



2022 United Nations Ocean Conference Side Event

Addressing key challenges in fisheries, aquaculture, and seafood trade policy for sustainable development

01 July 2022, 16:00 - 17:15 hrs. Room 1, Altice Arena, Lisbon, Portugal

Organized by UNCTAD, DOALOS, IISD, GSSI and the Monterey Bay Aquarium

Background on the event (one paragraph)

Trade policy can have a significant impact in making fisheries and aquaculture more sustainable. However, trade policy can also provide both positive and negative incentives to stocks conservation if not designed responsibly. Developing Oceans Economy and Trade Strategies (OETS) at the national level can frame sound ocean economic governance and provide an enabling environment for ocean-based value chains seeking sustainability. At the same time, addressing negative public incentives such as harmful fisheries subsidies need a clear and immediate multilateral response in the form of a Fisheries Subsidies Agreement under the World Trade Organization (WTO) with urgency. Seafood Interactive Maps (SIMs) can show a new path and ways for producers globally to learn, connect to markets, find technology solutions, and understand investment opportunities in sustainable seafood harvesting and farming. New risk assessment methodologies for aquaculture under the One Health Approach (OHA) can assist in understanding and mitigating impacts from the intensive use of antibiotics, including challenges with antimicrobial resistance that has broad implications for people and sustainability. This event will introduce how new and diverse partnerships, approaches and recommendations can maximize outcomes for fast-tracking the implementation of targets 1, 4, 6 and b of SDG 14.

Key Issues discussed (5- 8 bullet points)

- The Oceans Economy offers significant untapped opportunities for sustainable development. It is estimated that ocean-based sectors may double in size by 2030.
- [Oceans Economy and Trade Strategies \(OETS\)](#) implemented by UNCTAD and DOALOS are supporting coastal developing countries, and particularly SIDS, in realizing economic benefits from the sustainable use of marine resources and understanding the legal and institutional frameworks underpinning such potential.

- Belize is a case where the support provided by UNCTAD and DOALOS has allowed a successful development and implementation of [a multispecies and climate resilient management plan for more than 45 species of coastal fishes](#). Lessons of such support can also be found in Costa Rica with a registration of a [collective trademark for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture](#) and in [Barbados with a shift toward sustainable fishing practices market intelligence for exports of swordfish](#).
- The historic achievement of the WTO members by [concluding the negotiations on the Fisheries Subsidies Agreement](#) will allow to [address harmful fisheries subsidies in the most dangerous situations](#) when vessels or operators engage in illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing, when subsidies are provided for overfished stocks or for the fishing in the unregulated high seas. This agreement is not only laying grounds for the meaningful fisheries reforms and encouraging countries to build stronger disciplines in the future, but, even more importantly, is showing by example how the sustainability issues can be addressed using the trade instruments in a multilateral setting.
- IISD will be assisting the [Fisheries Subsidies Agreement implementation work](#) by presenting the self-assessment toolkit that will enable countries to determine the gaps in their system and seek for technical assistance and capacity building if that would be needed, as well as with provided a targeted support for countries in need.
- To successfully address key challenges in fisheries and aquaculture and help the seafood sector achieve the UN SDGs, inclusive collaboration is crucial. To this end, GSSI is currently implementing the [Seafood MAP program](#) as a platform with three key functions: connecting producers to buyers, finance opportunities and technology solutions, sharing knowledge on the implementation of key practices and available solutions, and visualizing continuous improvement journeys of all actors, regardless of size and destination.
- Seafood MAP will bring actors together and promote collective action to improve how seafood is produced and distributed around the world; and promote the inclusion of small-scale fisheries and aquaculture in the global seafood sustainability landscape.
- Aquaculture is key to addressing global food security but relies on antibiotics that have impacts that are not well understood. The Monterey Bay Aquarium and the World Bank collaborated on research with over 50 global experts to better understand the state of knowledge on antibiotic risks in aquaculture.
- Monterey Bay Aquarium and the World Bank identified significant knowledge gaps, including risks to the environment, animals and human health. Issues related to antibiotics in aquaculture must be prioritized for further action in order to achieve the SDGs.

Key recommendations for action (5 - 6 bullet points)

- The OETS project can be scaled up with donor support for the application of a well-tested tool for the sustainable use and trade of living marine resources and ecosystems in other countries in Africa and Asia.
- A strong coordination among donors and stakeholders is needed to ensure that the WTO Fisheries Subsidies agreement is ratified as soon as possible and the work on effective implementation begins immediately.
- All stakeholders are invited to help shape Seafood MAP by participating in the co-design process, contribute to the development of case studies, or join '[A Greener Blue](#)' - a global

storytelling initiative launched by GSSI and The Lexicon with the support of the UN FAO to celebrate the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture.

- Monterey Bay Aquarium and the World Bank identified key recommendations to address antibiotic risks in aquaculture through “TIMER”: Train, Invest, Monitor, Evaluate, Restrict. Full details can be found here: <https://www.seafoodwatch.org/globalassets/sfw/pdf/projects/antibiotics-in-aquaculture/seafood-watch-antibiotics-in-aquaculture-white-paper-2022.pdf> .
- Importantly, progress on antibiotics must recognize a One Health approach and take action that incorporates experts across disciplines, government agencies and at all levels – local to international.

Voluntary Commitments (one paragraph)

- UNCTAD, FAO and UNEP already deposited a voluntary commitment at the 2017 UNOC to support the implementation of trade related aspects of SDG 14.
- GSSI submitted a [Commitment](#) during the 2022 UN Ocean Conference