

WHAT IS FIRMS' FUTURE?

National partners

In order for FIRMS to achieve full global coverage, the partnership must expand. By involving new partner contributors, particularly at national level, the effective gap between monitored and unmonitored resources and fisheries will be highlighted. This will assist policy-makers in identifying new areas for action and priority. It will also directly support both international and national plans of action for responsible fisheries, as well as bolstering actions needed to achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals.

Although the FIRMS Secretariat and system maintenance are part of the FAO Regular Programme, strengthening and expanding the partnership will require locating additional financial resources to fund necessary conferences, workshops and growing maintenance activities and to keep pace with technological improvements.

Currently, the FIRMS partnership is composed of regional fishery bodies, with FAO acting as Secretariat. This initial stage aims at consolidating a strong and trusted platform that will serve to expand at the national level. Observers have also contributed to formulating the original partnership agreement.



For more information, contact:

FIRMS Secretariat

Fisheries Department

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00100 Rome, Italy

e-mail: FIRMS-Secretariat@fao.org

<http://firms.fao.org>

FIRMS partners



Observers

International Whaling Commission (**IWC**)

Northeast Atlantic Fisheries Commission (**NEAFC**)

Secretariat of the Pacific Community (**SPC**)

**Pre-agreements have also been discussed
or formulated at national level with:**

National Marine Fisheries Service (**NMFS**) United States of America

Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (**MFMR**) Namibia

Fisheries Informatics Centre (**FICEN**) Viet Nam

Bureau of Rural Science (**BRS**) Australia

Fisheries and Ocean Canada (**DFO**) Canada

Institut français de recherche pour l'exploitation de la mer
(**IFREMER**) France



THE FISHERY RESOURCES MONITORING SYSTEM

WHAT IS FIRMS?

Partnership

The Fisheries Resources Monitoring System (FIRMS) is a partnership of intergovernmental fisheries organizations that share a wide range of high-quality information on the global monitoring and management of marine fishery resources. FIRMS aims to provide decision-makers with the best and most authoritative information possible in order to develop effective fisheries policies in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.



Fisheries are a fundamental source of food, livelihood and trade around the world. Careful stewardship is required to conserve and protect all aquatic resources for present and future generations. Today, the overall state of world fishery resources and their ecosystems is deteriorating – nearly half of all stocks are fully-exploited and producing catches close to their maximum sustainable limits. To reverse this trend and achieve sustainability of fisheries, action must be coordinated through a range of national, regional and international institutions and organizations. But effective action must be founded on reliable, relevant and up-to-date information on a global scale.

FIRMS was established in February 2004 to respond to the need for such fisheries information. It draws together a unified partnership of international organizations, regional fishery bodies and, in the future, national scientific institutes, collaborating within a formal agreement to report and share information on fisheries resources. To further the effectiveness of fisheries information management and dissemination, FIRMS also participates in the development and promotion of agreed global standards.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR RESPONSIBLE FISHERIES

The Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, adopted by FAO Members on 31 October 1995, contains a broad set of principles and methods for developing and managing fisheries and aquaculture. A voluntary, non-binding instrument, the Code is widely recognized as the global standard for setting out the aims of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture for the coming decades.

Within the framework of the Code, International Plans of Action on Seabirds, Sharks, Fishing Capacity and Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing, as well as the Strategy for Improving Information on Status and Trends in Capture Fisheries, have been developed as complementary instruments to promote further the objectives of responsible fisheries.

WHAT DOES FIRMS OFFER?

Inventory of stocks and fisheries

FIRMS works as a monitoring system based on an inventory of stocks and fisheries conducted under the general framework of the 2003 FAO Strategy for Improving Information on Status and Trends of Capture Fisheries (Strategy-STF) that has been endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly.

The inventory of marine resources monitored by FIRMS partners ranges from broad regional resources to more local resources or stocks. Each partner agrees to provide regularly relevant information for species and fishing areas for which they have primary responsibility. In this way, FIRMS contains a unique and comprehensive vision of the current state of the world's fisheries. As the partnership grows, so will the reporting on marine resources and fisheries of the global inventory conducted under Strategy-STF.

