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# SAMUDRA

REPORT

THE TRIANNUAL JOURNAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL COLLECTIVE IN SUPPORT OF FISHWORKERS



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**Mediterranean and the Black Sea**

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**Cambodia's Community Fisheries**

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**SSF Guidelines and Fishing Communities**

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**Co-management and Illegal Fishing**

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**Saving Manta Rays**

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**Women of the Sea**

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ICSF is an international NGO working on issues that concern fishworkers the world over. It is in status with the Economic and Social Council of the UN and is on ILO's Special List of Non-governmental International Organizations. It also has Liaison Status with FAO.

As a global network of community organizers, teachers, technicians, researchers and scientists, ICSF's activities encompass monitoring and research, exchange and training, campaigns

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Woman fish retailer with squid,  
Koh Libong, Thailand  
Photo by: Cornelia Quist  
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# Guardians of the Sea

## The Regional Plan of Action for Small-scale Fisheries in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea is a model for other regional fisheries management organizations

For the first time since the endorsement of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries in the context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (the SSF Guidelines) in Rome in June 2014, a regional fisheries body has adopted a plan of action for sustainable small-scale fisheries that draws upon these Guidelines and other instruments.

A Ministerial Declaration of the members of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), signed in Malta on 26 September 2018, has adopted a 10-year Regional Plan of Action (RPOA-SSF) to ensure the long-term environmental, economic and social sustainability of small-scale fisheries in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea (see article, page 4). The Ministerial Declaration, signed by representatives of 18 GFCM member countries and the European Commission, encourages all stakeholders from GFCM member countries to, among other things, promote the objectives and principles of the SSF Guidelines and to establish concrete actions based on the RPOA-SSF.

The Ministerial Declaration on the RPOA-SSF recognizes the role of small-scale fisheries in supporting livelihoods and promoting social inclusion and social and environmental sustainability. It observes that small-scale fisheries have a relatively low impact on the environment and offer a greater role for women. The lack of recognition, representativeness and proper characterisation of the small-scale fisheries sector is attributed to the highly segmented and scattered nature of the sector, on the one hand, and the presence of other local fishing industries and maritime activities, on the other. The Declaration further recognizes that small-scale fishers are not only resource users but also “guardians of the sea”, whose intimate knowledge of, and close relationship with, marine ecosystems are valuable in highlighting major environmental and climate changes.

To promote action, the Declaration provides a 25-point agenda and the RPOA-SSF spells out a nine-point action plan for littoral countries. These include the promotion of decent work of small-scale fisheries workers, and equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes. Based on indicative criteria such as vessel size, gear used, duration of fishing trips, non-vessel-based fishing activities, etc., the RPOA-SSF

is expected to provide a characterization of small-scale fisheries in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea region.

We urge member countries and interested stakeholders to not only promote the objectives and principles of the SSF Guidelines but also apply them in their national and regional contexts. The principles of the SSF Guidelines encompass international human-rights standards (including standards related to the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of fishers, fishworkers and fishing communities) and pay attention to vulnerable and marginalized groups. These are significant principles to be upheld while implementing the RPOA-SSF. Global food security and nutrition, and the right to adequate food, are important objectives of the SSF Guidelines that need to be transposed to regional and national levels.



Responsible governance of tenure of land and fisheries should be considered in the context of protecting the rights of small-scale fishers and fishworkers in relation to the coast and marine space as well as in governing the spatial interaction with other commercial fishery sectors. Small-scale fishers and fishworkers, as the SSF Guidelines observe, should have secure, equitable and socially and culturally appropriate tenure rights to fishery resources. GFCM member countries are encouraged to consider granting preferential access to small-scale fishers to fish in marine waters under national jurisdiction. In addition to technical criteria at the regional level, the characterization of small-scale fisheries at the national level may include social and cultural criteria as well. The latter criteria need to be developed in consultation with fishworkers' organizations and fishing communities.

Considering the lackadaisical approach of regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) to small-scale fisheries, the RPOA-SSF for the Mediterranean and the Black Sea is a significant milestone. We hope the RPOA-SSF succeeds in taking the SSF Guidelines to small-scale fisheries actors, including fishers' and fishworkers' organizations, in all its member countries, both developed and developing. We also hope it will prove to be a vehicle to promote and apply the SSF Guidelines at regional and national levels in a holistic manner. We call upon all other RFMOs having a mandate for small-scale fisheries to follow suit.

# Deep-rooted Problems, Great Expectations

Can the Ministerial declaration and regional plan of action signed recently in Malta turn the tide of fortune for small-scale fisheries in the Mediterranean and Black Sea?

On 26 September in Malta, 18 Mediterranean and Black Sea coastal states committed themselves to developing “objectives, principles and concrete actions” to be applied across the region through a regional plan of action (RPOA) and thus “to ensure the long-term environmental, economic and social sustainability of small-scale fisheries”. Such a political commitment was made possible thanks to the joint efforts of

## History

The RPOA is the culmination of over five years of steady joint work by these two bodies, initiated in 2013 at the First Regional Symposium on Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Mediterranean and Black Sea, held in Malta, and organized by the GFCM in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and other partners. In fact, small-scale fisheries (SSF) have been on the GFCM agenda since 1980, rooted in a Resolution calling on its members for “the definition of a national strategy indicating in particular the place of artisanal fisheries in management schemes”.

SSF and the Mediterranean and Black Sea have for long been on the agenda of GFCM, but it is only relatively recently that the European Union (EU) seems to have woken up to their importance.

**SSF and the Mediterranean and Black Sea have for long been on the agenda of GFCM...**

the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean and Black Sea (GFCM) and the European Commission.

## EU Small-scale Fleet at a Glance

(Vessels under 12 m in length, not using towed fishing gear)

Number of vessels (49,029 in 2016):	70% of the fleet
Tonnage:	8% of the tonnage
Fishing days:	59% of the fishing days
Fuel used:	6% of the fuel used
Fishers employed (78,304 in 2016):	50% of at-sea employment
Landed volume:	6% by weight
Landed value:	12% of the value
Revenue:	13% of the revenue
Labour costs:	19% of the labour costs

Source: Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee on Fisheries (STECF). The 2018 Annual Economic Report on the EU Fishing Fleet (STECF 18/07)

This article is by **Brian O’Riordan** ([deputy@lifeplatform.eu](mailto:deputy@lifeplatform.eu)), Member, ICSF and Deputy Director, The Low Impact Fishers of Europe (LIFE), Brussels, Belgium



Lending a hand: African Confederation of Artisanal Fishing Organizations' (CAOPA) delegates with Maltese fishers at Marsaxlokk fish landing centre, Malta. Small-scale fisheries are the first to feel the pain of collapsing resources and therefore, it is important to build the future with them

Until the launch of the reformed Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) in 2014, SSF were considered a national issue and outside the purview of EU policy. Step by step, the socioeconomic and strategic importance of SSF as an integral component of European policy to sustain fisheries and fishing communities is gaining recognition. Europe's forgotten fleet is being rediscovered, albeit late in the day!

If SSF are Europe's rediscovered fleet, then the Mediterranean and Black Sea are its most neglected sea basins. Although the CFP was established in 1983, until 2006 the Mediterranean and Black Sea fell outside its purview. That is now changing through the MedFish4Ever process, launched in Catania, Sicily in 2016, and designed to build political consensus among Mediterranean stakeholders towards obtaining a commitment from all EU and non-EU countries to take concrete actions to address the dire fisheries situation in the region. Within the framework of the CFP, a series of multi-annual plans are being developed to cover stocks in different regions, starting with demersal stocks in the

Western Mediterranean and pelagic fisheries in the Adriatic.

Under the RPOA, SSF in the Mediterranean and Black Sea are to be characterized "as soon as possible" according to a set of indicative criteria "reflecting their socioeconomic relevance and specificities".

Given the highly diverse nature of SSF in the region and the lack of a simple cut-off point between different fleet segments (small-scale, semi-industrial, large-scale, industrial, inshore, offshore, coastal, deep-sea, etc.), the GFCM proposes to apply a "matrix approach" being developed by the FAO. Such a matrix may include characteristics spanning governance (policy, legislation, access and tenure), economy (taxation, subsidies, special preference) and management (regulation, gears, zoning).

### Strength in numbers

The Ministerial Statement highlights the strength in numbers of SSF in the region (80 per cent of the fleet by number, 44 per cent of the capacity, 62 per cent of employment aboard fishing vessels and 24 per cent of the landed

value), their socioeconomic value, relatively low environmental impact, and importance for food security. The statement also draws attention to endemic problems besetting the sector: the lack of a voice and the lack of access to decision-making processes; lack of access to resources, to markets, to credit and to support; and the limited capacities of the sector in terms of human capital.

These problems make the sector particularly vulnerable to the impact of other marine activities, such as marine pollution, habitat degradation, biodiversity and resource depletion, and to the encroachment of other activities in the areas it has traditionally occupied. In this regard, the RPOA highlights the need to both ensure that SSF are taken account of in marine spatial planning at national and regional levels, and that the sector is specifically represented throughout the entire process.

**... thanks to the Ministerial statement and the RPOA, SSF have moved from the periphery to centrestage in the regions' fishery policies ...**

Although the RPOA is non-binding, it is a historic step, and places SSF centre stage in the bid to reverse the declining fortunes of the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

The RPOA is the first instrument to be adopted by any Regional Fisheries Management Organization (RFMO) that goes beyond the management of fisheries to address such issues as social inclusion, decent work, social protection, the role of women, the participation of small-scale actors in management and decision-making processes, and the incorporation of traditional ecological knowledge. The RPOA builds on the foundations laid down by the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines), and draws on, and complements, other international instruments, including the 1995 FAO

Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries; the 2007 Work in Fishing Convention of the International Labour Organization (ILO); and the 2015 UN General Assembly 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

It is a significant step because, thanks to the Ministerial statement and the RPOA, SSF have moved from the periphery to centre stage in the region's fishery policies and are now incorporated as part of the solution to the problems besetting the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. Also, as highlighted by the EU's Commissioner for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, "SSF are the backbone of the fleet, the workers, and the community. They are also the first to feel the pain of collapsing resources. It is therefore important to build the future with them".

Most Ministers highlighted the traditional nature of SSF, and their cultural importance. Few spoke about their importance to food security. Some highlighted the low incomes and poor capacity of the SSF sector to provide decent work. Some mentioned the problems of invasive species and the vulnerability of the sector. A few mentioned the need for improved data collection. One – Turkey – mentioned "legacy" – the importance of the heritage that we will bequeath to the next generation. Palestine (not a contracting party) made the most passionate speech. The Minister invited everyone to visit his country to witness "one of the most vulnerable small-scale fisheries", which should not be left behind. Spain's was one of the most supportive speeches, emphasizing the special characteristics of SSF, the freshness of their products, their low environmental footprint, and the important role of women in the sector.

### **Problems**

Needless to add, the problems besetting the Mediterranean and Black Sea go way beyond fisheries. The semi-enclosed nature and large catchment areas of these sea basins make them highly vulnerable to human impacts. The Mediterranean is a hotspot of



## A matrix approach to characterizing fisheries

The matrix provides users with a tool to describe a fishing unit across multiple dimensions or characteristics of scale. The flexible nature of the matrix means that the fishing unit being assessed can either be an entire fishery/fleet, a part of it, or an individual vessel/ fisher. This flexibility allows the matrix to be applied to diverse types of fishing activity around the world. Applying the matrix generates an aggregate score for the given unit under assessment, with relevance for discussions of scale. A given fishing unit may have characteristics typically associated with both smaller-scale and larger-scale fisheries, so many will receive lower scores in some categories and higher scores in others. Scoring allows for an objective characterization of the fishing unit, indicating whether it tends towards small-scale or large-scale.

Once scores from all the categories are aggregated, an overall picture emerges that facilitates differentiation between larger- and smaller-scale fisheries. By analyzing different scores for different fishing units, it is possible to determine if there is a clear cut-off between distinctly SSF and distinctly large-scale fisheries. In theory, if the matrix is working well, it should highlight those fisheries which may be on the edge of small-scale and large-scale (for example, a small vessel with a high-powered engine and large-scale level of fishing effort), assigning them their own category. Furthermore, by incorporating multiple dimensions, the matrix approach seeks to avoid misleading or inappropriate characterizations of fisheries as small-scale or large-scale, which can sometimes occur when a single criterion, such as vessel length, is emphasized.



biodiversity, with a great variety of marine and coastal habitats, including wetlands, lagoons, dunes, reefs, seamounts, canyons, and sandy and rocky coasts, which are all important fisheries grounds.

The ever-burgeoning human population – with the coastal population doubling during some tourist seasons – along with expanding economic development, has resulted in increased environmental degradation. These vulnerable marine environments face a worrying combination of pollution from land sources and ships, including plastics and litter, and from aquaculture production, with impacts on biodiversity and coastal degradation, along with climate-change-related consequences. These are considerable challenges that such an RPOA cannot address on its own. Furthermore, a large proportion of the marine area is in international waters and falls outside national jurisdiction, making fisheries and the human impact on fisheries even more difficult to manage and control. Therefore, this RPOA needs to be fully integrated into wider maritime policy spheres, especially in the context of the development of the Blue Economy.

It is significant that Malta was chosen as the venue for this historic signing. Over 90 per cent of the Maltese fleet is comprised of small-

scale coastal fishing vessels (under 12 m, using non-towed gears), numbering some 950 vessels. Traditional Maltese fishing boats are made of wood, and use a wide variety of gears, namely, nets, traps, and hooks-and-line, along with ancillary equipment like fish aggregating devices (FADs) made from palm fronds, and *lampara* vessels to attract shoals of fish at night.

However, as with SSF across the Mediterranean and the Black Sea region, this once-vibrant fishery sector is facing a number of challenges. These were discussed at an informal gathering of Maltese, Cypriot and Italian (Pantelleria island) small-scale fishers, hosted by the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST), ahead of the Ministerial summit, and attended by the Maltese Minister for Justice, Culture and Local Government. These challenges include:

- Illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing and organized fishing crime, a transnational activity with well-organized and equipped criminal gangs. This was highlighted by the Europol-led Operation Tarantino, which resulted in the arrest of 79 people involved with IUU fishing for tuna, and fraudulent trade and marketing of illegal tuna across France, Italy, Malta and Spain;
- Forced labour of migrant workers in fishery operations;

BRIAN RIORDAN



Participants at the High-level Conference on Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Mediterranean and Black Sea, Malta, 25-26 September, 2018. The Ministerial commitment to supporting SSF through the RPOA is both timely and necessary

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- Encroachment into SSF of larger-scale interests, such as feed fisheries for aquaculture and tuna fattening;
- Unregulated sports fishing across the Mediterranean;
- Climate change and invasive species;

**...the unregulated fishing activities of innumerable leisure boating enthusiasts – be it for sport or their own consumption – displace fishers...**

- Pollution, notably from plastic waste (marine debris and micro-fibres and micro-particles); and
- The promotion of Blue Economy activities (tourism, aquaculture, energy generation, bioprospecting, seabed mining, oil and gas extraction, etc.) that impose themselves in areas traditionally occupied by SSF.

A particular problem across the Mediterranean highlighted by all the fishers is the rapid colonisation by invasive species from the Red Sea, along with the displacement of

traditional species. Two of the main culprits are the rabbit or toad fish (*Lagocephalus sceleratus*), and the lionfish (*Pterois miles*). The toad fish can grow up to 1 m in length and weigh as much as 7 kg, with sharp teeth that cause extensive damage to fishing nets. Additionally, it has no commercial value as it is highly poisonous. The lionfish has highly venomous spines that can inflict severe pain and even death. Both fish are also hazardous to the environment – the toad fish is a bottom feeder and can cause extensive damage to seabed habitats, and the lionfish is highly predatory. The lionfish makes for good eating, but is difficult to handle and is not well known to consumers. In other parts of the Mediterranean, the Blue Crab (*Callinectes sapidus*), native to the Eastern seaboard of the Americas and a voracious predator of shellfish, has become a cause for concern in the south of France and the east coast of Spain.

Last but not least, across the Mediterranean, the unregulated fishing activities of innumerable leisure boating enthusiasts – be it for sport or their own consumption – displace fishers from their harbours, and impact stocks.

## Benefits

For the Low Impact Fishers of Europe (LIFE) one of the principal benefits that the RPOA could deliver is improved governance through co-management. An entire section is devoted to the “participation of small-scale fishers in decision-making processes”. Linked to this is the call of the RPOA “for fisheries management plans with specific rules designed to ensure preferential access for sustainable and low-impact fisheries along the coastal band.” Such preferential access will only bring benefits if coupled to a system of genuine co-management where both responsibility and decision-making powers are devolved to co-management committees, and where small-scale fishers are empowered to form, and run, their own autonomous organizations.


For LIFE, the top-down model of command-and-control fisheries management, as applied in the Mediterranean, has become dysfunctional. Small-scale fishers have been alienated from management decision-taking processes, and, combined with a lack of capacity and political will at the national level to enforce regulations, this has encouraged overfishing, habitat destruction and IUU fishing activities.

In such a context, new forms of governance are required that build trust and co-operation between national authorities and fishery stakeholders, promote co-responsibility, and bring about unity in the common purpose of sustainable fisheries and the fight against IUU fishing and organized fishing crime. This requires a paradigm shift away from a top-down command-and-control approach to a bottom-up approach based on co-management.

Around the Mediterranean there are examples where relatively small, localized, and often informal co-management projects have successfully brought state and non-state actors together and facilitated a dialogue and collaboration between them, establishing a basis for co-responsibility and improved acceptance of legally binding regulations, which, in turn, helps address IUU practices and social conflict.

Of course, co-management is not a panacea, but it could provide an important tool for managing SSF, to be used alongside others (including closed areas reserved for SSF, effort control, etc.). In this regard, co-management has the potential to empower fishers and build their capacities to become responsible and competent actors in fisheries management.

There seem to be critical efforts in co-management that are now coming together – the recent incorporation of co-management into fisheries law in Catalunya through a decree putting co-management alongside maximum sustainable yield (MSY), monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS), technical measures, etc. is an inspiring example. There are also many relatively small local initiatives associated with marine protected areas (MPAs) that are beginning to reach a critical mass and joining up through networks and scaling-up initiatives.

