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منظمة  
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# COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

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| <p><b>Hundred and Fiftieth Session</b><br/> <b>Cent cinquantième session</b><br/> <b>150.º período de sesiones</b></p> |
| <p><b>Rome, 1-5 December 2014</b><br/> <b>Rome, 1-5 décembre 2014</b><br/> <b>Roma, 1-5 de diciembre de 2014</b></p>   |
| <p><b>FIRST PLENARY SESSION</b><br/> <b>PREMIÈRE SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE</b><br/> <b>PRIMERA SESIÓN PLENARIA</b></p>           |
| <p><b>1 December 2014</b></p>  |

The First Plenary Meeting was opened at 9.37 hours  
 Mr Wilfred J. Ngirwa,  
 Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La première séance plénière est ouverte à 9 h 37  
 sous la présidence de M. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,  
 Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la primera sesión plenaria a las 9.37  
 bajo la presidencia del Sr. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,  
 Presidente Independiente del Consejo

Please submit all corrections to Room A374. Pour toutes corrections s'adresser au Bureau A374.  
 Para todas las correcciones dirigirse a la Oficina A374.

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**Table of Contents – Table des matières – Índice**


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|   | Page |
|---|------|
| Item 1. Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable  |      |
| Point 1. Adoption de l'ordre du jour et du calendrier   |      |
| Tema 1. Aprobación del programa y el calendario<br>(CL 150/1; CL 150/INF/1; CL 150/INF/3)                             | 4    |
| Item 2. Election of three Vice-Chairpersons, and Designation of the Chairperson and Members of the Drafting Committee |      |
| Point 2. Élection des trois vice-présidents et nomination du Président et des membres du Comité de rédaction          |      |
| Tema 2. Elección de los tres Vicepresidentes y nombramiento del Presidente y los miembros del Comité de Redacción     | 5    |
| Item 3. Technical Committees  |      |
| Point 3. Comités techniques   |      |
| Tema 3. Comités técnicos  | 6    |
| <i>Item 3.1 Report of the 31<sup>st</sup> Session of the Committee on Fisheries (9-13 June 2014)</i>                  |      |
| <i>Point 3.1 Rapport de la trente et unième session du Comité des pêches (9-13 juin 2014)</i>                         |      |
| <i>Tema 3.1 Informe del 31.º período de sesiones del Comité de Pesca (9-13 de junio de 2014)</i><br>(C 2015/23)       | 6    |
| <i>Item 3.2 Report of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Committee on Forestry (23-27 June 2014)</i>                  |      |
| <i>Point 3.2 Rapport de la vingt-deuxième session du Comité des forêts (23-27 juin 2014)</i>                          |      |
| <i>Tema 3.2 Informe del 22.º período de sesiones del Comité Forestal (23-27 de junio de 2014)</i><br>(C 2015/24)      | 20   |

**CHAIRPERSON**

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen, I call the first meeting of the Hundred and Fiftieth Session of the FAO Council to order.

I wish to welcome Council Members and observers to this session, especially those of you who have travelled to be here today. A special word of welcome to new Council Members: the Czech Republic, Iceland, Malaysia, Mali and Zimbabwe.

I am also pleased to congratulate the countries which received an Award yesterday in recognition of their efforts to eradicate hunger, thus achieving the World Food Summit Goal and the first Millennium Development Goal, namely: Brazil, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Gabon, the Gambia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kiribati, Malaysia, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, the Philippines and Uruguay.

Before proceeding, I would like to ask the Secretary-General of the Council to make a short announcement. Mr Gagnon you have the floor.

**SECRETARY-GENERAL**

I wish to bring to the attention of the Council that the European Union is participating in this meeting in accordance with paragraphs 8 and 9 of Article II of the FAO Constitution.

I have been asked to inform you that the declaration made by the European Union and its Member States is contained in information document CL 150/INF/3, which is available online and at the documents desk. I wish to draw the attention of the meeting to this declaration.

**CHAIRPERSON**

I now wish to extend a warm welcome to the Director General, who has joined us for the start of this opening meeting.

Director-General, you have the floor.

**DIRECTOR-GENERAL**

Your Excellency Wilfred Ngirwa, Independent Chairperson of the Council, let me start by congratulating again the countries that were awarded yesterday for meeting the First Millennium Development Goal hunger target or the World Food Summit Goal: Brazil, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Gabon, the Gambia, Iran, Kiribati, Malaysia, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, the Philippines and Uruguay.

I would like to thank the presence of the Vice-President of Gambia and the Ministers of Brazil, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Gabon, the Gambia, Mauritania, as well as the Vice-Ministers and Deputy Secretaries of Malaysia, Mexico, and Philippines.

I would also like to recognize the presence with us today of the Ministers of Albania, Mozambique, Rwanda, Samoa and Sierra Leone, as well as that of the Deputy Ministers of Pakistan and Thailand.

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Members of the Council, Distinguished Permanent Representatives, Distinguished non-state actors, Ladies and Gentlemen, it is a pleasure to welcome you to FAO.

Exactly 3 years ago, on 1 December 2011, I stood here before you as Director-General elect of FAO, for the first time. It feels like yesterday. But we have already accomplished a lot. These have been 36 busy and productive months working together.

We are a more efficient, focused Organization with clear priorities, putting the full weight of FAO behind our work and achievements.

We have completed the reform process. We have cut administrative costs.

The Strategic Framework is enhancing the coherence of our work at the global, regional and country levels and guides our Technical Cooperation Programme.

We have strengthened our institutional capacity at Headquarters and in the field.

We are engaging external partners in more meaningful and effective partnerships, following the guidelines you approved.

Today, FAO is much better prepared to address the food security and nutrition, and also the sustainable development challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Your trust and constant support over the past three years have allowed us to get where we are.

The rise in voluntary contributions despite the still difficult economic situation is one testimony that FAO is on the right track. I would like to take this opportunity to thank FAO's main resource partners, including for both regular program and voluntary contributions.

They include the following ten Member Nations: the United States of America, Japan, United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, France, Canada, Saudi Arabia, Brazil and Norway.

They also include UN trust funds, the Global Environment Facility (GEF), and the European Union, which is our biggest single partner in voluntary contributions. I thank you all for your support.

I hope that the trust and support of the FAO Membership will translate into a real budget increase in the next Program of Work and Budget: we will ask only for a modest 0.5 percent, about 6 million dollars more.

We are still working on the staff cost increase estimates for the next biennium. We hope that the relatively low inflation of the last period will mean a smaller increase than the one we saw in the last biennium.

However, we will need to wait and see to what extent staff cost increases can be absorbed without additional efficiency savings.

The real increase that we are asking for will be used to bring the TCP budget to the 14 percent minimum level recommended by Conference.

As you might recall the recommendation was first made in the 1989 Conference, 25 years ago, a long time before the first International Conference on Nutrition. And it has been reiterated many times since then: in 1991, in 1993, in 1999 and in 2007. Four times. Even more if we include Regional Conferences. We hope that we will be able to reach this level now.

There are renewed commitments to food security and nutrition by FAO Members and growing challenges to which we need to help respond.

This real increase that we are asking for will be particularly important for the Small Island Developing States, the group of countries most affected by climate change.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Second International Conference on Nutrition illustrates how far FAO has come and the important role of the Organization in contributing to a better world.

I want to thank all of you for making ICN2 a success.

ICN2 has reminded all of us that there can be no development if the health, the well-being and the productivity of over half of the world's people are damaged by malnutrition.

But ICN2 is just the beginning.

The proposal for a Decade on Nutrition will be considered by the United Nations General Assembly. ICN2 should also help add prominence to nutrition in the Sustainable Development Goals agenda.

The Rome Declaration and the Framework for Action provide clear guidance on how to move forward. It is up to us to transform this good will into better nutrition results.

We are not wasting any time.

On 26 November, immediately after ICN2 ended, WHO Director-General Margaret Chan and I wrote to the UN Secretary General informing him of the results of ICN2, and requesting him to bring the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and the Framework for Action to the attention of the General Assembly.

This Council will also discuss ICN2 and the follow up to the Conference.

I would like to outline the main elements that frame how FAO plans to take the nutrition agenda forward.

First, FAO is firmly committed to fulfilling its mandate: help Members end hunger and raise levels of nutrition.

Second, we urgently need to improve global governance arrangements for food security and nutrition.

This last point has two sides: first, enhanced coordination within the United Nations System. And the other, better governance mechanisms that include civil society and the private sector and that are accountable to Member States.

We are committed to improving coordination within the UN System without creating new structures. Personally, I believe that the United Nations High-Level Task Force on Global Food Security is well placed to meet this need.

Specifically related to the Scaling Up Nutrition Network and REACH, we support a proposal that their coordination be located in WFP.

As I said, we also must ensure multi-stakeholder participation in the global governance for nutrition.

I believe there is nothing more natural than for the Committee on World Food Security, our CFS, to take on a bigger role in the global nutrition debate.

For this to happen, the World Health Organization and other organizations with a mandate touching on nutrition must join the CFS. We have already begun exploring this possibility informally.

Of course, this will not happen overnight. That is why FAO has offered to temporarily host the United Nations Standing Commission on Nutrition, the SCN, for a transition period as FAO has already hosted the Commission in the past.

Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to thank you again for your continued trust in, and support to my leadership and to FAO.

As I have said, we have done a lot, but we still have a lot to do.

We must consolidate the transformational changes to fully deliver the expected results.

We need to strengthen decentralization even more to increase our effectiveness in responding to national and regional needs. We need to further develop South-South Cooperation. We are only now starting to tap this immense potential.

And we need to enhance our relationship with middle-income countries. This includes supporting them as they play a more active role in international cooperation; and responding better to their needs. This is clearly seen in nutrition, as many of them now have to deal with undernourishment and obesity at the same time.

Ladies and gentlemen, few times in its history has FAO had such strong commitment and support from its Members.

And this commitment and support comes at a symbolic time.

For many reasons, 2015 will be an important year for all of us. 2015 marks the end of the Millennium Development Goals and the beginning of the Sustainable Development Goals era.

And also in 2015, we will also celebrate FAO's 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

FAO has done a lot in its first 70 years, especially on the food production side.

However, ending hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition is still a pending challenge. Ensuring sustainability, healthy and inclusive food systems, and improved access to food are all necessary for this.

I am confident that, together, we can meet the test of our time. But we cannot wait another 70 years. We need zero hunger, zero malnutrition within our lifetimes.

That is what we are fighting together for.

Thank you very much for your attention and support.

*Applause*

*Applaudissements*

*Applausos*

#### **CHAIRPERSON**

Thank you, Director-General.

I would like to remind delegates that to ask for the floor they simply need to press the red button located by the microphone. The light will flash until the delegate has spoken. The order of speakers will be automatically recorded and displayed on the screen above the podium.

