



Norway

Report of the Colloquium & Panel Discussion on WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies: Perspectives for Regional Fisheries Management

25 November 2024 | Kochi, Kerala



**Nalanda
UNIVERSITY**



About the Organizers



Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO)

The BOBP-IGO is a regional fisheries advisory body with Bangladesh, India, Maldives and Sri Lanka as its contracting parties. It is mandated to enhance cooperation amongst its member countries and other countries (especially, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar and Thailand) for sustainable fisheries management in the Bay of Bengal region. The BOBP-IGO Secretariat is located at Chennai. The Department of Fisheries, Government of India is the nodal agency from India and the hosting agency.



Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT)

The Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT), established in 1963 under the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, specializes in international business and trade. Recognized as a "Deemed to be University" in 2002, it has earned NAAC Grade 'A' accreditation twice. IIFT focuses on research, training, and education in International Business Management and Strategy, playing a key role in skill development for India's external trade sector.



Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA)

The Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA), established by an Act of Parliament in 1972, promotes and regulates India's marine product exports. It oversees all seafood exports, including fish, shellfish, and aquatic plants, ensuring quality, sustainability, and compliance with international standards. MPEDA is empowered to conduct inspections, set export standards, provide training, and facilitate global seafood marketing.



ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (ICAR-CMFRI)

The ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI), established in 1947 and integrated into ICAR in 1967, is a global leader in tropical marine fisheries research. It pioneered the "Stratified Multistage Random Sampling Method" for fishery data estimation, maintaining a vast National Marine Fisheries Data Centre. CMFRI expanded from capture fisheries to mariculture, developing technologies for farming shrimp, shellfish, and seaweeds, while advancing research in marine biotechnology, biodiversity, and climate resilience. Its efforts have driven India's marine fisheries development, fostered human resource training, and empowered coastal communities through sustainable aquaculture initiatives.



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Bay of Bengal Programme
Inter-Governmental Organisation

91, Saint Mary's Road, Abhiramapuram, Chennai - 600 018, Tamil Nadu, India
Telephone: # 91 44 42040024, www.bobpigo.org, Email: info@bobpigo.org

Preparation of Report

This report on “Colloquium & Panel Discussion on World Trade Organization Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies: Perspectives for Regional Fisheries Management” is prepared by BOBP-IGO.

The Panel Discussion was conducted alongside the Regional Training Course on Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) and Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management (EAFM) organized by BOBP-IGO from 15-30 November 2024 under BOBLME-II Project.

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of BOBP-IGO concerning the legal or development status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

Compilation & Editing

Dr. P. Krishnan, Director, BOBP-IGO, Chennai

Dr. Grinson George, Director, ICAR-CMFRI, Kochi

Dr. M. Karthikeyan, Director, MPEDA, Kochi

Ms. Pinar Karakaya, Economist, FAO Liaison Office in Geneva

Prof. James J. Nedumpara, Head, CTIL, IIFT, New Delhi

Dr. S. Amirthalingam, Professor of Law, TNNLU, Tiruchirappalli

Dr. Kishore Dhavala, Dean, Nalanda University, Bihar

Dr. P.S. Ananthan, Principal Scientist, ICAR-CIFE, Mumbai

Ms. Sunanda Tewari, Consultant (Legal), CTIL, New Delhi

Dr. T. Velumani, Project Scientist, BOBP-IGO, Chennai

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Abstract

On November 25, 2024, a panel discussion titled "WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies: Perspectives for Regional Fisheries Management" took place on the margins of the Regional Training Course on the "Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) and Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management (EAFM)." This event, part of the BOBLME Project II and held from November 15-30, 2024, was organized by BOBP-IGO in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT), Marine Product Export Development Authority (MPEDA), and ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (ICAR-CMFRI). The panel featured over 40 delegates from South Asian nations including Bangladesh, India, the Maldives, Sri Lanka, and Thailand, alongside prominent Indian panelists and guests. Discussions focused on the legal nuances of the WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies, regional stances in the negotiations, and global advocacy for compliance and sustainability. Panelists debated the support for small-scale fisheries, the push for stronger sustainability practices, and the pursuit of fair terms in international dealings. The dialogue highlighted challenges such as vague definitions, data scarcity, and the disproportionate influence of developed countries. It concluded with a unanimous call for enhanced regional cooperation, capacity building, and actionable strategies to synchronize fisheries management with international sustainability objectives.

Contents

1.	Introduction	1
2.	Opening Session	1
3.	Lead Presentations	2
3.1	Understanding the WTO Agreement on Fish Subsidies	2
3.2	International Perspectives for Sustainable Fisheries & Effective Compliance	3
3.	Panel Discussion	4
4.	Plenary	8
5.	Way Forward	9
	Annexure1: Agenda	11
	Annexure 2: List of Participants	13
	Annexure 3: Brief Profile of the Speakers	17
	Annexure 4: Media Coverage of the Event	19



1. Introduction

A panel discussion was held on 25 November 2024 as a part of the Regional Training Course on “Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) and Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management (EAFM)” being organized by BOBP-IGO during 15-30 November 2024 under the aegis of BOBLME Project II. The event titled **“WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies: Perspectives for Regional Fisheries Management,”** was organized by the BOBP-IGO in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT), Marine Product Export Development Authority (MPEDA), and ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (ICAR-CMFRI).

