



Annex 3.

FAO Committee on Fisheries inputs to High-level Political forum 2019

“Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality”

Goal 4. Quality education; **Goal 8.** Decent work and economic growth; **Goal 10.** Reduced inequalities; **Goal 13.** Climate action; **Goal 16.** Peace, justice and strong institutions; **Goal 17.** Partnerships for the Goals.

The two main functions of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) are to review and guide the programmes of work of FAO in the field of fisheries and aquaculture and their implementation, and to conduct periodic reviews of global issues in the field of fisheries and aquaculture with a view to developing concerted action by nations, inter-governmental bodies and civil society. COFI is also a forum in which global agreements and non-binding instruments are negotiated to address identified fisheries and aquaculture issues. COFI also reviews and decides on the recommendations of its two COFI Sub-Committees on fish trade and aquaculture, respectively.

I. Progress and challenges

During the 33rd Session of COFI held in Rome from 9 to 13 July 2018, the comprehensive review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular with regard to SDG 14, was made under Agenda item 9¹. In addition, SDG 8 was addressed in the context of implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (Agenda item 5), social sustainability in the seafood value chain (Agenda item 6) as well as small-scale and artisanal fisheries governance (Agenda item 8.2). SDG 13 was also addressed under Agenda item 10, Climate change and other environment related matters.

FAO's Blue Growth Initiative has proven to be an effective platform for developing programmes towards achieving the various goals under Agenda 2030². The Blue Trade component of the Blue Growth Initiative includes the Blue Forum, a multistakeholder platform involving government, industry, fisherfolk associations, NGOs, and Civil Society but with a particular focus on the private sector. The Blue Forum would address issues that require comprehensive and coordinated approaches and shared solutions. These could include decent working conditions in the seafood value-chain, human trafficking, sustainability as well as climate change impacts threatening sustainable socio-economic development.

¹ <http://www.fao.org/3/MW509EN/mw509en.pdf>

² <http://www.fao.org/3/MX230EN/mx230en.pdf>



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A Blue Forum has the potential to be a catalyst for multi-sector partnerships that drive direct social, economic and environmental action to promote the work of the stakeholders (private sector, civil society organizations, NGOs and governments) in transforming the fisheries and aquaculture sector. It will seek to create synergies between initiatives of different sectors/actors, and to identify opportunities for strategic alliances with other on-going initiatives. The Secretariat proposes that the format and TOR of the Blue Forum be presented to the next session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade (25-29 November 2019 in Vigo, Spain) for its consideration.

As critical arteries to the seafood value chain, fishing ports are key generators of economic and social benefits. Ports have however the potential for further growth through more holistic approaches, particularly in environmental sustainability. FAO proposes therefore to develop guidance on international best practices for fishing ports aiming to transition to blue growth models – fishing ports that are environmentally, economically and socially sustainable.

The implementation of a **Blue Growth framework** in the operations of fishing ports would contribute to their long term sustainability and to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. The Secretariat proposes that such guidance be presented to the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade in 2019 for consideration as, *inter alia*:

SDG 8- Decent Work and Economic Growth: Adopted in 2015, Cabo Verde’s Blue Growth Charter prioritizes environmental, economic and social development of ocean related priorities. These priorities include climate change research, conservation of sharks, developing marine protected areas, strengthening fisheries communities, improving the quality of fish products, empowering women’s groups to market their fish directly to restaurants, improving marine transport networks for tourism, and creating jobs for young people who are often forced to seek work abroad;

SDG 13- Climate Action: FAO focused attention on reducing fuel use with links to greenhouse gas mitigation from capture fisheries in Thailand to provide multiple economic and environmental benefits. Interviews with the captains showed limited understanding of the important role these can play in lowering fuel consumption, and how practices in Thai trawl fishing vessels can help the industry decrease greenhouse gas emissions, thereby lowering their carbon footprint; and

SDG 17- Partnerships for the Goals: The Nansen Programme, a partnership between the Norway Institute of Marine Research and FAO, provides a platform for many developing countries that lack the proper infrastructure to conduct marine research independently and to obtain critical information key to their reporting on SDG 14 achievements. Private sector dialogue with the other stakeholders is key to achieving Agenda 2030 and FAO hopes to engage the sector by establishing the Blue Forum.



II. Key messages and policy recommendations of COFI for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda

As referred in Paragraphs 86-97 of the Report of the 33rd Session of COFI³,

The Committee emphasized the importance of Members achieving the SDGs, especially SDG 14. It highlighted the coherence of these goals with the policy goals of binding and non-binding international instruments, regional bodies (including RFMOs) and national authorities.

Noting that SDG reporting was the responsibility of Members, the Committee acknowledged that FAO was the primary UN agency with responsibility for fisheries (marine and freshwater) and aquaculture and has the important role of assisting competent authorities in tracking their progress in achieving SDG 14 and the other goals of the 2030 Agenda.

The Committee reiterated its support for strengthened cooperation between FAO and international, regional and national bodies, as well as the private sector, in strengthening the development and delivery of suitable indicators for monitoring progress towards achieving SDG and Aichi Biodiversity Targets relevant to fisheries.

