

May 2003



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

Organización
de las
Naciones
Unidas
para la
Agricultura
y la
Alimentación

E

COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES

SUB-COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE

Second Session

Trondheim, Norway, 7-11 August 2003

PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING THE PROVISIONS OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR RESPONSIBLE FISHERIES (CCRF) RELEVANT TO AQUACULTURE AND CULTURE-BASED FISHERIES

SUMMARY

This paper provides an overview of recent efforts in monitoring and reporting on progress in implementing the CCRF provisions related to aquaculture, including culture-based fisheries. Particular emphasis is given to such efforts at the level of the Committee on Fisheries, as well as its sub-Committee on Aquaculture. Some initial findings on recent related reporting activities are presented, as a baseline for consideration and discussion, with a view to invite advice and guidance by the Sub-Committee, as well as to encourage collaboration among the Members of the Sub-Committee.

INTRODUCTION

1. FAO is required to monitor progress made in the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF). Article 4.2 of the CCRF assigns a major role to FAO in this regard:

“4.2 FAO, in accordance with its role within the United Nations system, will monitor the application and implementation of the Code and its effects on fisheries and the Secretariat will report accordingly to the Committee on Fisheries (COFI). All States, whether members or non-members of FAO, as well as relevant international organizations, whether governmental or non-governmental should actively cooperate with FAO in this work.”

For reasons of economy, this document is produced in a limited number of copies. Delegates and observers are kindly requested to bring it to the meetings and to refrain from asking for additional copies, unless strictly indispensable.
Most FAO meeting documents are available on Internet at www.fao.org

2. When adopting the CCRF in 1995, the Twenty-eighth Session of the FAO Conference called upon “*FAO to monitor and report on the implementation of the Code and its effects on fisheries, including action taken under other instruments and resolutions by UN organizations ...*”¹.

3. This paper provides an overview of FAO’s recent efforts in monitoring and reporting on progress in implementing the CCRF provisions related to aquaculture, including culture-based fisheries. Particular emphasis is given to such efforts at the level of the Committee on Fisheries as well as its Sub-Committee on Aquaculture. A number of documents are referred to as resource materials and some are made available as information papers, with a view to providing Members with the information necessary for awareness-raising, discussion and decision regarding the future of CCRF progress reporting to this Sub-Committee and to the Committee on Fisheries. Some initial findings on recent related reporting activities are presented, as a baseline for consideration and discussion, with a view to inviting advice and guidance from the Sub-Committee, as well as to encourage collaboration among the Members of the Sub-Committee.

CCRF PROGRESS REPORTING AT COFI

4. The Twenty-fifth Session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI), held in February 2003, discussed the Progress Report on the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and related International Plans of Action (Capacity, IUU Fishing, Seabirds and Sharks) and Making Monitoring, Control and Surveillance of Fishing Vessels more Effective. The Committee:

- i) **Recognized** the crucial importance of the Code of Conduct and its related IPOAs in promoting long-term sustainable development in fisheries and aquaculture.
- ii) **Urged** FAO to broaden and deepen its efforts to promote the implementation of the Code of Conduct and its IPOAs, building on positive past experience.
- iii) **Noted** the first analysis based on sixteen case studies of Code of Conduct implementation, allowing a more substantive analysis of the challenges being faced in its implementation.

5. There was strong consensus in COFI that aquaculture development should be undertaken in an environmentally sustainable manner in line with the CCRF and to ensure public health, food safety and quality. The Committee acknowledged that the expertise of FAO will be critical in developing science-based standards for the responsible development of aquaculture from culture to the finished products.

6. In following the decisions and recommendations by COFI, FAO’s Fisheries Department (FI) has recognized the strategic importance and priority of the recommended action of enhancing its efforts in support of the promotion and implementation of the CCRF. An integral part of these strategic actions is the monitoring of, and reporting on, progress made in the implementation of the CCRF. As part of these efforts, FI has been intensifying its work of improving the monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the CCRF.

