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## ASIA-PACIFIC FISHERY COMMISSION

### Executive Committee

### Seventy-sixth Session

**Manila, Philippines, 21-23 February 2017**

### APFIC – FAO ACTIONS SUPPORT MEMBER COUNTRIES COMBAT IUU AND IMPLEMENT THE FAO PSMA

1. APFIC member countries have for many years recognized the importance of addressing IUU and implementing the FAO PSMA in the region. This working paper reviews options for APFIC to further provide support to its members within the context of the coming into force of the FAO Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA) in June 2016. Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing represents a major problem for the fisheries sector, jeopardizing already difficult efforts to sustainably manage fisheries resources. IUU fishing destroys marine and coastal ecosystems, threatens biodiversity, and causes the loss of millions of dollars to the formal economy. Recently IUU fishing has gained wider attention due to the recognition of the environmental damages and socioeconomic losses associated with IUU fishing, the global concerns over the conditions of fish workers (including forced labour), links with human trafficking and organized crime, and the overall greater mobility of fishing vessels and difficulty tracking their operations.

2. IUU fishing in the Asia Pacific region is significant and APFIC recently identified over 33 hotspots with 5 accounting for 82-85%. Economic losses through IUU fishing are significant. It is estimated by the World Bank that the global cost of IU fishing (2009) is USD 10 - 23 billion per year and the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC) estimates the illegal fish catch by foreign vessels in Asia as USD 3.7 - 5.2 billion per year and to be in the region of 3.4 – 8.1 million tonnes (or around 8 -16% of the total reported catch).

3. The issue is complicated by the huge number of small scale fishers in the region which makes monitoring of the sector difficult.

4. In 2009, the FAO Conference adopted the Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate IUU Fishing (PSMA). The PSMA, coupled with the effective implementation

of complementary international instruments and regional mechanisms, provides for a potent and affordable regional and national governance framework to combat IUU fishing.

5. The PSMA has now been adhered to by 35 countries and the EU. The Agreement entered into force on 5 June 2016. To date 11 countries in RAP/SAP region have deposited instruments of ratification or accession (excluding the EU, France and UK territories). These are Australia, Indonesia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Palau, ROK, Samoa (who have signed only), Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tonga and Vanuatu. More are intending to do so and informal interest/request for support have been received by FAO from others several.

6. In 2011 The Commission called for continued assistance from developed countries and international organizations to support their efforts of the region in combating the IUU fishing noting the importance of vessel registers and licensing in controlling fishing capacity and combating IUU fishing (FAO GR initiative), the importance of implementing a Port State Measures (and awareness (FAO regional), and the role for APFIC to continue to facilitate coordination in efforts to combat IUU fishing.

7. Member countries in the region have also been taking action to combat IUU fishing. The EU plan of action on IUU and the US Traceability rule all support these regions in removing IUU from the market. Countries in the region have also had support from a range of agencies, donors and partners including EU and USAID.

8. In 2012 FAO/APFIC ran a joint workshop on implementing the 2009 FAO agreement on port state measures to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (APFIC, Bangkok, Thailand, 23–27April 2012) which made a number of recommendations with respect to the role of APFIC and its members. FAO-RAP has already provided limited support to these efforts through national TCPF's and components of projects (e.g. training fish vessel inspector's course).

9. Whilst FAO has for many years supported efforts to combat IUU fishing (including through the work of the Asia Pacific Fisheries Commission (APFIC)) these new challenges mean new action and initiatives are required. In 2016, FAO member countries requested FAO to priorities work on combatting IUU and implementing PSMA in the region. The current range of actions that FAO is undertaking are:

a. The FAO Global Umbrella Programme to support countries in implementing PSMA. The global programme – for which funding is currently being sought - will support coastal and small island developing States in building capacity to adopt and implement the provisions of the PSMA and complementary international instruments and regional mechanisms to combat IUU fishing.

b. The FAO Inter Regional TCP (IRTCP): The IRTCP is ongoing and provides technical assistance and capacity development to assist countries in developing national strategies and action plans to improve compliance with the Agreement. Within the APFIC-RAP region it will work in Palau, Vanuatu, Tonga, Thailand and Myanmar.

c. National TCP or FAO TA : Several countries in the APFIC region have been provided or have support ongoing Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Papua New Guinea, Thailand, Philippines and Singapore.

10. Regional actions are underway through the SEAFDEC/ASEAN partnership with the Japan Trust Fund and Government of Sweden. Efforts are underway to improve registries and vessel tracking systems, establishing effective port controls on domestic and foreign vessels (through port State measures), and developing National Plans of Action against IUU fishing.

11. During recent regional meetings, such as the SEAFDEC-Port State Measures workshop and the APFIC-Regional Consultative Forum and Session, member countries have specifically requested FAO to address the capacity gap in the region, by supporting the harmonization of legal frameworks and policies and strengthening regional cooperation against IUU fishing.

### **THE APFIC – FAO ACTIONS SUPPORT MEMBER COUNTRIES COMBAT IUU AND IMPLEMENT THE FAO PSMA**

12. In response, FAO is in the process of developing a Regional TCP which will achieve its results through a process of strengthening regional cooperation (through a regional partnership, capacity development for countries and regional partners and the provision of policy and legal support).

13. The project will provide close coordination at all levels including the FAO Global Umbrella programme and those of partners in the region to ensure harmonised and effective implementation. Countries will be further supported to develop and implement NPOA-IUU and to implement the FAO PSMA.

14. A broad range of stakeholders will be mobilized in support of the programme (including key resource partners). Further, the project will develop a programme which will coordinate the identification and develop opportunities for partnerships and resource partner contributions to support countries in implementation of these national action plans. The project Outcome will be achieved through two Outputs.

15. Output 1. Enhanced regional cooperation in support of addressing IUU and PSMA implementation. Actions may include:

- APFIC network for IUU/PMS established and or strengthened which shares and develops knowledge products with the region (Workshops, Social media, publications and training).
- Coordination and networking with regional and global partners including regional meetings to exchange information and (ASEAN/SEAFDEC, BOBIGO, USAID Oceans, NOAA, EU, SFP, WWF, IUCN, THE GEF, GCF, UNFCCC, RPO, IOTC, BOBLME, ISLME, FAO-ITCP and UP).
- Development of an FAO APFIC Regional programme of support through partner consultation and identification of priority regional actions to
- Support harmonization of regional strategies and action plans and integration of anti-IUU and PSMA implementation into national and (regional projects)
- Raised awareness on relevant laws and management measures to combat IUU fishing nationally and regionally, and development of sustainable linkages between fisheries and aquaculture through the Blue Growth Initiative.
- Review appropriate methodologies to better understand of impact of IUU.

16. Output 2 Strengthened national capacity for the implementation of the IPOA-IUU and PSMA. Activities may include :

- National consultations and gap analyses to raise awareness and prioritize actions (National and Community) (ensuring integration of VGSSF).
- Analysis of Institutional capacities to combat IUU and implement PSMA.
- Capacity development to harmonize national legal and policy frameworks to effectively combat IUU fishing, including port State measure implementation

17. National plans of action (IUU and PSMA) strengthened and actions for implementation identified (developed in those countries where they are missing and support has been requested. (Development of FAO – National Projects)

18. Capacity development on Fisheries Management planning (EAFM) for combatting IUU and the implementation of PSMA).

#### **SUGGESTED ACTIONS BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

19. The Executive Committee is invited to review the proposed regional support and suggest how the APFIC Secretariat might support partners, or develop specific initiatives to address the issue of combatting IUU and implementing PSMA.