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EFFECTIVE FISH TRADE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Regional technical assistance and capacity building workshop for AIMS SIDS

27–29 August 2018, Victoria, Seychelles



PRESS RELEASE

SIDS outskirts of Africa to value fisheries for development, poverty reduction, livelihoods, food security and nutrition

For an effective fish trade and sustainable development for Small islands developing States

Victoria, Mahé - Seychelles, August 27, 2018: An international workshop will gather for three days the Atlantic and the Indian Ocean small islands developing States (SIDS), organized in partnership with FAO, the Government of Seychelles and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA). The purpose is to highlight changes in the seascape of fish trade in the current global understanding, fisheries management and governance issues, and promote a dialogue for authorities to have a clear vision of the value of fish trade, the barriers and opportunities. The workshop should contribute to set up actions plan related to the Atlantic and Indian ocean SIDS component in the Global Action Programme on Food Security and Nutrition in Small Island Developing States (GAP).

Fish trade is integral to the culture of island communities, playing a major role in generating export earnings contributing to national income and providing livelihoods for local communities and food security and nutrition given its nutritional value and prevalence in many diets, as more than 75% of world fish production is for direct human consumption. For Seychelles' Hon. Charles Bastienne, Minister for Fisheries and Agriculture, "a resilient and

sustainable fisheries [...] that enhances food and nutrition security, contributes to economic growth and respects the natural environment”.

Fish trade plays a major role in national economies, both in terms of exports and imports. The total first sale value of fisheries and aquaculture production in 2016 was estimated at USD 362 billion, of which USD 232 billion was from aquaculture production (FAO, 2018).

With new market demands for fish, trade policies such as tariffs, subsidies, food safety, and sustainability standards can have a significant influence on fisheries trade and particularly on access to international markets. “That is why technical assistance to trade negotiators has become essential for bridging possible knowledge gaps”, highlighted Dr Gatot Guawan, the IORA Director.

Fisheries and the Blue Growth Initiative for SIDS

SIDS are a group of countries that share similar sustainable development challenges, including small populations, limited resources, susceptibility to natural disasters, vulnerability to external shocks and excessive dependence on international trade. This physical, biological and social diversity of SIDS; the demography of the regions; the nature of local economies and limitations to economic development; and the importance of oceanic, coastal and freshwater fisheries and aquaculture to economic development and government revenue all provide opportunities for fisheries, aquaculture, livelihoods and food systems economic growth from ecosystem services to be further developed. Many SIDS are heavily dependent on their oceanic and coastal fisheries resources for economic growth and development. Given this, the Blue Growth Initiative (BGI) for SIDS increases attention on (i) marine and inland capture fisheries; (ii) aquaculture; (iii) livelihoods and foods systems; and (iv) economic growth from ecosystem services. It includes the activities of tuna fisheries, shrimp culture, pearl oyster culture, seaweed culture, processing and marketing, salt ponds, rice-fish farming, mangrove forests, marine tourism and industrial estates; all supported by harbours, roads and energy supply infrastructures. “Strengthened fish trade is expected to improve food security, sustainable livelihoods, social protection and economic performance”, Dr Patrice Talla Takoukam, the FAO Representative for Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles said.

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