



Deep-sea fisheries project

Application of the precautionary approach to the management of deep-sea fish stocks

Tuesday 15 October 2024

07:00-09:30 CET [for Asia and Pacific]

14:00-16:30 CET [for Americas, Europe and Africa]

Background

The international fisheries policy and legal framework, including the 1995 FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) and the 1995 United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement (UNFSA), clearly calls for the application of a precautionary approach (PA) to all fisheries, recognizing that most problems affecting fisheries result from insufficiency of precaution in management regimes when faced with the high levels of uncertainty encountered in fisheries. The framework clearly calls for the development and application of long-term management plans, which should be based on the best scientific advice available and include stock-specific target and limit reference points with clearly identified actions to be taken if these are exceeded. In the context of deep-sea fisheries (DSF), this call is echoed in paragraphs 75-80 of the 2009 FAO DSF Guidelines, which call on RFMOs to develop and adopt stock-specific fishery management plans with defined long-term/multi-annual management objectives, and biological reference points set at levels that ensure that fish stocks are harvested at levels that are sustainable in the long term.

There are seven regional fisheries management organizations that have a mandate to manage DSF in areas beyond national jurisdiction (dsRFMOs)¹. All dsRFMOs have adopted or amended their Conventions making the application of the PA obligatory to Contracting Parties. To date, however, only one dsRFMO has started implementing a PA framework for the management of its fisheries, and only two dsRFMOs have adopted any stock-specific, long-term management plans for their DSF stocks.

An effective tool to apply the PA to the management of fish stocks is the development of stock-specific harvest strategies, which set clear, long-term management objectives and pre-define management decisions. This approach has been increasingly endorsed in the pelagic context by several RFMOs, but its application in the deep-sea context has been minimal.

The Common Oceans DSF Project is convening a virtual workshop to take stock of the application of the PA to the management of DSF stocks, and to explore the steps necessary to advance on the development of PA frameworks and/or harvest strategies for these stocks.

¹ These are: General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), the North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC), the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO), the North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFCC), the South East Atlantic Fisheries Organization (SEAFO), the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA) and the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organization (SPRFMO)



Format

The workshop will be held in virtual format, via Zoom. Two identical sessions will be held to accommodate different time zones, as follows:

- Asia and the Pacific: 15 October, 07:00-09:30 CET
- Americas, Europe and Africa: 15 October, 14:00-16:30 CET

Agenda

Time	Item	Speaker
07:00-07:10/ 14:00-14:10	Introduction and objectives	Eszter Hidas , DSF Project Manager
07:10-07:15/ 14:10-14:15	Overview of international requirements for the application of the PA to fisheries management	Sarah Fagnani , Policy and Legal Expert, FAO
07:15-07:40/ 14:15-14:40	Scientific considerations to the application of the PA to fisheries management	Rishi Sharma , Senior Fishery Officer, FAO
07:40-07:55/ 14:40-14:55	The NAFO PA framework – an example	Ray Walsh and Fernando Gonzales-Costas , Co-Chairs of NAFO WG-RBMS
07:55-08:10/ 14:55-15:10	GFCM long-term management plans for shrimp – an example	Elisabetta Morello , Fishery Officer, GFCM
08:10-08:40/ 15:10-15:40	Management strategy evaluations and harvest strategies – an overview	Shana Miller , The Ocean Foundation
08:40-09:20/ 15:40-16:20	Facilitated discussion	Paul de Bruyn , IOTC Alejandro Anganuzzi , Tuna Project
09:20-09:30/ 16:20-16:30	Conclusions	Eszter Hidas , DSF Project Manager

Registration

To register for the event, please send an email to Eszter Hidas (Eszter.Hidas@fao.org) and copy Amanda Santos (Amanda.Santos@fao.org), specifying your name, your organization, and the session you would like to attend. Please register latest by Friday 11 October 2024.