



ICFA RESOLUTION FOR THE THIRY-SIXTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES

July 2024

Preface

From July 8-12, FAO member countries and observers will convene in Rome, Italy for the Thirty-Sixth Session of the UN FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI 36). Participants will discuss the critical role of fisheries and aquaculture in addressing food insecurity, malnutrition, and poverty, highlighting their potential to alleviate hunger, promote sustainable growth, and combat environmental degradation.

ICFA welcomes the upcoming FAO COFI 36 meeting. There are several important issues on the agenda that ICFA would like to highlight:

1. *The role of fisheries and aquaculture in food security and nutrition.*
 - ICFA notes that seafood is critical to global food security and nutrition and even more so in specific jurisdictions around the world.
 - Achieving a balance between conservation, sustainable use of natural resources and food security is of paramount importance.
2. *Impact of climate change on fisheries and aquaculture, and aquatic foods as a climate solution.*
 - Climate change is impacting our oceans and fish resources. All jurisdictions must develop adaptation strategies to ensure the resilience of ocean and fish resources to these changes.
 - The fisheries sector plays a crucial role in combating climate change, as fisheries products and blue foods have among the lowest carbon footprints of all animal proteins. Increasing the proportion of these products in the global diet will substantially reduce the carbon intensity of the global food system, contributing significantly to the achievement of several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
3. *The implications for fisheries and aquaculture of global biodiversity frameworks and agreements.*
 - ICFA notes that the sustainable use of fish resources is fully consistent with marine conservation outcomes.
 - It is important to remember that fish are biodiversity and its use for food is not an option. Sustainable fisheries are critical to global food security and many economies. In fact, fisheries support the livelihoods of over a third of the world's population.

4. *Marine plastic pollution and abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear (ALDFG)*
 - Any discussions or international agreements that look to holistically address legitimate ocean plastic pollution issues, must also consider global food security, food safety, nutrition, and the social and economic sustainability of seafood systems.
 - The seafood industry recognizes that certain forms of sea-based marine plastic pollution such as ALDFG, in some cases can be sources of marine plastic litter with disproportionately higher adverse impacts on marine biota and habitats. ICFA members support and actively participate in industry efforts to explore fishing technologies and methods such as recycling programs and gear development and monitoring initiatives that would maintain a prosperous fishing industry while also reducing the risk of entanglements.

5. *Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing*
 - IUU fishing is a scourge of the industry. Its effects go far beyond reputational. The sustainability impacts and economic damages are very real but it's also no longer an issue that persists in the shadows. ICFA members support practical, targeted solutions that look to eradicate IUU fishing on every level and ensure a sustainable seafood supply chain for all.