



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS

relating to biodiversity in sustainable DEEP-SEA FISHING in the ABNJ are embodied in a wide range of instruments, and are implemented by States and eight regional bodies.

Deep-sea fishing occurs over continental slopes, seamounts, ridge systems and banks with bare muddy sediments, and on hard rocky substrates that may support species or communities that could be vulnerable to bottom fishing impacts. International efforts to address the potential negative impacts of deep-sea fishing have been ongoing for the last 40 years, and have progressed markedly in the last decade.

Currently, there are over 19 international instruments and eight regional conventions that address deep-sea fishing and biodiversity conservation in areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ).

In support of improved understanding and implementation of existing policy and legal frameworks, FAO, under the auspices of the ABNJ Deep Seas Project, initiated an analysis of the existing legal and policy instruments related to biodiversity and sustainable deep-sea fishing in the ABNJ, including identifying the constraints and challenges related to their implementation.

The analysis showed the importance and need to address both impact and conservation issues in the management of deep-sea fishing is clearly recognized in all current instruments that pertain to management of living resources in the deep-sea areas of the ABNJ. This is further reinforced through the directions to implement ecosystem based management, which includes taking a precautionary approach in management actions.

In addition, there is major recognition of the need to control vessels, collect information and improve understanding of deep-sea resources, biodiversity and ecosystems; and undertake impact assessments before new resources or areas are exploited.

The release of this report will be accompanied by a training programme including a step-wise guide to assist countries, where necessary, to better integrate their international obligations into national laws and policies.



GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY
INVESTING IN OUR PLANET

The ABNJ Deep Seas Project is a five year project designed to enhance sustainability in the use of deep-sea living resources and biodiversity conservation in the ABNJ. The Project brings together over 20 partners working on deep-sea fisheries and conservation issues in the ABNJ globally.

For more information see www.commonoceans.org



**The regional bodies are: the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), the North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC), the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO), the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC), the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO), the South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (SEAFO), and the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA).*