I now invite the Secretary-General to give a brief account of the documentation for this session.

#### **SECRETARY-GENERAL**

The documentation for this session of Council includes 19 main documents. Eight documents were published by the deadline of 3 November. Ten documents were online one week later, six of which were reports of meetings which took place either after or just before the deadline for despatch of Council documents. One document, concerning ICN2, went on line last week.

#### **Item 1. Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable**

##### **Point 1. Adoption de l'ordre du jour et du calendrier**

##### **Tema 1. Aprobación del programa y el calendario**

*(CL 150/1; CL 150/INF/1; CL 150/INF/3)*

#### **CHAIRPERSON**

We now proceed to item 1 on the agenda: *Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable* as set out in documents CL 150/1, CL 150/INF/1 Rev.1 and CL 150/INF/3.

Document CL 150/1 contains the Provisional Agenda which was distributed on 1 October 2014 to all Members of the Organization, together with the invitation to this Session.

Since our 149<sup>th</sup> Session in June this year no invitations have been issued to Non Member Nations to attend FAO meetings, nor have there been any applications for Membership in the Organization, hence sub-item 9.1, *Invitations to Non-Member Nations to attend FAO Sessions* and sub-item 9.2, *Applications for Membership in the Organization* can be removed from the Agenda.

Are there any comments on the proposed amendment? Thank you, the Agenda is adopted as amended.

*Adopted*

*Adopté*

*Aprobado*

#### **CHAIRPERSON**

With respect to the Provisional Timetable, you have before you document CL 150/INF/1 Rev.1.

I should like to point out that the items on the Provisional Agenda have been scheduled to allow the Drafting Committee to convene its first meeting on the afternoon of Wednesday 3 December. This in turn should enable the Committee to finish its work in good time on Thursday and so allow the Report to be adopted on Friday afternoon.

Does this draft Timetable, with the deletion of item 9, meet with the approval of the Council? Thank you, the Timetable is approved.

*Adopted*  
*Adopté*  
*Aprobado*

#### **CHAIRPERSON**

I would like to draw the Council's attention to my pre-session letter proposing the procedure to be followed when examining the report of the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees. Given that the Report of the Joint Meeting contains advice and comments on agenda item 10, *Independent Review of Governance Reforms*, I would like to propose that we make comments on this specific matter when the pertinent item, that is item 10, is taken up on Tuesday morning. This will help focus our debate and avoid repetition.

I take it that the Council approves this approach.

Ladies and Gentlemen, before we continue with the Agenda, and in the interest of the safety of all of us, I request your attention for a short video presentation on fire safety.

*Video Presentation*  
*Présentation vidéo*  
*Videopresentación*

**Item 2. Election of three Vice-Chairpersons, and Designation of the Chairperson and Members of the Drafting Committee**

**Point 2. Élection des trois vice-présidents et nomination du Président et des membres du Comité de rédaction**

**Tema 2. Elección de los tres Vicepresidentes y nombramiento del Presidente y los miembros del Comité de Redacción**

#### **CHAIRPERSON**

We now move on to Item 2, *Election of three Vice-Chairpersons, and Designation of the Chairperson and Members of the Drafting Committee*.

Following consultations among the Regional Groups, the following proposals for the three posts of Vice-Chairperson have been received: Mr Mafizur Rahman (Bangladesh), Her Excellency Maria Laura da Rocha (Brazil), His Excellency Serge Tomasi (France).

If there are no objections, I wish to congratulate the three Vice-Chairpersons on their election.

*Applause*  
*Applaudissements*  
*Applausos*

#### **CHAIRPERSON**

For the Drafting Committee, the Regional Groups have proposed His Excellency Jón Erlingur Jónasson from Iceland as Chairperson, and the following countries as members: Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Canada, Chile, France, Jordan, Liberia, Pakistan, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Zimbabwe.

Are there any objections? Thank you, it is so decided.

May I suggest that, in line with our consolidated method of work, Council Members keep their interventions as brief and focused as possible, and that preference be given to interventions by representatives of regions whenever feasible, rather than single countries repeating comments already made.

Similarly, the quality of interpretation will be improved if interventions are made at a reasonable pace.

I should also like to remind you that the full written text of your interventions may be submitted for the Verbatim Records of this Session, and a shorter version delivered orally in the interest of good time management.

Furthermore, may I also request that if you wish to make a statement during the meeting a copy of the text be provided to the Secretariat in advance. This will allow the interpreters to convey your ideas as clearly as possible. The relevant email address for the submission of electronic versions of statements will be projected on the screen behind me and is also given in the Order of the Day. Timely submission of texts facilitate the work of the verbatim reporters and ensures greater accuracy.

Following the discussions on each of the agenda items, I will draw up conclusions to facilitate the drafting of the report of this session. The Report will consist of conclusions, decisions and recommendations in keeping with the practice established at recent sessions of Council. I invite you to point out any inadvertent omissions that you believe should be included in the draft report rather than waiting for the meeting of the Drafting Committee. In this way the task of the Drafting Committee will be made easier, allowing it to carry out its work more efficiently.

In addition, may I remind you that in the interest of good time management, it is important that we start each meeting punctually. Please ensure that you are here in the Red Room at the times indicated in the Order of the Day.

### **Item 3. Technical Committees**

#### **Point 3. Comités techniques**

#### **Tema 3. Comités técnicos**

*Item 3.1 Report of the 31<sup>st</sup> Session of the Committee on Fisheries (9-13 June 2014)*

*Point 3.1 Rapport de la trente et unième session du Comité des pêches (9-13 juin 2014)*

*Tema 3.1 Informe del 31.º período de sesiones del Comité de Pesca (9-13 de junio de 2014)  
(C 2015/23)*

### **CHAIRPERSON**

We now come to item 3, *Programme and Budget Matters arising from Reports of Technical Committees*.

The first sub-item is 3.1, *Report of the 31<sup>st</sup> Session of the Committee on Fisheries*, which took place in Rome from 9 to 13 June 2014.

Please ensure that you have document C 2015/23 before you.

I will now invite Mr Johán Williams, Chairperson of the 31<sup>st</sup> Session of the Committee on Fisheries, to present the report.

#### **Mr Johán WILLIAMS (Chairperson, 31<sup>st</sup> Session of the Committee on Fisheries)**

The 31<sup>st</sup> Session of the Committee on Fisheries was held in Rome, from 9 to 13 June 2014. As Chair of the 31<sup>st</sup> COFI Session, I am very pleased to report before FAO Council on the outcome of the 31<sup>st</sup> Session of COFI.

The 31<sup>st</sup> Session of the Committee was attended by delegates from 116 Member Nations of FAO, six UN Agencies, and representatives from 65 Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs) and the Civil Society.

COFI is by this by far the largest of the FAO technical committees and the broad attendance underline the importance of FAO and the Committee as the workshop for developing the normative framework for world fisheries, aquaculture, sector trade and its contribution to world food security and nutrition.

At the outset I would like to report that at the its last session, COFI endorsed two very important instruments; the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication, (the SSF-Guidelines), and the Voluntary Guidelines for Flag State Performance.



As the Committee did not manage to adopt the Report from the 31st COFI in full, the Draft Report of the Session prepared by the Drafting Committee was adopted subject to a special arrangement, and it was agreed that some comments, invitations, suggestions, would be reproduced in Annex D to the Report.

I will now turn to the outcome of the 31<sup>st</sup> Session and will focus on programme and budgetary matters of particular relevance to the Council.

The first substantial item on the Agenda was item 4, State of world fisheries and aquaculture and progress in the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and its related instruments.

Under this particular agenda item the Committee expressed its praise and support for the State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA) 2014 publication.

The Committee emphasized the need for strengthened effort to further measures to rebuild fish stocks.

The Committee, while commending the new web-based questionnaire on the implementation of the FAO Code of Conduct, called upon FAO to further develop and review the questionnaire.

While noting the progress made by the Members in implementing the Code and related instruments, the Committee also underscored the need to continue supporting developing countries to this end.

The Committee acknowledged efforts being made by Members in combating Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing and emphasized the importance of the coming into force of the 2009 Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate IUU fishing (PSMA) as soon as possible.

The Committee requested FAO to expand its efforts to effectively implement the International Guidelines on Bycatch Management and Reduction of Discards.

Under Agenda item 5, Securing sustainable Small-scale Fisheries the Committee endorsed the SSF Guidelines and welcomed FAO's initiative for establishing a Global Assistance Program for promoting implementation of the SSF-Guidelines and recommended to develop further the assistance program in a participatory manner.

Agenda item 6, Global and regional processes and instruments, had two sub-items, 6.1: Global and regional processes and 6.2: Instruments combating Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing.

Under the sub-item 6.1, FAO's Blue Growth Initiative (BGI) of the Director-General of FAO was presented, responding to the call from Rio+20, and as a part of the Strategic Framework of the Organization.

The Committee acknowledged this initiative and suggested the establishment of a working group to further develop the application of the initiative.

Under sub-item 6.2 the Committee endorsed the Voluntary Guidelines for Flag State Performance (VGFSP).

With Agenda item 7 Inland fisheries the Committee for its first time addressed inland fisheries as a stand-alone agenda item.

The Committee acknowledged the importance of inland fisheries and recommended that inland fishery issues be better included in national, sub-regional, regional and global instruments addressing water use and food security.

The Committee called for FAO to provide guidance and increase development efforts in the inland fisheries sector.

The Global Conference on Inland Fisheries scheduled to be held in FAO from 26 to 28 January 2015 is an immediate answer to this call.

Under Agenda items 8, Fish trade, and 9, Aquaculture, the Committee endorsed the reports of the fourteenth session of the Sub-Committee on Fish Trade and the seventh session of the Sub-Committee on Aquaculture with the recommendations and decisions made by those Sub-Committees.

The election of chairs for the two sub-committees are being changed to follow the mode established for election of officers for COFI. The Bureau will further have the sub-committee chairs/vice-chairs as sit-ins during the Bureau meetings. This in order to create a modality enabling COFI and the Sub-Committees to work well coordinated.

Concerning FAO's work in fisheries and aquaculture under the reviewed Strategic Framework, the Committee welcomed FAO's new Strategic Objectives as a basis for focusing FAO's work in fisheries and aquaculture.

The Committee also endorsed the progress report of the Multi-year Programme of Work (MYPOW) 2012-2015 of the Committee and the MYPOW 2014-2017.

The Committee adopted the proposed amendments to its Rules of Procedure of the Committee.

You will be informed later this week under Agenda item 17, Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and other Main Sessions 2014-16, including the proposed schedule of COFI 32, which was agreed by the Committee should be held according to schedule in 2016.

Finally, I will draw the attention to the report on the role of fish in global food security and nutrition and the decisions taken on this issue at the 41<sup>st</sup> Session of the Committee for World Food Security in October this year. It was the first time that CFS addressed fish and thus the first time fish was on the menu in the context of food security and nutrition.

