



CHARTER of the Responsible Fishing Alliance

'An Alliance for a responsible fishing policy'

I. Preamble

Nearly three quarters of the most important wild fish stocks around the world are exploited at their maximum level, over-exploited or threatened today by over-exploitation¹. In certain areas, continuation of the policies and fishing practices of the last few decades is neither *responsible* nor *sustainable*, from environmental, social or economic points of view.

Because of this reality, it is highest priority to build synergies between actors of the fishing sector around the world. That is the reason why, at an international level, civil society organizations, private companies and public institutions have decided to unite their efforts in order to reverse this trend and to create an action group to promote responsible fishing; a group named the **RFA — Responsible Fishing Alliance**.

Members of the **Alliance** are private or public legal entities: companies with commercial statutes, public or semi-public organizations, associations, co-operatives, and private collectives engaged in fishing activities or using fishery products.

II. Objective, principles and actions

The **objective** of this international alliance is the **sustainable development of wild-fish fisheries and fisheries from alternative fish farming**. In order to guarantee sustainability, several aspects of the fishing must be considered:

- **The environmental aspect:** long-term management of wild-fish resources, protection of ecosystems,
- **The social and economic aspects:** decent working conditions and incomes for the actors of the fishing sector, defense of cultural specificities (especially for small-scale fishing),
- **Food security and food safety²** for consumers (developing and developed countries).

The Members of the RFA approve and defend the charter whose **principles** and engagements are as follows:

1. **Action:** To defend by all legal means the interests of the actors of the fishing sector —especially the social, economic and cultural specificities of small-scale fishing- ; to protect the natural resources and the environment.
2. **Share and support:** To share information with its members; to develop dialogue with professionals; to train and support the actors and the sustainable development projects in the field; to put the know-how of the Alliance in service of creating value and shared equity throughout the fisheries.
3. **Legitimacy:** To legitimate the Alliance with international, national, and local authorities, likewise with the media and professional authorities; to be recognized as a privileged interlocutor and contribute to the improvement of the regulations and professional practices.
4. **Communication:** To communicate with all the economic actors, in particular the consumers, both individuals and groups holding specific values.
5. **Objectivity and constructivism:** To define common strategies based on reports, studies, and analyses.

The RFA will accomplish this by various types of applied activities within the fisheries:

1. support of the producer organizations,
2. diffusion of scientific works and technical experiences supporting good fisheries practices,
3. information and the education of the economic actors,
4. discussion with political decision makers,
5. added value through eco-labeling.

III. Working

The Alliance does not have a legal identity. Its existence and its operation under private signature are governed by a **Convention**, whose principles are based on transparency and scientific proof, without influence from political parties, trade unions, or religious affiliation.

The Alliance wished to formalize its objectives through the Charter and the Convention which follow. Charter and Convention bind the whole of the members of the Alliance around a joint project: **the establishment of sustainable management of the wild-fish resources at environmental, social and economic levels**, as well as the development of an alternative aquaculture.

The objectives of the Alliance can be achieved only through dialogue with all the diverse actors.

The Alliance engages through the concerns of responsible citizen and in accordance with the laws.

Transparency, integrity, respect for others, active solidarity, social justice and democratic governance are the values relations between the members are based on.

The Alliance conducts itself, managing the human and financial resources necessary to achieve the consensual goals adopted, according to rules defined by this Convention.

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¹ Source: Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), 2004

² Food security = access to the food ; food safety = innocuity of the food