The Ministerial commitment to supporting SSF through the RPOA is both timely and necessary. We hope the positive political will fostered over the last five years will ensure that necessary resources are invested in putting the RPOA into practice. We need to transform the ink on paper into action at the grass roots. 

## For more



<http://www.fao.org/gfcm/news/detail/en/c/1154586/>

**Regional plan of action for small-scale fisheries in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea: a common commitment for the future**

<https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/documents/43805/2262384/STECF+18-07+-+AER.pdf>

**Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee on Fisheries (STECF). The 2018 Annual Economic Report on the EU Fishing Fleet (STECF 18/07).**

[https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/mediterranean\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/mediterranean_en)

**DG Mare webpage on the Mediterranean**

[https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/mediterranean/rules\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/mediterranean/rules_en)

**DG Mare webpage on the rules in force in the Mediterranean**

<http://www.fao.org/3/a-i8134e.pdf>

**Workshop proceedings on Improving our knowledge on small-scale fisheries: data needs and methodologies, June 2017**

<https://www.europol.europa.eu/newsroom/news/how-illegal-bluefin-tuna-market-made-over-eur-12-million-year-selling-fish-in-spain>

**Europol Press Release: How the illegal bluefin tuna market made over EUR 12 million a year selling fish in Spain**

<http://lifeplatform.eu/life-calls-inclusive-blue-growth/>

**LIFE calls for inclusive Blue Growth at the Our Ocean Conference**

<http://www.fao.org/gfcm/publications/en/>  
**General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) - Publications**



# From Individual Rights to Community Commons

**Cambodia's community fisheries initiative is the most extensive and well-developed system of community fisheries in the world**

**T**he current fishery rights system in Cambodia is the most extensive and well-developed system of community fisheries in the world", said the European Union (EU) Representative to Cambodia at the FAO/UN User Rights 2015 Conference held in Siem Reap, Cambodia.

Defining tenurial boundaries and proving rights in an aquatic milieu is a daunting task. This is further confounded when dealing with a dynamic land-water interface marked by significant seasonal fluctuations. Yet, taking advantage of its overriding tenure over all such terrains, the state reserves the right of granting tenure with differential bundles of rights to

Cambodia's vast aquatic milieu is part of the larger Mekong River Basin and its fertile floodplains. At the heart of this area is the Tonle Sap Lake – the largest freshwater lake in Southeast Asia and the most productive and bio-diverse freshwater zone in the world. The Tonle Sap River flows out from the Lake and joins the Mekong at Phnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia. During the peak flooding season, from June to September, the seasonal monsoon causes the Mekong and its tributaries to spill out of their channels. The flooding is so heavy that the flow of Tonle Sap River is reversed back into the lake, inundating huge areas of forest and grassland across the country. When this happens, the Tonle Sap – now designated a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve – grows from about 2,500 sq km to cover over 16,000 sq km, or about 7 per cent of Cambodia's land area. Tonle Sap teems with fish that nourishes Cambodia's population, making them the world's largest consumers of inland fish.

**...in 2000, a bold initiative in Cambodia became a trail-blazer when individual rights were replaced with community rights ...**

individuals or riparian communities to access and manage such fuzzy interfaces.

In Cambodia, the tenure rights were initially given to individuals. This system held for many centuries. But in 2000, a bold initiative in Cambodia became a trail-blazer when individual rights were replaced with community rights in this regard. This article very briefly narrates this unique case of top-down creation of community fisheries in an inland fishery in Cambodia, provides a brief evaluation of the current status and indicates the likely trajectory into the future.

## Licences auctioned

In 1873 the French Protectorate introduced tenure rights to the most productive parts of the Lake by auctioning licences to individuals to erect fish enclosures called 'fishing lots' over vast areas of the lake.

The Tonle Sap was also mute witness to the genocide of the Pol Pot regime in the 1970s. The populations around the Lake were uprooted and scattered far and wide to realize his dream of making a communist state, based exclusively on a rice-growing proletariat subsisting on state welfare. Many Vietnamese fishers and Khmer

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FAO/A.K. KIMOTO



A fisherman casting a net from the banks of the Tonle Sap River, Cambodia. The direction of events in Cambodia in the immediate future will reveal which way the dice is loaded for CFI and the riparian communities

11

farmers who were educated and fishing lot owners were killed for fear that they would rise against the state. Fishing came to a standstill.

The vicious regime of Pol Pot was defeated in 1978. Cambodia slowly returned to the democratic mainstream in 1993 but only after over a decade of 'socialist' rule. The fishing lots gradually reappeared and their auctioning by the state was revived as it did form a sizeable revenue of the state – between US\$ 2 and 3 mn per annum. Fishing lot owners became a rich and privileged group. Many former military men also got involved. They jealously protected the lots from ingress by the large displaced Khmer peasant population who settled around the Lake after Pol Pot. Conflict over access to fish became endemic. Many deaths were reported among riparian communities as a result.

This situation was altered drastically in October, 2000. Cambodia's Prime Minister made the unexpected announcement cancelling half of all fishing lot licences of a few hundred powerful individuals. He turned over the rights of access to thousands of poor rural families to harvest the fishery resources for food and livelihood. It

was action which yielded important political rewards for the Prime Minister in the next elections in 2003.

This was a state-sponsored aquarian reform backed by the highest level of legal protection with the pronouncement of a Sub-Decree. The Fisheries Administration (FiA) was asked to start a Community Fisheries Development Office to assist the riparian communities set up new community fisheries institutions (CFI for short). Civil society organizations and international development partners were encouraged to help.

Meanwhile, spurred by the new freedom to access the resources, many communities, sometimes with the help of NGOs, initiated the process of creating new CFI. They submit to the local Fisheries Administration a 'petition of interest' signed by interested members and enclose a hand-drawn map of the proposed area of their commons, usually composed of a dynamic land-water terrain. The Administration investigates the claim, conducts a needs assessment with the petitioners, arranges for a rough check of the boundaries and gives a tentative approval or rejection notice in 30 days. If approval is obtained, the

Fisheries Administration sets out to disseminate to the interested members their rights and responsibilities as spelt out in the sub-decree.

To obtain formal recognition of their CFI from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forest and Fisheries, the CFI must do the following: With the assistance of the Administration, the members form a general assembly. This assembly initiates a democratic process to decide on a name for their CFI, frame their objectives, internal rules and regulations and also elect a managing CFI Committee from among the members. A list of names of all members and the Committee is prepared. To produce an accredited map, the CFI area is physically mapped together with the Administration and neighbouring communities to hedge against potential future boundary disputes. The local administration, competent NGOs and technical agencies often help with financial support and mapping skills. The use of orthophoto mapping technology, with assistance from international development agencies, has been widely reported. Large cement boundary markers are placed at points which are perennially under water.

**Some of the best functioning CFI are marked by the greater participation of women in them.**

Once formally registered with the Ministry, a CFI has the exclusive use and management rights to the fishery domain within their mapped jurisdiction for an officially recognized period of three years, which is renewable. Fishing in the CFI is strictly meant for subsistence and only very small-scale nets and traps are legally permitted. Consequently, the risk of overfishing is minimal in this salubrious and highly productive ecosystem. Each CFI is required to prepare their own management plan to chart out how they will utilize and conserve their common domain and its resources. This plan includes a careful inventory of the different ecosystems

in the area; listing of the fish species diversity and seasonal patterns; the total fishing assets available with the members and a rough assessment of the sustainable resource yields which can be harvested. All the commoners of the CFI are duty-bound to protect their commons from harm. Formal patrolling groups composed of members are active in all CFI.

An assessment made in 2012 – of the 450 CFI established by then – demonstrated that the aquarian reforms resulted in a much wider distribution of the benefits gained from the teeming fishery resources of the Lake and also the other riverine and marine areas brought under the CFI regime.

Leading the list of benefits was the greater quantities of fish consumed by the rural population – particularly the children. Secondly, the use of the small cash incomes from sale of fish contributed to family expenditures such as children's school books; minor health costs and minor repair of homes; purchase of rice in the lean season and such like. For the rural communities such small but crucial expenses make significant differences in their lives. Knowing that all this comes from resources over which they have collective control is a great source of empowerment.

### **Democracy**

There have also been tangible improvements in the local ecosystem through the collective efforts of the CFI members to protect the flooded forests; plant mangroves; stop destructive fishing and other conservation measures. The structured role of women in the CFI committees provided new avenues to gradually bring in more gender equality in the communities. Some of the best functioning CFI are marked by a greater participation of women in them.

The governance of their CFI has thrown up new leaders; reinforced the merits of collective action and made a significant dent in the 'trust deficit' which prevailed due to periods of conflict and war. But there are also many challenges to overcome. These include, importantly, the bane of illegal fishing and the conflicts arising



from it. There are dispute settlement procedures and graded sanctions in place, but the will of the community often pales before the might of the powerful. Another issue of concern is the 'restrictive' definition of the organization as a 'fishery' institution when the clear majority of the community only fish for consumption but depend on agriculture and other service sector activities for their main livelihood. Noting the small but significant nutritional, economic and social benefits which widely accrued to the communities from his earlier policy pronouncements, the Prime Minister completed his reforms in 2012 by taking over the remaining half of the fishing lots. Some were converted into exclusive conservation zones in the Lake, in his words, "to protect the lake's pressured wild fisheries on which tens of thousands of subsistence fishermen rely."

Today (2018) there are over 500 CFI in Cambodia. The majority are around the Tonle Sap Lake. Their common area covers over 850,000 ha spread across 19 of the 25 provinces of the country. There are 188,000 members, of whom over 61,000 are women. Not all the CFI in Cambodia function as 'lively commons'. Many remain 'empty shells' for lack of leadership and timely support from civil society and development partners. The framework for a modern commons and the rich experience of thousands of commoners collaborating over the last 18 years is already a huge corpus of social capital which can be tapped with the right facilitation and support.

In conclusion, it can be said that fish is an integral part of Cambodia's aquatic ecosystem, an indispensable component of its people's food intake and an essential part of Khmer cultural identity. As long as this remains true, there will be a role for CFI in Cambodia, where community-based collective action to sustain and manage aquatic ecosystems is the basis for equitable benefits to individual members. But the current reality is that there are already threats to the ecosystem, changes in food habits and new competing elements entering the cultural realm.

The greatest of these threats relate to the assault on the ecosystem: the conversion of flood plains to agriculture; the damage to the flooded


forests; the destruction of mangrove swamps and mudflats; the reduction of river flow due to erection of barriers and construction of dams; and the use of illegal fishing gear and destructive fishing methods. Much of this assault on nature is undertaken with the patronage of powerful economic interests, often with political backing. If CFI are to survive in this situation, they will have to take more affirmative collective action to guard their domain and the resources within it.

### CFI

CFI were created in 2000 in a particular socio-political context which existed in Cambodia during that period. The rewards from the reforms which created CFI were reaped both by the riparian communities and those at the helm of political affairs that heralded the reforms into existence. As long as this convergence of interests continues, CFI in Cambodia have a future.

However, empowering CFI to become vibrant democratic people's organizations, living up to the narrative of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (the SSF Guidelines) and guaranteeing a bright future for the aquatic ecosystems, fishery resources and the members of riparian communities, will depend on many factors.

These include: the genuine commitment to democracy and concern for the livelihoods of the rural poor on the part of the political establishment; a strong belief in the viability of CFI on the part of the Fisheries Administration; the co-ordinated support of civil society organizations to promote self-reliance of the CFI; and the emergence of more committed leaders and enthusiastic young membership within the CFI.

The direction of events in Cambodia in the immediate future will reveal which way the dice is loaded for CFI and the riparian communities. 

### For more



[http://www.icsf.net/images/samudra/pdf/english/issue\\_63/3795\\_art\\_Sam63\\_E\\_art02.pdf](http://www.icsf.net/images/samudra/pdf/english/issue_63/3795_art_Sam63_E_art02.pdf)

#### **Cambodia: Small scale fisheries, A Community Future**

[http://www.worldfishcenter.org/resource\\_centre/Cambodia\\_s%20Aquarian%20Reform.policy%20paper%20-%20English\\_1.pdf](http://www.worldfishcenter.org/resource_centre/Cambodia_s%20Aquarian%20Reform.policy%20paper%20-%20English_1.pdf)

#### **Cambodia's Aquarian Reforms: The Emerging Challenges for Policy and Research**

<https://vimeo.com/138482914>

#### **Film: Give A Woman A Fish - Tonle Sap Lake, Cambodia**

<http://www.fao.org/3/a-i7206e.pdf>  
**Community Fisheries Organizations of Cambodia: Sharing processes, results and lessons learned in the context of the implementation of the SSF Guidelines**

# Aiming for Holistic Management

A workshop to strengthen small-scale fishery communities in the context of the SSF Guidelines was held on 28 September 2018 at the National Science Foundation in Colombo, Sri Lanka

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A workshop was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka for the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines). The workshop, held on 28<sup>th</sup> September, 2018 was attended by 45 participants from the Ministry of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development (MFARD), the Director General of the Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development (DFARD), National Aquaculture Development Authority (NAQDA) and Ceylon Fisheries Corporation (CFC), and 15 officers from Coast Conservation Department (CCD), Agriculture

equality and gender mainstreaming. Professor Oscar Amarasinghe, President of the SLFSSF, spoke about sustainable resource management, co-management, value chains and post-harvest practices including fish processing by women, social development and the need to empower fishing community organisations. The need for management to be integrated, inclusive, participatory and holistic was highlighted.

After the technical sessions, the participants were divided into four groups with each group being given two topics for discussion. The group discussions were conducted by Dr. Nilantha De Silva with the help of students from the University of Ruhuna.

The first group discussed the following topics:

*(a) Responsible Governance of Tenure*

Overlapping laws were identified as a key issue hindering the governance of tenure. Other issues such as the loss of beach access; the lack of appropriate regulations and enforcement; and conflicts between resource users were also discussed. For each issue, the various actors with a stake in coastal and marine tenure, including the government departments for Fisheries, Tourism, Wildlife, Forest, Environment, Irrigation, CCD, MEPA, fishing communities, the shipping and tourism industries, etc., were identified. Responsible nodal agencies for coordination and implementation were also identified. It was noted that political commitment is necessary, as is community empowerment and capacity building. The group recommended that a national committee for all aquatic environments (inland and marine) be established.

**It was noted that political commitment is necessary, as is community empowerment and capacity building...**

Department, Ministry of Tourism, Department of Wildlife, Coast Guard (Navy) and Marine Environmental Protection Agency (MEPA). The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Representative in Sri Lanka, Nina Brandstrup, was the Chief Guest of the event.

Senior Professor Upali Amarasinghe, Joint Secretary of the Sri Lanka Forum for Small-Scale Fisheries (SLFSSF) presented the SSF Guidelines and dealt with issues of governance of tenure, including the need to identify and respect the rights of fishers to fish resources, land (beaches) and adjacent areas, and of gender

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*(b) Sustainable Resource Management*

The group discussed how the lack of knowledge about the ecosystem approach to fisheries (EAF) is a major lacuna, which points to the need for comprehensive studies by the National Aquatic Resources Research and Development Agency (NARA) and universities, with the support of funding organizations and the MFARD. Political support is also needed to conduct national level awareness and monitoring programmes for sustainable resource management. The group called for regulations, based on well-designed studies, to be formulated by the fisheries ministry and relevant policy makers, such as National Science & Technology Commission (NASTEC). Another problem is the failure to recognize research output and the lack of facilities to conduct scientific research. It was suggested that research be translated into policy and sufficient funds allocated for filling research gaps. The group also discussed the need for a national level monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) system for small-scale fisheries.

*(c) Establishing Co-Management Platforms*

In the case of existing co-management platforms, provisions to declare fisheries management areas and fisheries management committees have been made in Act No. 35 of 2013. The deficiencies include the lack of funds for implementation of co-management practices; dysfunctional national advisory committees and inadequate community consultation. To improve these, it was suggested that there be separate budgetary allocations for co-management, and areas be identified where co-management can be implemented. Collaboration between the MFARD, Treasury, district secretaries and all stakeholders in the fisheries sector is critical.

*(d) Community Organizations*

Fisheries Co-operative Societies (FCS) are the existing community organizational structures and play an important role in co-management. Rural Fisheries Organizations (RFO) deal with inland fisheries co-management. The role of Fisheries Lagoon Management Committees (FLMC) (for lagoons) and Fisheries Management Coordination Committees (FMCC) (for marine

fisheries) was also discussed. Several barriers restricting community organizations from fulfilling their roles were identified, one being that cooperatives are not under the control of the fisheries department. Others include the lack of state intervention, fisher participation and funding sources. The group recommended awareness building as a solution to these challenges.

The second group discussed the following topics:

*(a) Social Development*

Three major gaps were identified for the poor health, sanitation and social development among fishing communities: inadequate drinking water, poor awareness and facilities for sanitation and insecure housing. Water purification plants, sanitation drives and housing development and loan schemes were suggested for each issue respectively. Nodal agencies were also identified to allocate responsibilities: the Water Board, the Department of Fisheries, Health, the National Housing Development Authority, local governments, etc.

*(b) Employment and Decent Work*

The group suggested several actions to ensure occupational health and safety in small-scale fisheries along with the identification of departmental responsibilities: search and rescue mechanism, technology and skill training (DFARD, NAQDA, Navy, Coast Guard); weather alerts and warnings (Department of Meteorology, DFARD); awareness raising on labour laws and rights (DFARD, NAQDA and Department of Labour); vessel safety and life-saving equipment (DFARD, NAQDA and CEYNOR); and health programmes (DFARD, Ministry of Health).

*(c) Gender Issues*

Several issues related to gender in fisheries were highlighted. A policy for 25 per cent representation of women in all decision making bodies was recommended. The importance of educational programmes as a solution to cultural barriers was discussed, along with issues of women's safety and security at the workplace. The responsibilities of the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs, Fisheries and Ministry of Policy Planning were identified. The group observed that unequal wages



between men and women needed to be rectified using better regulation by the Ministry of Labour.

