

5. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

1. In a context of exacerbation of food insecurity as a consequence of the COVID pandemic, the war in Ukraine, climate change, biodiversity losses and environmental degradation, the EU and its Member States reiterate the importance of the contribution of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture to food security and nutrition, to the transformation of food systems, as well as to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including synergies and interlinkages with other SDGs beyond and within SDG 14.
2. Turning to the SDG 14 targets for which FAO is the custodian agency, we regret that the international community continues to miss those that were set for 2020. Nevertheless, we acknowledge a couple of positive and encouraging elements that indicate that we can achieve more and better.
3. Considering fisheries management (SDG 14.4), our committee is called upon endorsing the FAO Voluntary Guidelines on Transshipment resulting from the FAO Technical Consultation held in June. The text agreed is a sound outcome and will certainly constitute for the international community – States, RFMO/As, international and regional organisations – an ambitious and practical reference document to regulate, monitor and control transshipment operations.
4. 2022 is a busy year for fisheries management at EU level. The European Commission is due to publish its report on the EU Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) by the end of the year. The objectives of this report are to address the functioning of the CFP and to look at how we can strengthen its implementation, considering new challenges.
5. A second encouraging element is the achievement of an agreement in the WTO on harmful fisheries subsidies, in line with SDG 14.6. A dedicated trust fund to provide technical assistance and capacity building for developing countries was also announced, to which the EU is fully committed.
6. The WTO agreement on harmful fisheries subsidies is directly related to another major driver for unsustainable management of fishing resources: fishing overcapacity. While the strict adherence to the principles in the WTO agreement should ameliorate the status of some stocks, we call on all flag States to also take measures to eliminate excess fishing capacity, in line with their international obligations.
7. Work must continue to reinforce the WTO agreement and complete the negotiations by addressing meaningful disciplines related to overfishing and overcapacity, so that we can deliver on the complete mandate of UN SDG 14.6.
8. On small-scale fisheries (SDG 14 B), the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture is an important recognition of the millions of small-scale fishers, fish farmers and fish workers who provide healthy and nutritious food to billions of people and contribute to achieving Zero Hunger. We will come to that under agenda item 6.
9. Finally, the EU and its Member States have contributed significantly to the many ocean commitments made by members of the international community at the One Ocean Conference in Brest, the Our Ocean Conference in Palau and the UN Ocean Conference in Lisbon. These ocean commitments, in addition to addressing all aspects of SDG 14, will contribute to achieving many other SDGs and advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.