

Overview of Fisheries Policy

Overview of Fisheries Policy – Key Points & Structure

1. What Is Fisheries Policy?

- **Definition:** A set of legal, economic, and management measures that guide the use, conservation, and development of fishery resources.
- **Purpose:** Balance sustainable exploitation with ecological health, socio-economic benefits, and food security.
- **Scope:** Covers marine, freshwater, and inland fisheries; includes capture fisheries, aquaculture, and related processing and trade.

2. Core Objectives

Objective	Typical Target	Example Indicators
Sustainability	Maintain fish stocks at or above biologically sustainable levels	Stock assessment status (e.g., “overfished”, “healthy”)
Food Security & Nutrition	Provide affordable, high-quality protein	Per-capita fish consumption, market price stability
Economic Viability	Support livelihoods and generate income	Employment rates in fishery sector, export revenues
Ecosystem Protection	Preserve marine habitats & biodiversity	Area of protected zones, by-catch mortality rates
Governance & Compliance	Ensure transparent, accountable management	Number of enforcement actions, stakeholder participation scores

3. Institutional Framework

Level	Main Actors	Typical Functions
International	FAO, Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs), World Trade Organization (WTO)	Global standards (e.g., Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries), quota allocations, dispute settlement

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Level	Main Actors	Typical Functions
National	Ministry of Fisheries / Marine Resources, Coast Guard, Environmental Agency	Legislation drafting, licensing, monitoring & enforcement, research funding
Sub-national / Local	State/provincial fisheries departments, community co-management boards	Site-specific regulations, community-based monitoring, capacity building
Private & Civil Society	Fishing companies, NGOs, industry associations, academia	Industry standards, certification (MSC, ASC), advocacy, scientific advice

4. Main Policy Instruments

1. Regulatory Tools

- **Catch Limits / Total Allowable Catches (TACs)**
- **Gear Restrictions** (e.g., ban on bottom trawls, size limits)
- **Closed Seasons / Areas** (temporal/spatial closures)
- **Licensing & Quota Systems** (Individual Transferable Quotas, Community Quotas)

2. Economic Tools

- **Taxes & Levies** (e.g., fuel taxes, landing fees)
- **Subsidies & Incentives** (fuel efficiency upgrades, gear modification grants)
- **Market-Based Instruments** (eco-labeling, certification schemes, traceability systems)

3. Management & Planning Tools

- **Stock Assessment & Scientific Advisory Panels**
- **Ecosystem-Based Management (EBM) Plans**
- **Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM)**
- **Co-Management Agreements** (shared decision-making with fishing communities)

4. Compliance & Enforcement

- **Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS) & AIS**
- **On-board Observers & Electronic Monitoring**
- **Port State Measures** (inspection, denial of entry for non-compliant vessels)

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- **Legal Penalties** (fines, license revocation, criminal prosecution)

5. Social & Capacity?Building Measures

- **Training & Extension Services**
 - **Alternative Livelihood Programs**
 - **Stakeholder Consultation Processes**
 - **Gender & Youth Inclusion Policies**
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5. International Legal Foundations

Instrument

Year Key Provisions

**United Nations Convention on