

**1st Meeting of the FAO-COFI Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management
(15-18 January 2024)**

EU intervention

Item 5: *Climate resilient fisheries*

1. It is timely that, only a few weeks after the Climate COP 28 in Dubai, this sub-committee discusses and provides recommendations on this issue.
2. The fisheries sector is faced with many different challenges: to be effective in addressing the biodiversity and climate change crisis, while at the same time making sure to provide for the conditions for a profitable and resilient sector. A sector that has an important role when it comes to food supply and in leading the way in terms of innovation and sustainability.
3. To tackle the uncertainties and the challenges that climate change will bring, it is important to step up efforts for emission reduction and to bolster the resilience of marine ecosystems by ending overfishing and IUU fishing, opting for a precautionary approach and ensuring the protection of sensitive species and sensitive habitats.
4. Two objectives should be pursued:
 - a. Firstly, adapting the fishery sector, as well as the overall fisheries governance and management. The EU Common Fisheries Policy is geared towards adaptation, by reducing fishing pressure, and governing EU fleets. It provides tools to assist adaptation in response to shifts in stock distribution and adverse climate impacts through science-based management strategies, flexible quota management and targeted structural support.
 - b. Secondly, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and the environmental footprint from the fishery sector, to mitigate the magnitude of climate change. At domestic level, the EU and its Member States are currently discussing additional measures to decarbonize the sector by 2050 as well as reducing the adverse impact of fishing activities on marine ecosystems, including on the seabed.
5. To address climate change, fisheries management will need to be more adaptive and flexible. This requires solid scientific advice to base this management on, detects climate shocks and sudden changes in the ecosystem.
6. Environmental and climate elements are increasingly incorporated into scientific assessments and are part of the total allowable catches/fishing opportunities setting process. Scientists are continuously improving these assessments to make them more robust. Those efforts must be pursued and intensified.
7. Funding is another key dimension to support mitigation and adaption efforts. At EU level, our

focus is on supporting efforts for innovation in CO₂-efficient technology, modernising engines to reduce CO₂ emissions, improving the energy efficiency of fishing vessels. On adaptation, the priorities are the collection of scientific data.

8. On the international dimension, the EU updated its International Ocean Governance agenda in 2022 highlighting climate action as one of its key priorities.
9. The EU pursues the efforts for integrating climate change considerations into the work of the scientific committees of RFMOs, and other bodies and instruments dealing with the conservation and management of marine living resources.
10. The climate change dimension is a key priority for the EU cooperation with developing countries on fisheries in all regions of the world on top of dedicating special attention to small-scale fishers.
11. Together with the Blue Food Coalition, we pushed for the 2023 Ocean and Climate Change Dialogue to address fisheries and food security.
12. We look forward to exchanging and sharing our experience with others on this issue.