

**FAO's brief for the Expert meeting in preparation for HLPF 2017  
Readying institutions and policies for integrated approaches to the  
Implementation of the 2030 Agenda**

**FAO's Blue Growth Initiative (BGI) as a platform to assist countries in the achievement of SDG 14 and other relevant SDGs**

FAO believes that achieving the full potential of the oceans and wetlands requires an integrated approach to restore their productive capacity and to maximize ecosystem service use.

Blue Growth constitutes a holistic framework, which seeks to strengthen interactions with existing policies linked in particular to the implementation of:

- i) Frameworks that recognize the three pillars of Sustainable development (ecological, social, economic) and the ecosystem approach to fisheries and aquaculture, as well as the integrated management of oceans and coastal systems;
- ii) Policies that support the improvement of governance through normative work, capacity building and greater participation of stakeholders including the private sector and interested parties in public policies, and of course;
- iii) Policies and interventions geared towards the fight against poverty, hunger and malnutrition, recognition of rights-based management and more generally inclusive growth, in the context of a blue economy. Efficient use, lower carbon footprint, high employment and decent work conditions need to underpin these measures.

Countries that transform their marine sectors using a Blue Growth approach can potentially reach not just sustainable development goal (SDG) 14 for oceans but contribute to meeting the 3 pillars of sustainable development and thus help meet SDG 1 (No poverty), SDGs 2 (End hunger), SDG 8 (Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all), SDG 12 (Ensure sustainable consumption and production), SDG 13 (Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts), and SDG 17 (Means of implementation).

The holistic Blue Growth approach which takes into consideration the many aspects of managing fisheries and aquaculture as well as marine and coastal areas provides an integrated framework for meeting many of the SDG 14 targets. Of particular note are those targets directly related to building resilience for healthy and productive oceans (Target 14.2) and those addressing fisheries management including illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (14.4), conserving coastal and marine areas (14.5), managing fisheries subsidies (14.6) as well as supporting Small Island developing States and least developed countries in the sustainable use of marine resources (14.7) and access to marine resources and markets for small-scale artisanal fishers (14.b).

Related issues and approaches addressed within the BGI context include: (i) confronting the risks of famine, malnutrition and food insecurity, ii) strengthening efforts in support of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, iii) reducing rural poverty and developing coastal economies, iv) improving governance to facilitate the evolution towards more inclusive growth and more inter sectorial policy and more sustainable development, v) strengthening the resilience of ocean and coastal ecosystems and human communities which depend on these resources.

**“Leaving no one behind”**

By targeting more inclusive systems and taking a participative approach, Blue Growth ensures a holistic and integrated approach is taken that considers the needs of all stakeholders with a focus on engaging the relevant communities for whom livelihoods, revenues and life quality depend on marine ecosystems. Already countries are taking concrete initiatives at national and sub-national levels, proposing institutional reforms or preparing action plans following an integrated approach with stakeholders to address the BG' objectives as seen in Cabo Verde with their Blue Economy Charter.

The Blue Growth initiative is aimed at reconciling potential economic growth with improved livelihoods and social equity, and strengthening transparent, reliable and more secure food systems based on sustainable use of resources. Blue Growth also places greater responsibility on national and regional policies for protecting and managing living aquatic resources, addressing employment and training with the sector and creating incentives for financial and technological innovation. It aims to create an enabling environment for workers involved in fisheries and aquaculture to act not only as resource users, but also to play an active role in protecting and safeguarding these natural resources for the benefit of future generations. To ensure no one is left behind, the Blue Communities Platform within the Blue Growth Initiative is focused on dependent communities, especially small scale fisheries to ensure they can participate and benefit from Blue Growth policies and actions.

Blue Growth helps to streamline public choice and change preferences and practices of private stakeholders by strengthening knowledge and putting in place coherent incentives for innovation and uptake of best practices across the value chain from fishing operations to consumer action. Because it considers *all* the services provided by ecosystems, Blue Growth also facilitates finding the balance between development objectives and can define and promote sectorial policies other than fisheries and aquaculture; the balance and regulation of competition with environmental policies advocating conservation, and the protection of certain ecosystems and water resources in addition to social policies such as decent work.

Blue Growth strategies can aim successively to: i) develop knowledge and harness the economic potential of the oceans through the development of new sectors and technologies, ii) combat more effectively the overexploitation of resources derived from marine, iii) ensure the maximum benefit is derived from the resources extracted so that losses and waste are eliminated, vi) enhance the economic and ecological potential of uses of oceans through technological innovations that benefit environmental and social performance, and v) by developing the practices and knowledge for ecological restoration and engineering in more inclusive production and value chain systems.

