I. Introduction

1. The 16th Meeting of the Governing Council (GC16) was hosted by the Government of the Philippines through the Bureau of Fisheries and Agricultural Resources (BFAR). The meeting was held in conjunction with the FAO/NACA-STREAM Workshop on Regional Livelihoods Framework and Strategy, 17-19 March 2005. The joint opening ceremony of GC16 and the FAO/NACA STREAM Workshop “Connecting Policy and People” was held on 16 March 2005 at the Oasis Hotel in Los Banos. The welcoming speech was given by Director Malcolm I. Sarmiento Jr of BFAR. Keynote speaker was Hon. Arthur Yap Secretary for Agriculture of the Philippines. His speech was delivered by Hon. Cesar M. Drilon, Jr Undersecretary for Agriculture. Other welcoming speakers were the FAO Assistant Representative to the Philippines and the Director General of NACA who delivered the message of the Governing Council Chairman of 2004, Mr. A. Hettiarachchi of the Ministry of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, Sri Lanka. The opening speeches are appended as Annexes 1-4.

Governing Council Meeting

2. GC16 was held in the Oasis Hotel in Los Banos, 20-23 March 2005. Participants included delegates from Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, China, India, Indonesia, I.R. Iran, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; Directors of the Regional Lead Centres in China, India and Thailand; ACIAR, WorldFish Centre, PCAMRRD, SEAFDEC Aquaculture Department, UP Visayas, and Hungary’s Research Institute of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Irrigation (HAKI). The list of participants appears as Annex 5.

II. Procedural matters

3. The 16th Governing Council meeting was opened at 1700 hrs by the Chairman, Mr A. Hettiarachchi. He reiterated his welcome to the delegates. He acknowledged and welcomed Mr Chen Foo Yan, the Coordinator of NACA from 1980 to 1990 and adviser during 1991 to 1994, and thanked the Director General, Mr Pedro Bueno, for getting NACA to promptly respond to the tsunamis of 26 December 2004, and for his role in the formation of the Consortium to Restore Shattered Livelihoods and Communities in Tsunami-devastated Nations (CONSRN).

Election of the Chair and Vice Chair

4. Sri Lanka called for nominations for the new Chair and Vice-Chair. The Philippines was elected as Chair, nominated by Nepal and seconded by Bangladesh. Iran was elected as Vice-Chair, nominated by Vietnam and seconded by Pakistan.

5. The new Chair thanked, on behalf of the Philippines and the Council, the outgoing Chair, Mr Hettiarachchi for ably guiding NACA through the previous year. He
remarked that aquaculture was becoming increasingly important in the livelihoods of people in the Philippines, particularly in a time of declining wild catches, and noted the need to ensure that the development of aquaculture development takes place in a socially and environmentally responsible manner. He wished the Council a productive meeting.

Adoption of the Provisional Agenda and Provisional Annotated Agenda
6. On the motion of Bangladesh and seconding of Sri Lanka, the Council adopted the provisional annotated agenda without amendment. It appears as Annex 6.

III. Report of the Director General 2004

7. The presentation of the Report by the Director General and the Program Leaders was followed by an open discussion concerning the achievements of NACA during 2004.

8. Thailand considered the shrimp program useful and should be continued. In particular, the Consortium program on shrimp farming and the environment and Shrimp Media Monitoring were especially useful. Thailand suggested expanding the Shrimp Media Monitoring coverage of international trade that affect trade in shrimp from NACA member countries. International developments in food safety, processing, eco-labeling and environmental standards should be closely monitored and informed to NACA members.

9. Thailand informed that lake and reservoir fisheries in conjunction with stocking and aquaculture are important for people in rural areas of Thailand, with potential for improving the livelihoods of poor people. He requested NACA to develop indicators for monitoring the effectiveness of stock enhancement programs.

10. Thailand emphasized the importance of controlling shrimp diseases and that the aquatic animal health management program was important for the country. He suggested to strengthen research on the P. monodon Slow Growth Syndrome addressing the cause or causes. Slow Growth Syndrome is likely infectious, probably a new virus, which is currently found in 6 countries including Thailand.

11. On to the training activities of NACA, Thailand highlighted the importance of shrimp and marine fish training. He further suggested that the grouper hatchery training be expanded to include other commercially important marine species.

12. Iran emphasized the importance of collaboration in aquaculture development among NACA members. The NACA TCDC programs should be further strengthened to share knowledge on aquaculture in the region. New, valuable species are needed and the development of markets is very important, as is the need for disease prevention, regulation and documentation.

13. Indonesia said that certification of aquaculture products is of great interest to them and noted that many international agencies are promoting certification. He suggested that NACA should have a program for the development of a regional quality control system, based on HACCP and ISO 9000 principles that NACA members can follow. NACA is recommended to develop a certification system for Asian aquaculture products.
14. Australia thanked the Director General and secretariat staff for very clear presentations. Additionally it was noted that NACA is now very engaged in technical and policy issues and commended the NACA Secretariat staff for their dedication and hard work. Australia acknowledged the very timely and effective response to the tsunami by NACA and said Australia remains strongly committed to assist countries affected by the tsunami with primary focus on Indonesia. Finally they stated that they were committed to the NACA goals and aims and highlighted that the Network is in very good health.

15. Pakistan acknowledged the efforts by NACA in the rehabilitation of areas hit by the Indian Ocean tsunami. He noted that the progress presented to the GC was very pleasing, but emphasized that NACA efforts should be extended to countries that want to start mariculture and shrimp, including Pakistan and highlighted that in Sind and Baluchistan Provinces there was potential for shrimp and marine finfish. He highlighted that a Pakistan Government task force is formulating a new Fisheries Policy. NACA assistance was requested in development of the policy. Furthermore, disease monitoring is being complied within Pakistan and they stated that they would appreciate training of co-ordinators and farmers to teach disease control and monitoring. Finally, they requested that NACA extend new projects to more NACA members including Pakistan.

16. Cambodia appreciated the Philippine Government for hosting the 16th Governing Council meeting and NACA for its excellent achievements in 2004. The delegate noted that Cambodia had benefited a lot from NACA, especially the STREAM initiative. However, he noted that only 3 participants were involved in NACA training in 2004 and requested increased support for the training of Cambodian staff. The production of aquaculture in Cambodia is currently only 20,000t/y but government plans for a future increase to 100,000t/y. Support from NACA was requested to build capacity in Cambodia for aquaculture. Finally Cambodia informed the Council that they hope to pay their contribution to NACA this year, as approved by Government.

17. China commended the secretariat for their efficient co-ordination across many programs. It was suggested to focus on improving aquaculture production and sharing the successful experiences of other countries. For the year 2005, China proposed further technical exchanges on (i) Ecological aquaculture and environment protection; (ii) fish breeding and genetics; and (iii) fish disease and control and the development of early warning and surveillance systems. Finally, China offered to further extend its assistance to help tsunami affected countries to resume fisheries and aquaculture production.

18. Hong Kong China offered their sincere thanks to the NACA staff and supporting people for their achievements of last year. The delegate noted that the NACA emphasis on food safety and quality was very important and that they wished for further activities to support and promote marketing of aquaculture products. In addition they noted that marine fish hatchery development was important. Such training helps marine fish development in the region, and contributes to sustainable coral reef fish capture fisheries. There should be further training and research work on coral reef species.

