

## **Introduction Networking session: Action Network Sustainable Food from the Oceans and Inland Waters for Food Security and Nutrition.**

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" ...Gaining and sharing knowledge... from the healthy waters to the healthy people. This is what we would like to do. Like this journey from sea to table, but in much a bigger format.

Looking at the list of participants, there is a lot of experience in this room, about healthy waters, environment, fisheries, aquaculture, food production, nutrition, healthy diets, how to get all aboard etc.

As stated earlier today: aquatic food do not contribute to food security and nutrition unless it eaten as part of a healthy diet.

To make that happen, we need to look at the food system holistically. A chain is not stronger than its weakest link. Hence we must make sure that each link in the food system is equally strong.

We all know, that we need a change to get to where we want to go.

We are poisoning our lakes and rivers. We fill our oceans up with plastics. One third of the seafood we harvest never reach the plate, even though, many of us are in desperate need of its nutrients. Others get health problems eating too much or unhealthy food. And we seem to be forgetting the fact that we grow food in the water and that our future generation is depending on it.

We need action. Global action. The water does not obey borders. Fish, poison, plastics.. they go where the water flows. And too many people are not in a position to have a healthy diet. Aquatic food is important for food security and nutrition but somehow we seem to forget that in discussions on food security.

So what is there to gain in creating a global action network on this issue? Is it some kind of collaborative advantage to be gained? Can we do more together than we can achieve alone? I believe the answer to that is yes. A joint effort will make us more visible and others will notice. Together we will have more knowledge and find better solutions. Recalling the African proverb: if you want to go quickly go alone, if you want to go far - go together.

We are facing major challenges. There is no quick fix. Everyone must act. We should do this together. This is why Norway have invited you, representatives from ministries, governmental institutions and other stakeholders from different sectors, working with different issues along the food chain.

We believe in cross sectorial collaboration. It is complex but will help us find better solutions, and create actions in every link, towards common goals. Everything is connected to everything. The Sustainable Development Goals is designed to help us see this. It is not easy, it takes time, but let us take this journey together. Make sure we all get there - in time.

We have all made commitments in the Rome declaration, in the sustainable development goals. So, we all know where we would like to end our journey. We just need a plan on how to get there. What will we need to get there.? How can we make sure we all get there – in time? Do we have all the equipment we need? Can we share?

I assume you are familiar with the concept document attached to our invitation. This is to be considered as a suggestion for further elaboration.

We have heard some interesting speeches and presentations here today. A holistic view from healthy waters to healthy people from UN environment, FAO and WHO. An quick look into topics under the different elements of food security, and some food for thoughts for this network initiative.

Now I am are really eager to hear what your thoughts are after these sessions.

So with these words I open the discussion about the network, and invite countries to take the floor and give some general remarks before we dive into the details: