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# SAMUDRA

REPORT

THE TRIANNUAL JOURNAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL COLLECTIVE IN SUPPORT OF FISHWORKERS



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**Sri Lanka's Revamped Fisheries Policy**

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**Decent Work for Pacific Islander Fishers**

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**Fish Smoking in West Africa**

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**Biodiversity Conservation in the Amazon**

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**Understanding Climate Change**

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**Illuminating Hidden Harvests Report**

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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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The opinions and positions expressed in the articles are those of the authors concerned and do not necessarily represent the official views of ICSF.

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REPORT

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NO.89 | AUGUST 2023

JITRAPON KAICOME / FAO

## FRONT COVER



Women fish sellers from the western province of Sri Lanka  
by Oscar Amarasinghe  
Email: oamarasinghe@yahoo.com

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The service often features exclusive, original stories on small-scale and artisanal fisheries, particularly in the regions of the South, as well as issues that deal with women in fisheries and safety at sea. Apart from news and stories on fisheries, the service also focuses on environmental and oceans issues. Please visit <http://www.icsf.net> to subscribe to SAMUDRA News Alerts.

## BACK COVER



A fisherman, standing on his boat, Saint Augustin, Madagascar  
by Alexander Joe / FAO



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# Shedding New Light

**The 2023 Illuminating Hidden Harvests Report is arguably the most concerted and comprehensive research effort so far to focus exclusively on small-scale fisheries but it is not enough**

Jointly produced by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Duke University and WorldFish, the 2023 Illuminating Hidden Harvests (IHH) Report throws light not just upon the harvest of fish, but upon the harvesters as well. It has contributions from 58 developing and developed countries across the world, with a special emphasis on Africa. The study was undertaken in support of the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (the SSF Guidelines). It involved about 800 researchers and government officials—probably the most concerted effort, so far, focusing on the small-scale fisheries subsector. As noted in an article in this issue of SAMUDRA Report (page 35), the study, no doubt, is “the most comprehensive, systematic research effort to date to focus exclusively on small-scale fisheries.”

Based on the most common legal or operational definition of small-scale fisheries at the national level – ranging from foot fishers to semi-industrial fishing vessels – the report estimates that the small-scale fisheries subsector contributes 37 mn tonnes of aquatic foods, or nearly 40 per cent of the total global capture-fishery production, and generates employment for 60 mn part-time or full-time fishers, accounting for 90 per cent of capture-fisheries employment. Another 53 mn people are estimated to be engaged in subsistence fishing, and 379 mn additional household members are estimated to be depending partially on engagement in small-scale fisheries.

The catches of the subsector include those taken by gleaners, and active and passive gear groups operating gillnets, hook-and-line, longline, pole-and-line, trolls, bottom trawls, purse seines, stake nets, etc. Women

comprise 40 per cent of those engaged in small-scale fisheries, mostly on the post-harvest side. Half of those in the post-harvest sector, and 45 per cent in subsistence fishing, for example are women. The report shows how the sub-sector could provide essential nutrition to nearly one billion women across the world.

The report provides an integrated understanding of small-scale fisheries and their importance in relation to economic, social, environmental and cultural objectives. It also helps in moves towards inclusive, equitable, sustainable and resilient small-scale fisheries. There is, however, a

need to go beyond a fuzzy and context-specific approach to defining small-scale fisheries. A universal circumscription would, for instance, allow for determining the contribution of small-scale fisheries to food security and poverty eradication.

To bring greater policy coherence to the harvest side, fishing associated with vessels below 12 m length overall—whether or not mechanized/motorized—may

be further illuminated under a spotlight, following the practice in many fishing nations to treat only vessels below 12 m as small-scale. Collecting and publishing disaggregated data in a timely manner of different craft-gear combinations under the <12 m matrix would help fisheries managers to monitor their respective catch shares over time, and to advise governments in maintaining a balance between active and passive gear groups in this category so that active small-scale bottom trawling or purse seining do not drive passive small-scale gill/drift nets out of existence. This will certainly safeguard the twin-objective of equity and sustainability in marine and inland fishing, and contribute to uphold the principle of inter-generational equity.





# Winning the First Battle

**Sri Lanka has incorporated the SSF Guidelines into its remodelled fisheries policy. Now, it needs to put it into action**

**S**ri Lanka recently amended the National Fisheries Policy, incorporating all relevant SSF Guidelines. A number of institutions supported and facilitated this welcome change. They include the Sri Lanka Forum for Small-Scale Fisheries (SLFSSF); the National Fisheries Solidarity (NAFSO); an array of renowned scientists; and two important international organizations, namely, the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

criticism was driven by concerns that emerged from a unique international initiative to improve the management of small-scale fisheries (SSF).

They emerged from a global consultation FAO had conducted, covering 120 countries in a bottom-up, participatory process. It involved about 4,000 representatives of governments, small-scale fishers, academia and researchers, civil society organizations and community organizations, among others. Consequently, in Rome in 2014, FAO member states accepted the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (the SSF Guidelines).