The early work of Blue Growth focuses on enabling conditions such as ensuring appropriate policies are in place, engaging appropriate institutions along with capacity development and incentives financial and technical innovation. An example of this work is the development of the Blue Growth Charter in Cabo Verde, supported by a Blue Growth Intelligence Unit. A second example from the field is seen in coastal fishing communities in Côte d'Ivoire, where women in the post-harvest sector are moving away from open smokers that burn large amounts of mangroves to more efficient closed smokers that either use less wood or alternative energy sources. Blue Growth activity also has multiple benefits that include a better quality product that generates a higher price in the market, less wood is exploited as well as less carbon emissions and improved health outcomes for the women who smoke the fish.

In the Appendix to this document there are some of the FAO's activities divided in the six major areas of work of the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, which are relevant to the implementation of the SDG 14 targets. These activities are all conducted under the overall framework of the FAO's Blue Growth Initiative.

## **APPENDIX**

This Appendix lists a number of focal activities related to achieving SDG 14, across the six ‘major areas of work’ of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Department:

- 1. Fishery Policy, Economics and Institutions: economic, social, institutional, governance, policy, and management aspects of fisheries and aquaculture;**
- 2. Marine and Inland Fisheries management and conservation: Fisheries assessment and mainstreaming biodiversity, with special attention paid to threatened species and vulnerable habitats;**
- 3. Aquaculture: development and management of marine, coastal and inland aquaculture**
- 4. Statistics and Information: collection, compilation, validation, analysis and dissemination of reliable and up-to-date information on all aspects of fisheries and aquaculture;**
- 5. Product, Trade and Marketing: utilization of fisheries and aquaculture resources and the reduction of post-harvest losses; and**
- 6. Fishing Operations and Technology: technologies, infrastructure, equipment and practices dealing with the operation of marine and inland fisheries.**

### **1. Fishery Policy, Economics and Institutions: economic, social, institutional, governance, policy, and management aspects of fisheries and aquaculture**

#### ***Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) and related questionnaire (SDG 14.4; 14.c)***

Monitoring the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. This is achieved through the web-based questionnaire application for FAO Members (in 6 official languages), regional fishery bodies (RFBs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) which was developed and then launched in 2013 to specifically report on the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and related instruments.

#### ***Small-scale fisheries (SDG 14.2; 14.b)***

Implementation of the FAO Umbrella Programme for the Promotion and Application of the SSF Guidelines to enhance the contribution of small-scale fisheries to food security and sustainable livelihoods.

#### ***RFBs and RFMOs, and Ocean Governance (SDG 14.4; 14.c)***

Promotion and technical support to regional fishery bodies (FAO and non-FAO bodies) by participating directly in their establishment, formalizing existing opportunities for sharing experiences within a given region, or implementing the processes needed for sustainable management of shared resources.

#### ***IUU fishing, including Port State Measures Agreement (SDG 14.4; 14.c)***

Support for the implementation of the FAO Agreement on Port State Measures and complementary instruments to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing through the implementation of multiple programmes/projects.

#### ***Spatial planning (SDG 14.5)***

Marine spatial planning for enhanced fisheries, aquaculture sustainability and biodiversity conservation.

#### ***Human rights-based approach (SDG 14.b)***

Support the Advancement of Knowledge on Rights-based Approaches in Fisheries. This is achieved through the Global Work Programme (GWP) for Advancing Knowledge on Rights-based Approaches in Fisheries.

#### ***Small-island developing States (SDG 14.1; 14.2; 14.5; 14.7; 14.b)***

FAO promoting and supporting knowledge sharing and facilitating exchange of good practices at global and subregional levels, recognizing the need to enhance cooperation and action to address the unique and particular vulnerabilities of Small Island Developing States.

## **2. Marine and Inland Fisheries management and conservation: Fisheries assessment and mainstreaming biodiversity, with special attention paid to threatened species and vulnerable habitats**

### ***The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SDG 14.2; 14.4; 14.5; 14.6; 14.7; 14.a; 14.c)***

The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA) is the flagship publication of the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department. Every two years SOFIA provides policy-makers, civil society and those whose livelihoods depend on the sector a comprehensive, objective and global view of capture fisheries and aquaculture, including associated policy issues.

### ***Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF) (SDG 14.2)***

FAO implements the EAF-Nansen Project (2006-2016): “Strengthening the Knowledge Base for and Implementing an Ecosystem Approach to Marine Fisheries in Developing Countries; and the EAF-Nansen Programme (2017-2021): “Supporting the application of the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries management considering climate and pollution impacts”.

### ***Fisheries Management of Threatened Species, Habitats and Biodiversity (SDG 14.2; 14.5; 14.7; 14b)***

Support global, inter-regional and regional processes, including the Convention on Biological Diversity and CITES, for orderly application of threatened commercially-exploited aquatic species listings, and implementation of their provisions, as part of fishery management.

