

Title: **The Use of Rights Based Approaches in Fisheries Management**

Author(s): Chris Grieve, Karoline Schacht

Abstract: The purpose of this paper is to set out WWF's position on the appropriate use of rights-based measures (RBM) as management tools as WWF pursues its far-reaching vision for sustainable fisheries and healthy marine ecosystems. The Paper draws on theories and practice that have informed the use of RBM within fisheries management, conservation and science communities. In the past, some RBM have proven an appropriate tool to pursue the ecological, social or economic objectives of a fishery. However, it is important to understand the characteristics of rights in order to choose the most appropriate attributes and to make sure the rights are as well defined as possible. Those six characteristics (e.g. duration, exclusivity or transferability) are interrelated and as a "bundle" of rights can help achieve fisheries management objectives. WWF maintains a healthy scepticism about the ability of RBM per se to fix the problems of overcapitalisation and overfishing and sustain fishing communities and livelihoods. Rights in themselves are not a panacea. This Policy Paper captures the complex issues that need to be considered in the context of fisheries management regimes that endeavour to use incentives to enhance people's and communities' stewardship of resources. Ensuring the ability of rights or privileges, along with other tools, to help deliver specific ecological, social and economic objectives within a holistic ecosystem-based management regime, is the primary focus for WWF. This paper does not advocate a "best fisheries management" approach. It presents the considerations that ought to inform choices about when it may be appropriate to use rights-based measures in fisheries and some of the measures that could be chosen.