

# COFI 35 – WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE PROCEDURE

## RECEIVED COMMENTS

### A – BASIC INFORMATION

<b>Document Number</b>	COFI/2022/9
<b>Document Title</b>	Developments in global and regional processes related to fisheries and aquaculture
<b>Commenting International Organization</b>	The Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea
<b>Referred paragraph numbers</b> (if applicable)	-

### B – COMMENT RECEIVED

The Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea serves as the Secretariat of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement, as well as General Assembly processes on oceans and the law of the sea, including fisheries. In this context, we have the pleasure to provide information on some international processes and fora relevant to the work of the Committee on Fisheries.

#### **Fifteenth round of Informal Consultations of States Parties to the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement**

The fifteenth round of informal consultations, originally scheduled in 2020, was held at United Nations Headquarters from 17 to 19 May 2022. Pursuant to resolution 76/71, for two days the fifteenth round of informal consultations focused on the topic "Implementation of an ecosystem approach to fisheries management"; one day served as a preparatory meeting for the resumed Review Conference on the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement, which will be held in 2023.

The Chairperson's report of the meeting, as well as the written contributions of states, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations on the implementation of an ecosystem approach to fisheries management, are all available on the Division website, together with the presentations made at the meeting.

#### **General Assembly review of actions of states and RFMOs to address the impacts of bottom fishing on vulnerable marine ecosystems and the long-term sustainability of deep-sea fish stocks (2022)**

In resolution 75/89, the General Assembly decided to postpone from 2020 to 2022 its further review of the actions taken by states and regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements in response to paragraphs 113, 117 and 119 to 124 of resolution 64/72; paragraphs 121, 126, 129, 130 and 132 to 134 of resolution 66/68; and paragraphs 156, 171, 175, 177 to 188 and 219 of resolution 71/123. The postponement is designed to ensure the effective implementation of the measures therein and to make further recommendations, where necessary. As per past practice, this review, which will take place in the context of the informal consultations on the draft annual resolution on sustainable fisheries in November, will be informed by the Secretary-General's report and a two-day multistakeholder workshop.

This very productive workshop was held from 2 to 3 August this year. Participants included States, regional fisheries management organizations, industry representatives and non-governmental organizations, with an interest in bottom fisheries. The Workshop served as a forum to exchange views amongst these different stakeholders. The summary of the moderator of this workshop, as well as other information is available at:

[www.un.org/Depts/los/bottom\\_fishing\\_workshop.htm](http://www.un.org/Depts/los/bottom_fishing_workshop.htm).

### **The regular process for global reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment, including socioeconomic aspects (Regular Process)**

The Regular Process is beginning a series of regional workshops, the first of which is to be held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania from 19–27 July, one will take place next week in Jamaica and one in November in Argentina. Workshops will take place through to the end of 2022 and aim to identify key priorities for assessment(s) to be conducted during the third cycle, as well as building capacity on ocean governance and the science policy interface.

Participation is key in this process, as we strive to have a balanced array of voices across geographic regions, disciplines and perspectives. We therefore strongly encourage widespread engagement, including by qualified female and early career candidates, to apply to participate in the workshops and contribute to the development of the third cycle assessments.

The invitation is open to all delegates to ensure that the World Ocean Assessment(s) produced under the third cycle:

- deliver the key information needed for decision-making;
- support broad dissemination of scientific knowledge;
- that the Regular Process continues to contribute to global action, strengthening the science–policy interface and supporting the delivery of Sustainable Development Goal 14 (Life Below Water) and its associated targets; and
- contributes to achieving the other goals of the 2030 Agenda.

The Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS) has launched its new social media channels to support outreach and engagement surrounding the Regular Process and the World Ocean Assessment. Together with a Communications Consultant, our team has launched a public awareness campaign on Instagram to amplify the key findings of the recently released, second World Ocean Assessment (WOAII).

### **Intergovernmental Conference on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (General Assembly resolution 72/249)**

Delegations gathered at UNHQ from 15-26 August, pursuant to General Assembly decision 76/564, for a fifth session of the Intergovernmental Conference on marine biodiversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (“BBNJ”) with the aim of concluding a new agreement under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction. The session was convened in addition to the four sessions initially mandated by the General Assembly in its resolution 72/249. The fourth session had taken place in March this year following two consecutive postponements resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The negotiations have continued to center around the four-part package of issues, outlined in resolution 72/249, namely: (i) marine genetic resources, including questions on the sharing of benefits; (ii) measures such as area-based management tools, including marine protected areas; (iii) environmental impact assessments; and (iv) capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology; as well as cross-cutting issues such as institutional arrangements and means to review and monitor implementation.

Unprecedented strides were made at the fifth session towards bridging the remaining gaps on these extremely complex issues. Yet, delegations, having run out of time at this session, agreed that more time was needed to finalize the agreement. The fifth session will therefore resume in the near future at a date to be determined.

### **United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea**

The Twenty-second Meeting of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea was held in New York from 6 to 10 June 2022. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 76/72, in its deliberations on the Report of the Secretary-General on oceans and the law of the sea, the meeting focused its discussions on the theme “Ocean observing”. As per past practice, regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements were invited to provide contributions to the report of the Secretary-General on the topic and to participate in the meeting. All relevant documents for this meeting, including the Secretary-General’s report on the topic of focus and the contributions to this report received from Member States, United Nations agencies, programmes and bodies, as well as other intergovernmental organizations, can be found on the website of the Division at: [www.un.org/depts/los/consultative\\_process/consultative\\_process.htm](http://www.un.org/depts/los/consultative_process/consultative_process.htm).

### **General Assembly resolutions on oceans and the law of the sea and sustainable fisheries**

The General Assembly, as the global institution with the competence to undertake a consideration and review of developments in ocean affairs and the law of the sea, considers and adopts resolutions on oceans and the law of the sea and sustainable fisheries on an annual basis. These resolutions contain important provisions relevant to the work of FAO and the conservation and sustainable use of marine living resources at all levels.

