



# COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES

## SUB-COMMITTEE ON FISH TRADE

### Nineteenth Session

11-15 September 2023

## GLOBAL THEMES AND COOPERATION WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND BODIES

### Executive Summary

This document outlines the engagement of FAO on a number of global themes within the context of the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda). It also describes FAO's collaboration with other international organizations, agencies and entities.

### Suggested actions by the Sub-Committee

- Recognize the efforts made in the context of global areas of work towards achieving the 2030 Agenda and implementation of the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31.
- Note the progress achieved in the collaboration with other international organizations and bodies.
- Provide guidance on further areas of work carried out by FAO with relevant international organizations and bodies.

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## INTRODUCTION

1. FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, developed through an inclusive and transparent process, aims to support achieving the 2030 Agenda by transforming to More efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems for better production, better nutrition, better environment, and a better life, leaving no one behind.<sup>1</sup>

2. In this regard, FAO continues implementing integrated approaches in fisheries and aquaculture towards trade, resource management, coastal management, aquaculture, livelihoods, food security and nutrition, value chains, and food systems. These activities are closely aligned with the objectives of the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular, SDG 14 (life below water), but also SDG 2 (zero hunger), SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth), SDG 10 (reduced inequalities), SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production), and SDG 17 (partnerships for the goals).

3. In this interconnected and global context, FAO collaborates with other international organizations in the fisheries and aquaculture sector to leverage comparative advantages, achieve synergies and reduce duplication of efforts, including joint capacity building and standard-setting actions.

## GLOBAL THEMES

### *The UN Food Systems Summit +2 Stocktaking Moment (UNFSS +2 Stocktaking)*

4. The UNFSS +2 Stocktaking Moment was held at FAO headquarters in July 2023. The event was hosted by the Government of Italy and the UN Secretary-General with support from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the World Food Programme (WFP), the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub and the wider UN system. The objective was to assess the implementation of the outcomes of the United Nations Food Systems Summit held in 2021 and its contributions to the 2030 Agenda.

5. The Fisheries and Aquaculture Division (NFI) hosted a special event titled "Blue Transformation: advancing aquatic food systems for people, planet and Prosperity" to highlight the bold actions and innovative initiatives promoting transformative partnerships and action-oriented solutions in the aquatic food sector. It was organized in collaboration with the Aquatic Blue Food Coalition, the Global Action Network – Sustainable Food from the Ocean and Inland Waters for Food Security and Nutrition, the Ocean and Coastal Zones of the Climate Champions, and the CGIAR Research Program on Fish Agri-Food Systems (FISH).

### *Global Environment Facility (GEF)*

6. Since 2002, GEF has been a significant financial partner of FAO, supporting global programmes in NFI such as the Common Oceans Program<sup>2</sup> and the Coastal Fisheries Initiative (CFI)<sup>3</sup>, both of which contribute significantly to the goal of strengthening fisheries value chains, trade and investment.

7. FAO has increased the size of its GEF portfolio and is now the third-largest GEF-7 agency in terms of portfolio size. GEF-7 is the seventh replenishment of the GEF, under which new impact programmes on food systems, land use and restoration, sustainable forest management, and sustainable cities are devised to address the causes of environmental degradation. GEF is currently the second-largest donor to FAO, demonstrating the synergies between FAO's Strategic Framework and GEF's programmatic priorities.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.fao.org/strategic-framework/en>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.fao.org/in-action/commonoceans/en/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.thegef.org/projects-operations/projects/9060>

### *SDGs*

8. The 2030 Agenda and the 17 SDGs, continue to influence the strategies of countries, international organizations and civil society by establishing a policy framework to eradicate all forms of poverty, reduce inequality and combat climate change. FAO is the custodian agency for 21 SDG indicators. It is directly responsible for four indicators under SDG 14, including the development of international standards, the recommendation of methodologies and the compilation and verification of country data.

9. Monitoring SDG Indicator 14.4.1, which assesses the proportion of fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels, is complex, and national reporting is frequently constrained or limited by capacity. FAO continues developing assessment methodologies for situations with limited data and reporting national indicator data. Several capacity-building initiatives have been conducted, including a multilingual e-learning course and an online FAO stock monitoring tool that allows trainees to test various data-limited methods.