The third group discussed the following topics:

*a) Value Chains, Post-Harvest and Trade*

The group discussed issues of post-harvest handling losses, destructive or illegal fishing practices (e.g. dynamite), the lack of infrastructure (ice storage, anchorage, etc.), the absence of standardized boat design and low supply of labour. Added to these, appropriate fish grading systems and auctions were not available to small scale fishers, which leads to exploitation by middlemen. Women are underrepresented at landing sites. The lack of awareness among fishermen is a problem, leading to inferior quality and prices (for example, bottom set gill nets were kept for too long in the sea causing a deterioration in fish quality). Promoting fishing activities as a family business (by engaging in diverse links in the value chain), adopting new technology and providing training were suggested by the group. Better access to credit facilities and strengthening of extension services were a few other solutions to iniquities in the value chain.

*b) Disaster Risk and Climate Change*

In the discussion on disaster risk reduction, the need to strengthen weather warning systems was highlighted. Fishing communities also need proper communication equipment and other technology. The role of the Meteorological Department, Disaster Management Centre, DFAR and community organizations was discussed. An appropriate insurance scheme for fisheries needs to be developed. The effects of climate change on fisheries have not been adequately studied, which requires more funds to be allocated to research agencies. The rights of fishers in instances of beach erosion have not been established and this needs a proper legal framework.

The final group discussed the following topics:

*a) Policy Coherence, Institutional Coordination and Collaboration*

A persistent issue for small-scale fishers is of government officers flouting regulations and overstepping their authority. Addressing this requires discussions with relevant institutes (for

example, on fishing in wildlife reserves). One solution is to inform both officials and communities about rights and duties. Responsible agencies were identified such as departments of Fisheries, Wildlife, NAQDA, NARA, etc. Management plans for small-scale fisheries need to be developed that create common platforms for all stakeholders. Some laws need to be updated while others need implementation through increased coordination between stakeholders. (For example, an update in the Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Act, 1996 so that roles and responsibilities are clearly specified.)

*b) Information, Research and Communication*

Lack of robust information (including traditional knowledge) and data about small-scale fisheries was highlighted, with a suggestion to form a dedicated unit to collect and constantly update this information. (The MFARD could lead this initiative, with contributions from universities, technical institutes and NGOs.) The collection, storage and dissemination of information were discussed in detail. The group discussed legal barriers, exchange of information between institutes and the community, the scarcity of trained officers, etc. The group felt that demonstration farms for small-scale fisheries and aquaculture can help in dissemination of new knowledge and training. Communication and collaboration between institutes needs to improve and a mechanism should be developed in universities to identify research areas relevant to the socio-economic needs of small-scale fisheries. This will need funds to be allocated for research, a plea also made by the other groups. 3

**For more**



<https://sites.google.com/site/smallscalefisheries/events/sri-lanka-1>

**Process of Building Voluntary Guidelines for Sustainable Small Scale Fisheries: Proposal from Sri Lankan Fisheries Communities, Negombo, Sri Lanka, 22 November 2011**

<https://www.icsf.net/en/yemaya/detail/EN/2192.html?>

**Sri Lanka : Widows' struggles in post-war Sri Lanka**

# Learning from Warnings

**A recent Consultation Workshop discussed awareness and policy support to protect ecosystems, reduce illegal fishing and promote co-management in the central coastal region of Vietnam**

Vietnam's fisheries sector plays an important role in the economic structure of the country. Marine capture fishery production continues to increase at an average rate of 9.07 per cent annually, whereas aquaculture activities increase at an average rate of 12.77 per cent per year. As reported by the General Directorate of Fisheries (D-Fish), in 2017 the total fish production reached over 7.28 mn tonnes, up by 5.6 per cent compared to 2016. The capture fishery production reached nearly 3.42 mn tonnes, up by 5.7 per cent, and aquaculture output reached over 3.86 mn tonnes, up 5.5 per cent, totalling in a farming area of 1.1 mn ha. Aquaculture production accounted for 53 per cent of total output in 2017, whereas in 2016 it was 54.2 per cent.

Capture fisheries is the primary provider for the food industry and employs more than 4 mn workers. However, capture fisheries in Vietnam continue to experience certain difficulties due to both objective and subjective conditions. On 10 May 2017, Vietnam was officially cautioned by the European Commission (EC) with a 'yellow card' for the effect the Vietnamese fisheries sector has caused on its marine ecosystems. On 23 October 2017, the European Commission issued the yellow card warning to Vietnam.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has developed guidelines for small-scale fisheries in 2014 – the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines). Accordingly, compliance with the regulations is sought to be made transparent and accountable for the effective implementation of regulations in the fisheries sector, from central to

local levels, in line with international practices and regulations. There are many shortcomings in the policy, organization and monitoring of small-scale fisheries.

On 28 September 2018, the Center for Marinelife Conservation and Community Development (MCD) and the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development of Binh Dinh Province jointly organized a "Policy Consultation, Communication and Sharing Workshop on the Mitigation of Illegal Fishing, Co-management and Protection of Fisheries Resources in the Central Coast". The workshop was supported by

**There are many shortcomings in the policy, organization and monitoring of small-scale fisheries.**

the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF) under a FAO-funded project on the implementation of the SSF Guidelines in nine countries, including Vietnam.

## Reef ecosystems

The objectives of the workshop were to promote communication and awareness amongst stakeholders of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU)-related policy and co-management practices to reduce illegal fishing, and co-management of the living resources of the reef ecosystems.

The workshop was attended by 50 representatives from the D-Fish, the Binh Dinh Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Departments of Fisheries in the central provinces of Thua Thien Hue, Phu Yen and Binh Dinh, the Binh Dinh Fisheries Association, the

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Quy Nhon City People's Committee and commune council, community organizations of four Locally Managed Marine Area (LMMA) communes in Quy Nhon and representatives of fishing groups in the central areas of Cu Lao Cham and the Ly Son marine protected area (MPA).

**Since the 1980s, many co-management models have been researched and tested...**

The workshop featured policy consultations, communication and sharing of experiences on the mitigation of illegal fishing in the Central Coast to raise awareness of the need for compliance with the implementation of the revised Fisheries Law 2017. The discussions covered co-management of fisheries resources, mitigation of illegal fishery harvest, and action for planning policy in Vietnam. It was decided that the D-Fish would give further support to the localities to improve enforcement.

The main topics of the workshop were: (i) an overview of the central regions and local policies, programming and current action plans; (ii) the need for co-management awareness, minimization of illegal practices, and application of successful practical lessons in the coastal region of central Vietnam; and (iii) how to link policymakers, regulatory agencies, and fisher community organizations in activities to strengthen co-management, regulate exploitation and protect fisheries resources in order to minimize illegal practices.

According to D-Fish, IUU fishing is prohibited, but such activities are still prevalent. Illegal harvest must be prevented to reduce the decline of resources, allow for the advancement of sustainable development, and protect the rights and interests of the community. Co-management is a strategic solution for combating IUU fishing.

Actions against IUU fishing are supported by a range of international institutions and instruments, including

the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the 1995 UN Fish Stocks Agreement (UNFSA), and the 1995 FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF). Vietnamese law also provides specific provisions on IUU fishing practices under the revised Fisheries Law of 2017, adopted by the National Assembly at its Fourth Session on 21 November (2017 or 2018?).

Between 2014 and 2018, Vietnam seized over 917 illegal fishing vessels in the waters bordering China and ASEAN and non-ASEAN countries. China, Indonesia and Cambodia are the three countries with the highest rate of detention of fishing vessels in Vietnam. The following are the efforts being made by Vietnam to combat IUU:

### **Co-management models**

Role of co-management in the protection of fishery resources: Co-management is a management approach in which the state shares its rights and responsibilities with community organizations involved in the management of fisheries resources. The community organization is an organization in which members participate voluntarily, jointly manage, share the benefits and protect fishery resources in a distinct geographic area.

Since the 1980s, many co-management models have been researched and tested in the field of fisheries and aquaculture use and practice, and in different localities throughout the country, with the support and funding of international organizations, in collaboration with local governments. Co-management models have been implemented in the following localities: (1) Buon Triet, Easoup, Lak lake (Dak Lak), Tra O Lagoon (Binh Dinh), Son La, and Bung Binh Thien (An Giang); and (2) Quang Ninh, Hai Phong, Thanh Hoa, Nghe An, Ha Tinh, Quang Nam, Thua Thien Hue, Binh Dinh, Phu Yen, Khanh Hoa, Binh Thuan, Ben Tre, Soc Trang, and Ca Mau. The results of applying the co-management model of aquatic resources in some provinces resulted in D-Fish issuing Decision No. 67/QĐ-TCTS-KTBVN on 7 June 2010.

The Fisheries Law of 2017, an important milestone in institutionalizing co-management, formally defined co-



**Table 1: Action plan for combating IUU**

EC recommended actions in Vietnam	Actions to take place in Vietnam
a) Revise the legal framework	a) Develop and improve legal documents, including two Decrees of the Government, one Decision of the Prime Minister and nine guiding circulars of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD)
b) Ensure implementation and enforcement	b) Strengthen direction, management and effectiveness in management of fisheries and IUU fishing
c) Ensure that full sanctions are enforced and monitored	c) Implement solutions that create practical changes
d) Overcome deficiencies in monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS)	d) Improve law enforcement capacity, requiring fishing vessels of length 15m or more to install cruise control equipment. From 1 January 2019, fishing vessels sailing on the sea must install 100 per cent cruise control equipment
e) Improve the registration and licensing system	e) Build a national database on management of fishing vessel registration and synchronous fishing permits at central and local levels.
f) Introduce a fishing vessel development policy	f) Announce the reserve of marine resources in order to reorganize fishing fleets in accordance with capacity, planning for offshore fishing up to year 2020 and a vision plan to 2030.
g) Ensure traceability of fishery products	g) Regulate and organize the control of raw materials originating from IUU, exploiting commercial ports for re-export, or for domestic sale; the MARD issued Circular No. 02/2018 / TT, dated 31 January 2018, which stipulates identification of the source of the fishery.
h) Aim for co-operation with other countries	h) Promote bilateral co-operation to prevent IUU fishing and illegal trade through establishment of hotlines, and through dialogue with other countries in the region for the sustainable use of marine resources. The government has ratified Vietnam's accession to the FAO Agreement on Port State Measures (PSA) and the UNFSA. Vietnam has also become a party to the Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC).
i) Engage in data collection and reporting for RFMOs	i) Implement regulations on collection and reporting of fishery data by WCPFC and the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC)

management in Article 10. The efforts of D-Fish and other concerned parties such as MCD have included initiatives such as issuing regulations for the recognition and assignment of management rights to community organizations, in the following manner:

1. Through application for recognition and transfer of management rights to community organizations;
2. By issuing orders for recognition and transfer of management rights to community organizations;
3. By disseminating the contents of the appraisal dossier on community management;
4. By preparing dossiers of proposals for amending and assigning management rights to community organizations;
5. By issuing orders for amending and transferring management rights to community organizations; and
6. By making model decisions on recognizing and empowering

community organizations to implement co-management of fisheries resources, and in recognizing and transferring management rights to community organizations.

Regulations on community collaborators are meant to recognize them as individuals who voluntarily participate in the activities of community organizations.

The community needs to be organized periodically, based on reports on the results of the implementation of co-management in the protection of fisheries resources, and the main contents of the community organization report should be widely disseminated.

The Binh Dinh Department of Fisheries presented the results of its review and plans to minimize IUU fishing, including proposals and recommendations for action.

Binh Dinh has set up a representative office and three standing groups at the

fishing port to inspect fishing vessels that dock and enter the wharf. Weekly inspection teams that control the fishing on coastal and lagoon areas have dealt with 102 cases of fisheries violations, and imposed fines totalling approximately 121 million Vietnamese dong (VND) (1USD=23,290 VND). 566 numbers of MCS equipment were installed on board fishing vessels (511 on board vessels of under 24 m in length and 55 on board vessels of 24 m or over).

In Binh Dinh, 13 vessels and 107 fishermen were arrested in the first eight months of 2018, up from four vessels and 13 crew members in 2017. These vessels and fishermen have had their fishing rights temporarily suspended and their fishing licences cancelled for six months, under Decision No. 48/2010 / QD-TTg. A constant review of fishermen and foreign fishing vessels is underway. The Provincial People's Committee has directed the provincial police, and the provincial Border Guard Commands to co-ordinate with the localities in verifying and handling cases of violation.

With a coastline of over 134 km, this geographical area includes the bay, seaports, and natural creeks such as Quy Nhon, De Gi and Tam Quan. The province has 6,245 fishing vessels, with a total capacity of 1,786,631 horsepower (HP). The total number of employees engaged in fishing activities is 44,350 (in offshore fishing: 29,512; in coastal fishing: 14,838).

The total seafood catch in 2017 reached 223,000 tonnes, of which tuna made up 47,000 tonnes (big-eye, yellow-fin tuna from the Atlantic: 9,700 tonnes; squid: 22,000 tonnes; shrimp: 1,200 tonnes; and other marine fish of all kinds: 143,100 tonnes).

Fishing vessels operating without fishing permits, or with expired fishing permits, account for 46 per cent of fishing vessels in the whole province. The number of fishing boats is quite large (1,358 under 20 HP, accounting for 21.7 per cent of the total number of registered boats), and this abundance affects the coastal fishery resources.

The operation of fishing vessels in areas that are not regulated – often on a complicated basis (especially for trawlers) – has impacts on the resources. Some forms of fishing are prohibited,

such as using explosives, electric pulse fishing, cages, etc. To curb these practices, the province has reviewed the statistics of fishing vessels (MEANING?).

Binh Dinh will continue to carry out its plan to review registration and licensing. Quarterly, the fisheries stations will record the number of vessels in the area to synchronise data between local and grass-roots statistical offices. Strengthening co-ordination among the authorities responsible for handling fishing vessels is needed. Raising awareness about the law, and training staff to improve the management capacity of vessels are being undertaken. Besides implementing various measures to reduce IUU fishing in offshore areas, Binh Dinh is working to ensure strict control of unregistered trawlers to prevent depletion of fishery resources; enforce a ban on fixed net fishing; and control unlicensed diving.

### Illegal fishing

Thua Thien Hue is known as the province that has implemented sustainable small-scale fisheries co-management to minimize illegal fishing in Tam Giang lagoon. Thua Thien Hue's Department of Fisheries has shifted the focus to management based on fishers rather than just fish. The regulation for management of lagoon fisheries has been issued as Article 5 (Decision No. 84/2016 / QD-UBND) and has achieved some successes, notably: Thua Thien Hue has implemented three parallel processes in its waters: a pilot model, institutional development and a management plan, and close community organization through formal fisheries associations at the grass-roots level, and development of sustainable fisheries co-management schemes at the provincial level. The synchronous implementation of the model has helped to rapidly develop the overall management plan, consistent with ecosystem and fishery considerations.

As a result, Thua Thien Hue has 7,000 members, and 65 official associations of the lagoon fisheries in 86 districts. The Fisheries Associations (FAs) have been granted 52 fishing rights. Fifty FAs in specific lagoon water bodies, in an area of over 16,000 ha, account for 74 per cent of the lagoon

area. Seven coastal fishing areas were chosen for pilot FAs. The whole province has 22 FAs, and fishing rights are allocated to the FAs by the provincial People's Committee. There are now 23 small-scale community-based marine conservation zones. The total protection area is 614.2 ha, accounting for 2.8 per cent of the Tam Giang-Cau Hai lagoon area. Assistance has been given by the state for the purchase of 20 community-based fishing boats for inspection and monitoring. A community fund of 3.25 bn VND was set up for the Loc Binh Fisheries Association in 2017. Clearly, emphasizing community-based management is the only way to streamline management activities, save costs and manage the fisheries for the sustainable development of aquatic resources, fishing communities and fisheries societies.

The Bai Huong Island sub-MPA, part of the Cu Lao Cham MPA, is a co-management model for marine resources protection and livelihood development of the local communities established in 2011, based on Decision No. 2614 /QD-UBND. The key management role lies with the community of Bai Huong village.

The sub-MPA has organized training courses to educate the community about the conservation and sustainable use of fisheries resources. Among the main activities of the co-management group is monitoring and patrolling in the Bai Huong sub-MPA. In addition to preserving livelihoods, the MPA has collaborated with MCD on livelihood improvement and regulating fishing activities under the co-management plan. MCD supports bottom-glass coral viewing tours as an alternate source of livelihood. Tourism has allowed the local community to reap benefits during lean fishing seasons. MCD registers legal fishing gear in order to reduce overfishing and to manage the fisheries resources. Local fishers reported an increase in species diversity in 2018, compared to 2017. Further livelihood opportunities have arisen from associated activities like cooking classes and hospitality home stay services.

Illegal fishing, however, continues through the exploitative activities of trawlers and seines, at great cost to

coastal fisheries resources. In 2017, Cu Lao Cham handled 12 infringement cases, resulting in more than 20 mn VND in sanctions. Cham shows us that co-management will succeed only if there is consensus within the community for the conservation and sustainable use of fishery resources. Patrol supervisors should handle cases of illegal fishing resolutely, but with caution.

### Assigning rights

An amendment in 2017 introduced the IUU issue into Section 6, Article 7 of the Fisheries Law 2017. Article 10 of the Law grants the district the prerogative to recognize and assign the right to manage fisheries resources in the area under co-management.

The co-management community organization is responsible for: (i) properly implementing the management plan; (ii) complying with the law on fishery activities, and inspection and examination by competent state agencies; (iii) co-ordinating with relevant authorities to

**Tourism has allowed the local community to reap benefits during lean fishing seasons.**

patrol, inspect, investigate, prevent and deal with violations in the assigned area; and (iv) reporting to competent state agencies on the operation of community organizations, according to regulations.

The following recommendations can mitigate IUU fishing and strengthen co-management in fisheries:

1. *Raise awareness about IUU fishing:* Use mass media information and communication systems to change the perception of target groups to comply with laws and regulations on sustainable use; organize media campaigns and advocacy through co-ordination between government and social organizations (including FAs); develop and implement communication programmes to reduce IUU fishing, at the provincial/district/commune level in line with national action plans.