The initiative came partly from COFI. The recognition of fish having a role in food security and nutrition clearly challenges the fisheries and aquaculture sectors. COFI can and should take a leading role in addressing this challenge. That will necessitate priorities in programs and budgets.

This concludes my presentation and the Council is invited to review the conclusions and recommendations of the 31<sup>st</sup> Session of COFI, as introduced, in particular on program and budgetary matters, and if found agreeable endorse its Report.

**Mr Jon E JONASSON (Iceland)**

This statement is made on behalf of the Nordic Countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.

We would like to thank the Chairperson of COFI for his report and give our full support to its endorsement by this Council.

We take the floor to bring to the Council's attention a major achievement of this last COFI meeting. That is the endorsement of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication.

It was the 29<sup>th</sup> Session of COFI in February 2011 that recommended that this instrument should be developed. We would like to thank all stakeholders for their contribution to make this a reality. This is in our view an important step towards recognition of Small-scale Fisheries as a major contributor to poverty alleviation and food security. This milestone is particularly welcome when we are still working on a new Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Targets on marine resources, oceans and seas have been recognized as one of the opportunities to a successful Post-2015 Development Agenda. Targets around ocean issues will not only have a major influence on the future of fisheries in developing countries but also on the success of other targets and goals in the Agenda.

Further this milestone can also contribute to recent developments in the CFS meeting last October in Rome, where the contribution of fisheries and aquaculture to food security and nutrition was recognized, as a primary source of protein and essential nutrients, and as a provider of income and livelihoods. In summary, in future we cannot improve fisheries-relevant policies and strategies for the

fisheries sector only, due consideration has to be given to food security, nutrition and poverty alleviation.

**Mr Wimol JANTRAROTAI (Thailand)**

My Delegation congratulates the Strategic Framework under the Committee on Fisheries, and notes that many issues of international interest and concern have been progressed.

We encourage FAO Members and others to respond to the Code questionnaire and commend FAO on the development of a web-based system which can facilitate easier response by the respondents. The questionnaire should consider regional differences and provide open questions for those who cannot fill into a specific question.

FAO should assess the responses and come up with the constraints on the implementation and then develop a programme of assistance accordingly. It is important for socio-economics, environment and biodiversity that the programme of work on sustainable fisheries, food security and poverty eradication should be considered to complement each other, therefore the programme of work and budgetary allocation to fishery management and sustainable development programme should be in comparable balance.

We support the FAO new Strategic Objectives to provide a basis for FAO's work in fisheries and aquaculture. Sustainable management and the use of aquaculture resources should be implemented regarding Strategic Objective D: quality and safety of food; Strategic Objective F: sustainable management of land, water and genetic resources; Strategic Objective G: improve livelihood development; and Strategic Objective H: improve food security.

We are pleased to endorse the Small-scale Fisheries Guidelines and support FAO's proposal for a Global Assistance Programme for implementation of the Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries Guidelines. Since Small-scale Fisheries are more and more important to many developing countries, we urge FAO to continue building capacity in implementing Small-scale Fisheries Guidelines and assess its contribution to food security and poverty eradication.

With this comments, our delegation endorses the report of the 31<sup>st</sup> Session of the Committee on Fisheries.

**Ms Laurence ARGIMON-PISTRE (European Union)**

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States. The candidate countries to the EU, Albania and Turkey, align themselves with this statement.

The European Union and its Member States welcome the results of the 31<sup>st</sup> Session of the Committee on Fisheries and acknowledge the large and active participation of the FAO Members. Important decisions have been taken.

We commend the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department for its excellent work in producing the SOFIA publication and encourage it to continue reporting on the State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture. To complete SOFIA reporting, the EU encourages the FAO to develop further the diagnosis of production trends whilst providing more information on fleet capacity. The FAO should also provide more support to countries on data collection and quality.

We welcome the endorsement by COFI of the Voluntary Guidelines on Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries. Increased attention to the role of Small-scale Fisheries is essential both for food security and as a lever for economic growth in coastal areas. These Guidelines address a wide range of issues relevant to Small-scale Fisheries while aiming to secure sustainable utilisation of fishery resources. They will be an important complement to the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. We agree with the development of implementation strategies for the Guidelines at various levels, including the local, national and regional levels.

We welcome the endorsement of the Voluntary Guidelines on Flag State Performance. This instrument, though voluntary, is of high political importance in the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing.

We are also pleased to note the broad support within the COFI for the establishment of a Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels, including the use of the IMO number as a unique vessel identifier for phase one of its development. We will continue to actively support the development of the Global Record and cooperate with the FAO on its development and implementation in particular in the fields of technical guidance and advice, evaluation of the Global Record prototype and testing of data exchange. The maintenance costs of the Global Register system should be assessed and addressed by the FAO with due regard to the principle of cost-efficiency.

We would like to stress once again the importance we attach to the entry into force of the Agreement on Port State Measures and invite all States to ratify or accede to it as soon as possible, as the measures provided for in the Agreement will only be truly effective in combating IUU fishing if and when they are enforced worldwide in a comprehensive, uniform and transparent manner.

In addition to these important elements in the fight against IUU, we would emphasise the value of Catch Documentation Schemes in combatting IUU fishing. We fully support the decision by COFI to convene an expert consultation to develop guidelines on Catch Documentation Schemes taking into account existing schemes. CDS are the best tools for ensuring full traceability of fishery products as catch certificates provide the means to identify illegal consignments and subsequently prevent them from being imported.

We welcome COFI's approval of the Evaluation Framework for assessing conformity of public and private certification schemes with the FAO guidelines on aquaculture certification.

We appreciate the fact that COFI also addressed the issue of bycatch management and reduction of discards and asked the FAO to continue its efforts to effectively implement the International Guidelines on Bycatch Management and Reduction of Discards and look into ways of addressing the problem of Abandoned, Lost or otherwise Discarded Fishing Gear (ALDFG) better.

We welcome the FAO Blue Growth Initiative which recognises the contribution of aquatic resources to food security. We further encourage the FAO to work on the prioritisation of this initiative to make it more effective.

Lastly, we consider that COFI would do well, in future, to provide clearer reflections and recommendations to the Council. This would further strengthen COFI's role in providing a basis for the FAO's decision-making. The FAO should focus on challenges related to its core mandate and join forces with its partners through better coordination. The FAO should also ensure that fisheries and aquaculture priorities are included under the Strategic Objectives.

**Mr John C.E. SANDY (Trinidad and Tobago)**

Mr Chairperson, please permit me to congratulate the Council for achieving this milestone of 150 sessions, and in doing so, pay tribute to our previous Directors-General, our present Director-General and indeed the gentlemen whose portraits adorn the walls of this august chamber, our previous Independent Chairpersons, all of whom led this Council, as you are doing, Chair, in efforts to champion the cause of food security and nutrition for all of mankind during the decades of this renowned Organization.

My Delegation congratulates and thanks the Committee on Fisheries for its valuable and comprehensive work at its 31<sup>st</sup> Session, especially since the government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago supports the view that fish is a critical food source and in particular provides a significant proportion of protein in the diets of most small island development states.

We also wish to highlight the Committee on Fisheries recognized the importance of aquaculture for food security and nutrition, poverty alleviation, income generation, employment and trade. This is significant given that farmed fish production is the fastest growing food production sector, and for the future increase the demand for fish will have to be satisfied through aqua culture production.

My Government is actively encouraging the development of a national aquaculture industry. Some of the key elements of the plan to develop this industry include: development of technological packages

to support consideration of requests for supporting investments in the sector and development of appropriate criteria for statutory environmental approvals for aqua culture; conduct farmer training and extension activities; encouragement of the adoption of global aqua culture alliance standards; development of a model farm for promotion and testing of models and research for key components of the sector; facilitation of access to diagnostic testing services to address disease identification and control in aquaculture facilities.

Accordingly, my Delegation endorses the report of the 31<sup>st</sup> Session of the Committee on Fisheries.

**Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)**

Following your wish and also the wish of the Chairperson of COFI, we limit our intervention to the contents of page three and four of the document, requiring the attention of the Council.

From the programmatic and budgetary aspects, which are the main expectation of the Council from the report of the technical committees, ten out of the 20 bullet points listed on pages three and four are relevant and may have resource implications. We support these ten bullet points, which could be grouped into four categories.

Category one: Blue Growth Initiative (BGI). This includes bullet point five, collaboration among countries on Blue growth initiative; bullet point six, establishment of BGI working group; item one of bullet 20, provide more technical precision regarding BGI contribution to Strategic Objectives.

Category two: Capacity development, bullet point seven, assisting developing countries in strengthening and harmonizing port state measures, bullet point ten, guidance and capacity development in data collection and analysis, stock assessment and post-harvesting, bullet point 11, capacity building on post-harvest issues.

Category three: Sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, including small scale fisheries: bullet point two, assisting developing countries to enhance food security through sustainable development of fisheries and aqua culture; bullet point 15, technical assistance and engagement with national government for the development of agriculture in all its aspects; bullet point 18 and item two of bullet point 20, impact of climate change on fisheries and aquaculture.

Category four: Better data information base. These are the four elements listed under bullet point one, improving food based systems and better formulated questionnaires; and item three of bullet point 20, assistance to member countries to improve statistics on small scale fisheries and communities.

With these comments, we endorse the report of COFI 31 and we wish to see the recommendation of COFI reflected in the Programme of Work and Budget 2016-2017 both in normative activities of fisheries and aquaculture as well as field operations.

**Ms Tereza Helena GABRIELLI BARRETO CAMPELLO (Brazil) (Original language Portuguese)**

As Minister of Social Development and Fight Against Hunger, it is with great satisfaction that I take part in the present FAO's Council Session.

We would like to congratulate the Committee on Fisheries and Professor Fábio Hazin for the adoption of the "Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication". From the social development perspective, I would also like to emphasize the areas of aquaculture and inland fisheries, which are a priority and essential for small producers.

Since I must leave this afternoon, I would like to share with you briefly some important results achieved by Brazil in the fields covered by FAO.

Yesterday, I had the honor of receiving, with other countries, the acknowledgement of the Organization for the achievement of the targets of the World Food Summit and of the Millennium Development Goals: Brazil has reduced undernourishment at a fast pace and has now left the World Hunger Map, having only 1.7 percent of the population in a situation of food insecurity today.

This result stems from political and technical efforts, which gained momentum as of 2003. Incentives to economic growth, income-guarantee policies and improved public services were the basis of our

strategy. A lot of work, dedicated financial resources, evaluations and constant improvements were our methodology. The goal that inspired us was to achieve ZERO HUNGER. This strategy was launched by President Lula at the time when he was supported and advised by Mr José Graziano da Silva, now Director-General of FAO. And we are delighted to have him at the helm of this Organization.

