

DSCC intervention – agenda item 10a (segment 4)

23 May 2023

This intervention applies to this segment of agenda item 10a as well as the previous segment of agenda item 10a where we heard a number of interventions on fisheries trade.

I would like to raise a couple of points related to CCRF. The Code was negotiated during the same period of time – 1993-1995 - as the UNFSA, with many of the same negotiators involved in both processes. I was also involved in both sets of negotiations – there was almost an organic link between the two processes as many of the provisions of the FSA were also included in the Code and vice versa.

In light the provisions on small scale and subsistence fisheries in art 5(i) and ‘the need to avoid adverse impacts on, and ensure access to fisheries by, subsistence, small-scale and artisanal fishers and women fishworkers, as well as indigenous people’ in 24.2(b) of the UNFSA, two of the provisions of the Code are relevant:

11.2.15 States, aid agencies, multilateral development banks and other relevant international organizations should ensure that their policies and practices related to the promotion of international fish trade and export production do not result in environmental degradation or adversely impact the nutritional rights and needs of people for whom fish is critical to their health and well-being and for whom other comparable sources of food are not readily available or affordable.

6.14 International trade in fish and fishery products should be conducted in accordance with the principles, rights and obligations established in the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement and other relevant international agreements. States should ensure that their policies, programmes and practices related to trade in fish and fishery products do not result in obstacles to this trade, environmental degradation or negative social, including nutritional, impacts.

The Resumed Review Conference should recognize and acknowledge the relevance of these important provisions of the Code in the report of the Conference in relation to the discussion on fisheries trade. I would add that they are also relevant to Deep Sea Fisheries.

As an example, in our view the international trade in orange roughy contributes to the destruction of deep-sea ecosystems, vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs) and biodiversity by deepwater trawl fisheries for this species in the South Pacific and Indian Oceans. It goes without saying that it takes two to trade, importers as well as exporters.