

SIDE EVENT

Driving change in fisheries trade through transparency: Opportunities of the Fisheries Transparency Initiative (FiTI)

Wednesday, 6 September 2017 – 17:30 to 18:30

Moderated by: Sven Biermann, Director FiTI

Objective of this side event

The side event will be used as a platform to share insights about the challenges to increase transparency in fisheries in the context of fish trade and general fisheries management and to discuss how a multi-stakeholder approach could be a possible avenue of solution.

As the FiTI recently entered its implementation phase with the adoption of the global FiTI Standard at the 2nd International Conference of the Fisheries Transparency Initiative (Bali, 27 April 2017), this session will stimulate discussions regarding the way the FiTI can, through the conditions established by the FiTI Standard, drive change for more sustainable fisheries activities. The outcomes of this session will benefit stakeholders from all countries seeking to increase transparency in fisheries.

Background

There is a widely-shared understanding of the need to achieve sustainable and responsibly managed marine fisheries. But coastal states and fishing nations face a complex challenge: ensuring that fishing and fish trade contribute to income, employment, food and nutrition for millions of people, while also conserving marine biodiversity for future generations. Whilst there are many aspects to achieve sustainable fisheries, ensuring the public availability of credible information is essential.

Transparency is therefore a prerequisite for informed public debates on fisheries policies and for achieving meaningful participation in fisheries decision-making. But it is not only the availability of information that counts; it is also essential that it is accessible and that citizens have the assurance that the information provided by governments and fishing companies is credible.

The need for transparency and participation is central to the major fisheries reform effort of FAO, including: the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries (FAO, 2015) and the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (FAO, 2012). However, even with a greater public interest in the fisheries sector, basic information still often remains out of the public domain. This includes information on the status of fish stocks and marine ecosystems, the conditions attached to fishing authorizations as well as the contracts of fishing access, which are crucial to ensure sustainable fish trade activities.

In this context, the FiTI has been developed as a unique effort that complements and supports other national, regional and global efforts for achieving responsible fisheries governance. The purpose of the FiTI is to increase transparency and participation in fisheries governance for the benefit of a more sustainable management of marine fisheries all around the world.