7. In its regular report to COFI on progress in the implementation of the CCRF, FAO reports on: (i) action taken by FAO, (ii) action taken by FAO Members, (iii) responses from regional fishery bodies and international non-governmental organizations, and, in the most recent report, on findings resulting from country case studies. The information provided in these reports

¹ The full text of the relevant resolution of the Twenty-eighth Session of the FAO Conference called upon *FAO to monitor and report on the implementation of the Code and its effects on fisheries, including action taken under other instruments and resolutions by UN organizations and, in particular, the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly to give effect to the Conference on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks leading to the Agreement for the implementation of the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 Relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks.*

is supplied by the FAO Secretariat, FAO Members, regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) and international non-governmental organizations (INGOs). Information from FAO Members, RFBs and INGOs is collated and analysed on the basis of self-assessment questionnaires provided by FAO.

8. So far, three such reports have been prepared for the last three Sessions of COFI and published² (for the report prepared for the COFI session held in 2003 - COFI/2003/3 Rev.1, see COFI:AQ/II/2003/Inf.8), in addition to Summarized Extracts³ on the Status of Implementation of the CCRF (2003, 2001) and Regional Statistical Analysis⁴ of Responses by FAO Members to the 2002 Questionnaire on the CCRF (2003).

9. The Sub-Committee is provided with the three questionnaires distributed for reporting: (i) for FAO Members, (ii) for regional fisheries management organizations and (iii) for international non-governmental organizations for easy reference and perusal (see COFI:AQ/II/2003/Inf.9).

10. In comparison with the first two reports (COFI Twenty-third Session and COFI Twenty-fourth Session) the CCRF progress report to the Twenty-fifth Session of COFI (see COFI:AQ/II/2003/Inf.8; COFI/2003/3 Rev.1) contained significantly more details on responses received to the questionnaires. The summaries on replies received in 2000 and 2002 to questions regarding CCRF Article 9 Aquaculture Development are reproduced here for easy reference and comparison.

CCRF progress reporting on Aquaculture Development at the Twenty-fifth Session of COFI in 2003

(extract from COFI/2003/3 Rev.1; COFI:AQ/II/2003/Inf.8)

Action by FAO (paras. 5-16)

11. No specific event or activity on aquaculture undertaken by FAO of direct relevance to the implementation of the CCRF was reported for the period since the Twenty-fourth COFI Session, except for the publication of Technical Guidelines on Good Aquaculture Feed Manufacturing Practice⁵.

² FAO. December 2002 - COFI/2003/3Rev.1 prepared for COFI 25 – (COFI:AQ/II/2003/Inf.8)

<http://www.fao.org/DOCREP/MEETING/005/Y8370E.HTM>

FAO. December 2000 - COFI/2001/3 prepared for COFI 24.

<http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/003/X9187E.htm>

FAO. November 1999 - COFI/1999/3 prepared for COFI 23.

<http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/x0360e.htm>

³ FAO. 2003. Summarized Extracts on the Status of Implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (320 p.), prepared for COFI 25 (not numbered).

FAO. 2001. Summarized Extracts on the Status of Implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (163 p.), prepared for COFI 24 (not numbered).

⁴ FAO. 2003. Regional Statistical Analysis of Responses by FAO Members to the 2002 Questionnaire on the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. 26 p.

⁵ FAO, 2001. Aquaculture development. 1. Good aquaculture feed manufacturing practice. FAO Technical Guidelines for Responsible Fisheries. No. 5, Suppl. 1. Rome, FAO. 47p. - <http://www.fao.org/DOCREP/005/Y1453E/Y1453E00.HTM>

Action by FAO Members to implement the CCRF (paras. 31-37)

12. There were some differences by region in Members' responses concerning whether or not they had legal and institutional frameworks in place with which to promote responsible aquaculture development. On a regional basis, Asian, European and both North American Members tended to have higher proportions of legal and institutional frameworks than the other regions. Frameworks ranged from specific aquaculture legislation, dedicated sections of the fisheries act, to several pieces of legislation spread over different levels of government (e.g. state/provincial and national governments) and different government ministries. Some Members without frameworks indicated that it was their intention to develop them.

13. Members indicated that they have a total of 140 codes or instruments with which to promote responsible aquaculture; 53 by governments, 33 by producers, 18 by suppliers, 17 by manufacturers and 19 by others. Codes promoted by government and industry are the most numerous. Many of the codes involve practical policy guidance (administrative, legal and environmental) and best practices for aquaculture development, including, *inter alia*, standards and guidelines on fish culture and registries and accreditation of laboratories and qualified auditors that award certificates and quality labels and regulations concerning the establishment operations and disease prevention measures at fish farms.

