



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**



Record of the workshop of regional deep sea fisheries management bodies in support of the Worldwide Review of Bottom Fisheries in the High Seas

3-5 May 2016 • Rome, Italy

ABNJ Deep Seas Project

**Sustainable Fisheries Management and Biodiversity Conservation of Deep-sea Living Marine Resources
and Ecosystems in the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction**



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Regional experts nominated by deep-sea RFMO/As gathered at the FAO headquarters in Rome from 3-5 May 2016 to participate in a workshop concerning the 2016 *Worldwide Review of Bottom Fisheries in the High Seas*. The objectives of the meeting were to present the framework and intent for the review, to review the draft regional chapters, identify any revisions required and agree on a work plan for the completion of the updated document. The meeting started with an introduction to the *Worldwide Review*, followed by presentations of the deep-sea fisheries in each region by the experts. Discussions were held on information presented as it related to the regional chapters, and on the key messages to be presented in the *Worldwide Review*. A plan for the completion of the *Worldwide Review* was also drafted.

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1. Opening of the meeting

1. The *Worldwide Review of Bottom Fisheries in the High Seas Workshop* was organized by the ABNJ Deep Seas Project, and held at the FAO Headquarters, Rome, Italy on 3-5 May 2016. Experts nominated by regional fisheries management organizations, other regional fisheries bodies and the FAO attended. The list of participants is attached as [Appendix I](#).
2. The ABNJ Deep Seas Project Coordinator opened the meeting and welcomed the participants.
3. The meeting adopted the Agenda as presented in [Appendix II](#) to this report. The documents referred to at the meeting are listed in [Appendix III](#).
4. The Coordinator gave a brief overview of the ABNJ Deep Seas Project and the place of the *Worldwide Review* within the Project (ppt-01), then presented the workshop objectives and expected outputs.

Worldwide review of bottom fisheries in the high seas workshop activities

2. Introduction to the 2016 Worldwide review of bottom fisheries in the high seas

5. Trevor Kenchington introduced the *Worldwide Review*, including a brief overview of the scope, outline and framework for the regional chapters of the updated version (ppt-02).
6. The meeting noted:
 - there are various regional interpretations on what fisheries are “likely to contact the seafloor during the normal course of fishing operations”, hence are bottom fisheries, as per the DSF Guidelines. Several RFMO’s do not consider gears that only rarely or inadvertently contact the seafloor as being subject to the guidelines.
 - the review should follow each RFMO/A’s determination of which fisheries involve bottom contact; near-bottom fisheries that do not involve contact should be mentioned in the text but not included in tabulated summaries nor re-classified as bottom-contact fisheries
 - the review should acknowledge that such fisheries, that otherwise might have been included, are not going to be dealt with
 - the review should include shallow water fisheries in the ABNJ, with no emphasis on the depth of the fishing
 - perhaps a figure of the fisheries being covered in the review could be used presented
 - while endeavouring to be as up to date as possible, catch and effort figures for 2014 should be estimated and presented; however if more recent information can be presented for the fisheries for which it is available
 - the term “EEZ” should be used without referring to “extended shelf” or “200 nm from the coast”
 - the review will be an opportunity to address the many myths and misunderstandings that surround high-seas bottom fisheries
 - text could be added to describe the transition from largely unregulated fishing in ABNJ before 2000 to highly-regulated fishing today

- text could include incidences of severe depletion of resources, cases of recovery of depleted resources, delays in recovery
- the need to acknowledge that some countries have national (or supra-national, e.g. EU) rules and regulations on their vessels when operating in the ABNJ.

3. Selection of the deep seas fisheries in each region

7. Trevor Kenchington described how fisheries were selected for inclusion in the review, including the spatial distribution of the fisheries and information sources.
8. The meeting noted:
 - a request to review the regional material and identify if there are any fisheries missing from the review
 - the review should use the management terms and gear definitions adopted by each RFMO/A
 - it is important to note the uncertainty regarding the status of stocks in ABNJ, arising from the general lack of information, and regarding impacts of fishing on associated and dependent species – this is to avoid supposition of negative impacts in the absence of information.

4. Review of the introduction and global-overview chapters

9. Trevor Kenchington presented and led discussions on the scope, framework and messages of the review, the geomorphology and ecosystems of the regions and the resource-biology of deep-sea fisheries.
10. The review framework was re-drafted and reviewed over the course of the meeting. The meeting noted that:
 - resources chapter should address ecosystems and list the exploited resources, noting the deep-pelagic resources but then setting them aside
 - resource status and stock assessments should be addressed, though there is very little solid information for High Seas demersal resources
 - misinterpretation of catch trends as trends in resources should be discouraged
 - review needs tabular summaries of management measures, and temporal trends in metrics such as numbers of conservation measures in force
 - the limited information on social structures, crewing etc. should be considered amongst the global-summary chapters and not addressed in each regional chapter
 - *Review* should touch on EAF
 - note that fuel and other subsidies were important to expansion in 1990s, as was the collapse of the former USSR
 - remove ecolabeling from the regional chapters; address it in global-summary chapters as a new form of driver
 - avoid excess of material readily available elsewhere
 - there may be a need for a glossary

