

**Reducing the impact of fisheries on marine biodiversity**

CONSCIOUS that ocean health depends on thriving biodiversity;

MINDFUL that Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14 recognises the importance of ocean conservation and sustainable use;

EMPHASISING that fisheries can exert significant, growing proximate pressure on biodiversity;

DEEPLY CONCERNED about the high incidence of inadequate fisheries management, over-fishing, destructive fishing, catch of non-target marine life and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, contravening Article 61 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS);

NOTING that negative impacts can extend far beyond those on fish and biodiversity, into social and economic spheres;

MINDFUL that the effects of fisheries on biodiversity are linked to realities such as livelihoods and culture, and exacerbated by corruption, human-rights violations, global markets and perverse incentives;

DEEPLY CONCERNED that Aichi Biodiversity Target 6 has been largely unsuccessful in stemming the adverse impacts of fisheries on biodiversity or in achieving recovery of depleted species;

ACKNOWLEDGING work by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and other organisations – such as regional fisheries management bodies (RFBs), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) – to promote sustainable, responsible fisheries;

CONCERNED about the increasing number of imperiled marine species on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, potentially requiring action from CITES and CMS;

ACKNOWLEDGING that applying Resolution 6.021 *Monitoring and management of unselective, unsustainable and unmonitored (UUU) fisheries* (Hawai'i, 2016) is an important part of curbing fisheries impacts;

CONCERNED that ecosystem-based management of fisheries, as recognised by Recommendation 5.169 *Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF)* (Jeju, 2012), is rarely applied;

AWARE that fishing affects thousands of species that are caught in a targeted or incidental manner, many with poor scientific information and without precise regulation and control;

NOTING that applying Resolution 6.050 *Increasing marine protected area coverage for effective marine biodiversity conservation* (Hawai'i, 2016) to protect the ocean would significantly limit fisheries impacts;

CONCERNED that reconciling fisheries and conservation requires a comprehensive integrated approach, including consideration of small-scale fisheries, artisanal fisheries, women's fisheries, indiscriminate fisheries, habitat destructive fishing (e.g. bottom trawling, dynamite), non-fish fisheries (e.g. fisheries for invertebrates, reptiles), extraction for non-food purposes (e.g. aquarium, medicinal), fisheries flawed by perverse incentives, and distant-water fisheries; and

RECOGNISING that marine biodiversity is also influenced by many other factors, both anthropogenic and natural, that are not directly linked to fishing;

**The IUCN World Conservation Congress 2020, at its session in Marseille, France:**

1. REQUESTS the Director General and Commission Chairs to:

a. establish, in 2021, a Task Force to reconcile fisheries and conservation that:

i. involves all IUCN Commissions and all IUCN Regions;

ii. takes account of Antarctica and the Southern Ocean; and

iii. draws on relevant reports from peer organisations (e.g. IPCC Special Report on the Oceans and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate);

b. produce, by 2022, a scientific and technical Situational Analysis on the effects of fisheries on biodiversity, involving a Consultative Workshop, and taking an inclusive approach, to cover:

i. diverse fisheries (e.g. small-scale, artisanal, women's, indigenous, non-selective, invertebrate, distant-water); and

ii. diverse issues (e.g. spatial management, efficacy of legal instruments, perverse incentives, economic dependencies, human well-being and rights, climate change impacts); and

c. convene, in 2023, a second Consultative Workshop to consider the findings of the Situational Analysis and to propose policy to IUCN and implementing parties; and

2. ENTREATS all IUCN State and Government Agency Members and other competent authorities to:

a. establish/strengthen a national ministry/department/agency with an explicit mandate for marine biodiversity conservation;

b. ensure that national Red List assessments and national, regional, or global biodiversity reports include marine fishes and invertebrates;

c. ensure that all fisheries management, including distant-water permitting, is compatible with conservation of threatened marine species (across entire ranges), vulnerable habitats and human well-being;

d. constrain destructive and non-selective fisheries practices, respecting Resolution 6.021;

e. ensure, when implementing Resolution 6.050, that marine protected areas help avoid and mitigate the negative impacts of fisheries on biodiversity; and

f. remove perverse incentives for fisheries, including harmful subsidies.