



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**

Preparatory meeting for the 2025 United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

Tuesday, 2 July 2024.

Trusteeship Council Chamber, UN Headquarters, New York

Mr. Lucas Tavares, FAO Senior Liaison Officer

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations welcomes the opportunity to participate in this conversation.

A healthy and sustainable ocean is a necessity, not a desire. The ocean is critical for the future of our planet: it regulates the climate, provides food, and generates income. Fisheries and aquaculture alone support the livelihoods of more than 600 million people globally, the large majority in the global south.

By 2050 the world will have an additional 2 billion people to feed. Climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution, and other unsustainable practices threaten to undermine the ocean's ability to contribute to feed this growing population with nutritious and healthy aquatic foods.

Consequently, the Declaration could consider the significant contribution aquatic foods make to food security and nutrition, now and in the future. Thanks to aquaculture, the fastest growing food production industry, the global consumption of aquatic animal foods has been growing since 1961 at nearly twice the annual rate of the population growth. Aquatic foods are thus net contributors to nutritional improvements, as well as drivers of employment, economic growth, and social development.

It should be noted that many aquatic food production systems have lower environmental and carbon footprints compared to terrestrial animal-source food systems, and that aquatic animals convert feed to flesh more efficiently than land-based animals. Considering the pressures on land-based food production systems, aquatic food systems remain crucial to ending hunger and malnutrition and offer efficient and impactful food solutions.

To support governments, unlock the potential of aquatic foods, FAO has developed a Blue Transformation roadmap. It outlines targets and priority actions to achieve the effective management of all fisheries to deliver healthy stocks and secure equitable livelihoods; sustainably intensify and expand aquaculture production to satisfy global demand for aquatic food and distribute benefits equitably; and upgrade value chains to ensure the social, economic, and environmental viability of aquatic food systems.

FAO also welcomes the proposed themes for the ocean action panels and looks forward to supporting the preparatory process leading to the UN Ocean Conference, in particular in relation to fostering sustainable fisheries management and promoting sustainable food production from the Ocean.

Lastly, FAO would like to reiterate that accelerated and urgent implementation of Goal 14 will require the leveraging of the interlinkages between Goal 14 and other Goals.

Thank you for your attention.