

Fish Trade, SDG 14 and Fisheries Subsidies

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It is a great honor for FAO to co-sponsor this event on fish trade with UNCTAD here at the margins of the WTO Ministerial Conference in Buenos Aires. Our cooperation on fish trade to assist and support countries has expanded tremendously in the last years.

UNCTAD-FAO-UNEP Joint Statement on Fisheries Subsidies



UNCTAD-FAO-UNEP Joint Statement

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**REGULATING FISHERIES SUBSIDIES MUST BE AN
INTEGRAL PART OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
2030 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA**

- Transparency
- Effectiveness of the Mandate
- Special Needs of Developing Countries

One landmark point of our joint efforts took place in 2016, when UNCTAD, UNEP and FAO issued a joint-statement supporting member countries to reach a positive outcome on the regulation of fisheries subsidies, focusing on transparency, the effectiveness of the current mandate, and the special needs of developing countries. This joint-statement was supported by more than 90 countries, four intergovernmental organizations and more than 15 civil society organizations.



THE
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Sustainable Trade in Fisheries - Assisting Member States to Implement Effective, Inclusive and Sustainable Policies

by UNCTAD/FAO/UN Environment (Intergovernmental organization)

#OceanAction18469



In a supplementary action, in June 2017, during the UN Ocean Conference in New York, the three agencies again, UNCTAD, UNEP and FAO, jointly deposited a set of voluntary commitments aiming to support member countries with technical assistance, capacity building and information dissemination on trade-related issues associated with Sustainable Development Goal 14, including fisheries subsidies.

Fisheries Subsidies

WTO and SDG's Mandates

Rules to regulate Fisheries Subsidies

Taking into consideration

- ☐ **Overfishing**
- ☐ **IUU fishing**
- ☐ **Overcapacity**

- And now, here in Buenos Aires, guided by WTO's mandate on fisheries subsidies, complemented by the SDG's mandate, countries have the opportunity to create rules to regulate fisheries subsidies, focusing on important issues that negatively affect fish resources – overfishing, overcapacity and Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing.
- To better understand how fisheries subsidies can have enormous negative impacts for countries, and social and economic development, we must have a view of the importance of the fish sector at a glance.



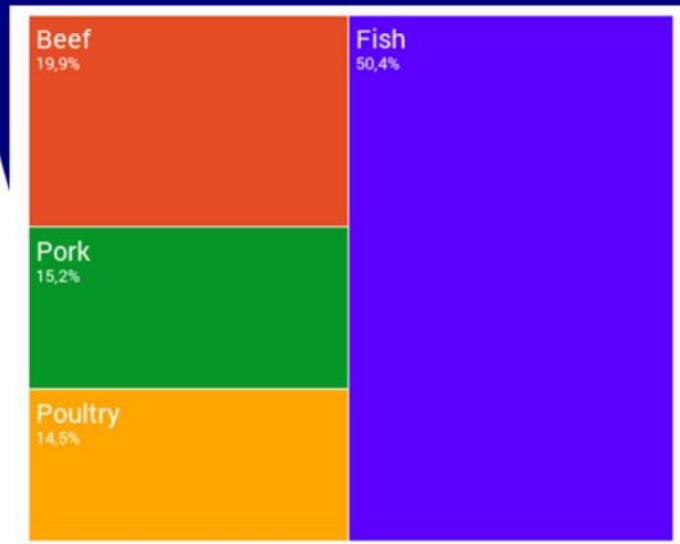
Importance of **FISHERIES**

- ❑ Food Security and Nutrition
- ❑ Developed and Developing Countries
- ❑ Small and Medium-Scale Fishers

Fish is a paramount commodity because in addition to contributing directly to food security and nutrition for billions of citizens, it also represents important economic and social aspects for both developing and developed countries. Furthermore, fish is an important economic commodity for small and medium scale fishers located in both developed and developing countries. It is indeed a multifaceted commodity.

