

**The WTO fisheries subsidies disciplines: a search for a new balance
between economic, environmental and social concerns during and in the
aftermath of public health emergencies**

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Policy Brief

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Crisis and Pandemic in Regional and other Trade Agreements**

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Abstract

Wild capture marine fisheries sector is seriously affected by the measures taken to combat the COVID-19. It faces challenges on the demand and supply sides. In addition, monitoring and enforcement mechanisms, allowing WTO Members to ensure stock management and control the IUU, are also impacted. While both industrial and small-scale fishing are disrupted globally, the latter is more seriously hit. The situation offers an opportunity to reassess how the rules aimed at disciplining fisheries subsidies, negotiated at the WTO since 2001, could better balance the underlying economic, environmental, and social concerns in the context akin to the pandemics. Namely, to simultaneously ensure recovery of the fish stocks, sufficient fish supply / food security, and the necessary support to the fishers facing reduction in or cessation of their activities. The contribution focuses on the design of the disciplines specific to public health emergencies, including exceptions, across the three substantive areas addressed by the negotiators (overcapacity and overfishing; fishing overfished stocks; and the IUU) and makes both - short-term and more strategic suggestions.

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Abbreviations

AFS	[The future] Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease 2019
DSM	Dispute Settlement Mechanism
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN
INTERPOL	International Criminal Police Organization
IPOA-IUU	International Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing
IUU	Illegal, Unreported, Unregulated [fishing]
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
RFMA	Regional Fisheries Management Arrangement
RFMO	Regional Fisheries Management Organization
RNG	Negotiating Group on Rules (WTO)
SCM	Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures (SCM)
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	UN Conference on Trade and Development
UNEP	UN Environment Programme
WAEMU	West-African Economic and Monetary Union
WEF	World Economic Forum
WTO	World Trade Organization

I. Statement of the problem

Wild capture marine fisheries sector is seriously affected by the measures resorted to for containment of the COVID-19. Such measures, mostly impacting social and economic dimensions, also have their bearing on the environmental aspect of the sector in varied ways.

The overview of the measures concerned, classified into the three groups featuring their closer proximity to either demand, supply or regulatory sides, as well as the scrutiny of their implications, is provided in the Annex 1. Due to their design, most of the measures appear to have a heavier bearing on the small-scale fleets. Of relevance to this assessment is the fact that the owners /operators of the latter are reported to receive much less subsidies as compared to the industrial fishing fleets (15% v. 85% ratio)¹.

The Annex 1 attests that:

The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates that public health emergencies might have an important negative impact on the food security (in the context of the fish protein consumption), in particular in the landlocked developing countries and LDCs, and induce severe social consequences by worsening welfare of fishermen and their communities. They also risk to temporarily weaken the monitoring and enforcement systems of the Members, which, in its turn, is ensuring stock assessment and an array of the actions combatting the IUU.

The dynamics of the pandemics or other public health emergencies, in which different geographical regions are swamped with dissimilar gravity and at distinct times, measured against the shared nature of the stocks, could allow some fishing fleets to benefit from inactivity of the others

Despite the evidence that the WTO Members are not generally providing new support for inputs in response to the COVID-19 pandemic² and the fishing efforts is facing large reductions in many areas³, the suggestions that the COVID-19 on its own would make a key contribution to the recovery of the stocks⁴ appears to be somewhat overoptimistic. Even if the pandemic could allow some short-term relief to a share of the fish stocks⁵, 10-15 years should pass for the recuperation to happen. Nevertheless, the crisis opens several opportunities, among which a unique chance to reduce excessive fishing capacity. In a longer run, this might indeed have a positive impact on the fish species concerned.

¹ Sumalia, R., 2017, *Small-scale Fisheries and Subsidies Disciplines: Definitions, Catches, Revenues, and Subsidies*. Geneva: International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD).

² OECD, 2020a. *Policy Responses to Coronavirus (COVID-19): Fisheries, aquaculture and COVID-19: Issues and policy responses*, July 2020, available at <http://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/fisheries-aquaculture-and-covid-19-issues-and-policy-responses-a2aa15de/>.