FIRMS Marine Resource Inventory

The inventory of marine resources monitored by FIRMS partners is organized in a hierarchical way from broad regional resources to more local resources or stocks. The tree below can be browsed or searched, while clicking on an item of the tree opens the corresponding marine resource fact sheet.

Marine Resources

hierarchy Resource by inventory search go collapse

- Marine resources - Atlantic Ocean and adjacent seas
 - Marine resources - Eastern Central Atlantic
 - Marine resources - Mediterranean and Black Sea
 - Marine resources - Mediterranean Sea
 - Demersal resources - Mediterranean Sea
 - Angler - Adriatic Sea
 - Blackbelly angler - Adriatic Sea
 - Blackspot seabream - Alboran Sea and Straits of Gibraltar
 - Blue whiting - Adriatic Sea
 - Blue whiting - North Tyrrhenian and Corsica
 - Common cuttlefish - Adriatic Sea
 - Common pandora - Adriatic Sea
 - Common sole - Adriatic Sea
 - Common spiny lobster - Corsica and Sardinia
 - Common spiny lobster - Sicily channel
 - Deepwater rose shrimp - Adriatic Sea
 - European hake - Mediterranean Sea
 - Horned octopus - Adriatic Sea
 - Musky octopus - Adriatic Sea
 - Norway lobster - Adriatic Sea
 - Norway lobster - North Tyrrhenian and Corsica
 - Pink spiny lobster - Sicily channel
 - Red mullet - Corsica and Sardinia

Information is presented in synthesized Fact Sheets and State of Resources Summaries. These include images, maps of geographical distribution, general biological and habitat characteristics, scientific assessment results, management considerations and status and trends statements. Every Fact Sheet is sourced with relevant links, thus allowing for transparent traceability, cites related references and, where available, mentions noteworthy observations from other sources.

HOW DOES FIRMS WORK?

Shared concepts and standards

To ensure consistency and a common understanding of the information shared, FIRMS has established core concepts, definitions and data modelling. Partners have agreed on protocols and standards in their reporting, which enhance the overall authoritative value and quality of the information shared in FIRMS.

Marine Resource Fact Sheet

State of stock and resources

Sardine - Northwest of Africa, 2002

Sardine (*Sardinia sardinella*) class: clupeoidae, order: clupeiformes

Owned by Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO/WHO)

This Fact Sheet has 1 Observation Sheet: FAD/WHO

Species: *Sardinia sardinella*

FAO Name(s): Cl - European sardine = Sardine, F1 - Sardine commune, Sp - Sardine variegata

Given Name: Sardine

Map: Area: Northwest of Africa

Area: 0.000000

Map Description: Considered as a stock in management with no

Map Scale: 1:00-Regional

Map Distribution: Shared - Transboundary

Map Group: Pelagic

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- Introduction
- Species
- FAO Name(s)
- Given Name
- Map
- Map Description
- Map Scale
- Map Distribution
- Map Group

FIRMS is powered by the Fisheries Global Information System (FIGIS) and benefits from its content management system and information exchange protocol features. Information provided by partners through streamlined protocols is published on the Web for general access. FIRMS provides partners with the appropriate tools and training to ensure controlled dissemination of high-quality and updated information.

Partners are committed to providing the best scientific evidence on the status and trends of fishery resources and fisheries, and to document the quality of their data contributions. For each collection of Fact Sheets, the FIRMS Data Quality Assurance statements describe the set of criteria applied, enabling users to evaluate FIRMS information content.

STRATEGY FOR IMPROVING INFORMATION ON STATUS AND TRENDS IN CAPTURE FISHERIES

Strategy-STF, adopted by FAO in 2003 and supporting the principles of the Code of Conduct, provides a framework, strategy and plan to improve the knowledge and understanding of fishery status and trends as a basis for fisheries policy-making and management for the conservation and sustainable use of aquatic resources.