



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

The WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies *in a nutshell from an FAO perspective*

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Outline of the presentation

- ✓ General overview of the WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies (the Agreement) from an FAO perspective
- ✓ The basis of FAO's engagement, including on the implementation of the Agreement
- ✓ FAO's perspective in more details: FAO's role and existing tools&instruments
- ✓ Summary and key messages

General Overview of the Agreement from an FAO perspective

- FAO **welcomes** the WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies.
- FAO believes that it will **reinforce international efforts** with a long-term positive impact on the status of stocks.

FAO commitment:

- 19th Session of FAO Sub-Committee on Fish Trade (September 2023)
 - ✓ noted the critical role that recent international agreements and instruments can play in supporting the sustainability of the sector, such as the **WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies**.
 - ✓ emphasized the need to support Members' **implementation of the Agreement** as well as provide technical expertise to the **second phase of the negotiations**.
- 36th Session of FAO Committee on Fisheries (July 2024)
 - ✓ called for increased **technical cooperation between FAO and WTO**.

The basis of FAO engagement, including on the implementation of the Agreement

WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies

- WTO Fisheries Funding Mechanism (*art. 7*)
- WTO Committee on Fisheries Subsidies (*art.9*)

Also:

- Definitions of *fish, fishing, fishing-related activities* and *IUU fishing* (*art.2 & FN4*)
- FAO data on marine capture production (*FN11*)

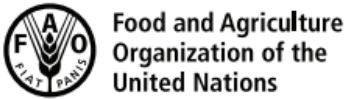
FAO-WTO Memorandum of Understanding

- Signed in December 2023

.....collaborate on the implementation of the WTO's Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies adopted at the 12th Ministerial Conference (MC12), including on projects funded through the Fisheries Funding Mechanism Trust Fund, and on the second wave of negotiations.....

FAO perspective in more details: FAO's role and existing instruments&tools

***Fisheries management** is essential to ensure effective compliance with the WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies.*



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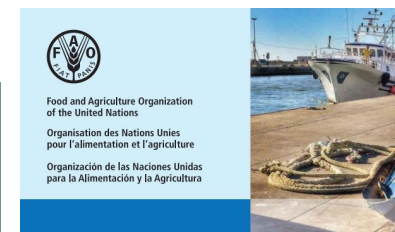
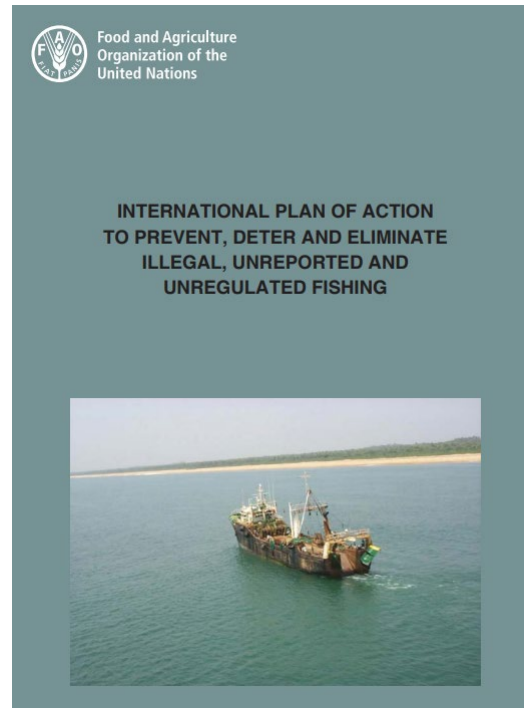
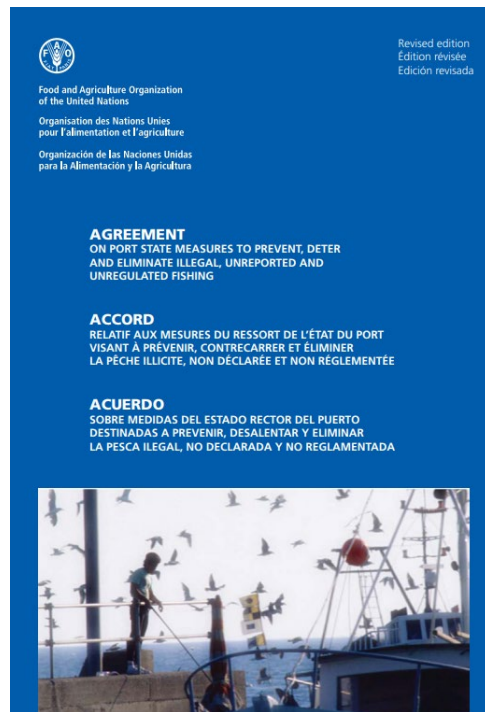
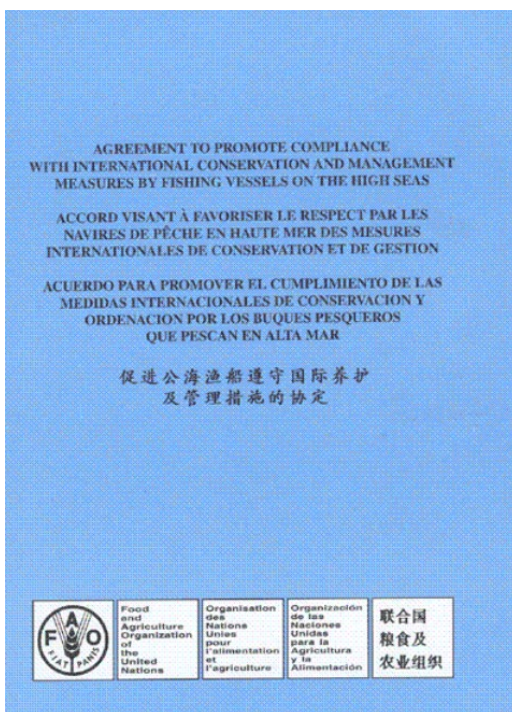
RESPONSIBLE FISHERIES