³ FAO, 2020a. *Addendum to The State Of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2020: Summary of The Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on The Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector*, 1 June 2020, available at <http://www.fao.org/3/ca9349en/CA9349EN.pdf>.

⁴ UN, 2020. *Changing Sails: Accelerating Regional Actions for Sustainable Oceans in Asia and the Pacific* United nations publications Sales No. E.20.II.F.15, UN, 13 May 2020, available at <https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/publications/CS76%20Theme%20Study.pdf>.

⁵ Hudson, A., 2020. *The ocean and COVID-19*, UNDP Blogs, 8 June 2020, available at <https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/blog/2020/the-ocean-and-covid-19.html>.

Finally, the recovery from public state emergencies might necessitate the state involvement, *inter alia*, through the temporary support to the sector. The latter has to be approached with care, since “*over-assertive*” industry revival agendas could lead to a backlash in the stock recovery process, especially if adopted on the global scale. Different capacities of the WTO Members to provide support to their fishermen has to be duly accounted for and, to the extent, equalized.

II. The WTO fisheries subsidies negotiations

Having officially commenced in 2001 (see Annex 2 for the complete outline), the negotiations of the Fisheries Subsidies Agreement (the AFS)⁶ are the only active multilateral negotiations at the WTO⁷ at the moment. The respective WTO mandate was established in para 28 of the Doha Ministerial Declaration (2001)⁸, confirmed in the paras 28 and 30-32 as well as in the para 9 of the Annex D of the Hong Kong Ministerial Declaration (2005)⁹, and further clarified and reinforced by the Ministerial Decision on Fisheries Subsidies taken in Buenos Aires (2017)¹⁰, largely driven by the SDGs 14.6¹¹.

The work proceeds along the three distinct, yet interconnected substantive lines encompassing prohibitions of: subsidies enhancing/ maintaining capacity; subsidies to fishing overfished stocks and subsidies to the vessels and/ or operators involved in the IUU. Cross-sectional issues, such as dispute settlement, transparency and institutional aspects, are addressed both as an integral part of substantive disciplines and along a separate, fourth, track. In addition, development is also allocated a distinct pathway.¹²

Due to the suspension of the WTO meetings caused by the outbreak of the COVID-19, the AFS negotiations were adjourned in March 2020. After their resumption in June 2020, the consolidated draft text was presented by the RNG Chair in the hope of launching text-based discussions¹³. Ambitious agenda, comprised of the four negotiating clusters, was set by the Group for the Fall 2020. It is expected to culminate with the conclusion of the Agreement still in the 2020.

⁶ The abbreviation is used in order to distinguish between a prospective WTO treaty-to-be and the existent UN Fish Stock Agreement, commonly abbreviated as “FSA”.

⁷ Without underestimating the important contribution of many other fora, including the FAO, varied RFMA / RFMO, the UNCTAD, the UNEP and the other UN agencies, the OECD, the INTERPOL among others, to finding solutions to the dilemmas related to the fish stock depletion and, less directly, fisheries subsidies, this paper fully concentrates on the relevant efforts undertaken at the WTO.

⁸ WT/MIN(01)/DEC/1, dated 20 November 2001.

⁹ WT/MIN(05)/DEC, dated 22 December 2005.

¹⁰ WT/MIN(17)/64 WT/L/1031, dated 18 December 2017.

¹¹ The text of the relevant SDG Target reads: “*by 2020, prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, and eliminate subsidies that contribute to IUU fishing, and refrain from introducing new such subsidies, recognizing that appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries should be an integral part of the WTO fisheries subsidies negotiation*”.

¹² A concise and up to the point overview of the main issues discussed under each of the tracks could be found in Tipping A., 2018. *Building Comprehensive and Effective WTO Rules on Fisheries Subsidies*. Geneva: International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD).

¹³ WTO, 2020. Fisheries subsidies negotiations chair introduces draft consolidated text to WTO members, WTO Fisheries Subsidies Negotiations, 25 June 2020, available at https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news20_e/fish_25jun20_e.htm.

