

Recommendations for the UN General Assembly for the second round of informal consultations on the draft Sustainable Fisheries resolution, 8-9 & 11-16 November 2011

The Deep Sea Conservation Coalition (DSCC) began calling on the UN General Assembly (UNGA) to declare a moratorium on high seas bottom trawling in 2002. The call to action was based on science showing bottom trawling to be the single most destructive fishing method for deep-sea marine life on the high seas. After several years of debate, a compromise was reached in 2006 (resolution 61/105) under which those countries with fleets engaged in high seas bottom trawling agreed to comply with certain requirements to protect deep-sea fisheries and vulnerable marine ecosystems. In 2009, the UNGA reviewed implementation of the 2006 resolution and strengthened it (resolution 64/72), asking States and regional fisheries management organizations / agreements (RFMO/As) to fully implement the resolutions on an urgent basis, and calling for another full review in 2011. The FAO also adopted a set of deep-sea guidelines, detailing how to implement the UNGA resolution requirements.

While it was clear in both the 2009 and 2011 reviews that some progress has been made, implementation of the UNGA resolutions has been patchy and inadequate. In short, there is compliance in the Southern Ocean around Antarctica, where deep-sea fisheries are well regulated and bottom trawling is not allowed, but in no other area has full compliance with the resolution been achieved.

Since the 2006 resolution, scientific evidence of the fragility of deep-sea fisheries and vulnerable marine ecosystems has grown. It has become increasingly clear that deep-sea bottom trawling continues to be the single most destructive activity to high seas fish populations and vulnerable marine ecosystems. Furthermore, bottom trawl fishing in the deep sea is overwhelmingly viewed by the scientific community as unsustainable.

Therefore, the DSCC urges that the 2011 Sustainable Fisheries Resolution call for the following measures:

- 1. States and RFMO/As should immediately cease authorizing vessels to fish in areas where there is not full implementation of the UNGA resolutions.
- 2. Any high seas bottom fishery that is not in full compliance with existing UNGA resolutions should be considered illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) and market States should treat it as such.
- 3. In view of the weight of scientific evidence, the UNGA should agree that the single most destructive fishing method in areas outside national jurisdiction—deep-sea bottom trawling on the high seas—be phased out within 3 years.

On behalf of the DSCC:

Matthew Gianni, DSCC, matthewgianni@netscape.net

Jeff Ardron, Marine Conservation Institute, jeff.ardron@marine-conservation.org

Duncan Currie, DSCC, duncanc@globelaw.com

Susanna Fuller, Ecology Action Centre, marine@ecologyaction.ca

Andrea Kavanagh, Pew Environment Group, akavanagh@pewtrusts.org

Mirella von Lindenfels, CommsINC, mirella@communicationsinc.co.uk

Sebastian Losada, Greenpeace International, slosada@greenpeace.org

Sian Owen, DSCC, sian@sustainabilityoptions.net

Lisa Speer, Natural Resources Defense Council, lspeer@nrdc.org

Monica Verbeek, Seas At Risk, <u>mverbeek@seas-at-risk.org</u>