

Agenda Item 11.1 Implementation of the FAO Strategy on Biodiversity Mainstreaming across fisheries and aquaculture

This statement is on behalf of the Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF) and The Pew Charitable Trusts (Pew).

Our collective priority is to ensure 100% of the global ocean is sustainably managed. As enshrined within Aichi Target 11 and the proposed 30 by 30 target within the draft text for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), marine protected areas and other effective conservation measures (OECMs) will be critical to this effort.

EJF and Pew support the spirit of Information Paper 15.3 which lays out FAO's OECM workplan, and notes the FAO's proposal to coordinate several regional workshops so that members and key ocean stakeholders can better identify, establish, monitor and report area-based management tools in a fisheries context. We note that these initial workshops will support the FAO's development of "guidance for the establishment and management of OECMs in the fisheries sector that complements existing non-sectoral guidance".

At this important juncture, prior to the initiation of the FAO's OECMs work, we would like to underscore how critically important it is that any OECMs fisheries guidance developed by the FAO be fully aligned with existing UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) OECM definition and decisions, including CBD COP Decision 14/8 – explicitly, OECMs must; A) "Achieve positive and sustained long-term outcomes for the **in situ** conservation of biodiversity" by "reducing or eliminating existing, or potential threats", and; B) "Deliver biodiversity outcomes of comparable importance to and complementary with those of protected areas".

Under this criteria, many area-based fisheries management measures will not qualify as OECMs. Area-based biodiversity conservation and the conservation of ecosystem functions and services requires a systems-based rather than species-based approach to conservation. Pew and EJF strongly recommend that any future guidance from the FAO on OECMs also account for existing IUCN WCPA non-sectoral guidance. Otherwise, it risks supporting designations of OECMs which do not bring about the outcomes intended in CBD Aichi Target 11 nor its likely new iteration calling on at least 30% of the global ocean to be protected and conserved by 2030.