III. Incorporation of the special issues introduced by the public health emergencies into the WTO fisheries subsidies disciplines in the making

The concerns related to pandemics and/ or other public health emergencies were not considered within the scope of the AFS negotiations in the past. Nevertheless, they might well appear on the agenda, as Members seemed to have recognized that such crises could arise again in future¹⁴. Below, possible ways and places for addressing such issues are outlined.

A. The role of general WTO disciplines on fisheries subsidies (as developed at the WTO) during and after the public health emergencies

Concluding the WTO fisheries subsidies negotiations with the agreement remains relevant. Clear and enforceable¹⁵ rules could discipline measures taken during the recovery from the COVID-19 and / or other pandemics and/ or at least guide Members in planning and framing their prospective efforts in the sector.

Among the key objectives of such measures are:

- Equal level playing field has to be ensured both in the course of the pandemics and / or similar public health emergencies and during the recovery. The “*race to the bottom*” in attempts to capitalize on the stock harvesting opportunities, which have arisen due to the reduced fishing effort, especially on high seas, has to be prevented. In this respect, the disciplines prohibiting capacity enhancing subsidies for fuel or those supporting fishing on high seas, among others, appear to be instrumental.
- The rules with respect to the subsidies to the IUU fishing could reinforce the message of many other stakeholders jointly involved in their elimination. Moreover, such a call would be well placed in the face of certain weakening of the monitoring and enforcement mechanisms adopted by the Members, and, where relevant, RFMOs/ RFMAs during the time of the pandemics.
- Finally, the design of the prohibition of subsidies to fishing on the overfished stocks could deserve additional thought in the light of its current strong reliance on the results of stock assessment, as the latter could be delayed and otherwise disrupted by the pandemic.

B. Selected specific measures addressing concerns related to public health emergencies

Additionally, specific measures, tailored to address the impact of pandemics and other public health emergencies on fisheries subsidies disciplines could also be considered.

a. Exceptions to the AFS

¹⁴ WT/GC/210, dated 1 May 2020, ASEAN Declaration of the special ASEAN Summit on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), 30 April 2020.

¹⁵ It is important to note that the issue of how exactly enforceability of the rules is to be ensured is still open. Fisheries subsidies disciplines would necessitate certain adjustment in the WTO DSM procedures as well as recalibration of the available remedies.

Some of such measures were already proposed in the context of the AFS negotiations and are broadly referred to as the “*beneficial subsidies*”¹⁶. Here, subsidies aimed at improving welfare of fishermen and their local communities and subsidies granted in the cases of vessel scrapping / [permanent] cessation of the fishing activity deserve particular attention. In the earlier group, an explicit reference to subsidies supporting professional re-qualification of fishermen could be introduced.

In a more targeted way, one might suggest inclusion of “*public health emergencies*” in the scope of temporary¹⁷ disaster relief subsidies¹⁸, exceptionally allowed across the three disciplines. Similarly to the proposal made with respect to the disaster relief exception, support in the case of public health emergencies should be available to all the Members with flagged fisheries vessels, including those that are not normally subsidizing their fleets. Nevertheless, at least for the case of the states with solid record of fisheries subsidization, the interaction between the extent of this exception as compared to the established caps¹⁹, if any, has to be cleared. So-designated support might be limited to several key areas, such as a) fisheries management, including stock assessment; IUU enforcement; Income support to fisherman and / or subject to the extra fishing sustainability safeguards.

Since only allowing subsidies in case of public health emergencies would not cure inequalities of the Members in their abilities to generate and disburse such support to their fishermen, a fund, comprised of voluntary contributions, aiding developing WTO Members in need and the LDCs in this area could be instituted.

b. WTO Ministerial Decision and / or Declaration

¹⁶ Sumalia, R., 2020. COVID-19 is a chance to end harmful fishing subsidies. Here's why we must take it. The WEF, 19 May 2020, available at <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/05/covid-19-is-a-chance-to-end-harmful-fishing-subsidies-heres-why/>; Jarrett I, Gilbert, R., 2020. Fisheries Subsidies Reform Could Reduce Overfishing and Illegal Fishing Case Studies Find: New World Trade Organization rules would help ocean, local fleets, and coastal communities, The Pew Charitable Trusts, 22 July 2020, available at <https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/articles/2020/07/22/fisheries-subsidies-reform-could-reduce-overfishing-and-illegal-fishing-case-studies-find>.

