

Regional Training Course on Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries

The first Regional Training Course on the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) will be held in Chennai during September-October 2006. It will be organised by the BOBP-IGO.

Background

The Committee on Fisheries (COFI) at its 19th Session in March 1991 made an appeal for responsible, sustained fisheries. Subsequently, the International Conference on Responsible Fishing, held in 1992 in Cancun (Mexico), requested the FAO to prepare an international Code of Conduct to address the issue.

On October 31, 1995, more than 170 members of the FAO unanimously adopted the Code. It has been described as “one of the most important international instruments devised for management of our planet’s aquatic resources.”

Simply put, the Code consists of a collection of principles, goals and elements of action. It sets out principles and standards of behaviour for responsible practices in fisheries. The aim is to ensure effective conservation, management and development of living aquatic resources, with due respect for the ecosystem and biodiversity.

The Code is voluntary in nature. It is directed at members and non-members of the FAO, fishing entities, organisations of all kinds, fishers, people engaged in the processing and marketing of fish and fishery products – in short at everyone concerned with development and management of fisheries.

To support implementation of the Code, the FAO has brought out a

series of 12 booklets known as “FAO Technical Guidelines for Responsible Fisheries”. The booklets relate to fishing operations, the precautionary approach to capture fisheries, integration of fisheries into coastal area management, fisheries management, aquaculture development, inland fisheries, responsible fish utilization, indicators for sustainable development of marine capture fisheries, and implementation of the International Plans of Action to prevent illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing; conservation and management of sharks, management of fishing capacity; and reducing incidental catch of seabirds in longline fisheries.

Why is a course on CCRF needed?

Though the CCRF is more than 10 years old, understanding of it at the grassroots level is poor, awareness of its provisions at all levels is inadequate. Better understanding of the CCRF is essential for tackling the many problems that confront fisheries today – over-exploitation, pollution, etc.

The course can create a cadre of trained scientists and officials who are aware of the Code and its technical guidelines. These persons will constitute a resource pool to facilitate implementation of the Code in the region.

The course should ultimately influence community participation and grassroots action in promoting fisheries development and management. The Code will have a meaning only if fishers and fisher communities apply it from day to day, and fisheries officials and extensionists promote the Code in a pro-active manner. The ultimate triumph of CCRF also lies in its

localization, and that’s what the course is designed to bring about.

Course participants will be made conversant with the Technical Guidelines and the International Plans of Action. They will develop new capacities for planning, managing and evaluating fisheries programmes from the standpoint of effective implementation of the CCRF. Field-based experiences drawn from fisheries development programs will be included in the course.

Participants

Course participants will be from Government agencies, NGOs and research organisations interested in effective implementation of the Code. They could be fisheries extension workers, mid-level government officials, research scientists, donor agency representatives.

Duration

Fifteen days, including three to four days of field trips.

Expected outcomes

At the end of the course, the participants will have:

1. discussed and understood the Code and the technical guidelines better.
2. identified the advantages and constraints of various methods of the implementation of the Code through the analysis of case studies and field experiences; and
3. prepared an action plan to incorporate design, implementation and evaluation elements of CCRF implementation strategy into ongoing or planned activities, projects and programmes.

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