



Fisheries Department
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Global Partnerships for Responsible Fisheries

Fisheries, including aquaculture, provide a vital source of food, employment, recreation, trade and economic well-being for people throughout the world.*

However, **capture fisheries** production has reached a point of maximum potential in most of the world's fishing areas. Overcapacity in the global fishing fleet perpetuates conditions of heavy exploitation pressure and stock depletion, lowered economic return, and increased social hardship and conflict. Concern has also been expressed about adverse habitat and biodiversity impacts of fishing operations. While **aquaculture** production has grown dramatically in recent years, potential for further growth is constrained within many regions by serious problems of technology and financial resource access barriers, disease control, land use conflicts, and environmental degradation.

IMPLEMENTING THE CODE OF CONDUCT

It was against this background of growing risks to resource sustainability and food security that the **Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF)** was adopted by FAO member countries (FAO Conference, 31 October 1995). Together with its **Technical Guidelines**** for implementation, the CCRF contains a broad set of voluntary principles and methods for developing and managing fisheries and aquaculture. It has become widely recognized by governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as the global standard for setting out the aims of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture over the coming decades and as a basis for reviewing and revising national fisheries legislation.



In adopting the Code, FAO member countries requested the Organization to respond to the special requirements of developing countries through an Interregional Assistance Programme for its implementation.

****The FAO Fisheries Department has published the following Technical Guidelines in support of Code implementation:**

- No.1 Fishing operations**
- No.1, Suppl.1 Vessel monitoring systems**
- No.2 Precautionary approach to capture fisheries and species introductions**
- No.3 Integration of fisheries into coastal area management**
- No.4 Fisheries management**
- No.4, Suppl.1 Conservation and management of sharks**
- Suppl.2 Ecosystem approach to fisheries**
- No.5 Aquaculture development**
- No.6 Inland fisheries**
- No.7 Responsible fish utilization**
- No.8 Indicators for sustainable development of marine capture fisheries**
- No.9 IPOA - IUU Fishing**

Other technical guidelines are under preparation.

* Marine capture fisheries account for about 64 percent of the global fish production (an estimated 129 million tonnes in 2001), inland capture fisheries for about 7 percent, and aquaculture for about 29 percent. In many parts of the developing world, fish represent the single most important source of animal protein. Employment in capture fisheries, aquaculture, and the post-harvest sectors combined provides a source of livelihood for over 100 million people around the world. International trade in fisheries commodities is valued at over US\$ 55 billion.

FISHCODE: Global Partnerships for Responsible Fisheries

The FAO Fisheries Department, noting the especially difficult challenges faced by less developed countries in putting responsible fisheries measures into effect, established 'FishCode' as a special programme of global partnerships to promote responsible fisheries.

The overall FishCode objective is to raise the economic, social and nutritional benefits obtained from fisheries, especially by coastal fishing communities, through the adoption of responsible fisheries management and resource conservation policies and practices.

RESOURCES AND FUNDING

FAO Fisheries Department staff devote substantial efforts to normative activities to promote the full implementation of the Code of Conduct. In many instances, however, critical constraints to responsible fisheries in less developed countries cannot be effectively addressed because Regular Programme resources are limited. FishCode, as a special programme funded through donor Trust Fund contributions, is intended to fill this gap. The resulting partnership of regular and extra-budgetary resources allows an array of FishCode component projects to draw upon the FAO's multi-disciplinary technical expertise and worldwide experience. All component projects deal with critical issues and problem areas identified by the Fisheries Department as priorities requiring immediate attention in order for strategic Code of Conduct aims to be achieved.

FishCode entails two types of component projects. **Global components** are based at FAO Headquarters in Rome, have wide geographical scope, and focus on normative issues related to specific articles of the Code of Conduct. **Regional components** are field-based and deal with aspects of Code implementation within specific geographical areas. Examples include ADRIAMED (Scientific Cooperation to Support Responsible Fisheries in the Adriatic Sea, funded by Italy) and SFLP (the Sustainable Fisheries Livelihoods Programme funded by the United Kingdom and covering 25 States in the West Africa region). The FishCode Management Unit, established in the FAO Fishery Policy and Planning Division, links and coordinates both global and regional component projects.