14. Most reporting Members (about 78%) indicated that they have procedures available to undertake environmental assessments of aquaculture operations, as envisaged in the Code. Many Members reported that they monitor aquaculture operations (about 79%) while many Members also indicated that they have measures in place to minimize the harmful effects on the introduction of non-native species or genetically altered stocks used for aquaculture (about 75%). Some Members noted that they were progressively extending these procedures to cover all aquaculture operations. Some Members noted that these procedures were considered to be efficient and effective.

15. To enhance the effectiveness of procedures used to develop and monitor aquaculture, Members identified issues such as a lack of resources to support responsible aquacultural practices, training for farmers, skills-development for technicians to strengthen monitoring and the availability of reference documents and poor logistical support for extension work.

16. Many Members indicated that they were aware of the potential harmful effects resulting from the introduction of non-native species or genetically-altered stocks and that, as a consequence, they have measures to address these situations. Measures included the prohibition or strict control of exotic species and the propagation of non-native species, stringent quarantine facilities and the strengthening of the quality of brood stock and seeds.

17. To promote more responsible aquaculture, many Members reported that they are focusing attention on developing responsible policies and best practices backed by appropriate legislation, developing management plans, strict controls on the introduction of exotic species, training for artisanal production, creating awareness among stakeholders for responsible behaviour, farming of indigenous species, the promotion of farming practices appropriate to the socio-economic status of farmers, the promotion of integrated aquaculture-agriculture practices, implementing regulations against the use of chemicals that adversely impact on the industry and the environment, enhancing monitoring of operations, developing more environmentally-friendly technology, placing greater emphasis on extension, accreditation of hatcheries and the involvement of communities in management, strengthening aquaculture cooperatives, applied aquaculture research and strengthening monitoring control and surveillance (MCS).

18. In terms of technical assistance needs, many Members indicated that they would welcome assistance, especially in the areas of policy development, credit and management of aquaculture enterprises, disease and stock management, strengthened diagnostic laboratories and quarantine measures (including demonstration of new techniques and species introduction), improved statistical and methodology assessment, skills enhancement for field officers, improved risk

assessment, monitoring and enhanced research, training and extension, environmental impact assessment, and acquisition of materials to support aquaculture.

Aquaculture-related responses by regional fishery bodies (RFBs) and international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) (paras. 77-81)

19. No action on aquaculture was reported by regional bodies, primarily because the relevant questionnaire for RFBs does not actually contain any aquaculture-specific questions, since it is addressed to regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs).

20. Five INGOs replied to the questionnaire, two of which are particularly involved with aquaculture, the European Aquaculture Society (EAS) and the Global Aquaculture Alliance (GAA). Most responding INGOs indicated that many countries do not have adequate procedures to undertake environmental assessment and monitor aquaculture operations, and minimize the harmful effects on the introduction of non-native species of genetically altered stocks used for aquaculture. Among the proposed solutions are development of adequate policy frameworks, collaboration between national and international producers' organizations, introduction of a precautionary approach and enforcement including proper record keeping, certification and restriction of introduction of non-native species or genetically-altered stocks, promotion of research and so on. The INGOs indicated that they have taken concrete steps to assist in the implementation of the Code through technical publications such as the "Code of Practice for Responsible Shrimp Farming" by GAA, organizing consultations and conferences such as "Aquaculture Europe 2002" by EAS.

Case studies (paras 82-86)

21. As directed by COFI⁶, sixteen member countries responded to the request made by the Secretariat to undertake case studies on problems associated with the efficient implementation of the Code and its related International Plans of Actions (IPOAs). The general findings presented in this section of COFI/2003/3 Rev.1 (COFI:AQ/II/2003/Inf.8) may well apply to aquaculture, at least in part. However, it may also be that aquaculture-specific issues or findings have not been reported explicitly.

Constraints and suggested solutions identified by FAO Members (paras 87-88)

22. Many constraints and solutions, as described, are very general, and may or may not apply to the aquaculture development context in a given country.

