



منظمة الأغذية
والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

联合国
粮食及
农业组织

Food
and
Agriculture
Organization
of
the
United
Nations

Organisation
des
Nations
Unies
pour
l'alimentation
et
l'agriculture

Продовольственная и
сельскохозяйственная
организация
Объединенных
Наций

Organización
de las
Naciones
Unidas
para la
Agricultura
y la
Alimentación

EUROPEAN INLAND FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE ADVISORY COMMISSION

EIFAAC Management Committee and Technical and Scientific Committee Meeting 2023

Rome, Italy, 28-29 March 2023

Report on implementation of decisions made at EIFAAC 31

Introduction

1. The aim of this document is to report on the outcomes of two monitoring exercises in which the EIFAAC membership participated recently, being: 1) the 2023 Survey on the implementation of EIFAAC resolutions and recommendations, and 2) the 2022 questionnaire for monitoring the implementation of the 1995 FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

2023 Survey on the implementation of EIFAAC resolutions and recommendations

2. This survey was conducted by the Secretariat in January-February 2023 to collect information on the application and usefulness of EIFAAC resolutions, recommendations and related guidelines on inland fisheries and aquaculture for the Members of EIFAAC. By monitoring the implementation of the EIFAAC decisions it will be possible to judge whether the objectives of the various resolutions and recommendations are being met. This survey was also intended to provide a tool to EIFAAC Member countries to measure their own general progress towards regionally agreed resolutions, recommendations and related guidelines.
3. Similar monitoring surveys are common practice among regional fisheries bodies (RFBs) and regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) to monitor and support the implementation of their decisions on an annual or bi-annual base. The monitoring exercise can also help inland fisheries and aquaculture administrations of Member countries to address specific gaps in national level implementation of these resolutions, recommendations and guidelines.
4. The first monitoring survey was sent to the operational focal points of 27 EIFAAC members¹ on 23 January and a reminder was sent on 21 February. The survey was closed on 24 February. At closure 9 operational focal points had completed the survey. The secretariat appreciates that the operational focal points from Bosnia and Herzegovina,

¹ Eight members have not yet nominated their operational focal point for EIFAAC.

Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Lithuania and Romania completed the survey.

5. This survey served as a test, to identify challenges in its completion, and to inform the secretariat of improvements to be made to it before the 2024 survey. The 2024 survey would report to the 32nd session.
6. Some survey outcomes are the following;
 - a. On the question “Relevance of the EIFAAC resolutions and recommendations for your country” at least two-thirds of the respondents indicated for each of the Recommendations and Resolutions endorsed by EIFAAC 31 that these were relevant or highly relevant to the respective member. Even eighty-nine percent of the respondents indicated that Resolution EIFAAC31/2022/3 “On measures to support the protection of vulnerable and endangered fish species from unsustainable predation from cormorants” was relevant or highly relevant to the member.
 - b. On the application of the “EIFAC Code of Practice for Recreational Fisheries” nearly all respondents reported that their countries implement most of its articles or at least partially. Only two respondents noted that some of the articles of the Code were not implemented by them. It is noteworthy that seventy-eight percent of the respondents are partially implementing Articles 8 (Recreational fishing practices), 12 (Research), and 13 (Awareness, education and training), which indicates that there is still a lot to do support implementation of the Code in these areas.
 - c. On the implementation of Resolution EIFAAC31/2022/2 “On the Code of Conduct for Recreational Fisheries and Invasive Alien Species” the 9 respondents reported to:

Measure	Yes	Partially	No
1. Collect data on aquatic invasive alien species	44%	56%	%
2. Have established a National Monitoring Systems for Invasive Alien Species, in line with Regulation (EU) no. 1143/2014	22%	67%	11%
3. Support actions to reduce invasive alien fish populations, with a focus on those invasive alien fish species that are a threat to European Red List species	22%	67%	11%
4. Apply the 2014 European Code of Conduct on Recreational Fishing and Invasive Alien Species	33%	44%	22%

- d. On the implementation of Resolution EIFAAC31/2022/3 “On measures to support the protection of vulnerable and endangered fish species from unsustainable predation from cormorants” the 9 respondents reported to:

Measure	Yes	Partially	No
1. Take stock of the available research and analysis on cormorant predation	33%	33%	33%
2. Monitor the effects of various management measures in order to find solutions in protecting fish species, fisheries and aquaculture against cormorants	22%	44%	33%
3. Develop national management plans that reduce cormorant predation on protected fish species	11%	56%	33%

- e. On Resolution EIFAAC31/2022/4 On Small-scale Fisheries and Aquaculture the respondents reported that most of the countries did not implement the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquacultures (IYAFA 2022) at national level, and that only a small majority actively encourages the application of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines).

