

Australian Intervention

Item 7 – Combatting Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing

Australia recognises that IUU fishing continues to be a critical global issue, which contributes to undermining responsible fisheries management and also impacts livelihoods, food security and marine environments.

Australia is a longstanding supporter of action to combat IUU fishing and we welcome the core role the FAO is playing, including through the Agreement on Port State Measures, the FAO Compliance Agreement, initiatives to promote global information exchange, and the expansion of the Technical Guidelines on methodologies and indicators to determine the magnitude of IUU.

Australia was a key participant in the Technical Consultations which led to the development of the Voluntary Guidelines for Transshipment and we can endorse the guidelines. We can also endorse the revised terms of reference of the joint FAO/ILO/IMO Ad Hoc Working Group on IUU Fishing and Related Matters.

Regarding the Standard Specifications for the Marking and Identification of Fishing Vessels, Australia would be interested in understanding the current uptake of the Standard and note the potential limitation to the use of IMO numbers for identification given many vessels are not eligible or required to have an IMO number. Australia welcomes new IUU initiatives but would be interested in an assessment of the priority of this initiative against other IUU initiatives.

COFI members have and will continue to play an important role in combatting IUU fishing with new ideas and initiatives and Australia recognises this is the intention of Norway's proposal.

Australia agrees that vessel tracking systems is one of a number of tools that can support action to combat IUU fishing and is open to a technical workshop to further discuss relevant issues on vessel tracking, including mechanisms to share information between governments.

In concluding, Australia will continue our strong commitment to addressing IUU. However, we note further action is needed in cooperation and information sharing, building country capabilities tailored to country contexts, and to strengthen monitoring, control and surveillance regimes. We encourage members and the FAO to continue to support such

measures to reduce the instances of IUU fishing and preserve the sustainability of fish stocks.