¹⁷ The temporary nature of such measures is indispensable in the light of their protectionist potential, negative impact on sustainability and disruption of international markets.

¹⁸ The importance of accounting for such subsidies has been recently emphasized by the US. See U.S. 2020. Statement by Ambassador Dennis C. Shea, Deputy U.S. Trade Representative and U.S. Permanent Representative to the World Trade Organization The U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Geneva, 21 July 2020, available at <https://geneva.usmission.gov/2020/07/21/statement-by-ambassador-shea-wto-rules-negotiating-group-fisheries-subsidies-negotiations/>.

¹⁹ The three capping proposals introduced in search of a solution in the WTO fisheries subsidies negotiations by i. Philippines; ii. Argentina, Australia, the United States and Uruguay; and iii. China, bring the issue of scheduling of non-tariff concessions in goods back into the spotlight. In a nutshell, each of the proposals aims at establishing a member-specific monetary commitment level, in excess of which subsidization in marine wild catch fisheries sector will be prohibited. The caps are expected to be further integrated into the framework of the other fisheries subsidies disciplines, shaped as a self-standing covered agreement in the WTO Annex 1A or as a special structure integrated into the SCM. At least in certain cases, the bindings might be set via [bilateral] request-offer negotiations process, functioning of which in itself might present interesting challenges accounting for non-trade objectives to be served by the new agreement. Finally, a simplified and streamlined mechanism applicable to adjustment of the caps might also be provided for.

According to the most optimistic expectations, the adoption of the FSA is not anticipated for earlier than the end of 2020²⁰. This new deadline is nothing else but a step to interpret the deadline “by 2020”, set in the SDG 14.6 [which was already missed by the WTO Members], in a more flexible way²¹. In its turn, according to the Buenos Aires ministerial mandate, the delivery in the fisheries subsidies is set for the next WTO Ministerial Conference, as of now pre-scheduled to take place in Nur Sultan, Kazakhstan, in June 2021.

A more prompt action could be warranted. Namely, WTO Members could consider adopting a decision or a declaration following the substantive lines of the interaction between the fisheries subsidies disciplines and the COVID-19 (or a broader category of public health emergencies). Even if such document would not have a binding force, it might have significance politically, guiding Members’ actions in this domain and encouraging their coherence. This could be of importance since, as duly noted by Tipping and Irschlinger, “*the nature of fisheries as a shared resource means that governments’ decisions will be influenced by how others respond*”²².

c. WTO fisheries fund supporting specific measures warranted by public health emergencies

In addition, the establishment of the WTO LDC fisheries fund, a mechanism supporting the participation of the LDC delegations in the fisheries subsidies negotiations clusters in Geneva, on 3 May 2019²³, proves feasibility of launching of an exceptional sustenance mechanism addressing the urgent impact of the pandemic on the fish stocks and the fishermen in a targeted manner and based on voluntary contributions even outside of more formal approach. Such support mechanism, if suggested and accepted by the WTO Membership (as the WTO is fully Member-driven) would be fully in line with the SDG 14.6, the object and purpose of the agreement-to-be and the overall commitment of the Organization to deliver.

²⁰ Reuters, 2020. Deal on fisheries subsidies possible in 2020, WTO Chair and officials say, 30 June 2020, available at <https://www.agriculture.com/markets/newswire/deal-on-fisheries-possible-in-2020-wto-chair-and-official-say>

²¹ The text of the Ministerial Decision sets a clear deadline of the “*Ministerial Conference in 2019*”. This linguistic solution is different and, arguably, more restrictive than, say, the reference to the “*12th Ministerial Conference*”, since it also sets the date, when the event was supposed to take place. Moreover, this was exactly the date (e.g. 2019) which was of particular essence, inter alia, as underscored by the SDG 14.6, explicitly referenced in the Decision. This was confirmed by the Members in the course of the discussions about postponement of the 12th Ministerial Conference to be held in Kazakhstan from December 2019 to June 2020. In particular, at that time it was agreed that “[...] *the 2019 deadline in the Buenos Aires Decision on Fisheries Subsidies was upheld. The importance of adhering to the 2019 deadline in that Decision had been repeatedly emphasized to meet the SDG target 14.6 which referred to prohibiting certain forms of fisheries subsidies by 2020. Article IV of the Marrakesh Agreement stated, “in the intervals between meetings of the Ministerial Conference, its functions shall be conducted by the General Council”. That clearly meant that the General Council could take any necessary decision, as appropriate, without waiting for the next Ministerial Conference.* See WT/GC/M/163, para 1.397. a.

²² Tipping, A., Irschlinger, T., 2020. How Can We Support Fisheries During the Pandemic?, IISD Global Subsidies Initiative, 20 May 2020, <https://www.iisd.org/gsi/subsidy-watch-blog/support-fisheries-covid-19>.

²³ WTO, 2019. DG Azevêdo announces new fund to help LDCs participate in fisheries subsidies talks, WTO TNC Committee, 3 May 2019, available at https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news19_e/tnc_03may19_e.htm.

Annex 1: COVID-19 Containment Measures impacting the fishing sector and their consequences: an overview

Demand	Supply	Regulation, monitoring and enforcement
Fishing effort and primary processing		
	<p>Mandatory and voluntary²⁴ [temporary] pandemic-containment measures are imposing limits on both the scope and the extent of fishing and related activities at sea²⁵;</p> <p>The change in the market conditions (see below) necessitates re-orientation to fishing different stocks / species;</p> <p>Additional costs related to implementation of mandatory and voluntary sanitary measures at sea, including the purchase of the necessary sanitary equipment and accessories, are incurred by fishermen²⁶.</p>	<p>Fishing, an essential economic activity, is mostly allowed²⁷. Nevertheless, varied segments of the pertinent value chains are affected by the measures aimed at containing the pandemic;</p> <p>Monitoring and enforcement at sea are impeded during the lockdown due to the emphasis on enforcement of social distancing and similar measures²⁸;</p> <p>The relevant administrative budgets are curtailed due to the waved or deferred registration, licensing and other related fees;</p>

²⁴ Aroni, E., 2020. Peruvian Fisheries Experience Massive Decline in Activity from COVID-19, Global Fishing Watch, 12 June 2020, available at <https://globalfishingwatch.org/news-views/peruvian-fisheries-covid-19/>; Materials generated by the campaign “Keeping Fishing COVID-19 Free” in Peru, available at <http://www.pescalibredecovid19.org/en/#home>.

²⁵ Low Impact Fishers of Europe, 2020. Corona crisis hits Cyprus, *Fishers are fighting the storm, locked down and chained up*, 24 April 2020, available at <https://lifeplatform.eu/corona-crisis-hits-cyprus/>.

²⁶ FAO, 2020b. How is COVID-19 Affecting the Fisheries and Aquaculture Food Systems, available at <https://doi.org/10.4060/ca8637en>.

²⁷ OECD, 2020b. COVID-19 and the Food and Agriculture Sector: Issues and Policy Responses, OECD Publishing, available at https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/view/?ref=130_130816-9uut45lj4q&title=Covid-19-and-the-food-and-agriculture-sector-Issues-and-policy-responses&utm_source=Adestra&utm_medium=email&utm_content=Read%20the%20brief&utm_campaign=Agriculture%20COVID%20blast&utm_t.

²⁸ OECD, 2020a, supra note 2.