The Committee noted the lack of an internationally recognized methodology for lower tier indicators under the custodianship of FAO. It appreciated the technical work of FAO in progressing the development of appropriate methodologies to facilitate indicator reporting by Members.

The Committee emphasized the need to ensure comparability and consistency of reporting indicators at global, regional and national levels, whilst minimizing the burden on Members.

The Committee agreed that data and information submitted through the Code questionnaire could be used for reporting on SDG indicators and Aichi Biodiversity Targets in aggregate and, where permission is explicitly granted by Members, for reporting on their national progress, subject to adequate consultation and validation of inputs by Members, as stated in paragraph 19 of this report. (*cf.* 19. The Committee called upon FAO to consult with Members on matters of potential confidentiality in the use of the country data and information submitted through the Code questionnaire. It further emphasized the need for Members to validate the use of any information obtained from the questionnaire for SDG reporting.)

The Committee highlighted that reporting on these indicators by Members using new methodologies required institutional and human capacity development and resource

³ http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/bodies/Conference_2019/MX970_23/MX970_C_2019_23_en.pdf



mobilization, in order for them to achieve independent data collection, monitor and report on SDGs and related international instruments.

The Committee requested FAO to continue to assist Members in strengthening statistical capacity and delivery of their data and information, especially in data-poor situations. It further requested support to provide tools and publishing guidelines to assist in this activity.

The Committee recognized the synergies between the SDGs and the Blue Economy, with the need for broad cooperation on developing new economic platforms and processes (e.g. Blue Forum, Blue Ports, Blue Fashion) in a sustainable way.

The Committee welcomed the upcoming High Level Conference on sustainable blue economy, co-hosted by Canada and Kenya in Nairobi, Kenya, 26-28 November 2018.

The Committee expressed the need for FAO to increase communication for clarifying and enhancing awareness of multi-sectoral approaches for Blue Growth and delivery of the 2030 Agenda and better elaborate its plans for the BGI.

The Committee further requested FAO to review potential opportunities of Blue Growth and Blue Economy initiatives and present this to the 17th session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade in 2019.

In addition, with regard to **SDG 8**,

The Committee highlighted the importance of safety at sea and working conditions in the fisheries sector and welcomed the close cooperation between FAO and the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO). Members requested FAO to further strengthen international cooperation on occupational health and safety issues in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors and to promote decent work for fish workers. (extract para 20. COFI report)

The Committee recommended that future guidance on social sustainability be developed in cooperation with relevant stakeholders, including industry and fish worker associations, building on experience from the development of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development OECD-FAO Guidance for Responsible Agricultural Supply Chains. extract para 27. COFI report)

The Committee highlighted the need to recognize and address the special role of women and the vulnerability of indigenous and local communities and minorities in SSF. (extract para 64. COFI report)



The Committee encouraged FAO to provide capacity development and technical support to SSF, including by addressing socio-economics, gender dimensions, and post-harvest and data collection challenges found in the sector. extract para 65. COFI report)

In addition, with regard to **SDG 13**, (extract para 98-101. COFI report)

The Committee commended the work of FAO in the area of climate change in fisheries and aquaculture, and its engagement with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, also noting the recent inclusion of climate change in a range of international instruments and initiatives.

The Committee commended the comprehensive review of FAO on the impacts of climate change in fisheries and aquaculture and adaptation options, noting that it will be an essential support to Members for the strengthening of their Nationally Determined Contributions and National Adaptation Plans.

The Committee emphasized the vulnerability of fisheries and aquaculture communities to climate change and extreme events, and expressed particular concern for the impacts on SSF and SIDS in this regard.

The Committee stressed that effective responses to climate change require effective fisheries management in line with the 2030 Agenda. It requested the development of guidelines on climate change adaptation and mitigation in fisheries and aquaculture, and welcomed the offer from Canada to host an expert workshop on fisheries management in the context of climate change.

III. Successful experiences and lessons learned on HLPF theme

During the 33rd Session of COFI, the following side events were also organized to share the experiences and lessons learned with regard to the relevant SDGs⁴:

The importance of small-scale fisheries:

Global, regional and national initiatives endorsement of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication by the FAO Committee on Fisheries in 2014 was a global recognition of the importance of the sector. Importantly, these SSF Guidelines bring together responsible fisheries and social development, providing a policy framework towards small-scale fisheries sustainability through a holistic and integrated approach, in line with the 2030 Agenda, which rests on the interconnected and indivisible nature of its 17 SDGs.

⁴ <http://www.fao.org/about/meetings/cofi/cofi33events/en/>



However, this transformation needs substantial support, including better understanding the contributions of small-scale fisheries to sustainable development to make the case for greater political support; learning from SSF Guidelines implementation experiences at different levels, including on issues such as social protection and partnership mechanisms.

This side event will therefore present ongoing work to improve our knowledge of the sector's contributions, in particular to food security and poverty eradication, and on the implementation of the SSF Guidelines at various levels, which will also support paving the way towards the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture in 2022.

