



# COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

## Item 2 of the Provisional Agenda

### INTERGOVERNMENTAL TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP ON AQUATIC GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

#### Third Session

1–3 June 2021

#### PROVISIONAL ANNOTATED AGENDA AND TIMETABLE

#### 1. Election of Chair, Vice-Chair(s) and *Rapporteur*

In accordance with its Statutes, “the Working Group shall elect its Chairperson and one or more Vice Chairpersons from among the representatives of Members of the Working Group at the beginning of each session. These officers shall remain in office until the next session of the Working Group and shall be eligible for re-election”.<sup>1</sup> The Working Group shall also elect a *Rapporteur*.

#### 2. Adoption of the agenda and timetable

The provisional agenda is contained in document **CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/1**. A provisional timetable is provided in Annex 1 to the present document, which provides annotations to the provisional agenda. The Third Session will be held as a virtual meeting. Annex 2 outlines the special procedures proposed for virtual meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (Commission) in 2021.

#### 3. *The State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*

At its Seventeenth Regular Session, the Commission considered the document *Preparation of The State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*<sup>2</sup> and took note of the proofing version of *The State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (Report)*.<sup>3,4</sup> The Commission requested FAO to finalize, launch and widely distribute the Report and its in-brief version in 2019.<sup>5</sup> In August 2019, the Report was launched on the occasion of the Tenth Session of the Sub-Committee on Aquaculture of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI), held in Trondheim, Norway. The Sub-Committee (**CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/Inf.5**) and, subsequently, COFI (**CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/Inf.6**) welcomed the Report.

<sup>1</sup> CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/Inf.2.

<sup>2</sup> CGRFA-17/19/8.2 Rev.1.

<sup>3</sup> CGRFA-17/19/8.2/Inf.1.

<sup>4</sup> CGRFA-17/19/Report, paragraph 52.

<sup>5</sup> CGRFA-17/19/Report, paragraph 54.

The Report<sup>6</sup> is available in English and its in-brief version in all UN languages on the website of FAO.<sup>7</sup>

The document *The Finalization of The State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/2)* provides a summary of the process towards the preparation of the Report, the scope and coverage of the report, and FAO follow-up activities based on the findings of the report.

The Working Group may wish to welcome the Report, take note of its key findings, including the needs and challenges synthesized in Chapter 10, and take note of FAO activities based on and in support of the key findings of the Report.

#### 4. Draft Global Plan of Action for Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

The Commission, at its Seventeenth Regular Session, considered the document *Options for follow-up to The State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*,<sup>8</sup> requested FAO to review the proposed objectives, overall structure and list of follow-up strategic priorities, and to prepare a draft Global Plan of Action for Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture for consideration by the Working Group and the Commission at their next sessions.<sup>9</sup>

The Commission also agreed that the Global Plan of Action should be prepared upon consultation with the regions and in collaboration with COFI and its relevant subsidiary bodies.<sup>10</sup>

The request to prepare a Global Plan of Action was further endorsed by the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture at its Tenth Regular Session (CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/Inf.5) and COFI at its Thirty-fourth Regular Session (CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/Inf.6).

The document *Status report on the preparation of the draft Global Plan of Action for the Conservation, Sustainable Use and Development of Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/3)* describes the process for the preparation of the draft Global Plan of Action, and includes the draft Global Plan of Action in its appendix. This process drew upon:

- the findings of the Report;
- inputs and recommendations provided by regional workshops held for:
  - Africa (CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/Inf.7);
  - Asia and the Pacific (CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/Inf.8);
  - Europe and Central Asia (CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/Inf.9);
  - Latin America the Caribbean and North America (CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/Inf.10);
  - and
  - Near East (CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/Inf.11);
- submissions by Members and observers (CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/Inf.3) provided in response to the Secretariat's Circular State Letter (C/FI-42) inviting inputs to the Global Plan of Action;
- the report of the Third Session of the COFI Advisory Working Group on Aquatic Genetic Resources and Technologies (CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/Inf.4); and
- the report of the Tenth Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture (CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/Inf.5).

The Working Group is invited to review and revise, as appropriate, the draft Global Plan of Action with a view to its finalization at the Commission's Eighteenth Regular Session.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.fao.org/3/CA5256EN/CA5256EN.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.fao.org/aquatic-genetic-resources/home/en/>

<sup>8</sup> CGRFA-17/19/8.3.