10. SDG Indicator 14.7.1 monitors the economic contribution of marine resources to national economies by calculating sustainable fisheries as a proportion of gross domestic product (GDP). It facilitates a more equitable allocation of resources to the fisheries sector by demonstrating the importance of fisheries to national economies.

11. SDG Indicator 14.6.1 is based on the responses of Members to the bi-annual questionnaire for monitoring the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) and related international instruments in order to assess their enactment degree to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing.

12. SDG Indicator 14.b.1 progress is evaluated bi-annually through the CCRF questionnaire containing three questions addressing the efforts of Members to promote and facilitate access rights to small-scale fisheries (SSF). An e-learning course is now available in six languages on how to report on SDG14.b.

### *COFI: Sub-Committee on Aquaculture (COFI:AQ)*

13. The 12th COFI:AQ Session was held in May in Hermosillo, Mexico, with over 120 delegates from 36 Members present to examine aquaculture challenges and prospects. It was acknowledged that aquaculture contributes significantly to sustainable agrifood systems and that responsible practices are critical to ensuring economic growth and social well-being.

14. The Sub-Committee approved the Voluntary Guidelines for Sustainable Aquaculture (GSA) drafted at the request of Members. The GSA provide a distinct roadmap for aquaculture development within the context of the CCRF, informing how the sector can most effectively contribute to food security, poverty alleviation, and the broader SDG objectives.

15. The summary of the session is available as document COFI:FT/XIX/2023/Inf.3.

### *Blue Transformation*

16. FAO's Blue Transformation agenda is a concerted effort in which agencies, countries, and dependent communities use existing and emerging knowledge, tools, and practices to secure and sustainably maximize the contribution of aquatic food systems to food security, nutrition and affordable healthy diets for all.<sup>4</sup>

17. Members at the 172<sup>nd</sup> Session of the FAO Council and the 43<sup>rd</sup> Session of the FAO Conference emphasized the importance of Blue Transformation for achieving sustainable aquatic food systems, including its three core objectives: (1) sustainable intensification and expansion of aquaculture to meet

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en?details=cc0459en>

the rising global demand for aquatic foods, (2) effective management of all fisheries leading to healthy stocks and equitable livelihoods, and (3) upgraded value chains to ensure aquatic food systems' social, economic and environmental viability.<sup>5</sup>

## COLLABORATION WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND BODIES

### *Codex Alimentarius, World Health Organization (WHO) and World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH)*

18. FAO and WHO continue collaborating to provide Codex Alimentarius with scientific advice. COFI:FT/XIX/2023/4 includes extensive information about this collaboration.

19. FAO cooperates with WOAH (formerly OIE) to advance the development and implementation of the Progressive Management Pathway for Improving Aquaculture Biosecurity (PMP/AB)<sup>6</sup> and supports WOAH Aquatic Animal Health Strategy 2021–2025.<sup>7</sup> WOAH also supported many FAO-organized virtual events, including the Fish-Vet Dialogue (June 2021), the Global Conference on Aquaculture (September 2021), and webinars about antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in aquaculture.

20. Under the new Antimicrobial Resistance Multi-Stakeholder Partnership Platform, inaugurated in November 2022, the Quadripartite (FAO, UN Environment Programme (UNEP), WHO, and WOAH) is working closely together to raise awareness of the threat AMR poses to humans, animals, plants, ecosystems and livelihoods.

### *International Labour Organization (ILO)*

21. Cooperation between FAO and ILO has been continuous and productive, with representatives participating in many meetings and dialogues with technical inputs and data to foster the development of technical papers, guidelines, and projects. Collaboration in the context of decent work in fisheries continues to evolve and expand in line with related global commitments, such as SDG 8, the SSF Guidelines, and others.<sup>8</sup>

22. FAO continues to mainstream the ILO Decent Work Agenda in fisheries and aquaculture through knowledge generation, advocacy in regional and global fora, and country-level policy support to achieve basic labour standards, occupational health and safety, and promoting access to social protection for fishers, fish workers and fish farmers.

