

FAO

Thank you co facilitator. The discussion these past two days has been very interesting and diverse. I will try to summarise in these few words the most important points made by member countries that I believe FAO can provide support to drafting in the preparations for the Member State final declaration First Comments on SDG 14 goals and indicators due in 2020.

14.4.1 This is a very extensive goal, which partly overlaps with goal 14.6. The indicator is very simple in its complexity, the proportion of stocks utilised to the level equal to or above maximum sustainable yield. The actual statistics for 2020 will not be available until 2022 but the latest statistics for 2018 will be made available at the UNOC, in a special **FAO SOFIA Side Event**. Even though there are in places very good advances in the efforts of Member States and RFMOs, particularly on IUU due the PSMA and related work, no dramatic positive changes are expected. However, recent academic research shows that countries which have adopted intensive scientific based management systems have achieved or are achieving the maximum sustainable yield goals and protect ecosystems and biodiversity. This gives us reason for optimism regarding the future if we do the right things at the needed level of effort.

14.6.1 This goal concerns solely IUU fishing and the goal is again very simple, in its complexity, which is to end certain forms of subsidies that contribute to overcapacity, overfishing and IUU. This issue is on the agenda of this year's WTO Ministerial meeting, which will take place in Kazakhstan in the week after the UNOC. Thus, the goal is achievable this year if so decided by the WTO Ministerial.

And then the key messages, the Blue messages as I see them coming from the Member States.

First fisheries management including IUU issues.

From 90% in 1974, to 66.9% in 2015, stocks within biologically sustainable levels have decreased substantially. Nevertheless, we have the knowledge and fisheries management experience to reverse this trend. Monitoring the world's fish stocks has become more critical than ever before. Globally, we know that smaller stocks, developing world fisheries, and countries with weak governance often correlate with poorer stock status and higher risk of overfishing. However, where fisheries are intensively managed, stocks are consistently above target levels or rebuilding.

Political will for prioritizing sustainable fisheries management can turn the tide on threatened marine resources. Fully involving local communities in ecosystem management efforts can help rebuild depleted stocks and restore degraded habitats to ensure ecosystems provide food and livelihoods for all resource users into the future. Management is the best conservation.

### **Then Blue food systems**

Fish plays an important role in fighting hunger and promoting good nutrition. People have never consumed as much fish as they do today. From 9kg per year in the 1960s, to 20.3kg in 2016, our per capita fish consumption has more than doubled. Fish enables communities with few affordable animal protein alternatives to achieve healthy diets, while simultaneously meeting the shifting needs for balanced diets that prioritize coronary and overall health in developed and middle-income countries. Fish is therefore an indispensable component of any sustainable food system.

### **And aquaculture**

The current world population and projected growth coupled with the growing demand for healthy marine food products have incentivized the expansion of small- and large-scale marine aquaculture operations. In 2016 global aquaculture production was over 110 million tonnes contributing 50% of the seafood traded and consumed. Seafood production from aquaculture will play an ever-increasing role in the production of food and livelihood development of coastal communities. Technological advances and innovation coupled with appropriate regulatory frameworks should ensure the adoption of best farming practices to gradually allow for the sustainable exploitation of marine areas for mariculture.

### **At last Blue communities**

Fish and fish products are amongst the most traded commodities internationally. Approximately 35% of global capture and farmed production is exported. Trade brings jobs and economic benefits contributing to livelihoods in coastal and rural areas. In 2016, developing countries accounted for 54% of the total fish export trade value and almost 60% by volume. Building vibrant fisheries communities is key to achieving sustainable development of our ocean resources, while simultaneously through innovation bolstering the social and economic development of these populations. Small-scale fisheries and aquaculture

communities are among the most vulnerable communities globally, and they need support in order to achieve poverty alleviation and food security. Investment and innovation in coastal communities is crucial, since they are important allies in promoting the sustainable fisheries practices and ecosystem approaches that will safeguard our oceans and fisheries resources for the benefit of future generations.