<sup>9</sup> CGRFA-17/19/Report, paragraph 55.

<sup>10</sup> CGRFA-17/19/Report, paragraph 56.

## **5. Development of a global information system for farmed types of aquatic genetic resources for food and agriculture**

The Commission, at its Seventeenth Regular Session, endorsed the report of the Second Session of the Working Group, which included recommendations to FAO to assess, explore and develop mechanisms to monitor the status and trends of aquatic genetic resources for food and agriculture (AqGR) including, as appropriate, through the establishment of a global information system and a registry of farmed types and stocks of wild relatives, subject to availability of funds.<sup>11</sup>

In 2018, FAO started the development of a Registry of farmed types of AqGR (Registry)<sup>12</sup> and is currently planning its further expansion into a global information system to be used by Members, on a voluntary basis, for regular reporting to FAO on the status of conservation, sustainable use and development of farmed types and wild relatives of aquaculture species.

The document **CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/4** provides the rationale for the development of a global information system for AqGR, summarizes the progress made by FAO in this regard and presents possible future steps. The Working Group is invited to take note of and review the progress made in the development of the Registry, and to provide guidance to the Commission on the expansion of the Registry into a global information system, subject to availability of necessary funds.

## **6. Access and benefit-sharing for aquatic genetic resources for food and agriculture**

The Commission, at its last session, recalled that its Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPOW) foresees a review of its work on access and benefit-sharing (ABS) for its Eighteenth Regular Session and requested its Secretary to prepare, for review by the Commission's Working Groups:

- (i) a review of the Commission's past work on ABS for genetic resources for food and agriculture (GRFA);
- (ii) an overview of developments under other international agreements and instruments relevant to ABS for GRFA;
- (iii) an up-to-date survey of existing legislative, administrative and policy approaches, including best practices, for ABS for the different subsectors of GRFA and traditional knowledge associated with GRFA held by indigenous peoples and local communities, with the aim of identifying typical approaches and lessons learned from their implementation, as well as challenges and possible solutions; and
- (iv) a proposal for options for future work of the Commission on ABS for the different subsectors of GRFA.<sup>13</sup>

The document *Access and benefit-sharing for genetic resources for food and agriculture: Review and outlook (CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/5)* responds to the above requests. Inputs by Members on the above deliverables are contained in the document *Inputs by Members on access and benefit-sharing for genetic resources for food and agriculture (CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/Inf.13)*. The *Draft survey of access and benefit-sharing country measures accommodating the distinctive features of genetic resources for food and agriculture and associated traditional knowledge* is made available as document **CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/Inf.12**.

## **7. "Digital sequence information" on aquatic genetic resources for food and agriculture**

The Commission agreed that there is a need for further review of "Digital sequence information" ("DSI") on GRFA. It agreed to address, at its next session, the innovation opportunities "DSI" on GRFA offers, the challenges of capacity to access and make use of it and its implications for the conservation and sustainable use of GRFA and the sharing of benefits derived from GRFA. It requested its Working Groups to consider these matters with regard to existing subsector-specific

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<sup>11</sup> CGRFA/WG-AqGR-2/18/Report, paragraph 28.

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.fao.org/aquatic-genetic-resources/activities/registry/en/>

<sup>13</sup> CGRFA-17/19/Report, paragraph 19.

examples related to conservation, sustainable use and development of genetic resources, food security and nutrition, food safety, and efforts to combat crop and animal pests and diseases.<sup>14</sup>

In response to the Commission's request, document "*Digital sequence information*" on genetic resources for food and agriculture: *Innovation opportunities, challenges and implications* (CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/6) reviews the innovation opportunities "DSI" on GRFA offers and identifies challenges associated with the capacity to access and make use of it and its implications for the conservation and sustainable use of GRFA and the sharing of benefits derived from GRFA. The Working Group is invited to provide guidance with regard to future work on "DSI".

## **8. The role of aquatic genetic resources for food and agriculture in mitigation of and adaptation to climate change**

The Commission requested FAO to prepare a scoping study on the role of GRFA in adaptation to and mitigation of climate change, including knowledge gaps, taking into account the special reports on terrestrial and marine systems by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and other available relevant sources, including examples from different regions and subsectors. The Commission requested its Working Groups to review the study and, if a global assessment of the role of GRFA is considered pertinent, to provide guidance to the Commission on its preparation.<sup>15</sup>

In response to the Commission's request, the Secretariat updated, in collaboration with relevant units of FAO and partners, the study *Coping with climate change – The roles of genetic resources for food and agriculture*,<sup>16</sup> prepared in 2015 on the basis of thematic studies commissioned by the Secretariat in preparation of the Commission's Thirteenth Regular Session in 2013.<sup>17</sup> The updated study *The role of genetic resources for food and agriculture in climate change adaptation and mitigation* (CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/Inf.15) has been prepared for review by the Working Groups.

In addition, the Commission requested the Secretariat to prepare a draft work plan, including for the preparation of a global country-driven assessment, for review by its Working Groups at their next sessions.<sup>18</sup> The draft work plan can be found in document *Climate change and genetic resources for food and agriculture* (CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/7). The document *FAO activities on climate change* (CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/Inf.14) gives an overview of FAO activities on climate change, in the context of the FAO Strategy on Climate Change.<sup>19</sup>

## **9. Review of the work on biotechnologies for the conservation and sustainable use of aquatic genetic resources for food and agriculture**

The Commission's MYPOW foresees for the next session a review of the work on biotechnologies for the conservation and sustainable use of GRFA.<sup>20</sup>

In response to the Commission's request, the Secretariat updated the document *Application and integration of biotechnologies for the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources for food and agriculture*,<sup>21</sup> that was provided to the Commission's Fifteenth Regular Session. The document *Review of the work on biotechnologies for the sustainable use and conservation of genetic resources for food and agriculture* (CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/8) summarizes FAO's technical activities specifically related to biotechnology and reviews relevant work of FAO and the Commission's Working Groups on the application and integration of biotechnologies for the conservation and sustainable utilization of GRFA, for review by the Working Groups. The reporting period spans from July 2014 to October 2020 and thus comprises the period of the last six years that was not covered by the previous report.

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<sup>14</sup> CGRFA-17/19/Report, paragraph 23.

<sup>15</sup> CGRFA-17/19/Report, paragraph 29.

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i3866e.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> See Background Study Papers Nos. 53–57.

<sup>18</sup> CGRFA-17/19/Report, paragraph 30.

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.fao.org/3/i7175en/I7175EN.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> CGRFA-17/19/Report, *Appendix F*, Annex 1.

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.fao.org/3/mm468e/mm468e.pdf>

Technical developments are reported in document *Recent developments in biotechnologies relevant to the characterization, sustainable use and conservation of genetic resources for food and agriculture* (CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/Inf.16).

#### **10. Options for the organization of the Commission's future intersessional work**

The Commission requested its Secretary to prepare an options paper setting out different options (and their financial implications) for the future organization of the Commission's intersessional work, for consideration by the Working Groups and the Commission at their next sessions,<sup>22</sup> to:

- (i) address in a coherent, integrated and consistent way, biodiversity for food and agriculture, including micro-organism and invertebrate genetic resources; and
- (ii) consider how to enhance coordination and communication among the Commission's Working Groups, to raise awareness on subsectoral issues and strengthen coherence on cross-sectoral matters to effectively address the Commission's mission and goals.<sup>23</sup>

The document *Possible re-organization of the Commission's future intersessional work* (CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/9) presents an overview of options for consideration by the Working Group.

#### **11. Other business**

#### **12. Adoption of the Report**

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<sup>22</sup> CGRFA-17/19/Report, paragraph 97.

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.fao.org/cgrfa/overview/vision-mission/en/>

## Annex 1

## PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE.

Date and time	Agenda item	Title	Working document
<b>Tuesday, 1 June 2021</b>			
<b>Morning</b>			
10.00– 13.00	1	Election of Chair, Vice-Chair(s) and Rapporteur	
	2	Adoption of the agenda and timetable	CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/1 CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/1 Add.1
	3	<i>The State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture</i>	CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/2
	4	Draft <i>Global Plan of Action for Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture</i>	CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/3
<b>Tuesday, 1 June 2021</b>			
<b>Afternoon</b>			
14:30– 17:30	5	Development of a global information system for farmed types of aquatic genetic resources for food and agriculture	CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/4
<b>Wednesday, 2 June 2021</b>			
<b>Morning</b>			
10.00– 13.00	6	Access and benefit-sharing for aquatic genetic resources for food and agriculture	CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/5
	7	“Digital sequence information” on aquatic genetic resources for food and agriculture	CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/6
	8	The role of aquatic genetic resources for food and agriculture in mitigation of and adaptation to climate change	CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/7
<b>Wednesday, 2 June 2021</b>			
<b>Afternoon</b>			
14:30– 17:30	9	Review of the work on biotechnologies for the conservation and sustainable use of aquatic genetic resources for food and agriculture	CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/8
	10	Options for the organization of the Commission's future intersessional work	CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/9
	11	Other business	
<b>Thursday, 3 June 2021</b>			
<b>Afternoon</b>			
14:30– 17:30	12	Adoption of the Report	

