



REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR FISHERIES (RECOFI)

Fifth Session

Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 12 – 14 May 2009

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR RECOFI NATIONAL FOCAL POINTS

I. INTRODUCTION

RECOFI Members have already indicated their Focal Point or Contact Person for the Commission and for the Working Group on Aquaculture. The mandate and role, however, of the RECOFI National Focal Point (NFP) have not yet been specified and agreed upon. The purpose of this document is to highlight the important function played by the designated National Focal Point, to invite the Commission to approve the proposed terms of reference and, consequently, to request and encourage Members to nominate their National Focal Points at the fifth session of the RECOFI, or, if not, by 1 July 2009.

II. ROLE OF THE NATIONAL FOCAL POINT

The National Focal Point is appointed to support and facilitate the work of the Commission, especially during the inter-session period.

The National Focal Point carries out advisory and liaison functions with respect to the Commission's programme of work and its relevance to national fisheries policy. In addition, the NFP maintains contact with the Commission's Secretariat, focusing on the overall range of activities fundamental to the Commission's smooth and judicious operation. The country's focal points for aquaculture and fisheries management perform similar functions to their National Focal Point counterparts although with a tighter and more direct focus on their own issues.

To strengthen the Commission and to ensure its effective operation, RECOFI Members are invited to designate their National Focal Point.

III. NOMINATION OF THE NATIONAL FOCAL POINT

In accordance with the mandate of RECOFI, the National Focal Point is designated by the relevant national authority to promote and give advice on the Commission's activities to participate in the formulation and to contribute to the implementation of the Commission work plans.

Taking account of the responsibilities identified for the National Focal Points of the Commission, RECOFI Members are invited to nominate their National Focal Point. For fast and effective communication with the Secretariat and with Focal Points in other countries, it is essential that the nominees have access to electronic communication.

Members are invited to submit the names and full contact details (address, phone numbers, fax numbers and e-mail addresses) of their nominees to the Secretary of RECOFI (piero.mannini@fao.org) with a copy to the Technical Secretary of the Working Group on Fisheries Management (david.doulman@fao.org) and to the Technical Secretary of the Working Group on Aquaculture (alessandro.lovatelli@fao.org) at the fifth session of the RECOFI, or, if not, by 1 July 2009.

IV. DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

Draft terms of reference for the RECOFI National Focal Points have been prepared and are in Appendix 1. The Commission may find necessary it to revise these terms of reference from time-to-time to ensure that they remain relevant and current.

V. SUGGESTED ACTION BY THE COMMISSION

The Commission is invited to consider the draft terms of reference for the RECOFI National Focal Points, and when appropriate, to comment on them. Moreover, Members are invited to nominate their National Focal Points at the fifth session of the RECOFI or, if not, by 1 July 2009.

Appendix 1**Draft Terms of Reference for the National Focal Points**

In accordance with the mandate of the Regional Commission for Fisheries (RECOFI, henceforth referred to as the “Commission”), the National Focal Point is designated by the relevant national authority to promote and give advice on the Commission's activities to participate in the formulation of the Commission’s work plans and to contribute to the implementation of those plans.

The National Focal Point shall have an advisory and liaison function with respect to the programme of work and to its relevance in the national policy of fisheries development and management. The National Focal Point is a high level, experienced fishery scientist/manager who has access to his/her country’s main fishery information. He/She will be:

- Kept in direct contact with the RECOFI Secretariat;
- Informed by the RECOFI Secretariat about the most important Commission activities planned and implemented at the regional level;
- Placed at the top of the RECOFI Secretariat mailing list and provided with all the technical output;
- Informed on all the activities carried out at national level.

The function of the National Focal Point is to participate in the overall Commission’s research and development programme. Specifically, the functions of the National Focal Point are:

- To advise the Commission about appropriate scientific research programmes, including possible annual revisions, within the limits of the available project budget;
- To review and discuss the annual work plans offering proposals for and planning of scientific training courses and seminars in the context of the RECOFI framework of activities;
- To assist the Commission, to make conclusions and recommendations, on the basis of the technical work conducted, for appropriate action in fisheries research and management;
- To support scientific liaison and coordination with relevant fisheries organizations or related projects and with appropriate institutions and interested scientists in the RECOFI member countries or outside the RECOFI region;
- To coordinate, at the national level, specific activities and initiatives of the Commission, and to provide all the necessary support in the acquisition of data.
- To ensure effective flow of communications regarding the RECOFI activities to and from national scientific and institutional counterparts, and from relevant stakeholders.

The Commission may review these terms of reference from time to time and amend them as appropriate.