

## BIODIVERSITY

### Bangladesh balances energy needs with climate, conservation

**F**ish, rice, mangrove trees and the lush delta wetlands where the massive Ganges, Brahmaputra, and Meghna rivers drain into the Bay of Bengal.

It's not luxury. But for the farmers and fishermen who live by the world's largest mangrove forest, it's more than enough. Now, the environment is at risk.

A power plant will start burning coal near the Sundarbans this year as part of Bangladesh's plan to meet its energy needs and improve living standards, officials

say. Home to 168 million people, Bangladesh is among the most densely populated countries in the world.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-63559426>

## CLIMATE CHANGE

### Twin Crises

**E**xperts and activists were hoping UN climate talks would end last week with a prominent mention of biodiversity in the final text. They walked away disappointed.

Some say delegates at the COP27 summit missed a key opportunity to acknowledge the connection between the twin climate and nature crises, which many believe have been treated separately for too long.

Failing to address both could mean not only further decimating Earth's life support systems, but also missing the key climate target of limiting warming to under 1.5 degrees Celsius, they warn.

"We're doomed if we don't solve climate, and we're doomed if we don't solve biodiversity," Basile van Havre, co-chair of the UN biodiversity negotiations, told AFP.

At the COP15 UN biodiversity talks next month, dozens of countries will meet to hammer out a new framework to protect animals and plants from destruction by humans. The meeting comes as scientists warn that climate change and biodiversity damage could cause the world's sixth mass extinction event. Such destruction of nature also risks worsening climate change. The oceans have absorbed most of the excess heat created by humanity's greenhouse gas emissions and, along with forests, are important carbon sinks.

<https://www.barrons.com/news/twin-crises-experts-say-nature-and-climate-can-t-be-siloed-01669345207>

## ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

62

### Jaffna District Federation of Fisheries Co-operative Unions

**T**he Jaffna District Federation of Fisheries Cooperative Unions brings together ten cooperative fisheries unions in the northern Sri Lankan district of Jaffna. In turn, those unions represent 118 fisheries cooperative societies in coastal villages dependant on fishing. Most of the fisher families engage in nearshore fishing, using traditional methods.

The federation's mandate is to address the problems of the fisherfolk; mediate in rifts among fishing communities; facilitate the marketing of the catch; and oppose illegal fishing methods. Annalingam Annarasa, a fisher leader from the coastal village of Thambaati in the islands off Jaffna, is the federation's president.

The northern fishers have a serious problem in the form of trawlers from Tamil Nadu, India; they encroach into Sri

Lankan waters. Over the past few years, the federation has organized protests to draw the State's attention to this encroachment, to find a solution to the conflict. For the past two decades, federation representatives have held several rounds of talks with the governments of Sri Lanka and India, and with the fishers from Tamil Nadu.

The many resolutions adopted at these meetings have not been implemented. Both governments had agreed that trawling has devastating impacts on natural resources, that such fishing methods need to be stopped. However, steps to control such practices have been inadequate.

Annarasa claims that several species, including the milk shark (*Rhizoprionodon acutus*) and the trevally (locally called parai), are hardly caught by the local fishers because most of these

stocks have been overfished by bottom-trawling fishing methods. They also destroy fish banks and coral reefs, setting off cascading damage to fish production.

The three-decade-long Sri Lankan civil war seriously damaged the fishers' lives and livelihoods. After the violent conflict abated, the northern fisherfolk began to reel under devastating poaching. The fishing communities are also concerned about State-sponsored aquaculture projects; they believe these will spread diseases, impacting coastal fish stocks and further undermining nearshore small-scale fisheries.

Over the past three years, the COVID-19 pandemic was followed by a severe economic crisis in Sri Lanka; both have severely affected Jaffna fisheries. Most small-scale fisherfolk here rely on subsidized kerosene

for their fibreglass boats with outboard engines. The ongoing economic crisis has led to serious fuel shortages. Even when the fuel is available, its price has quadrupled, hitting the income of the fishing households, pushing many into destitution.

According to Annarasa, most families now face starvation; many families can afford just one meal a day. In these difficult times, the federation is continuing its struggle against trawlers and illegal fishing practices in the region. It wants to take steps to protect their natural resources and to make fishing a sustainable livelihood for their communities.

