

Monday, 12 October 12:30- 14:00

Red Room

### Capacity building within marine resources and the importance of putting fish on the menu

#25

#### ORGANIZERS

Ministry of Trade, Norway

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway

National Institute of Nutrition and Seafood Research

World Fish

**Abstract:** Approximately 70 percent of the global surface is covered by water. Fish farming is the fastest growing food production sector and fish is one of the most efficient converters of feed into high quality food. There is a great potential to increase the production of fish through aquaculture as well as better management of the wild stocks globally. Fisheries and aquaculture play an important role in food security and nutrition, as suppliers of healthy food covering human needs and as providers of livelihoods. Nutrients from fish and other seafood are essential for the general population, but particularly important for poor and vulnerable groups, including women and young children. Last year, CFS stated that seafood plays a significant, but not yet fully recognized role in global food security and nutrition. The Committee advised all stakeholders to raise awareness of the importance of fisheries and aquaculture for food security and nutrition and give fish the position it deserves in food security and nutrition strategies, policies and programmes.

Furthermore the Committee also advised stakeholders to promote the inclusion of food security and nutrition in the objectives of policies and mechanisms related to fish trade. This side-event aims to bring attention to capacity building within marine resources and the importance of putting fish on the menu, particularly in the diets for the poor.

**KEYWORDS:** The role of fish for food security and nutrition; Why is fish important in the diet of changing societies; How to increase fish in the diets of the poor? Presentation of "Fish for Development"

**Languages:** EN

Refreshments

**Summary:** Sustainable fisheries and aquaculture play an important role in food security and nutrition, as a supplier of healthy food covering human needs and as a provider of livelihood. Nutrients from fish are essential for the general population, but particularly important for poor and vulnerable groups, including women and young children. From a health perspective, nutritionists recommend an increased fish consumption. The connection between consumption of omega-3 fatty acids and coronary heart disease is well known. The "Fish Intervention Study" (FINS) has a new approach. FINS is a large study, looking at several effects of eating seafood as part of the diet, in particular whether consumption of fish can have positive effects on obesity, diabetes and mental health, children development and learning skills. For instance, Iodine deficiency is the most important preventable cause of mental retardation globally, and fish is an important source of Iodine. The study shows the highest birth depression score among the mothers with lowest intake of fat from fish. Fish as part of a healthy diet is overlooked globally. Promotion of diverse and healthy diets, especially for the poor, needs policy focus beyond productivity and economic gains in fisheries. A people centered approach is important, focusing on a healthy diet for the poor. We must recognize the multiple benefits of intake of high quality, safe fish both on the individual and the national level. Dried small fish sold in small portions at little cost contribute with important fatty acids and nutrients e.g. iodine, vitamin D, zinc, iron, calcium, B12. Intake of fish can prevent stunting which is a challenge in poor countries. The potential of fisheries to healthy diets can be realized through implementing nutrition-sensitive fisheries policies. Documenting and disseminating the evidence on the value of fish to policy makers and other stakeholders, at international and national levels to influence strategies and investments are necessary first steps. There is a need to strengthen knowledge and capacity of developing countries within the area of marine resources and thereby increase the contribution from sustainable produced fish to a healthy diet especially among the poor. Norway has experience and knowledge on sea-based production and principles of ecosystem management, and has intensified the work on capacity building within marine resources by launching a program called "Fish for Development". This programme will cover areas such as fisheries management, aquaculture, coexistence and integrated management, fisheries crime, education and science, and business development in the marine sector in developing countries. Through this programme, Norway aims at reducing poverty in developing countries, and enhancing worldwide food security