

STATEMENT

by Ambassador Traian Chebeleu, Deputy Secretary General
BSEC Permanent International Secretariat (PERMIS)
at the CACFish Regional Workshop on “Post-harvest measures,
rules and standards for safe and quality fish and fish products”
(Istanbul, 12-13 November 2019)

“BLACK SEA AQUACULTURE AND FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT – CONTRIBUTION TO THE REGIONAL FISH MARKETS AND TRADE”

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished participants,

At the outset I would like to express my gratitude to FAO and EUROFISH for inviting the Permanent International Secretariat (PERMIS) of the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) to attend the Workshop and to participate in the discussions.

Founded in 1992, at a summit meeting in Istanbul, BSEC was launched as an initiative aimed at fostering peace, stability and prosperity in the Black Sea region through economic cooperation. Subsequently it became a regional intergovernmental organisation, with the adoption of its Charter that entered into force in 1999, having 12 Member States.

Allow me to briefly highlight the **activities of the BSEC in the field of fisheries and aquaculture *in the Black Sea region.***

These activities are directed by the provisions of the “BSEC Economic Agenda”, a strategic document approved by the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs and endorsed by the Heads of State and Government in 2012 and are in line with the *Goal 6 of the BSEC Economic Agenda, concerning Food Security and Safety*, which includes, among other activities, **promoting regional cooperation for the sustainable management of fishery resources.**

The Ministers of Agriculture of the BSEC Member States at their meeting in Istanbul on 17 May 2017 adopted a *Joint Declaration on the interaction of the*

BSEC countries in the field of agriculture and agro-industry, which shapes a concise and ambitious road map to further enhance and intensify the cooperation in the field of agriculture of the BSEC Member States. It puts an emphasis, *inter alia*, on the **elaboration of efficient measures of control and surveillance for the fishing in the boundary-neighbouring aquatories**.

At the expert's level, the BSEC Working Group on Agriculture and Agro-industry, which currently is guided by the Republic of Turkey as the Country-Coordinator, has been considering **the prospects of the Black Sea regional cooperation in the field of fisheries and aquaculture**. The national experts attending the meetings of this Working Group stressed the importance of enhancing regional cooperation in the field of fisheries and aquaculture, taking into accounts the relevant activity of other regional and international organizations.

Among those institutions, a special relationship has been established with the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM).

While discussing the subject of *unreported and unregulated fishing in the Black Sea area, and considering the measures to combat illegal and undeclared fishing*, the national experts emphasized **the potential benefits for the BSEC Member States to consider joining the “FAO Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing”**.

In a more practical way, I would like to inform you that BSEC organized the *International Conference on Fisheries and Blue Growth* in Istanbul on 31 October-1 November 2017, in close cooperation with Sariyer Municipality. The Conference discussed the main issues affecting fisheries management, assessed the environmental and socio-economic impact on fisheries and aquaculture and evaluated the perspectives of development of these sectors in the Black Sea area.

The **conclusions and recommendations of the Conference** have a significant importance for our future work and planning in the field of fisheries and aquaculture. Among them:

- ⇒ the stocks are depleted due to various kinds of pollution, climate change and illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing;
- ⇒ a strategy is required for the sustainability of fish stocks;
- ⇒ acute lack of data on stocks is creating uncertainty for the fisheries sector

⇒ there is a necessity for an adequate regulatory framework and licencing in the sector.

I would like to inform the participants that BSEC PERMIS and Sariyer Municipality intends to organize next year the second *International Conference on Fisheries and Blue Growth* in Istanbul.

I am pleased to mention that under the guidance of the Republic of Turkey, as the current country-coordinator of the Working Group on Agriculture and Agro-industry, and in close cooperation with FAO Sub-regional office for Central Asia, our organization will establish a **BSEC Regional Cooperation Centre for Sustainable Food Systems** with the purpose to assist the BSEC Member States in implementing joint research programs, special training activities, exchange of information and knowledge in the BSEC Region. One of the sub-areas of cooperation of the Centre will be dedicated to the **efficient control in the area of fisheries**, by exchanging the expertise and gathering of relevant scientific data on aquaculture industry in the Member States.

Last but not least; we are in the final stage of concluding a *Memorandum of Understanding between BSEC and FAO*, which will define the areas of cooperation between our organizations and would lead, in the future, to the implementation of joint projects in the wider Black Sea region. According to the proposed text, BSEC and FAO will cooperate in the implementation of joint projects in the Black Sea area. A special provision of the MoU is foreseen for **promoting regional cooperation for the sustainable management of fishery resources, including through the General Fisheries Commission for Mediterranean.**

In concluding my remarks, I wish the participants every success in the deliberations with concrete and promising results.