It is the first international instrument dedicated entirely to the SSF sector that is immensely important, although often neglected. The FAO, the World Bank and other international development agencies strongly recommended the incorporation of the SSF Guidelines into the national fisheries policies of the countries in which the SSF sub-sectors play an important role in food and nutritional security, employment generation and poverty alleviation.

FAO initiated a process in 2018 of implementing the SSF Guidelines. Among the eight countries selected for a pilot project was Sri Lanka. SLFSSF implemented the project with ICSF's assistance and funds from FAO. It drew from island-wide consultations carried out in 12 out of 15 fisheries districts. It included fishers, women fisherfolk and all State institutions working alongside the Department of Fisheries. By August 2019, the Small-Scale Fisheries Policy was prepared. Its prescriptions were based on the results of stakeholder consultations that discussed and analyzed the parts of the SSF Guidelines relevant to Sri Lanka's fisheries.

It was felt that these recommendations fell short of addressing some major issues related to inland fisheries. Subsequently, a

**By August 2019, the Small-Scale Fisheries Policy was prepared. Its prescriptions were based on the results of stakeholder consultations that discussed and analyzed the parts of the SSF Guidelines relevant to Sri Lanka's fisheries...**

The policy will soon be submitted to the cabinet of ministers. Its adoption by the national parliament is expected soon. This is a great victory for not only the fishing communities but for all the people of the country, as also for all those who have contributed towards implementing the SSF Guidelines across the world. Still, it is worth remembering that this is only the first part of the campaign; it does not guarantee the implementation of the guidelines. The next phase of this effort is to ensure the policy is translated into action.

Sri Lanka first created a national fisheries policy in 2018. Technical and financial assistance for this came from the Norwegian government. It went through comprehensive stakeholder consultations. Yet it remained a white paper submitted to the cabinet, not approved by parliament. Several parties, including SLFSSF, were critical of certain policy prescriptions, especially because some critical issues had received inadequate attention. The

*This article is by Oscar Amarasinghe (oamarasinghe@yahoo.com), Chancellor, Ocean University of Sri Lanka, Professor Emeritus, University of Ruhuna and President, Sri Lanka Forum for Small Scale Fisheries (SLFSSF), Sri Lanka*

OSCAR AMARASINGHE



Hauling a beach-seine net in the eastern province of Sri Lanka. Beach-seine fishers are losing their seine-laying coastal space for powerful tourism stakeholders in many parts of the country

5

separate consultation process was conducted by the National Fisheries Solidarity and the SLFSSF in areas where inland fisheries were widespread. This produced another policy document: the Inland Fisheries Policy of 2021.

SLFSSF combined the two to prepare a comprehensive policy paper. In this the new policy prescriptions were compared with the policy recommendations of the existing National Fisheries Policy of 2018, under various thematic areas. The aim was to improve the 2018 policy by taking into account the recommendations of this comprehensive policy document. This proposed 'remodelled' policy document was sent to the ministry in February 2021. The SLFSSF president made a presentation to the ministry officials, explaining the process and the need to incorporate relevant SSF Guidelines into the National Fisheries Policy 2018. The ministry accepted this in principle, deciding to remodel the National Fisheries Policy of 2018.

#### Policy remodelled

The COVID-19 pandemic delayed the work that was revitalized in 2022. The ministry prepared a remodelled policy and appointed a panel of experts.

It included SLFSSF and other fisheries experts to ensure that all relevant SSF Guidelines are incorporated. This move on the part of the fisheries authorities was commendable. This work happened in the last two months of 2022. By mid-January 2023, the final remodelled policy document was completed. After several rounds of talks among fisheries officials, the ministry brass, along with the panel of experts, unanimously approved the policy with some minor rewording. It will now go for translating into the two languages used in the country, Sinhala and Tamil. Then, it will be submitted to the cabinet.

Although endorsed in 2014, the SSF Guidelines remained unknown in Sri Lanka, until the efforts in 2018 for their implementation. From SLFSSF and ICSF to FAO, all parties involved played a vital role in bringing attention to the guidelines. It impressed the government's fisheries authorities about this instrument addressing most of the issues affecting fishery communities—a group that is highly vulnerable to diverse threats and poverty.

The positive interventions included initiatives to turn information into knowledge. The drive to remodel policy not only collected information but

also analyzed, studied and moulded that information into knowledge. The participatory experience turned into a model of how innovative ideas can mobilize all stakeholders.


Another achievement was how SLFSSF's leadership displayed 'unity in diversity'. Its membership includes State actors, academics, researchers, civil society organizations and agents of change in the community, among others. This wide range of actors contributed to all policy prescriptions. The involvement of State agencies helped engender trust among various actors.

While the remodelled policy has a strong people-oriented focus, two more hurdles must be overcome: approval by the cabinet and by parliament. Any drastic changes are unlikely because the remodelled policy has emerged from a comprehensive and interactive

translation', as against the usual process of scientific knowledge ending up in libraries.