International Trade

Value Terms



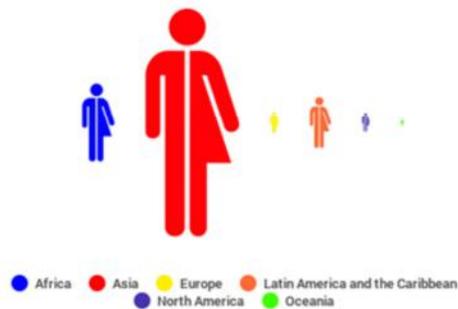
Fish is an international commodity by nature. Fish and fish products are considered to be one of the most traded animal protein commodity in value terms in the world. Fish and fish products are also subject to the highest degree of competition from imported products among all other animal proteins – around 78% of fish production is subject to international competition.

In 2017, the trade value of seafood products is expected to reach USD 153 billion, with a significant historical supply of more than 50% by developing countries.

In addition, fish net exports from developing countries are significantly higher than those for other agricultural commodities such as rice, coffee and tea combined

Fish and Labor

Direct Employment in Fisheries



Women Employment in Fisheries



10.8 billion

Number of women employed directly in the fishing activity



19%

Women force employed in fish production (primary sector)



50%

Women force employed in fish production, processing and distribution (primary and secondary sectors)

- The fisheries sector is relatively labor intensive. More than 50 million people are engaged in the primary sector of capture fisheries and aquaculture.
- The fisheries sector is also gender inclusive - women make up half of the workforce when primary and secondary fishery sector are combined, with 20 percent only in the primary sector.

Inclusion Features of the Fish Sector

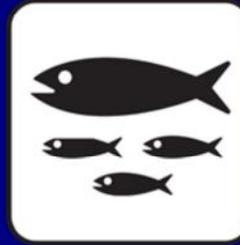
Inclusiveness in terms of

- Geographic Distribution
- Developing Country Participation
- Gender
- International Trade Participation



The importance of fisheries for inclusion in several dimensions is an utmost feature. Fisheries allow countries in different parts of the globe to engage themselves in production, regardless of their level of economic development, and to create social inclusion in terms of income and gender.

Distortion of Fisheries Subsidies



However, many of these natural benefits associated with fish production and fish trade are being jeopardized due to distortions created by fisheries subsidies.

These distortions reduce the impact of fisheries on the SDGs, including

- SDG 1 and 2 on poverty and hunger
- SDG 5 and 10, on gender and other forms of inequality
- SDG 8 on decent work and economic development
- And, of course, SDG 14 on life below water

Fisheries subsidies distortions can affect particularly developing countries, with negative spillovers effects on income generation, poverty alleviation, gender inclusion, food security, and nutrition. This is particularly true taking into consideration that the general pattern of trade involves the major supply of fish from developing countries to developed countries.

In addition, fisheries subsidies distortions also create global negative effects for small-scale fishers and on the environment.

Benefits of Regulating Fisheries Subsidies

At a Global Level

- Environmental Benefits

At a Country Level

- Economic Benefits
- Social Benefits



However, the two current international mandates guiding the negotiations here in Buenos Aires are a concrete example of how to foster the implementation of the three pillars of sustainability.

Regulating fisheries subsidies will reduce unfair competition in accessing the resources at sea, with benefits for the environment as a whole.

For individual countries, accessing the resources in a more equitable way will generate benefits for the population involved in fishing activities in both social and economic terms, with positive effects for the national economy as a whole.

Support to Countries by FAO on Fish Trade



Technical
Assistance



Capacity Building

FAO, together with UNCTAD, will continue to provide technical assistance and capacity building in the area of fish trade in order to allow countries to better incorporate trade benefits, to better adjust themselves for WTO rules, to implement FAO fish related instruments, to assess new market opportunities, and to smooth the access of small fishers to markets. All those FAO actions are framed by sustainability criteria present in every single FAO instrument related to fish.



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Thank you.