MCD



Participants at the workshop in Quy Nhon, Binh Dinh province. The workshop was attended by 50 representatives and the discussions covered co-management of fisheries resources, mitigation of illegal fishery harvest, and action for planning policy in Vietnam

2. *Support efforts for livelihood development and employment for fishermen groups:* Fishery resources have been significantly reduced due to unsustainable capture fisheries and hence, developing activities for livelihoods and alternative income for fishermen should be accorded a high priority; impart technical training by experts for fisheries groups on sustainable harvesting techniques and post-harvest preservation; develop coastal tourism and vocational training for youth to reduce the pressure on natural resources; and provide access to necessary resources for livelihood enhancement (including information technology and marketing skills).
3. *Support the implementation of co-management regulations and capacity building of community groups in sustainable fishery practices:* Ensure capacity building/strengthening of community organizations involved in co-management, training support, and strengthening of facilitators' skills; support planning for the conservation and sustainable use of fishery resources and management of community organizations; and promote co-ordination at the central and local levels, by creating mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating, and effectively enforcing co-management regulations for sustainable fisheries.
4. *Strengthen surveillance systems, and traceability and product certification in accordance with regulations:* Strengthen the capacity of fisher groups to improve responsible fishing practices, and use of fishing gear and legal fishing grounds; enhance co-operation with the business sector to improve traceability, improve recording/reporting practices in fishing ports and fishing areas, and comply with market regulations and requirements; and provide technical assistance to improve local and national monitoring and reporting systems.

#### For more

<http://mcdvietnam.org/en/>  
**Centre for Marinelife Conservation and Community Development (MCD)**

<https://sites.google.com/site/smallscalefisheries/events/myanmar>  
**National consultation workshop for Small-scale fisheries in Myanmar: Developing of Voluntary Guidelines Towards Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries, 12-14 October 2012, Yangon, Myanmar**

<http://mcdvietnam.org/en/>  
**Centre for Marinelife Conservation and Community Development (MCD)**

# Hooray for Manta Rays

**Lamakera, a tiny village in Indonesia, is a centre for the global trade in manta rays, which are listed as vulnerable by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)**

**T**he IUCN Red List of Threatened Species – a critical indicator of the health of the world’s biodiversity – has assessed 93,500 animal species since it began its work in 1964. Its research found that over 26,000 species are threatened with extinction – that is, 27 per cent of all assessed species. Sharks and ray, or *Chondrichthyes* – characterized by their cartilaginous skeletons – are under intense pressure. There are 1,041 known *Chondrichthyes* species and, of these, 181 (17.4 per cent) are classified as threatened: 25 (2.4 per cent) are assessed as Critically Endangered (CR), 43 (4.1 per cent) Endangered (EN), and 113 (10.9 per cent) Vulnerable (VU). Within this group are the manta rays (*Manta birostris* and *Manta Alfredi*), charismatic, filter-feeders found in tropical and sub-tropical waters around the world. Sadly, both species are listed as vulnerable to extinction. Threats to manta ray populations have been directly attributed to the development of a market for their body parts (specifically, their gill plates), which began growing in the 1990s.

In the far reaches of eastern Indonesia is a small village named Lamakera, which is known by some as one of the locations for the biggest manta fisheries in the world. The Lamakerans have hunted mantas for centuries; in their words, since ancestry (*sejak nenek moyang*). In the past, Lamakerans hunted manta rays in dugout canoes and sailboats and this fishery was a small-scale subsistence fishery, and the Lamakerans only used the meat for local consumption; the remaining body parts (including the gill plates) had no value and were thrown away. However, over the last two decades, increased demand and enhanced technology have

transformed the fishing from a modest source of sustenance to a barbaric pursuit of profit. China’s demand for manta gill plates – which are used for bogus, pseudo-medicinal purposes – has turned Lamakera into one of the centres of the global trade.

The Lamakera manta ray fishery landed an estimated 975 mobulid rays in 2002. Catch comparisons across a 12-year period (2002 to 2014) revealed a 75 per cent decline in manta ray and mobula catch, despite an increased fishing effort. Interviews conducted in 2011 and 2014 revealed that fishers found it increasingly difficult to locate mantas,

**...over the last two decades, increased demand and enhanced technology have transformed the fishing...**

further suggesting that populations may have declined significantly due to fishing pressure. Despite recognizing the fact that stocks may be depleted, there was no effort from the fishermen to reduce hunting efforts.

## CITES

In 2013, a momentous announcement changed everything. Member countries of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) voted to include both species of manta ray under Appendix 2, thus regulating the trade in these animals’ body parts. In January 2014, Indonesia went a giant step further by banning all hunting of manta rays in national waters. The regulation, issued by the Marine and Fisheries Ministry Regulation (Kepmen KP No. 4 2014), banned the hunting,

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selling and distribution of both species of manta ray. Violation of this regulation can incur a punishment of a maximum prison sentence of six years and a fine of approx. US\$100,000. This new regulation provided a catalyst for a coalition of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and passionate individuals, which included Misool Foundation, Reef Check, Indonesian Manta Project, Blue Sphere Media and Wild Aid, to begin work in Lamakera. Their goal was to end manta ray hunting in the region, redirect villagers' focus to new sources of income, and create a model that could be used to transform the practices of other communities.

In 2014, this coalition, led by Misool Foundation, began working with the Indonesian Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, local government and coastal villages to introduce a comprehensive community-based conservation programme designed to collect scientific data, influence marine policy and diversify livelihoods within the community. In 2016, realizing the need for a local enforcement component to complement the community development and research, the Wildlife Crimes Unit (WCU) of the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) was bought in to begin a local patrol initiative.

### **In January 2014, Indonesia went a giant step further by banning all hunting of manta rays in national waters**

The first step was to set up several meetings with the local community and the Indonesian Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, local government departments and NGOs. These meetings aimed to provide clarity about the regulation, provide a forum for community members to raise their concerns or share their perceptions, and start discussions about possible alternative livelihood options. These discussions were met with mixed feelings from the community. Some felt their incomes were threatened, while others understood the law and were keen to seek alternative options. Misool

Foundation responded by developing new income streams that are decoupled from manta hunting. The team engaged ex-manta hunters and those community members who were ready to change. The goal was to give them the option to stop hunting in exchange for NGO and government support. The Foundation's team gathered those people and asked them to sign an agreement to state that they would stop hunting mantas, an agreement which was ratified by the local government departments. In return, and with the consultation of fishermen, surveys were conducted to understand how to best address the communities' needs.

A Rapid Assessment on the Potential for Sustainably Focused Programme Development, conducted by Yayasan Masyarakat dan Perikanan (MDPI), concluded that most of the Lamakera fishers are opportunistic, and take multiple gears with them on their fishing trips. This assessment showed that fishers were open to new methods, therefore giving potential to explore other options such as the development of new supply chains of high-value species like skipjack tuna and high value demersal fish.

In 2016, a fishermen's co-operative was created as an economic device to support the fishers' transition away from hunting manta rays. By September 2018, 32 ex-manta hunters and a total of 105 community members had joined the co-operative. The main stipulation of co-operative membership is that all members should sign the official agreement to stop hunting.

### **Training support**

This co-operative is registered with the Department of Co-operatives and is a legal entity. This means that members receive support and training, and are eligible for grants from the local government. Based on interviews with the community and survey results, five small business units were established within the co-operative framework, as also microfinance opportunities, a community mini-market, ice production facilities, seaweed farming, and a mini purse-seine boat.

The business units are structured to enhance existing incomes, lower

household costs and – in the case of the mini purse-seine fishing boats – provide a higher income by using alternative fishing methods. Good-quality ice and storage, for example, means that fishers can easily increase the value of their existing catch, without having to increase catch numbers.

In addition to working directly with the Lamakeran community, the team began working with the coastal communities surrounding Lamakera. They planned to reinstate multiple groups of community rangers (POKMASWAS) and provide them with knowledge and tools to protect and preserve their own marine environments. These groups were encouraged to take pride in these areas and their efforts were celebrated in monthly publications. In September 2018, the POKMASWAS members increased in number to 324 people across 33 villages.

A call centre was launched to provide a mechanism to report incidents of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, bycatch and animal strandings. A rapid response team was put in place to respond to these reports. As a result, the team released 27 large, vulnerable marine animals, including manta rays and whale sharks this year.

It is now four years since the programme's inception, and there have been a number of exciting achievements. Without doubt, the most significant of these achievements is a 97 per cent decrease in mantas caught by the targeted fishery between 2015 and 2017. Increased interest in, and membership sign-up to, the fishermen's co-operative proves that behaviour change is occurring at a local level, and community members have an increased understanding of the need to transition to new fishing practices. These encouraging results provide evidence that the two-pronged approach to enforcement and livelihoods development is working.

Lamakera is a lynchpin to emboldening the Indonesian government to continue the process of national conservation of manta rays and sharks. Success here – proving that even the most ardent community can buy-in and even prosper from



Indonesian Lamakera manta ray hunters in action. Stories like Lamakera demonstrate that with passion, dedication and strong partnerships, our marine environment has a bright future ahead

national marine legislation – sets the stage for even more aggressive implementation of the manta hunting regulations. Indonesia is defined by its coastline and its rich marine assets. Stories like Lamakera demonstrate that with passion, dedication and strong partnerships, our marine environment has a bright future ahead.

#### For more



<https://www.misoolfoundation.org/>  
**Misool Foundation**

<https://www.icsf.net/en/proceedings/article/EN/104-indonesia-works.html?start=10>

**The Indonesia Workshop Report: Indonesia Workshop Report: Customary Institutions in Indonesia: Do They Have a Role in Fisheries and Coastal Area Management?**

<https://www.icsf.net/en/samudra/article/EN/78-4338-Strong-Pillars.html>  
**Indonesia: Strong Pillars**

<https://www.icsf.net/en/samudra/article/EN/72-4186-No-Turning-Back.html>  
**Indonesia / Illegal Fishing: No Turning Back**



# The Long March

**A Peoples Long March against dams on the Indus River, organized by the Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum, earned widespread support and solidarity from the fishing and peasant community of Sindh**

**T**he Sindh Peoples Long March was a massive public action that involved a 16-day walk of over 200 km from a small fishing village in the Indus River Delta region and culminated at the Governor House, Sindh, in Karachi. The long march, which started on 10 October 2018 and ended on 25 October 2018, was organized by Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF) and got widespread support and solidarity from the fishing and peasant community of Sindh, civil society organizations (CSOs) and the media.

The Long March demanded that the federal government and Supreme Court of Pakistan (SCP) cancel the construction of any dam on the Indus River as the rampant construction of dams and barrages on the river had led to sea erosion and saline intrusion which was destroying coastal cities and districts.

**...all international and national laws prohibit construction of any mega-dams on the Indus River system...**

The PFF wanted to make the authorities realize that Sindh, being in the lower riparian area, had suffered the most following the destruction of the Indus River and the Indus Delta due to stoppage of freshwater flow that had been majorly caused by dams and barrages built previously. Moreover, all international and national laws prohibit construction of any mega-dams on the Indus River system without the consent of lower riparian communities.

Rejecting the Kalabagh dam completely, the Long March highlighted that dams on the Indus River were destroying Sindh villages and cities

forming the Indus delta. The tail-end farmers and other communities of Sindh were facing tremendous difficulties due to the unavailability of water.

The Long March manifesto aimed to: oppose all dams on the Indus River, including the Kalabagh and Basha dams; restore the natural flow of the Indus River; help the Indus River reach its final destination; and prevent future dams and diversions on the Indus River.

The Indus River, also locally called Sindhu, is one of the longest rivers in Asia. Originating in the Tibetan Plateau, the final destination of the river is the River Indus Delta in district Thatta of Sindh, the southern province of Pakistan. It is the longest river and the national river of Pakistan. The river has historically been important to many cultures of the region. The Indus River came into the knowledge of the West early in the Classical Period, when King Darius of Persia sent his Greek subject Scylax of Caryanda to explore the river, circa 515 BC. The Indus is one of the few rivers in the world to exhibit a tidal bore.

The Indus River Delta forms where the Indus River flows into the Arabian Sea, in the Southern Sindh province of Pakistan. The delta covers an area of about 41,440 sq km (16,000 sq miles), and is approximately 210 km (130 mi) across where it meets the sea.

Since the 1940s, the delta has received less water as a result of large-scale irrigation works capturing large amounts of the Indus water before it reaches the delta. The result has been catastrophic for both the environment and the local population.

Experts, along with the provincial government of Sindh, agree on the fact that a freshwater flow of 30 million acre-foot (MAF) is needed for the survival of

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Sindh Peoples Long March 2018 against all dams on River Indus in Pakistan. The natural flow of water and fertile sediments from the Indus River into the delta has been impeded due to the construction of dams and barrages along the river

the Indus River Delta. Above all, 10 MAF of freshwater flow was agreed upon by the Pakistan state in an infamous accord known as the Water Apportionment Accord of 1991. But the accord had also remained null and void up until now. According to the Institute of Oceanography, there is a 1.3 mm sea level rise annually, and 3,500,000 acres of land of the Indus River Delta have been destroyed by sea intrusion.

Before the development of an irrigation system on the Indus River, the entire flow passed through Sindh's plains to the Arabian Sea, culminating into 17 branches called creeks and forming the seventh largest delta of the world. An annual flow of over 180 MAF, carrying a silt load of about 440 mn tonnes, passes through the Indus into the Arabian Sea.

Until the 1980s, mangrove forests of the delta covered an area of 600,000 ha (1,500,000 acres) and could be found along the entire 240-km coastline. But the mangrove area has since reduced to 86,000 ha.

The natural flow of water and fertile sediments from the Indus River into the delta had been impeded due to the construction of dams and barrages along the river. The reduction of freshwater due to the dams also increases salinity, making the waters of the delta unsuitable for the freshwater species. In case of the Indus dolphin, the damming of the river has isolated

the delta dolphin population from those dolphins upstream. The Indus delta has shrunk by 92 per cent since 1833. In light of these threats, the Indus Delta was designated a Ramsar site in 2002.

A few months back, a pro-dam campaign was launched. Some influential leaders are collecting donations for the construction of the Basha Dam on the Indus River and also talk approvingly about the construction of the controversial Kala Bagh Dam.

Previously, three barrages on the Indus – the Guddu barrage, the Sukkur Barrage and the Kotri barrage – along with the Kala Bagh Barrage, the Chasma Barrage and the Taunsa Barrage had been built on the Indus River. The Tarbela Dam is also on the Indus River.

Such rampant construction of dams and barrages on the river has caused widespread sea erosion and saline intrusion, which, in turn, has destroyed coastal cities and districts. It is to stop this continuing destruction that the PFF and CSOs have banded together to petition the Federal Government and the Supreme Court of Pakistan to put an end to such ill-conceived “development” projects.

#### For more



<http://pff.org.pk/>  
**Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF)**

<https://dc.icsf.net/en/component/dnews/article/detail/12455-Pakistan--A-200.html>  
**A 200 kilometer journey on foot against Dams on River Indus, Sindh Peoples Long March, October 10-25, 2018**

<https://dc.icsf.net/en/component/dnews/article/detail/10494-Pakistan--Indus.html>  
**Indus River Canyon declared second Marine Protected Area of Pakistan**

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**Disruptive marine weather lowers catch for small-scale fishermen**

<https://www.icsf.net/images/what%20is%20new%20page/Inland%20Fisheries%20policy%20note%20by%20ICSF.pdf>

**Governance of water and freshwater fish production systems in India: Is there need for a national policy to protect fishers and fishworkers?: Draft for Comments - by ICSF**

# Confusion, Uncertainty

Ten years of freshwater fisheries governance reform in the Ayeyarwaddy region of Myanmar has led to greater democratization and decentralization, but problems remain

28

The decentralization of powers in the governing structures of the inland/freshwater fishery sector in Myanmar has brought about changes in fisheries governance, which can be characterized by three inter-related processes: movements of small-scale fishers (SSF) for greater fishing rights; multi-stakeholder engagement in the form of fishery partnerships; and policy reforms in fisheries co-management.

Following the decentralization of freshwater fisheries governance in 2008, the Ayeyarwaddy region passed a fishery law that recognized some rights of SSF, which were previously neglected in fishery legislation. The new fishery law of 2018 was promulgated to recognize the rights of SSF and the fishery co-management mechanism. In the intervening 10-year period, the fishery governance of the Ayeyarwaddy

economic liberalization of the fishery sector, introducing the open auction system to “any person.”

Successive governments followed the fishery regulations enacted under the 1905 Burma Fishery Act and granted exclusive exploitation rights to licence holders. During the military government period, the 1991 Freshwater Fishery Law was enacted, which enhanced revenue collection from the inland fishery sector. During the 1991-2010 decades, large numbers of open auction fisheries were demarcated as tender lots and allocated to private individuals. The process of privatization and provision of exclusive rights to individuals excluded many local SSF from accessing fishing grounds. The system led to a monopoly of fishing rights, to the advantage of business elites. Successive governments – of both the colonial and democratic periods – neglected the livelihood concerns of local SSF communities and regarded the fishery as a mere source of revenue. As a result, the poverty levels of SSF communities in the Ayeyarwaddy Delta increased massively over the period. Moreover, the higher prices for fishing licences contributed to the overexploitation of fishery resources and the decline in fish stocks. The livelihoods of SSF were thus worsened, pushing them into deeper levels of poverty. The result was increased conflicts between licence holders and SSF in the use of resources – and massive out-migration.

According to Schedule II of the 2008 constitution, the inland/freshwater fishery sector has been decentralized to the sub-national (state and region) levels, in terms of both legislative powers and revenue management. This has had several positive impacts. First, the democratization and decentralization process has narrowed the distance between SSF and policymakers. The

...the higher prices for fishing licences contributed to the overexploitation of fishery resources...

region gradually changed in positive ways, and the reforms of 2018 brought about significant improvements in SSF access to fishing rights. At the same time, the reform suffers from incomplete decentralization, irrelevant institutional design and divergent interests of the actors involved.

Even before the British colonial era, the inland fisheries sector of Myanmar was very productive and the British government introduced the auction system for the allocation of fishery leases in 1875, following the recommendation of Francis Day. In 1905, a new fishery act was promulgated that furthered the

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SSF have got opportunities to engage, and consult with, new policy actors and parliamentarians from their respective areas.

Second, the democratization process has led to greater freedom of association and media interaction; SSF now have the opportunity to establish their own organizations and initiate campaigns that demand direct access to fishing rights. This has also helped bring fishing rights issues into the public domain.