		The coverage of the fisheries sector by social security and other temporary remedying measures is incomplete: small-scale fishers, as self-employed entrepreneurs / new entrants are not eligible to receive unemployment / other benefit during the closures ²⁹ , unless exceptions are authorized ³⁰ .
Access to domestic and foreign markets		
<p>The demand from professional purchasers is reduced due to drop or cessation in their activities, in particular in the hospitality, restaurant and catering (HORECA) sector;</p> <p>Certainty on the side of the household consumption (satisfied through the retail trade), is lacking, <i>inter alia</i>, due to fluctuation in individual incomes and limited access to the resale points caused by the sanitary and social distancing measures (except for</p>	<p>Domestic markets, which have to be prioritized due to the international trade restrictions, are not able to absorb the surplus³³;</p> <p>Drop in prices³⁴;</p> <p>Export restrictions due to health concerns make importation more difficult or even impossible³⁵.</p>	Export restrictions are occasionally imposed on the fish products;

²⁹ O’Riordan, B., 2019. Fisheries Subsidies: public funds for public good, not individual gain. Not to help us fish more, but to help us fish better. Low Impact Fisheries Europe, 4 October 2019, available at https://lifeplatform.eu/harmful_subsidies_emff/.

³⁰ For instance, in its second “*batch*” of the related measures, the EU extended its support scheme covering temporary cessation of the fishing activities to the new vessels (Regulation (EU) 2020/560 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2020 amending Regulations (EU) No 508/2014 and (EU) No 1379/2013 as regards specific measures to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak in the fishery and aquaculture sector, PE/9/2020/REV/1).

³³ Global Marine Commodities, 2020. Supra note 31.

³⁴ OECDa, 2020. Supra note 2.

³⁵ Among such Members, for instance, Mali, a landlocked LDC, the consumption of the fish protein products imported from the neighboring countries in which ranges to 24 g. per person per day (FAO, 2007).

<p>processed fisheries products for stockpiling³¹ and ingredients for indirect consumption³²);</p> <p>The wild catch fish products originating from the foreign markets are largely inaccessible due to import restrictions and other border measures (especially in the landlocked developing countries and LDCs, the populations of which heavily rely on the fish protein in their diets).</p>		
Adaptation challenges / risks		
Demand and supply imbalances could lead to deterioration of the catch due to slow market, insufficient storage facilities, etc.		
<p>Food security of certain Members (especially landlocked states), highly reliant on the fish protein in their diets, could be threatened;</p> <p>Prices might face an increase in the aftermath of the pandemic to cover for the losses incurred by the industry.</p>	<p>Re-orientation to fishing different stocks / species is a difficult task, not necessarily manageable for small-scale fishermen. In addition, in a longer term, such re-orientation could lead to overfishing of new targeted species (in particular, in the territorial sea and the EEZ)³⁶.</p> <p>COVID-19 has demonstrated that the pandemics might have different effects on the stocks in different fisheries (by specie), depending, mostly, on the fishery season, on which the peak of the crisis has fallen and on the type of the fishing effort (industrial fleets were effected less than small-scale fleets and</p>	<p>The planned “<i>aggressive</i>” agendas for the revival of the industry, might include measures impacting sustainability of the stocks. This way, the benefits of the temporary reduced fishing activity for the fish will be minimized.</p> <p>The relaxation of the fisheries management measures post-COVID-19 (such as extension of fishing quotas, prolongation of fishing periods, etc.) could negatively impacts the stocks, especially should the overlaps with mating periods occur.</p>

³¹ Global Marine Commodities, 2020. Impacts of COVID-19 in Target 75 Fisheries: Summary of preliminary findings, April 2020, available at: https://globalmarinecommodities.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Impacts_of_COVID_19_final.pdf; OECD, supra note 23.

³² OECDa, 2020. Supra note 2.

³⁶ Global Marine Commodities, 2020. Supra note 31.

	<p>were more likely to continue fishing even during the peak of the restrictions applied otherwise³⁷);</p> <p>The WTO Members, less affected by the pandemics, adopting a different approach to containing it, or having already reached a different stage in the virus spread curve, allowing for more relaxed containing measures, could draw benefits from inactivity of the rival fishing fleets to increase their catches in the area³⁸.</p>	
Adaptation opportunities		
<p>Lower prices on maritime wild capture fish products could boost household consumption³⁹ and contribute to furthering re-orientation of the fishing industry to better meeting the market demand.</p>	<p>The situation might convince some fishermen to re-qualify, somewhat reducing the extent of the fishing effort. This would more likely apply to the small scale fleets and could also somewhat reduce hardship for coastal communities, which rely heavily on the sector;</p> <p>Evidence to date suggests that countries are not generally providing new support for inputs in response to the COVID-19 pandemic⁴⁰. This might, in part, be caused by the industrial slowdown caused by the pandemic and the need to re-route available funds (even though, arguably, the allocations made</p>	<p>Fishermen engaged in the IUU fishing (in particular the “unreported” and “unregulated” segments) are not covered by social security / other relevant support measures, offered by the states during pandemics. The situation might induce some of them to formalize their activities, in case such measures could be extended to cover them.</p>