19. Bangladesh thanked NACA and offered their congratulations on the outstanding activities, including training and study tours. They noted that they had benefited from NACA, especially through training in sustainable aquaculture. Eighty-one
Bangladeshi recipients had benefited from nine training courses. In 1994, Chinese carp from Yangsi were imported to Parbatipur and these grow very well. Correspondingly, they requested support to obtain more wild germ plasm and to receive training programs in broodstock management, HACCP quality control and safety measures for production processes.

20. Bangladesh stated that they are reporting the aquatic animal disease status to OIE and NACA under the regional aquatic animal disease reporting system. They also requested NACA support to implement the strategy for aquaculture development.

21. The Secretariat of the Pacific Community appreciated the livelihoods approach of STREAM as presented at the Sydney Indigenous aquaculture conference. Furthermore, they highlighted the value of a regional approach in being able to market the product.

IV. Report of the Regional Lead Centres and SPC

22. The Regional Lead Centres and SPC presented reports on their activities during 2004, plans for 2005 and opportunities for collaboration.

Regional Lead Centre, China (RLCC)

23. RLCC advised that 2004 was the first year operated under the newly reformed non-profit research system. A new record was set for international training with 59 participants from 24 countries attending the Integrated Fish Farming course. A total of 71 R&D projects were carried out, 27 of which were newly approved in 2004. The center received a total of five awards from the Ministry and local governments in recognition of several outstanding research projects, and in recognition of “Scientific Fish Farming Magazine”, which is the most widely circulated fish farming magazine in China. 100 research papers and reports were produced in 2004 and more than 40 were published in journals and magazines. Total investment on physical facility improvement amounted to around 1.3 million dollars, which included the construction of a new building for training purposes and a GMP workshop for manufacture of different lines of aquaculture chemicals. The “China Fisheries Information Net” website was restructured and upgraded. Broader cooperation is slated with HAKI, the WorldFish Centre and NACA in 2005.

Regional Lead Centre, India (RLCI)

24. RLCI reported that 54 research projects were underway. Highlights of 2004 included a selective breeding program for rohu that has delivered substantial growth rate improvements, development of immunostimulants, standardization of PCR-based diagnosis of nodavirus causing white muscle disease in Macrobrachium rosenbergii, development of several products with commercial on-farm application including formulated larval feed for magur, fish immunostimulants and herbal medicines for treating fish disease. The center has been heavily involved in training and technology transfer with 22 national training programmes involving 600 participants and two international training programmes conducted for participants from Sri Lanka and Egypt, as well as substantial on and off campus training programmes in fisheries and allied agriculture activities. Greater emphasis was placed on technology dissemination in the Northeastern region of India. Activities included demonstration of cage culture in reservoirs, establishment of a farmer’s helpline and demonstration of fry rearing and composite fish culture practices by women’s self-help groups. An aquarium, wet lab and field laboratory facilities were constructed.
Regional Lead Centre, Thailand

25. RLCT conducted 17 study tours in 2004 involving 110 people from nine countries and covering a broad range of activities including shrimp hatchery operation, fisheries extension systems, development of shrimp farm certification schemes, ornamental fish aquaculture development and fish product quality control and safety insurance. Training courses were also conducted in catfish breeding and culture, tissue culture of aquatic ornamental plants, tilapia hatchery operation and nursery, and giant freshwater prawn hatchery techniques. Research focus in 2004 included aquaculture technology, aquatic plants and ornamental fish aquaculture, feed quality control and development, aquatic animal health, stock enhancement including of endemic species for conservation purposes. The center implemented a development project to improve the livelihoods of mountain people. RLCT requested assistance to obtain trout eggs from NACA member countries such as Australia or Iran in order to develop their broodstock to support the project. RLCT also requested assistance to arrange a study tour on *Pangasius bocourti* culture.

Aquaculture Department of SEAFDEC (SEAFDEC AQD)/NACA Collaborating Centre

26. AQD and NACA collaboration goes back a long way to the early years of the NACA as a regional project of UNDP/FAO. It was designated as the Regional Lead Centre in the Philippines and hosted the Senior Aquaculturists Training Course that ran from 1981 to 1989 and graduated 137. It shared in the research, information and training activities of the Network. It continued to collaborate with NACA in various ways. AQD's recent policy directions have been shaped by a reduction in the Philippine Government's contribution to the Aquaculture Department; and a push from ASEAN for more regional collaboration in fisheries through the Fisheries Consultative Group mechanism. In response AQD has substantially downsized staff and intensified R&D activities supporting national programs of member countries through collaboration with other academic and research institutions. There has been a shift away from technical to policy-oriented activities, strengthening regional collaboration by tapping existing expertise and facilities of SEAFDEC-ASEAN member countries. Departmental programs currently include: Broodstock management and seed quality improvement of cultured species; development of responsible and sustainable aquaculture technologies; aquaculture biotechnologies; special activities including establishment of a ‘Fishworld Museum’ for environmental education, and collaborative programs with the Department of Agriculture, BFAR and others. Regional programs include: Promotion of mangrove-friendly shrimp aquaculture in Southeast Asia; regional fish disease program; development of diagnosis and preventive measures for Koi herpes virus; stock enhancement for threatened species of international concern; and integrated regional aquaculture program. SEAFDEC is also collaborating with NACA in post-tsunami rehabilitation activities, through CONSRN.

SPC

27. Highlights included an Animal Health and Quarantine Workshop, which made a series of recommendations in relation to improving animal health management and translocation issues, including closer liaison with NACA on health issues. Two model import risk analyses were commissioned on movement of indigenous strains of *Macrobrachium lar* and *M. rosenbergii* within the Pacific Community, which were also the subject of domestication research. Feed inputs are a common bottleneck for aquaculture in the Pacific and collaborative research has been initiated between Fiji and Papua New Guinea. Sea cucumber research is underway in New Caledonia by WorldFish Centre with emphasis on hatchery techniques, pond grow-out and
ecological factors for restocking. Larval pre-settlement and capture work is in progress targeting ornamental species. Regional marketing activities were focused on Kappaphycus seaweed and regional marketing assessments conducted for the marine ornamental trade and milkfish aquaculture. A model template was prepared for making national aquaculture development plans. Monitoring systems were developed for black pearl diseases in the Cook islands, economic modeling software for farm performance and training of extension officers and development banks. Nauru was highlighted as a special country focus due to an economic collapse that has reduced incomes to a poverty level and threatens food security. Rehabilitation activities will include aquaculture programs, focusing on rehabilitation of milkfish aquaculture, promotion of foodfish, and control of Mozambique tilapia.

V. Review of the NACA Workplan

1. STREAM

28. The Director General of NACA and STREAM Director highlighted the workplan in Annex 1 of WP2. In addition, reference was made to the Regional Workshop of FAO NACA STREAM on Aquatic resources and livelihoods: ‘Connecting Policy and People’, regarding the use of livelihoods approaches in fisheries and aquaculture in the region. A statement from the regional workshop about the value of livelihoods approaches and recommendations about the development and use of livelihoods approaches was distributed to GC members.

29. The DG Fisheries of Cambodia, Mr. Nao Thouk, reported on STREAM activities in Cambodia over recent years as well as the just concluded FAO/NACA STREAM Regional Workshop. The Fisheries Department DG highlighted how the government with STREAM support has been connecting policy to the people’s voice, especially addressing the livelihoods of poor fishers in the development of the Fisheries Law.

30. He said that the existing law in Cambodia had stipulated that family-scale fishing was just for cooking, not for selling, (i.e. only for consumption). Now after taking a livelihoods approach to understanding the needs of family-scale fishers within the law, we have redrafted the law to reflect that fishing should support the livelihoods of fisher families (some of whom are landless and trade fish for rice). We have also now drafted separate chapter and a new sub-decree on community fishery which empowers communities to set up and co-manage local fisheries. This reflects the usefulness of the NACA STREAM Initiative to influence policy development through the use of the livelihoods approaches.”

31. Dr Luu, Director of the Research Institute for Aquaculture Number 1, Vietnam, then went on to introduce to the GC Members the Statement of Understanding and Recommendations. He described the Statement as a very significant output of the FAO/NACA STREAM Workshop and urged the delegates to promote the recommendations in their countries and the Meeting to endorse the Statement.

32. The Chair asked members for comment. Australia congratulated the NACA Secretariat and the Director of the STREAM Initiative. Australia now has an improved understanding of the livelihoods approach and its application to the construction of development plans. Australia has already commenced discussions with the Director of the STREAM Initiative concerning the possibility of developing a pilot project within indigenous communities in Australia. Australia endorsed the statement of the STREAM workshop.
33. Thailand also endorsed the STREAM Workshop Statement and Recommendations, and made further comment on the work plan. The objective of the STREAM Initiative is extremely relevant to this region. It aims to relieve poverty and to ensure the initiatives future, Thailand suggested a clear mandate from the GC that also highlights capacity-building and institution-building and emphasized the need to sustain the initiative in the long run. The STREAM Initiative is very important in the countries where it is happening. Last week, Thailand gained a lot of information about the way that STREAM works and therefore, they were clear that it would be very useful for other members of NACA. They noted that it would be good if others could be invited as observers to the upcoming Regional Conference of STREAM in Vietnam.

34. Bangladesh offered their thanks to NACA for taking this initiative. They stated that they would like reference to the agreement by STREAM at GC15, to contribute to dialogue on the PRSP paper that would be sent to NACA as referred in last year’s report. They asked whether this communication had taken place. In a written reply to the Bangladesh delegate it was explained that the Stream Initiative and NACA had unfortunately received no further correspondence on the PRSP from Bangladesh.

35. Pakistan strongly appreciated the efforts of NACA and the Director of STREAM regarding the initiative. Regarding the recommendations to FAO and other International organizations (from the FAO NACA STREAM workshop) Pakistan strongly emphasized that this initiative should continue. Through the efforts of NACA and perhaps some other international donors support should be sought to further development of the initiative.

36. Pakistan strongly endorsed the approach of supporting strategy and policy development and wished success to the STREAM Initiative. Pakistan urged follow through of the TCP proposed to support Pakistan in this regard at the highest level. STREAM was requested to seek continued support to the communications hub manager in Pakistan as the hub had been established at a very late stage.

37. Vietnam endorsed the Statement and Recommendations, and offered their cooperation with all NACA members. In addition, they hoped that the STREAM would continue to support the SAPA Program. They requested continuous co-operation with STREAM to development priorities for poverty alleviation. (SAPA was explained as the strategy for Sustainable Aquaculture for Poverty alleviation whose formulation and early development was strongly supported by STREAM, NACA, FAO and other agencies).

38. The Chairman invited the Members to endorse the Statement and Recommendations. The Council unanimously endorsed the Statement and Recommendations and the 2005 workplan of the STREAM Initiative.

2. R and D workplan

39. The Secretariat introduced the outputs in the Working Paper 2, and other specific papers requiring endorsement.

- AP1: Highland Aquaculture Network to be expanded and a number of institutes to be formally included.
• AP2: To strengthen collaboration with Australia with reference to Mariculture and NACA to link with the Center for Innovation in Tropical Aquaculture (CITA).
• WP 3, 4, 8, 9 and 10 referring to the different elements within the workplan and specific areas for endorsement.

40. Iran made a presentation on the cold water aquaculture activities in their country, and proposed to include the Kalardasht centre as a leading center for coldwater aquaculture in the region. The Council thanked the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and endorsed the proposal to include the Kalardasht centre formally as an institute within the network. Iran further offered to host training courses on rainbow trout. Further sharing of experiences on rainbow trout culture between NACA members was suggested.

41. Australia made a short statement regarding the proposed Center for Innovation in Tropical Aquaculture (CITA). This paper was sponsored out of Australia. Key Research and Development institutes in Queensland are to combine their skills to provide R&D and education support to assist the development of aquaculture in tropical Australia and there is a significant opportunity to link that body to activities in Asia-Pacific. This was discussed at a meeting in Sydney in September, which agreed that NACA would be the best mechanism for linkage to the Asia-Pacific region, and that this would be formally requested of the 16th GCM. Australia said they would appreciate the support by and endorsement of other countries to this program.

42. The Governing Council endorsed the proposal to involve NACA as a partner in the proposed Center for Innovation in Tropical Aquaculture.

43. The Secretariat described the other work programs and the issues for consideration by the Governing Council. Regarding the different elements of the work program, the Governing Council made the following endorsements.

44. Aquatic alien invasive species and transboundary movements: The continued strengthening of its program of assistance to member governments in managing risks associated with aquatic alien species, including aquatic animal pathogens, within ASEAN, and more broadly within the Asia-Pacific region.

45. Shrimp aquaculture: To continue to expand the shrimp aquaculture program, develop a set of international principles for shrimp aquaculture, and develop the program to improve market access for aquaculture products produced using responsible farming practices.

46. Marine fish culture: To continue to expand the marine fish culture and mariculture networking as identified in the workplan; identify regional resource centers and formalize participation in the network; and develop the regional mariculture program and identify national focal points to assist in formulation of the program.

47. Inland fisheries and aquaculture: To continue to develop the inland fisheries and aquaculture programs.

48. Biodiversity and genetic conservation: To continue to develop the initiative on biodiversity and genetic conservation in relation to aquaculture and fisheries development in Asia as a special program of NACA.
49. Sri Lanka noted that in spite of all the efforts taken since 1996 with the support of FAO, banks and the industry itself, the problem of shrimp disease persists. Shrimp is the most important aquaculture industry in the country and Sri Lanka requested more support from NACA to overcome this problem.

50. The Secretariat responded by saying that in India groups of farmers, working with MPEDA, ICAR, NACA and ACIAR had substantially improved control of White Spot disease. The program had been very successful and that it was difficult to respond to all needs. It is possible to have better outcomes in the field, and therefore we would be happy to encourage the sharing of the experience in India in shrimp culture management.

51. Further to this FAO pointed out that another FAO project in Andra Pradesh was also addressing health management in shrimp aquaculture. There will be a Terminal Workshop in late June and South Asian partners would be brought to that workshop.

52. Vietnam requested assistance with mahseer aquaculture in the biodiversity and genetics program, and suggested further cooperation in the region in rainbow trout farming.

53. With regard to mariculture issues FAO suggested that the Shrimp and Environment Consortium, now five years old, become an international arena. The mariculture program could be a consortium between NACA, FAO and the Australian partners to bring more resources rather than a NACA regional program.

54. Iran announced that they can host any type of training course on Rainbow Trout and would be willing to share their knowledge.

55. Thailand offered their support for the proposed mariculture network and thanked Iran for their offer. They highlighted that mariculture was very important and would therefore like to participate. Thailand will inform NACA regarding this upon their return. They also supported the shrimp media news supported by NACA STREAM, highlighting that it was very important, and they would like to see it continue.

56. FAO announced that APFIC, ACIAR, NACA, FAO, MRC, SEAFDEC, WORLDFISH Center and a UNEP/GEF project were planning a collaborative meeting on trash fish, fisheries and aquaculture interactions. This would be hosted by MOFI, on 7 June in Ha Long, Vietnam.

57. Australia congratulated the NACA secretariat for acknowledging the suggestions of the NACA member countries. They endorsed the work plans under this heading. Australia was further developing the consortium concept for a mariculture initiative. On WP10, Australia will prepare a response on the Regional Resource Centers.

58. Australia specifically encouraged the planned workshop, scheduled for July on food safety and trade. Australia suggested that GC members and the NACA secretariat consider for the next GC meeting a dedicated session on ‘Markets and Trade’. Australia believed that this approach would assist in focusing thought processes to allow the Council to better advise the Secretariat on ways to strengthen the existing program. The GC and secretariat may also wish to consider the adoption of this approach for all future meetings. Australia endorsed the work plan put forward in the R and D co-operation.
59. The NACA Secretariat would be happy to further discuss the opportunity of developing the consortium concept outlined by FAO in para 53.

3. Aquatic Animal Health Program

60. The Secretariat noted that most elements were ongoing in the Aquatic Animal Health Program, but pointed out that some recommendations have come out of the Regional Advisory Group. With regards to WP5 attention was called to items:
   - No 11 – White tail disease (WTD) in *Macrobrachium rosenbergii*.
   - No 32 – Resources to draw on in aquatic animal disease emergencies.
   - (It was highlighted that both of these need the attention of the GC to examine funding mechanisms.)
   - No 33 – New initiative between FAO, DAFF and NACA.
   - No 35 – Applications from 6 resources centers be accepted by NACA, regarding animal health

61. Nepal asked to see some TOR for the National Coordinators to decide whether the coordinator should be a higher position or not. The opinion of the GC was sought in this matter. The Secretariat indicated that it would be desirable if national coordinators presently contributing to the regional reporting system be considered by OIE as the project national focal points.

62. The Council recognized the need to improve communication and cooperation between veterinary (CVOs) and fisheries. The Council recognized the need to improve communication and cooperation between veterinary (CVOs) and fisheries authorities (NCs) in the Asia-Pacific Region. FAO suggested that NACA consider inviting OIE to Governing Council meetings, rather than only its Fish Diseases Commission.

63. The Council was concerned about the emergence of *P. monodon* Slow Growth Syndrome as a serious problem in the region. Thailand urged caution in considering *P. monodon* Slow Growth Syndrome for inclusion in the regional list of diseases. Four counties experienced this kind of problem, but it was unknown whether it was caused by a pathogen or by some other factor. They highlighted that it was not really conclusive and therefore more detail and clarification was needed. The question was raised as to whether this was a disease in the region, whether there is a sufficient risk and whether *P. monodon* brood stock is the risk. The need to gain further understanding on the disease including its precise etiology was highlighted.

64. The GC endorsed the following decisions:
   - The aquatic animal health work plan for 2004-2005, follows the recommendations of 7th TAC meeting (Bali, Indonesia, July 2003) and third meeting of the Asia Regional Advisory Group on Aquatic Animal Health (Bangkok, Thailand, 23rd - 25th November 2004). The Council approved the proposed work plan for 2005.
   - The Council noted the report of the Third Meeting of the Asia Regional Advisory Group (AG) on Aquatic Animal Health including recent developments in the region's aquatic animal health status, notably, continued occurrence of KHV in Indonesia and Japan, occurrence of white tail disease in *M. rosenbergii* in China and India, spread of TSV in the region, impact of monodon slow growth syndrome, problems with VNN and grouper iridoviral diseases, isolation of SVC virus in China, abalone mortalities, and the need to address molluscan diseases.
• The Council endorsed the proposed revisions to the regional Aquatic Animal Disease List and the Quarterly Aquatic Animal Disease reporting form, specifically the addition of “White Tail Disease (MrNV and XSV)” and other changes to conform with OIE Aquatic Code.
• The Council noted the recommendations of the AG on aquatic animal disease control in Asia and endorsed the list of actions proposed by the third meeting of the Asia Regional Advisory Group on aquatic animal health as steps necessary to address emerging health issues in the region.
• The Council endorsed the recognition of 6 institutions as Regional Resource Centres, which were approved by the Third Asia Regional Advisory Group meeting.
• The Council endorsed the proposal to establish an emergency fund to deal with disease emergencies in the region.

4. Information and Communications

65. It was highlighted that much of the information activities are ongoing. The most important consideration was to be given to:
• Assisting partners to develop their own online digital publishing capacity through hands on training and technical advice.
• Pilot implementation of a more advanced digital library and developing guidelines on digital publishing as part of an FAO funded project. There is an opportunity to develop this as a shared, regional library that would be jointly owned and operated by collaborating organizations. Expressions of interest were called for from like-minded organizations interested in putting their publications online. Training could be provided if required.
• Strengthening content streams on the website – publishing more information more frequently.
• Providing support and publicity to tsunami relief activities – assisting in preparation of development proposals and maintaining the profile of tsunami rehabilitation issues after the mainstream media has lost interest.

66. NACA has developed a low cost and low-technical input web publishing model that can be sustained by organizations with limited financial and IT resources, and which allows publishing in non-English languages. Preliminary discussions are underway with RIA1 and NAFEC in Vietnam, NAQDA in Sri Lanka, and the Andaman Forum, Thailand, to train staff in the development and management of websites and digital publishing operations. Expressions of interest by other partners were welcomed, but it was stressed that this was an activity that required a long-term, continuing commitment on the part of participating organizations.

5. Education and Training

67. Thailand noted that it was necessary to highlight that the Education Consortium is an important one. It provides the opportunity for stakeholders, and therefore Thailand supports the initiative.

68. They highlighted that ‘virtual study tours’ could be key elements of training materials on the website so that people can access them without the need for an actual study tour. This was also supported by University of the Philippines in the Visayas (UPV).
69. Vietnam requested training courses for trainers on the implementation of Better Management Practices to assist with the uptake by their industry.

70. India (RLCI) suggested that given the current situation, the fisheries and aquaculture sectors prepare a disaster preparedness and resistance management program. This should be not only with regards to the business aspects but also associated with the environment.

6. SPIRIT

71. The DG sought approval for the following:
   a) SPIRIT remain as 5-years (in light of statements from national leaders that rehabilitation is likely to take 5 years).
   b) It be in line with CONSRN
   c) It be supported by the Coastal Livelihoods Rehabilitation Fund – therefore not supported by the NACA fund – the Council will be the board of trustees for the provision of transparency.
   d) It will be managed directly under office of the DG.

72. Australia commended the Secretariat for their timely response and highlighted that they were happy that Australia was able to support NACA by seconding Dr John Ackerman of the Bureau of Rural Sciences of DAFF.

73. The DG thanked the Australian Government for their assistance and China for its expression of strong support to the affected countries.

74. The council unanimously endorsed the proposals in relation to SPIRIT.

7. Meeting on Aquaculture of Ministers of the Asia and Pacific Regions

75. In introducing the proposed activity, the DG announced that there has been significant support for the program and felt that there was sufficient justification for the meeting. He informed the meeting there has been exploratory consultations with China as host to the meeting. Other useful activities suggested by the DG for the Ministerial Meeting was a GC meeting preceding it and possibly a Trade and Technology Show.

76. Sri Lanka endorsed the proposal, noting that it is good. Thailand stated that they would like to support this initiative and noted that Indonesia had proposed to hold a ministerial meeting this year. Cambodia offered their support while reminding the GC to learn from what happened at the CITES meeting in Bangkok in which the Minister of Natural Resources of Thailand was the only attendee at the ministerial level. They noted that ministers were very busy people so the GC would need to plan very well the arrangements for the Ministers’ participation.

77. Australia noted that the point raised by Cambodia was important. To arrange the attendance of the Ministers, a long lead time, and substantial effort by all parties, was needed to inform them so that they are able to fit it into their work plans. Additionally, Australia stated that they fully supported the initiative, but pointed out that it would lose its impact if participation by Ministers was limited.

78. Pakistan expressed its support. At this juncture, the Chairman enjoined everyone to join hands to make the meeting successful.
79. Iran expressed their approval, noting that it would be important to have the Ministers together. As highlighted earlier, the Asian region is big in aquaculture, working in partnership is one of the aims of NACA and so they would like to endorse it. As mentioned by other members it will certainly need the members to be coordinated in their efforts. They suggested that NACA widely disseminate the announcement. It also advised early decision on the date of the meeting.

80. SPC commended NACA for its’ ‘forward thinking’. They highlighted that this meeting represented a great opportunity, and great responsibility. They stated that they were willing to do any necessary ‘legwork’ that may be needed and therefore offered their support. They also pointed out that Ministers are busy and therefore the meeting would need to be specific about what the focus would be.

81. In the light of their being requested to host the Meeting, China suggested that there are some issues that need to be addressed. If the meeting is planned for the year 2005 it will not allow enough time for planning. The NACA secretariat will need to provide details regarding this meeting. The DG thanked China for the positive response and assured that the Secretariat will provide China with the needed information. He also explained that that the proposed activity is placed in the 2005 agenda so that the planning can start this year.

82. FAO highlighted that it has been five years since the Millennium Conference and that regional reviews would be produced by March 2006. The regional reviews, from 7 regions, will be presented at a workshop, at which point it will be one year since the tsunami. If the ministers came together they could look at progress on tsunami rehabilitation, which would provide an excellent opportunity to link these issues together. However, the cost will be high, but maybe this could be managed by linking these to other activities. Furthermore, FAO may be able to offer some assistance.

83. Vietnam advised the meeting that they would require more detail; otherwise it may be difficult to organize the Ministers to attend. They suggested that the time for the meeting should be postponed to 2007. Furthermore, they emphasized that clear and concise content was necessary; otherwise the Ministers may not be interested in attending.

84. The Chair advised NACA to develop a detailed program and assured of the Council’s cooperation to make the meeting a reality and a success. He reiterated that NACA needed to develop the details of the implementation plan; however, it can only start if the Council endorsed it.

85. The proposal was unanimously endorsed.
VI. Statements from partners and other organizations

WorldFish Center

86. Mrs Belen Acosta of The WorldFish Center said that WorldFish works in close partnership with developing country institutions and a number of international, regional and non-government organisations and therefore see NACA as an effective partner for the work that is ongoing in the Asia-Pacific region. WorldFish is also working alongside NACA and other regional & international organizations particularly in addressing issues from the perspective of aquaculture development and aquatic resources management initiatives that will help rebuild livelihoods of coastal communities devastated by the recent Tsunami. WorldFish Center is one of the key members of CONSRN, which is developing a regional vision and strategy for rehabilitation of the aquatic sector. To assist in this initiative, WorldFish Center seeks to work further with NACA and other organizations on the following areas: (i) detailed assessment of previous aquaculture sites in Indonesia and current situation through remote sensing/GIS maps of coastal areas and, (ii) strengthening of district level capacity in fisheries and aquaculture to support the local rehabilitation and restoration. Mrs Belen Acosta expressed her thanks to NACA for the invitation to attend its Governing Council meeting and looks forward to greater cooperation towards further development of aquaculture and fisheries in the Asia-Pacific region (Annex 7).

ACIAR

87. Mr Barney Smith of the ACIAR thanked the Council for the invitation to participate in this important meeting. He highlighted that the broader Asia-Pacific region is the primary focus for ACIAR activities, and NACA, with it’s regional mandate for aquaculture R&D and strong networking mode of operation, is a natural regional partner. This relationship is a productive and mutually rewarding one that delivers substantial benefits to NACA member countries. He stated that NACA was a key participant in five active ACIAR projects, ranging from studies of reservoir fisheries in Indonesia, to several related studies on shrimp disease control and management in India, Thailand, Indonesia, and Australia, to marine finfish hatchery and grow-out research in Indonesia. Mr Smith also highlighted that NACA’s central role in mediating what has developed into a broad and very productive cooperation between the matrix of interlinked projects on shrimp disease control and management. This is an excellent example of the value-adding role that NACA is playing in the region. He congratulated the Secretariat on its close working association with MMAF in Indonesia, and thanked the NACA Director General and his staff for the valuable advice and assistance so freely given over the years (Annex 8).

HAKI

88. Mr László Váradi of HAKI remarked that the EU membership of Hungary, since May 2004, offered new opportunities for HAKI to intensify its activities in the NACA region. In line with this, he noted that a new government fund has been made available in Hungary to assist aquaculture development in some developing countries, among them Laos and Vietnam. In addition, collaboration between the NACA Lead Center in China, FFRC, Wuxi and HAKI had been recently intensified under a bilateral Science and Technology program between China and Hungary. Mr Váradi also stated that HAKI is the co-ordinating institution of a newly established network
called Network of Aquaculture Centers in Central-Eastern Europe (NACEE). One of the objectives of NACEE is to develop inter-regional collaboration between other networks/organisations with special regard to NACA. Active discussions between leaders of NACA and NACEE has been started in order to explore the possibility of a formalised collaboration and joint activities (Annex 9).

**SEAFDEC**

89. Dr Rolando Platon, Chief of the SEAFDEC Aquaculture Department, highlighted that there was a general ASEAN push for more regional collaboration in fisheries through the Fisheries Consultative Group mechanism. As one response to this they planned to intensify research and development activities supporting national programs of their member countries through collaboration with other academic and research institutions in these countries. He noted that research, training, technology verification and information dissemination were key component activities in their regional program. One of which included the interface with NACA, through membership in the Advisory Group on Aquatic Animal Health. Furthermore, the post-tsunami rehabilitation activities, together with NACA and other institutions were an important focus at present. It was hoped that SEAFDEC was able to strengthen regional collaboration by tapping existing expertise and facilities of SEAFDEC-ASEAN member countries.

**FAO**

90. Dr Simon Funge-Smith, on behalf of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, stated that aquaculture production in 2003 reached 54.8 million tonnes and that the NACA member countries produced 86% of this total. Clearly, the NACA member countries are at the forefront of global aquaculture and therefore this sector required special attention. He noted that the NACA network continued to strengthen and streamline its program of work, which relied, as ever, on the effective interaction between the member countries and the NACA lead centres. He noted that FAO and NACA continue to work closely together on many issues, including the topic of aquatic animal health. In addition, he highlighted that both NACA and FAO have a strong mandate to develop and exchange information. With regard to the tragic impact of the Indian Ocean tsunami, Dr Funge-Smith offered his deep condolences to those who were affected by the disaster. He further noted that the almost immediate response to the disaster by NACA in drawing information together was an important step towards forming the CONSRN partnership.

91. He highlighted that FAO and NACA were looking to start mariculture programs, as there was increasing interest from members in this promising area. The development of guiding principles for the better management of shrimp aquaculture is a good example of the ongoing joint work of the FAO and NACA. Finally, he noted that the increasing information demands that arise from globalisation and trade challenge the capacity of systems to collect and analyse aquaculture information. Therefore, as part of an ongoing strategy to address this, FAO and NACA will collaborate on the improvement of status and trends reporting in aquaculture (Annex 10).

**UP Visayas**

92. Dr Romeo Fortes, Dean of the College of Fisheries and Oceanology of the UP Visayas thanked the Council for the opportunity to attend the meeting and assured the
Council of its support to both NACA members and through SEAFDEC AQD as a locally based partner. It particularly requested NACA to pursue the Aquaculture Education Consortium, which he said UP Visayas would strongly support and participate in.

**PCAMRRD**

93. Dr Castor de Jesus, Senior Staff of PCAMARRD, informed the council that it is the coordinating body for research in the fisheries sector within the Philippines, with involvement in setting research priorities, enumerating and monitoring the effectiveness of activities. It was noted that NACA is very strong in information dissemination. PCAMRRD offered to share its databases, which are concerned with aquatic and marine resource studies in the Philippines as well as some foreign literature.

**Oman**

94. Oman informed the Council that it is interested in joining NACA, possibly jointly with other states through the Gulf Cooperation Council. He requested that NACA provide information on membership, including the benefits, cost and procedure for joining, and undertook to pursue evaluation and necessary administrative processes on return.

**Indonesia**

95. Indonesia welcomed the opportunity to attend the Governing Council to discuss ongoing collaboration with NACA, particularly with regards to activities to rehabilitate tsunami affected communities.
VII. Administrative and financial matters (closed session)

Status of membership

96. The session was chaired by the Vice Chairman, the Representative of Iran.

97. Indonesia advised that the Foreign Ministry has submitted the membership papers to the Office of the President and expected that the government’s accession will be made very soon.

98. The Chair noted that the representative of Oman had requested, during the preceding session, advice and information on the benefits of NACA membership as well as the procedures and administrative requirements for applying for membership and requested the DG to further inform the Council on the matter. The DG briefed the Council on previous discussions with regards to Oman’s interest in becoming a member of NACA. Oman had first attended GC15 in Sri Lanka and had expressed interest in joining NACA, either as a member or jointly with other nations that were members of the Gulf Cooperation Council. NACA had sought legal advice from FAO, which advised that the NACA Agreement allowed only for membership by governments but allowed for the Gulf Cooperation Council to join as an Associate Member.

99. Australia expressed support for Oman to become a member of NACA. It was emphasized however that, while the benefits of NACA membership need to be set out for Oman to enable a decision on the merits of membership, the benefits to the Organization of Oman’s membership equally need consideration. Australia suggested an assessment of these mutual benefits.

100. The Governing Council instructed the Secretariat to provide written advice to Oman regarding the application procedure and providing an analysis of the benefits of membership both to NACA and to Oman in order to facilitate progression of this issue.

Audited financial reports of 2004

101. The Director General presented the audited financial reports for 2004, provided to the Council as Financial Paper 1 (auditor’s statement including Baht account), FP 2 (core budget for 2005) and FP 3 (Annual contributions). The audited NACA Rupee Account in India was being transmitted by ICAR.

102. Pakistan noted that assets in 2004 were lower by $143,655 than in 2003 and asked for clarification. The Director General explained that two project staff positions had been converted to core staff with the endorsement of GC 15, that payments by some governments were late, and that some project expenditures had yet to be reimbursed. Australia asked how the payments would alter the shortfall when they arrived. The DG expected the shortfall would be balanced when all receivables were paid.

103. It was also clarified that Thailand also contributes in cash to the salaries of local staff, payment of utilities and other expenses associated with hosting the Secretariat in addition to the annual contribution.

104. Myanmar advised that they transferred their membership contribution for 2004 on the 28th February 2005 to which the Chair thanked Myanmar.
105. The Director General also informed that salaries of professional staff had been frozen in 2004, and that the Council had urged the Secretariat to redress this issue.

106. Australia congratulated the Secretariat on their efforts to increase revenue streams into the organization.

107. Thailand moved for endorsement of the report but requested that the financial reports be circulated in advance of future Governing Council meetings. FAO suggested an annotated explanation accompany the financial reports in future, highlighting those issues brought forward in the Director General’s presentation.

108. The financial reports for 2004 were accepted by the Governing Council.

Proposed core budgetary requirement to support workplan 2005

109. The Director General presented the proposed core budgetary support to the workplan.

110. Hong Kong, China enquired if the proposed budget could be met from projected income, or if it would require a draw down on the accumulated surplus. The Director General explained that the projected income to support the work plan was based on the best year of contribution from governments (which was in 2001 when 84% of the expected contribution was received) plus a modest projected income from training and projects. It did include additional expected payments to be made from Iran and other governments. He said that income would be just about enough to fund the workplan.

111. Indonesia asked for clarification on source of funding to support tsunami rehabilitation activities. The Director General explained that this would be funded from other sources, and would not be funded from the core budget.

112. Thailand and India requested further information on the contractual budget line and the function of the additional staff. The Director General advised that one or two professionals were likely to be hired as part of the shrimp and health work. The cost would likely be absorbed by a project at a later date. Thailand noted that the proposed budgetary increase was modest, and endorsed the proposed budget for 2005. Australia, India, Nepal and Pakistan also moved for its endorsement. The Governing Council endorsed the proposed budget for 2005.

Membership contributions

113. The proposed level of contribution of Iran was discussed.

114. Iran requested clarification on the criteria for calculating the level of contribution from a member government. The Director General advised that in November 2004, Iran had requested to be invoiced by NACA for two years contribution. NACA had invoiced Iran for the maximum amount, as had been indicated in a letter prior to Iran’s membership.

115. Iran noted that $60,000 is not a large amount for any country to pay. However, he indicated that the criteria for determining contribution levels would have to be made very clear to the Iranian Government. Iran requested that a paper be developed to advise the government of the Council’s position on the criteria and level of contribution for Iran.
116. The adopted schedule of contribution of member governments explaining the criteria used to calculate membership fees was provided to the meeting. The Director General pointed out that the primary criteria were a country’s GDP with additional principles of minimum contribution, and also consideration of ability to pay. The minimum was set at $10,000 and the ceiling at $60,000. The Governing Council agreed to set Iran’s contribution level based on the original schedule of contribution.

117. Iran noted that the schedule was labeled ‘proposed schedule’ and asked if the document had been endorsed. The Director General advised that the schedule had been adopted by First GC Meeting, held in Dhaka in 1989. The Chair instructed the Secretariat to provide Iran the appropriate documentation and an explanatory letter to this effect.

118. Australia noted that the membership contribution issue was a difficult one, and asked if countries’ membership fees were revised as their economies expanded. The Director General advised that membership fees for individual countries had not been revised.

119. Mr. Chen Foo Yan, the first Coordinator and subsequently adviser of NACA, explained that the schedule of membership contribution had been set at the Provisional Governing Council (PGC) in 1989, based on the recommendations of a study group constituted by the PGC, and that this had been the agreed schedule of contributions ever since, and would remain so unless the current Council chose to revise it. He noted the long period between 1989 and 2005 and suggested that the Council might find it timely to consider establishing a working group to revise the schedule of contributions in line with the Secretariat’s contemporary budgetary requirements.

120. Pakistan advised that the contribution of fisheries and aquaculture in Pakistan is very small, and that it would be difficult to convince the government to increase the level of contribution.

121. Thailand observed that members can contribute additional resources in line with the spirit of cooperation of NACA. He also noted that the contribution range is set at between 5 and 20% of the total amount of contributions, and could also be used as a mechanism for setting the rate of contributions for new members.

122. The Director General appreciated the difficulty of putting into motion within most governments the request to increase membership contributions. However, he reiterated remarks in previous Governing Council Meetings, particularly during the 13th GC Meeting in Langkawi when the Council adopted the NACA Task Force 2000 recommendations, that aquaculture in a number of members has been expanding and that inflation and decline in the value of the dollar had combined to substantially reduce the real value of the cumulative core fund of NACA since 1989.
VIII. Other matters

123. The Director General requested the Council to constitute a Search Committee for the next Director General, as his term was due to finish on 31 March 2006. He advised that there have been three search committees to date. These have consisted of the outgoing Coordinator as Secretary, and three to five other people drawn from the Governing Council, Regional Lead Centres and advisers such as Mr Chen Foo Yan and the late Dr TVR Pillay. The Council instructed the Secretariat to draw up a list of prospective search committee members and circulate it for Council’s consideration.

124. Bangladesh raised the issue of the participation of the Bangladesh Fisheries Research Institute in the Network. The center has developed many improved aquaculture technologies and has been involved in reporting on health issues to the OIE on a quarterly basis. He requested that NACA actively involve the center in its activities.

125. The Director General advised that NACA had requested the Government of Bangladesh to host an extension phase of the ACIAR supported project on culture based fisheries. A letter had been sent requesting assistance to host a workshop, to be completed by June, to share the findings and experiences. He requested the assistance of BFRI to host the workshop. Bangladesh asked that the letter be re-sent for further consideration.

126. Nepal requested support in training and in obtaining broodstock of ducks, and of Chinese carps, for which Nepal’s existing stocks were suffering from problems caused by inbreeding. HAKI offered to provide ducks to Nepal to be raised as brooders. China advised Nepal it would be able to provide broodstock for carps and suggested channels by which Nepal could send its request to the Government. RLCC offered to help facilitate the request.

127. Cambodia reported that a 5-year project had been initiated to improve aquaculture production and extension. Assistance was requested, specifically from the Philippines, to obtain improved stocks of tilapia, as the growth rate of stock currently available was low. WorldFish indicated that it might be able to assist with GIFT Tilapia and training in broodstock management practices, and invited Cambodia to submit a formal request.

128. The Philippines, Pakistan and Indonesia requested provision of improved strains of carps and genetic management of carps, specifically for common carp. Indonesian broodstock had been destroyed by Koi herpes virus and the genetic base of remaining stocks was of poor quality. HAKI suggested that, given the common interests among several members, a collaborative program could be arranged focusing on improved carp varieties.

129. The Governing Council recommended NACA develop a regional program on genetic improvement and broodstock management of carp species. The next meeting of INGA, to be held in China, September 2005, would provide an opportunity to discuss this issue.

130. RLCC advised that they could assist members to obtain broodstock, within the framework of national and international protocols. RLCC expressed thanks to NACA for assistance in organizing the IFF course for many years. RLCC advised that
although it has much expertise available in inland fisheries and aquaculture, over the past 20 years there has been little direct involvement of the center in other NACA activities. RLCC wished to assure the Council that the center stood ready to become more actively involved in network activities and to assist other members.

131. The Secretariat advised that the movement of broodstock and introduction of hatchery-reared stocks into natural waterways posed serious risks in terms of disease and potential impact on indigenous species and genetically distinct strains. NACA members had adopted technical guidelines on the health management and transboundary movement of live aquatic animals and import risk analysis that provided guidance on responsible movements.

132. FAO also cautioned members on the movement of live aquatic animals, noting that the activities of countries could affect others where there were shared watersheds. FAO suggested that it would be timely for NACA to consider working towards developing a regional policy framework on safe movement of aquatic animals. The Technical Guidelines already developed and agreed upon by ASIAN countries should be fully implemented.

133. The Secretariat suggested that NACA members adopt as policy the use of risk analysis before movement of live aquatic animals. Technical assistance on conducting risk analysis could be extended by NACA and countries with experience in this area, such as Australia, and that this could be one area of activity in the NACA workplan. Australia expressed support for the comment from FAO and reiterated its commitment to improving biosecurity in the region, particularly with regards to issues related to translocation. Australia is actively providing technical support.

134. The Governing Council agreed to adopt as policy the use of risk analysis prior to movement of live aquatic animals. The risk analysis approach would allow risks to be identified, benefits and problems to be properly assessed and management strategies identified to reduce risks.

135. The Director General advised that a manual is being developed by NACA for training of regional personnel for use of genetic tools in fisheries management. RLCC advised that it had substantial expertise available in molecular genetics and biotechnology and was willing to provide hands-on training for small numbers of people from within the network.

136. Oman advised that formalization of internal procedures for membership would require further discussion. It was yet open as to the manner in which Oman would seek to participate, either as a member government or jointly as an associate member as part of the Gulf Cooperation Council. The Director General advised that the Secretariat would continue dialogue with Oman and the Gulf Cooperation Council on the issue of membership of NACA and mutual benefits there from.

**Developing the NACA workplan**

137. The principles and process for development of the new NACA Work Program for the period 2006 to 2010 were presented and discussed.

138. Thailand supported the process of participation in development of the new work program. The regional policy to be developed during the Bangkok Declaration would
provide the policy framework to develop the work program. International agreements such as the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries should also be considered.

139. Thailand also emphasised the importance of mobilising resources and particularly the use of south-south cooperation and TCDC. It was suggested to invite donors to participate in the work program development. This input would be useful in developing the program, and facilitate donor support to the program implementation. Capacity building should be included in the program.

140. Pakistan supported the outline framed for development of the research and development program. Participation of NACA member countries would ensure that the new work program can better address the needs. The delegate suggested the work program address responsible aquaculture as well as trade restrictions. This approach will be important for the economy of the countries and region. The work program would provide the basis for development of projects for donors, especially on poverty alleviation and other development aspects.

141. Sri Lanka agreed with the approach as highlighted, and suggested to include in the process a self-evaluation of NACA to ensure the work program is based on needs.

142. Philippines suggested that TCDC activities under the new NACA Work Program on Food safety and Trade could include HACCP application and monitoring on the aquaculture production processes in the region.

143. Indonesia supported the program development, particularly the focus on supporting poor aquatic resource users and suggested that the R&D program should also focus on areas of the region affected by the tsunami. It would be useful because people are very poor in these areas. SPIRIT would be a good program to support poverty alleviation in these areas.

144. The representative of RLCC said he was very much encouraged by the presentation and fully supported the principles for development of the work program. The approach should attract the wide participation of member governments and regional lead centres. He assured full support.

145. The Director General noted that some country reviews have been prepared that provide a basis for self-evaluation. He described the processes of the development of the previous three work programs and stressed that the proposed process in developing the next 5-year work program moved to infuse more government ownership and make it the product of broader participation.

146. Australia commended the participatory approach and the idea of mobilising resources within member countries. The delegate requested clarification on certain aspects of the program. In response the secretariat noted that the aquatic animal health program, the STREAM initiative, education/training and communications would also continue into the new work program.

147. India suggested further work on reservoirs in the new workplan. These aquatic resources are important for poor people. CIFA and STREAM India will work together with self-help groups to organise a meeting. The information from this meeting can help in informing the development of the work program.
148. The NACA Secretariat requested NACA members to inform the Secretariat of national meetings that could provide further useful outputs to inform development of the work program.

149. FAO welcomed the approach for development of the workplan. FAO noted the importance of its complementarity to FAOs workplan in the region. FAO offered to participate in the development.

Tsunami

150. Affected countries briefed the Council on the impact of the tsunami and responses of their governments. Coastal communities and in particular fishermen have been hit very hard in terms of loss of life, housing and impact upon their livelihoods.

151. Sri Lanka described the as follows: The total number of lives lost is 38,000. Damage to houses and infrastructure facilities is very extensive. These are reported in numerous websites and other media reports. As regards the fisheries sector, 7500 fishers lost their lives, 10 out of 12 fishery harbors were damaged; basins were filled with sunken boats, vehicles and debris; and shore facilities were destroyed. About 60 percent of the fishing fleet was destroyed. Now that the relief period is over, what is required is relocation of the displaced people, rehabilitation and reconstruction. Many countries, donor agencies and NGOs have come forward to support for which the government is deeply grateful. Aquaculture, thankfully, came off with slight damage, but it will now have to intensify its efforts even more to be able to share in the overall national recovery and development effort. In this regard, Sri Lanka and specifically the fisheries ministry would be very grateful for NACA’s assistance.

152. Thailand indicated that resource assessments are required to assess the impact on fish stocks as preliminary assessments have shown species shifts. A rehabilitation strategy is required involving participation of communities in the decision-making and reconstruction process. The government’s emphasis is on building the capacity of people to sustain their livelihoods and regain full independency. Fishers unwilling or unable to return to their previous occupation must be assisted to take up alternative livelihoods. Safety and early warning systems are high priorities. Thailand has established the Andaman Forum, a coalition of government and NGO organizations involved in tsunami recovery, to coordinate sharing of information on tsunami-related needs, rehabilitation efforts and contacts.

153. Myanmar advised that the impact of the tsunami was relatively mild in terms of loss of life although around 2,500 people have been rendered homeless and many more otherwise impacted. Serious damage has been sustained to fishing boats and aquaculture facilities. Myanmar requested immediate assistance for the rehabilitation of communities dependant on fisheries and aquaculture through the NACA SPIRIT program.

154. Malaysia advised that organizations wishing to visit Malaysia for tsunami rehabilitation efforts were most welcome and that Malaysia would facilitate their visit on a cost sharing basis. He inquired as to what action the recently held COFI meeting in FAO Rome made on the report of the Bangkok Meeting on tsunami rehabilitation held under CONSRN.

155. Indonesia advised that the effect of the tsunami on coastal communities had devastating impact on the fishing and aquaculture sectors. Indonesia stressed the
importance of establishing a regionally coordinated program on post-tsunami rehabilitation, stressing the need for concrete action. Assistance was required for the fisheries and aquaculture sectors as many coastal communities were dependent on these activities for their livelihoods.

156. India requested cooperation to develop aquaculture for alternative livelihoods in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, in finding new uses for low lying inundated areas and in mobilizing resources.

157. The Director General advised that the Ministers Meeting held in conjunction with COFI that had issued a Ministerial Declaration in relation to the tsunami. FAO said the statement fully supported collaborative action in rehabilitation activities. He suggested a strategic combination of national and regional assistance.

158. Thailand thanked NACA for initiating pilot recovery activities in Thailand to rehabilitate some tsunami-affected communities. Clarification was requested as to the nature of the SPIRIT. The Director General advised that the fund encompassed both financial contributions and offers of technical assistance. The fund would be used to support pilot rehabilitation activities that were intended in part to provide learning experiences to guide the rehabilitation efforts of others. Activity had been initiated in three communities on Ko Yao Noi in Thailand, and in Ujung Batee, Indonesia.

159. FAO suggested that Council examine the best role for NACA in the rehabilitation effort, considering NACA’s technical competencies. It was suggested that NACA could have a role providing technical advice to organizations providing microcredit and other financial support to recovery. NACA could also provide a coordination role linking affected and non-affected countries with regards to informing the needs and arranging technical exchanges to supply necessary skills. Thailand suggested that NACA could focus on sustainable development and management of coastal aquaculture.

160. The session closed at 17:08.
IX. Recommendations

161. The 16th Governing Council meeting of NACA adopted the following recommendations.


b) The proposed Work Plan for 2005 be implemented.

c) The new NACA Work Program for 2006-2010 be developed according to the principles and processes as agreed during the meeting.

d) A regional program be developed for broodstock management and genetic improvement of carps and other species.

e) NACA members adopt a risk-based approach to movement of live aquatic animals.

f) The Governing Council members will bring to the attention of the concerned government agencies the Meeting on Aquaculture of Ministers of Asia and the Pacific regions and assist in facilitating the participation of the Ministers in the Meeting and in the preparations for the meeting.

g) The SPIRIT be fully developed and implemented to assist rehabilitation and development of tsunami affected communities.

h) Development of regional collaborative mariculture program.

i) Develop a certification system for Asian Aquaculture Products.

IX. Date and Venue of the 17th Governing Council Meeting

162. Iran offered to host the 17th Governing Council. The Council expressed its gratitude to Iran and unanimously accepted the offer.

XI. Adoption & Closing Activities

163. The draft summary was adopted by the Governing Council.

164. On behalf of Council, Sri Lanka and Thailand thanked the Government of the Philippines and the BFAR staff for their hospitality and the excellent arrangements in facilitating the meeting and NACA’s partner organizations for their strong collaboration in network activities. Australia thanked the Secretariat for organization of the meeting and STREAM workshop and encouraged members to implement council decisions as far as possible on their return.

165. The Director General closed the meeting by reiterating the opening paragraph of his report to the Council, specifically the many influences on NACA’s work program. He thanked Sri Lanka for having steered NACA very well through 2004 and the Philippines for ably chairing the 16th GC meeting. He thanked the Department of Agriculture and BFAR for the excellent support, logistics, and hosting of the meeting. He thanked the representatives of governments and organizations for their valuable contribution to the meeting and requested them to convey NACA’s gratitude to their respective governments and institutions for their continuing support to the regional aquaculture development program. He then called for a minute of silence for the late Dr TVR Pillay, a key figure in the founding of the NACA organization and in the development of modern aquaculture.

166. The Chair closed the 16th Governing Council at 11:11 am.