More than 40 delegates from South Asian countries including Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Sri Lanka, and Thailand participated the event. In addition, the leading panellists and guests from institutions such as Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT), Centre for Trade and Investment Law (CTIL), Tamil Nadu National Law University (TNNLU), ICAR-Central Institute of Fisheries Education (ICAR-CIFE), Cochin University of Science and Technology (CUSAT), Central Institute of Fisheries Nautical and Engineering Training (CIFNET), ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (ICAR-CMFRI), ICAR-Central Institute of Fisheries technology, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and Nalanda University have also participated in the event.

The discussion centred around understanding the legal implications of the WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies, the positions of South Asian countries in negotiations, and international advocacy efforts ensuring compliance with the agreement and promoting sustainability. The panellists expressed their views on supporting small-scale fishers, enhancing sustainability measures, and advocating for equitable frameworks in global negotiations. Concerns were raised about definitional ambiguities, data limitations, and the influence of developed nations in shaping policies.

2. Opening Session

The BOBP-IGO Director, **Dr. P. Krishnan**, opened the event by welcoming the panellists, presenters, participants and attendees, and setting the context for the discussion. He described the importance of the WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies, emphasizing its critical role in negotiations and its direct implications for regional fisheries management. He suggested that fisheries management is not merely a technical or biological endeavour but is intrinsically linked to the livelihoods of millions, the sustainability of marine ecosystems, and global trade dynamics. He underscored the importance of addressing the biological, social, commercial, and trade dimensions of fisheries management, framing the discussion as a timely opportunity for member countries to share perspectives and build consensus.



3. Lead Presentations

Following the welcome address from **Dr. P. Krishnan**, two lead presentations set the context for ensuing discussion. **Ms. Pinar Karakaya**, Economist, FAO Liaison Office in Geneva made her presentation on “Understanding the WTO Agreement on Fish Subsidies” and **Prof. James J. Nedumpara**, Professor and Head of the Centre for International Trade and Investment Law (CTIL) made a presentation on “International Perspectives for Sustainable Fisheries & Effective Compliance”.

3.1. Understanding the WTO Agreement on Fish Subsidies

WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies, adopted at the 12th Ministerial Conference in June 2022, represents a landmark step toward environmental sustainability and achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 14.6. It is the first WTO agreement focusing on mitigating the harmful effects of fisheries subsidies on marine resources. The agreement prohibits (i) subsidies that contribute to Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing; (ii) subsidies for overfished stocks; and (iii) subsidies for fishing in unregulated high seas. It also emphasizes caution when granting subsidies for vessels not flying the subsidizing country's flag or where stock statuses are unknown. Developing and

Least-Developed Countries (LDCs) benefit from special treatment, including exemptions from dispute settlements for two years (peace clause) and extended reporting timelines. The Agreement establishes a WTO Committee on Fisheries Subsidies to oversee its implementation, with periodic reviews planned, and provides technical assistance for developing countries through a voluntary funding mechanism. Members are required to submit data on fish stock statuses, conservation efforts, and fleet information to enhance transparency.



Pinar Karakaya is an economist at the FAO Liaison Office in Geneva, where she leads the trade and food security work stream. She has 17 years of professional experience in agrifood trade, commodity markets, and trade negotiations. Prior to joining FAO, she worked as a government official for Türkiye's Ministry of Trade, the sole authority in the country for import and export policies.



The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) plays a crucial role in supporting the agreement, offering technical expertise in fisheries management, data collection, and combating IUU fishing. Tools such as the Global Record of Fishing Vessels and the SOFIA report are instrumental in these efforts. Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) also contribute significantly by fostering cooperation and enforcing sustainable fishing practices. Despite its comprehensive scope, the agreement acknowledges the need for complementary tools and collaborative efforts to address fisheries sustainability effectively. As of November 2024, 87 WTO members have accepted the Agreement, with implementation awaiting ratification by two-thirds of members (111). By promoting responsible fisheries governance, the agreement aims to balance economic development with the long-term health of global marine ecosystems.

3.2 International Perspectives for Sustainable Fisheries & Effective Compliance

Reiterating the WTO-AFS as a significant global effort to promote sustainable fishing practices by addressing harmful subsidies that contribute to overfishing, illegal fishing, and stock depletion, he emphasised the scope and opportunities available under the Agreement for international cooperation through Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) and partnerships



Prof. James J. Nedumpara serves as a Professor and Head of the Centre for International Trade and Investment Law (CTIL) at the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT) as well as the India Chair of WTO's Chairs Programme. With extensive experience in international trade and economic law, he has worked with prominent law firms, corporate organizations, and UNCTAD's India programme prior to transitioning to academia. James has taught international trade law as a visiting faculty member at institutions such as FGV Law School in São Paulo, Brazil, ITAM Mexico, UNSW Sydney, NLSIU in Bangalore, and the CWS-WTI Joint Summer Academy.

like the FAO, which aids in technical assistance, data collection, and stock monitoring. Complementing global frameworks like the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), it reflects an urgent need for sustainable fisheries governance. As of November 2024, it awaits ratification by two-thirds of



WTO members to come into effect, highlighting the ongoing challenges of balancing marine fisheries activities with marine conservation. With nearly 90% of marine fish stocks fully or overexploited, the negotiations for providing disciplines for subsidies that contribute to overcapacity and overfishing (OCOF) seeks to curb harmful subsidies, especially those supporting fleet capacity expansion, operational losses, or fuel costs. Negotiations on OCOF entails a carefully negotiated balance as it could constrain the policy space of developing country members WTO to provide the much needed support for income poor and resource poor fishermen. In other words, the development dimensions of the additional disciplines need to be fully considered.

