



# COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES

## SUB-COMMITTEE ON FISH TRADE

### Nineteenth Session

11-15 September 2023

## BLUE PORTS INITIATIVE: RECENT PROGRESS AND WAY FORWARD

### THE BLUE PORTS INITIATIVE (BPI)

1. The 34th Session of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) highlighted the significance of inclusive and sustainable ocean economies to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.<sup>1</sup>
2. In aquatic food value chains, fishing ports are essential for fostering innovation, safeguarding the environment, and promoting social inclusion. As vital nodes, fishing ports can positively impact people's livelihoods, foster synergies, and promote local development. As outlined in COFI:FT/XVIII/2022/Inf.8<sup>2</sup>, improvements of the triple sustainability bottom lines – environmental protection, social benefits, and economic growth – are essential for a sustainable fishing port.
3. FAO Blue Ports Initiative (BPI) supports the strategic planning capacity of ports by integrating inclusiveness, competitiveness, environmental sustainability, and efficiency into development activities. This includes establishing a global network, incorporating pilot projects, and strengthening the collaboration between academia, governments, private sector and civil society.
4. The BPI is committed to assisting fishing and port authorities to contribute to a Blue Transformation<sup>3</sup>, enhancing their capacity to offer technical assistance and capacity-building initiatives and share best practices and experiences, including comprehensive guidance, through a network between ports.
5. The design and implementation of the BPI are conducted through a participatory process, including the joint drafting of a work plan and the hosting of multiple seminars to raise awareness, expand knowledge, and set the groundwork for achieving sustainability goals. The participation of multilateral organizations was also fundamental in co-designing the BPI actions and activities.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cb8322en>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.fao.org/about/meetings/cofi-sub-committee-on-fish-trade/session18-documents/en/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.fao.org/3/cc0459en/cc0459en.pdf>

## **UPDATES SINCE THE 18TH SESSION OF THE COFI SUB-COMMITTEE ON FISH TRADE**

6. Since the last session of COFI-FT, a number of capacity-building and awareness-raising activities have been conducted under the BPI umbrella, addressing climate change, seabed restoration, just transition, strengthening ports' role in Marine Spatial Planning, and improving understanding of their role in traceability

7. In January 2023, three working groups were formed to facilitate the exchange of information and devise actions and pilot projects focusing on environmental preservation, market-driven innovation, and social welfare issues.

8. In June 2023, a regional capacity-building course was conducted in Manta, Ecuador, with the collaboration of the Seafood Alliance for Legality and Traceability (SALT) and the Camara Ecuatoriana de Industriales y Procesadores de Atun (CEIPA) to identify implementation strategies for traceability tools in fishing port activities. Following the event's success, a subsequent event is planned in China.

## **THE WAY FORWARD**

9. Since its inception in 2019, the BPI has attracted a growing number of fisheries and port authorities, international organizations, and Members, demonstrating its role in promoting sustainable practices in fishing ports worldwide.

10. For the period 2023/2024, FAO plans to:

- continue to organise international, regional, and national capacity-building activities under the BPI;
- formalise various forms of future support by establishing a Global Capacity Building Programme;
- implement pilot projects on assessing landing sites, just transition, and social welfare in fishing locations;
- strive to strengthen its collaboration with the private sector to implement pilot projects and actions as a key innovation driver for fishing ports and the value chain; and
- develop a methodological tool to establish a global baseline for blue fishing ports and their social, economic, and environmental impact performance by 2024.