11. The meeting discussed the development and current status of deep seas fisheries and the fisheries management.

5. Presentation and discussion of the regional draft chapters

12. Jessica Fuller provided a broad overview of existing RFMO measures organized in a visual format, categorized into compliance, management, gears, encounter and exploratory protocols, VME indicator species, other by-catch, VME and other closures, observers and research (ppt-03).
13. Tony Thompson presented on contributions of high seas bottom fisheries to global SDG and Aichi targets that could be added in new sections of the *Worldwide Review*, such as area closures, fishing footprints, food security and employment (ppt-04).
14. Mark Belchier gave a presentation on fisheries in the Southern Ocean, where the main target species are krill, mackerel icefish Patagonian and Arctic toothfish. The presentation also included information on the CCAMLR convention, stock assessments, management measures, by-catch and spatial planning (ppt-05). The meeting noted that CCAMLR “research area” fisheries could be included in the review, as they involve commercial fishing vessels and their TACs can be quite high.
15. Odd Aksel Bergstad presented on the fisheries in South East Atlantic (no ppt). The meeting noted that this region is oligotrophic, outside of the Benguela Current system (which falls within EEZs) and hence productivity is low. Also, that British Overseas Territories in region are not involved in High Seas fisheries.
16. Aleksandr Zavolokin provided an overview of the North Pacific Ocean fisheries (ppt-06). The NPFC convention entered into force in July 2015. The main fishing area is the Emperor Seamounts, where the target species are North Pacific armourhead, splendid alfonsino and rockfish. There is also a fishery for sablefish on seamounts in the east of the region.
17. A presentation of the South Pacific Ocean fisheries provided by the SPRFMO Secretariat was presented by Anna Wall (ppt-07). Fisheries resources in the SPRFMO area are orange roughy, giant squid and jack mackerel, though only the first of those is taken by bottom fishing. The presentation also covered a brief overview of the SPRFMO convention, conservation and management measures and SPRFMO’s achievements regarding management of bottom fisheries. The meeting noted that SPRFMO introduced a new CMM for toothfish fishing in 2016. This fishery is expanding across the SPRFMO/CCAMLR boundary; and management is currently delegated to flag states
18. Anna Wall presented material on the southern Indian Ocean fisheries provided by the SIOFA Scientific Committee Chair (ppt-08). The presentation included a brief a history of bottom fisheries in the high seas of the region, the major development of fisheries management in the past ten years, an overview of regional fisheries and the outcomes of SIOFA’s first scientific committee meeting.
19. A presentation on bottom fisheries in the North East Atlantic Ocean, the NEAFC regulatory area, was given by Odd Aksel Bergstad. He described the features of the fishing areas, the fisheries and management measures. Examples of current management measures in the regulatory area include a general limitation on fishing effort directed at deep-sea species, grenadier regulations (a TAC for all macrourids), a ban on targeted fishing for orange roughy, a blue ling seasonal closure, a shark ban, a ban on setting gillnets deeper than 200m and protection of vulnerable

marine ecosystems (VMEs), which essentially restricts fishing with bottom gears to 'existing fishing areas' (ppt-09).

20. Aurora Nastasi described the deep-sea fisheries operating in the GFCM region and provided comments on the draft chapter on the Mediterranean Sea (ppt-10).
21. An introduction to the fisheries and regional fishery bodies of the central Atlantic Ocean was provided by Trevor Kenchington.
22. Tom Blasdale provided a brief introduction of NAFO, the deep-sea fisheries under NAFO jurisdiction and the management measures applied to fisheries for the main target species: cod, redfish, plaice and flounder. Further, he presented the management measures for the protection of VMEs and NAFO area closures.
23. Trevor Kenchington gave a brief overview of the fisheries in the Southwest Atlantic.

6. Work plan for completing an updated version of the Worldwide review of bottom fisheries in the high seas

24. The above presentations and discussions were intended to provide updated information of the fisheries in each region and comments on the draft regional chapters in preparation for the updated version of the Worldwide Review.
25. The meeting noted the data and information gaps of the draft chapters and the RFMO experts agreed to assist in providing the information and review of text needed to complete the draft chapters.
26. The meeting discussed a range of key messages that the worldwide review should convey; these include:
 - Maps of the ABNJ
 - Maps of RFMO coverage
 - Percentage of ABNJ shallower than 2000 m
 - Percentage of ABNJ fished
 - Species caught, gears used
 - 2014 total catch
27. The meeting agreed on a completion plan for the *Worldwide Review of Bottom Fisheries in the High Seas*. Dr Kenchington will finalize the regional chapters with up to date information.