23. FAO and ILO are also collaborating on the upcoming revision of the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) for the relevant codes for the fisheries and aquaculture sector and the forthcoming update of the ILO-FAO Guidance addressing child labour in fisheries and aquaculture.

24. In addition, the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) urged its Members, regional fishery bodies (RFBs) and other international organizations to share information and experiences on these issues and requested FAO to increase its role in assisting developing countries with fishing safety issues and to take the lead in establishing a global repository for fisher safety data and accident, and mortality information.<sup>9</sup>

### *International Maritime Organization (IMO)*

25. In October 2000, the Secretariats of IMO and FAO established the Joint FAO/IMO *ad hoc* Working Group on IUU fishing and Related Matters (JWG)<sup>10</sup>, following the request of the 23rd Session

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.fao.org/3/nm116en/nm116en.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <https://doi.org/10.4060/cb0582en>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.woah.org/app/uploads/2021/05/en-oie-aahs.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.fao.org/3/cb9931en/cb9931en.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc3652en>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.fao.org/iuu-fishing/tools-and-initiatives/joint-working-group-on-iuu-fishing/en/>

of COFI. Since its inception, the JWG has met four times. The discussions of the JWG focused primarily on the mutual concerns of the two organizations in the fisheries sector, including IUU fishing, safety-at-sea, labour and working conditions, and marine environment pollution. The fifth JWG meeting is planned for the end of 2023.

26. FAO, in collaboration with IMO and ILO, is developing a global study on integrating port State measures into the broader framework of port State control to assist countries in identifying mechanisms, procedures, and tools to ensure that the implementation of the Agreement on Port State Measures to prevent, deter and eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (PSMA) complements and supports the implementation of IMO Cape Town Agreement and ILO Work in Fishing Convention, and vice versa. This study development is a response to the recommendation from the last session of the JWG encouraging organizations to promote and support the development of methods to increase coordination and information sharing for national inspection and control procedures, including through technical assistance to developing countries. In addition, FAO, in collaboration with IMO and ILO, will deliver a training course on the coordinated implementation of international instruments on fisheries, labour and safety. This course will provide participants with theoretical and practical knowledge of the PSMA and other international fisheries instruments. The course will be delivered in the last quarter of 2023.

#### *Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)*

27. FAO and OECD regularly collaborate on numerous activities of mutual interest, including the OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook, fisheries and aquaculture statistics, and the Fisheries Support Estimate (FSE) database.<sup>11</sup> The annual OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook publication examines supply and demand for selected agricultural commodities over the medium term. Since 2011, it has had a distinct chapter on fish that outlines the principal results of a fish model jointly developed by FAO and the OECD. The 2023 issue, released in June, provides an outlook for 2023–2032.<sup>12</sup>

28. FAO and OECD have collaborated extensively to streamline the collection of fisheries and aquaculture statistics in order to reduce the reporting burden and better harmonize disseminated statistics. In approximately 47 countries, the number of fishers, fish farmers and fish processors is being determined by compiling joint data collection on employment in the sector. FAO provides the OECD with statistics on aquaculture production, inland capture fisheries and trade of aquatic products directly, and the OECD has ceased independently collecting these data to avoid duplication of effort.

#### *United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)*

29. FAO's partnership with UNCTAD on fisheries and aquaculture trade-related issues continues, with the FAO Blue Transformation extending the partnership to include additional sub-sectors. FAO, UNCTAD and UNEP also collaborate through the Inter-Agency Joint Plan of Action (JPoA) to advance SDG 14 trade targets (targets 14.4, 14.6, 14.7 and 14.b) by improving trade and trade-related policies that ensure food security and preserve and sustain oceans, living and marine resources, and livelihoods.<sup>13</sup>

30. FAO and UNCTAD co-hosted the 4th Oceans Forum on Trade-related Aspects of SDG 14 in April 2022.<sup>14</sup> The Forum focused on the seaweed sector, fisheries subsidies reform, non-tariff measures (NTMs), social sustainability, decarbonization of shipping and maritime supply chains, plastic litter and other ocean waste.

