

## EUROPEAN UNION

*(Shared competence – EU vote)*

**Item 11. Addressing climate change and other environment matters in Fisheries and aquaculture**

### UNION POSITION

**(on behalf of the EU and its Member States)**

- I have the honor to speak on behalf of the EU and its Member States.
- Fisheries management needs to **increase both resilience and adaptability** to climate change. The **fisheries and aquaculture sector needs to play its part** in reducing greenhouse gas emissions alongside other sectors.
- The EU and its Member States find it appropriate to consider **financial support for a transition to more carbon-efficient fisheries**. The use of **lower-carbon or zero-carbon fuels and the use of fishing gears and fleet-wide fishing strategies that provide more fish per tonne of CO<sub>2</sub> emitted** is also to be considered and promoted.
- We welcome FAO's work on the **impacts of climate on fisheries and aquaculture** and call on FAO to continue **helping Member Countries in their Nationally Determined Contributions and their National Adaptation Plans**. In this respect, it will be important that FAO **strengthens synergies and cooperation with the UNFCCC and the wider UN system**.
- We welcome that **Regional Fisheries Management Organisations and Arrangements are increasingly integrating climate change** into their work.
- In view of the profound and potentially irreversible impacts of climate change on the unique ecosystems and marine biodiversity of the waters around Antarctica, the creation of large-scale **marine protected areas in the Southern Ocean by CCAMLR** is especially relevant. In this context, the EU and its Member States, have proposed to create two MPAs in the Southern Ocean, which would constitute some of the biggest marine protected areas of the planet.
- We are **determined to achieve an agreement** on these proposals and take the opportunity to call on those CCAMLR Parties attending the COFI to agree on these MPAs.
- **Aquaculture production** also needs to **increase its resilience and adaptability**. In this respect, FAO could work on guidance but the **Guidelines on Sustainable Aquaculture** should also cover these aspects.
- In relation to **abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear**, it is essential to continue promoting the **Voluntary Guidelines** and the **provision of capacity building at RFMO and national levels**. It is also important to **advocate for them in other UN fora**, such as the IMO when considering for

instance pollution from marine plastic litter stemming from ships, including fishing vessels.

- We take note of the outcomes of the **four regional workshops** on best practices to prevent and reduce abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear and commend the work done in this regard. The **report includes a certain number of recommendations that are going further** than the Voluntary Guidelines. It therefore **requires further consideration** and discussions.

**11.1. Implementation of the FAO Strategy on Biodiversity Mainstreaming across fisheries and aquaculture** (*Shared competence – EU vote*)

(The “Draft 2021-23 Action plan of the FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors” will be discussed under this item)

**UNION POSITION** (on behalf of the EU and its Member States)

- I have the honor to speak on behalf of the EU and its Member States.
- The EU and its Member States are committed to **enhance the implementation, integration and mainstreaming** of actions for biodiversity in relevant policies, including fisheries and aquaculture, at all levels.
- The Declaration on Fisheries and Aquaculture Sustainability that we endorsed earlier this week should guide us to **prepare the mainstreaming of biodiversity** in fisheries and aquaculture **in line with the future post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework** to be endorsed at CBD COP 15.
- Within its mandate, **FAO should actively support** building the monitoring framework for the future goals and targets.
- The expansion of the current **Marine Protected Areas and Other Effective Conservation Measures coverage to 30%** as suggested in the revised draft post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework is an **ambitious and necessary move** if we take biodiversity and climate crises seriously.
- We should also draw the lessons from our failure to achieve Aichi targets and put **stronger emphasis on effective management of MPAs**, including of fishing activities in MPAs. **Effective management is probably the best tool for biodiversity conservation and avoid MPAs from becoming paper parks.**
- We believe that blending Area Based Management Tools including Marine Protected Areas and **Other Effective Conservation Measures** is a good solution to ensure a flexible approach.
- In this respect, we encourage **FAO to develop further the work on OECMs with the CBD, UNEP and other relevant organisations.**

- We also lend our support for the **Guidelines to prevent and reduce bycatch of marine mammals in capture fisheries**. These guidelines are particularly important and relevant in addressing cetacean bycatch. We therefore also stress the **need for countries and RFMOs to implement the methods outlined in the guidelines** and **welcome the opportunities that the guidelines provide for collaboration with intergovernmental organisations**, such as the International Whaling Commission and others and also among countries on **building capacity to address bycatch** with proven solutions and approaches.
  - The **FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity** and the Action Plan for its implementation provide a sound basis for important work in the FAO.
  - Its implementation will depend on effective and efficient **synergies between the CBD and other conventions and UN processes**, including FAO. Therefore, the FAO has to **continue collaboration with existing bodies and initiatives** and partnerships with all relevant international organizations and instruments.
  - It will be important that the FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity and its Action Plan be **updated in response to new global measures**, in particular those arising from the Convention on Biological Diversity COP 15.
  - Moreover, **fisheries and aquaculture practices** that have an effective and proven positive impact on biodiversity should be promoted.
  - Finally, we believe that, when envisaging biodiversity conservation, we should **promote a holistic approach to cumulative impacts**; thus not only look at impact of fisheries activities but also of other human activities.
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