

April 2000

E



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

TWENTY-SIXTH FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Merida, Mexico, 10 – 14 April 2000

REPORT OF THE EIGHTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION FOR INLAND FISHERIES OF LATIN AMERICA (COPESCAL)

INTRODUCTION

1. COPESCAL was established at the Seventieth Session of the FAO Council (1976, Resolution 4/70) under Article VI-1 of the Constitution of FAO. Its objectives are to promote, coordinate and support fisheries research and development programmes leading to the rational utilization of inland fishery resources; to assist Member Governments in establishing the scientific basis for regulatory measures; to assist in the development of aquaculture, recreational fishing, and the catching, marketing and utilization of fish; to encourage education and training; to assist member countries in formulating national and regional programmes to help achieve the objectives set out in the Statutes. Its current members include: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay and Venezuela.

2. The Commission has promoted studies on the management and conservation of living aquatic resources in the Amazon and River Plate basins and impounded waters of the region; has examined and recommended measures to improve the socio-economic conditions of small-scale fisheries and rural aquaculture, and has promoted cooperative research activities and training in specialized areas, such as the development of rural aquaculture; prevention and control of disease and management of food and nutrition in aquaculture; handling, processing, marketing and quality control of fishery products; fisheries legislation; planning and management of aquaculture and application of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries in inland fisheries and aquaculture of the region. The results of the Commission's work have been published in the *FAO Fisheries Technical Papers*, *COPESCAL Technical papers*, and *COPESCAL Occasional Papers*. The 8th Session of the Commission was held in Belem do Pará, Brazil, from 11 to 14 August 1998. The main decisions and recommendations resulting from this session are given below.

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.

3. Because of the importance that the member countries of the region attached to the fisheries sector when requesting that FAO establish the Commission for Inland Fisheries of Latin America, it was thought appropriate to make available to the FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean the recommendations and ideas that arose from the last session of the Commission.

MAIN DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EIGHTH SESSION OF COPESCAL

REGARDING DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SEVENTH SESSION AND INTER-SESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

For the attention of FAO

4. To continue through FAO providing technical assistance in fisheries legislation upon the request of interested countries and in selected matters relating to inland fisheries and aquaculture in the region.

For the attention of FAO and Governments

5. To promote the criterion of management of inland fishery resources by river basins, so as to cover ecological and production factors in an integrated manner.

6. To promote the formulation and implementation of management strategies that favour the decentralization of decision-making capacity for fisheries management and the transfer of appropriate resources to local administrative bodies.

7. To assign to fishers and fishing communities adequate rights over fisheries resources and support their efforts to organize themselves and derive greater benefits from their activities.

8. To promote the harmonization of commercial and recreational fishing activities, applying criteria to optimize social benefits while maximizing food security.

For the attention of FAO and Governments

9. To study the feasibility of formulating a regional project of support to the development and management of sports fisheries.

REGARDING APPLICATION OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR RESPONSIBLE FISHERIES***For the attention of Governments***

10. To take the necessary steps to improve institutional cooperation at national level to achieve an enabling environment for inland fisheries and promote the development of aquaculture.

For the attention of FAO and Governments

11. In the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, to pay particular attention to the issue of introductions and transfers, and the related transmission of disease.

12. To use the comparative advantages of COPESCAL to carry out training activities, workshops and seminars as part of the process of implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

REGARDING OPTIONS TO STRENGTHEN THE ROLE OF COPESCAL***For the attention of FAO***

13. To retain COPESCAL under Article VI of the FAO Constitution, as conditions do not exist in the region for the establishment of an independent body outside of FAO, nor is there sufficient reason to adopt the alternative of raising the Commission to Article XIV of the FAO Constitution.

14. To abolish the COPESCAL Working Parties on Fishery Resources, Aquaculture and Fishery Technology, and substitute these with a cooperation mechanism that would permit a more efficient and flexible use of available financial and human resources.

For the attention of Governments

15. To take steps, through delegates acting upon their respective governments and civil societies, to secure a greater commitment towards financial and material support to supplement the resources made available by FAO to carry out the activities of the Commission.

For the attention of FAO

16. To request that FAO maintain the same level of budget allocated for the work of COPESCAL.

17. To review the Commission's Statutes and Title to give more explicit coverage to aquaculture. Its revised title could be "Commission for Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture of Latin America and the Caribbean".
18. To submit the reports of COPESCAL to the FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean.

For the attention of FAO and Governments

19. To hold a workshop on the marketing of inland fishery and aquaculture products in Latin America and the Caribbean.
20. To carry out a study on the management of shared catfish resources in the Amazon basin. This study should lead to the formulation of a regional cooperation project.
21. To carry out a study on the genetic improvement of tilapia. The delegate of Costa Rica offered one of the country's aquaculture centres as the possible site of a tilapia gene bank.
22. To make use of existing capacity in Cuba, Chile and Mexico to promote training and technical assistance for the members of COPESCAL.
23. To hold a regional workshop in Mexico on aquaculture in small reservoirs.
24. To hold a regional workshop in Chile on rural aquaculture.
25. To hold a regional workshop on the reactivation of the Information System on Aquaculture for Latin America and the Caribbean.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS FOR THE CONFERENCE

26. The Conference is invited to:
 - deliberate the recommendations of the Eighth Session of COPESCAL,
 - express guidelines on whether COPESCAL should continue to function as such or whether it should be replaced by a more agile and flexible mechanism of cooperation, and,
 - in the case of opting for the continuation of COPESCAL, undertake to defray the costs of respective delegates attending the sessions of the Commission.