Third, improved access to communication has helped the SSF movement to access social and political processes, as well as to enhance communication and collective action among the SSF organizations.

Fourth, the democratization process has allowed non-state actors to work to strengthen civil society organizations and NGOs to campaign for a better governance system. Many of these non-state actors have been working in Ayeyarwaddy since the 2008 Nargis cyclone in areas like capacity building, organizational development, and advocacy actions.

Finally, the democratization and decentralization process created a new balance in institutional power, limiting the role of government in policymaking, and forcing it to engage with other stakeholders, especially with the SSF movement.

In 2011 the SSF sought to abolish the tender and lease fisheries system, and provide direct access to the resources. However, the movement failed for several reasons. First, the SSF organizations were small, and suffered from limited communication and collaboration amongst themselves.

Second, the revenue from fisheries contributes to about 39 per cent of the total revenue collected by the regional government. Thus, the SSF demand for abolishing the tender and lease system was not acceptable to the regional government.

Thirdly, the fish collectors and leaseholders were powerful and influential at all levels of decision making, with some going on to become parliamentarians in the first parliament of 2011-2015. Hence, until 2013 the early movement of SSF was not successful. Later they built larger,



Cast net fishing in the flood plain of Kayin State, Myanmar. The 2018 freshwater fishery law of Ayeyarwaddy recognizes the rights of SSF and the co-management mechanism

more representative bodies in their respective townships. In 2014, the Ayeyarwaddy Region Fisher Network (ARFN) was established in which 21 SSF organizations from different townships of the Ayeyarwaddy region were involved. After that, advocacy efforts shifted from abolishing the tender and lease system to increasing equitable access to fishing rights through fisheries co-management. In this, they had the support of NGOs and non-state actors.

### Major discussions

Informal and formal engagement mechanisms among the stakeholders were introduced to resolve resource use conflicts. The negotiations for fishing rights later led to multi-stakeholder engagements for fishery policy reform in Ayeyarwaddy region. In 2014, the Ayeyarwaddy Fishery Partnership (AFP) was established, which became the platform for the major discussions on inland fishery policy reform.

The 2012 fishery law focused primarily on formalizing revenue collection mechanisms from the regions' fisheries concessions, and reintroduced the auction system for better revenue generation from inland fisheries. However, the governance system remained in favour of large-scale fisheries. Worse, the auction system led to an escalation in fishing licence fees and increased the frequency and severity of resource use conflicts.



In early 2017, the Ayeyarwaddy Regional Government introduced a new policy that allowed a selective allocation of tenders directly to fishing community groups. This initiative was championed by the Regional Minister of Agriculture, who pushed through this policy, despite objections from powerful business interests. For the 2017-18 fishing season, more than 400 fishing grounds were allocated to community fisher groups. However, the ambitious and unconstitutional executive order forced the minister to resign.

The new minister and regional parliament continued to support the old policy and co-management initiatives. The fishery governance reform was accelerated by the promulgation of a new Ayeyarwaddy region freshwater fishery law in 2018. The new fishery law recognizes the fishing and livelihood rights of SSF, and the co-management mechanisms put in place.

Several challenges remain in the current fishery governance reform process. The first relates to the provisions of the constitution. Although the constitution allows for political, administrative and fiscal decentralization, it does not mandate the relevant institutional structures necessary to implement

the previous centralized management system, under which prices for tender and lease are to be increased by 10 per cent annually, even as fishery resources are declining.

The third challenge comes from the application procedure of the co-management system. Since most SSF communities are poor and most fisher families have low education levels, it is difficult for some SSF communities to make the first attempt to apply for co-management. Although the fishery law states that DOF officials should support SSF groups in preparing for co-management application, this aim is often hampered by inadequate organizational capacity, culture and practices.

The fourth challenge is related to the limited financial capacity of the SSF communities. Although the regional government provides the fishing rights at the floor price, SSF communities, in most cases, cannot afford to pay the fixed floor price. This leads them to remain indebted to private moneylenders or fish collectors in a relationship of bondage. Evidently, the influence of fish collectors or fishery business elites may negatively impact the co-management led by the SSF.

Finally, although co-management requires consultative efforts and long-term investments, the problem is that allocation of fishing rights to the community is designed annually, which leads to confusion and uncertainty for SSF in planning for fishing rights access in the future. 3

**...the institutional structure prevents the regional government's authorities from managing the collected revenue...**

the decentralization. Though the Ayeyarwaddy region has its own constitutionally-sanctioned authorities to enact their fishery law, the regional government does not have full authority to control the Department of Fisheries (DOF).

Further, the constitution allows the regional government to collect revenue from inland fisheries, but the institutional structure prevents the regional government's authorities from managing the collected revenue and instead, sends them directly to the Union treasury. The second challenge is due to current practices derived from

#### For more



<https://dc.icsf.net/en/component/dcnews/article/detail/11363-Myanmar--Develo.html>

**Development could hurt Ayeyarwady River: environmentalists**

[https://unctad.org/en/PublicationChapters/aldc2017d2\\_ch08\\_en.pdf](https://unctad.org/en/PublicationChapters/aldc2017d2_ch08_en.pdf)

**Bangladesh, Cambodia, the Comoros, Mozambique, Myanmar and Uganda**

# The Course of the Fishing Life

**Social contexts inevitably influence entry into the occupation and how fishing lives are shaped by the unfolding of non-fishing identities**

**T**emporal perspectives can help us understand what it means to be a fisher – including the importance of social contexts for entering the occupation and how non-fishing identities shape the unfolding of fishing lives.

Recent studies have observed difficulties in recruitment of new generations of ‘fishers’ in many fisheries around the north Atlantic. Such recruitment challenges have raised concerns about the future sustainability of the fishing industry in these places. Previously, there had not been enough research on understanding the temporal dimensions of the lives of fishers and how fishing lives are embedded in intergenerational contexts of linked lives which shape the opportunities and constraints of existing and prospective fishers.

Responding to these gaps, a recent study published in *Sociologia Ruralis* considers the potential of a life-course approach in helping us to better understand how fishers accumulate, utilize and share capital(s) in getting onto and moving along the ‘fishing ladder’. The study found that the life course can start from different initial positions (both familial and non-familial) and take different shape – influenced by life events such as partnership, parenthood and retirement as well as the presence or absence of successors. This article attempts to provide a summary of this recently published paper.

By interviewing fishing families in the small-scale fishery of the Llŷn peninsula in North Wales (UK) (see Figure 1, page 32) – a mixed

fishery primarily focused on lobster and crab, with seasonal and occasional targeting of scallop, whelk and sea bass – researchers at the University of Liverpool and the University of Exeter sought to understand how prospective fishers can enter the occupation category of ‘fishers’ and what types of capitals (social, cultural and economic) are needed to become established as legitimate members (‘good fishers’) of the fishing community.

**...the study reveals how the lives of fishers and their families change over the life course...**

By taking a temporal focus, the study reveals how the lives of fishers and their families change over the life course, shaped by life events such as parenthood, retirement and marriage. Whilst the paper reported on here focuses on the life course of fishing men, there has been attention elsewhere on understanding women’s relation to capital in the fishing field.

The word ‘fishing ladder’ was used as a metaphor to illustrate how fishers move along the life course. Although the metaphor of a ladder presents an image of a uniform and linear process, the article argues these are far from linear processes. As such, the use of a rope ladder – unstable and rocking – highlights the fact that the shape of the ladder may vary but that does not prevent us from observing general patterns in the flow of capitals.

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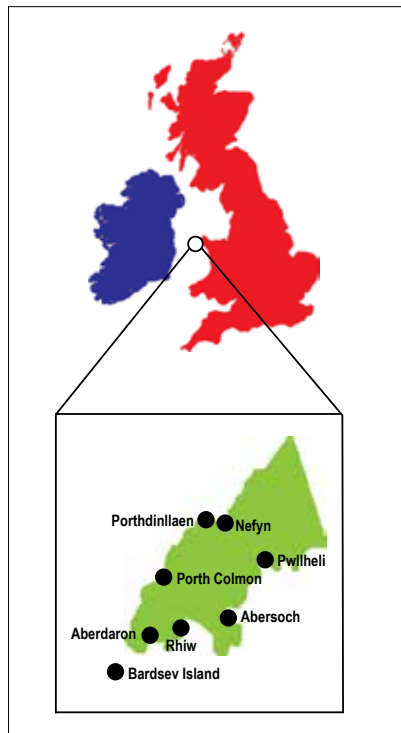


Figure 1: Map of the Llŷn peninsula, North Wales, United Kingdom

The study found that prospective fishers could enter the fishing career 'ladder' from different initial positions (see Figure 2) and these positions had different relations to capital (economic, social and cultural capital). The first pathway – sons of fishers – could relatively easily access social capital in the form of fishing gear and vessels (social capital) owned by their fathers (or the social networks of their fathers). These prospective fishers could also access the knowledge (cultural capital) of their fathers and associated networks. As sons of fishers had access to the material context and place-specific knowledge needed to fish, they could use these resources in experimenting with fishing and develop their own 'hard-won knowledge'.

The second pathway identified was young prospective fishers who grew up in the local community. For these individuals, their position was such that they did not have access to the material and social contexts without being invited to these spaces by existing fishers. In order to get invited, the research revealed that they needed to more actively show an interest, being

present in onshore fishing places and simultaneously developing knowledge (cultural capital) and social relations within the fishing community.

Through interviews, it became clear that it was important for these prospective fishers to be seen as young and 'innocent', as it was frequently reported that there is a culture of secrecy within the community, in particular, towards those established 'older' fishers who were seen as competitors. If successful, these young local prospective fishers became invited on fishing boats and continued learning the skills and the 'rules of the game' of fishing. Both the familial and non-familial contexts, however, presented challenges in accessing enough economic capital to afford their own fishing boat, gear and licences.

A third pathway was identified for 'older' fishers who had, through previous work, accumulated enough economic capital to purchase their own businesses. These fishers, however, did not necessarily have the necessary cultural and social capital to be accepted as legitimate members of the fishing community. Nevertheless, through displaying the qualities of being a 'good fisher' – that is, demonstrating the skills of fishing (cultural capital) as well as complying with the unwritten rules of fishing in this area – these fishers could become trusted (enabling access to social capital, for example, in the form of support at sea in case of need) and eventually become known as legitimate members of the fishing community – that is, being a 'good fisher' (see Figure 2).

Later on in the life course, fishers (re)negotiated their fishing identities in relation to the lives of others, within transitions such as parenthood as well as with older age. Parenthood posed the challenge of needing a more secure source of income which, in the area studied, resulted in fishing careers taking on two differing directions.

First, some full-time fishers decided to temporarily go part-time and took up an additional occupation. Important for these fishers was that they wanted to have the option to go back to being full-time fishers in the future when familial circumstances had changed.

The second route identified was that fishers intensified their businesses to secure a more stable income. The significance of these findings was that fishers respond to changes in family circumstances to adapt their businesses and fishing practices. As such, the study revealed that socially constructed meanings of parenthood – in this case, specifically, fatherhood – had significance for the unfolding of fishing lives and the shaping of fishing practices.

Being a self-employed occupation, fishing does not have an institutionally defined retirement age. Instead, retirement, for the fishers spoken to, was defined in relation to physical capabilities and often a process of 'force' caused by pain and injury. Interviews revealed that fishers preferred to 'remain in place' by continuing fishing at an older age.

Whilst their older age and decreasing bodily capabilities, to some extent, stopped them from going fishing, their reputation built around

good fishing at a younger age could help them to remain good fishers, although their actual involvement in the fishery was decreasing. In this context, again, it was observed that the notion of linked lives with other generations became important. Those fishers who had sons (successors) could remain in the fishery for longer as their sons could substitute their bodily capital, allowing the older generation to keep fishing at sea.

The presence or absence of successors of fishers at an older age also became important in another significant way. It was observed that older fishers who had successors more frequently reported they engaged in voluntary v-notching of lobster, which was a practice performed to safeguard the future lobster stock in the area. Such findings reveal that those who wish to encourage fishers to adopt more sustainable fishing practices had to broaden their focus to include intergenerational contexts of linked lives between generations.

GUSTAVSSON AND RILEY, 2018

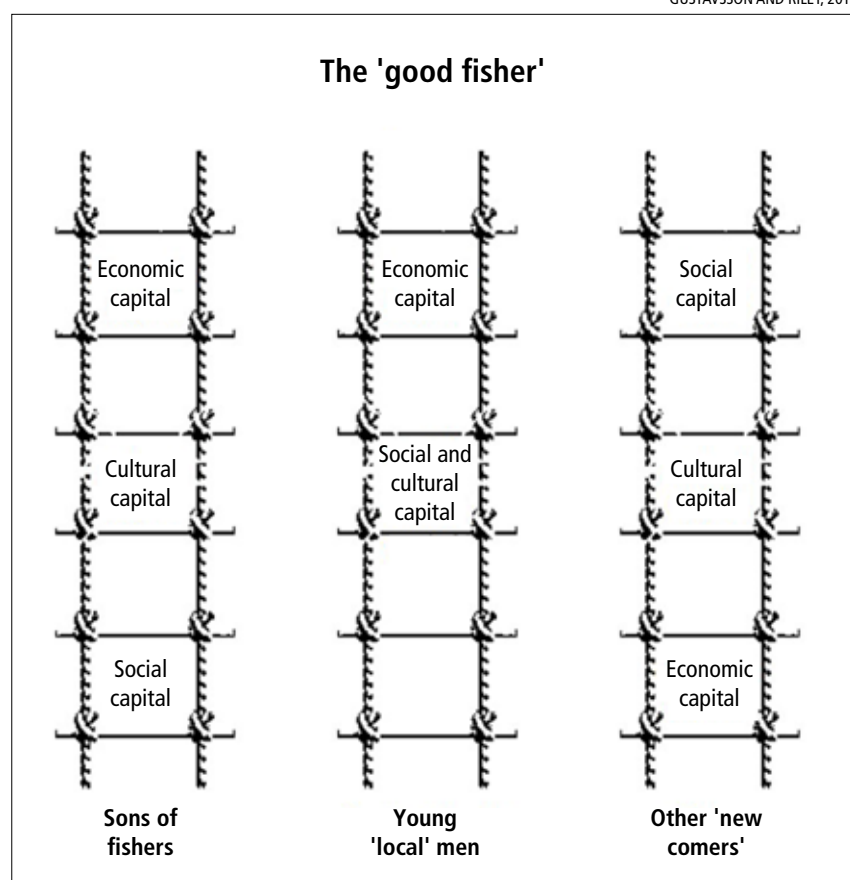


Figure 2: The different trajectories in which prospective fishers, from different initial positions, accumulate fishing capital to become 'good fishers'



## Conclusions

The life course approach reported on here highlight how different social contexts allow individuals within the fishing community varying access to different forms of capital, which, in turn, shapes how they are able to access the fishing ladder and position within the fishing community. Although familial connections offered the most clearly defined route onto the fishing ladder, this was not the only pathway.


**Policies that seek to change or regulate fishers' activities too need to recognize that decisions are often collective and spanning across several generations**

Capital may be accumulated in different ways, and at different points across the life course, to allow non-familial access. Examples presented in this paper remind us that fishing life courses – or the 'fishing ladder' – are not necessarily linear or uniform. Different points of entry may be taken onto the fishing ladder at different stages in the life course. Also, movement along the ladder may progress at different rates, with life transitions such as parenthood, differentially shaping fishing activity and the ways that fishers develop capitals.

The study argues that the life course perspective helps us to understand how moving along the fishing ladder is closely choreographed with the life course(s) of other fishers. The recognition that decisions by fishers are made in the context of linked and unfolding life courses has relevance to recent attempts to introduce more sustainable fishing practices as the study observed that fishers' willingness to engage with practices such as v-notching was closely dependent on the presence of a fishing successor.

The study concluded that "the life course approach highlights the need to shift the scale of focus – both in policy and academic research – away from a singular concern for the individual fisher. Policies that seek to change or regulate fishers' activities too need to recognize that decisions are often

collective and spanning across several generations."

To conclude this article, we would encourage others to use the life course approach to investigate the temporal dimension of fishing lives in other geographical contexts to gain a more nuanced understanding of what it means to be a fisher. 

## For more



<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/soru.12181>

**The fishing lifecourse: exploring the importance of social contexts, capitals and (more than) fishing identities**

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0743016716301103>

**Exploring the socio-cultural contexts of fishers and fishing: developing the concept of the 'good fisher'**

<https://arxiv.org/abs/1608.08016>

**Social Capital in Fisheries Governance**

<https://maritimestudiesjournal.springeropen.com/articles/10.1007/s40152-018-0102-z>

**Women, capitals and fishing lives - exploring gendered dynamics in the Llŷn peninsula small-scale fishery (Wales, UK)**

# Come Together

**Only collective action in small-scale fisheries can overcome the problems of poverty, marginalization, insecure tenure rights and powerlessness**

Sometimes an academic paper is especially known for its intriguing title, like the one by Chris Béné, which stated that small-scale fisheries “rhymes with poverty”. He not only referred to the fact that small-scale fishers and fishworkers are poor, often extremely so. He also alluded to the way they are generally perceived; the image of small-scale fishing as “an occupation of last resort”, that is, what people do when they have no other alternative to sustain themselves. Small-scale fishers and fishworkers, therefore, need assistance to free themselves from their dismal predicament, to get out of the industry, and into some other employment. This would be good for themselves, but also for the economy and the environment, because the definition of the problem is that there are “too many fishers chasing too few fish.” The assumption is that poor people are also bad stewards. Removing them from this industry would, therefore, be a win-win situation. For policymakers, it then makes sense to help speed up their exit.

It is rather amazing how we let images govern our governing, how easily we are seduced by metaphors, like the most famous one brought forward by Garrett Hardin about the “Tragedy of the Commons”, which is the root metaphor of modern fisheries management. The issue is not that it is intriguing, or that he does not have a good point. Nor is he necessarily wrong – if we look at the evolving tragedy as a mathematical equation. Rather, the problem is, as Elinor Ostrom pointed out, that it leads to “panaceas”, to quick fixes that are applied universally, in situations where they do not fit. Then we end up using “hammers to paint the floor”, which was the metaphor used in a paper I published in Marine Policy

some years ago with a group of Danish and US colleagues.

