



联合国
粮食及
农业组织

Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

Organisation des Nations
Unies pour l'alimentation
et l'agriculture

Продовольственная и
сельскохозяйственная организация
Объединенных Наций

Organización de las
Naciones Unidas para la
Alimentación y la Agricultura

منظمة
الغذية والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

E

COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES

Thirty-fifth Session

5–9 September 2022

OPENING STATEMENT BY DR QU DONGYU FAO DIRECTOR GENERAL (5 SEPTEMBER 2022)

Excellences,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. I am delighted to join you at the opening of this hybrid session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries,
2. Reflecting a new and more flexible FAO, with adjusted working procedures to fit a dynamic and rapidly evolving world.
3. This COFI session takes place during the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture, led by FAO, which sets out a vision for a world where small-scale artisanal fishers, fish farmers and fish workers are fully recognized and empowered to contribute to the sector and industry, and to our global agrifood system.
4. This is also the UN Decade of Family Farming, which will help us carry the message beyond 2022,
5. To recognize the important contribution of small-scale artisanal fisheries to human well-being, healthy food systems and poverty eradication.
6. Today's High-level Special Event taking place later this morning will provide an important platform for our collective dialogue and action in going forward with the objectives of this International Year.
7. In particular, I wish to welcome Peter Thomson, Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General for Oceans.
8. As a long-time friend and supporter of FAO, and of COFI, I look forward to his contribution and leadership in our common agenda.
9. We last met in Lisbon at the 2nd UN Oceans Conference that focused on accelerating and scaling-up implementation of SDG 14 "Life Below Water", for which FAO is the custodian of 4 indicators.

Documents can be consulted at www.fao.org

10. At the UN Oceans Conference, the discussions focused on sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, and the need to transform our aquatic food systems.
11. FAO played a key role at the conference and contributed to the technical discussions and support through a strong engagement with governments and partners.
12. I am also pleased that my esteemed colleague Rafael Grossi, Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, will provide a video message.
13. FAO and the IAEA have a strong and historic partnership, as reflected through our work and labs in the Joint Centre of Nuclear Techniques in Food and Agriculture more than five decades.
14. The IAEA also has a number of Marine Environment Laboratories, to assess coastal and marine pollution and improve seafood safety.
15. Agrifood systems transformation requires innovation and science-based solutions, to ensure they are more efficient, more inclusive, more resilient and more sustainable.
16. Partnerships, such as the one with the IAEA, are key to ensuring we achieve our goals together,
17. Today, more than ever, as we face many global challenges, fisheries and aquaculture play an increasingly important role in providing food, nutrition and jobs across the world.
18. The latest edition of the State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture report informs that production hit a record high at 214 million tonnes in 2020 - with 122.6 million from aquaculture - generating about 151 million US dollars in international trade.
19. We are eating more aquatic foods than ever – doubling consumption in the last 60 years from 9.9 kilos per person in 1960 to over 20 kilos in 2020.
20. But our valuable aquatic resources must be managed and used responsibly and sustainably, guided by the best science available,
21. To recover stocks, restore degraded ecosystems and distribute benefits equitably.
22. Sustainably expanding the aquaculture industry, ensuring that all fisheries are effectively managed and that aquatic food value chains are efficiently and equitably developed, are at the core of FAO's vision of Blue Transformation.
23. And they reflect the FAO Strategic Framework in support of the 2030 Agenda for better production, better nutrition, better environment, and a better life for all, leaving no one behind.

Dear Colleagues,

24. The FAO Committee on Fisheries is the only global inter-governmental forum on fisheries and aquaculture,
25. And I look forward to your discussions this week and suggestions arising from the session on matters related to global fisheries and aquaculture.
26. You will discuss developments in relevant global and regional processes, including the recently approved WTO agreement on fisheries subsidies, among others.

27. At the last session of COFI, I launched the “My fish food experience”, inviting FAO employees and Members to share how they experience fish as food in their lives.
28. I am pleased to announce that as a result of this initiative, we are now launching the first-ever FAO fish recipe book.
29. The book features fish and seafood recipes from nearly 50 countries with various species, offering a wide selection of nutritious and healthy cookery from five continents.
30. The book is also enriched with FAO data and information on species production, consumption and trade, as well as sustainability and nutritional content.

Dear Colleagues,

31. We have little over 7 years to achieve SDG 14 and the 2030 Agenda.
32. Now is the time for concrete action and bold decisions.
33. I wish you a fruitful session.
34. Thank you.