

GLOBAL MEETING OF THE COASTAL FISHERIES INITIATIVE PROJECTS IS HELD IN GUAYAQUIL-ECUADOR

Between today and October 26, authorities from Peru, Ecuador, Indonesia, the Ivory Coast, Cabo Verde and Senegal met to launch the Global Program Coastal Fisheries Initiative (CFI), designed to develop and promote more holistic and integrated processes in sustainable fishing management.

This first global meeting held in Guayaquil has CFI Latin America as its host, a program executed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and supported by the WWF, CI, and FAO. This event is being attended by more than 40 representatives from these 6 countries and CFI partners, who together with their technicians raise and discuss different experiences to be replicated.

Erasmus Otárola (CFI Perú National Director), declared that in Peru fishing is the second most important economic activity, and it's an essential part of the local economy and the livelihood of the local population.

"We're aware that [fishing] faces a great threat in resource exploitation, marine pollution, climate change, among others." Otárola says that CFI must be the catalyst of change to strengthen the roles of the agents in charge of taking care of the marine zones. He remarked that **"the fishing value chain does not start when the fish is caught, but with the conservation of the ecosystem where the species live."**

Susana Villacis, Viceminister of Aquaculture and Fishing in Ecuador, manifested that the Ecuadorian government needs to uphold the Sustainable Development Goals, especially those that are directly related to fishing, poverty, hunger and the use of oceans and marine resources.

"We need to look for strategic alliances that strengthen our ocean conservation efforts, in addition to creating opportunities for our artisanal and industrial fishers," she said. *"We need to save this value chain so families' present and future sustenance is ensured."*

She also pointed out the biodiversity and the amount of fishing resources that exist in the transition zone between the marine ecosystems of the Humboldt and Central American currents. *"We need to focus on the management of small fisheries and artisanal fisheries to guarantee all the steps are present to ensure resource sustainability,"* she said.

All the participants during the meeting will get in-depth knowledge of projects in different countries, and the way they've been handled under the same vision and pursuing the sustainability of the marine ecosystems and their species.

José Vicente Troya, UNDP Regional Technical Advisor, suggested that all of us need to look at the ocean from a different point of view.

“We have to explore and develop new tools to better monitor our oceans, we all have to move forward with the same agenda: the Sustainable Development Goals”

He also mentioned that the pursuit of gender equality will enhance the opportunity of achieving collective victories in environmental objectives, in addition to improving socioeconomic aspects.

Data: In Peru and Ecuador the CFI - AL project has been developing since May 2018, with the support of national governments through their environment and fishing entities, together with UNDP's technical support and funding from the Globe Environment Facility (GEF). In Ecuador CI and WWF act as execution partners.