



NATIONAL FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE AUTHORITY(NaFAA)
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Actions taken by LIBERIA in response to paragraphs 113, 117 and 119 to 124 of General Assembly resolution 64/72, paragraphs 121, 126, 129, 130 and 132 to 134 of General Assembly resolution 66/68 and paragraphs 156, 171, 175, 177 to 188 and 219 of General Assembly resolution 71/123; addressing the impacts of bottom fishing on vulnerable marine ecosystems and the long-term sustainability of deep-sea fish stocks in accordance with paragraphs 210, 212 and 213 of General Assembly resolution 74/18.

Report of the Director General, National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority (NaFAA)

Summary

This report has been prepared pursuant to paragraph 210 of the General Assembly resolution which recalled its decision in resolution 71/123 of 7 December 2016 to conduct in 2020 a further review of the actions taken by States and regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements in response to paragraphs 113 117 and 119 to 124 of General Assembly resolution 64/72, paragraphs 121, 126, 129, 130 and 132 to 134 of General Assembly resolution 66/68 and paragraphs 156, 171, 175, 177 to 188 and 219 of General Assembly resolution 71/123 with a view to ensuring effective implementation of the measures therein and to make further recommendations, where necessary, and decided to precede that review with a two-day workshop.

Furtherance thereof, paragraph 213 of General Assembly resolution 74/18, requests the Secretary-General in connection with the report requested in paragraph 212 of General Assembly resolution 74/18, to invited State and regional economic integration organizations and regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements to submit related information to the Secretary-General in a timely manner on actions taken pursuant to paragraphs 113 117 and 119 to 124 of General Assembly resolution 64/72, paragraphs 121, 126, 129, 130 and 132 to 134 of General Assembly resolution 66/68 and paragraphs 156, 171, 175, 177 to 188 and 219 of resolution 71/123 and to facilitate a further review of such actions for consideration by the Assembly at its seventy-fifth session.

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Abbreviation

CPC	Cooperating non-contracting Party
RFMOs	Regional Fisheries Management Organizations
RFMO/As	Regional Fisheries Management Organization and Arrangements
VMEs	Vulnerable marine ecosystems

Introduction

1. Within the framework of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks [United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement [UNFSA)], a number of actions have been taken by **Liberia** amongst other things, to address the impacts of bottom fishing on vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs) and the long-term sustainability of deep-sea fish stocks.

2. The General Assembly considered the impacts of bottom fishing on VMEs and the long-term sustainability of deep-sea fish stocks and called on States and regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements RFMO/As to take a number of actions in that regard. Paragraph 210 of the General Assembly resolution which recalled its decision in resolution 71/123 of 7 December 2016 to conduct in 2020 a further review of the actions taken by States and RFMO/As in response to paragraphs 113 117 and 119 to 124 of General Assembly resolution 64/72, paragraphs 121, 126, 129, 130 and 132 to 134 of General Assembly resolution 66/68 and paragraphs 156, 171, 175, 177 to 188 and 219 of General Assembly resolution 71/123 with a view to ensuring effective implementation of the measures therein and to make further recommendations, where necessary, and decided to precede that review with a two-day workshop.

3. Following adoption of resolution 73/125, “paragraph 212 of resolution 74/18 further recall its request the Secretary General to prepare a report similar in scope, length and detail to his report to the General Assembly at its seventy first session, in cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO/UN) and with the assistance of an expert consultation to be hired by the Division [for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea] to provide information and analysis on relevant technical and scientific issues to be covered in the report, for consideration by the Assembly at its seventy-fifth session, on actions taken by States and regional fisheries management organization and arrangements in response to paragraphs 113 117 and 119 to 124 of General Assembly resolution 64/72, paragraphs 121, 126, 129, 130 and 132 to 134 of General Assembly resolution 66/68 and paragraphs 156, 171, 175, 177 to 188 and 219 of General Assembly resolution 71/123 and invites States and regional fisheries management organization and arrangements to consider making such information publicly available”,

4. Paragraph 213 of resolution 74/18 also requests the Secretary-general, in connection with the report requested in paragraph 212 of resolution 74/18, to invite States and regional economic integration organizations and regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements to submit detailed information to the Secretary-General in a timely manner on actions taken pursuant to paragraphs 113 117 and 119 to 124 of General Assembly resolution 64/72, paragraphs 121, 126,

129, 130 and 132 to 134 of General Assembly resolution 66/68 and paragraphs 156, 171, 175, 177 to 188 and 219 of General Assembly resolution 71/123 to facilitate a further review of such actions”.

