

Agenda Item 7 Contribution of fisheries and aquaculture to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The Pew Charitable Trusts (Pew) deeply appreciates the FAO's continued contributions to achieving the sustainable development goals (SDGs) and monitoring progress towards these important goals.

With regard to SDG target 14.4 (By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible, at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics), we share the FAO's concern that the sustainability of world fishery resources has continued to decline. While the rate of decline has slowed, much more needs to be done to achieve this SDG. We fully agree that "more efforts are needed to restore stocks to biologically sustainable levels through the implementation of effective management measures."

We are therefore disappointed that the proposed actions to progress towards this indicator revolve around improving data collection, monitoring, and reporting. While there is a clear need for such support, improving data collection and reporting alone will not be enough to achieve SDG 14.4. We strongly encourage the FAO and its Members to broaden and accelerate their efforts to establish and enforce evidence-based measures to sustainably manage all fish stocks and end IUU fishing. This should start with the development of guidelines on best practices for regulating, monitoring and controlling transshipment, as discussed in more detail under Agenda Item 9, and could also include capacity development for Members and RFMOs to move from traditional stock assessment to harvest strategies or management procedures; increased attention to the responsibilities of the flag State, and to transparent information exchange between States, in fighting IUU fishing; promotion of enhanced practices and coordination across regional fisheries management organizations; and a renewed focus on engaging small island developing States and least developed countries in all matters of concern to COFI.

Pew also strongly encourages the FAO and its Members to support a World Trade Organization decision in 2021 to eliminate harmful fisheries subsidies per SDG 14.6.