



International Coalition of Fisheries Associations

April 2024

ICFA RESOLUTION FOR THE 9th OUR OCEAN CONFERENCE

Preface

In April 2024, ocean stakeholders from across the globe will convene for the 9th Annual Our Ocean Conference. The event will serve as a platform for fostering dialogue and exploring innovative strategies to protect and sustainably manage our oceans and their resources.

The International Coalition of Fisheries Associations (ICFA) notes that:

- As the world's population continues to grow, ensuring a stable food supply is a critical global task. The supply of fisheries products from the earth's oceans, which cover 70% of the planet, is an important component of global food security in order to provide sustainable, high-quality fisheries products for both current and future generations. A balance among conservation, sustainable use of natural resources and food security is important.
- Effective fisheries management is the strongest tool to simultaneously protect ocean health while also fostering human development. This is reflected in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework in its calls towards sustainable use. Focusing solely on creating Marine Protected Areas without considering the sustainable use of marine resources and the needs of coastal communities may have detrimental effects on food security and livelihoods.
- Marine plastic pollution is introduced to the marine environment from a range of land- and sea-based activities. Plastic litter negatively impacts marine life and biodiversity; human health, safety, and livelihoods; and the fishing industries, including the economics of local communities that rely on these industries. The seafood industry is committed to working diligently with global partners, governments, industry and communities to find meaningful solutions and advancements in research and innovation to reduce plastic pollution in our oceans.
- The fisheries industry is actively engaged in efforts towards decarbonization to mitigate the impacts of climate change. However, these efforts require support and collaboration from stakeholders across sectors to achieve meaningful progress towards reducing carbon emissions and promoting environmental sustainability.

- The fishing industry is committed to being an active participant in solutions for climate change resilience. It is crucial to recognize that fisheries products, with their low carbon footprint and essential nutritional value, play a pivotal role in achieving global climate objectives. Fisheries can be part of the solution for a sustainable and healthy future.
- Illegal, unregulated, and unreported (IUU) fishing activities pose threats to the sustainability of fisheries resources, food security, employment, and wellbeing of fishing communities globally.

Therefore, ICFA:

1. Highlights the critical importance of convening policy makers, NGOs, and the fisheries sector to collaboratively develop pragmatic and implementable solutions for addressing the six focus areas identified in the Our Ocean Conference.
2. Points to the role of Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs) as an effective instrument of cross sectoral collaboration between fisheries and biodiversity conservation.
3. Calls on stakeholders to take fully into consideration the impacts of climate change on marine ecosystems, fish stocks and economic activities at sea and to ensure that an ecosystem-based management of fisheries is put into place in order to include climate change in fisheries management.
4. Urges stakeholders to address ocean plastic pollution issues both on land and at sea, while also prioritizing goals such as food security, food safety, nutrition, and the social and economic sustainability of seafood systems.
5. Requests continued support for research and development initiatives aimed at advancing decarbonization efforts within the fisheries industry, including the adoption of alternative fuels, energy-efficient technologies, and sustainable fishing practices.