The Fisheries Management Knowledge Network (FIMNet)

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1. Selected issues

Fisheries management problems result in part from the following shortcomings:

- No holistic view of fisheries governance (quick fix syndrome)
- Abundant but dispersed, un-coordinated information
- No access to non-academic knowledge
- Difficult access to expert competence
- Difficult access to case studies and best practices
- Lack or ignorance of on-the-job training opportunities
- No "common" global advocacy channel for good governance
- Globally "unfair" access to strategic information

2. FIMNet purpose

What?
To increase the capacity to develop and manage fisheries in a responsible manner, providing:

- better access to strategic information
- enhanced interaction between actors
- educational and advocacy material
- training
- best practices
- bridges between competencies

For whom?
Fisheries management practitioners, policy-makers, scientific advisers, industry, fishers, NGOs, academia, students, teachers the media, and the public at large.
Beneficiaries and users groups will largely overlap

3. FIMNet services

- a holistic view of fisheries governance
- a global organiser of dispersed information
- an easily accessible public good library of quality information
- international instruments, scientific literature, case studies, grey literature, non academic knowledge, management-oriented projects
- a catalyster of implicit knowledge
- a "multiplex" forum (simultaneous e-rooms) on hot, emerging issues
- a network of bridges between globally available competencies
- a source of capacity-building
- a source of training material and a catalogue of opportunities
- an advocacy centre on fishery governance
- a repository of scientific views and success stories
- a reference site for the media
- a factory for "best practices"
- a connection between excellence websites

4. Development principles

- One-stop shop: on all aspects of fisheries governance and management theory and practice
- A web-based platform: using well tested FAO and other Information and Communication technology and resources: CDS and TKN
- Main functions: electronic library; interaction platform; training and education resource
- Main actors: scientists, academics, managers, NGOs, industry
- Knowledge: reliable; scientific; traditional; integrated; tested
- Value adding, through networking
- Address the digital divide: web-to-email
- Development model: International partnership
- No duplication of work: harvesting and re-use of information
- Assist collaborators (Editors): warnings, pre-identification of relevant material through ontology services, etc.
5. Information content

- Focused on fisheries governance, policy, and management
- Built around UNCLOS, CCDF, UNFSA, etc.
- Related Instruments: RIMSAR, CBD, CMS, CITES
- Connects to UNGA, ICP and other sources of policy
- Connects Regional Fisheries Bodies: (i) RFMOs and (ii) other RFBs
- Reflects principles, issues, solutions and experience
- Guidelines, manuals, case-studies, policies, legislation, management plans, projects documentation; best practices
- Training material (lectures, presentations, courses)
- Connects approaches to management: ESD, SLA, EAF, etc.
- All types of fisheries under all ecosystems and jurisdictions;
- Field-oriented, explicitly connected to normative foundations

6. Functionality

- Intuitive multilingual interface, simple to navigate
- Easy browsing through knowledge areas
- Fast search and retrieval (key words, full text)
- Distributed online inputting/editing (from your desk)
- Ability to post messages, send queries and collect opinions
- Organization of e-WGs, discussions and conferences
- Production of e-newsletters
- Facilities for distance learning, e-learning
- Off-line access via cd-roms or libraries PCs
- Web-to-Email communication
- Remote downloading and printing of knowledge
- Connection to other relevant information systems
- Assistance to editors
- Websites harvesting

Synergy within FAO

Knowledge-building and sharing is a cross-FAO priority offering opportunity for collaborative developments such as:

- Fisheries Global Information System (FIGIS)
- The Fisheries Resources Monitoring System (FIRMS)
- The FAO Fisheries Management Country profiles
- Ask FAO, Best Practices, TKNs and E-learning
- Portal development (OneFish, UN Atlas of the Oceans)
- FAO projects, e.g.:
  - SSFs integrated assessment & advice;
  - New Fridtjoff Nansen project;
  - NeON Overfishing Alert System;
  - UN University course development project;
  - FIMNET will underpin the FI Programme on conservation and management

Potential partners

- Fishery and academic institutions
- International: e.g. WFC, WB, FIRMS, SEAFDEC, ICES
- Regional: e.g. RFMOs, other RFBs, ROEIs
- National: e.g. NMFS, CSIRO, DFO, CEFAS, MRAG, IMR (Norway), IFM (Denmark), Crodt (Senegal), IMarpe (Peru), Terengannu (Malaysia), etc.

Implementation highlights

- Organize the first meeting of experts (Feb. 2007)
- Identify and budget FIMNET in the FAO PWB, MTP and SP
- Identify champions / leader in marine and inland areas
- Develop the CDS Portal (first half of 2007)
- Confirm partnerships: LOAs, MOUs etc.
- Populate the information resources (before end 2007)
- Establish/test the discussion groups (before end 2007)
- Officially launch the system (start of 2008)