While responding to queries, he stressed upon the need for AFS to be forward looking considering the possible shift from the use of and subsidy for the current usage of fossil fuel to the possible adoption of renewable energy sources in near future by the fishing vessels. He also addressed the question of feasibility of considering the per capita basis of subsidy as a criteria in place of aggregate amount of subsidy given by a member country.

4. Panel Discussion

Dr. P. Krishnan, Director of the BOBP-IGO, informed the forum that India, Maldives, and Sri Lanka have already submitted their concern on International Plans of Action to Prevent, Deter, and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing (IPOA-IUU), while Bangladesh is in the process of doing so. As a Regional Fisheries Advisory Body (RFAB), the BOBP-IGO acknowledged its pivotal role in facilitating and supporting these initiatives.

The panellists were then introduced:

Dr. Grinson George, noted that historically, fisheries subsidies enabled developed countries to build large industrial fleets, causing significant environmental impacts and inequalities in resource distribution. Compared to this, India's fish catch is predominantly small-scale based. Therefore, the negotiations on subsidies agreement should focus on protecting the small-scale and artisanal fishers while encouraging sustainable growth in the fisheries sector. He also highlighted India's demand for a 25-year transition period in adopting additional disciplines in the Agreement. "India's fishing sector is primarily driven by small-scale fishermen, making it a matter of food security and livelihood", he added.

Panelists



Dr. Grinson George
Director, ICAR-Central
Marine Fisheries Research
Institute (ICAR-CMFRI),
Kochi



Dr. M. Karthikeyan
Director,
Marine Product Export
Development Authority (MPEDA),
Kochi



Dr. S. Amirthalingam
Professor of Law,
Tamil Nadu National Law
University,
Tiruchirappalli



Dr. Kishore Dhavala
Dean,
Nalanda University,
Bihar



Dr. P.S. Ananthan
Principal Scientist,
ICAR-Central Institute of
Fisheries Education (ICAR-CIFE),
Mumbai



Ms. Sunanda Tewari
Consultant,
Centre for Trade and
Investment Law (CTIL),
New Delhi

Dr. M. Karthikeyan, emphasized that India is practices primarily livelihood fishing rather than industrial fishing, with surplus production supporting trade. Countries relying on Indian fisheries for food should not push for subsidy removals, a concern that India has raised in the WTO meetings. India's marine exports have grown significantly, from 9 lakh tons a decade ago to 18 lakh tons today, including 6.5 lakh tons from aquaculture and 11.5 lakh tons from the marine sector, underscoring the importance of sustainable resource management. India's commitment to sustainability is evident in measures like implementation of fishing ban period over the past 15 years and extending the fishing ban period from 45 days to 61 days. The initiatives like artificial reefs and sea ranching promoted by the Government also enhance the marine ecosystems. Subsidies in India are focused on supporting small-scale fishers and their livelihoods, rather than fostering industrial fishing and overexploitation. He emphasized the need to re-evaluate resources, catches, and how the sector sustains both livelihoods and exports. India shall continue to advocate for subsidies as a tool to support small-scale fisheries and oppose undue pressure from developed nations, ensuring a balance between sustainability and the welfare of its fishers.

Dr. Kishore Dhavala, emphasized the complexities of subsidy reductions in the fishing sector, particularly for small-scale fishers in the Global South, including regions like the Bay of Bengal encompassing India, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. While reducing subsidies is important to address overfishing and IUU fishing, a one-size-fits-all approach is not suitable. Small-scale fishers, whose livelihoods depend on fishing, earn

modest incomes of \$35 to \$120 per month. Eliminating subsidies would severely disrupt their lives. Instead of blanket subsidy removals, a balanced approach should link subsidies to sustainable fishing practices. This includes educating and equipping fishers on sustainable techniques, reducing bycatch, and promoting capacity building and technology adoption. Regional solutions like quota systems and coordinated fishing bans, already practiced in India and Bangladesh, could also support sustainability. He also highlighted the need for special treatment of small-scale fishers, reflecting their socio-economic vulnerabilities. Policies should incorporate alternative livelihoods and training programs to empower fishers while ensuring their compliance with sustainable practices. Given that many people are directly or indirectly connected to small-scale fisheries, it is essential for governments to retain targeted subsidies while promoting long-term sustainability and equitable resource management.