FAO's **technical assistance** involves:

- **Information and data collection/compilation/analysis/reporting;**
- Development of **management plans and measures** for rebuilding the overfished stocks;
- Facilitating the establishment of institutional coordination for **management plan implementation; and**
- Assistance on **fisheries management issues**, including the fight against IUU fishing and the role of RFMO/As.

FAO perspective in more details: *IUU Fishing*

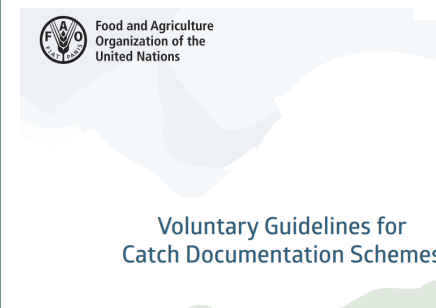
There are several key **instruments/initiatives/tools relevant** to combatting IUU fishing for which **FAO executes Secretariat responsibilities** and maintains the operation such as:



VOLUNTARY GUIDELINES FOR
FLAG STATE PERFORMANCE



VOLUNTARY GUIDELINES ON THE
MARKING OF FISHING GEAR



VOLUNTARY GUIDELINES FOR
TRANSSHIPMENT

- **Global Record of Fishing Vessels-** www.fao.org/global-record/information-system/en/
- **Global Information Exchange System-** www.fao.org/port-state-measures/operational-resources/gies/en/

FAO perspective in more details: *IUU Fishing*

Global Capacity Development Programme in the context of PSMA since 2016

- based on **comprehensive needs assessment processes**.
- focuses on **review and strengthening** of *policies, legislation, institutional capacity and arrangements, monitoring, control and surveillance, and enforcement*.
- so far, support to **over 50 countries**.

- The **WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies** when implemented together with **existing additional instruments** can be powerful in eliminating and fighting against IUU fishing.
- **These additional tools and initiatives** can assist Members in their efforts in **implementing** the IUU-related provisions of the new Agreement.

FAO perspective in more details: *Overfished Stocks*

Critical to the sustainability of the sector and compliance with the WTO Agreement on Fisheries subsidies, **stocks monitoring** is crucial since it allows the assessment of the status of fisheries governance.

Since its foundation, **FAO** has been a **source of global fisheries and aquaculture statistics**, representing a unique global asset for sector analysis and monitoring.



FAO has been **periodically reviewing and monitoring the status of the world's marine fishery resources since 1971.**

The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA), FAO's biennial flagship report, is a critical reference to this end.

FAO perspective in more details: *Overfished Stocks*

It is crucial to have the **national capacity** to *collect, manage and process data and information* for **assessing and reporting the status of fisheries and fish stocks**.

