



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**

**Impact of Covid-19 on Fisheries and Aquaculture
Effects, Good Practices and Recommendations:
Small-Scale Artisanal Fisheries Perspective**

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Fisheries and Covid-19

- Fish are declared as essential food, and fishing and fish processing are declared as essential services soon after 11 March 2020
- Work on the marine fishing vessel is considered at low risk of exposure
- Subsistence fishing, gleaning activities and subsistence fish consumption seem less affected in remote areas
- Fear of contagion and poor access to health care facilities of small-scale, artisanal fishing communities

Diminished livelihood opportunities: Small-scale artisanal fishers and fishworkers 1

- Supply-side disruptions
 - Covid-19 and its prevention and control measures
 - Fishing operations, input supply affected
 - Labour supply reduced
 - Fisheries management problems

Diminished livelihood opportunities: Small-scale artisanal fishers and fishworkers 2

- Demand-side disruptions
 - Covid-19 and its prevention and control measures
 - Global, regional, national and local trade slump (high-value fish and fish products)
 - Lack of capacity for long-term storage of fish
 - Higher price of smaller pelagics at landing centres to the disadvantage of women fishmongers (low-value fish and fish products)
 - Higher cost of transportation

Impacts

- Supply of high-value fish negatively impacted
- Supply of low-value fish less affected, but demand remains volatile
- Decline in the number of small-scale artisanal fishing vessels in operation
- Work force reduced to meet operating costs
- Some fishers forced to sell high-value fish at lower prices
- Burden of household duties under lockdown reducing women's participation in the work force
- Unemployment, reduced income and food insecurity threaten the livelihoods of fishers and fishworkers
- Some inland fishers threatened with starvation
- Forced dependence on social protection measures

Good practices

- Declaring fish as essential food and fishers and fish processors as essential workers (many countries)
- Exemptions granted to artisanal fishers from curfew (Chile)
- Social protection and economic support programmes for fishers and fishworkers (UK, EU, Canada)
- Hardship funding for marine fishing vessels 12-m or below (Scotland)
- Permitting small-scale fishing fleet compatible with pandemic prevention measures to undertake commercial fishing operations; prior fixing of prices of catch and facilitating fish sales through cooperatives with preferential access to women fish vendors (Kerala, India)
- Support for temporary cessation of fishing activities and storage of fish of producer organizations (EU)

Good practices CSOs, Industry, etc.

- Collecting and disseminating epidemiological information and providing emotional support to fishing communities (Brazil)
- Providing emergency assistance to procure food and medicine, especially to migrant fishers and fishworkers (India)
- Control Guide to avoid spread of Covid-19 on artisanal fishing boats (Peru)
- Guidance for Covid-19 risk assessment on fishing vessels (NFFO, UK)

Recommendations 1

- Strengthen social protection measures during the entire duration of the Covid-19 pandemic
- Ensure Covid-19 related social protection measures are inclusive of the self-employed, informal, and migrant fishers and fishworkers, consistent with the SSF Guidelines
- Improve access of fishers, fishworkers and their families to health infrastructure and health care
- Promote alternative employment opportunities
- FAO to recommend national governments to create a Covid-19 social protection fund, equivalent to 1% of the landed/farm-gate value of fish production
- FAO in collaboration with the World Bank/IFAD to create a special social protection fund to support small-scale artisanal fishers and fishworkers in low income, food deficit countries

Recommendations 2

- Segregate different types of robust fishing craft/gear combinations towards local nutrition and food security, consistent with pandemic control protocols and standards
- Strengthen institutions of fishers and fishworkers (trade unions, coops, associations, etc.) towards improving the effectiveness of economic and social protection measures during the pandemic
- Promote joint mechanisms of fisheries and health departments to adopt pandemic control measures maintaining a judicious balance between Covid-19 control measures and human rights
- FAO/OIE/WHO tripartite collaboration to jointly develop protocols and standards for emerging and reemerging zoonotic diseases and persistent pandemics in the context of fisheries and agriculture

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Thank you

