

**IOC - FAO – IOTC INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM AND WORKSHOP**  
**STRENGTHENING PORT STATE MEASURES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN**  
**The key to improving fisheries management and combating IUU fishing**

International Symposium, 18–20 June 2007  
Workshop for Developing Countries, 21–22 June 2007

Labourdonnais Hotel  
Port Louis, Mauritius

**OPENING STATEMENT**

Mr Ichiro Nomura  
Assistant Director-General  
FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department  
Rome, Italy

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is my pleasure to extend a warm welcome to you on the occasion of the opening of the International Symposium and Workshop on Strengthening Port State Measures in the Indian Ocean. This is the second in a series of regional workshops on port State measures that the Food and Agriculture Organization has been involved in convening, and we are indeed honoured to have as our partners for this event the Indian Ocean Commission, through its Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Project, and the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission. These organizations have played a leading role in this region in efforts to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing through strengthened port State measures and development of human capacity to implement those measures.

The positive effect of these initiatives is expected to be amplified through cooperation with the more recently established South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission, and the South Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement.

It was only six years ago that the 2001 FAO International Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (IPOA-IUU) was adopted and two years ago that the 2005 FAO Model Scheme on Port State Measures to Combat Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing was endorsed by the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI). The Model Scheme was developed as a result of consultations convened by FAO between 2002 and 2004, and COFI urged all FAO Members should put a priority on operationalizing the Scheme.

Since then, the international community has intensified its resolve to strengthen port State measures even further. Over the past two years there have been repeated calls in international fora for a binding

international instrument on port State measures, to be developed in FAO and based on the IPOA-IUU and the FAO Model Scheme. Earlier this year, the Twenty-seventh Session of COFI established a process that is likely to result in the development of such an instrument. To that end, an Expert Consultation will be held in September 2007 and a Technical Consultation will take place in mid-2008. The next Session of COFI, in 2009, will review the outcome.

We are now on the threshold of a new era in addressing IUU fishing through the key compliance tool of port State measures. They are widely regarded to be one of the most cost-effective means of combating IUU fishing, and their value in allowing swift and certain action to be taken is well understood. They embrace a range of requirements, including vessel reporting prior to entry into port, in-port inspections, complementary actions by flag States, reports on inspections, information exchange and systems and human capacity development. Actions taken as a result of port State measures target the profitability of the IUU fisher, gained through what is now widely recognized as environmental crime. Actions can include denial of port access, landing, transshipment, trade, export and resupply.

In addition, port State measures are fundamental to the effective use of a wide range of other tools employed at national and regional levels to combat IUU fishing. These tools include IUU and authorized vessel lists, vessel monitoring systems and the implementation of internationally agreed market-related measures.

As a result, a growing number of regional fishery bodies (RFBs), mindful of the value of harmonizing and coordinating measures against IUU fishing, are developing, or have adopted, regional schemes and are undertaking human capacity development programmes. Such regional cooperation and coordination will assist greatly in reinforcing national efforts and deterring the operation of “ports of convenience”, where countries are unable or unwilling to apply effective port State measures.

In response to mounting international attention to the essential role of port State measures in combating IUU fishing, support has been provided to FAO by the Government of Sweden through the FishCode Programme, and by the Government of Norway, through the Trust Fund on Port State Measures, to mount a series of regional workshops to develop national capacity and promote regional coordination. As a result of these initiatives it is expected that countries will be better placed to strengthen and harmonize their port State measures. In addition, we anticipate that countries will be able to meet the requirements of relevant RFBs and implement the necessary IPOA-IUU tools and the FAO Model Scheme on port State measures.

This week, three days will be devoted to a Symposium where participants from approximately 25 countries as well as intergovernmental organizations, industry, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders will have the opportunity to interact with panels of international and regional experts during discussion periods. A two-day problem-solving workshop for developing countries will then be held to facilitate human capacity development through the application of what was learned during the Symposium.

The International Symposium and Workshop will also afford a valuable opportunity to discuss issues that may eventually be considered in the context of a binding international instrument on port State measures. I am anticipating outcomes of a very high standard.

FAO notes the relevant initiatives already undertaken by the MCS Project of the Indian Ocean Commission and the measures adopted by the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission. I extend my thanks to the IOC MCS Project Director David Ardill and Technical Officer Neil Ansell, as well as to the IOTC Secretary, Alejandro Anganuzzi and Deputy Secretary, Chris O'Brien, and all other staff who have worked so hard to assist in the coordination and presentation of this International Symposium and Workshop.

Bringing this workshop to fruition has been a true team effort. I also wish to extend my thanks to the South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission and the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Living Marine Resources for their support and input, as well as the participation of all interested stakeholders. Finally, let me acknowledge the excellent work of our Ms Judith Swan and FAO colleagues in the FAO Subregional Office for Southern Africa in addition to the FAO country representatives for India, Indonesia and Sri Lanka for assisting with arrangements.

I wish you all a full and very productive week at this International Symposium and Workshop on Strengthening Port State Measures in the Indian Ocean.

Thank you very much for your attention. I very much regret that because of other commitments I am unable to attend the Symposium.