



Intervention

The Republic of Vanuatu

**The United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable
Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine
resources for sustainable development**

Partnership Dialogue 4: Making Fisheries Sustainable

**Delivered by the Hon. Seremaiah Matai NAWALU, Minister of Agriculture,
Livestock, Forestry, Fisheries and Bio-security**

(New York, 7 June 2017)

Co-Chairs,

Excellencies;

Distinguished representatives,

I have the pleasure to deliver my brief intervention on behalf of the people and the Government of the Republic of Vanuatu.

At the outset, I wish to congratulate the two co-chairs on your appointments. You have my delegation's full trust and confidence.

Co-Chairs,

For thousands of years, our people have lived in harmony with our oceans conserving and consuming marine resources in a sustainable manner. 90% of Vanuatu's population depend on commercial and artisanal coastal fisheries crucial for livelihoods, food security and sustainable development efforts.

Co-Chairs,

Fisheries is the Pacific region's largest shared natural resource and a sector that continues to reap tangible results through regional cooperation. Vanuatu is part of a wide number of sub-regional and regional fisheries management organizations where fisheries management efforts are supposedly science-based to sustainably manage the harvest of highly migratory fish species. Vanuatu is part of the Melanesian Spearhead Group's 'Roadmap for Inshore Fisheries'; the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency's 'Future of Fisheries' Roadmap; the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission's 'Harvest Strategy Work Plan'; regional fisheries surveillance programs, the Coral Triangle Initiative and locally managed Marine Areas Network.

Co-Chairs,

Despite these initiatives, Pacific Islands including Vanuatu continue to face challenges to the conservation and sustainability of our fisheries. Endeavours to conserve and manage our fisheries through monitoring, control and surveillance efforts particularly against the torment of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and other destructive fishing practices remain a big battle for our region. The management of by-catch and the prevalence of flag state-focused decision-making for fisheries add to our dilemma.

Co-Chairs,

Fisheries subsidies is another area of concern for Vanuatu and our region. They have major impacts on fish stocks harvested by our regional member states especially when subsidies provide incentives for overfishing and overcapacity in our regional waters. Overfishing and overcapacity are common in all parts of the world and lack of international cooperation to address them, is unfortunately undermining and placing a disproportionate burden of fisheries conservation in our region.

Co-Chairs,

Vanuatu calls on the international community to enhance support of regional and international efforts to tackle IUU fishing and other destructive fishing practices, to enact effective fisheries catch documentation and traceability, to improve timeliness and accuracy of data collection through the use of modern technology, encourage flag states to exercise effective control over their vessels, encourage port states not party to the FAO Port States support monitoring, control and surveillance efforts for coastal fisheries, support efforts to eliminate subsidies that contribute to overfishing and overcapacity and to address marine pollution and ocean acidification. This will require a multilateral and an integrated approach to address the challenges of fisheries.

Co-Chairs,

Vanuatu stands prepared to work in close partnership with the international community to ensure regional fisheries remain sustainability for the benefit our people.