

BLOG

MCBI at the UN: Supporting High Seas Conservation

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On Wednesday, Oct. 3, the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition (DSCC) and Greenpeace held a briefing for the G77 Forum at UN headquarters in New York City. Steven Lutz, Ocean Policy Analyst for Marine Conservation Biology Institute (MCBI), attended and represented MCBI as a member of the DSCC supporting high seas conservation.

Entitled “The State of the World’s Oceans: Implications for Developing Countries”, the briefing focused on the state of the world’s oceans and implications for developing countries. Comprised of 130 developing nations, the Group of 77 is the largest intergovernmental organization of developing States at the UN. The briefing was facilitated by the Pakistan Mission (current Chair of the G77 Forum) with the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition (DSCC) and Greenpeace and was attended by many States including Brazil, Indonesia, India, Kenya, Iran, Malaysia, Philippines, Trinidad and Tobago and the Seychelles.

Along with Karen Sack, Head of Oceans for Greenpeace, participants heard from Dr. Callum Roberts, Professor of Marine Biology at the University of York and author of the recent book titled ‘The Unnatural History of the Sea’; and Dr. Ussif Rashid Sumaila, Director of the Fisheries Economics Research Unit, University of British Columbia Fisheries Centre. Other NGOs present included Conservation International, the Pew Institute for Ocean Science, and the Pew Environment Group.

The briefing opened with an introduction from Pakistan’s Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN, Farukh Amil, who spoke eloquently about importance of ocean and natural resource protection. Karen Sack first provided an overview of high seas conservation and discussed access agreements by North to fish in the South. Rashid Sumaila provided analyses on the state of the oceans over the past 50 years with implications including the rise in distant water fishing, as well as the rise in fishing access agreements and subsidies.

Callum Roberts commented on the misconception that creation of MPAs takes away from the fisheries; MPAs and reserves rebuild the resilience of depleted populations. Copies of Callum’s book “The Unnatural History of the Seas” were distributed and very well received. Karen Sack later presented NGO thoughts on closing current governance gaps on the high seas and called for States to act now to implement the language that was included in last year’s UN GA resolution on bottom

trawling. Karen also called for action to address the issue of genuine link between flag states and vessels.

You can view the briefing at: <http://www.un.org/webcast/>

See also the DSCC press release at: <http://www.savethehighseas.org/display.cfm?ID=163>

Link: <https://blog.marine-conservation.org/2007/10/mcbi-at-un-supporting-high-seas.html>