



2022 United Nations Ocean Conference Side Event

Future of Food is Blue: Coalition Acts to Support Aquatic Foods and Thriving Communities

June 27, 2022, 13:00-14:15, Side Event Room 1

Organized by: Government of Iceland, Government of Canada, Germany - Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development Center (BMZ), Environmental Defense Fund (EDF), Ocean Solutions at Stanford, EAT, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Global Action Network Sustainable Food from the Oceans and Inland Waters for Food Security and Nutrition (GAN) World Economic Forum (WEF), World Resources Institute (WRI), WWF, Friends of Ocean Action, RiseUp, Environmental Law Institute, the Pacific Community (SPC), Oceana, Worldfish, Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), Safe Seaweed Coalition, Monterey Bay Aquarium, Global Salmon Initiative (GSI), FUTUREFISH.

Background on the event (one paragraph)

The Future of Food is Blue side event side event launched a multi-sectoral Aquatic Blue Food Coalition a key milestone towards realizing the full potential of blue foods to help end malnutrition and build nature-positive, equitable and resilient food systems. The event united 16 speakers*, and shared the Coalition's vision to promote understanding, acceptance and integration of sustainable blue foods in food systems and food value chain thinking and decision-making. It also gave voice to small-scale artisanal fisheries and aquaculture (SSFA) who rely on sustainable fisheries management and good governance practices, as they depend on aquatic food and healthy ecosystems for their livelihoods. Finally, the event galvanized action from policy makers for investments and policies that can provide a growing global population with sustainable and equitably sourced aquatic foods that can deliver progress in meeting the SDGs.

Speakers included: Peter Thomson, UN Special Envoy for Oceans; Hon. Katrín Jakobsdóttir, Prime Minister of Iceland; Hon. Lídia de Fátima da Graça Cardoso, Minister of Fisheries Mozambique; Sakti Wahyu Trenggono, Minister of Marine Affairs and Fisheries Indonesia; Maria do Céu Antunes, H.E. The Minister for Agriculture and Food Portugal; Virginijus Sinkevičius, EU Commissioner for the Environment, Oceans and Fisheries; H.E. Dr. Satyendra Prasad, Fiji Ambassador to the United Nations; Monica Medica, US Assistant Secretary of State

for Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs of the United States; Cameron Diver, Secretariat of the Pacific Community; Shakuntala Thilsted, WorldFish; Manuel Barange, FAO; Lavenia Naivalu, Nacula District representative, Fiji; Therese Log Bergjord, CEO of Skretting

Key Issues discussed (5- 8 bullet points)

- In national food security legislation and global conferences, blue foods have been left out of the conversation despite the instrumental role they play in nutrition outcomes, poverty alleviation, and sustainable development.
- 90% of all people working in the fishing and aquaculture sector live in developing countries. Government leaders underscored the important role small-scale and artisanal actors play in the aquaculture and fishing industry.
- Women play a key role in blue foods, making up more than half of the fish processing industry and leading the integration of fish into family diets.
- Sustainable and cooperative management of fisheries is needed to secure our future. Challenges to sustainable management include illegal, underreported, and unregulated fishing practices as well as disregarding local and indigenous voices in policy and management.
- Government leaders shared policy and programmes to address over-fishing, encourage science-based management of fisheries, uplift small-scale and artisanal fisher voices, and provide financial assistance to support sustainable fishing and aquaculture.
- Governments, the private sector, scientists, industrial and small-scale actors must all work together to ensure a just transition of the fishing and aquaculture sector to secure blue foods for a healthy and sustainable future.

Key recommendations for action (5 - 6 bullet points)

- We should recognize the rights of coastal communities and include local and indigenous knowledge in the management and planning of fisheries and coastal resources.
- We should revise national dietary guidelines to include blue-foods while respecting culture and context, and bring blue foods forward in global food security conversations.
- Build effective, science-based management of blue food resources, and ensure that harvesting and farming activities are environmentally and socially responsible, well governed, and climate-resilient.
- We must work collaboratively, incorporating strong science and the expertise and technology of the private sector into sustainable management solutions.
- We should include blue-foods in school feeding and mother-child nutrition programmes.

Voluntary Commitments (one paragraph)

This multi-sectoral coalition will work for more effective blue foods governance and policies to address inequities along value chains. The Coalition includes the European Union, Fiji, Germany, Iceland, Japan, New Zealand, Canada, Palau, Portugal and the United States of America, in addition to representatives from intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, academic institutions, aquatic food producers and those along the value chain, consumer groups, financial institutions and philanthropies.