

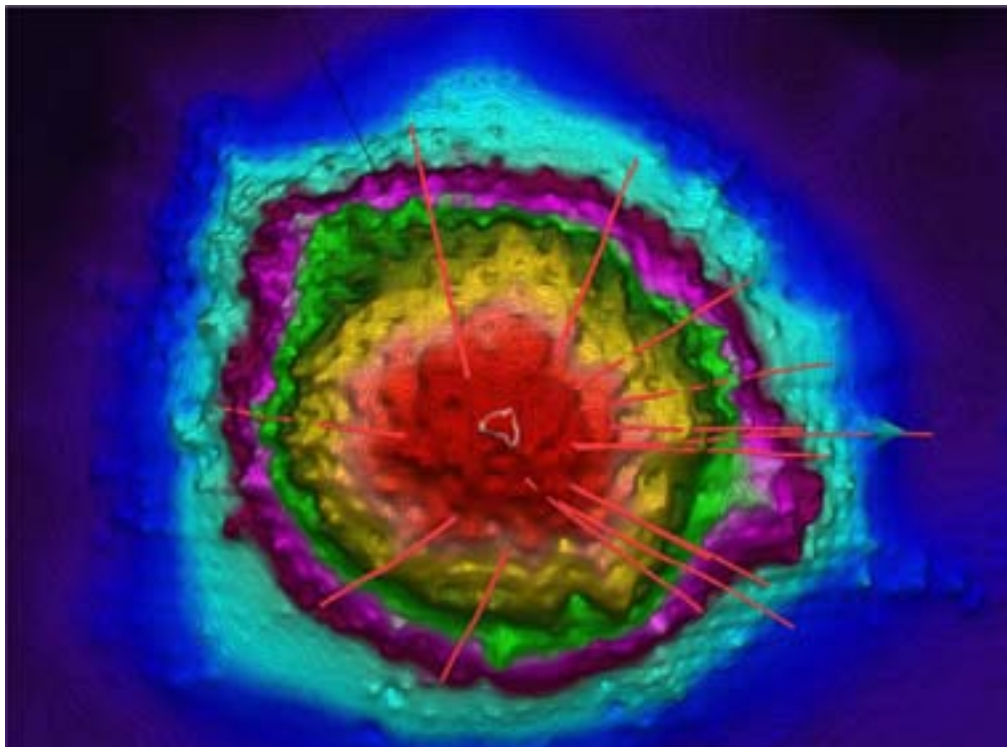
FAO/JAPAN GOVERNMENT COOPERATIVE PROGRAMME

GCP/INT/942/JPN

Report and documentation of the

EXPERT CONSULTATION ON DEEP-SEA FISHERIES IN THE HIGH SEAS

Bangkok, Thailand, 21-23 November 2006



Cover photo: Image of rusky knoll, a deep sea feature in the Indian Ocean. Courtesy of Graham Patchell, Sealord Grp, New Zealand. This knoll is now closed to bottom trawling largely due to the presence of black coral. The red lines indicate known tow lines. The majority of the tows have come close to the top of the knoll and landed below the ledge at 690 metres which surrounds the knoll.

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ISBN 978-92-5-105822-0

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PREPARATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

The recognition that deep-sea fisheries, as a result of technological development and market demand, are, in many areas, being exploited at increasingly unsustainable rates and, in some cases, with considerable damage to benthic habitats, has led to concern on the part of many States over the conservation, management and governance of deep-sea fisheries.

The management challenges of deep-sea fisheries, and particularly demersal deepwater fisheries, were discussed at the twenty-sixth session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) in 2005. FAO has undertaken a range of activities to address recommendations in this context.

The Expert Consultation on Deep-sea Fisheries in the High Seas was convened in answer to the concerns and suggestions made at the twenty-sixth session of COFI and took place from 21 to 23 November 2006 in Bangkok, Thailand. Experts from a range of disciplines and geographic areas were brought together to analyse four main aspects of deep-sea fisheries in the high seas: the overall resource, management of the resource, legal issues, and high seas marine protected areas.

This consultation followed DEEP SEA 2003, an international conference on governance and management of deep-sea fisheries held in New Zealand. The Expert Consultation sought to further develop understanding of the management of deep-sea fisheries and endeavoured to advance guidance on potential technical guidelines for the conservation and management of deep-sea fisheries.

The Expert Consultation is the first of a number of activities addressing issues of high-seas deep-sea fisheries. Funding was provided by the Government of Japan (through a project entitled, “Promotion of sustainable fisheries: support for the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development”).

The Consultation was organized and convened by Dr Dominique Gréboval with support from Dr Ross Shotton (co-convenor) and Blaise Kuemlangan. Input and assistance was provided by Jessica Sanders (FAO Consultant) and Louise-Anne Le Bailly offered secretarial support.

This report includes an overview of the presentations and discussions held during the consultation, and also presents the conclusions and recommendations agreed upon by participants. Four background documents commissioned by FAO are published in this report, together with additional complementary documentation and presentations that were provided by participants.

Distribution:

Participants in the Expert Consultation
FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department
FAO Fisheries Officers, Regional and Subregional Offices

FAO.

Report and documentation of the Expert Consultation on Deep-sea Fisheries in the High Seas. Bangkok, Thailand, 21–23 November 2006.

FAO Fisheries Report. No. 838. Rome, FAO. 2007. 203 p.

ABSTRACT

This Expert Consultation was convened in order to address continuing global concerns regarding deep-sea fisheries in the high seas and to build on outputs from previous conferences. The impetus for the consultation also emerged from recommendations of the twenty-sixth session of COFI (2005). Four main aspects of deep-sea fisheries in the high seas were highlighted: the overall resource, management of the resource, legal issues, and high seas marine protected areas. The consultation sought to improve knowledge of management issues and constraints. Activities that build on this information will follow in 2007 and 2008.

This document contains an overview of the meeting and the main conclusions and recommendations developed by the participants. In addition the four background papers that were commissioned for the consultation, as well as complementary presentations and documents presented in Bangkok are included.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

As	Arrangements
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CCAMLR	Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources
CCRF	(FAO) Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries
COFI	Committee on Fisheries
EAF	Ecosystem approach to fisheries
EEZs	Exclusive economic zones
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GFCM	General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean
GRT	Gross registered tonnage
ICES	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea
IPOA	International Plan of Action
IPOA–Capacity	International Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity
IPOA–IUU	International Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing
IUU	Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing
MCS	Monitoring, control and surveillance
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MSE	Management strategy evaluation
MSY	Maximum sustainable yield
NAFO	Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization
NEAFC	North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PICES	North Pacific Marine Science Organization
RFMO	Regional fisheries management organization
RFMOs/As	Regional fisheries management organizations or arrangements
SEAFO	South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation
SIODFA	Southern Indian Ocean Deepwater Fishers' Association
TAC	Total allowable catch
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFSA	Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (commonly abbreviated as the UN Fish Stocks Agreement)
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
VMS	Vessel monitoring system