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113th session
Agenda item 12(a)

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EXTERNAL RELATIONS

(a) Relations with the United Nations and the specialized agencies

Note by the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

Executive summary: This document highlights matters of relevance to IMO as discussed at the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (ICP) at its fifteenth meeting held from 27 to 30 May 2014

Strategic direction: 1.1, 1.3

High-level action: 1.1.2, 1.3.1

Planned output: No related provisions

Action to be taken: Paragraph 7

Related documents: United Nations document A/69/90 and Assembly resolution 68/70

Introduction

1 The fifteenth meeting of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea ("Informal Consultative Process") was held from 27 to 30 May 2014 and, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 68/70, focused its discussions on the topic entitled "The role of seafood in global food security".

2 The meeting was attended by representatives of 80 States, 15 intergovernmental organizations and other bodies and entities and nine non-governmental organizations. The meeting was conducted under the co-chairmanship of Ambassador Don MacKay (New Zealand) and Ambassador Milan Jaya Nyamrajsingh Meetarbhan (Mauritius).

3 In accordance with the annotated agenda, discussions were structured around a general exchange of views by delegations on the topic of the role of seafood in global food security followed by panel discussions on relevant issues, namely: understanding global food security and the current role of seafood therein; the role of seafood in global food security in the context of the three pillars of sustainable development; and opportunities and challenges for the future role of seafood in global food security.

4 Additionally, and in accordance with the terms of reference for UN-Oceans adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 68/70, the UN-Oceans focal point provided information on the activities of UN-Oceans under agenda item 4 – Inter-agency cooperation and coordination. The Secretariat, through the Marine Environment Division, is the contact point for the Organization in UN-Oceans.

5 The full report of the Co-Chairpersons' summary of the discussions is contained in document A/69/90 and is available on the website of the United Nations Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS) at the address:

http://www.un.org/Depts/los/consultative_process/consultative_process.htm

Outcomes

6 The following paragraphs of the said report appear to be of relevance to the Organization:

- paragraphs 15 to 17 and 76 highlight the crucial role of healthy marine ecosystems, sustainable fisheries and sustainable aquaculture for food security, nutrition and livelihood. The impacts of climate change, ocean acidification, invasive alien species, (land-based) marine pollution and debris, habitat loss and underwater noise on marine biodiversity and consequently on fisheries and food security were stressed. It was emphasized that protecting the health, the productivity and the resilience of marine ecosystems was critical for global food security. Biodiversity loss threatened the capacity of marine ecosystems to fully deliver much-needed services and there was thus a need to balance sustainable use and conservation. The detrimental impacts on the marine environment from man-made pollutants that commonly entered the marine environment from land-based sources, including nanoplastics, persistent organic contaminants, antibiotics, pesticides, herbicides, chemical fertilizers, detergents, oil, sewage, plastics, heavy metals such as mercury and other solids were underlined. The role of marine protected areas with fishery management regimes were discussed as potential mechanisms to increase resilience of ecosystems;
- paragraph 75 drew attention to underwater noise and the need for FAO to carry out further studies on the topic, as encouraged by the General Assembly;
- paragraphs 18, 20, 78 and 79 relate to Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing and related matters, and stresses the importance of enhancing monitoring, surveillance and control for the exploitation of resources and, in particular, the need to combat IUU fishing. A need to build the capacity of developing countries with regard to IUU fishing and for cooperation in developing effective management mechanisms was identified; and
- paragraphs 84 to 89 report on the activities of UN-Oceans since the approval of its revised terms of reference by the General Assembly in resolution 68/70. The membership of UN-Oceans consists of 22 United Nations entities with competence in ocean and coastal areas and the International Seabed Authority. The agreed biennial work programme (1 January 2014–31 December 2015) includes the development of an inventory of mandates and activities of the members of UN-Oceans for the purpose of facilitating the identification of possible areas for collaboration and synergies. UN-Oceans has held multiple teleconferences and two face-to-face meetings in the reporting period. Delegations emphasized the importance for UN-Oceans of continuing to focus on

ensuring coherence within the United Nations system on ocean issues, in order to prevent duplication of efforts among relevant United Nations entities. UN-Oceans will post its annual report to the Consultative Process on the UN-Oceans website.

Action requested of the Council

7 The Council is invited to take note of the information contained in this document and comment, as it may deem appropriate.
