

UNIT FOR INTERNATIONAL FISHERIES AND AQUATIC RESEARCH

By

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The Support Unit for International Fisheries and Aquatic Research (SIFAR) was established as an autonomous project within the Fisheries Department at FAO, Rome, in March 1998 in response to previous recommendations of the Fishery Development Donor Consultation and The World Bank's *Study of International Fisheries Research- SIFR* (1992).

SIFAR facilitates the identification, articulation and funding of research proposals through working closely with developing country research systems. The unit acts as a link between these and collaborating donors, helping improve decision making on prioritising national and regional research needs. Through advocating greater integration of research with wider development objectives (especially effective and efficient management, sustainability and livelihoods), SIFAR aims to foster a broadening in the scope of fisheries and aquatic research. The specific objectives are:

- to promote the formulation within partner countries of demand-led research strategies and projects of direct application to the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, which meet policy and technical requirements, and which are in a format appropriate for funding by collaborating donors (see examples in table);
- to stimulate discussion and seek ways in which research-based information can more effectively inform decisions on resource use policy - an essential prerequisite being better selection and prioritisation of research activities, above all involving consultation with user and stakeholder groups.
- to establish an electronic knowledge management network (*oneFish Community Directory*) dedicated to the global fisheries and aquatic resources research community, achieving access by and contributions from partner countries and collaborating donors. This will promote discussion, networking, information sharing and improved priority setting in research. It will also enable collaborating donors to interact rapidly and efficiently with partner country organisations.

The first two objectives require an assessment of the ways in which stakeholders participate in decision making on the research agenda, and how outputs from research feedback to inform policy. The third objective will to some extent be informed by this assessment, and will play a role in assisting collaborating organisations disseminate research results and articulate research concepts and proposals.

SIFAR has a core budget of around US\$350,000 pa which is financed by a range of bilateral and multilateral donors including NORAD, CIDA, The World Bank, Iceland, UNDP, CIDA and DFID.

Web site: www.sifar.org
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Examples of Recent Research Concepts

Country/Region	Title
Orissa State, India	Action research to improve policy processes affecting poor fishing communities
Kerala State, India	Fishery management system prevailing in Kerala for coastal fishery and development of suitable management models for sustaining fish catch in coastal waters with special emphasis on trawl fishing
China	Epidemiology of <i>Clonorchis sinensis</i> infection in cultured and captured fish and resistance trial on metacercaria in fish in relation to cooking/eating habits in China
Gaza	Research and Development in the outer fishing zone, Gaza
Nepal 1	Pilot fisheries policy research and development to increase the benefits to poor farmers in hill regions (Phases 1 and 2)
Thailand	Research into incidence and control of foodborne trematode infections in freshwater fish - <i>Management and Food Studies Components</i>
Lao PDR	Research into incidence and control of foodborne trematode infections in freshwater fish - <i>Training and Epidemiology</i>
Vietnam	Research into incidence and control of foodborne trematode infections in freshwater fish - <i>Pond Management Component</i>
India/Korea/China	Research into incidence and control of foodborne trematode infections in freshwater fish - <i>Diagnostic Methods Component</i>
West Africa - Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission	Improving research-policy linkages
EU - Sub-Saharan Africa	Thematic network for policy development to enhance maternal nutrition and improve the health and cognitive function of the next generation in Africa (TN/INFANTS)
Nepal 2	Pilot research into aquatic resources management systems to increase and sustain benefits to hill farmers in Nepal (Phase 1 and 2)
Nepal 3	Pilot research into aquatic resources management systems to increase and sustain benefits to hill farmers in Nepal (Phase 1)
Thailand/Regional	Study on health and socio-economic impact of liver fluke infection in Thailand
Thailand/Laos	Freshwater fish consumption in Thailand and Laos helminthiasis control program
Thailand/China/Laos	Emerging trematode infections in captured and culture fish and their impact on human health
Danube Delta	Integrated management of wetlands
West Africa (sub-region) Mauritania; Senegal; Cabo Verde; Guinea; Guinea Bisau; Gambia	Improvement of Research/Policy/User Linkages in six countries of the sub-region