

## **4 th SIPAM ANNUAL MEETING**

*MALTA, 24 - 28 NOVEMBER, 1999*

### Introduction

The 4th Annual SIPAM Meeting took place in Malta from 24 to 28 November 1999, and was hosted by the National Aquaculture Centre of Malta, Marsaxlokk. Organisation of the meeting was the responsibility of the SIPAM Regional Centre in Tunisia, together with the National Aquaculture Centre of Malta. It was funded by F.A.O.

The participants were welcomed by Mr. NINU ZAMMITT, the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries of Malta, emphasising in this way the importance of SIPAM to Malta.

The list of participants is attached as Annex I.

### MATTERS DISCUSSED

The meeting was opened by a report on the SIPAM activities presented by the regional co-ordinator Mr. HADJ ALI SALEM. The major points of the report included:

- Administration and financial issues
- SIPAM expansion
- Participation at Mediterranean specialised meetings
- Data Management
- SIPAM Software
- Specialised databases
- Training
- SIPAM National Network Installation
- SIPAM Connection to Internet

Mr. HADJ ALI particularly stressed the importance of the first core of the SIPAM databases and the participation of the two new countries, Libya and Algeria, in the SIPAM Network. Two more countries, Bulgaria and Romania, expressed the wish to join, and they had already sent their representatives to the training course held in Zaragoza, Spain, 25-27 January 1999. The representatives from Bulgaria and Romania were not present at this meeting, as they had not yet filled an official request to join SIPAM. The complete report of Mr. HADJ ALI is attached to this document as Annex II.

The Cyprus National Coordinator raised the question of the legal issues related to SIPAM. The Regional Coordinator answered that the SIPAM legal framework would probably comprise, in addition to the agreement between FAO and the Tunisian Government for the establishment of SIPAM in Tunisia:

- An arrangement between the GFCM members regarding the operation and foundation of SIPAM
- The SIPAM data copyright.

Concerning the first issue, a draft document has been prepared and distributed to SIPAM members for their suggestions. Few comments were received.

The document will be presented to the next GFCM Aquaculture Committee for comments and then to the GFCM for adoption.

With regard to SIPAM data copyright, a document will be prepared jointly by FAO and the SIPAM Regional Centre for submission to the GFCM meeting for a decision on what data should be considered public domain and what should be considered confidential.

Following the report by Mr. HADJ ALI, Mrs. ELISA VASCONCELOS, national co-ordinator from Portugal, commented on the financial support of the SIPAM meeting (see to the first line of the second paragraph of the report in Annex II) and suggested that it should be rephrased. Discussion of the matter resulted in the official statement by the Portuguese

representative (attached to this document Annex III). The importance of financial support to the SIPAM network by FAO and the Tunisian government was also stressed by Mr. R. COPPOLA, (FAO) who commented on the inadequate budget allocation to the SIPAM network up till now. This issue would be presented to the GFCM at their forthcoming meeting.

#### Promotion of SIPAM

There was a general consensus that SIPAM should be made more widely known. Mr. COPPOLA suggested issuing a technical newsletter or targeted study based on the data gathered and included in the existing SIPAM databases as one way to improve the situation.

Mrs. VASCONCELOS handed out the SIPAM Brochure prepared in four languages (English, French, Portuguese and Spanish). It was decided to translate the SIPAM brochure into the four remaining languages. At this effect Mrs. VASCONCELOS promised to obtain the estimated cost quotations and report to us, in order to facilitate the countries involved seeking the necessary funds.

#### SIPAM-ASFA Agreement

This item was introduced by Mr. Richard Pepe (FAO). He described the Aquatic Sciences and Fisheries Abstracts (ASFA) system and bibliographic database and explained the responsibilities and entitlements involved in the SIPAM-ASFA Agreement.

The Meeting agreed that the SIPAM information system/network, as represented by the Regional SIPAM centre in Tunisia, would become an FAO ASFA collaborating Partner.

The responsibility of the Regional SIPAM centre (as an FAO ASFA collaborating Partner) would be:

- to prepare bibliographic references, for inclusion in the ASFA database, of the aquaculture literature published in the SIPAM participating countries, using the ASFA input methodology. In order to accomplish this task, the National SIPAM centres would send their aquaculture publications to the Regional SIPAM centre for processing:
- to carry out bibliographic searches of the ASFA database in response to requests from the National SIPAM centres to fulfil requests coming from national end users.
- The entitlement of the Regional SIPAM centre (as an FAO ASFA collaborating Partner) would be:
  - to receive, free of charge, the ASFA database on CD-ROM and the quarterly updates for as long as the Regional SIPAM centre submits bibliographic input for inclusion in the ASFA database.

#### Report on the Current Data Situation

Mr. BENDAG MUSTAPHA, the SIPAM Data Manager, presented a report on the status of the data in the system, and the present management. Attention was focused on the first core of high priority databases and the databases improperly filled in. He proposed the creation of a second core with five other databases. The full report by Mr. BENDAG is attached to this document as Annex IV.

Technical aspects: the meeting agreed on the following recommendations:

- 1) The SIPAM Databases on Export and Import is that this two databases would not be compulsory for EU members, because of UE legislation. Non-EU members would still fill in this database.
- 2) The field Production range on Page 1 of the Production Centres database would be upgraded with two different range scales, one for seed and the other for flesh production. The

upgrading was necessary to overcome the problem of the confidentiality of data as well as their accuracy.

- 3) The field Quantity on Page 2 of the Production Centres database would not be compulsory for the same reasons mentioned above in 1.
- 4) The field Date of birth in the National Expert database would also not be compulsory.
- 5) The list of countries in all SIPAM databases would be narrowed down to SIPAM relevant countries.
- 6) The list of new species in SIPAM databases would be updated regularly in agreement with the Regional Centre.
- 7) The fields Author and Title in the Bibliography database would be extended.
- 8) The entry to the field Author in the Bibliography database would be standardised.
- 9) The R&D database would be revised due to the problem of duplication of the Bibliography between the national and the regional database.
- 10) In order to enable the SIPAM operators to include graphics and tables in National Annual Reports, a possible link between the National Annual Report and Word View would be established.
- 11) A revision of the SIPAM software was proposed in order to enable the SIPAM operators to isolate particular modules in the database to facilitate and speed up the exchange of data.
- 12) The Fish Pathology database would not be further developed as SIPAM was waiting for the new structure being developed by the AAPQIS (Aquatic, Animals Pathogens and Quarantine Information System as prepared for Asia by FAO) and, although promised never released.

It was pointed out that the general problem was the partial incompleteness of the databases, and it was agreed that the final deadline for completion would be 31. December 1999, mainly referring to the first core.

With reference to the Fish Pathology database problem, it was decided that the final deadline would be the end of the year (Steering Committee). Should that deadline not be met, its further development or complete exclusion would be discussed again (Steering Committee). The same deadline (and procedure) applies to the marketing data expected to be supplied by SELAM.

#### SIPAM for Windows, version 2.2

The new version of SIPAM was demonstrated to the participants. The main points of the presentation were the transition from version 2.1 to the new version and the main changes. Upon some comments from the participants, small problems were clarified and discussed. Participants were given a brief outline on how to use the new version. The general conclusion was that the new version still needed some improvement, particularly with regards to the regional centre functionality.

#### AQUAFLOW and MARAQUA

AQUAFLOW was presented by Mr. DENIS LACROIX, who particularly stressed the need for better connection between this project and SIPAM, as well as the potential benefits from this interchange for SIPAM and AQUAFLOW.

Mrs. VASCONCELOS introduced the MARAQUA project in order to discuss on the attitude of SIPAM member countries in case they were approached by a similar project. In answer to this problem, Mr. COPPOLA stated the FAO policy in such cases ie., FAO via SIPAM could

provide the data depending on the status of the Institution or Project requesting them, and only upon an official request directly to FAO and/or SIPAM.

#### SIPAM Participation in AQUA 2000

The SIPAM members were informed of the decision to participate in the AQUACULTURE 2000 meeting in Nice, France, by Mr.LACROIX, the French SIPAM co-ordinator. Disappointment was expressed by some participants for not having been informed earlier. It was also remarked that no action had been taken so far to meet the deadlines for the abstract or the presentation itself (deadline for the abstract was 30 Nov 1999). The SIPAM coordinator confirmed that the Regional Centre had received an informal note, but there had been no official announcement to take part to the meeting. It was established further that Mr.BASURCO, the TECAM/SELAM co-ordinator, contacted by Mr.LACROIX had already accepted to present a paper on the Mediterranean Aquaculture Networks, including SIPAM but had not informed the SIPAM Regional Centre about such a decision. In order to overcome this impasse two task groups were appointed to complete the presentation. Completion of the short abstract was considered of primary importance and a tentative document was prepared during this meeting. The possibilities of presentation and preparations would be reviewed by the end of the year. After an assessment of the available finances the final assignment of the preparation (either to a hired an expert or to a SIPAM task force) would be decided. The table of the assignments is given in an attachment to this document as Annex V.

#### SIPAM on Internet

The SIPAM Homepage on the Internet was demonstrated by Mr. COPPOLA. It was stressed that that version was the start up release, and further and more detailed work had to be carried systematically. It was decided that further enhancement of the homepage is necessary.

#### Other

This annual meeting of SIPAM pointed out the need to contact the Spanish national SIPAM centre, as it was noted that this was the second meeting related to SIPAM without a Spanish representative. It was also pointed out that, apart from not participating, Spain had not been distributing the relevant data among the SIPAM member countries.

The representatives from the two new member countries were asked about their possibilities and the status of development of the SIPAM network in their countries.

It was also generally concluded that communications between the SIPAM member countries should be enhanced and that the exchange of data should be better.

Among problems faced by the SIPAM Network, it was also noted that there were still countries with problems in gathering the data, or quality control.

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