

Implementation of Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies

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- At first glance, the requirements of the new Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies would appear to be complex and extensive.
- Diversity of reporting requirements may worry some parties, particularly small developing States on their capacity to successfully implement the agreement.
- This is not uncommon.
- However, the situation is not as bad as people may first think.

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Although the agreement will require input from all States, even if these are null reports, all States will benefit from more sustainable fisheries, either as fishing nations, coastal States, importers, processors or exporters.

- Focus on:
 - Information requirements, gathering and notifications;
 - Potential support; and
 - Lessons learnt from previous fisheries experience.

Information gathering and notification requirements

- What information is required?
 - Information on fisheries;
 - Information on subsidies;
 - Information on processes in place; and
 - Simple notification process.
- Summary – the information required is very likely already collected by colleagues in other departments or agencies, and may already be shared with some international organisations (e.g. FAO, regional fisheries management authorities).
- Who will submit the information? Focus submission on one key agency.

Support for Implementation

- Most new agreements generate publicity and discussion.
- The higher the profile and agreement, the more likely are options for support and technical assistance for implementation.
- If support is requested, donors will normally supply it.
- Assistance may come from bilateral donors, regional organisations, international organisations or NGOs with vested interest.
- Recent Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA) has been followed by various sources of support for implementation to ensure it is applied equally.

Good Practice Implementation and Support

- Good practice on how implementation of international commitments should work best:
 - Donors listening to support needs and responding;
 - Government departments work together and do not engage in internal squabbling to present a united front and deliver as required;
 - States working together, work with neighbours as likely they have similar problems;
 - Do not just disengage from the process, small steps and continued progress is better than nothing; and
 - Use publicly available resources and tools.