We are happy with our achievements, but we know that there is still a long way to go. We will fight now, together with our President Dilma, to reach those specific publics that are missing – such as indigenous people and geographically-isolated groups – until no Brazilian ever again suffers from food and nutritional deficiencies. And we will invest in an agenda for the future, which consists in adequate nutrition, the fight against obesity and overweight, the incentive to the production and consumption of organic food.

Our partnership with FAO has been fruitful over the years. With FAO's support, the Brazilian experience has been shared with other countries, in the fields of school feeding, of family farming, and in humanitarian cooperation in emergency situations.

Brazil is investing over four million dollars in projects in nine Latin American and Caribbean countries, alongside efforts within the framework of sub-regional organizations. We are also working in five African countries with the goal of improving school feeding, through the Purchase from Africans for Africa (PAA) Project, which is supported by FAO. In addition, we are acting within Mercosur and the Community of Portuguese Language Countries to strengthen regional strategies for the promotion of food and nutrition security.

All of this has been possible thanks to the redirection of FAO's actions as well. The Director-General José Graziano has been giving new impulse to the fight against hunger and poverty, to the promotion of the development of sustainable agriculture and fisheries, to the protection of natural resources and to the prevention of disasters, without neglecting important trade issues.

This is also why I am here, to congratulate him for the work done so far and to express once again our confidence in his ability to lead and accomplish. I count on the support of all of you to keep FAO united around the common goal of eradicating hunger worldwide.

**Sra. Maria Eulalia JIMÉNEZ ZEPEDA (El Salvador)**

Nuestros agradecimientos al Presidente del 31 COFI por la presentacion de este informe.

La Delegacion de El Salvador desea reiterar la importancia de los trabajos realizados por los diferentes Comites Técnicos de la FAO, en los cuales se basa el trabajo de esa Organizacion. Los resultados del COAG, COFI, COFO, Comité de Problemas de Productos Básicos, orientan el camino a seguir, por ello es importante reafirmar ante este Consejo las prioridades técnicas que estos Comités han establecido.

Para mi país y para los países del sistema de integración centroamericana, SICA, los trabajos del Comité de Pesca son de particular importancia y es por ello que en el COFI nuestros países examinan con anticipacion los temas a tratar y presentamos siempre posiciones comunes en cada uno de ellos.

En ese sentido y como señalamos durante el COFI en nombre de El Salvador y en de los países del SICA, reiteramos la importancia de atender bajo el concepto de crecimiento azul el enfoque integrado y multidisciplinario para afrontar los aspectos medioambientales, socioeconomicos y jurisdiccionales que sustentan los procesos de ordenación pesquera actuales.

Felicitamos al Director General por esta iniciativa. Deseo reiterar asimismo la importancia que reviste para los pescadores y estados contar con las directrices que nos orienten hacia un manejo sostenible de las pesquerias artesanales, para asegurar la sostenibilidad de la pesca de pequeña escala. Por ello nos congratulamos por la aprobación de las directrices voluntarias para lograr la sostenibilidad de la pesca en pequeña escala en el contexto de la seguridad alimentaria y la erradicación de la pobreza.

Reiteramos nuestro respaldo al establecimiento de un programa de asistencia mundial para la ejecución de estas directrices.

**Mr Jingyuan XIA (China) (Original language Chinese)**

The Chinese delegation would like to congratulate Brazil and other countries on the MDGs achievement. The Chinese delegation fully supports FAO Director-General's remarks, and we support your summary of work and your view for the coming future. The Chinese delegation would like to thank COFI Secretariat for the report and the good presentation.

The Chinese delegation commends FAO's work for three reasons.

First, we praise FAO's attention on aquaculture and fisheries in the new Strategic Objectives Framework.

Second, we laud FAO's support in the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and the relevant International Guidelines.

Third, we appreciate FAO's contribution in developing aquaculture to ensure food security and nutrition.

As you may know, China is a big country in the fishery production and trade. Over many years, we have carried out our work in three areas.

Firstly, we have been committed to combat Illegal Unreported and Unregulated fishing. The Chinese Government gives great importance to this matter.

Secondly, we take measures to suspend fishing to protect fishery resources which yielded fruitful results.

Thirdly, the Chinese Government gives great importance to bilateral and multilateral cooperation in fisheries, including the cooperation with FAO. Therefore, we could promote our fishery development sector by cooperating with other countries and FAO.

In that regard, we have three suggestions: one, we think that FAO should integrate the fishery sector development into the Blue Growth Initiative. FAO Director-General once talked with our Minister about this Initiative and we believe this is a very good opportunity. We could also take into account the formulation of the Post-2015 Development Agenda. We could then work hard to set the fishery sector as one of the priorities of the Blue Growth Initiative.

Two, we should upgrade the capacity building of the small scale fishermen. There are many big fishing countries, which are also developing countries. There are many small scale farmers and to improve their capacity it is very important to promote a sustainable development. FAO could work together with other countries within the South-South Cooperation Framework and also ameliorate and enhance technical support.

Three, we want to improve our capacity to effectively share information by establishing good communication and an information sharing network. We could cooperate to promote a good and sustainable development for the fisheries sector around the world.

**Mme Josiane RATSIMBAZAFY (Madagascar)**

Je suis très honorée de prendre la parole au nom du Groupe Afrique. Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Directeur Général, honorables invités, je voudrais tout d'abord vous féliciter pour la bonne conduite de nos travaux et je suis persuadée que cette session du Conseil aboutira à des résultats probants.

J'adresse par la même occasion mes vives félicitations aux trois Vice-présidents ainsi qu'aux membres du Comité de rédaction qui apporteront leur concours pour le succès de nos travaux.

J'adresse mes remerciements aussi au Président du COFI pour sa brillante présentation du Rapport de la trente et unième session du Comité des pêches.

Mon intervention sera sur ce point de l'ordre du jour portant sur le Rapport de la trente et unième session du Comité des pêches, au nom du Groupe Africain. Au regard de la contribution significative des produits de la pêche et de l'aquaculture pour la sécurité alimentaire et la nutrition et compte tenu de la nécessité des pays en développement de mettre en place des politiques sectorielles, le Groupe Afrique se félicite de l'édition de 2014 du rapport sur La situation mondiale des pêches et de l'aquaculture.

Le Groupe Afrique reconnaît assurément les progrès accomplis dans le cadre de la mise en œuvre du Code de conduite pour une pêche responsable et des instruments connexes. Toutefois, nous souhaitons que la FAO continue une assistance technique accrue aux pays en développement et aux organismes régionaux. Nous pensons qu'une meilleure application de ce code en matière de pêche artisanale et d'accès aux marchés contribuerait à l'amélioration des conditions de vie des populations les plus défavorisées. Le Groupe Afrique se félicite donc des nouveaux questionnaires en ligne sur la mise en œuvre du Code de conduite et demande à la FAO d'en poursuivre le développement et de le réexaminer.

Concernant la lutte contre la pêche illicite non déclarée et non réglementée, nous devons admettre que cette forme de pêche a des impacts négatifs considérables sur la durabilité de la pêche. Au regard de la faiblesse des moyens techniques des États de la Région Afrique, nous appuyons les initiatives concourant à une meilleure gestion de ce problème par le biais des outils et des instruments internationaux. Tout comme le COFI, le Groupe Afrique réaffirme son soutien inconditionnel et ferme à la FAO pour la poursuite des travaux sur un Fichier mondial, en coordination avec d'autres initiatives.

Le Groupe Afrique se félicite de l'adoption des Directives d'application volontaire, visant à assurer la durabilité de la pêche artisanale dans le contexte de la sécurité alimentaire et de l'éradication de la pauvreté, car il faut souligner qu'au-delà de sa dimension sociale et économique, les captures pour la consommation humaine réalisées par la pêche artisanale sont importantes comme celles réalisées par le secteur de la pêche industrielle. Le Groupe Afrique accueille favorablement aussi la proposition de la FAO concernant un programme d'assistance mondiale destiné à appuyer la mise en œuvre des Directives sur la pêche artisanale et recommande à la FAO de poursuivre l'élaboration du programme en question de façon participative.

Enfin, dans le cadre des nouveaux objectifs stratégiques de la FAO, le Groupe Afrique souhaite que les priorités dans le domaine des pêches et de l'aquaculture soient prises en considération en mettant l'accent sur la sécurité alimentaire. Le Groupe Afrique salue l'Initiative de la FAO en faveur de la croissance bleue et demande au Secrétariat de continuer à développer cette Initiative et que des ateliers et réunions soient organisés à cet effet. À la lumière de ces observations, notre délégation, en son nom et au nom du Groupe Africain, approuve sans réserve ce rapport et invite les autres membres du Conseil à faire de même.

**Mr Wan Zakaria WAN IBRAHIM (Malaysia)**

Malaysia supports the endorsement of the Report of the 31<sup>st</sup> Session of COFI, which addressed a range of issues related to the long-term wellbeing of marine and inland fisheries and aquaculture and discussed potential action by Governments, Regional Fishery Bodies, NGOs, fish workers and other actors in the international community.

Malaysia also supports recommendations regarding COFI programme and budgetary matters especially on the need to continue supporting developing countries in enhancing food security through the development of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture and various assistance and technical capacity programmes suggested.

We welcome the proposal for a Global Assistance Programme to support the implementation of the SSF Guidelines, and for FAO to continue with the delivery of its capacity development programme to assist developing countries in strengthening and harmonizing Port State Measures.

We congratulate COFI for the endorsement of two key sets voluntary guidelines designed to improve sustainability and responsible fisheries conduct, respectively the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries and the Voluntary Guidelines for Flag State Performance.

We request FAO to broaden its engagement with partners to develop a global assistance programme that will help countries implement both guidelines.



**M. Carlos AMARAL (Angola)**

L'Angola souscrit dans l'intégralité à l'intervention de Madagascar qui s'est exprimé au nom du Groupe Afrique. De même, l'Angola approuve le rapport du Comité des pêches.

Nous voulons juste souligner certains aspects. L'importance du travail de la FAO sur le renforcement des capacités pour la mise en œuvre des différents instruments déjà adoptés, et j'aimerais faire plus particulièrement référence aux Directives sur la pêche artisanale, approuvées récemment par le COFI, car la pêche artisanale est le secteur qui emploie le plus de personnes et le principal contributeur pour l'approvisionnement du marché des poissons.

Nous voulons également conseiller à la FAO de concentrer davantage ses efforts pour aider le développement de l'aquaculture, en particulier en Afrique, qui a une population qui augmente rapidement et se débat encore avec des difficultés alimentaires et nutritionnelles.

