

35th Session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries

Written Correspondence Procedure – Input from Members

General Statement

Member	Comments
Canada	<p>Canada would like to thank the Chair and the Secretariat for organizing the 35th Session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries. It is a pleasure to have the chance to meet in person once again, while also connecting with our fellow members and observers signing on from around the world, as supported by the hybrid modality. We look forward to productive discussions over the week ahead.</p> <p>Canada would like to further thank the FAO for its work to develop this year's <i>State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture</i> (SOFIA) report. The technical and policy expertise maintained by FAO in relation to fisheries and aquaculture should remain as a key function of the organization, and we continue to see the benefit of expanding this expertise to other international fora in light of the broadening global agenda on oceans conservation and sustainability, where specific fisheries expertise will not only be beneficial, but necessary.</p> <p>This year's COFI meeting is taking place during the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture. Canada has a diverse small-scale fishing sector ranging from subsistence fishing in remote areas to highly organized inshore commercial fleets, and recognizes the benefits of supporting the participation of small-scale harvesters in fisheries conservation and management activities. We welcome the FAO's ongoing work to support small-scale fisheries, and look forward to discussing at COFI how to continue and build on progress to date.</p> <p>Canada believes that the sustainable management of fish stocks and protection of marine ecosystems must be shared priorities as they underpin global food security, economic stability, and ultimately peace and security.</p>

Illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing is antithetical to those values. Canada commends the progress made on the Global Record of Fishing Vessels, as well as the ongoing global progress to implement the Agreement on Port State Measures. We are particularly supportive of the work recently completed to develop Voluntary Guidelines for Transshipment. Canada encourages the Committee to endorse the Guidelines this week and, moving forward, to continue this collaboration as we coordinate our implementation efforts.

The effects of climate change on fisheries, and how to understand, mitigate and adapt to these effects, are ongoing priorities for Canada. We are seeing such impacts in our own fisheries and worldwide, and can only expect them to intensify. Canada continues to use the best available scientific evidence and to apply the precautionary and ecosystem approaches when making fisheries and ecosystem management decisions in the face of climate change. We welcome the opportunity provided by COFI to discuss FAO's continued work in this area, including in seeking ways to account for climate change in fisheries management.

With respect to the governance of the Committee itself, we appreciate the efforts of the Working Group on the establishment of a Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management. Canada would welcome such a Sub-Committee in order to provide ample opportunity to discuss the wide range of complex issues that arise in fisheries management, warranting a specialized forum. We appreciate the proposal provided by the Working Group and hope that COFI will agree this week to move forward and operationalize the proposal.

As a responsible fishing nation, Canada places great emphasis on the sustainability of the fisheries and aquaculture sector, not only in its own waters but worldwide. Canada is grateful to have this opportunity to work with all delegations at COFI to make progress on these issues over the coming week, and to plan for our work together going forward.