FAO commitment:

- 36th Session of FAO Committee on Fisheries (July 2024)
 - ✓ encouraged FAO to continue **assisting Members in strengthening their capacity to collect, manage, analyze and communicate timely and disaggregated data** to support decision-making processes, in close collaboration Regional Fishery Bodies (RFBs), where appropriate.
- FAO conducts **capacity development programmes** that strengthen the capacity of the fisheries institutions to collect, manage and process data and information for assessing and reporting the status of fisheries and fish stocks.

FAO perspective in more details: *Fishing in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction*

Regionalizing fisheries governance provides opportunities to:

- ✓ address common concerns,
- ✓ create synergies and mainstream global objectives,
- ✓ improve capacities and functioning,
- ✓ identify good practices, and
- ✓ work efficiently for sustainable development.

Regional fisheries management organizations (**RFMOs**) and regional fisheries advisory bodies (**RFABs**), collectively referred as **Regional Fisheries Bodies (RFBs)**, have a key role in regional and global fisheries governance, promoting collaboration and joint action in relation to conservation and management to fisheries.

FAO perspective in more details: *Fishing in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction*

around 80% of WTO
members are party to at
least one RFMO

74 WTO members are
party to more than one
RFMO

The Agreement has references to RFMO/As in various parts
such as the determination of IUU fishing, determination of
overfished stocks, determination of sustainable levels

- The **role of RFMOs** can be considered as practical means to enforce the disciplines in the Agreement.
- The **Agreement reinforces the significance of RFMOs** as a pragmatic mechanism for cooperation between countries for ensuring the sustainability of fisheries.

FAO perspective in more details: *Fishing in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction*

FAO commitment:

- 19th Session of FAO Sub-Committee on Fisheries (September 2023)
 - ✓ highlighted the **importance of coordination with RFMOs** which play a vital role with respect to trade measures for combatting IUU fishing.
- 1st session of the Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management (January 2024)
 - ✓ recalled **the role of Regional Fishery Bodies (RFBs)** in achieving effective fisheries management
 - ✓ called on FAO to **continue supporting their work**.

FAO has been committed to:

- ✓ provide **its technical and administrative support** to its RFBs to strengthen their effectiveness;
- ✓ promote **collaboration and consultation** among all RFBs or arrangements on matters of common concern; and
- ✓ **cooperate to report on status and trends** of fisheries

FAO perspective in more details: *Notification requirements*

The Agreement requires the WTO members to **provide various FAO fish related information** to the WTO such as:

- ✓ status of the fish stocks;
- ✓ conservation and management measures in place;
- ✓ fleet capacity;
- ✓ name and identification number of the fishing vessel or vessels;
- ✓ catch data by species or group of species; and
- ✓ a description of their fisheries regime.

Questionnaires

General

Agriculture

Forestry

Fishery and Aquaculture

Natural Resources

Fishery and Aquaculture

Global Aquaculture Production (FISHSTAT-AQ-NS)	▼
Global Capture Production (FISHSTAT-FI-NS)	▼
Regional Capture Production (STATLANT)	▼
Disposition of Fishery and Aquaculture Production (FISHSTAT-DNC)	▼
Production of Preserved and Processed Fishery and Aquaculture Commodities (FISHSTAT-FC1)	▼
Trade of Fishery and Aquaculture Commodities (FISHSTAT-FTR)	▼
Fishers and Fish Farmers (FISHSTAT-FM)	▼
Fishery Fleet (FISHSTAT-FF)	▼
SDG Indicator 14.4.1: Fish stocks sustainability	▼

FAO, through its regular and periodic questionnaires, collects information from its Members

Other cross-cutting points

- Newly established **Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management**



opportunity for more focused discussions and recommendations on the topics associated with **fisheries management**

- **FAO in Geneva Fisheries Trade Talks**
 - ✓ to enhance the understanding of the state of global fisheries and aquaculture;
 - ✓ to inform on the existing and emerging FAO knowledge and tools for promoting responsible and sustainable utilization and management of fisheries; and
 - ✓ to provide technical capacity building activities

Summary and Key Messages

- Various tools are available to address sustainability concerns, and no single tool or Agreement will suffice to achieve all of these goals. Instead, they will operate in a complementary manner.
- No one-size-fits-all solution exists.
- FAO is committed to:
 - ✓ Support the implementation of the Agreement upon its entry into force;
 - ✓ Continue active participation in the Fish Fund Steering Committee;
 - ✓ Provide technical support during the second wave of negotiations; and
 - ✓ Offer any additional support as needed and appropriate.

Thank you