*by Yathursha Ulakentheran (ulayathu@gmail.com), an independent researcher based in Jaffna, Sri Lanka and Ahilan Kadirgamar (ahilan.kadirgamar@gmail.com), senior lecturer at the University of Jaffna.*

SMALL-SCALE FISHERIES

# IYAF 2022

The United Nations designates specific days, weeks, years and decades as occasions to mark events or highlight topics to promote, through awareness and action, its developmental objectives. In 2018, the United Nations General Assembly declared 2022 the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAF 2022) and nominated FAO as the lead agency for celebrating the year in collaboration with other relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations (United Nations, 2018). The world faces many complex challenges, including hunger, malnutrition and diet-related diseases, an ever-growing global population that needs sufficient and healthy food and must reduce food loss and waste, and over-exploitation of

natural resources, in addition to the effects of climate change and other major issues such as the COVID-19 pandemic. IYAF 2022 highlights the importance of small-scale artisanal fisheries and aquaculture for food systems, livelihoods, culture and the environment. Given that artisanal fishers, fish farmers and fishworkers produce a significant portion of aquatic food, they can be key agents of transformative change for sustainable use and conservation of living aquatic resources – with positive ripple effects on food systems and nutrition security.

The objectives of IYAF 2022 are to:

- enhance global awareness and understanding of small-scale artisanal fisheries and aquaculture, and foster action to

support its contribution to sustainable development, specifically in relation to food security and nutrition, poverty eradication and the use of natural resources; and

- promote dialogue and collaboration between and among small-scale artisanal fishers, fish farmers, fishworkers, governments and other key partners along the value chain, as well as further strengthen their capacity to enhance sustainability in fisheries and aquaculture and improve their social development and well-being

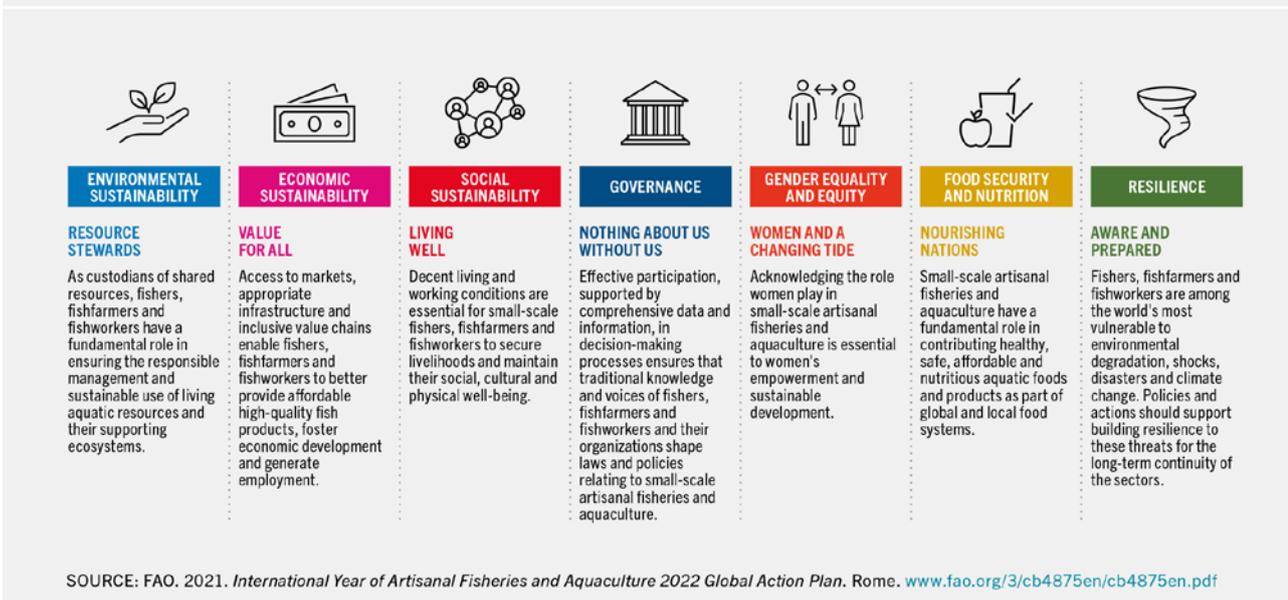
By elevating awareness of the role of small-scale fisheries and aquaculture, IYAF 2022 aims to strengthen science-policy interactions, empowering stakeholders