The irony is that these fixes were in fact what Hardin warned against, but that tends to go under the radar of those who cite him. Everyone remembers what he said about “the freedom in the commons” that “brings ruin to all”. But what he really argued was that there are some societal problems that do not have scientific or technical solutions, because they challenge our morality and ethics. Poverty is one of them. These are problems that Rittel and Webber called “wicked problems” in a famous article that came out in 1973,

**Small-scale fishers and fishworkers, therefore, need assistance to free themselves from their dismal predicament...**

five years after Garrett Hardin’s article. Also Rittel and Webber used poverty as an example of what they were talking about.

I think it would be prudent first to check if small-scale fisheries are always synonymous with poverty, if it is really true that small-scale fisheries are necessarily an occupation of last resort and never a preferred occupation. Wouldn’t it be wise, before one clamps down on them, to explore empirically how big a threat on marine resources and ecosystems small-scale fisheries really are? Is it really true that small-scale fishing people are deemed to live in poverty at the margins of society, as Hardin would presumably predict? What is interesting and important, is that all those 150-plus states that endorsed the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale

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Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (the SSF Guidelines) do not seem to believe that this is the case, if we should take their word for it.

We should, of course, make no mistake about it: small-scale fisheries are indeed ridden with problems like poverty, marginalization, insecure tenure rights, and powerlessness, which are all at the centre of the SSF Guidelines. But they also have

### Self-governance capacities and capabilities in small-scale fisheries locally can be built systematically over time

opportunities and potentials waiting for enabling policies, good governance and collective action. Then we need first to get rid of those images and metaphors that are limiting our ideas of what the problems and solutions are, and which are legitimizing policies that are blind to context. Why not then start with exploring how people in small-scale fisheries themselves understand their predicament, how they cope with the problems they experience, and how they pursue the opportunities as they see them? How do they deal with the challenge of living poorly in an environment which they themselves risk ruining if they do not think hard on how to avoid it? We should not assume that people are sitting idle because they are poor, or that they are poor because they are idle.

These are exactly the questions that we set out to investigate back in 2008 when starting the PovFish project, which, among other things, led to the book *Poverty Mosaics: Realities and Prospects in Small-Scale Fisheries*, published by Springer in 2011. The book contains case studies of small-scale fisheries around the world, and provides a nuanced picture of the diverse situations that people in this industry find themselves in. Small-scale fisheries are not the same globally; they exist in circumstances, also politically, which differ a lot. Poverty also involves a lot of things,

and means different things to different people. That is why we used the term “poverty mosaics”. The idea that there is one simple remedy to their problems is flawed.

Policies, and the governing mechanisms that they generate, must be as nuanced, diverse, adapted, and dynamic as small-scale fisheries are. This, we argue, requires governance according to the “dexterity principle”, that is, attention to details, and governance by your fingers rather than your thumbs. Such governance requires knowledge of particularities, of context, but also governance that is inclusive, interactive, and co-operative. No one knows their context better than those who live in it. No one has the local ecological and social knowledge that you need to have to govern well, like those who live with the problems and opportunities that exist.

There is obviously need for supportive infrastructure, like legal frameworks and macroeconomic policies. But there are limits to how governable small-scale fisheries are from a distance. Rather, governance of small-scale fisheries should follow the ‘subsidiarity principle’: what can be governed locally, should also be governed locally. The fact that the organizational capacity for self-governance on that level is often poor, does not suggest that they can never be governed there. Self-governance capacities and capabilities in small-scale fisheries locally can be built systematically over time. This has happened in numerous instances around the world, with mixed success, one may add, as the Poverty Mosaics book and subsequent publications also show.

### Collective action

Such capacities and capabilities require organizations whose building and functioning are a matter of collective learning and action. Theories of collective action suggest that communities need a push sometimes; they need help, as there is often lack of resources and a tendency of free riding, as Mancur Olson pointed out in his famous book about collective action. Particularly, in the initial

stage of collective action, civil society organizations and (local) government can play an important role. Building organizations – co-operatives, for instance – is bound to be a trial-and-error affair, because they need to be adapted to a dynamic context and cannot be imposed from afar, which is a reason why they failed in many instances.

I believe that academics have a contribution to make to collective learning – in this case, about collective action in small-scale fisheries. Our Poverty Mosaics book is just one of many efforts that have been made to bring the discourse about small-scale fisheries up from the level of simplistic metaphors and quick fixes, and into thick description and interactive governance that is nuanced and contextually embedded.

Most of all, I think academics can help reduce the tendency of ‘spurious learning’, where metaphors often make us jump to conclusions. When resources are overfished and marine ecosystem are eroded, it may well be for the reasons that Garrett Harding described, but it may also have other causes. We cannot know what actually happened before we have looked closely into the situation.

When co-operatives fail to live up to expectations, it may also be for other reasons than that they are co-operatives. Enterprises that are built on private business models fail too, and co-operatives can stumble for the same reasons that they do, like poor management. But co-operatives are, no doubt, complex organizations because they are meant to serve a broad range of functions in addition to business. Firms that operate from a narrow profit model, have it easier than co-operatives that also take responsibility for the wellbeing of members and communities.

Co-management, which is another form of organized collective action, has met some of the same criticisms that co-operatives have. People refer to examples they know or have heard of, where co-management flopped. They think that co-management is the essential reason and not how it was actually done. In an article in SAMUDRA



Fishers getting ready for a fishing trip in Kerala, India. Policies, and the governing mechanisms that the governments generate, must be as nuanced, diverse, adapted, and dynamic as SSF are

Report, titled “The Devil is in the Detail”, I argued that co-management fails when their particular designs are flawed relative to the context and demands. To avoid spurious learning, one should, therefore, in accordance with the dexterity principle, first check the design details and the context before concluding that co-management cannot work.

But if the devil is in the details, where is god? God, I argue, is in the principles, like in the classic Rochdale principles for co-operatives from 1844. If you check them out, you will see that they read very much like the guiding principles in the SSF Guidelines, and they work equally as well for fisheries co-operatives as for fisheries co-management.

If we are to collectively address the dilemmas that poverty alleviation involves, and which Hardin, Rittel and Webber talked about, we need these principles because they have intrinsic value: they are ethical and moral. The principles stand firm regardless of the examples that critics may have up their sleeves of unsuccessful co-operatives and co-management as a proof that co-management and co-operatives are bound to fail. In other words, in poverty alleviation through collective action, one should be flexible and adaptive on organizational design—by learning from mistakes as well as successes; but, on the principles, one should stay firm. 3

#### For more



<https://maritimestudiesjournal.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s40152-014-0016-3>

**Walking the talk: implementing the international voluntary guidelines for securing sustainable small-scale fisheries**

<https://www.springer.com/in/book/9783319550732>

**The Small-Scale Fisheries Guidelines: Global Implementation**

<https://www.springer.com/in/book/9789400715813>

**Poverty Mosaics: Realities and Prospects in Small-Scale Fisheries**

<https://igssf.icsf.net/en/page/1069-SSF%20Guidelines%20Translation.html>  
**SSF Guidelines Translated**

[https://igssf.icsf.net/en/page/1067-SSF%20Guidelines%20\(Summary\).html](https://igssf.icsf.net/en/page/1067-SSF%20Guidelines%20(Summary).html)  
**ICSF's Summary of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries in the context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication**



# Eight Shells

The voices of the women of the sea were heard loud and clear at a learning exchange aimed at strengthening the capacities of fisherwomen in the backdrop of the SSF Guidelines

**W**omen from marine fishing communities of Barbados, St Kitts, Grenada, and Belize visited Tárcoles and Chomes in Puntarenas and the Caribbean coast of Costa Rica as part of a women's learning exchange aimed at strengthening the capacities of fisherwomen in the backdrop of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (the SSF Guidelines). Supported by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the programme had significant learning elements from the social, economic, cultural and organizational aspects present in artisanal fishing as well as about personal, economic and political/organizational empowerment.

The exchange programme had multiple objectives. The first was

on gender and equity. The exchange also hoped to generate a process of application of learning so that innovative ideas that emerged could be put into practice in their respective countries. An important objective was to develop creative visual materials on gender and governance that could contribute to the implementation of the SSF Guidelines. The last objective was to demonstrate the benefits of a properly planned learning exchange.

## Experience One: CoopeTárcoles R.L (Fishers Cooperative of Tárcoles) and Consorcio Por La Mar R.L.

In the first experience, the visitors learned about the management of CoopeTárcoles R.L, its collection centre, the experience of traceability and the sale of fish. The methodology included interactions with key people in the organization, guided tours and rural community tourism. After the analysis of the experience, a space was opened to deepen empowerment of women. This is one of the first steps to strengthen self-esteem, break out of invisibility and assert rights in everyday life and at work as fisherwomen.

Leadership, respect, and perseverance are three words constituting the heart of empowerment. Traditional knowledge is linked to the empowerment and identity of fisherwomen, their rights, and necessity for alliances to strengthen the sector. The unity of the group is important. Associated words are consciousness, power, unity, respect, recognition of strengths, and greatness. Other related words are thought, knowledge, rights, model of inspiration, process and support.

Three kinds of empowerment could be recognized. While personal

**Traditional knowledge is linked to the empowerment and identity of fisherwomen...**

to acquire an understanding of the experiences of three coastal marine communities in the Pacific and Caribbean regions of Costa Rica. This was by showing good practices of integrated management of fishery resources to provide women in the Caribbean with opportunities to incorporate ideas and innovations into their projects and contexts.

The second was to promote a process of reflection-action to generate lessons learned that contribute to the programmes, projects and policies of small-scale fisheries, with a focus

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empowerment is linked to the recognition of work, opportunities, belief in themselves and self-esteem, organizational empowerment was about taking into account what each woman wants. Thus, listening to each other to make decisions, horizontal leadership and sorority were important constituents. Economic empowerment was about having fair and equitable access to economic resources. In the case of Tárcoles, income is divided into three parts: boat owner, captain, and the person fishing. "Lujadoras" are part of the guided tours and have an economic payment. They depend on the use of fishing gears.

### **Experience Two: CoopeMolusChomes R.L (Mollusc Fisherwomen Co-operative of Chomes)**

This co-operative has achieved a major milestone in obtaining approval of a Mollusc Sustainable Management Plan, achieved through a participatory organizational effort. On arrival at Chomes, the participants were received with a folk dance that conveyed the culture, knowledge, joy and history of the place, with dancers wearing costumes used for working in mangroves many years ago. Many dancers in the group and the director are sons and daughters of the women of the mangroves, who are members of the CoopeMolusChomes R.L.

The next day was a guided tour of the mangrove swamps. The Chomes women explained their work in four stations.

In the first station, they described the process of mollusc extraction in the mangroves, including the mangrove species and the molluscs they harvest as well the dangers they face in their tasks. They also explained in detail the participatory research that has given rise to the Mollusc Sustainable Management Plan and the negotiation process with different actors.

In the second station, they shared the obstacles they faced in order to carry out their activities. A major problem was the presence of an aquaculture shrimp company that does not comply with stipulations and regulations. This affects the women and the health of the mangroves.

The process of mangrove reforestation and the traditional knowledge of women were discussed in the third stage. Each participant of the learning exchange planted a mangrove seedling. In the last stage, an entrepreneurship initiative and the value it added were visited.

Discussions included various obstacles faced by the local women, including obtaining electricity connections to run their small businesses. As a mark of solidarity, the visiting women decided to write a letter of support for the women of the Chomes co-operative to be presented to the national authorities.

### **Experience Three: Co-management in Cahuita National Park**

In the third experience, the visitors learned about the experiences and history in the co-management of the resources of a National Park where its inhabitants were always present despite the obstacles they faced.

Edwin Cyrus, Director of the Conservation Area ACLAC, said the government had to listen to the inhabitants and learn from them, their traditional knowledge, their culture and their ways to co-manage the park. "This area was declared a National Park, without the consultation of the inhabitants and without taking into account their interests. These people make decisions without consultation, such as charging for entry, and the community was very upset. Most of the park is in the sea. Leaders said that tourists should not pay to enter. Subsequently, they moved into a shared management. The government realized that the inhabitants were organized and now they ask tourists to make a voluntary contribution. The idea is that there are benefits for women as well."

It took many years of dialogue and effort to move towards community leadership and participation. Women benefit from economic initiatives generated around tourism. There are women in power and decision-making positions in the Association of Fishers of Cahuita. There must be greater recognition and motivation for women, especially young women, to integrate

into the value chain. There is still a need to redouble efforts to fight against climate change, and the search for adaptation measures to erosion that the territory is suffering, as well as the warming in seawaters that affects the coral reefs. Women seemed more affected because they have the responsibility for the food security of their children.

As for the Ambassadors of the Sea, they recognized the experience of young people who are entering diving practices and learning opportunities offered by the Diving School, in addition to other activities such as cleaning the seabed and recognition of the sea's riches.

### **Perceptions, feelings and keywords of women in the learning exchange**

Women said that this experience was marked by, Unity: The importance of family unity for conservation, as well as cultural identity because people come from different cultures, countries, nationalities; Co-operation: All people working together; Orientation: There is a vision and line of work from historical figures, which have rescued community values and traditions from

young people and said they required opportunities for development.

Women had a lot to say about governance. They said that dialogue between government and civil society is important and advantage must be taken of positive leadership such as the Director of the Area, but with the support of the citizens. Local efforts can transform national policies and so lessons learned should be taken to the level of state powers: legislative, executive, judicial and comptroller's office. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that facilitate processes must build bridges between civil society and institutions to produce changes. It was also important to know about international treaties and agreements, among others.

They understood the SSF Guidelines as a commitment to resume issues of governance, gender, and organization of the groups of fishers. In Costa Rica, there is an executive decree that has transformed the Guidelines from being voluntary to becoming obligatory, with the participation of different institutions. They then worked on a law, where civil society would give them the elements to advance towards their interests and needs. The process worked because they worked hand-in-hand with the fishers. While there are many challenges with respect to gender in fisheries, they would like the Caribbean to be an example from a holistic perspective.

Although there are differences between the Pacific and Caribbean coasts, the SSF Guidelines constitute a meeting point for both. The common challenges are women's empowerment, support from strategic alliances, changes in power relations between men and women, marine responsible fishing areas and economic, social, cultural and environmental opportunities to improve the quality of life of its inhabitants.

### **Lessons learned**

People learn from practice and experience. Learning is a dynamic and reciprocal process, where meaning is given to experiences and these findings are added to our knowledge repository. Therefore, a lesson learned is evidence

**There is still a need to redouble efforts to fight against climate change...**

the point of view of social, cultural and natural resource management; Pride: The pride in what they have and what is important. The pride in being black; Joy: In every place where they went, there was joy; and Music: Music is part of the culture. Music means more than just dancing. It is learning from people and traditions.

Women expressed their concern about climate change. As heads of households, they were concerned about sedimentation, which is part of climate-change impacts, and pollution and its impact on food security. They saw the need to be more aware of what was used and consumed. They saw youth being models to other



Learning visit to the Cahuita Co-managed National Park in Costa Rica. Women from marine fishing communities of Barbados, St Kitts, Grenada, and Belize visited Tárcoles and Chomes in Puntarenas and the Caribbean coast of Costa Rica as part of a women's learning exchange

that allows us to generate trends from a model of social, economic, political and environmental development, with the idea of multiplying and generating changes, in this case in favour of women and equality.

A number of important lessons were learnt from this exchange programme. The role of women is essential in artisanal fisheries and hence it is necessary to generate support policies. The identity of Caribbean women as women of strength, empowerment and leadership needs to be strengthened with the motto "Change starts with me and we continue to work together." It is important to activate personal and collective will.


Perseverance, personal and collective will, and teamwork are essential to achieve goals. Communities, civil society and government need to work together to achieve goals. Perseverance is important to enhance change and it is through education that you can reach young people. It is determining the teamwork and the construction and reproduction of a development model that identifies women in fisheries. As

empowered leaders, that knowledge and attitudes must be multiplied with other women in fishing communities and along the value chain. "Sorority" is a keyword that people must put into practice in all women's empowerment processes – sorority, because it can be seen how the voices of the eight women joined to become one.

Empowering other women to walk together by opening spaces to advance the implementation of our human rights and empowering women to make decisions on different issues is fundamental. Alliances with other women's organizations and governments need to be made and optimal environments have to be created for enabling implementation of women's ideas. Non-interventionist accompaniment in organizations is important.

Another lesson is about a holistic approach to the issue of climate change; from prevention to adaptation (MEANING?). Co-management is a shared decision-making possibility that helps to set up opportunities for social, environmental and economic improvement in the lives of fishermen







## Caribbean Small-Scale Fisherwoman Learning Exchange in Costa Rica: Women's Voices

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### INTRODUCTION



The Small Scale Fisherwoman Learning Exchange, strengthened the capacities of Fisherwomen from several Caribbean countries as well as their Costa Rican hosts and counterparts. The Caribbean women, selected by the Caribbean Network of Fisheries Organizations (CNFO) learned from experiences in Costa Rica, while contributing their knowledge on Caribbean artisanal fishery value chains. The women were from the fishery sectors in Barbados, St. Kitts and Nevis, Grenada and Belize. They shared experiences with the women from Tortugas Fishing Cooperative and Chomes Molinos Cooperative. They visited Comarca Por La Mar, and had a closer look at the co-management process of Cahuala National Park and the South Caribbean Diving Center: Embajadores del Mar.

This knowledge exchange sought to build links and shared experiences among women from fishing communities from personal, economic and political/organizational empowerment perspectives, strengthening bridges among islands of the Caribbean and Costa Rica.

### EXPECTATIONS

"Coming and sharing my knowledge and experience and to learn about the different islands and the culture and tradition of Costa Rica as related to their fishery and fisher women. Their daily activities and fishery history passed on from generation to generation."

"Come expecting to share our experiences, especially when they ask us to create an invitation plan prior to coming here. I especially liked that they gave us homework before arriving as they get us to start to think even before coming here. Making my plan at home felt easy but here I saw and felt the struggle the hard work it takes to achieve the goal."

"Come expecting to share what we do and hear what they do. Also expected some practical experience."

