

ACP statement to the G20 on eradicating Illegal Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing

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Brussels 28 June 2019/ACP: Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing in ACP coastal countries remains one of the greatest threats to marine ecosystems, dependent communities and the society as a whole. It undermines efforts to conserve and sustainably manage fish stocks, destroys the food security of affected coastal countries and harms their economic interests.

Globally, about 20% of the annual catch valued at US \$23 billion (€20,2 billion) comes from IUU fishing. A large percentage of this is known to come from developing countries with inadequate regulatory oversight and control measures. For ACP regions, estimates of the economic loss due to IUU fishing remain uncertain.

Not only is IUU fishing a challenge for ACP countries but indeed, a global problem that requires intensified actions by all actors following the adoption of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 14. The entry into force of the FAO Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA) in 2016, which has now been ratified by 33 of the 65 ACP coastal states, demonstrates the growing commitment by members of the ACP Group to make a united stand against IUU fishing by denying IUU operators access to ports in ACP countries.

Nevertheless, more and urgent actions are required to discourage and halt illegal fishing activities that undermine and violate established national, and regional fisheries conservation norms. Further to the 2017 Bahamas declaration of ACP Ministers in Charge of fisheries and aquaculture, the ACP Group therefore calls on the G20 to support capacity building initiatives to reinforce the effectiveness of surveillance and control programmes and reform national fisheries regulations to promote compliance to national and regional fishery management measures.

The G20 is further invited to support actions that strengthen regional cooperation mechanisms in the fight against IUU fishing, in particular, to enhance the exchange of information and good practices, joint surveillance and control programmes.

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