

**Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)**  
**First session of the Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management – 1<sup>st</sup> session**

15-18 January 2024

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**Agenda Item 3**

Agenda Item 3 - Addressing illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the context of effective fisheries management (COFI:FM/I/2024/3)

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**Joint Statement by Costa Rica and France**

= Check against delivery =

Mr Chairman,

I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of Costa Rica and France.

1. Costa Rica and France welcome this first session of the FAO Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management, mindful that the sustainable management of fisheries is a crucial issue today, at a time when 30% of the world's fish stocks are overexploited.
2. The regulation of global fishing and the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing are central to FAO's mandate – as reflected in the very first article of the FAO Constitution. Delivering on this mandate is key to reinforcing synergies between the protection of the ocean, the fight against climate change and the preservation of biodiversity - while contributing to the achievement of both SDG 2 and SDG 14 of the 2030 Agenda.
3. The ocean is subject to multiple cumulative pressures. It is affected by increasingly extreme temperatures and climatic phenomena, declining biodiversity and growing pollution. At the same time, the ocean is essential to our survival, with over 3 billion people relying on the ocean for their livelihoods. It is therefore urgent that we come together and act for the health of the ocean.

4. In response to this urgency, Costa Rica and France have decided to host the Third United Nations Ocean Conference in June 2025 in Nice, to be preceded by a high-level event in Costa Rica in June 2024. Following in the footsteps of the first conference co-hosted by Sweden and Fiji, and the second conference co-hosted by Kenya and Portugal, the aim of this third UNOC conference is to be as ambitious as possible to accelerate action for the ocean.
5. This is where the FAO, notably its Committee on Fisheries and related sub-committees, but also the regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) established under the auspices of the Organization and the regulatory framework elaborated by it over the years have a key role to play in making UNOC3 a success.
6. We have high expectations in this respect, including:
  - Promoting universal adherence to the Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA) and strengthening its implementation,
  - Considering the ways of revitalization of the Agreement to Promote Compliance with International Conservation and Management Measures by Fishing Vessels on the High Seas (Compliance Agreement). In this regard, we request the CCLM, at its upcoming 120th session in March 2024, to examine the institutional options to reinforce the implementation of this agreement
  - Reinforcing and empowering regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) and organize a side-event of all these organizations during the UNOC3 Conference,
  - Supporting the agenda of Blue Transformation outlined in the 2021 Declaration for Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI).
7. We are convinced that on all these issues, and many other, UNOC 3 will enable great strides to be made in the protection and resilience of the ocean. We therefore call for the highest possible level of ambition between now and June 2025, with a view that it be reflected in the "Nice Ocean Action Plan" which will comprise of a politically agreed declaration and a list of voluntary commitments.
8. We are counting on FAO and its Members States – on all of you – to ensure that the ambition of this Conference matches the state of emergency faced by the ocean.

Thank you for your attention./.