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PROHIBITING SUBSIDIES TO FISHING OVERFISHED STOCKS

PROPOSAL OF CANADA, EUROPEAN UNION, ICELAND, NEW ZEALAND, NORWAY

The following communication, dated 7 December 2017, is being circulated at the request of the Delegations of Canada, the European Union, Iceland, New Zealand, and Norway.

The delegations of Canada, the European Union, Iceland, New Zealand, Norway submit the following proposal as text to fill the 'overfished stocks' placeholder contained in paragraph 2.2 of the Draft Ministerial Decision Fisheries Subsidies (WT/MIN(17)/W/4) that Ministers will consider at the Ministerial Conference:

2.2 In the interim, until a negotiated Agreement is adopted, each Member [agrees] [shall endeavour] not to grant or maintain subsidies to fishing that negatively affects targeted fish stocks in an overfished condition.

A subsidy prohibition in relation to overfished stocks has been a long running part of the WTO negotiations. It specifically featured in Ministers' discussions at the 10th Ministerial Conference in Nairobi and was included in subsequent textual proposals:

- TN/RL/GEN/186: New Zealand, Iceland, Pakistan
- TN/RL/GEN/181/Rev.1: EU
- TN/RL/GEN/192: ACP Group
- TN/RL/GEN/187/Rev.2: Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Panama, Peru, Uruguay
- TN/RL/GEN/193: LDC Group

Where stocks are overfished there is a particularly compelling case to prohibit harmful subsidies. Moreover, in light of Leaders' commitments in the UN Sustainable Development Goal Target 14.6, the above delegations consider it of paramount importance that Ministers make substantive commitments in this area at MC11 in addition to a prohibition on subsidies contributing to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and committing to continue working after MC11 to more fully implement SDG Target 14.6.