



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



General Fisheries Commission  
for the Mediterranean  
Commission générale des pêches  
pour la Méditerranée



## Declaring an International Day for the fight against illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing



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In the global context of a growing world population and persistent hunger issues, fishery resources have emerged as an important commodity towards the achievement of food security. However, efforts by the international community to ensure the sustainability of fisheries are being seriously compromised by illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing activities.

Reportedly, IUU fishing activities are responsible for the loss of 11–26 million tonnes of fish each year, which is estimated to have an economic value of US\$10–23 billion. To curtail this impact, Target 14.4 of the Sustainable Development Goals adopted in 2015 by the UN General Assembly, specifically urges the international community to "effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices" by 2020. Meeting this ambitious target requires strong awareness-raising efforts to draw the attention of the general public to the negative impacts of IUU fishing activities, an activity in which FAO has been actively engaged.

At its thirty-ninth session in 2015, the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean of the FAO (GFCM) proposed that an initiative be launched to declare an International Day for the Fight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing. Following extensive consultations, a proposal has been submitted to the attention of the thirty-second session of FAO Committee of Fisheries (COFI). This initiative could not be timelier as the world's first internationally binding instrument specifically targeting IUU fishing, the FAO Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing, has entered into force on 5 June 2016.

Upon its approval by COFI, the proposal should be submitted to the FAO Council and subsequently to the FAO Conference in July 2017 for endorsement. Once it is adopted as a resolution, the FAO Director-General will approach the UN Secretary-General with a view to declaring an international day at the UN level and including it in the UN calendar of international days and observances.

Your contribution to eradicating IUU fishing is crucial in order to safeguard living marine resources for present and future generations. **Lend your support to the declaration of an International Day for the Fight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing!**