

Recommendation WECAFC/17/2019/16

“ON THE APPLICATION IN THE REGION OF THE TECHNICAL GUIDELINES ON METHODOLOGIES AND INDICATORS FOR THE ESTIMATION OF THE MAGNITUDE AND IMPACT OF ILLEGAL, UNREPORTED AND UNREGULATED (IUU) FISHING”

The Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC):

RECALLING that the objective of the Commission is to promote the effective conservation, management and development of the living marine resources within the area of competence of the Commission, in accordance with the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication and to address common problems of fisheries management and development faced by members of the Commission;

NOTING with concern that Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing in the WECAFC area is estimated between 20 and 30 percent of total reported harvests, representing a value of 450 to 750 million USD annually, that IUU fishing has dire implications for millions of peoples' livelihoods and entails among others, adverse impact on national economies, food security, and the environment and on labour standards, given the linkage of some IUU vessels with slavery and other labour and human rights abuses, drug trafficking, etc.¹.

RECALLING that The FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) on its Thirty-Second Session from 11-15 July 2016 supported the development of technical guidelines on methodologies and indicators by FAO for the estimation of the magnitude and impact of IUU fishing and called for the reliable periodic estimates of IUU fishing, including at the regional level.

MINDFUL of Resolution WECAFC/15/2014/6 “on region-wide support to the implementation of the CRFM “Castries, St Lucia, (2010) Declaration on Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing”.

RECOGNIZING the need to strengthen the quality and consistency of IUU estimation studies and generate information, on a regular basis, of the magnitude and impact of IUU activities and progress in combatting IUU fishing globally.

ACKNOWLEDGING that there are very substantial benefits in attempting to quantify the nature and scale of IUU fishing, some of the most common benefits such as gauging potential losses suffered by coastal States, addressing uncertainties in stock assessments and planning effective monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) investments for evidence-based policy advice and improvements in socioeconomic conditions of legitimate fishers

¹ <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0004570> . Consulted 24 07 2019

COMMITTED to implementing the International Plan of action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (IPOA-IUU);

DEDICATED to supporting the continued efforts by the members to increase Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) in their EEZs and beyond;

NOTING the challenges in defining IUU fishing;

COGNIZANT of the guiding principles set out in the technical guidelines on methodologies and indicators for the estimation of the magnitude and impact of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, which should be incorporated into study design and implementation;

RECALLING Resolution WECAFC/15/2014/9 “on the implementation of the Port State Measures Agreement and the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Flag State Performance in the Region”, and particularly the application of the Voluntary Guidelines in areas beyond national jurisdiction;

FURTHER RECALLING the outcomes of the third meeting of the Regional Working Group on IUU

Fishing (RWG-IUU), held in Barbados in September 2018, supported by the European Union, UNDP/ GEF/CLME project and FAO;

PENDING the delivery of additional information by the RWG-IUU;

ADOPTS in conformity with Article 6 of the WECAFC Revised Statutes this **RECOMMENDATION** that:

The WECAFC undertake periodic estimations of possible IUU fishing activities in the WECAFC area and identify indicators to assess the efficacy of actions to combat these activities. These estimations and indicators should be undertaken in line with existing guidelines on methodologies and indicators for the estimation of the magnitude and impact of IUU fishing to strengthen their overall credibility and practical usefulness to WECAFC members and stakeholders.