CCRF progress reporting on aquaculture development to the Twenty-fourth Session of COFI in 2001 (extract from COFI/2001/3)

Action by FAO

23. In 2001, FAO reported on aquaculture-related action as follows: (i) the Consultation on the Application of Article 9 of the CCRF in the Mediterranean Region; (ii) the International Conference on Aquaculture in the Third Millennium; (iii) the Expert Consultation on the Development of an Aquatic Animal Diversity Information and Communication System; and (iv) the Expert Consultation on Good Management Practices and Good Legal and Institutional Arrangements for Sustainable Shrimp Culture.

Action by FAO Members to implement the CCRF

24. Some countries indicated that legal and institutional frameworks for the development of aquaculture are in place. Guidelines for best practices have been developed or are being developed in a few countries both by governments and producers. A limited number of countries have introduced measures on environmental impact assessment and together with risk management approach and the precautionary principle these are applied with regard (in particular)

⁶ Report of the Twenty-fourth Session of COFI, Rome, 26 February - 2 March 2001, paragraph 37.

to the introduction of non-native species, the use of genetically-altered stocks and the development of large size enterprises especially for shrimps. In many countries, however, there is a need to streamline the process to provide increased coherence and consistency, as well as minimize delays.

25. Many countries reported on measures to promote responsible aquaculture in support of rural communities, producer organizations and fish farmers. The measures include: providing extension and training services to fish farmers, conducting research and surveys, development of a separate code of practice for responsible aquaculture business, increased funding for environmental and biological scientific research, creation of special funds for aquaculture development, integration of aquaculture into existing farming practices, organization of fish farmers associations, and strict control of the introduction of exotic species.

Aquaculture-related responses by regional fishery bodies (RFBs) and international non-governmental organizations (INGOs)

26. The Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) reported on its efforts to regionalize the Articles of the Code that include an activity on aquaculture development. There were no other reports on action by regional bodies active in aquaculture. In 2000, responding INGOs had assessed that currently countries have inadequate procedures in place to monitor aquaculture operations and to minimize the harmful effects of the introduction of non-native species or genetically altered stocks for aquaculture. Furthermore, the Federation of European Aquaculture Producers (FEAP) and the World Conservation Union (IUCN) expressed the view that present procedures for environmental assessments are inadequate for aquaculture operations. Among the proposed solutions are stronger enforcement and monitoring efforts, restriction of cultured species to those that occur naturally in a given environment, and better procedures and models for environmental impact assessments.

CCRF PROGRESS REPORTING AT THE COFI SUB-COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE

27. The First Session of the Sub-Committee was provided with a Working Paper entitled "Towards Sustainable Aquaculture Development: Progress in the Implementation of Aquaculture-related Provisions of the CCRF"⁷ (COFI:AQ/I/2002/4). This paper made explicit reference to monitoring and reporting on progress in the implementation of the Code and noted that COFI in 2001 had agreed that more in-depth analysis of problems associated with the efficient implementation of the Code be carried out in future reporting on the application of the Code. This paper also reported on action by FAO, SEAFDEC, FEAP, the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific (NACA), and the Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection (GESAMP).

28. As stated in the report of its First Session (COFI/AQ/II/2003/Inf.5 – para 35), the Sub-Committee reiterated the importance of regular reporting on the implementation of the Code and requested that the Sub-Committee receive specific aquaculture reports from Members with a comprehensive status report prepared by FAO. Reporting should cover both progress reports by member countries, summarizing progress in implementing the Code at the national level, as well as comprehensive status reports prepared by FAO for member countries that provide information compilation, analysis and feedback, particularly from past experience. It was stressed that these latter serve to encourage countries, individuals and all stakeholders in adopting the Code and enacting relevant legislation and policies to ensure its proper functioning. The Sub-Committee supported the FAO initiative of developing a data bank of national codes and other useful material produced by organizations including INGOs to be made available to all member countries.

⁷ FAO. 2002. Towards Sustainable Aquaculture Development: Progress in the Implementation of Aquaculture-related Provisions of the CCRF (15 p.) COFI:AQ/I/2002/4 - <http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/004/Y3020E.htm>

29. Although requested by the Sub-Committee (COFI:AQ/II/2003/Inf.5 – para 35), the Secretariat could not prepare a detailed, comprehensive status report for member countries on the progress made in implementing the CCRF provisions on aquaculture, since it had not yet received any specific aquaculture progress reports from Members. It appears that there may be a need for a standardized annotated outline structure for such CCRF implementation progress reports on aquaculture to guide respondents on what and how to report on progress made.

