

**Statement of the Alliance of International Agricultural Research Centres
of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
(CGIAR)**

Agenda item 7.2: Aquatic genetic resources

Wednesday, June 13, 2007

Mr Chair, on behalf of the fifteen IARCs of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), I thank you again for an opportunity to address this meeting.

We are delighted to at last see aquatic genetic resources included in the Multi-Year Program of Work of the FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. Document CGRFA-11/07/19.2 provides a brief summary of activities in relation to aquatic genetic resources undertaken by the CG Centres since 2004.

Mr Chair, the CG Centres believe that Working Document CGRFA-11/07/15.2, on which we were consulted, provides an excellent overview of the importance of fish and other aquatic organisms in a nutritionally balanced diet and in particular highlights the growing importance of aquaculture, which today provides almost 50% of all fish eaten. We fully agree with the analysis of the current status of fish genetic resources presented in this paper and its conclusions on the urgent need to improve policies and management in order to both conserve and develop these for the benefit of humankind.

We fully concur with the priorities set out in the document and the guidance sought from the Commission to improve information systems for fish genetic resources, to analyze existing policies for fish genetic resources and to further elaborate the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, while promoting research into the current status of resources for aquaculture and capture fisheries and capacities for their management. Guidance is also needed on sources of support on how to develop and implement policies for an intersectoral approach.

Mr Chair, we hope that our full endorsement of the high priority accorded to aquatic genetic resources at this, the 11th Regular Session of the CGRFA, and of the priorities highlighted in Working Document CGRFA-11/07/15.2 will be useful in the ongoing considerations of this Commission.