Enfin, je tiens à féliciter le Groupe d'experts de haut niveau du Comité de la sécurité alimentaire mondiale qui a préparé une excellente étude sur la durabilité de la pêche et l'aquaculture au service de la sécurité alimentaire et la nutrition. J'aimerais bien, vu son importance, faire la liaison avec la conclusion du Comité des pêches.

J'aimerais mettre en évidence surtout quatre points: (i) la nécessité de donner au poisson la place qu'il mérite dans les stratégies, les politiques et les programmes menés en faveur de la sécurité alimentaire et la nutrition, ce point a été soulevé par le Président dans la présentation du rapport; (ii) relever les défis liés au développement de l'aquaculture, notamment à travers la recherche, l'innovation et la promotion de la coopération sud-sud; (iii) renforcer la contribution des marchés et du commerce aux niveaux national et international tout en évitant de créer des obstacles tarifaires et non tarifaires; et (iv) renforcer la protection sociale et le droit des travailleurs en tenant compte du principe d'égalité entre les sexes. Je vous remercie.

**Sr. Luis Alejandro PEDRON HURTADO (Venezuela)**

La República Bolivariana de Venezuela agradece la presentación del documento C 2015/23 mediante el cual se reflejan los resultados del 31.º período de sesiones del Comité de Pesca. Respalamos las recomendaciones que se presentan a continuación del Consejo al igual que lo hicimos en el 31.º período de sesiones del COFI.

Expresamos nuestro aprecio por la publicación *El estado mundial de la pesca y la acuicultura (SOFIA)*, de 2014, la cual es de vital importancia para el sector de la pesca. Igualmente, apoyamos la recomendación destinada a mejorar los cuestionarios y el seguimiento del Código de conducta para la pesca responsable. Es muy importante continuar apoyando a los países en desarrollo para que puedan hacer los reportes de seguimiento.

Asimismo, tomamos nota de la adopción de las Directrices internacionales sobre el Estado del pabellón así como de la aprobación de las Directrices voluntarias para lograr la sostenibilidad de la pesca en pequeña escala en el contexto de la seguridad alimentaria y la erradicación de la pobreza, y reiteramos nuestro apoyo a la FAO para incrementar sus esfuerzos en función del programa de asistencia mundial para la implementación de estas Directrices. Los principios incluidos en estas Directrices, tales como los derechos humanos y la dignidad, el respeto de las culturas, la no discriminación, la equidad y la igualdad, incluida la dimensión de género, la consulta y la participación, el respeto a las leyes, la transparencia, la rendición de cuentas, la sostenibilidad económica, social y ambiental junto a la responsabilidad social, la factibilidad y la viabilidad social y económica, ofrecen un marco adecuado para respaldar la pesca en pequeña escala en las diferentes regiones del mundo, ya que constituye un medio de vida para millones de familias especialmente en los países en desarrollo.

La República Bolivariana de Venezuela, a partir de la aprobación en el año 2001 de la Ley de pesca y acuicultura cambió el paradigma de la pesca, la acuicultura y sus actividades conexas hacia un enfoque de servicio social que contribuye a garantizar la seguridad alimentaria de la población, involucrando de forma participativa y protagónica los conocimientos y opiniones de los pescadores y acuicultores en la ordenación pesquera y regulación de los recursos.

Como medida específica en favor de la pesca en pequeña escala, desde el año 2009, fueron totalmente prohibidas las actividades industriales de pesca de arrastre dentro de la zona económica exclusiva de la República, es decir, 6 millas marítimas próximas a la línea de costa, con el objetivo de evitar la erosión de los fondos marinos altamente explotados durante décadas, y mantenerlos como medio de trabajo de los pescadores artesanales. Esto ha conducido a un incremento sostenible en la producción de diversas especies que han repoblado nuestras costas, por lo que alentamos a los Estados Miembros a fomentar la pesca en pequeña escala.

En este ámbito, hemos firmado un acuerdo de cooperación con la FAO para medir el impacto económico, social y ambiental que ha tenido la prohibición de la pesca industrial de arrastre en Venezuela. Para la implementación de estas Directrices, reconocemos la importancia del fomento de la cooperación internacional con énfasis en los niveles subregional y regional. En este ámbito estamos realizando grandes esfuerzos mediante la cooperación sud-sud en materia de pesca, tal como ha sido destacado en el 33.º período de sesiones de la Conferencia regional de la FAO para América Latina y el Caribe celebrado el pasado mes de mayo en Chile.

Finalmente, reiteramos la posición expresada en el 30.º y 31.º períodos de sesiones del COFI de que las referencias a la Convención sobre derechos del mar (CODEMAR) y a otros acuerdos internacionales en los documentos del Comité, en ningún caso prejuzgan la posición de los Estados Miembros del COFI para su firma o ratificación.

**Mr Alexander A. OKHANOV (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)**

After everything that has been said by other delegations, especially the European Union, there is scarcely anything to be added since they have highlighted the most important aspects considered at the 31<sup>st</sup> Session of the Committee on Fisheries.

Nonetheless, the Russian Federation would like to emphasize the importance of this session since the 2009 Agreement on Port State Measures was adopted, as well as the Voluntary Guidelines on Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication.

In this relation, I would like to make a proposal that we could explore the possibility of developing, on the basis of the Agreement on Port State Measures, some sort of legally binding document.

And we would like to stress the importance of the upcoming activities scheduled next year in FAO, such as the Global Conference on Inland Fisheries: Fresh Water, Fish and the Future.

I would like to conclude by saying that we endorse the report and we approve the recommendations contained in it.

**Ms Sultana AFROZ (Bangladesh)**

The Bangladeshi Delegation welcomes the review of the Strategic Framework as a basis of FAO's work in fisheries and aquaculture in support of achieving food security and poverty eradication.

We congratulate the Director-General's Blue Growth Initiative and we would like to continue to support it, but we also request FAO to continue and further refine its work.

Bangladesh would like to request FAO to support Member Nations in marine fisheries issues where needed, especially in the Blue Economic zone where also Bangladesh belongs. We would also like to request FAO to extend its support for the effective implementation of Port State Measures and the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

Finally, Bangladesh thanks the Chairperson of the Committee of Fisheries for his presentation, and we fully endorse the report of the 31<sup>st</sup> Session of COFI.

**Mr Seyed Aminollah TAGHAVI MOTLAGH (Islamic Republic of Iran)**

I would like to thank the Director-General of FAO for yesterday's event, granting 13 countries an award for achieving MDG goals set by Food World Summit 1996, and I am proud that the Islamic Republic of Iran was one of them.

The Islamic Republic of Iran acknowledges and appreciates the contribution of FAO for this achievement; therefore, the Islamic Republic of Iran fully supports Mr Graziano da Silva, Director-General of FAO and his strategy and goals for eradication of food insecurity and malnutrition.

We would like to thank the Chairperson and the Secretariat of COFI and for producing this excellent and very well focused and oriented document. We thank the Director-General of FAO for his initiative on Blue Growth and support the establishment of a Working Group to further develop its application.

We also acknowledge the importance of inland fisheries for livelihood of many people around the world and we support this inclusion of inland fisheries as national, sub regional, regional, and global instruments addressing water use and food security. We also endorse the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries (SSF), which are very important for food security and also for sustainable utilization of aquatic resources, we welcome FAO's proposal for Global Assistance Programme for the implementation of SSF Guidelines. The Islamic Republic of Iran endorses the report.

**Mr Matthew WORRELL (Australia)**

Australia would like to thank, firstly, the Chair of COFI for his presentation of the Report of the 31<sup>st</sup> Session of COFI. We would also like to express our appreciation for the open and inclusive way in which the Chair and the other COFI Bureau members have conducted their intersessional activities during the last period. We believe the way and the processes that have been employed by the Chair and the other Bureau members offer potential for other FAO Technical Committee Bureaus to consider.

Obviously, fisheries is a very important sector for food security and economic well-being of countries in the Southwest Pacific Region. It is important to recognize that a large proportion of the global tuna stocks come from the Pacific.

From the 31<sup>st</sup> COFI session report, Australia would like to highlight the discussion regarding Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing (IUU). IUU fishing from vessels originating outside of the Pacific Region is a major challenge. We fully agree with COFI's emphasis on the importance of coming into force of the 2009 Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate IUU fishing as soon as possible. We would also fully support COFI's endorsement of the Voluntary Guidelines for Flag State Performance.

**Mr Vimlendra SHARAN (India)**

I align India's statement with the rest of the House here to fully endorse the report.

Having said that, I have a small question that maybe the ADG could clarify. When I see the matters which have been brought to the attention of the Council, every bullet point reads "the Committee" except the sixth bullet point which reads "Some members suggested the establishment of a BGI Working Group".

So my question is twofold: is this just a suggestion of some members or is this a Committee recommendation? And, if it is a Committee recommendation, what will be the contours of the Working Group that you intend to frame in this regard?

**Mr Ropati Mualia LE MAMEA (Observer for Samoa)**

I would like to voice a few remarks on the report now in discussion. Currently, 1 to 5 December, the Global Tuna Commission is meeting in Samoa. The Tuna Commission is to improve on the conservation and the development of measures to protect and safeguard the depletion of tuna stocks in the world.

The question that arises is why in Samoa this meeting is being hosted? For information of fellow delegates, the Southwest Pacific is the custodian of the largest tuna stocks in the world. The report now discussed emphasizes efforts made by Members in combating Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing, and the expansion of efforts to implement International Guidelines on Bycatch Management and Reduction of Discards.

This is one of the problems currently faced by the Southwest Pacific Island countries. Due to a large increase of designer fishing vessels on our side of the world, the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) in the Southwest Pacific is doing its best in the safeguarding of tuna stocks by combating illegal and unreported and unregulated fishing by fishing boats and vessels from last countries like Europe and Asia currently fishing in our seas.

Secondly, the Tuna Commission is meant to develop measures to safeguard stocks of fish, especially tuna stocks in the Pacific.

FAO should be working together with various agencies who are doing the same work around the world, like FFA that we have in the Southwest Pacific, instead of separately developing their own measures which can be a duplication of work for the various agencies, including FAO. We suggest that FAO develop linkages with these agencies since they are doing the same type of work, and I am pretty sure that by working together in collaboration, they could arrive at a much better sustainable development for the fishing stocks, especially tuna stocks, which is gradually depleting in the world.

**Mr Seerat ASGHAR (Pakistan)**

We thank the Chair of the Committee on Fisheries for his statement. We also appreciate the very able manner in which he led the Committee. In general, we endorse all the recommendations of the report.

Specifically, I would like to state that we welcome the adoption of the International Guidelines on Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries at the 31<sup>st</sup> Session of COFI. We support FAO's proposal for Global Assistance Programme for implementation.