Dr. Ananthan P. S. outlined the current status and key issues surrounding the fisheries subsidies agreement and India's role in the negotiations. The WTO-AFS is yet to come into force, which is conditional upon ratification by 24 more countries, and conclusion of negotiations on additional provisions within July 2026 consensus on which has remained elusive so far. Developing nations, including India, Indonesia, and many African nations are advocating for a broader but precise definition of small-scale and artisanal fishing to ensure that subsidies benefiting small-scale fishers are protected, countering the narrower definitions proposed by developed nations like the EU, Australia and New Zealand. India must collaborate with other developing







nations to continue to push for this broader definition. India is also emphasizing the Common but Differentiated Responsibilities (CDR) as against the present Special and differential treatment (S&D) that excludes countries like India in its ambit, arguing that developed countries with advanced fishing fleets should bear a greater burden in reducing subsidies, much like their obligations in climate treaties. Another key issue is the need to include fisheries access agreements in the subsidy definition. Currently, agreements of EU members with West African nations are excluded, which India views as inequitable as it leads to underestimation of EU subsidies to the aging industrial fleets. However, India should take three proactive steps regardless of the Agreement's future: First, it needs to create a clear, consensus-driven definition of fishing operations that differentiates small-scale, artisanal, and large-scale mechanized fishing. Subsidies should be rationalized to exclude certain large-scale operations. Second, India should quantify and rationalize its subsidies for transparency and sustainability. Finally, a legislative framework is essential to regulate fishing in the EEZ beyond 12 nautical miles, incorporating scientific management plans and sustainability measures already proposed by institutions like CMFRI. These steps are crucial to sustainably manage its fisheries resources as well as fishers livelihoods, with or without the global Agreement.

Dr. S. Amirthalingam, underscored the importance of India's capacity to implement sustainability policies across several dimensions. Highlighting the intersection of trade and sustainability and integration of sustainability within WTO agreements, the Rio

Declaration's Principles 4 and 12 were referred. He also stressed the importance of intergenerational equity as a part of Fisheries subsidies agreement. He also reported that India faces challenges in aligning trade agreements, such as agricultural subsidies and MSP-related issues, with sustainability goals. The transition to alternative energy sources mandate, as part of India's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), requires financial and technological support, leveraging global mechanisms like the GEF. The realisation of sustainability principles as well as stakeholder participation is as vital for transparent governance, with Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration and SDG Goal 16 underscoring the need for institutional coordination. Furthermore, he emphasised for aligning the efforts of institutions like the BOBP-IGO to address gaps in domestic legislation, particularly in managing territorial waters and the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). He stressed the need for precautionary measures, stakeholder involvement through public participation, collaborative policymaking, and robust legal reforms to bridge gaps and enhance India's capacity to fulfil its global sustainability commitments.

Ms. Sunanda Tewari, underscored the importance of having inter-agency and intergovernmental cooperation to address challenges faced by developing countries in meeting compliance requirements under the WTO's Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies, particularly regarding Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing and overfished stocks. She emphasized capacity-building, surveillance, and monitoring as critical areas where these countries struggle, particularly in identifying and utilizing the best scientific

evidence. She also suggested that regional cooperation among countries with shared geographical and ecological concerns, such as in the Bay of Bengal, could be a practical solution. This could involve harmonized policies and practices, collective accountability mechanisms, and enhanced coordination beyond relying solely on organizations like RFMOs, Regional Fisheries Advisory Bodies (RFABs), or the FAO. Strengthening regional collaboration would improve compliance with notification requirements and support sustainable management of shared resources under the Agreement.

An intervention made by **Priyansha Hajela** highlighted the significant role of RFMOs in the current Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies and the Additional Provisions (that are presently being negotiated). She emphasized on the importance of capacity building and collaboration between the RFMOs and the members particularly the developing and least developed members in providing the requisite technology to the members for the purpose of notifications. Also, the RFMOs can assist the members in notifying the conservation and management measures. With the increasing obligations placed on the RFMOs in terms of determination of IUU fishing and overfished stocks, it places them in a pivotal position to promote sustainable management of fisheries resources.

5. Plenary

During the plenary session, participants interacted with the panellists and the speakers on various topics related WTO Agreement on Fish Subsidies

- Potential legal challenges that might arise when implementing the WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies (WTO-AFS)
- Potential problems for a country if it does not follow the regulations related to IUU fishing, and measures taken by WTO
- Dispute settlement process if a country is impacted by a prohibited subsidy

In his concluding remarks, **Dr. Grinson George**, highlighted several challenges in the context of fisheries management and the role of RFMOs, particularly for developing countries like India and Sri Lanka. First, he expressed concern about sovereign rights within Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs), where data produced by developing countries is often ignored, while external parties use their own methods to intrude on EEZs without considering local input. Second, he questioned the fairness of the 0.8% catch classification, arguing that countries with large populations and fishing sectors, like India, face