to take action including building and strengthening partnerships. It showcases the potential and diversity of small-scale artisanal fisheries and aquaculture and highlights the benefits of facilitating partnerships and cooperation with fishers, fish farmers and fishworkers to achieve sustainable development of living aquatic resources. By sensitizing public opinion and governments and fostering the adoption of specific public policies and programmes, these subsectors and their communities can secure their rights and acquire best practices to operate in a sustainable manner.

Sources: *The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2022: Towards Blue Transformation*

<https://www.fao.org/3/cc0461en/cc0461en.pdf>

FIGURE 58 KEY MESSAGES OF IYAF 2022



SOURCE: FAO. 2021. *International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture 2022 Global Action Plan*. Rome. [www.fao.org/3/cb4875en/cb4875en.pdf](http://www.fao.org/3/cb4875en/cb4875en.pdf)

## INFOLOG: NEW RESOURCES AT ICSF

### Publications and Infographics

**Making Small-scale Artisanal Fishing Zones Work!: An ICSF Campaign by Vishakha Gupta, 2022**  
<https://www.icsf.net/resources/icsf-campaign-andhra-pradesh-tenure-rights/>

Research study on the tenure rights of the most vulnerable and marginalized fishers in Srikakulam, Visakhapatnam and East Godavari districts of Andhra Pradesh.

**Report on Asia Workshop – IYafa 2022: Celebrating Sustainable and Equitable Small-scale Fisheries, 4 – 8 May, 2022, The Berkeley Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand, 2022**  
<https://www.icsf.net/resources/asia-iyafa-2022/>

The Asia workshop was the first of the series of four regional workshops planned by ICSF in connection with the proclamation of 2022 as the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYafa) by the United Nations.

**Report on National Workshop on SSF Guidelines and Women in Fisheries, India, 8 -10 April, 2022, Asha Nivas Social Service Centre, Chennai, India, 2022**  
<https://www.icsf.net/resources/wif-india-2022/>

The national workshop facilitated in building a platform of women in fisheries to promote gender equality and equity, to recognize livelihood space and to improve the participation of women in decision making processes through various discussions that were held during the three days.

**A Case for a Human Rights-based Approach to Indian Aquaculture Systems: A Literature Review by Neena Elizabeth Koshy, 2021**  
<https://www.icsf.net/resources/a-case-for-a-human-rights-based-approach-to-indian-aquaculture-systems-a-literature-review/>

This study is an effort to bring focus on this void and the facets that need to be examined if aquaculture is to become sustainable and is able to contribute towards various sustainable development goals as envisaged

**Film: Unseen Faces Unheard Voices: Women and Aquaculture (Purba Medinipur, West Bengal, India), 2021**  
<https://www.icsf.net/resources/unseen-faces-unheard-voices-women-and-aquaculture-purba-medinipur-west-bengal/>

The documentary film Unseen Faces, Unheard Voices showcase the impacts of the boom in aquaculture on women in the floodplain regions of the Indian coastal state of West Bengal.

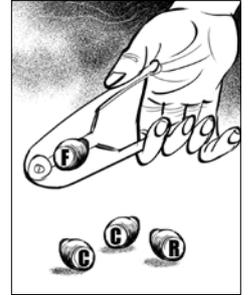
**Socio-economic Analysis of Small-scale Fishers in Antigua and Barbuda in the Context of Social Development, Employment and Decent Work According to the SSF Guidelines by Ian S. Horsford**  
<https://www.icsf.net/resources/icsf-social-development-study-antigua-and-barbuda/>

This report hopes to provide a status report on the nature and extent of social development in the fisheries sector and within the context of the SSF Guidelines.