FAO should provide technical support to developing countries for development of sustainable fisheries and implementing the guidelines. However, the guidelines should not be used by countries as a barrier to the trade. Aquaculture and inland fisheries can play an important role in the provision of livelihood and food security. FAO should continue to provide support for the expansion of Small-scale Fisheries in developing countries and development of inland fisheries as part of its Strategic Objectives of food security, sustainable development, public alleviation, stable markets, and increased resilience.

With over 1,000 kilometers of coastline, thousands of kilometers of rivers and canals, and lakes, ponds, and other open water bodies, Pakistan has an immense potential for enhanced fish production. We would like to request FAO for technical support in this area.

FAO should also provide support to developing countries in dealing with the impacts of climate change in relation to the fisheries and aquaculture sectors. Assistance should also be provided for data collection related to fisheries, including socioeconomic data and related information on the Small-scale Fisheries and communities.

**Mr Johán WILLIAMS (Chairperson, 31<sup>st</sup> Session of the Committee on Fisheries)**

I of course appreciate the very good reception of the report. To make it even simpler for me, I will ask the Assistant Director-General Árni Mathiesen to answer the questions.

**Mr Árni M. Mathiesen (Assistant Director- General, Fisheries and Aquaculture Department)**

It is always a pleasure to make life easier for the COFI Chair. This is not a very difficult question to answer; however, the question of the exact language, whether it's a language difference, it's possibly a little bit more difficult to explain. But, however, a wording like the Representative of India quoted, that means to us and the Secretariat that this is an issue that we take up with the Member Nations and see if there is a consensus to carry it forward. And later on this month there will be a Bureau meeting where this issue will be on the agenda. And judging by the reception of the Blue Growth Initiative has had so far, and as reflected in the comments here this morning, I have no doubt that there will be a Blue Growth Working Group set up very soon.

There is only one more comment that really requires an answer; that is the comment by the Representative of Samoa with regards to the cooperation on tuna and the Pacific. The biggest project that we run in the Fisheries and Aquaculture Department at the moment is the GEF ABNJ Tuna

Project which has a very large element in the Pacific, and the WCPFC is a part of that project, as are the other four Tuna Regional Fisheries Management bodies.

In addition to that, we also run the OFMP-2 project in cooperation with UNDP which goes into even more detailed cooperation with the very same organizations that the Representative of Samoa mentioned earlier. In addition to that, the Director-General has made decisions with regards of strengthening the office in Samoa recently which will very strongly contribute to the workings of the office. In addition, all of these organizations are a part of and cooperating with the RFMO network of which the Fisheries and Aquaculture Department is the Secretariat for. So this is definitely an area and an issue that we are emphasizing.

I would like to thank the Council for the very positive comments with regard to COFI and the COFI report. I would also like to thank the Chairperson, Mr Williams, for his excellent cooperation. I express my high hopes for cooperation with the incoming Chairperson, Mr Hazin, over the next two years.

**Mr Yohannes TENSUE (Ererea)**

I would like to comment on the remarks made by India, that the report in most of its parts says that “the Committee” did this and that, or endorsed and reviewed, but in some of the paragraphs it says that “some countries noted”.

I think it is a common practice that we have been following so you don’t have to go to the Bureau meeting to review the way it is reported. Some countries may express reservations – but it doesn’t mean that there was an objection.

**CHAIRPERSON**

Thank you. I would like to conclude sub-item 3.1 as follows:

1. The Council endorsed the conclusions and recommendations contained in the Report of the 31<sup>st</sup> Session of the Committee on Fisheries and in particular:
  - a) welcomed FAO’s Strategic Objectives as the basis for focusing the Organization’s work in fisheries and aquaculture on food security, poverty reduction and sustainable management of natural resources;
  - b) welcomed the Blue Growth Initiative and encouraged its further enhancement in pursuing the Strategic Objectives;
  - c) underlined the importance of FAO’s continued work in support of effective implementation of Port State Measures, the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, the International Guidelines on Bycatch Management, as well as development of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture;
  - d) welcomed the proposal for a Global Assistance Programme to support the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication;
  - e) welcomed the endorsement of the Voluntary Guidelines for Flag State Performance, which will contribute to the fight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing;
  - f) acknowledged the importance of inland fisheries as a means towards meeting the Strategic Objectives on food security, sustainable development, poverty alleviation, stable markets and increased resilience; and
  - g) encouraged FAO to support capacity development in the areas of data collection and analysis, stock assessment, management, post-harvesting, and policy development.
2. The Council also welcomed the acknowledgement by FAO of countries which had achieved the targets of the World Food Summit and Millennium Development Goals, noting that the reorientation of the Organization’s action over the past three years had given new impetus to the fight against hunger, notably through the promotion of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture.

I think the Report has been well received. That is the end of my summary and I think it will guide the Drafting Committee. We have concluded this agenda item.

*Item 3.2 Report of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Committee on Forestry (23-27 June 2014)*  
*Point 3.2 Rapport de la vingt-deuxième session du Comité des forêts (23-27 juin 2014)*  
*Tema 3.2 Informe del 22.º período de sesiones del Comité Forestal (23-27 de junio de 2014)*  
(C 2015/24)

## CHAIRPERSON

We will now move on to Sub-item 3.2, *Report of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Committee on Forestry*, held in Rome from 23 to 27 June 2014. The document before Council is C 2015/24.

The Chairperson of COFO, His Excellency Bharrat Jagdeo had to cancel his trip at the last moment due to unforeseen developments. So I now give the floor to Mr James Singh, Commissioner of Forests of Guyana, and Vice-Chairperson of COFO, to present the report.

### **Mr James SINGH (Vice-Chairperson, Committee on Forestry)**

The 22<sup>nd</sup> Session of COFO, whose slogan was “Forest and People – World and Beyond”, was organized together with the Third World Forest Week and was attended by over 600 delegates from 117 Member Nations plus 34 UN Agencies and observers.

The very rich ambitious agenda was developed by the steering committee based on the recommendations of the six regional forestry commissions and contained the following five main thematic blocks as outlined in the slide above: State of the World’s Forests, Enhancing socioeconomic benefits for forests, Contribution to global processes and initiatives, Progress on previous recommendations and in the work of statutory bodies, FAO’s work in forestry on the revised Strategic Framework.

COFO made several recommendations to its Members, in particular it invited countries to create enabling frameworks to unlock the full gamut of potential offered by forests and ensure the sustained provision of socioeconomic benefits which are often unrecognized and undervalued.

Secondly, they established and strengthened platforms for cross-sectorial multi-stakeholder dialogue and initiatives that link forestry and agriculture and other natural resource related sectors to enable more effective coordination and communication at a landscape level.

In the International Year of Family Farming, COFO invited members to create an enabling environment for forest communities, family forest owners, forest rights holders and forest and farm producer organizations which include clear tenure, access to markets, incentive programs and financing mechanisms. COFO also invited countries to strengthen their response to a Zero Hunger challenge by developing relevant forest policies, integrating cross-sectorial approaches to food security and nutrition, sustainably manage forest ecosystems, residence and wildlife habitats and promote policies that increase productivity of small holders. It invited countries to advocate for and work actively towards achieving zero illegal deforestation and to protect, conserve, restore and sustainably manage forest resources and biodiversity at global levels.

COFO invited countries to ensure adequate consideration of gender issues in forestry in all deliberations and *fora*. They further encouraged countries to strengthen collaboration amongst all unused sectors and invited COAG, COFI and COFO to explore opportunities in this regard. The benefit of including the Committee on World Food Security in this collaborative effort was emphasized.

The Committee also invited interested countries to foster the cooperation within their existing initiatives working on boreal forests, and requested FAO to scale-up its support in this area. It further invited countries to work with FAO for a formulation of a global capacity development program on sustainable management and restoration of dry-land forests and agro-silvo-pastoral systems.

Additionally, COFO considered its use of global strategic relevance and provided its guidance for Member Nations. Countries were requested to strengthen efforts to recognize forests contribution to

the sustainable development goals and to ensure adequate consideration and visibility of forests in the SDGs and the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Members were also requested to consider further strengthening the collaborative partnership on forests in any future international arrangement on forests and to ensure coordination across all relevant government agencies so that CPF activities are fully integrated and financed.

COFO invited countries to consider membership in the International Poplar Commission and encouraged the Executive Committee to continue their reform process of the Commission. It further invited countries to elevate the red-plus discussions to the highest political level in the countries, regions and globally, and support the forest initiative of the UNSD Climate Summit and strengthen mechanisms for inter-sectorial coordination to achieve effective climate change adaptation and mitigation.

The Committee appreciated the excellent work and recommendations of the regional forestry commissions, and emphasized the need to consider FAO's work in forestry in the broader context of FAO's Strategic Framework and prioritize it accordingly. The programme should be realistic, and sufficient financial resources need to be allocated.

The Committee gave guidance for a development of the next Multi-Year Programme of Work and requested the Secretariat to develop it in consultation with the Steering Committee for consideration and adoption by the 23<sup>rd</sup> Session of COFO.

Regarding guidance to FAO, COFO recommended strengthening the management and access systems on people's use and benefits for forests, as well as transparency and accountability. It recommended that FAO continue to work on strengthening the links between forests and food security, in particular in the context of Strategic Objectives I and III. It recommended that FAO in collaboration with CPF members and others contributes to the development of appropriate targets and indicators on forests in the SDGs, including improved indicators for the socioeconomic benefits of forests especially as they relate to poverty reduction and food security.

COFO recommended FAO to upscale capacities for monitoring the contribution of forests to address the zero hunger challenge at regional and global levels and present the contribution of forests to food security to the Committee on World Food Security for its consideration.

The Committee further encouraged FAO to contribute actively to the international arrangement of forests and requested FAO to continue its leadership role in the CPF and together with Members consider new ways of strengthening the CPF and developing a vision for its future. It recommended that FAO further develop, disseminate and test the sustainable forest management toolbox and complete the development of the voluntary guidelines on national forest monitoring for a final endorsement by the next session.

COFO requested FAO to continue supporting the regional forest communicators' networks, and to continue enhancing the forestry related knowledge base, and to include education and research initiatives in FAO regional activities. FAO was also requested to continue promoting cross-sectorial collaboration within FAO's Strategic Framework and its objectives and elaborate in consultation with the respective Bureau a detailed proposal for collaboration for a consideration of the technical committees in their forthcoming sessions.

Finally, it requested FAO to present possibilities for enhancing interdisciplinary work on boreal forests and a recommendation for the establishment of the working group on dry-land forests and agro-silvo-pastoral systems for consideration and possible adoption at the next session.