Countries	Observation
Thailand	Thailand faces particular challenges in balancing compliance with the Agreement across both large-scale and small-scale fisheries. The focus is on finding ways to align with and apply the Agreement within the country's context. Currently, SEAFDEC plays a key role in addressing these challenges by organizing capacity-building initiatives for member countries. These efforts include enhancing digital capacity, improving understanding of IUU (Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated) fishing, conducting stock assessments, and advancing fisheries management practices.
Sri Lanka	Sri Lanka reflects on the discussions, noting that while the country has strong laws addressing issues like IUU fishing, challenges persist in their implementation a problem not unique to Sri Lanka. It was emphasized that good governance and effective management are critical for addressing such issues. As managers, it is essential to make sound decisions to ensure the proper implementation of laws and adherence to international agreements. Ms. Yasmin, participant from Sri Lanka stressed that countries must take responsibility and take action to align with these agreements, which will enable better fisheries management globally.
Maldives	Maldives also relates to the issues discussed by the panellists, noting that many resonate with the challenges faced in the Maldives. A key concern is the definition of terms in agreements on fishery subsidies, particularly distinguishing between small-scale and large-scale fisheries. The difficulty arises because much of the fishing gear used is common across different types of fisheries, making it challenging to clearly delineate effort. Mr. Nabeel, participant from

disproportionate challenges compared to smaller countries. Additionally, he stressed the need for leadership within RFMOs and RFABs that represents the interests of member countries, rather than external leadership imposing frameworks that are not feasible for regional contexts. He suggested that more practical, locally-driven solutions are needed to bridge the gap between developed and developing countries in fisheries management.

In his concluding remarks, **Dr. P. Krishnan**, Director of BOBP-IGO, emphasized that the agreement does not call for a total ban on subsidies but rather highlights the need to identify beneficial subsidies and draw lessons from other countries. A critical point made by several panellists was the role of regional fisheries bodies. He mentioned BOBP-IGO's commitment to advancing this conversation and expressed the organization's plan to develop a comprehensive capacity-building program for senior officials from member countries through various responsible mechanisms.

6. Way Forward

Based on the deliberations, following way forward was proposed for further action

Define and Differentiate Fishing Practices

- Develop a clear, consensus-driven definition of fishing operations that differentiates small-scale, artisanal, and large-scale industrial/commercial fishing.
- Promote a broader definition of small-scale and artisanal fishing to ensure protection for small-scale fishers, as advocated by India and other developing nations.

Special and Differential Treatment (S&D)

- Continue advocating for Special and Differential Treatment for developing countries by revisiting the criteria for including/excluding a 'developing country', ensuring they are not unfairly burdened by subsidy reductions or eliminations, and allowing for longer transition periods.
- Implement provisions that consider the specific needs of small-scale fishers, providing targeted support to those who rely on fisheries for their livelihood sustenance.

Capacity-Building and Technology Transfer

- Strengthen capacity-building initiatives in developing countries, particularly in areas like IUU fishing, stock assessments, and sustainable fisheries management.

Regional Cooperation and Governance

- Promote regional cooperation and coordination among countries sharing ecological and geographical concerns, such as those in the Bay of Bengal, to harmonize policies and manage shared fish stocks effectively.
- Develop more practical, locally-driven solutions through Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) and Regional Fisheries Advisory Bodies (RFABs), ensuring that the governance structures better represent the interests of member countries.

Improved Data and Monitoring Systems

- Strengthen data collection and monitoring systems to address the challenges of quantifying subsidies and ensuring transparency in subsidy notifications.
- Support developing countries in building robust scientific research and surveillance capacities to meet international compliance requirements.

Long-Term Sustainability Goals

- Promote the integration of sustainability goals into national policies, focusing on long-term resource management, food security, and the welfare of fishers, particularly in developing countries.
- Advocate for a balanced approach that protects both livelihoods and marine ecosystems, ensuring that the fisheries sector is resilient and adaptable to future challenges.

The session concluded with a call for stronger regional collaboration, capacity-building initiatives, and practical measures to align fisheries management with global sustainability goals.



1

Welcome & Opening Remarks

(10 minutes)

2

Lead Talks (50 minutes)

Understanding the WTO Agreement on Fish Subsidies (20 minutes)

Speaker: Ms. Pinar Karakaya, *Economist, FAO Liaison Office in Geneva*

Discussion Points:

- WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies
- Interconnectivity with sustainability and the primary global fish instruments.
- FAO assistance in implementing the "fish clauses" of the Agreement.

International Perspectives for Sustainable Fisheries & Effective Compliance (30 minutes)

Speaker: Prof. James J. Nedumpara, *Head, Centre for Trade and Investment Law, Indian Institute for Foreign Trade, New Delhi*

Discussion Points:

- Challenges in implantation and capacity needs of developing nations
- Advocacy strategies for compliance
- Case studies of successful implementation
- Opportunities for regional cooperation

3

Panel Discussion & Q&A Session

(60 minutes)

Moderator: P Krishnan, *Director, BOBP-IGO-IGO, Chennai*

Panellists:

Dr. Grinson George, *Director, ICAR-CMFRI, Kochi*

Dr. M. Karthikeyan, *Director, MPEDA, Kochi*

Ms. Pinar Karakaya, *Economist, FAO Liaison Office in Geneva*

Prof. James J. Nedumpara, *Head, CTIL, IIFT, New Delhi*

Dr. S. Amirthalingam, *Professor of Law, TNNLU, Tiruchirappalli*

Dr. Kishore Dhavala, *Dean, Nalanda University, Bihar*

Dr. P.S. Ananthan, *Principal Scientist, ICAR-CIFE, Mumbai*

Ms. Sunanda Tewari, *Consultant (Legal), CTIL, New Delhi*

Key Discussion Points:

- What are the capacity needs in implementing the agreement?
- How can regional collaboration enhance compliance with the agreement?
- What best practices can be adopted from other regions?
- How to monitor the implementation of sustainable fisheries policies?

