

# Benefits of decent employment in fisheries and aquaculture

Vigo, 9 October 2015, 9:00 – 10:30

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## Working for blue growth: Social responsibility in the fish business – a win-win situation for all

### Guiding questions for discussion

#### 1. Background and scope of the 2015 Vigo Dialogue event

The Vigo Dialogue Event in 2014 highlighted the wide range of issues and problems of poor working conditions in the fisheries and aquaculture sector, which include forced labor, child labour, excessive working hours, dangerous work, low wages, low number of formal contractual arrangements, discrimination of women and migrant workers, low levels of social protection, poor representation, association and organization among fish workers, insufficient social dialogue, lack of application or enforcement of national and international labour standards in the fish sector. The participants recognized the diversity of stakeholders concerned with labour issues in the fish sector ranging from suppliers, producers (fishers & farmers), processors, retailers, and consumers in addition to civil society and governmental institutions.

The overall objective of the 2015 event is to continue the dialogue between governments, private sector and civil society on improving labor conditions in fisheries and aquaculture. The 2015 Dialogue will focus on the **benefits and incentives** of addressing and facilitating decent employment in fisheries and aquaculture for the different stakeholders, as they may include:

- Better reputation for companies: fulfilling consumers' expectations (working conditions are good, decent and fair) → good reputation → higher level of CSR recognized → advantages in marketing → increase in revenues and market position;
- Competitive marketing: setting examples and targets for the sector;
- "Marketing" for decent work is an important tool for social development: it is important for bettering livelihoods, education, health standards, food security and poverty reduction of many stakeholders like small-scale fishers, fish farmers or people working in fish processing;
- In the long run, more efficiency and less costs in production and operation through improved working and living conditions for fish workers;
- Fish workers will appreciate decent labour environment and will be more likely to contribute to further enterprise development and expansion, product quality, and presence at the workplace (less sick leave/accidents, etc.);
- Avoiding or reducing accidents on fishing vessels, fish farms and processing factories;
- Healthier and "happier" fish workers and their families, for example, through career opportunities;
- Good reputation for the whole sector when seen to be promoting and enabling decent work conditions of fish workers;
- Recognition of "doing the right thing" by contributing to sufficient income of fish workers, employment creation, secure employment, poverty reduction in local communities or along the value chain;
- Enterprise will enjoy greater acceptance in local communities when seen to provide for decent work conditions of local fish workers;
- Ensuring fish workers' rights and decent work conditions on fishing vessels can contribute to combating IUU fishing and better management of fishery resources

Growth of decent work opportunities is both means and end for sustainable development, as recognized by the recent International Conference on Financing for Development. In its outcome document, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, governments committed to "*Generating full and productive employment and decent work for all, and promoting micro, small and medium-sized enterprises*".

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## 2. Suggestions for discussion and presentation

Share your experiences with decent employment: good practices and success stories in small scale fisheries, industrial fisheries, processing industry, aquaculture.

Which benefits do you realize with decent work conditions?

What incentives should be in place for promoting decent work in the fisheries sector, in fish factories, on board fishing vessels, on fish farms? Which means are necessary to implement decent employment (e.g. knowledge, enabling institutional environment, financial support...)?

How would you like to promote decent work? What do you think would be the added value of improving labour conditions? Have you already taken actions in that regard?

Based on your experience, what approach or strategy is most promising to introduce or facilitate decent employment conditions? What do you see as a priority/start to address decent employment issues?

Would it strengthen labour issues if they were included in labels and certification schemes, similar to ecolabels?

Who are key players in improving working conditions? What are the roles of governments, industry, CSOs/NGOs in enhancing benefits and providing incentives on decent employment issues?

Which actions and incentives in your own institution / company / organization would help promote decent employment?

Which actions should other players / institutions / companies / organizations take to promote decent employment?

How can we improve dialogue and collaboration on work conditions and labour rights, and on related benefits and incentives? What do you think is necessary for cooperation with other stakeholders? What kind of cooperation you think is needed (partnerships, projects, joint-activities, and others)? What would you be working on in that/those cooperation(s) specifically?

Do you think there are collective actions the industry can take (those present in Vigo for example)? How can we work together to promote decent employment ? What joint actions could be developed (e.g. communication of decent work conditions: retailers and consumers; labor issues in fish trade; importance of fish worker unions, etc) ?

What kind of technical support (e.g. awareness raising, capacity development, development of tools) should be provided by FAO, ILO and other UN agencies?

Which issues should be discussed at future “Vigo Dialogues” ? In your opinion what other kinds of decent work issues should be included or discussed?

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