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## Discussion Document on webinar on Fisheries Crime and the 2030 Agenda: How do the SDGs Address and Help Tackle Fisheries Crime – 27. August 2020<sup>1</sup>

### 1. Background

This discussion document is based on a webinar first in a series of Blue Justice Forum webinars facilitated by the Blue Justice Initiative Secretariat in conjunction with the UNDP Blue Resilience project.

The theme for the webinar was the ‘**How do the UN Sustainable Development Goals address and help to tackle organized crime in the fisheries sector?**’.

The webinar was presented by Julia Kercher, Senior Expert on Governance and Peacebuilding (SDG 16) at the Oslo Governance Centre, Norway, as part of the UNDP Blue Resilience project. A total of 36 participants joined the webinar from a total of 10 countries (France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Norway, South Africa, Togo, the United Kingdom and the USA) with IGO representation from the UNODC. The webinar was moderated by Emma Witbooi.

### 2. Topic in Focus

#### Introduction to the SDGs

1. The SDGs evolved from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).
2. The 17 SDGs address more issues than the MDGs and are more detailed and comprehensive.
3. The 2030 Agenda includes not only the SDGs but also chapters on Means of Implementation and on Review & Follow-Up. Perhaps most importantly – and unlike the MDGs – the Agenda includes overarching principles such as Universality, Leave No One Behind, Accountability and Interlinkages & Policy Coherence which provide guidance on how to implement the SDGs.
4. Interlinkages & Integration means, in short, that no goal can be achieved in isolation, we need to work across sectors. Organized crime in the fisheries sector is perhaps one of the best examples for this - the need for cross-sector coordination and collaboration (see below).

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<sup>1</sup> The webinar was held on the 17 August, 14:00 CET.

## Where is Organized Crime in Fisheries in the SDGs?

5. The adverse impacts of organized crime in the fisheries sector are shown to frustrate the pursuit of many SDGs.
6. Organized crime is expressly addressed in **SDG 16 ‘Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions’**.
7. The **targets** of SDG 16 on
  - improved rule of law and access to justice (16.3);
  - reduction of illicit financial and arms flows and organized crime (16.4);
  - reduced corruption and bribery (16.5);
  - development of effective, accountable and transparent institutions (16.6) and
  - access to information and fundamental freedoms (16.10)
 together with its **‘enabling’ role** in realizing other SDGs make it central to addressing organized crime in fisheries.
8. To realize SDG 14 ‘Life Below Water’ targets of ending overfishing and IUU fishing (14.4.) and addressing contributors to overcapacity (14.6) necessitates meeting the outlined targets of SDG 16.

## Interlinkages and Policy Coherence

9. The 2030 Agenda looks at issues more holistically. In its preamble, it mentions 5Ps to summarize what the Agenda addresses: People, Prosperity, Peace, Partnerships and the Planet.
10. In addition to providing focus, the 5Ps also help consider different dimensions of any one issue. Take fisheries crime:
  - It affects the **planet** as it contributes to overfishing (link with SDG 14 on Life Below Water)
  - It affects **people** e.g. when they work in slavery-like conditions on fishing vessels or when it reinforces gender inequality (link with SDG 1 on Poverty, SDG 16 on Peace, Justice and Inclusion and SDG 5 on Gender Equality);
  - It is linked to **prosperity** as some fishermen and women turn to it when their livelihoods are at risk (link with SDG 8 on Decent Work and Economic Growth);
  - It threatens **peace** as it brings violence and crime (link with SDG 16); and
  - It requires global **partnerships** to address it (SDG 17 on Global Partnerships).
11. The policy implication is that organized crime in fisheries can only be effectively tackled when its different dimensions are addressed. One of the challenges of doing so in practice is the fact that policy work tends to be organized in sectors and most policy-makers are experts in only one field.
12. What the 2030 Agenda says is: **We need to cooperate more across our respective areas of expertise and across institutions. In short, we need more interagency policy cooperation.**

## UNDP Blue Resilience Project

13. The UNDP’s Blue Resilience Project is part of the Blue Justice Initiative. In its **problem analysis**, it identifies lack of institutional cooperation as a facet of weak governance, which in turn represents one of the underlying causes of organized crime in the fisheries sector.
14. The project’s **theory of change** is premised on two main *activities* - baseline **research** on institutional cooperation which will inform the development of a **learning** package. The intended *outcome* of these activities is to enable target countries to analyze and strengthen their institutional cooperation towards more effective governance responses to organized fisheries crime.
15. An element of the learning package could be tools to facilitate identifying and leverage interlinkages between different SDGs (see next).

## Identifying and Leveraging Interlinkages: Tools

16. It could be useful to have a tool that assists non-governance experts at country level to first - **identify** governance interlinkages their area of work and in relation to a specific issue, e.g. in the context of fisheries crime 'Fishermen work in slave-like conditions in remote places'.
17. Such a tool would help identify the economic, social and environmental aspects of the issue and assess whether any of the SDG 16 targets could enable progress on the issue. For example, improving access to justice (16.3) for exploited workers might act as a deterrent for operators of fishing vessels with such practices.
18. Secondly, such a tool should help policy-makers **leverage** these interlinkages. This could include further unpacking the problem into immediate, underlying and structural (root) causes and identifying corresponding existing policies, relevant (responsible and influential) actors as well as capacity gaps. Lastly, the tool should help policy-makers decide on how to best collaborate with the identified key actors.
19. Interestingly, the 2018 World Public Sector Report distinguishes between different (increasing) levels of interaction: cooperation; coordination and integration.

### In sum

20. The 2030 Agenda recognizes that Planet, People, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership cannot be tackled separately.
21. Organized crime in the fisheries sector is addressed in several SDGs, especially SDG 16.
22. Given its specific targets, together with its 'enabling' role in realizing other SDGs such as SDGs 1, 5, 8 and 14, SDG 16 is central to addressing organized crime in fisheries.
23. The 2030 Agenda calls for policy coherence and the UNDP's Blue Resilience project aims to strengthen interagency policy cooperation to tackle organized crime in fisheries.

## 3. General discussion

The discussion highlighted various issues including:

- Challenges around identifying and addressing lack of institutional capacity.
- The role of institutional capture, often linked to entrenched corruption, in hindering institutional cooperation.
- The value of whistleblower protection towards effective governance response to organized crime in fisheries.
- The challenges associated with resistance towards cooperation, be it at national or global policy level, in addressing organized crime in fisheries.
- The role of institutional cooperation in addressing trans-boundary fisheries crime and in ensuring cross-country collaboration, e.g. to deal with re-offenders.
- The imperative of awareness-raising to ensure that the topic of fisheries crime is made more visible internationally, e.g. through major global events such as the next IUCN Congress.