4

Closing Remarks

(15 minutes)

- Summary of key takeaways from discussions
- Future steps and potential follow-up meetings



Dinner and Cultural

(2030 hours to 2130 hours)



List of Participants

No	Name, Designation and Address	Country	Mobile/ Email
Speakers & Panelists			
1	Ms. Pinar Karakaya <i>FAO Liaison Office in Geneva</i>	Switzerland	Pinar.Karakaya@fao.org
2	Prof. James J. Nedumpara <i>Head, CTIL, IIFT, New Delhi</i>	India	+91 9999727461 jamesnedumpara@gmail.com
3	Dr. Grinson George <i>Director, ICAR-CMFRI, Kochi</i>	India	+ 91 8547857036 grinson.george@icar.gov.in
4	Dr. M. Karthikeyan <i>Director, MPEDA, Kochi</i>	India	+91 9445267196 karthikeyan@mpeda.gov.in
5	Dr. S. Amirthalingam <i>Professor of Law, TNLU,, Tiruchirappalli</i>	India	+91 6381253062 amirtham@tnnlu.ac.in
6	Dr. Kishore Dhavala <i>Dean, Nalanda University, Bihar</i>	India	+91 8919714702 k.dhavala@nalandauniv.edu.in
7	Dr. P.S. Ananthan <i>Principal Scientist, ICAR-CIFE, Mumbai</i>	India	+91 7021887439 ananthan@cife.edu.in
8	Ms. Sunanda Tewari <i>Consultant, CTIL, New Delhi</i>	India	+91 9918923989 sunanda@iift.edu
Country Participants			
9	Ms. Robiat Ferdausi Senior Assistant Secretary, Ministry of Fisheries & Livestock, Dhaka	Bangladesh	+880 1717449911 rftuhin30@gmail.com
10	Mr. Mohammad Faruque Moyaduzzaman Assistant Director, Department of Fisheries Matshya Bhaban, Dhaka	Bangladesh	+880 1640951676 fmzaman0307@gmail.com
11	Mr. Muhammad Nasir Uddin Deputy Project Director, Hilsa Development and Management Project, Department of Fisheries, Matshya Bhaban, Dhaka	Bangladesh	+880 1723360006 baunasir30@gmail.com
12	Mr. Muhammad Farajul Kabir Assistant Director, Marine Surveillance Check post, Chattogram	Bangladesh	+880 1710580676 fkabir.fri@gmail.com
13	Shri M. Habibullah <i>Director, CIFNET, Kochi</i>	India	+91 7845697086 directorcifnet.1963@gmail.com
14	Dr. K. Sunil Mohamed <i>Chair, SSNI, Former Scientist-CMFRI, Kochi</i>	India	+91 9447056559 kasmohamed@gmail.com
15	Dr. A. Suresh <i>Principal Scientist, ICAR-CIFT, Kochi</i>	India	+91 7838963081 sureshcwri@gmail.com
16	Dr. Shinoj P. <i>Principal Scientist, ICAR-CMFRI, Kochi</i>	India	+91 809569694 shinoj.p@icar.gov.in
17	Dr. Joice V Thomas <i>Chief Executive, NETFISH, Kochi</i>	India	+91 9446139861 joice.nf@mpeda.gov.in
18	Dr. S. Sabu <i>Director & Associate Professor, CUSAT, Kochi</i>	India	+91 9847233764 sabuif@cusat.ac.in
19	Dr. M. Neelakandan <i>Chief Instructor, CIFNET, Kochi</i>	India	+91 9495609723 neelcifnet@gmail.com
20	Dr. Mini Sekharan <i>Associate Professor, CUSAT, Kochi</i>	India	+91 9895070310 minisekharan@yahoo.com