### ***FishFinder (SDG 14.2; 14.3; 14.4; 14.7; 14.a; 14.b)***

Assist fisheries management and biodiversity research through the provision of foundational information on species of commercial and artisanal importance that facilitates and enhances reporting of fisheries catch data, and global fisheries assessments.

### ***Litter and microplastics (SDG 14.1)***

Improve knowledge base on microplastics: occurrence in fisheries and aquaculture and potential impacts on food safety.

### ***Climate change and ocean acidification (SDG 14.3)***

FAO, in close collaboration with the partners, is carrying out a thorough review of scientific knowledge available on impacts of ocean acidification and warming on the fisheries and aquaculture sector.

## **3. Aquaculture: development and management of marine, coastal and inland aquaculture**

### ***Sustainable aquaculture development (SDG 14.7)***

FAO conducts field projects on sustainable aquaculture development aimed at contributing to food security, poverty eradication and economic development in SIDS.

### ***Aquaculture certification (SDG 14.2)***

The FAO Technical Guidelines on Aquaculture Certification were endorsed by the Committee on Fisheries and its Sub-Committee on Aquaculture and cover environmental, food safety, animal welfare and social criteria and requirements.

### ***Support to member countries in the implementation of the ecosystem approach to aquaculture (EAA) (SDG 14.2)***

The information provided by the CCRF questionnaire improves the global understanding of aquaculture compliance with the Code, and can improve the understanding of regional and national needs for more targeted assistance.

## **4. Statistics and Information: collection, compilation, validation, analysis and dissemination of reliable and up-to-date information on all aspects of fisheries and aquaculture**

### ***Fisheries and aquaculture statistical databases (SDG 14.2; 14.4; 14.5; 14.6; 14.7; 14.a; 14.c)***

Collect, analyse and disseminate information on national, regional and global catch and development trends of the fisheries and aquaculture sector (based on 65 years of time series on capture and aquaculture production, trade, per-capita consumption, fleet, employment). In particular Capture production statistics are used in a range of fishery resources assessment models, including for FAO's

monitoring of status of world fishery stocks; fleet, fishers, trade and aquaculture statistics support assessments of socio and economic benefits of the sector.

***Fisheries information systems: (SDG 14.2; 14.4; 14.5; 14.6; 14.7; 14.a; 14.c)***

FAO has developed a database on Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems and on Shark measures which aim to monitor implementation of fishery management actions as national and regional responses to international plans of action aiming to protect vulnerable species and their ecosystems as well as sustainable management. Moreover, FAO, through the Fisheries and Resources Monitoring System (FIRMS), collates and disseminates data and information on status and trends of marine resources and fisheries. Through the iMarine platform, on-line interactive hands-on courses can be delivered for capacity building on SDG indicators' related assessment models.

**5. Product, Trade and Marketing: utilization of fisheries and aquaculture resources and the reduction of post-harvest losses**

***Fish trade (14.4)***

Gathering, assessing, analyzing and disseminating up-to-date fish marketing and trade information worldwide and supporting the development of the Voluntary Guidelines for Catch Documentation Schemes (CDS).

***Fisheries subsidies (SDG 14.6)***

Provide technical assistance and capacity-building actions in the area of regulation of trade in fisheries in order to allow countries to better position themselves in the current negotiations.

***Traceability of fisheries products (SDG 14.4)***

Enhance national capacities of developing States and RFBs/RFMOs to implement traceability systems for fisheries products.

***Food safety (SDG 14.b)***

Support the strengthening of institutional and technical capacity in the implementation of sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures in accordance with international standards and in accordance with country and regional needs.

**6. Fishing Operations and Technology: technologies, infrastructure, equipment and practices dealing with the operation of marine and inland fisheries**

***Safety at sea in the fisheries sector (14.2)***

Promote safety at sea in the fisheries sector. The overall objective is to improve safety at sea in the fisheries sector in a holistic way by increasing resilience of livelihoods of fishers and their families through assisting countries and regions adopting and implementing legal, policy and institutional system and regulatory frameworks for risk reduction for fishing vessels and their crews.

***Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (SDG 14.4)***

FAO is running a series of projects and activities in relation to Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) in order to increase long-term sustainability of the resources. MCS is at the basis of any efficient fisheries management system, to ensure compliance with the rules.

***Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels (SDG 14.4)***

FAO is supporting the development of the Global Record which objective is to contribute to the prevention, deterrence and elimination of IUU fishing, in synergy with other international, regional and national instruments and tools by increasing transparency and traceability of vessels and fish products, through dissemination of relevant information.