

COFI 34; Agenda 11-Climate Change and Other; Intervention (Feb.4)

(as delivered)

- **Canada supports the FAO's work to address climate change impacts on coastal communities most vulnerable to climate change. Last year we provided \$2 million to a project that will strengthen small-scale fisheries in the Pacific Islands. This project will help to increase the resilience and adaptability of local fish harvesters in order to protect their livelihoods and food security.**
- **We commend our colleagues at the FAO for producing an excellent technical report, *Adaptive management of fisheries in response to climate change*, released on Monday, just in time for COFI.**
- **This report, which is the result of an expert workshop that Canada co-hosted with the FAO in 2019, identifies good practices for adapting fisheries management regimes to be more flexible and responsive to unforeseen environmental and ecosystem changes that result from climate change.**
- **Building on this important work, Canada sees a clear need for more practical guidance on mainstreaming climate change considerations in fisheries management. Canada recognizes that there are data gaps that need to be addressed before guidelines could be produced.**

- **We propose that the FAO take an iterative approach in further identifying and carrying out the work that needs to be undertaken as a basis for the future development of technical guidelines on adaptive management of fisheries in response to climate change.**
- **To support this approach, Canada is prepared to work with the FAO and interested COFI members to establish a roadmap towards the development of guidelines, and to help to build on the momentum of this critical work being done by the FAO.**

(Marine debris and Plastics)

- **Another important and related priority for Canada is the reduction of marine plastic debris and microplastics in our oceans. This was a central theme of our 2018 G7 Presidency and resulted in the release of the Ocean Plastics Charter.**
- **In 2018, Canada also became a signatory to Global Ghost Gear Initiative, which aims to reduce the harmful effects of ghost gear on fish stocks, marine mammals and as a potential navigational hazard.**
- **Canada supports the work of the FAO and the development of a database to record information relating to ALDFG and applaud the IMO's led GloLitter Partnership Program's examination of opportunities for the reduction of plastics used in the fishery sector.**

(Underwater Noise)

- **We also note with concern the trend of rising levels of underwater noise in many parts of the world's oceans, which has detrimental impacts on marine biodiversity.**
- **Canada supports the FAO's current efforts to deepen the understanding of the socio-economic impacts of underwater noise on fish resources, and we agree that there is a need for more evidence-based tools to identify and mitigate impacts of underwater ocean noise on marine ecosystems and biodiversity.**