No	Name, Designation and Address	Country	Mobile/ Email
21	Ms. Bhakit Anand <i>International Fish Trade Specialist, FAO, New Delhi</i>	India	bhakti.anand@fao.org
22	Ms. Priyansha Hajela <i>Associate, CTIL, New Delhi</i>	India	+91 9927719018 priyansha.ctil@iift.edu
23	Mr. Mahesh Dafada Assistant Superintendent of Fisheries Bhuj, District-Kutch, Gujarat	India	+91 7567656773 mahesh251110@gmail.com
24	Mr. Sagar Kuveskar Assistant Commissioner of Fisheries Sindhudurgh District, Maharashtra	India	+91 8928520122 sagar.kuveskar14@gmail.com
25	Mr. V Reddy Naik Fisheries Development Officer, Kota, Tirupati District, Andhra Pradesh	India	+91 8500981961 reddynaik2016@gmail.com
26	Mr. Partha Sarathi Swain Assistant Fisheries officer at O/o Additional Fisheries Officer Marine Balasore, Odisha	India	+91 88249418403 parthaswain402@gmail.com
27	Mr. Ahmed Rizwan Ismail Assistant Statistical Officer, Ministry of Fisheries and Ocean Resources	Maldives	+960 975-1481 ahmed.rizwan@fisheries.gov.mv
28	Mr. Mohamed Mubeen Ahmed Assistant Fisheries Officer, Ministry of Fisheries and Ocean Resources	Maldives	+960 753-0377 mohamed.mubeen@fisheries.gov.mv
29	Mr. Nabeel Abdhul Muhsin Assistant Marine Research Officer, Ministry of Fisheries and Ocean Resources	Maldives	+960 948-9434 nabeel.abdulmuhsin@mmri.gov.mv
30	Ms. A.P.A. Madushani Development Officer, Ministry of Agriculture, Lands Livestock, Irrigation, Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Division	Sri Lanka	+94 71 854 0229 anushikam1992@gmail.com
31	Mr. N. Sriranjana Assistant Director, Ministry of Agriculture, Lands Livestock, Irrigation, Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Division	Sri Lanka	+94 77 507 6197 ranjan.hghgfhghfuor@gmail.com
32	Mr. T.N. Gammanpila Fisheries Inspector, Ministry of Agriculture, Lands Livestock, Irrigation, Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Division	Sri Lanka	+94 71 637 4511 thanukagammanpila@gmail.com
33	Ms. WBWMRYC Aluwihare Ministry of Agriculture, Lands Livestock, Irrigation, Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Division	Sri Lanka	+94715597632 yasminaluwihare@gmail.com
34	Ms. Panitnard Weerawat Fisheries Management Senior Researcher (FMSR), Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center, Bangkok	Thailand	+66 915462695 panitnard@seafdec.org
35	Ms. Rattana Tiaye Fisheries Management Scientist (FMS), Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center, Bangkok	Thailand	+66 817751754 rattana@seafdec.org
36	Mr. Prapat Kaewmanee Fishery Biologist, Senior Professional Level, Department of Fisheries, Bangkok	Thailand	+66 976549251 prapat.kaewmanee@gmail.com

No	Name, Designation and Address	Country	Mobile/ Email
37	Mr. Jeerasak Lanmeen Fishery Biologist, Practitioner Level,	Thailand	+66 872751352 fai-sally@hotmail.com
Organizers			
38	Dr. P. Krishnan <i>Director, BOBP-IGO, Chennai</i>	India	+91 9498050062 krishnanars@bobbigo.org
39	Dr. E. Vivekanandan <i>Senior Scientific Consultant, BOBP-IGO</i>	India	+91 944238648 evivekanandan@hotmail.com
40	Ms. Divya <i>PhD Scholar, CUSAT, Kochi</i>	India	+91 8943464975 divyar74917@gmail.com
41	Ms. Sruthi <i>PhD Scholar, CUSAT, Kochi</i>	India	+91 9402759741 sruthisundar888@gmail.com
42	Dr. K. Nirmala <i>International Consultant for Gender, BOBLME</i>	India	+91 9884115095 nirmalak.esci@gmail.com
43	Dr. Velumani T <i>Project Scientist, BOBP-IGO</i>	India	+91 8928507760 velumani7694@gmail.com





Brief Profile of the Speakers



Ms. Pinar Karakaya is an economist at the FAO Liaison Office in Geneva, where she leads the trade and food security work stream. She has 17 years of professional experience in agrifood trade, commodity markets, and trade negotiations. Prior to joining FAO, she worked as a government official for Türkiye's Ministry of Trade, the sole authority in the country for import and export policies.

Prof. James J. Nedumpara serves as a Professor and Head of the Centre for International Trade and Investment Law (CTIL) at the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT) as well as the India Chair of WTO's Chairs Programme. With extensive experience in international trade and economic law, he has worked with prominent law firms, corporate organizations, and UNCTAD's India programme.



Dr. Grinson George is currently serving as the Director of the ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (ICAR-CMFRI). His area of expertise includes oceanography, remote sensing, and modeling techniques to support food and nutritional security in fisheries and aquaculture, particularly benefiting artisanal fishermen and aquafarmers in India.

Dr. M. Karthikeyan is currently serving as the Director of the Marine Product Export Development Authority (MPEDA). With an extensive background in fisheries and aquaculture, he brings over 13 years of experience from the Department of Fisheries, Government of Tamil Nadu, where he managed both inland and marine fisheries sectors.



Dr. S. Amirthalingam is currently working as a Professor at Tamil Nadu National Law University. With a background in legal practice at the High Court of Madras, he has an extensive academic career in law, having previously taught at Tamil Nadu Dr. Ambedkar Law University. His research and teaching focus on diverse legal fields, including International Law, Constitutional Law, Environmental Law, and Human Rights.

Dr. Kishore Dhavala is currently serving as the Dean of Nalanda University. With 15 years of extensive experience in teaching and research, his academic expertise spans critical domains of environmental and economic studies. His research focuses on interconnected areas including Environment and Natural Resource Economics, Energy Systems, Climate Change, Statistical Methods, and Applied Econometrics.