7. Any other business

28. None.

Appendix 1 Meeting participants

List of participants	
CCAMLR	GFCM
Mark Belchier <i>Science manager</i> markb@bas.ac.uk	Aurora Nastasi <i>Consultant for Environmental Issues</i> Aurora.nastasi@fao.org
NAFO	NEAFC
Tom Blasdale <i>Scientific council coordinator</i> tblasdale@nafo.int	Odd Aksel Bergstad <i>Scientific adviser on deep sea fisheries</i> odd.aksel.bergstad@imr.no
FAO	NPFC
Jessica Fuller <i>Fisheries consultant</i> Jessica.fuller@fao.org Merete Tandstad <i>Fisheries Resources officer</i> Merete.tandstad@fao.org	Aleksandr Zavolokin <i>Science manager</i> Aleksandr.zavolokin@tinro-center.ru
ABNJ Deep Seas Project	
Chris O'Brien <i>Coordinator</i> Chris.obrien@fao.org Anna Wall <i>Project assistant</i> Anna.wall@fao.org	Trevor Kenchington <i>FAO consultant</i> Trevor.kenchington@fao.org Tony Thompson <i>FAO Deep Seas Consultant</i> Tony.thompson@fao.org

Appendix 2 Agenda

Worldwide review of bottom fisheries in the high seas

Workshop

Rome, Italy

3 – 5 May 2016

AGENDA

v8April2016

Day 1: start 0900
1. Opening session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Welcome - Introduction to the Deep Seas Fisheries Project - Workshop objectives and expected outputs - Adoption of agenda
2. Introduction to 2016 Worldwide Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Framework for regional chapters
3. Selection of the deep sea fisheries in each region <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selection process, including the spatial distribution of the fisheries - Information sources
4. Review of the introduction chapters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scope, framework and messages - geomorphology & ecosystems - resource-biology - development and current status of deep seas fisheries - fisheries management
Day 2
5. Recap
6. Presentation and discussion of the draft regional chapters <i>Presentations from regional experts followed by a presentation of the associated draft chapter</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Southern Ocean - South East Atlantic - North Pacific - South Pacific - Indian Ocean - Central Atlantic - North East Atlantic - North West Atlantic - Mediterranean - South West Atlantic
Day 3
7. Recap
8. Work plan for completing WWR2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - data and information gaps, analyses to be completed (by whom and when) - assistance for regional experts in completing draft chapters - agreement on the completion plan

Appendix 3 List of documents

Reference	Title
Session	
ABNJ_DSP-2016-WWR11-Doc1.1	Agenda
ABNJ_DSP-2016-WWR11-ppt01	O'Brien – Introduction to ABNJ Deep Seas Project
ABNJ_DSP-2016-WWR11-ppt02	Kennington – Introduction to 2016 Worldwide review
ABNJ_DSP-2016-WWR11-ppt03	Fuller – RFMO measures
ABNJ_DSP-2016-WWR11-ppt04	Thompson – Global contributions towards SDG and Aichi targets
ABNJ_DSP-2016-WWR11-ppt05	Belchier – High Seas bottom fisheries in the Southern Ocean
ABNJ_DSP-2016-WWR11-ppt06	Zavolokin – North Pacific Ocean bottom fisheries
ABNJ_DSP-2016-WWR11-ppt07	SPRFMO - South pacific RFMO bottom fisheries
ABNJ_DSP-2016-WWR11-ppt08	SIOFA – Update from the SIOFA Scientific committee
ABNJ_DSP-2016-WWR11-ppt09	Bergstad - Bottom fisheries in the ABNJ of the North East Atlantic (NEAFC Regulatory Area)
ABNJ_DSP-2016-WWR11-ppt10	Nastasi - Deep-sea fisheries in the GFCM area of competence
ABNJ_DSP-2016-WWR11-ppt11	Blasdale – Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization
ABNJ_DSP-2016-WWR11-ppt12	Kennington - Worldwide Review of Bottom Fisheries in the High Seas – 2016

The Sustainable Fisheries Management and Biodiversity Conservation of Deep Sea Living Resources in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction Project (ABNJ Deep Seas Project for short) is a five year project supported by the Global Environment Facility, and implemented jointly by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and the United Nations Environment Programme. The UNEP project component is executed through the UNEP World Conservation and Monitoring Centre.

The Project is designed to enhance sustainability in the use of deep-sea living resources and biodiversity conservation in the ABNJ through the systematic application of an ecosystem approach. It brings together over 20 partners who work on deep-sea fisheries and conservation issues in the ABNJ globally. The partnership includes regional organizations responsible for the management of deep-sea fisheries, Regional Seas Programmes, the fishing industry and international organizations. The Project aims to:

- strengthen policy and legal frameworks for sustainable fisheries and biodiversity conservation in the ABNJ deep seas;
- reduce adverse impacts on VMEs and enhanced conservation and management of components of EBSAs;
- improve planning and adaptive management for deep sea fisheries in ABNJ; and
- develop and test methods for area-based planning.

The ABNJ Deep Seas Project started in September 2015 and is one of four projects under the GEF Common Oceans Programme. More information is available from www.commonoceans.org