5. In response to paragraph 213 of resolution 74/18, Liberia hereby submits information to the Secretary General in a timely manner on actions taken pursuant to paragraphs 113 117 and 119 to 124 of General Assembly resolution 64/72, paragraphs 121, 126, 129, 130 and 132 to 134 of General Assembly resolution 66/68 and paragraphs 156, 171, 175, 177 to 188 and 219 of General Assembly resolution 71/123, to further facilitate a further review of such actions.

Actions taken by Liberia to Regulate Bottom Fishing and the Conservation Management Measures taken to Protect Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems

Furtherance of identified paragraphs and General Assembly resolutions mentioned above and in conformity with the implementation of paragraphs 80 and 83-87 of General Assembly resolution 61/105, Liberia upholds the principles of precautionary approach and ecosystem approaches, to sustainably manage fish stocks and protect VMEs.

Liberia as a flag state has no fishing vessels conducting direct bottom fishing nor has fishing vessel which promotes the harvest of bottom fisheries in areas beyond national jurisdiction even in areas where there are no regional fisheries management organizations or arrangements.

Liberia is a contracting party to the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) and a cooperating non-contracting party (CPC) to the Inter America Tropical Tuna Commission and the India Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC); North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC), Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) and Southern Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organization (SPRFMO) respectively; regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) which conserve and manage the sustainable harvest of tuna and tuna-like species (off-shore large pelagic) as well as other marine resources in the Atlantic Ocean, Pacific Ocean and Indian Ocean respectively. The RFMOs address the impacts of bottom fisheries on vulnerable marine ecosystems and the long-term sustainability of deep-sea fish stocks. Liberia as a party or CPC therefore, is under obligation to conform to the resolutions that may be adopted by the RFMOs. All Liberian flagged fishing vessels operating outside areas of national jurisdiction are subject to national legal regime¹ aimed at fulfilling general obligations to protect living marine resources.

In order to ensure effective control over its distant-water fishing fleets, Liberia requires strict compliance with the terms of fishing license, transshipment authorization, transshipment notice, fishing permit, marine notice² and by implementing and enforcing conservation and management

¹ December 10, 2019; Authority, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “*An Act to Amend the National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority Law by Adding Thereto the Fisheries and Aquaculture Management and Development*”; Approved November 26, 2019

² December 2019; The Republic of Liberia, Liberia Maritime Authority, “*Marine Notice FTP-001*”; ref. (a) NEAFC; WCPFC; SPRFMO; IOTC; ICCAT; IATTC; (b) National Fisheries and Aquaculture Management and Development Law 2019, Sections 10.1.3, 10.17d and 10.25; (c) Liberia Maritime Law, Sections 11, 12, 13 and 51; (d) Liberia Maritime Regulation 1.13(2); Supersedes: *Marine Notice FTP-001, Dated 08/1*

measures through effective monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS); mechanism including observer coverage, electronic monitoring and satellite-based vessel monitoring systems (VMS) in order to provide information on the location of fishing vessels engaged in distant water fishing, port inspection and pre-licensing inspection.

In fulfilment of its voluntary obligation, Liberia has taken appropriate measures to address the problems of illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, in accordance with the International Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (IPOA – IUU) and with the adoption of a National Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (NPOA-IUU) in conformity the International Guidelines for the Management of Deep-sea Fisheries in the High Seas “the Guidelines”.

With the establishment of its website, Liberia continues to ensure transparency and public dissemination of information, taking into consideration confidentiality standards as well as involvement of relevant stakeholders in the fisheries sector.

In conformity with “the Guidelines”, Liberia maintains and periodically update vessel registers and indication of International Maritime Organization (IMO) number and share same with the RFMOs she is a Party or CPC to.

Plans are underway for the conduct of stock assessment of Liberia’s biomass that could lead to further provisions on the regulations of bottom fishing in its high sea and possibly identify VMEs. Currently, Liberia as a coastal state has six demersal trawlers operating outside the six nautical mile inshore exclusion zone (IEZ), in conformity with the national legal regime and any plan in the future to increase the size of its local fleet shall not be devoid of conservation management measures (CMMs). In consonance with the national legal regime, the use of monofilament fishing nets on the whole fishing fleet is prohibited and fishing vessels are required to report equipment lost during fishing activities and to place markings on equipment during use.

Conclusion:

In addition to actions taken by Liberia as mentioned above, the need for capacity building as relate to addressing the impacts of bottom fishing on vulnerable marine ecosystems and the long-term sustainability of deep-sea fish stocks is paramount for developing states. Obviously, the full implementation of resolutions 64/72 and 66/68 and 71/123 as well as “the Guidelines”, continue to provide a good basis for protecting VMEs from significant adverse impacts resulting from bottom fishing and ensuring the long-term sustainability of deep-sea fish stocks.