## Annex 2

### **SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR A VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP ON AQUATIC GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE EXCEPTIONAL TO ITS THIRD SESSION.**

1. The procedures outlined in this document apply on an exceptional basis to the Third Session of the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (Working Group) in light of the measures to contain the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting virtual modality of this Session. The adoption of such procedures shall not create a precedent for the working methods of the Working Group or any other subsidiary body of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (Commission) for their future meetings.

### **FUNCTIONS OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP ON AQUATIC GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE**

2. The Working Group, as laid down in its Statutes, shall:
- review the situation and issues related to aquatic genetic resources for food and agriculture and advise and make recommendations to the Commission on these matters;
  - consider the progress made in implementing the Commission's programme of work on aquatic genetic resources for food and agriculture as well as any other matters referred to the Working Group by the Commission; and
  - report to the Commission on its activities.
3. In order for the Working Group to carry out this mandate, the Commission assigns specific tasks to the Working Group.
4. The virtual modality of the Third Session of the Working Group does not alter any of the functions of the Working Group outlined above.

### **CONDUCT OF SESSIONS**

5. All plenary meetings of the Third Session of the Working Group will be conducted through the **Zoom platform**. Members and observers of the Working Group will be granted equal accessibility and capability inside the Zoom platform, ensuring their ability to be seen, and to view who is in attendance in the virtual meeting, and to address the Working Group.
6. Participants may **request the floor** by using the 'raise hand' function in the Zoom platform. This will draw up a list of speakers that the Chairperson will use to call participants to take the floor.
7. The **Members of the Working Group** are listed in the document CGRFA/WG-AqGR-3/21/Inf.2.
8. **Simultaneous interpretation** in all six languages of the Organization will be provided during the Third Session of the Working Group.
9. Given the virtual modality of the Third Session of the Working Group and the need to streamline the proceedings to ensure sufficient time during the session to complete all agenda items, participants are encouraged to **limit interventions** to three minutes, and regional interventions to five minutes. Regional statements are particularly encouraged to maximize the efficiency of the proceedings.
10. To facilitate interpretation and reporting, all participants are requested to provide written copies of their statements to the Secretariat of the Group prior to the Third Session or as early as possible thereafter. Statements should be sent to: [ITWG-AQGR@fao.org](mailto:ITWG-AQGR@fao.org).

11. Participants may use the **chat function of the Zoom platform** for exchanging information. However, views that should be taken into account in the preparation of the meeting report need to be orally expressed during the session.

#### **AGENDA, TIMETABLE AND DOCUMENTATION**

12. All the **documents** for the session are prepared and made available as per established practice on the website of the Working Group.<sup>24</sup>

13. The **time zone applicable** to the Third Session of the Working Group will be Central European Time (UTC +1). This is the time zone of the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and the location of the Session as if it were held as a physical meeting.

14. The **meeting** of the Third Session of the Working Group will be scheduled from 10:00 to 13:00 hours and from 14:30 to 17:30 hours on days 1 and 2 of the session. On day 3, the afternoon session will run from 14:30 to 17:30 hours, unless it is decided otherwise.

15. The Chairperson of the Working Group may call for a **short break** of up to ten minutes at any time during the session.

16. All other **working methods** of the Working Group outlined in this Note, in relation to the agenda, timetable and documentation, will be applied to the Third Session of the Working Group in accordance with established practice.

#### **REPORTS AND RECORDS**

17. The draft meeting report will be prepared by the *Rapporteur* of the Working Group, circulated by email to all participants and made available on the webpage of the Working Group on day 3 at 13:30 hours. The Report will record the Working Group's consensus on the amended modalities for the session outlined in this Note.

18. All other working methods of the Working Group outlined in this Note, in relation to Reports and records of the session, will be applied to the Third Session of the Working Group in line with established practice.

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<sup>24</sup> <http://www.fao.org/fishery/nems/41297/en>