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<sup>11</sup> [https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/agriculture-and-food/oecd-review-of-fisheries-2022\\_9c3ad238-en](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/agriculture-and-food/oecd-review-of-fisheries-2022_9c3ad238-en)

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cc3020en>

<sup>13</sup> <https://unctad.org/project/inter-agency-joint-plan-action-achieving-trade-related-targets-sdg-14>

<sup>14</sup> <https://unctad.org/meeting/4th-oceans-forum-trade-related-aspects-sustainable-development-goal-14>

*United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD)*

31. The continued collaboration between UNSD and FAO was strengthened further, including sharing trade statistics and the revision of the Central Product Classification (CPC). FAO played a key role in the last revision (version CPC 2.1) and has presented a new proposal envisaged in the current revision cycle to improve further the classification's breakdown of fisheries and aquaculture products.

*World Customs Organization (WCO)*

32. FAO has been working with the WCO to improve the quality and coverage of the trade of aquatic products by enhancing the specification for species and product forms in the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (HS). This partnership mainly consists of responding to technical queries presented by the WCO Secretariat and preventing the deletion of codes on aquatic products with a trade value below USD 50 million by sub-heading.

33. FAO and WCO developed the second edition of the GLOBEFISH publication "HS Codes for Fisheries and Aquaculture Products"<sup>15</sup>. The first edition was revised, updated and expanded, including 2022 nomenclature. This new edition also contains photos of the most commercially-important species, relevant information and species singularities.

*World Trade Organization (WTO)*

34. The recent approval of the WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies<sup>16</sup> at the WTO 12th Ministerial Conference in Geneva in June 2022 set a new standard for the sustainability of fish resources and FAO's role in the international context. FAO and the WTO are collaborating to assist WTO members in implementing the Agreement based on Members requests and in accordance with their mandate, especially those involving the three pillars of prohibition: subsidies contributing to overfished stocks and to IUU fishing and involving fishing in unregulated areas outside national jurisdiction. FAO and WTO are currently exploring the best ways to assist countries in implementing, adopting and complying with the new rules.

35. As in previous phases of the negotiations on fisheries subsidies, FAO will continue to support the WTO on fisheries subsidies negotiations within the WTO mandate, including addressing overcapacity, overfishing, and special and differentiated treatment for developing countries.

*UN Global Compact*

36. FAO collaborates routinely with the Ocean Stewardship Coalition of the UN Global Compact in areas of shared interest. FAO contributions include developing a collection of best practices, common challenges, solutions and experiences from the aquatic food sector to assist companies in setting a science-based emission reduction target.<sup>17</sup> FAO and the UN Global Compact also partnered on several side events at key global conferences on aquatic food systems.

*FISH INFONetwork (FIN)<sup>18</sup>*

37. FIN, with the support of FAO GLOBEFISH,<sup>19</sup> is the principal open source of market and trade information, releasing periodical analytical reports for all nodes of the fisheries and aquaculture value chains and offering technical assistance to governments, industry and academia, among others.

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.fao.org/3/cc6347en/cc6347en.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> <https://docs.wto.org/dol2fe/Pages/SS/directdoc.aspx?filename=q:/WT/MIN22/33.pdf&Open=True>

<sup>17</sup> <https://unglobalcompact.org/library/6050>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.fao.org/in-action/globefish/background/fishinfonetwork/en/>

<sup>19</sup> [www.globefish.org](http://www.globefish.org)

EUROFISH<sup>20</sup>, INFOFISH,<sup>21</sup> INFOPÊCHE,<sup>22</sup> INFOPESCA,<sup>23</sup> INFOSAMAK<sup>24</sup> and INFOYU are the six regional networks constituting the global FIN, covering more than 85 countries.<sup>25</sup>

38. The units of the FISH INFONetwork provide a vast array of information products and support in their regional contexts, frequently with the assistance of FAO GLOBEFISH. The units provide information, promote events, discussions, and information sharing on technological innovation, product specifications, processing methods, quality standards, and market requirements; conduct regional fisheries and aquaculture economic analysis, market development, and value chain integration; and offer advisory services in a variety of fields involving post-harvest activities and sustainability.

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<sup>20</sup> <https://eurofish.dk/>

<sup>21</sup> <http://infofish.org/v4/>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.infopeche.co/en>

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.infopesca.org/>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.infosamak.org/english/>

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.fao.org/3/nb253en/nb253en.pdf>