

EUROPEAN UNION

Item 7. Contributions of Fisheries and aquaculture to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

(“Vision and Strategy for FAO’s Work in Nutrition” 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.
- Considering EU’s progress in implementing the SDGs, and starting with **fisheries management (SDG 14.4)**, the EU Common Fisheries Policy is clearly bearing **positive results**. Many EU fish stocks are in their best shape since decades.
- With regard to the **Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY)** target, we have been making steady progress in setting sustainable Total Allowable Catches.
- We have also made significant progress with the so-called **regionalisation**. We have now 4 new-generation Multiannual Plans for the North Sea, the Baltic Sea, the Western Waters in the Atlantic ocean, and for demersal in the Western Mediterranean. These Plans provide, among other aspects, the timeline for the implementation of the MSY objective.
- On the **WTO negotiations on fisheries subsidies (SDG 14.6)**, the EU remains committed to reaching an ambitious agreement as soon as possible.
- On **small-scale fisheries (SDG 14 B)**, the EU Common Fisheries Policy contains a **number of provisions designed to take on board the specificities of small-scale coastal fisheries**, including through **dedicated financial support**.

Vision and strategy for FAO’s work on nutrition

- The EU and its Member States welcome the **Vision and Strategy for FAO’s Work in Nutrition** as well as the consultative efforts taken in developing it. This work is **highly significant** in achieving the **2030 Agenda**, considering the added urgency due to the **COVID-19 pandemic**.
- We acknowledge the **comprehensive nature of the Vision and Strategy for FAO’s Work in Nutrition** and its articulation of the **central role of healthy diets**.
- FAO’s work in nutrition is also about **recognising, harnessing and engaging with various established nutrition initiatives**, and multilateral movements, like the Committee on World Food Security and the Scaling Up Nutrition

movement that have accumulated policy guidance, research, operational knowledge and expertise.

- It is also the role of FAO to identify how the most **marginalised can access healthier food systems** and how those systems can be transformed to **reduce inequalities**.
- The importance to consider **gender and equity issues** should come out more strongly in the strategy.
- The SOFIA report makes clear that fish is crucial to a nutritious diet in many areas. Fish and fish products are recognised not only as **healthy food**, but also as some of the least **impactful on the natural environment**, when appropriately managed. We therefore wish the strategy to **emphasise better the precious contribution of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture** to eliminating hunger and malnutrition.
- According to SOFIA, the **levels of fish consumption in Africa remain low and will likely deteriorate**. Therefore, the strategy should **include actions to improve the availability, accessibility and consumption of fish by vulnerable consumers**, with particular emphasis on women and children.
- We take this opportunity to request FAO to continue providing full support to the preparatory process towards the **2021 UN Food Systems Summit** and to bring fisheries and aquaculture fully into the debate.
- Beyond their **relevance to diets and nutrition**, sustainable food systems play an important role in promoting **environmental sustainability** (e.g. climate change adaptation and mitigation, biodiversity conservation, pollution prevention), **inclusivity** (e.g. viability for small-scale fishers and fish farmers, gender equity) and **productivity** (e.g. increased production of nutritious foods, economic development).
- These aspects of food systems **interconnect**, making **hard choices** about trade-offs inevitable. But these interconnections provide **opportunities for win-wins and co-benefits**.
- We also reiterate the need for a **holistic approach** in how fisheries and aquaculture contribute to nutrition. There is a need to **avoid that the increasing global demand for fishmeal and fish oil as ingredients for feed for aquaculture deprives poor populations from access to nutritious food**.