## FLASHBACK

### Cracking the Code for Small-scale Fisheries

There is need for both an international instrument and a global programme to address the specific needs of the world's small-scale and artisanal fisheries. Should the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) be "opened up" to include a special Chapter on small-scale artisanal fisheries? This was called for by the civil society organizations at the FAO's Global Conference on Small-scale Fisheries (4SSF) in October 2008. The call was reiterated by civil society at the 28th Session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI 28).



The CCRF, while making several references to small-scale fisheries and fishworkers, does not provide specific guidance on how the small-scale artisanal subsector, which employs about 90 per cent of those engaged in fishing and fisheries-related activities, should be supported and promoted. The CCRF also lacks a gender perspective—especially to address the specific forms of discrimination faced by millions of women who are part of the fisheries worldwide, or to acknowledge the vital role they play at all levels. For civil society, these are areas that need urgent attention.

However, several delegations to COFI 28 opposed opening up the CCRF, which, it was argued, could prove to be a "Pandora's Box". If opened up for small-scale artisanal fisheries, then why not for other interests? While there was consensus on the need to support small-scale artisanal fisheries, there was no consensus on the best way to do so. Many Members expressed the need for an international instrument on small-scale fisheries, which could comprise a new article in the Code, an international plan of action (IPOA) and/or the development of guidelines that would guide national and international efforts to secure sustainable small scale fisheries and create a framework for monitoring and reporting. In addition, many Members called for the establishment of a new COFI Sub-Committee on small-scale fisheries. In the end, COFI 28 directed the FAO Secretariat to examine various options to carry these suggestions forward.

To follow up on the mandate given by COFI, the FAO organized three regional workshops in Asia, Africa and Latin America, in October 2010. This enabled a large number of both governmental and civil society participants to provide their views on how small-scale artisanal fisheries can be best supported and enabled to fulfil their potential. All the three workshops recommended developing a new instrument, complementing the CCRF, to address small-scale and artisanal fisheries issues.

ICSF feels that there is a need for both an international instrument and a global programme. With the world gripped by concerns about overfishing, excess capacity, declining biodiversity and climate change, as well as the challenges of food insecurity and poverty, it is increasingly evident that sustainable small-scale artisanal fisheries within a human-rights framework offers the most viable solution. There is recognition today that the small-scale artisanal fisheries subsector is relatively more sustainable, energy-efficient and less destructive, even as it supports millions of livelihoods across the world, and supplies diverse populations, and particularly rural and remote populations in food-insecure regions, with a rich source of nutrition.

—from SAMUDRA Report, No. 57, November 2010

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### MEETINGS

**Africa Workshop: IYafa 2022-Celebrating Sustainable and Equitable Small-scale Fisheries, 15-18 February 2023**  
<https://www.icsf.net/resources/africa-workshop-iyafa-2023/>

Main SSF issues to address: Access rights (to resources, fishing areas and markets); social development, employment and decent work; implementation of the SSF Guidelines; women and gender in

fisheries; food security and poverty; climate change.

**UN 2023 Water Conference, 22 - 24 Mar 2023, New York**  
<https://sdgs.un.org/conferences/water2023>

On 20 December 2018, the General Assembly adopted the resolution on the "Midterm comprehensive review of the implementation of the International Decade for Action, 'Water for Sustainable Development', 2018-2028" (A/RES/73/226).

### WEBSITES

**Asia Workshop: IYafa 2022-Celebrating Sustainable and Equitable Small-scale Fisheries**  
<https://www.icsf.net/resources/asia-workshop-iyafa-2022-celebrating-sustainable-and-equitable-small-scale-fisheries/>

**Latin America and the Caribbean Workshop: IYafa 2022-Celebrating Sustainable and Equitable Small-scale Fisheries**  
<https://www.icsf.net/resources/latin-america-workshop-iyafa-2022/>

**National Training of Trainers (ToT) Workshop on the SSF**  
<https://www.icsf.net/resources/tot-ssf-guidelines-india-2022/>

**Harvest strategies**  
<https://harveststrategies.org/>  
 harveststrategies.org serves as a resource for fisheries scientists, managers, and other stakeholders, compiling information about how harvest strategies work and how implementing this pioneering management approach can lead to sustainable, profitable fisheries and successful recovery programs for many species around the world.