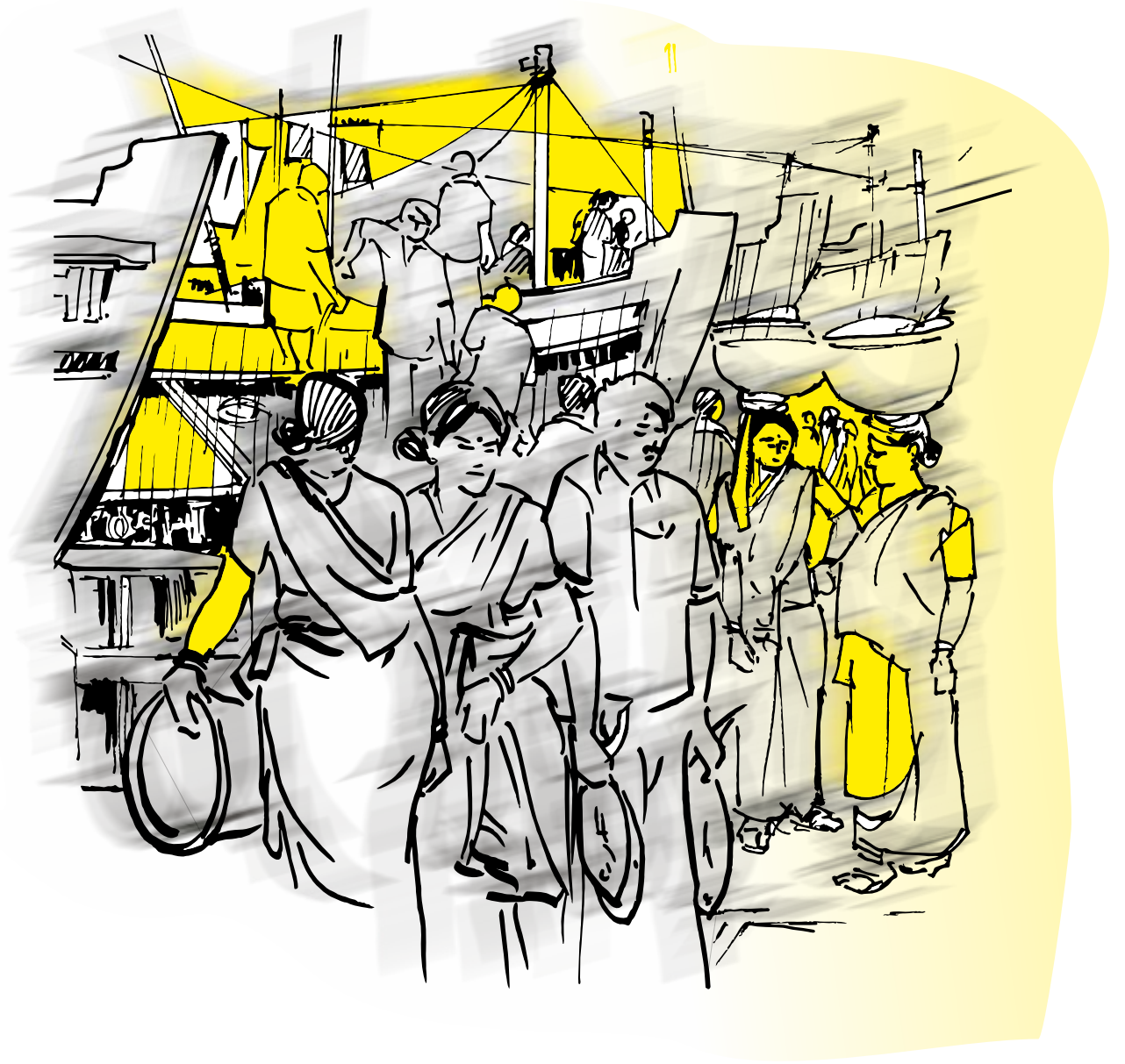


Dr. P.S. Ananthan is a Principal Scientist at ICAR-Central Institute of Fisheries Education (ICAR-CIFE), bringing over 20 years of comprehensive experience in teaching, research, extension, and institutional development. His research focuses on five key thematic areas: Fisheries Governance & Policy, Fishers Livelihoods & Human Development, Climate Change & Vulnerability, Fish Markets & Trade, and Information and Communication Technologies for Development (ICT4D).

Ms. Sunanda Tewari is currently working as consultant at the Centre for Trade and Investment Law (CTIL), specializes in public policy related to international trade, focusing on cross-border services and e-commerce. Her professional interests lie at the intersection of international trade, digital trade, and technological innovation, with an emphasis on policy development in the evolving global trade landscape.







**Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation
(BOBP-IGO)**

The BOBP-IGO (www.bobpigo.org) is a leading regional fisheries body instrumental in fisheries development in the Bay of Bengal Region for the last 45 years. Bangladesh, India, Maldives and Sri Lanka are the member-countries of the Organisation.

The Organisation is currently implementing the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem (BOBLME) project phase II. One of the objectives of the Organisation is to improve the capacity of the countries to better participate in national and regional fisheries governance processes including CCRF and EAFM.

Since 2008, the BOBP-IGO has conducted Regional Training Programme in CCRF to meet the training and capacity building needs of the fisheries personnel in the member-countries. So far, 116 officers from member-countries and cooperating countries of the BOBP-IGO, viz., Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and Myanmar have successfully completed the training course in six editions.

In addition, the BOBLME Project Phase I and BOBP-IGO jointly conducted a series of training courses in EAFM in the member countries in 2014 for junior and middle level fisheries and environmental practitioners to develop basic skills in understanding EAFM.



**Bay of Bengal Programme
Inter-Governmental Organisation**

91 St. Mary's Road, Chennai - 600 018, India.

Tel: +91 44 42040024

Email: info@bobpigo.org

www.bobpigo.org