Ensuring Responsible Fisheries Value Chains:

Governments, industry, civil society as well as buyers and consumers are calling for responsible business conduct and due diligence in fisheries and aquaculture value chains. They are demanding environmental accountability and social responsibility from all value chain actors involved in capture fisheries, aquaculture, fish processing, distribution and trade. This side event will explore a range of initiatives that are working towards more responsible fisheries value chains. From addressing social labour standards in the seafood sector to the development of new eco-labels, panellists will present a wide range of topics that will lead into an open dialogue with all event attendees.

Impacts of Climate Change in Fisheries and Aquaculture: Launch of FAO Technical Paper 627⁵:

The 2015 Paris Climate Agreement recognizes the need for effective and progressive responses to the urgent threat of climate change. One of the novelties of the Agreement is the inclusion of a long-term adaptation goal – to increase the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience .../... in a manner that does not threaten food production – alongside the goal for mitigation. To implement the Agreement member states are required to prepare, communicate and maintain successive Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), submitted every five years to the UNFCCC secretariat. The next round of NDCs (new or updated) is to be submitted by 2020. By September 2017 a total of 155 NDCs had been submitted to the UNFCCC. Out of these, 87 address fisheries and aquaculture, of which 78 include climate change adaptation measures in the sector.

With the purpose of supporting countries in their development of NDCs the FAO decided to prepare a Technical Paper on the Effects of Climate Change on Fisheries and Aquaculture aimed primarily at policymakers, fisheries managers and practitioners.

The report, which is released on the day of side event, provides the most up-to-date information on the disaggregated impacts of climate change for marine and inland fisheries,

⁵ <http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/I9705EN>



and aquaculture, in the context of food security, poverty alleviation and the differential dependency of countries on fish and fishery resources. The work is based on model projections, data analyses, as well as national, regional and basin-scale expert assessments.

The side event will highlight the main conclusions of the report, and will provide specific examples of the challenges that climate change poses on the sector, in the context of FAO's climate change strategies and actions.

Mainstreaming the 2030 Agenda:

Background: FAO's four Technical Committees – COFI, COAG, COFO and CCP –, organized jointly the side event FAO Technical Committees and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development during the 158th Session of the FAO Council. During this event, Committees presented their initiatives in strengthening the efforts to provide a coordinated input to FAO to address the 2030 Agenda, described the results of these endeavors, and received inputs for enhancing coordination and collaboration among all food and agriculture sub-sectors. The expected outcome was a better understanding of the progress made and the opportunities and challenges encountered, as well as the impact of these on the work of the Organization.

Following all these discussions, FAO developed Guidelines for policy-makers on how to engage agriculture, forestry and fisheries in the 2030 Agenda. They bring together the Common Vision for Sustainable Food and Agriculture, its 5 principles, and cross-sectoral action points – which will also be presented in SOFIA 2018. The Common Vision for Sustainable Food and Agriculture, developed by FAO, will be discussed under agenda item “Decisions and recommendations from COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture”. FAO's ongoing work on the SDGs will be discussed under agenda item “The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”.

Objectives:

1. Present FAO's efforts to accelerate the contribution of sustainable food and agriculture to the 2030 Agenda: Guidelines for decision makers
2. Inform on future FAO plans
3. Highlight collaboration between FAO's Technical Committees on cross-sectoral work under the 2030 Agenda
4. Discuss concrete steps to assist and collaborate with countries to mainstream the 2030 Agenda in the food and agriculture sectors

Ensuring Socially, Environmentally and Commercially Sustainable Fisheries:



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The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) is very clear towards the obligations of every flag state. They have the duty to ensure their vessels' safety at sea with regard, inter alia, to (a) the construction, equipment and seaworthiness of ships, (b) the manning of ships, (c) the labour conditions of their crews, and (d) the training of their crews.

The International Maritime Organization (IMO), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), all specialized agencies of the United Nations, have indeed developed and adopted international instruments on all four duty areas for fishing. Particularly, IMO Cape Town Agreement 2012 (safe construction); ILO Work in Fishing C188, 2007 (manning and labour conditions); IMO STCW-F, 1995 (safety and training); FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and Agreement on Port State Measures (responsible fishing), are the foundations for the protection of fishermen across the world. These Conventions are either not into force or poorly ratified by the international community.

The aim of this event is to provide practical expert advice to and from international and national policy-makers, industry and NGOs to develop a roadmap towards widespread ratification of the international instruments for safety at sea in fishing, the protection of fishers' lives and fight against IUU. It will also serve to create awareness on the need to ensure a socially, environmentally and commercially sustainable fisheries; thereby influencing the COFI discussions.

Blue Growth in Small Island Developing States (SIDS):

Background: An intensification of resource mobilization is required together with a strengthening of strategic partnerships at the global, regional and sub-regional levels to accelerate the implementation of Blue Growth and the 2030 agenda for SIDS.

The Event: This side event will focus on Blue Growth tools and activities as key contributions to the integrated implementation of the 2030 agenda in SIDS countries.

The Large Ocean Nations (LON) Network will be launched as a new initiative under the Blue Growth umbrella, including a special feature on Blue Fashion, oceans-sourced designs, from fish skins to seaweed fabrics, as an innovative and sustainable alternative for the fashion industry.