COFO requested FAO to support countries in upgrading and disseminating socioeconomic data, strengthening tenure and governance processes, strengthening forest-based industries, producer associations and community-based forest organizations, strengthening and introducing best schemes given for environmental services, policy and planning, information exchange and access to funding to achieve zero illegal deforestation, gender mainstreaming and economic empowerment of women, forest landscape restoration, forest and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

These recommendations have been brought to your kind attention in detail in the Report. To conclude, the COFO agenda was developed by the COFO Steering Committee based on the recommendations of the Regional Forestry Commissions. COFO was characterized by the strong involvement of heads of forestry administrations, including two facilitated dialogues discussing enabling policies and a zero illegal deforestation challenge. COFO was organized in conjunction with the World Forest Week. Forestry developed its own reporting service and published the event on the COFO website allowing persons and organizations to follow developments remotely.

The COFO Steering Committee met immediately after the session and engaged in a brainstorming exercise on how to intensify its intersessional work and explore opportunities for further strengthening the impact of future COFO sessions.

**Mr Ringson J. CHITSIKO (Zimbabwe)**

Zimbabwe is taking the floor on behalf of the Africa Group. Right from the onset, let me take this opportunity to congratulate you, Mr Chairperson, and the Secretariat for providing this comprehensive document which is now before this 150<sup>th</sup> Session of the FAO Council.

The Africa Group welcomes the Report of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Committee on Forestry and fully supports its messages and recommendations, especially with respect to the contribution that forests make towards sustainable development.

Africa is endowed with forests, as you know, and there is therefore need to manage and conserve them. There is also need for a coordinated approach at the national, regional and international levels in order to combat forest degradation through a number of tools and strategies in a wide range of institutions and stakeholders. In this way, we would have made an important contribution towards the achievement of food security and mitigation of the fit of climate change.

We recognize that forests and trees have important multiple functions and provide a wide range of forest goods and products, including flora, medicines, timber, construction materials and forest foods, such as caterpillars, honey, mushrooms, bush-meat and so on. These are critical to the livelihoods of both the rural and urban communities. It is therefore vital that measures are taken to ensure that forest resources are available today and in the future.

The Africa Group is cognizant of the need to strengthen Member Nations' capacity to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate evidence based forest policies, investments and programmes that take into consideration the role of forests in addressing the Zero Hunger challenge. Furthermore, there is need to develop mechanisms to improve data collection, monitoring and reporting on the role that forests play in food security and nutrition.

The Africa Group looks forward to participating at the 14<sup>th</sup> World Forestry Congress which will be held in Durban in South Africa from 7 to 11 September 2015. We note with appreciation that the Government of the Republic of South Africa as the host is organizing and financing the Congress while FAO is providing technical and administrative support. As we are aware, the theme of the Congress is "Forests and People Investing in a Sustainable Future". The Congress will, through this theme, focus on people-centered forestry, socio-economic issues and the need for opportunities for investment in the vital role forests and forestry play in sustainable development. Members are therefore encouraged to participate in this important meeting.

Finally, the Africa Group recommends that the Report of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Committee on Forestry be adopted by the Council.

**Mr Gianni GHISI (Italy)**

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States. The candidate country to the EU, Albania and Turkey, aligns itself with this statement.

The EU and its Member States highlight the importance of forests and the multiple environmental and socioeconomic benefits they provide.



We welcome the publication of the State of the World's Forest 2014, with its focus on the socio-economic benefits of forests and its central message about the importance of forests for sustainable development.

The quantification of socio-economic benefits is a complex exercise. Further work is needed to assist countries in upgrading their system for collection and analysis of socio-economic data on forests, so as to ensure that the full range of socio-economic benefits is quantified.

The publication of this report comes at a very crucial juncture, as the international community is currently engaged in the development of sustainable development goals (SDGs) as part of the post-2015 development agenda as well as reviewing the International Arrangement on Forests, including the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF). The evidence provided in this report should help policy-makers to understand and recognise more fully that forests are not only a threatened environmental resource, but that they deliver - when sustainably managed - multiple social and economic benefits.

Forests are linked to a range of other priority areas in the development of SDGs. These include sustainable agriculture and food security, health, sustainable growth and jobs, climate change, biodiversity, water, disaster prevention and resilience, gender equality, governance and the rule of law. We stress the imperative need to focus on these benefits while promoting the sustainable management of forests worldwide. With regard to gender equality, we would stress that women play a crucial role in managing forests throughout the world. That role needs to be duly recognised and promoted further. In that context, the FAO can play an important role in strengthening capacity and providing technical support for gender mainstreaming and the collection of gender-disaggregated data in the forest sector.

2015 will also bring another major event, the 21<sup>st</sup> Conference of the Parties to the Climate Change Convention, in the context of which forests are closely associated with mitigation and adaptation issues.

The FAO can also make an important contribution to initiatives such as the Zero Hunger Challenge and the Zero Illegal Deforestation Initiative. Halting and reversing deforestation is essential if the international community is to meet its agreed forest-related goals and targets. Here we highlight the goal of reversing the loss of forest cover worldwide, which is enshrined in the Forest Instrument.

The challenge of achieving zero illegal deforestation requires, above all, stronger land governance, secure land tenure and more integrated land-use planning, particularly between the agricultural and the forestry sectors. We welcome the recommendation by COFO to expand FAO work in this area and recognise the FAO's role and unique position in supporting member countries on these matters. We therefore request that the FAO works in partnership with other organisations, including the United Nations Forum on Forests, other members of the CPF and all relevant UN.

The EU and its Member States would recall our view that the priority areas of work should include monitoring and assessment, forest ecosystem services, REDD+, urban and community forestry, integrated land use and landscape management, governance, gender, wood energy, forest biodiversity, innovation in forest products, and education. We also encourage further promotion of cross-sectoral collaboration between the FAO statutory bodies within the FAO's Strategic Framework and its objectives.

We believe that the FAO's activities should focus more on actual results on the ground in the regions. We welcome the fact that the COFO documents contained a wide range of recommendations from the regions presented through the Regional Forestry Commissions, which are a unique vehicle for regional and global collaboration, and programme and policy coordination. In particular, we would highlight the importance of the joint UNECE-FAO cooperation in our region. We welcome this interaction and would encourage the Regional Forestry Commissions to intensify or extend cooperation with other UN organisations and forest-related processes, whilst continuing to provide input to the FAO Regional Conferences.

**Ms Maria Laura DA ROCHA (Brazil)**

Brazil supports FAO's mandate to promote sustainable forest management worldwide and recognize the work done by the Committee on Forestry setting forth this agenda.

FAO's report on the state of "the State of World's Forests" highlighted the contribution of forests to people's livelihoods, but also revealed the need of improving information and adapting policies to enhance forest's socio-economic benefits. COFO was particularly successful in bringing to light the linkages between forests and family farming and the role played by of forests to achieve food security and nutrition. But, again, the lack of reliable data unveiled the need of fostering research.

That is to say that some good work has been done by the Committee on Forests but there is a lot more ahead. No other agency is better placed than FAO to work in this crosscutting field, linking forestry, family farming and food security.

Brazil welcomed the "Zero Illegal Deforestation Challenge", which is indeed consistent with our 2007 National Plan on Climate Change. As a result of cross-sectorial policies, deforestation in the Amazon has decreased by 79 percent in the last ten years. More recently, a programme for the *Cerrado bioma* was put in place to address the need to protect this ecosystem, frequently called the Brazilian Savannah, where agriculture and livestock are major economic drivers.

Notwithstanding our steady progress to combat deforestation, new challenges are being posed on us, requiring the upscale of strategies. Therefore, in our view, the international call to protect and sustainably manages forests must be accompanied by the provision of appropriate means of implementation. Cooperation must be in the heart of our common goals.

The outcome document of Rio+20 recognized the wide-range of social, economic and environmental benefits of forests to people. Now, the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the SDGs should support countries in the implementation of policies to sustainably manage their forests. However, in order to enhance and renew forests' benefits, we must promote more sustainable patterns of consumption and production, both in developed and developing countries. FAO can definitely play a role in this area.

**Mr Wimol JANTRAROTAI (Thailand)**

Our Delegation supports the outcome of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Committee on Forestry. Many areas of works have contributed to the sustainable forest management. We appreciate COFO for initiating more cross-cutting issue of the forestry and other Technical Committees.

Therefore, the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the context of National Food Security must be encouraged and intervention of FAO through capacity-building can facilitate the implementation. Along with this, we concur with the request of COFO to FAO to complete the development of the Voluntary Guidelines on National Forest Monitoring.

Under FAO Statistic Objectives, we would like to see more of the Regional Forest Commission to identify and prioritize regional specific issues to cover in the Programme of Works. Topics and Works area on REDD+ are important in contribution to achieve Strategic Objectives. We acknowledge FAO for its activity and support to countries on forests and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

We request FAO to consider their regional approaches and to force the regional collaboration on this matter. Accordingly, my Delegation endorses the Report of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Committee on Forestry.

**Mr Ivan G. KONSTANTINOPOLSKIY (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)**

I would like to thank the Secretariat for the document prepared, and would also like to thank the Vice-Chairperson of the Committee, Mr Singh, for his very detailed report about the session.

We would like to support the FAO's activity in forestry as a very important integral element in the activities of the Organization in sustaining a sustainable way of managing natural resources. In this connection, we agree with the recommendation of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Session of the COFO with relation to allowing FAO to assign sufficient financial resources for forestry work.

In particular, it is important to take due account of this when we develop the Programme of Work and Budget for 2016-17. This, of course, requires that we maintain the topicality relevance of recommendations with regard to the signing of priorities for FAO activities in forestry.

We believe that it is very promising to see the study planned about the relationship between forestry and food security, which is fully falling within the mandate of the Organization. We commend the decision of the 41<sup>st</sup> Session of the Committee on World Food Security with respect to the preparation by a High-Level Expert Group of a report on this same topic in 2017. This step is a logical follow-on of the discussion which has taken place at the Rome Conference on the contribution of Forests to ensuring Food Security and Nutrition which took place in 2013.

It also is called upon to allow for better monitoring of the implementation of the United Nation Secretary General's initiative Zero Hunger on this very important track. And we would also like – as an aside – to emphasize the importance of having due consideration of forestry issues as a whole, in the global Post-2015 Development Agenda. In this context, we would commend FAO efforts to attract international attention to this theme.

We endorse COFO's recommendation with regard to stressing even more the importance of supporting country efforts in collecting statistics which would reflect the socio-economic role of forestry. We support further development of FAO work with regard to improving efficiency and productivity of the forestry sector. We indeed are happy to see that the 55<sup>th</sup> Session of the Advisory Committee of FAO on Sustainable Forest Industry is going to be scheduled in St. Petersburg this year.

We consider that FAO activities, with regard to the use of firewood and introducing innovation into forestry and preserving forestry biodiversity, is something which remains extremely topical indeed. As before, we are especially interested in pursuing an exploration of opportunities to involve FAO in disciplinary work on boreal forests and in strengthening this thrust of the Organization.

**Sra. Maria Eulalia JIMENEZ ZEPEDA (El Salvador)**

La delegación de El Salvador agradece al Vicepresidente la presentación de este informe.