- f. The questions on the survey itself, to find out whether it would need to be adjusted, were answered by 7 operational focal points. The responses were:

Statements	Yes	Partially	No
1. The survey was easy to access and complete	71%	0%	29%
2. The survey questions were easy to understand	71%	14%	14%
3. The survey structure was clear	86%	0%	14%
4. The survey included the right questions	71%	14%	14%

2022 questionnaire for monitoring the implementation of the 1995 FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries

7. The following EIFAAC members (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, European Union, Iceland, Norway, Switzerland, Türkiye and the United Kingdom) responded to the 2022 questionnaire for monitoring the implementation of the 1995 FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. The European Union responded to the questionnaire on behalf of its Member States. In the following sections contain some aggregated responses from the EIFAAC membership, which can be compared with the global trend reported to the 35th session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI), which took place in September 2022. The global trends can be found [here](#).
8. The Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) is subdivided into themes, covering eight technical domains of the fisheries and aquaculture sectors. FAO members were invited to assign priority ratings to these domains. Fisheries management and aquaculture development continued to be ranked as top priorities, both at world-level as well as for the EIFAAC countries. Inland fisheries was also given top priority by three of the eight EIFAAC members that responded to the questionnaire.
9. On fisheries management plans, five of the eight EIFAAC members that responded indicated that they have identified at least one inland fisheries in their countries and have management plans in place. The EU DG Mare response was also that only one inland fisheries has been identified and that there is a management plan for inland fisheries that is being implemented. The EIFAAC secretariat has its doubts about this response.
10. On aquaculture development, seven of the eight EIFAAC member responses were positive on statements that they have policy, legal and institutional frameworks in place for responsible aquaculture development. Fifty percent of the eight EIFAAC member responses indicated that the government and producer organizations in their countries have adopted a code or instrument of best practices for aquaculture. This would indicate that further aquaculture best practice guidance could be useful for part of the EIFAAC membership.
11. The EU DG Mare responds to the CCRF monitoring questionnaire on behalf of its members. The member states are only allowed to respond individually on questions that relate to:
- Integrated coastal zone management
 - Conflicts between the fisheries sector and other sectors in coastal areas
 - The 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of The Sea, and
 - Whether a member state has received from FAO specific technical guidelines that support the implementation of the CCRF.
12. Twenty-six EIFAAC members responded to the question on technical guidelines in support of the CCRF implementation. Respectively 18 (69%), 14 (54%), 15 and 15 (58%) of the respondents indicated to have received the 1997 technical guidelines on aquaculture development ([access here](#)), the 1997 Technical Guidelines on Inland Fisheries ([access here](#)), the 1998 Technical guidelines on rehabilitation of inland waters for fisheries ([access here](#)) and the 2010 Technical guidelines on recreational fisheries

([access here](#)). These results indicate that in many EIFAAC member countries the FAO technical guidelines are not known among key stakeholders in inland fisheries and aquaculture.

Discussion

13. The responses to the 2023 Survey on the implementation of EIFAAC resolutions and recommendations show that some members are implementing EIFAAC decisions. The low response rate to the survey may have been caused by it being a test survey.
14. The responses on the survey format itself indicate that there were some problems encountered in the completion of the online survey. However, none of the respondents provided comments or suggestions for improving the survey. The secretariat recognizes that some operational focal points may have had challenges with the survey, because they may not have been aware all the documents concerned and/or are new to EIFAAC. The survey can be found in annex A.
15. The CCRF monitoring survey contains dozens of useful questions to analyse. However, the fact that the EU DG Mare responds on aquaculture and inland fisheries development and management matters to the CCRF monitoring survey makes this survey less useful for EIFAAC purposes. The information on the implementation of inland fisheries and aquaculture development and management measures and individual country specific sector characteristics are lost by applying this centralized (aggregated) approach.
16. The European Union has not been given the mandate by its member countries to manage inland fisheries and aquaculture in their respective countries, and the European Union DG Mare considers inland fisheries as a relatively low priority. However, it appears that the countries have authorized DG Mare to complete 90% of the CCRF monitoring questionnaire on their behalf. The reason for this centralized approach may be political, or to reduce workload for its members. Nevertheless, it may be useful for EIFAAC members to re-discuss the bi-annual CCRF monitoring questionnaire completion responsibilities with DG Mare.

Suggested action by the Meeting

17. The Meeting is invited to:
 - Discuss the level of implementation of the EIFAAC recommendations and resolutions and how implementation can be further promoted.
 - Discuss the format of the online EIFAAC monitoring survey used and propose amendments as necessary.
 - Note the low response rate (one-third of the membership) to the EIFAAC monitoring survey and suggest how to improve the response rate.
 - Note the limitations to use the CCRF monitoring questionnaire for analysing trends in application of international and national fisheries instruments, plans and guidelines on inland fisheries and aquaculture development and management.

2023 Survey on the Implementation of EIFAAC Resolutions and Recommendations

Name of respondent:

Country:

I. General information

Resolutions and recommendations		Rating 1= not very relevant 3 = relevant 5 = extremely relevant				
Relevance of the EIFAAC resolutions and recommendations for your country		1	2	3	4	5
1	Recommendation EIFAAC31/2022/1 On the Code of Practice for Recreational Fisheries					
2	Resolution EIFAAC31/2022/2 On the Code of Conduct for Recreational Fisheries and Invasive Alien Species					
3	Resolution EIFAAC31/2022/3 On measures to support the protection of vulnerable and endangered fish species from unsustainable predation from cormorants					
4	Resolution EIFAAC31/2022/4 On Small-scale Fisheries and Aquaculture					

1. Recommendation EIFAAC31/2022/1 On the Code of Practice for Recreational Fisheries

Does your country apply the “EIFAC Code of Practice for Recreational Fisheries” on the following subjects?	Yes	No	Partially
Article 4 – Objectives			
Article 5 – Environmental stewardship and ethics			
Article 6 – Policy and institutional frameworks			
Article 7 – Compliance and enforcement			
Article 8 – Recreational fishing practices			
Article 9 – Fish welfare			
Article 10 – Stakeholder interactions			
Article 11 – Management			
Article 12 – Research			
Article 13 – Awareness, education and training			

Does your country implement the following actions from recommendation EIFAAC31/2022/1 ?	Yes	No	Partially
1. Data collection on recreational fisheries			
2. Assessment of the recreational fisheries sector			
3. Assessment of the fish stocks used by recreational fishing			
4. Apply digital data collection systems and data poor assessment methodologies			

2. Resolution EIFAAC31/2022/2 On the Code of Conduct for Recreational Fisheries and Invasive Alien Species

Does your country implement the following actions from resolution EIFAAC31/2022/2?	Yes	No	Partially
1. Collect data on aquatic invasive alien species			
2. Have established a National Monitoring Systems for Invasive Alien Species, in line with Regulation (EU) no. 1143/2014			
3. Support actions to reduce invasive alien fish populations, with a focus on those invasive alien fish species that are a threat to European Red List species			
4. Apply the 2014 European Code of Conduct on Recreational Fishing and Invasive Alien Species			

3. Resolution EIFAAC31/2022/3 On measures to support the protection of vulnerable and endangered fish species from unsustainable predation from cormorants

Does your country implement the following actions from resolution EIFAAC31/2022/3?	Yes	No	Partially
1. Take stock of the available research and analysis on cormorant predation			
2. Monitor the effects of various management measures in order to find solutions in protecting fish species, fisheries and aquaculture against cormorants			
3. Develop national management plans that reduce cormorant predation on protected fish species			

4. Resolution EIFAAC31/2022/4 On Small-scale Fisheries and Aquaculture

Does your country implement the following actions from resolution EIFAAC31/2022/4?	Yes	No	Partially
1. Promoted the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquacultures (IYAFA 2022) at national level			
2. Encourage application of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines)			
3. Support small-scale inland fisheries and aquaculture businesses with EMFAF and national level crisis measures and funds, to			

facilitate business continuity and post-crisis rapid recovery of the sector.			
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5. Survey evaluation

Please provide your views on some statements to evaluate this monitoring survey	Yes	No	Partially
1. The survey was easy to access and complete			
2. The survey questions were easy to understand			
3. The survey structure was clear			
4. The survey included the right questions			

6. Additional observations on this implementation monitoring survey of EIFAAC decisions.

Please provide any additional information on the answers above, and any comments or suggestions for improving or changing this survey in this box.

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING!