

Nowhere in the world have the negative aspects of globalization on marine fisheries been more pronounced than in the Pacific Islands region which encompasses some of the world's smallest and most vulnerable States and ecosystems.

The coastal and marine ecosystems of these island States are extremely important for sustaining the livelihoods of the Pacific Islanders, providing food and nutritional security. The region supports the world's largest tuna fishery with an estimated value of almost \$5 billion. For many Pacific Island States, foreign fishing access agreements in their exclusive economic zones (EEZs) provide the main source of government revenue. Other important economic activities such as tourism depend on a healthy marine environment.

But globalization has led to the region becoming home to fishing fleets from every corner of the globe—from Europe, North America, South America, Asia and Africa. This has resulted in indiscriminate and uncontrolled licensing of foreign fishing vessels, pressure on already weak governance systems and corruption. Increased foreign fishing is threatening key tuna species, particularly bigeye and yellowfin.

Many distant water fishing fleets, both licensed and unlicensed, have exploited the lack of enforcement capabilities of Pacific Island States by engaging in illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. This takes many forms including fishing without licenses, false reporting of catch, unauthorized transshipment of catches and failure to activate vessel monitoring systems.

Globalization in the marine fisheries sector began with the doctrine of the "freedom of the seas" propounded by the Dutch lawyer, Hugo Grotius in the 17th century, under which fishing fleets roamed much of the world's oceans unregulated. The declaration of EEZs under the 1982 UN Law of the Sea Convention, rather than curtailing the expansion and global reach of the world's distant water fishing fleet, accelerated it. The Law of the Sea requirement that coastal States grant access to surpluses of their allowable catch in their EEZs has allowed the global fishing fleet to move freely from one jurisdiction to another.

Opening up of coastal States' EEZs under access agreements has brought some benefits such as increased access to fisheries technology, capacity building for developing countries through foreign bilateral trade partnerships, and access to world markets for fish products.

The globalized international institutional and legal framework for fisheries provided by the UN system, Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) and the myriad NGOs active in marine conservation have led to international norms and best practice on sustainable fisheries management. These

include the precautionary approach, the ecosystem approach, and the concept of sustainable fisheries management.

These positive aspects of globalization have been equally matched by the negative, particularly on marine ecosystems and food