Respaldamos en su conjunto el mismo y deseamos destacar la necesidad de que la FAO en general y a través de su programa forestal siga dando prioridad a las actividades en apoyo del Marco Estratégico Revisado y se fortalezcan aún más los vínculos entre la silvicultura y la seguridad alimentaria.

Consideramos importante que la FAO trabaje en el fortalecimiento de la asociación de colaboración en materia de bosques y que participe activamente en el programa de colaboración de naciones unidas para la reducción de emisiones de la deforestación y la degradación de bosques en países en desarrollo. El apoyo de la FAO en la puesta en marcha de la iniciativa sobre bosques en la Cumbre del clima convocada por el Secretario General de las Naciones Unidas es fundamental.

Apoyamos la recomendación realizada en el informe a las comisiones regionales para que proporcionen orientaciones sobre áreas prioritarias a nivel regional respecto del sector forestal lo cual brindará fundamento precioso a los cinco objetivos estratégicos de la FAO y contribuirán a su consecución.

**Sr. Luis Alejandro PEDRON HURTADO (Venezuela)**

La República Bolivariana de Venezuela agradece al Vicepresidente la presentación del documento C2015/24 mediante el cual se reflejan los resultados del 22.º período de sesiones del Comité Forestal.

Respaldamos las recomendaciones que se presentan a continuación del Consejo, en especial aquellas que solicitan a la FAO cooperar con los países para mejorar sus capacidades de gestión forestal.

También queremos reiterar nuestra satisfacción por la presentación del documento *El estado de los bosques del mundo, 2014* (SOFO 2014), el cual señaló, a la consideración del COFO, la contribución de los bosques al desarrollo sostenible. En especial, deseamos destacar la dificultad identificada por la FAO para obtener información detallada con indicadores precisos que permitan medir los beneficios socioeconómicos de los bosques.

A pesar de esto, las principales conclusiones del informe demuestran el gran impacto económico y social de las actividades forestales que emplean millones de personas a nivel mundial en los sectores

formal e informal de la economía, quienes suministran leña para cocinar, proveen fuentes energéticas alternativas y productos forestales de alto valor para la fabricación de viviendas, entre otros.

La República Bolivariana de Venezuela apoya la ordenación forestal sostenible y ejecuta con apoyo de la FAO el proyecto titulado *Fortalecimiento de capacidades para la formulación y adopción de una estrategia nacional de conservación, manejo y gestión forestal*, mediante el cual se está formulando la política nacional forestal y las estrategias para su implementación. Asimismo, hemos preparado nuestro Informe nacional forestal, que forma parte de la Evaluación de los recursos forestales mundiales (FRA) que publicará la FAO el próximo año. Estas iniciativas desarrollan los lineamientos contenidos en la Constitución de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela para promover la protección del equilibrio ecológico, la Ley de Bosques promulgada en el año 2013 y en el 5º Objetivo del Plan de la Patria 2013-2019 de contribuir con la preservación de la vida en el planeta y la salvación de la especie humana.

Asimismo, queremos reiterar los comentarios generales que realizamos respecto del enfoque asignado a varios de los documentos que analizamos en el 22.º período de sesiones, en particular nuestra preocupación por las reiteradas menciones a la economía verde o a las economías más verdes. Para Venezuela es importante destacar que conforme al párrafo 56 de la Declaración de Río +20, la economía verde y la transición hacia la misma es solo una de las tantas opciones de política de desarrollo que los países pudieran acompañar o no. Por tanto, es pertinente acotar que existen otros modelos y políticas relevantes para el desarrollo sostenible, los cuales también deberían ser tomados en cuenta y respaldarse con financiamiento, desarrollo de capacidades y cooperación técnica. Consideramos en ese sentido que los documentos del COFO deben reflejar con claridad los conceptos definidos en la Declaración Final de Río +20.

Asimismo, nos preocupa la referencia realizada al concepto de agricultura climáticamente inteligente cuando tratamos la relación entre los bosques y la agricultura familiar. Por tanto, reiteramos que esta definición no goza de consenso en el sistema de Naciones Unidas, por lo que recomendamos ser sumamente cuidadosos en su utilización.

Igualmente, dejamos constancia que cuando sean abordadas materias que vinculan el clima y la seguridad alimentaria, debe hacerse referencia a la Convención Marco de las Naciones Unidas sobre Cambio Climático, foro competente en esta materia.

**Mr James SINGH (Vice-Chairperson, Committee on Forestry)**

On behalf of the Chairperson of COFO, I would like to thank the Distinguished Delegates for their additional comments, suggestions and recommendations, and for supporting and endorsing the recommendations contained in the report.

I will now ask the Assistant Director-General to make a few more detailed comments.

**Mr Eduardo ROJAS-BRIALES (Assistant Director-General, Forestry Department)**

It is a pleasure to address you today and to acknowledge such a great support and very constructive comments received by several countries to the report and the session's outcomes.. In addition, I would also like to thank Vice-Chairperson Singh for coming on short notice all the way from Guyana.

With regards to the several comments, we take notice of the last intervention from Venezuela on definitions. I would like to take the opportunity to report very briefly on the progress in the implementation of the COFO recommendations.

As highlighted by several speakers – especially by the Russian Federation –important momentum was identified during COFO regarding the role of forests in the SDG. And a few weeks later, the Open-Ended Working Group Report ensured that forests were recognized at the same level as mountains, which is also an FAO responsibility while biodiversity and ecosystems were avoided as buried under other items in the SDG 15. And also forests were identified in SDG 6 regarding water.

I think we are well placed, and with the guidance and support of the coming process in the General Assembly will ensure that the forests are seen from the world perspective and sufficiently identified.

We also appreciate the mention made by the Africa Group regarding the importance of the World Forest Congress that will be held in September next year in South Africa for the first time in the region. We know that important progress is moving ahead in very intense cooperation between South Africa and FAO and that a mission took place last week in the country and we look very much forward to the success.

We would also like to highlight, as commented by the Director-General, the increased support of countries under GEF and the strengthening of our GEF Unit. This will affect, of course, not only forestry projects but also fisheries and other areas. We are experiencing a very important progress in the upscaling of our capacity to support countries in the GEF and I am sure that the engagement of FAO in implementing GEF projects will grow significantly very soon. We are also very much satisfied that the Committee on World Food Security approved for 2017 the report on the contribution of Forests to Food Security, as several speakers also highlighted.

Discussion is going on in the COFO Bureau to implement recommendations arose during discussions in COFO to establish a high level segment in COFO to ensure that we take advantage of the presence of high level officers such as Ministers, Vice-Ministers, Permanent Secretaries, Secretary-Generals, so as to ensure that items of a more political nature are dealt with in this high level segment, whereas more technical items are taken in our technical segment. Discussions regarding SOFO 2016 are very well advanced so that we have also a recognized report and we are very thankful for this.

Regarding the work in REDD areas, and especially in UN-REDD, there is an important work ahead. During last months, FAO has streamlined its internal UN-REDD arrangements which will surely implement better support to countries. Moreover, the three Rome-based Agencies are working very intensively together to ensure that for the next second and third place of REDD we are prepared. The UN-REDD participants have grown over 250 million recently thanks to the support of Norway and other donors. And with 56 Member Countries and supports I really think that in that area we are moving ahead. Therefore, the International Poplar Commission is moving ahead as recommended by COFO, and FRA 2015 is being prepared.

Finally, on the review of the International Arrangement on Forests and UNFF, we are working very closely with the CPF partners in order to prepare a joint submission for the AHEG meeting in January in New York. We are also working closely with DESA, suggesting and supporting the possibility that if the International Forum on Forests wishes to establish a regional dimension, that the Regional Forestry Commissions of FAO are seen as an opportunity to catalyze this, to avoid further fragmentation of forest processes and increase trouble caused and destruction.

To conclude, we are very much in your hands to avoid that we get further fragmented in the forest scenario, as the forestry evaluation we approved two years ago anticipated. In that sense, we would wish that the clear support to the FAO leading role in the CPF as the eminent Chair would be also echoed by the same countries and other bodies, as we have seen unfortunately some inconsistent approaches in recent times.

#### **CHAIRPERSON**

Thank you. I think the report was positively received by the Members. This enables me to make the following conclusions.

The Council endorsed the conclusions and recommendations contained in the Report of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Committee on Forestry and welcomed the State of the World's Forests 2014. In particular, the Council:

- a) stressed the need for FAO as a whole, and its forestry programme in particular, to continue to prioritize its activities in support of the reviewed Strategic Framework, and to continue strengthening the links between forestry and food security;
- b) recommended that FAO assist countries in strengthening tenure rights and governance processes, including through building capacity to implement the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security;

- c) underscored the importance for FAO to support the Regional Forestry communicator Networks;
- d) requested FAO to continue its leadership role of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, and in collaboration with the World Bank and other members, seek new ways of strengthening the Collaborative Partnership on Forests; and
- e) urged FAO to continue to actively participate in the Forest and Landscape Restoration Mechanism, UN-REDD and the International Arrangement on Forests;
- f) supported the formulation of policy and planning, information exchange and dialogue, as well as access to funding, with a view to achieving zero illegal deforestation;
- g) acknowledged the need to strengthen Members' capacity to develop and implement evidence-based forest policies, as well as cross-sectoral programmes that take into consideration the role of forests in addressing the Zero Hunger Challenge;
- h) supported the development of appropriate targets and indicators on forests in the Sustainable Development Goals and the development of indicators for the socio-economic benefits of forests; and
- i) encouraged FAO to explore further possibilities for interdisciplinary work on boreal forests.

**Mr Ivan G. KONSTANTINOPOLSKIY (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)**

On the whole, we agree with your wonderful summary. We just wanted to recall that, during the course of the discussion, some Delegations referred to the importance of Regional Forestry Commissions and, in particular, we recall that the Delegate of Italy speaking on behalf of the European Union highlighted the importance of the coordinated work of FAO and the European Economic Commission, and our Delegation agrees with that.

We are in favour of pursuing the traditional partnership and cooperation between these two organizations and I think that this could be very well reflected in your summary as well.

**CHAIRPERSON**

I do not have any problem with that because the importance of Regional Commissions and their cooperation with other organizations was discussed. This will be added. Thank you.

We have concluded this agenda item. Ladies and gentlemen, that brings us to the end of this morning's session. To be efficient and effective and to focus on guidance, you may wish to shorten your statements during the afternoon session.

May I remind you of the side event "Building a Common Vision for Sustainable Food and Agriculture", taking place from 13:00 to 14:30 in the Red Room.

The Council will resume with Agenda Item 3.3 at 14:30 hours sharp.

*The meeting rose at 12:31 hours*

*La séance est levée à 12 h 31*

*Se levanta la sesión a las 12.31*