"Come expecting to learn a lot from the other women. This is the first time I came out and I had a great experience about it. I love learning."

"Hope that the Triangular South - South Cooperation, between Costa Rica, the Caribbean and FAO, will be effective, so that they can contribute and learn from their experiences in order to encourage more women to participate in fishing organizations that promote this important work."

### WERE EXPECTATIONS MET?




"The whole fisherwoman exchange was efficient, effective, and informative. It was met."

"Expectation was met up to a point, as I was expecting more practical experience"

"It was fulfilling and went beyond all initial expectations"

### APPROACH



The exchange was designed using a participatory approach privileging a horizontal transmission of knowledge. There were significant learning elements from the social, economic, cultural and organizational aspects present in artisanal fishing in Costa Rica, with special emphasis on women. In turn, they received the perceptions, recommendations and learnings from the Caribbean women who visited them. All this fed into their Innovation Plan.

The discussions and learnings was captured on canvas by a Costa Rican artist who was part of the exchange.

### WOMEN REFLECT ON THE APPROACH

- The arrangements for learning throughout the exchange was good & effective. Methods used cater to different periods of time. Learn more.
- Appreciate the reflection times to discuss what was learned.
- The environment for each particular visit were well suited.
- The shared information and pictures of sites to be visited permitted them to be familiarized with the area prior to arrival.
- Being among the community, facing the women struggle and even their emotion is a completely different learning and appreciation process.
- All the women brought something to the table and were open to share knowledge and experiences.
- Site visit helped to learn a lot, "I saw different things from my own country and it was a sight to behold."
- The agenda for the last day was too packed. It was challenging to keep up.
- Some of the visits could have been more interactive, as expected to just be listening.

### NEXT STEPS

"Put information together in a report and present it to the association and to the fishermen coop. Organize the women community group. Have a meeting with them and through meetings pass on the experiences and the knowledge I gain here."

"Report back to the CNFO team and to the CNFO and also help create a women in fisheries network"

"Increase CNFO work on gender to increase the presence of women representation and women leaders within their country and organization's activities"

"Participate more and more actively in activities that address fisheries issues"

"Used what I have learned for personal growth and to assist the fisherwoman and women in the community as it relates to SSF"

### LESSONS LEARNED



- Role of women in artisanal fisheries is essential throughout the SSF guideline implementation process. It's necessary to generate support policies.
- It is necessary to strengthen the identity of Caribbean women as women of strength, empowerment and leadership.
- To achieve goals, it is important to have perseverance, and personal and collective will. To this, we add teamwork, where we all work towards the same direction: communities, civil society and government.
- Ensure that traditional knowledge of fishers is recognized.
- Rescue cultural traditions in fishing to help strengthen the identity and roots of our people, as well as their commitment to the restoration of a country and an activity such as responsible fishing, including the contributions of women and young people.
- Change is a beginning of work among women working together. Start working towards a better relationship between fisherwomen. The change begins with me.
- Do not let yourself be defeated... use all you can to grow as a woman. Take the strengths of other women, make them yours and share.



Learning exchange captured on canvas

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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- FAO - especially to Susana Sor and Daniela Kikielko
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- CoopesMolinos
- CoopesMolinosChomes
- Cahuala National Park
- South Caribbean Diving Center: Embajadores del Mar

relationship between fisherwomen, with the change beginning with oneself.

Women in fisheries can support one another through networking and empowering one another. One may stop, scream and cry but rather than allow defeat to take over, one must use all one can, including strengths of other women, to grow. Empowerment and leadership training spaces with, and for, women must be provided on the coast.

and fisherwomen and from the value chain. Co-management works if given a chance to succeed.

### Traditional knowledge

Recognition of traditional knowledge of fishers must be ensured. There is a need to rescue cultural traditions in fishing to help strengthen the identity and roots of the fishing communities, as well as their commitment to the restoration of a country and an activity such as responsible fishing, including the contributions of women and young people.

There is hope and motivation that change will come soon, especially when women start working together. There is a need to start working towards a better

### For more

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EK1B\\_dE4eHE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EK1B_dE4eHE)

**Film: Fortalecimiento de peladoras de camarón, Costa Rica**

<https://coopesolidar.org/CoopeSoliDar>

<https://www.icsf.net/en/samudra/detail/EN/3618.html?>

**The Sea Gives Us Everything**

<https://www.icsf.net/en/samudra/detail/EN/3745.html?>

**Giving Back to the Sea**

<https://www.icsf.net/en/samudra/detail/EN/4194.html?>

**Costa Rica / SSF Guidelines: Sailing from a Good Port**

# Being Ready

**A Fisheries and Aquaculture Response to Emergency (FARE) training, along with a Training of Trainers course, was held recently in St Georges, Grenada**

**2**017 is considered the most costly hurricane year on record. During its hurricane season, decades of development gains in some small islands in the Caribbean were eradicated. Beginning on 8 September 2017, Hurricane Irma tore through the Caribbean, bringing destruction and devastation. As communities were assessing the damage and loss and just starting the rebuilding process, Hurricane Maria made landfall as a Category 5 hurricane, bringing further destruction and devastation. Both hurricanes Irma and Maria registered as some of the most powerful hurricanes in recorded history, with maximum sustained winds of 125 mph. Amongst the most affected nations were Dominica, Antigua and Barbuda, and Saint Kitts and Nevis. The fisheries sectors of these countries were severely damaged. In Dominica, Hurricane Maria affected the basic livelihoods of approximately 2,200 fishers and fishworkers, including market vendors, gutters, mechanics and boat builders.

It is against this background that the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) organized, under the Global Environment Facility (GEF)-funded Climate Change Adaptation of the Eastern Caribbean Fisheries Sector Project (CC4FISH), a Fisheries and Aquaculture Response to Emergency (FARE) training along with a Training of Trainers course in St Georges, Grenada during 17-22 September 2018. The first three days were designed to improve the quality of the response to emergencies in fisheries and aquaculture and were run by the Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies of the University of the West Indies (CERMES) and the Grenada Red Cross Society. It was followed by three

days of sessions run by FAO consultants focusing on practical training exercises and planning for becoming a FARE Trainer who would be able to bring the training back to the countries of the participants, that is, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and St Vincent and the Grenadines.

The trainees included both fisheries officers and disaster risk management personnel. Building bridges between different government agencies will enhance the quality and accountability of preparedness and response for the fisheries sector,

**...fisheries and aquaculture are often not well captured in damage and needs assessments**

which is also the objective of the FARE training. Due to the complexity of the fisheries and aquaculture sector and the lack of baseline data, fisheries and aquaculture are often not well captured in damage and needs assessments. Unless recognition and resources are given to include the fisheries and aquaculture sectors explicitly in post-disaster assessments, and in disaster-preparedness strategies, it is unlikely that the complexity of the sector will be dealt with in relief, rehabilitation and overall resilience work. An important lesson in the Caribbean region is that (baseline) data about fisheries and aquaculture need to be collected systematically where these are lacking and that existing data should be improved.

In spite of good intentions, best practices in fisheries and aquaculture

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are often forgotten in the post-disaster rush to provide immediate relief and to replace lost physical assets. A major threat from poorly-planned emergency responses is, for example, the delivery of poorly built and unsafe boats produced in an attempt to respond rapidly to the disaster. This poses a threat to the safety of fishers as well as to the economic usefulness of the boats. Rehabilitation efforts should take a holistic and integrated approach and include activities and livelihood support along the whole value chain. What is the point of a boat without gear? What is the point of fishing with no means of conserving or transporting the fish? Fishing gear or boats or ice-makers on their own will have little overall effect on the rehabilitation and resilience of the sector. It is also necessary to look into the needs of different actors along the value chain, considering the roles of both men and women.

Although it is difficult to see any positive side of a disaster, and the challenges are considerable, an emergency situation presents an opportunity to review and improve

fishing operations and management. For example, the replacement of fishing equipment after a disaster can be used to redirect fishing effort away from destructive practices. Fishers are often aware of this possibility but do not have the means or experience to make a change without assistance. Emergencies, if responded to in an effective way, can thus provide a significant opportunity for enabling communities and countries to build back better.

In line with national and regional fisheries and aquaculture policies, the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (the SSF Guidelines) and related instruments, the FARE training course aims to support the safeguarding of fisheries and aquaculture livelihoods by facilitating the identification of the most appropriate emergency interventions. The training also includes discussions on good practices and related key indicators, and provides

IMA INTERNATIONAL



Participants at the training course. The FARE training promotes a disaster response that adheres to humanitarian and fisheries and aquaculture principles such as engagement with the affected population, inclusion of vulnerable groups and gender mainstreaming



FAO/IRIS MONNEREAU



Hurricane Maria's damage in Scott's head, Dominica. In Dominica, hurricane Maria affected the basic livelihoods of approximately 2,200 fishers and fishworkers. The container is the fishing cooperative which was destroyed as a result of the hurricane

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guidance on practical difficulties or benchmarks. In addition, the FARE training promotes a disaster response that adheres to humanitarian and fisheries and aquaculture principles such as engagement with the affected population, inclusion of vulnerable groups and gender mainstreaming.

The FARE training builds on the Fisheries and Aquaculture Emergency Response Guidance and the Guidelines for the Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector on Damage and Needs Assessments in Emergencies. These guidelines draw on good practices and experiences from natural and man-made fisheries and aquaculture disasters to help those responding to new emergencies to improve the quality of the design, implementation and assessment of interventions, including establishing pre-emergency baseline assessments and conducting post-emergency damage and needs assessment.

The newly trained disaster risk management (DRM) and fishery officers are now equipped to bring the three-day FARE course to their home countries. In preparation for the next hurricane season, CC4FISH will provide further assistance to collect

the baseline data, replicate the course for other Caribbean countries and tailor good practice examples for the region.

#### For more



<http://www.fao.org/policy-support/policy-themes/disaster-risk-reduction-agriculture/en/>

#### **FAO work on disaster risk reduction (DRR)**

<https://www.icsf.net/en/samudra/article/EN/78-4326-Mortal-Embrace.html>

#### **Puerto Rico / Hurricane María: Mortal Embrace**

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/sep/21/caribbean-islands-hurricane-irma-maria-puerto-rico>

#### **How the Caribbean islands are coping after hurricanes Irma and Maria**



# Fishing for the Future

**A World Bank-funded project for 12 countries in the East African and Indian Ocean regions attempts to allow fishers to maximize revenue but not deplete stocks**

**Q** : Good morning. Could you tell us about the SWIOFish1 project and how it would help fishers and coastal communities in your region?

A: Thank you for giving me this opportunity to interact on this SWIOFish1 project. This is a World Bank-funded project destined for 12 countries in the East African and Indian Ocean regions (with the exception of Yemen and Somalia). These countries are part of the South West Indian Ocean (SWIO) Fisheries Commission. There was an outgoing World Bank initiative called the South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Project – the SWIOFP project – which was phased out. The countries belonging to the SWIOFP area made a plea to the World Bank to ensure sustainability of the project. That was how this new project came

now becoming the fundamental paradigm, fishers are at the core of development efforts.

The regional project sets out minimum terms and conditions for all foreign fishing vessels who take licences from the respective countries to fish in their national EEZs and the high seas. The conditions must be uniform for the region. The maximum potential catch in each country's waters will determine the financial contribution which the countries will pay besides the licence fees. We want to harmonise the licence fees across the board per tonnage and not on stock size or potential. The countries are toying with the idea of a common front in terms of setting up a South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Framework Agreement.

**Q: How are these agreements different in impact from the EU-Mauritania Agreement, for example, in terms of local development?**

A: The fisheries framework agreement which those countries want to put in place will be an entity that will negotiate on their behalf, as in the case of the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (PFFA). The situation, however, is different. In the Pacific, 90 per cent of the catch is from the EEZ and 10 per cent from the high seas, whereas in the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) area, where these 12 countries operate, the distribution is 50-60 per cent from the EEZ and around 40-50 per cent from the high seas. So a configuration is being built up to have a centralized unit to negotiate with the distant-water fleet to fish in their EEZs.

In the present fisheries partnership agreement, there are plenty of infrastructure elements in place as a result of the fisheries sector support policy. The new agreement will allow these countries to negotiate with the

**...these traditional communities are among the poorest in each country of the region...**

into operation in 2015. It is called the First South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Governance and Shared Growth Project.

This is a very diverse region where most of the fishers – operating very close to the shore – earn their living from the exploitation of marine resources up to 12 nautical miles from the shoreline, and beyond. But these traditional communities are among the poorest in each country of the region. You also have the five Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) island states which command a large exclusive economic zone (EEZ). With the Blue Economy

*This interview with Daroomalingum Mauree (d.mauree@coi-ioc.org), Regional Project Co-ordinator, SWIOFish1, Commission of the Indian Ocean, Mauritius, was conducted by N Venugopalan and Manas Roshan of ICSF (icsf@icsf.net). The interview took place on the sidelines of the Second Regional Workshop on Monitoring, Control and Surveillance, organized by the Bay of Bengal Programme, Inter-Governmental Organisation in Chennai during 3 - 4 October 2018. The transcript was prepared by Mythili D. K. (mythilidk@arm-c.com)*

European Union (EU) for licences, which binds them to ensure transparency and monitoring. The project has also got a relationship with IOTC which meets annually, where the countries are exposed to a series of proposals tabled by individual member countries.

We have been working on a commonality of interest and ideas before putting up proposals at the IOTC meeting to ensure that the project works in the interests and needs of the region and its industry and the fisher community. There are several mechanisms already in place – the South African Development Community (SADC), the Indian Ocean Commission, the IOTC, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Eastern and Southern African Economic Partnership Agreement. We try to avoid duplication of projects and wastage of resources. We will soon set up a regional monitoring control surveillance co-operation centre in Mozambique to which all the countries will be invited to participate.

Tracking down and fighting illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing is important in exporting your products. The issue of subsidies is also very important. Each country under the SWIOFC umbrella is entitled to take either a loan or a grant from the World Bank. Only two countries – Mauritius and Seychelles – have to repay the loan because of their gross domestic product (GDP) levels, unlike, say, the Comoros, Tanzania, Madagascar, Mozambique and Maldives.

The countries of the region are bound to integrate the needs of the fisher community into the spheres of development and at the same time, increase the participation of women in fisheries. They also need to train their fisher community in new fishing techniques. The project will also seek to enhance proper recording of statistical data using electronic media like mobile phones.

**Q: How does this project synergise with the projects on the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (the SSF Guidelines) happening in the same countries?**

A: All projects that are being implemented at the national level – whether it is boatbuilding, security-at-sea measures, gear development, preservation of fish products, avoiding wastage, and developing landing infrastructure – must indirectly have a relationship and correlation with the SSF Guidelines. And they are approved only after widespread discussion and gap analyses.

Let me give you a concrete example now. In Mauritius, we have an island called Rodrigues. It's a dependency of Mauritius. This island witnessed massive destruction and overfishing of the octopus fishery, leading to the closure of the fishery. Management measures were put in place and fishing effort diverted to other alternative job opportunities. And finally, after a two-year closure, the stocks were rehabilitated. And now Zanzibar is following suit through the network.

A similar project is taking place in Madagascar, which has a very long coastline that makes it difficult

### **The project will also seek to enhance proper recording of statistical data...**

to regulate fisheries management measures. The ongoing project attempts to mark boats in the crab fishery. The boat marking now will form the basis of identification and a starting point to determine the level of fishing effort. Thus, every project is tailored to the needs and requirements of each country.

In the case of the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing at the regional and national levels, with the introduction of monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) measures and vessel monitoring system (VMS), there is better policing of the waters. We should not think that only the distant-water fishing fleets and the big fleets are playing havoc in our waters. With improved technology and techniques, local vessels are also involved in IUU fishing. Through the

MCS network, we can now track the movements of all the licensed vessels and cross-check them against the database of the monitoring centre.

**Q: Once the external assistance of SWIOFish1 project gets over, what about the local capabilities of these governments to develop a national legislation and policies which support the development of the local fishing communities as well as coming together for developing action plans at the regional level?**

A: Within the national programme, SWIOFish will try to assist all countries to improve upon their national legislation for fisheries. Any country having problems to adhere to the 1995 Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries will be given the opportunity to contract out a consultant to come to their country and assist them. When SWIOFish1 ends in September 2021, SWIOFish2 is waiting on the sidelines. SWIOFish2 will give the fishers an

**With improved technology and techniques, local vessels are also involved in IUU fishing**

opportunity to attend international meetings, meet with the fishers community, articulate the voices of the fishers at inter-sessional discussions so that the project meets their needs.

Eight countries will benefit from SWIOFish2. They are all island states, namely, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritius, Seychelles, Comoros and Madagascar, which will bear the brunt of climate change and erosion – all small islands. We have to make the member countries realize that they cannot depend eternally on foreign technical assistance. There is a need to create a trust fund to show their commitment, a fund that will drive the process of sustainable development of their fisheries.

There is a great possibility that funds will come from the Dr. Fridtjof Nansen Programme to sustain the research work that is needed for all the 12 countries. There is an ongoing

project of the Swedish Development International Agency (SIDA). We are presently also working on a SWIOFC–Nairobi Convention joint probe document, particularly targeted at artisanal fishers.

**Q: For all the 12 countries?**

A: For all the 12 countries, yes. We want to understand what are likely to be the impacts of the fisheries management measures on shrimp, crab and demersal fisheries, as well as their impacts on the marine ecosystem in terms of overexploitation, climate change, and pollution. In the Cotonou Agreement with the EU, all the African, Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP) countries will benefit from financial assistance for the development of their respective sectors. Aid will also come from the European Development Fund, which can be used for MCS activities.

**Q: How is the revenue obtained from distant-water fishing nations for accessing your EEZ used?**

A: These fees are paid into the treasury of the Ministry of Fisheries and directed into the central treasury of each country. The fisheries partnership agreements have two elements – one is the fisheries sector support policy, the other is the financial contribution of the EU. Besides that, is the fishing licence fee, which goes directly into the treasury. The fisheries support sector policy element goes to the central treasury but must be credited into the account of the Ministry of Fisheries for implementation of the project.

