

4.116 Fisheries management by Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs)

RECOGNIZING recent scientific investigations and reports documenting previously undiscovered species, great species diversity, and very high endemism rates in some deep-sea ecosystems;

AWARE that destructive fishing practices and illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing constitute the most serious and immediate threats to vulnerable marine ecosystems, including seamounts and cold water corals;

RECALLING Recommendation 3.099 *The protection of seamounts, deep-sea corals and other vulnerable deep-sea habitats from destructive fishing practices, including bottom trawling, on the high seas* adopted by the 3rd IUCN World Conservation Congress (Bangkok, 2004), which called on RFMOs with competence to regulate bottom fisheries and the impacts of fishing on vulnerable marine ecosystems to adopt an interim prohibition on high-seas bottom-trawling, until such time as a legally binding regime is developed and adopted to conserve and protect high-seas biodiversity;

WELCOMING Resolution 61/105 on *Sustainable fisheries* adopted by the 61st Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), which, in Part X, Articles 80-86, calls on states individually and through RFMOs or similar arrangements to regulate bottom fisheries in accordance with the precautionary approach and ecosystem approaches and to adopt and implement conservation and management measures to prevent significant adverse impacts on vulnerable marine ecosystems;

TAKING NOTE that the deadline set by the UNGA for the adoption and implementation of such conservation and management measures for RFMOs and states is 31 December 2008;

FURTHER NOTING that the UN Secretary General is requested to report to the General Assembly on actions taken by states and RFMOs at the 64th Session of the UNGA and to conduct a review in 2009 of such actions with a view to further recommendations as necessary;

WELCOMING the elaboration and adoption by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of *International Guidelines for the Management of Deep-Sea Fisheries in the High Seas* and the measures for protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems and the biodiversity these *Guidelines* contain;

WELCOMING the initiation of negotiations to establish RFMOs in the South Pacific and Northwest Pacific, and further welcoming the adoption of interim conservation measures by the South Pacific and Northwest Pacific RFMOs still under negotiation;

ALSO WELCOMING the adoption by some existing RFMOs of measures to implement UNGA Resolution 61/105;

FURTHER WELCOMING the scientific research being carried out to identify vulnerable marine ecosystems so that they may be properly protected, including through the creation of Marine Protected Areas;

TAKING NOTE of the ongoing negotiations under the auspices of FAO of a legally binding instrument on Port State measures to combat IUU fishing; and

NOTING THAT the deadline of 31 December 2008 is quickly approaching and that there has not yet been full implementation of paragraphs 80-86 of UNGA Resolution 61/105 in areas where new agreements are under negotiation, or where such agreements have not yet entered into force, or in respect of some existing RFMOs;

The World Conservation Congress at its 4th Session in Barcelona, Spain, 5-14 October 2008:

1. CALLS ON states, individually and as members of RFMOs and arrangements, as well as in their participation in negotiations to establish RFMOs with the competence to regulate bottom fisheries, to adopt and more fully and effectively implement measures set forth in Articles 80-86 of UNGA Resolution 61/105 as a matter of priority, but no later than 31 December 2008;

2. CALLS ON states to develop and implement, individually and through FAO and RFMOs, effective port and market measures to enable the tracking of fish caught in compliance with interim measures or with applicable conservation and management measures of RFMOs fully reflecting the requirements of UNGA Resolution 61/105 Articles 83-86; and
3. CALLS ON states, through the UNGA at its 64th Session, to consider in the negotiation of the Resolution on sustainable fisheries a call for an immediate suspension of the capture of and trade in deep-sea bottom fish that are not caught in compliance with interim measures or conservation and management measures fully reflecting the requirements of UNGA resolution 61/105 Articles 83-86.