



Remarks by Mr Ciyong Zou, Deputy to the Director General and Managing Director, TCS, UNIDO. UNOC3 Ocean Action Panel 9 Food Security – 13 June 2025

Excellencies,
Distinguished government delegates,
Esteemed Partners,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour to join you today on behalf of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization. I thank the organizers for convening this timely and urgent dialogue.

As we discuss sustainable aquatic food systems, I wish to emphasize a critical enabler that is often overlooked: inclusive and sustainable industrial development. At UNIDO, we focus on building resilient value chains — from production to processing to market access — that ensure aquatic foods are not only produced, but made safe, accessible, and equitable for all.

Why does this matter?

Aquatic foods are a lifeline for over 3 billion people, yet post-harvest loss can reach 30%, particularly in developing regions. This means lost nutrition, lost income, and lost opportunities—especially for coastal and island communities already vulnerable to climate and economic shocks.

At UNIDO, we address this by helping countries modernize value chains, enhance food safety, reduce loss and waste, and unlock inclusive market access.

Let me share a few concrete examples:

In Cambodia, we partnered with small and medium fishery enterprises to upgrade processing facilities and meet international food safety standards. This not only opened doors to global markets but created local jobs and improved domestic food availability.

Through our nutrient-rich fish powder project, also in Cambodia, we transformed otherwise wasted small fish into safe, high-protein supplements for infants — tackling both food waste and child malnutrition simultaneously.

In Sudan, we trained artisanal fishers on hygiene and handling practices, improving both the quality and safety of their products. This led to higher incomes and safer diets in local markets.

Our support for the global Save Food Packaging initiative reduces both spoilage and plastic pollution, demonstrating how innovation can align with circular economy principles and SDG 14.

We also recognize that technical assistance is not enough. That is why we helped launch the Group of Friends of Food Security in Vienna — an informal platform uniting UN agencies and Member States to drive innovation and cooperation on food security, particularly for the Global South.

Our approach emphasizes:

- Women empowerment, recognizing their key role in aquatic food value chains.
- Cleaner production, helping informal food processors meet safety standards.
- Circularity and climate resilience, because sustainable food systems must also be environmentally sound.

Looking forward, UNIDO is proud to announce a voluntary commitment aligned with SDG 14 and OAP 9 priorities:



We will expand our technical cooperation on aquatic food systems to at least 10 additional coastal countries by 2030, focusing on post-harvest loss reduction, enterprise upgrading, and women's participation.

This will be done in collaboration with partners under UN-Oceans, leveraging the comparative strengths of our sister agencies to scale impact and avoid duplication.

In closing, sustainable aquatic food systems are not only a matter of nutrition or economics — they are a matter of justice and resilience. At UNIDO, we stand ready to work with you to ensure these systems deliver for people and planet alike.

I thank you.