**Q: Your project is focusing on governance, trade and MCS and you have done some support work in the crab fishery of Madagascar and in the sea cucumber fishery of Seychelles. How is the project trying to help the local fishing communities?**

A: The sea cucumber fishery is a very high-value fishery for the markets of China, South Korea and Japan. But there has been an overexploitation of stocks. The fishers communities, especially in Seychelles, have grouped together into an organization to ensure the manageability of sea cucumber stocks at a sustainable level. Limits have been imposed on the fishing season and the number of dives to extract the sea cucumber. Initially, there was a lot of



What we are driving at through the SWIOFish project is that these fisheries must only be developed at a sustainable level, and they must be controlled to allow fishers to maximize revenue but not deplete the stocks

resistance to the strategy to cut down the fishing effort. But now, through training and discussions, the stocks are recovering.

Take the octopus fishery of Rodrigues. Whenever there is a closed season, the Rodriguan administration tries to give the fishers alternative jobs – like cleaning backyards and streets, scavenging work, or any other paid work. The seasonal closure helps reduce undue pressure on the stock and allows for recovery. The result – fatter octopus at the end of the closure.

What we are driving at through the SWIOFish project is that these fisheries must only be developed at a sustainable level, and they must be controlled to allow fishers to maximize revenue but not deplete the stocks. Most of the project has got this synergy. In Mauritius there is a limited entry in place identical to a quota allocation mechanism whereby those who cannot use their quota during a given year can have them redistributed to performing vessels to satisfy market requirements.

**Q: Could you say something more about the structure of how the quota is distributed among the communities?**

A: For the artisanal fishery, at this point in time, it is an open-access fishery. So there's no quota. The sea cucumber fishery in Seychelles and Mauritius is a very controlled fishery, with quotas allocated based on research of the stock potential, in an honest, fair

and reasonable manner. If this supply is interrupted, then we have to import fish. And we are importing a lot from India and the Far East because we don't have enough fish in Mauritius.

**Q: And the Mauritian octopus fishery has almost come back to sustainable resource levels?**

A: Yes, for Rodrigues it has come to the sustainable level. But not for Mauritius, which includes Rodrigues. 🐙

#### For more



<http://www.swiofishnz.go.tz/index.php>  
**SWIOFISH**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YwcEti6fVxQ&feature=youtu.be-->

**Film: Fisheries and Aquaculture in the SWIO Region: Best Practices and Lessons Learned**



## THE MALTA STATEMENT

### A common commitment for the future

High-level representatives from 18 Mediterranean and Black Sea countries as well as the European Union (EU) just signed in Malta a Ministerial Declaration aimed at implementing a Regional Plan of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea (RPOA-SSF). This declaration took shape at the end of a long process involving all stakeholders. It is a historic step for the region and a concrete commitment to ensure the long-term environmental, economic and social sustainability for small-scale fisheries within the next decade. This event took place within the framework of the High-level Conference on Sustainable Small-scale fisheries in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, organized during 25-26 September 2018. Approximately 240 participants from 30 countries gathered at the conference to discuss progress made in recent years and solutions to support the small-scale fisheries sector. Lively stakeholder discussions took place, and fishers and fisher organization actively participated in the debate on key topics such as the role of small-scale fishers in supporting scientific research, improving

small-scale fisher livelihoods and enhancing the value chain, promoting social development and decent work, supporting the role of women, co-management and strengthening the role of small-scale fisher organizations in monitoring, control and surveillance of small-scale fisheries.

The declaration was signed by Albania, Algeria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, France, Georgia, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Libya, Malta, Montenegro, Morocco, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey and the EU.

Source: <http://www.fao.org/gfcm/news/detail/en/c/1154586/>

#### FISH STOCKS

### New international deal protects Central Arctic Ocean's fish stocks

The signatories of a new treaty to prevent unregulated fishing in the Central Arctic

Ocean, a legally binding agreement, has been signed by Greenland, Canada, China, the European Union, the Faroe Islands, Iceland, Japan, Norway, Russian Federation, South Korea and the United States.

The treaty's goal is to protect the Central Arctic Ocean, where shrinking sea ice could draw in factory-fishing trawlers to plunder fish stocks. These waters include those off Nunavut's Ellesmere and Axel Heiberg islands. Inuit were part of Canada's negotiating team and they made sure their views were heard.

Source: [http://nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/65674new\\_international\\_deal\\_seals\\_protection\\_for\\_central\\_arctic\\_oceans\\_fish/](http://nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/65674new_international_deal_seals_protection_for_central_arctic_oceans_fish/)

#### DISASTER MANAGEMENT

### Indian people owe fishermen more than a few words

A WhatsApp post currently doing the rounds in Kerala, India comprises an image in which a fisherman wearing a red cape, oar in hand, stands near a boat on which rests a cut-out of the state. The accompanying message reads: "Hollywood has Spiderman, Batman, Ironman, but we

Keralites have all under one name – fishermen." Some may consider this post to be an exaggeration, considering that a vast number of people across various categories of society – including students, professionals and armed forces personnel – have been involved in the rescue operations for the worst flood to hit Kerala in a century. But these marine fishers are indeed the heroes of these operations. Navy officials, the press, people on social media, politicians across party lines and thousands of local residents who were rescued by them have commended their efficient and selfless service over the past few weeks, especially in the worst-flooded districts of Pathanamthitta, Alappuzha, Ernakulam and Thrissur. The involvement of fisherfolk in the rescue effort is remarkable considering the fact that they belong to the lower rungs of Kerala's socio-economic ladder, are often invisible to other residents of the state, and neglected by the government. Despite this, they mobilised swiftly and efficiently to join the rescue efforts – often at their own cost – and utilised their skills and equipment to help save thousands of lives. The citizens of Kerala owe them more than a few words of thanks and social media memes.

Source: <https://scroll.in/article/891482/kerala-floods-local-residents-owe-fishermen-more-than-a-few-words-of-thanks-and-social-media-memes>

## ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

### Operação Amazônia Nativa (OPAN)

The first indigenous rights organization founded in Brazil, in 1969, OPAN works to strengthen indigenous peoples, valuing their culture and their ways of social organization, by valuing the management practices of their territories and natural resources, with autonomy and in a sustainable manner. Over the years, OPAN has carried out work in the fields of education, politics, land rights, health and economy, through methodologies based on direct action, by socializing with the communities and through involvement in the daily life of the villages.

Currently, OPAN, together with indigenous groups of

the states of Mato Grosso and Amazonas in Brazil, supports the sustainable management of natural resources to generate income as a strategy to strengthen territorial management and protection. Among them is



the management of pirarucu (*Arapaima gigas*), a fish with ancestry of 200-250,000 years, which can grow to more than 2 m in length and a weight of more than 200 kg. As its management is now regulated

by a normative instruction of the Brazilian Institute for the Environment and Renewable Natural Resources (Ibama) and the government of Amazonas state, the pirarucu is no longer threatened in areas where groups of managers operate.

In communities where pirarucu is managed, community members monitor the lakes to prevent illegal fishing. They also count the pirarucus – using a method that was created from the scientific and popular knowledge of residents of the Mamirauá Sustainable Development Reserve (RDS) – to monitor fish stocks, and they implement a series of agreements to establish the plans for the activities of surveillance, fishing and then the commercialization of the fish, the latter being currently a major bottleneck of the activity.

The social mobilization and organization of management groups for the pirarucu have generated a series of other benefits besides income generation. With the territorial protection through community surveillance, the whole system is protected, allowing not only the recovery of pirarucu stocks, but also that of a number of species that use these environments, such as turtles, manatees, birds and other fish, apart from guaranteeing the integrity of the surrounding forest. The strengthening of the social groups involved in the management has led to improvements in the self-esteem of fishermen, the guaranteeing of traditional ways of life, the empowerment of women and the involvement of young people in activities.

– by Gustavo Silveira  
[www.amazonianativa.org.br](http://www.amazonianativa.org.br)

UNCL05

## Resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly on 24 December 2017

### 72/249. International legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction

The General Assembly,  
Guided by the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations,

Recalling its resolution 69/292 of 19 June 2015,

Taking note of the report of the Preparatory Committee established by General Assembly resolution 69/292: Development of an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, and the recommendations contained therein,

1. Decides to convene an intergovernmental conference, under the auspices of the United Nations, to consider the recommendations of the Preparatory Committee on the elements and to elaborate the text of an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, with a view to developing the instrument as soon as possible;
2. Also decides that negotiations shall address the topics identified in the package agreed in 2011, namely, the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, in particular, together and as a whole, marine genetic resources, including questions on the sharing of benefits, measures such as area-based management tools, including marine protected areas, environmental impact assessments and capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology;
3. Further decides that, initially with respect to 2018, 2019 and the first half of 2020, the conference shall meet for four sessions of a duration of 10 working days each, with the first session taking place in the

second half of 2018, the second and third sessions taking place in 2019, and the fourth session taking place in the first half of 2020, and requests the Secretary-General to convene the first session of the conference from 4 to 17 September 2018;

4. Decides that the conference shall hold a three-day organizational meeting in New York, from 16 to 18 April 2018, to discuss organizational matters, including the process for the preparation of the zero draft of the instrument;
5. Requests the President of the General Assembly to undertake consultations, in an open and transparent manner, for the nomination of a President-designate or co-Presidents-designate of the conference;
6. Reaffirms that the work and results of the conference should be fully consistent with the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea;
7. Recognizes that this process and its result should not undermine existing relevant legal instruments and frameworks and relevant global, regional and sectoral bodies;
8. Decides that the conference shall be open to all States Members of the United Nations, members of the specialized agencies and parties to the Convention;
9. Stresses the need to ensure the widest possible and effective participation in the conference;
10. Recognizes that neither participation in the negotiations nor their outcome may affect the legal status of non-parties to the Convention or any other related agreements with regard to those instruments, or the legal status of parties to the Convention or any other related agreements with regard to those instruments;
11. Decides that, for the meetings of the conference, the participation rights of the international organization that is a party to the Convention shall be

as in the Meeting of States Parties to the Convention and that this provision shall constitute no precedent for all meetings to which General Assembly resolution 65/276 of 3 May 2011 is applicable;

12. Also decides to invite to the conference representatives of organizations and other entities that have received a standing invitation from the General Assembly pursuant to its relevant resolutions to participate, in the capacity of observer, in its sessions and work, on the understanding that such representatives would participate in the conference in that capacity, and to invite, as observers to the conference, representatives of interested global and regional intergovernmental organizations and other interested international bodies that were invited to participate in relevant conferences and summits;
13. Further decides that attendance at the conference as observers will also be opened to relevant non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council in accordance with the provisions of Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996, as well as to those that were accredited to relevant conferences and summits, on the understanding that participation means attending formal meetings, unless otherwise decided by the conference in specific situations, receiving copies of the official documents, making available their materials to delegates and addressing the meetings, through a limited number of their representatives, as appropriate;
14. Decides to invite associate members of regional commissions to participate in the work of the conference in the capacity of observer;
15. Also decides to invite representatives of relevant specialized agencies, as well as other organs, organizations, funds and

programmes of the United Nations system as observers;

16. Further decides to forward the report of the Preparatory Committee to the conference;
17. Decides that the conference shall exhaust every effort in good faith to reach agreement on substantive matters by consensus;
18. Also decides that, except as provided for in paragraphs 17 and 19 of the present resolution, the rules relating to the procedure and the established practice of the General Assembly shall apply to the procedure of the conference unless otherwise agreed by the conference;
19. Further decides that, subject to paragraph 17, decisions of the conference on substantive matters shall be taken by a two-thirds majority of the representatives present and voting, before which, the presiding officer shall inform the conference that every effort to reach agreement by consensus has been exhausted;
20. Recalls its invitation to Member States, international financial institutions, donor agencies, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and natural and juridical persons to make financial contributions to the voluntary trust fund established in resolution 69/292, and authorizes the Secretary-General to expand the assistance provided by this trust fund to include daily subsistence allowance in addition to defraying the costs of economy-class travel, limiting requests for assistance from this trust fund to one delegate per State for each session;
21. Requests the Secretary-General to appoint a Secretary-General of the conference to serve as focal point within the Secretariat for providing support to the organization of the conference;

Source: <http://undocs.org/en/a/res/72/249>

## INFOLOG: NEW RESOURCES AT ICSF

ICSF's Documentation Centre (dc.icsf.net) has a range of information resources, which are regularly updated. A selection:

### Publications

**Sundar, Aparna. 2018. Skills for Work and the Work of Skills: Community, Labour and Technological Change in India's Artisanal Fisheries. Journal of South Asian Development, 13(3) 1–21pp.**

Artisanal cultures of work and skills transmission provide a useful point of contrast from which to think about the renewed interest in skills development as a formal, institutionalized process of training and certification for discrete and standardized skills.

**Svein Jentoft, Maarten Bavinck, Enrique Alonso-Población, Anna Child, Antonio Diegues, Daniela Kalikoski, John Kurien, Patrick McConney, Paul Onyango, Susana Siar, Vivienne Solis, 2018. Working together in small-scale fisheries: harnessing collective action for poverty eradication**

This paper builds on lessons learned from case studies of organization-building and collective action as a means of eradicating poverty in small-scale fisheries.

<https://link.springer.com>

**Percot, Marie. 2017. Migration as a risky gamble: Places and networks of departure to the Gulf of Bangladeshi fishermen. French Institute of Pondicherry, 76p.**

Taking into account the structural factors at play in Bangladesh and Oman, the study tries to explore the agency of the migrants, by highlighting their strategies or tactics at the moment they decide to go from Hatiya, a small island in the Bay of Bengal, from where most fishermen are going to Oman.

<https://www.researchgate.net/project/Migration-as-a-risky-gamble-Places-and-networks-of-departure-to-the-Gulf-of-Bangladeshi-fishermen>

**Gendering Change in Small-scale Fisheries and Fishing Communities in a Globalized World, Maritime Studies, Volume 17, Issue 2, October 2018**

This thematic collection, entitled (En)Gendering Change in Small-scale Fisheries and Fishing Communities in a Globalized World, emerged many years ago and finally materialized. In order to fulfill the idea, researchers from various disciplines and practitioners from different continents, working on women and gender issues in fisheries and coastal communities, were brought together at several occasions to discuss issues pertaining to gender in fisheries.

<https://link.springer.com/journal/40152/17/2/page/1>

### Film

#### Women of the Shore

<https://vimeo.com/164586942>

At the crossroads of climate change, the Philippines is likely to be one of the countries most battered from this impending natural phenomenon. This documentary explores the need for sexual and reproductive health and rights awareness amongst fishing and coastal communities, and how to give resilience to the mothers of the shore and the future they face.

## FLASHBACK

### Looking beyond Fisheries

This issue of *SAMUDRA Report* carries seven articles—including two extracts—that report on modest to well-attended workshops for raising awareness and for supporting implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines). They were held in different places — ranging from the



Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean and the Pacific — within a time span of eight months during 2015-16 at the regional, national and local levels, and were organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), regional bodies, fisheries projects, national governments, civil society organizations (CSOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Nearly 600 participants representing various stakeholders from over 50 countries, mostly developing countries, attended these workshops.

The workshops saw the SSF Guidelines as a tool to eliminate the marginalization of small-scale fisheries actors at various levels. They highlighted the significance of a holistic and human-rights-based approach, a dimension not upheld in any fisheries instrument so far. Several examples of good practices were provided in relation to legal systems and institutional structures that can potentially support the implementation process.

The Guidelines should, in the first place, act as a reference framework to guarantee preferential access rights to small-scale fisheries and to enable the participation of small-scale fisheries actors, including migrants, in institutional arrangements for sustainable fisheries. Secondly, the Guidelines should seek a balanced outcome and help reform fisheries and social legislation and policies at various levels to protect the right to life and livelihood of marginalized small-scale fishing communities and women in small-scale fisheries, within an ecosystem approach, a gender-sensitive approach and a human-rights-based approach. Thirdly, the Guidelines should assist in winning support from non-fisheries actors to help the social development of fishing communities, both within and outside the fisheries sector.

Towards reaching these goals, we strongly urge governments to take the lead in establishing regional and national plans of action to implement the SSF Guidelines by making space for both State and non-State actors in a consultative and participative manner, upholding the principles of accountability, rule of law and transparency. Such a move—which goes beyond the immediate bounds of 'fisheries'—can trigger an irreversible process of undoing the marginalization of small-scale fishing communities in different parts of the world.

—from *SAMUDRA Report* No. 73, April 2016

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### MEETINGS

**Committee on World Food Security (CFS), Rome, Italy 14-October-2019 / 18-October-2019**

Using a multi-stakeholder, inclusive approach, CFS develops and endorses policy recommendations and guidance on a wide range of food security and nutrition topics. These are developed starting from scientific and evidence-based reports produced by the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and

Nutrition (HLPE) and/or through work supported technically by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the World Food Programme (WFP) and representatives of the CFS Advisory Group. CFS holds an annual plenary session every October in FAO, Rome.

### WEBSITES

**The Women's Industry Network (WIN)**  
<http://winsc.org.au/>

The Women's Industry Network (WIN) was formed in 1996 by a group of women fishing in South Australia. In 1998 The Women's Industry Network Seafood Community (WINSOC) developed into a national body with organizations in each state. WINSOC is the only national organization in Australia representing women in the seafood industry. It is a unique network covering the tough, high-tech world of commercial fishing, cutting-edge aquaculture, research and processing sectors, and policy and resource management.

**Women in Fisheries: Exploring the role of women in fishing families**

<https://women-fisheries.com/>

The aim of the website is to make women in fishing families visible and allow their voices to be heard. Women hold a range of roles in the fishing community and industry. They also play a vital part in the running of many family fishing businesses. Yet, often unpaid and invisible, the contributions of women members of this industry are commonly undervalued and unrecognized.





## Endquote

*We were the first that ever burst  
Into that silent sea*

— ST Coleridge

*Another vessel sheds the chrome  
of its silver mile until a mile  
meanders into three, triples again  
over the reef. Nothing can breathe  
under oil, nor register that  
dark membrane's slick  
over sight. We were the first  
cracking the hull of the earth  
open, our foolish husbandry  
a metallurgy that's brimmed  
with false gold too often  
we can talk, and talk, and talk  
but a ship in space, manned  
by non-thinking from non-feeling,  
says absolutely nothing at all.*

— Rachael Boast