30. The Secretariat continues its efforts to develop a data bank of national codes of practice and other useful material produced by organizations including INGOs, and has also started to compile aquaculture development policies and plans produced by aquaculture sector agencies or private sector associations.

INITIAL FINDINGS ON CCRF PROGRESS REPORTING ON AQUACULTURE

31. FAO's efforts of analysing and reporting on CCRF questionnaire responses from FAO Members, regional bodies and INGOs have been enhanced significantly, as can be seen in the most recent report (COFI/2003/3 Rev.1; COFI:AQ/II/2003/Inf.8). Reporting continues to show a legitimate and strong emphasis and focus on capture fisheries issues. This report also provides good insight on general advances made, on problems encountered and on solutions proposed with regard to promotion of responsible aquaculture development.

32. However, there is scope for expanding aquaculture-specific analysis and reporting. Regional bodies (FAO and non-FAO) active in aquaculture should be involved in CCRF reporting on aquaculture. The existing questionnaires addressed to INGOs should be sent to a wider number of INGOs and regional bodies active in aquaculture. Additional efforts may be undertaken by FAO regional fishery bodies to enhance dialogue and reporting on sustainable aquaculture development and related advances and problems associated with CCRF implementation.

33. In addition to enhancing response to the CCRF questionnaires, there may be scope, as recommended by the First Session of the Sub-Committee, for initiating and facilitating the preparation of (i) specific aquaculture progress reports by Members and (ii) the comprehensive status report by FAO.

34. Monitoring and reporting on progress in the implementation of the Code provides important opportunities for aquaculture development planning at national levels and for enhancing exchange and collaboration on aquaculture-specific themes, at various international levels including regional, bilateral and multilateral levels. Such collaboration should also be monitored by this Sub-Committee, particularly in view of the need for assistance to developing countries, as mandated by the Sub-Committee's Terms of Reference and Article 5 of the Code (Special Requirements of Developing Countries). Both COFI and this Sub-Committee have emphasized that the sharing of experience among countries in the implementation of the Code should be encouraged.

35. However, present reporting requirements on responsible aquaculture, as outlined in the CCRF questionnaires, are limited to a small range of issues, as seen in the questionnaires (see COFI:AQ/II/2003/Inf.9). At the same time, it must be recognized that many government administrations do not always have the staff and resources necessary to meet the numerous reporting requirements at national and international levels, both regional and global. Detailed information on sustainable aquaculture development issues often need to be invited from other agencies and academic institutions as well as from producers, suppliers, manufacturers and retailers involved in aquaculture.

36. In addition to present CCRF reporting requirements, there may well be additional reporting requests at international levels related to aquaculture practices and products, such as, for example, on issues related to aquatic animal health, quality and food safety of aquaculture products, environmental protection, conservation of biological diversity, protection of endangered species, international trade, etc. There are a number of international agreements, conventions and treaties, which require regular reporting by their signatories. It may be considered that the above-

mentioned CCRF aquaculture progress reports by Members could include and integrate such information, particularly since the CCRF, covering a wide range of issues, has been developed in conformity with other relevant international instruments. This would possibly help to identify related benefits and implications for sustainable aquaculture development at national, regional and global levels.

37. There appears to be a significant need for and an opportunity to develop an information-sharing system to support national and international reporting, monitoring, analysis and exchange of experiences in the implementation of aquaculture-related provisions of the CCRF. Such an information system could possibly be developed within the overall framework of FAO's Fisheries Global Information System (FIGIS).

SUGGESTED ACTION BY THE SUB-COMMITTEE

38. The Sub-Committee is invited:

- to consider and report on recent experiences and lessons learnt in the implementation of CCRF provisions related to aquaculture, including culture-based fisheries;
- to offer its advice on the role and function of FAO in addressing CCRF progress in monitoring and reporting, including the need for in-depth analysis of problems associated with the efficient implementation of the CCRF for the purposes of future reporting on the application of the CCRF in aquaculture, including culture-based fisheries; and
- to consider the establishment of intersessional technical task forces charged to address the implementation of selected CCRF issues of common interest to the Members of this Sub-Committee.

39. The Sub-Committee may wish to consider recommending specific action by the FAO Fisheries Department, FAO Members, and regional and international organizations concerned with sustainable aquaculture development and the implementation of the CCRF.