³⁷ The Guardian, 2020. Small boats and female workers hardest hit by Covid-19 fisheries impact, 8 June 2020, available at <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/jun/08/small-boats-women-workers-hardest-hit-covid-19-fisheries-impact>.

³⁸ Aroni, E., 2019. Supra note 24.

³⁹ Global Marine Commodities, 2020. Supra note 31.

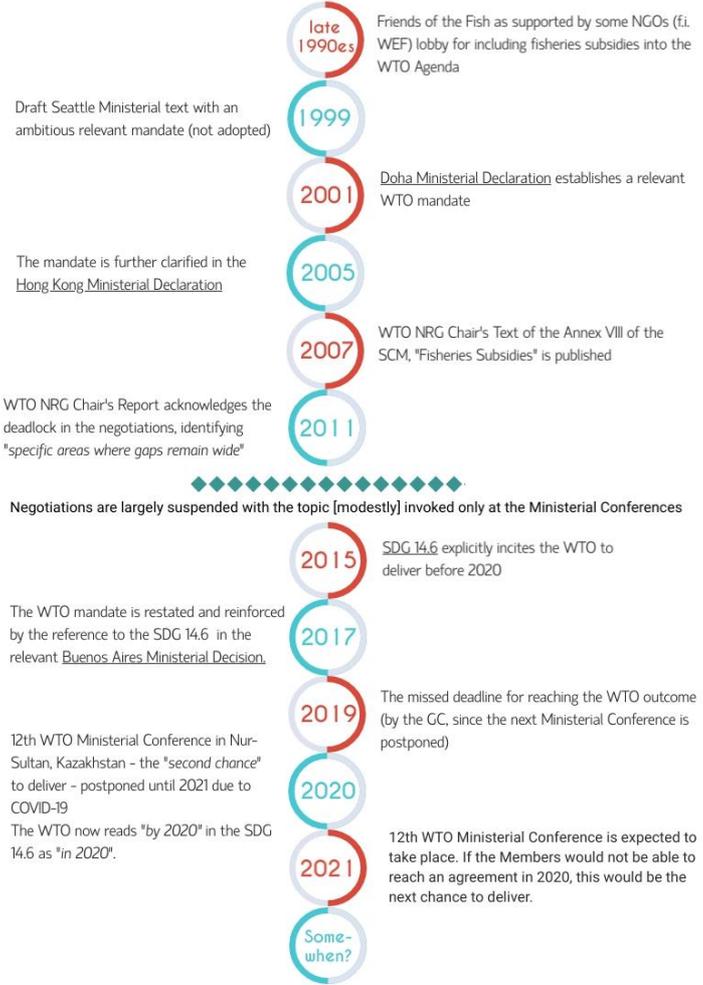
⁴⁰ OECDa, 2020. Supra note 2.

	<p>in favour of the pre-defined programs remain untouched);</p> <p>Stocks less popular on the relevant markets might benefit from certain reduction in the fishing effort.</p>	
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Annex 2⁴¹: Timeline of unfolding of the WTO Fisheries Subsidies Negotiations

TIMELINE:

Key dates in the [hi]story of the WTO fisheries subsidies negotiations



⁴¹ Adopted accounting for the most recent developments in the WTO negotiations from Guglya, L., 2020. The WTO Reform through the Prism of the Fisheries Subsidies Agreement-to-Be (February 14, 2020). Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3538832> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3538832>.

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Hudson, A., 2020. The ocean and COVID-19, UNDP Blogs, 8 June 2020, available at <https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/blog/2020/the-ocean-and-covid-19.html>¹ WT/MIN(01)/DEC/1, dated 20 November 2001.

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