Finally, the third order: interaction among stakeholders on the ground in a participatory atmosphere. In this regard, mechanisms like co-management have now become quite popular. Yet this concept is misunderstood. Many see it as a platform for State actors to sit together with community representatives to make decisions. In fact, such platforms often do not ensure effective participation of fishing communities. Co-management platforms, it is critical, must be truly integrated, inclusive, participatory and holistic.

Gaps in language seriously limit effective participation by fisher stakeholders. In general, ordinary people can hardly understand the language used by government agencies. Officials tend to use words that emphasize their view, insisting that people to see things from their perspective. Resolving this problem requires training and capacity building of people at the bottom—only this can ensure their effective participation in decision-making. An example of this was how the SSF Guidelines were presented to fishing communities in their own language—in simplified terms and reworded guidelines, posters and factsheets—during the policy development process.

All the effort made already by multiple parties so in Sri Lanka will prove futile if their resulting policy is not translated into action. The government has an important role. It must establish enabling institutions, preparing action plans and regulating patterns of interactions among diverse stakeholders. It must stay with the interactive processes that ensured effective participation of all in decision making. 

## A sound national fisheries policy, based on the SSF Guidelines, does not guarantee by itself the security and sustainability of the SSF sector

process. The ministry's approach in all discussions was conscientious and supportive, both respecting knowledge and inviting constructive criticism. This deserves a special note of appreciation.

A sound national fisheries policy, based on the SSF Guidelines, does not guarantee by itself the security and sustainability of the SSF sector. For that, the policy must translate into action. As aptly described by Jentoft and Chuenpagdee (2022, in Jentoft et al (eds), *Blue Justice*), there are three governance orders. The first is the meta-order at the top that deals with rights and principles. Broad guidelines like policy prescriptions fall into this.

The second order is the institutions of governance that are critical to translating policy into action. This decides the 'rules of the game'. It is important that the institutions are set up with the right values and with far-sightedness. For this we must follow an interactive process, with the participation of all relevant stakeholders. This will bring scientific knowledge to decision-making, ensuring effective 'knowledge

### For more



#### The Rage of a Perfect Storm

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#### A Beacon of Trust

[https://www.icsf.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/4517\\_art\\_Sam\\_85\\_art12\\_Sri-Lanka\\_OscarAmarasinghe.pdf](https://www.icsf.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/4517_art_Sam_85_art12_Sri-Lanka_OscarAmarasinghe.pdf)



# Wanted: A Fair Deal

**Pacific Islander men in the longline fisheries work under frightening conditions. They deserve decent conditions of work**

**L**and-based workers in Pacific Island Countries (PICs) are generally covered by laws regulating the terms and conditions of employment, including occupational safety and health (OSH) regulations. For instance, in Fiji, Samoa and the Solomon Islands, and, more recently, in Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea and Tonga, labour laws have been introduced in compliance with the standards of the International Labour Organization (ILO). Moreover, land-based workers may be members of unions engaged in collective bargaining, as in Fiji, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Samoa. Exceptions to this may apply to the agricultural sector and to the informal sector.

In contrast, those who work offshore as deckhands on board fishing vessels in the exclusive economic zones (EEZs) and beyond, are not covered under such laws. For example, in Fiji, the Government has recommended wage rates for a variety of trades and occupations, but fishing and seafaring are not included in these.

Fishers and their families face dire consequences because of the lack of laws regulating wages and conditions on fishing vessels. It means that the men need to accept whatever wage they are offered simply to keep their families 'above the poverty line'.

It does not have to be like that....

Thanks to rising interest internationally in the conditions of work on board fishing vessels, we were able to source some information in published literature. However, much of that reported information does not take into account the situation in the western Pacific longline fishery, we took matters into our own hands and asked the fishers themselves.

We had direct discussions with the men who work as fishers in the Fiji fishery over about a five-year

period (see also V. Naidu, January 2023, *Islands Business* article: 'Fijian fish workers in foreign-owned fishing boats') and also with men whom we had assisted through World Wise Foods U.K.'s Sustainable Fisheries and Communities' Trust to attend the Fiji Maritime Academy. They wrote short essays for us on events at sea that they particularly remember.

In all, more than 170 men were interviewed or engaged in discussions. Their individual stories are consistent in their reporting of conditions on board the longliners on which they had worked.

To say 'our eyes were opened' does not come anywhere close to what we learned from those accounts. These

**...the Government has recommended wage rates for a variety of trades and occupations, but fishing and seafaring are not included in these**

men: on board vessels of confined space on an ocean completely absent of any relief for weeks at a time and often subjected to foreign captains and senior crew who did not speak any English. They had little rest from the 24/7 work of fishing.

## Complaints

We listed the main complaints that were common to all of the deckhands from Fiji that we interviewed. Here's a summary:

- \* **No written contract:** Some men ask for pay slips but many men do not know enough to ask. When given, pay slips usually state hours worked as 9-to-5 and do not reflect the hours actually worked on a daily basis. This is a matter of 'fair dealing', that is,

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the men must know what they are going to be paid before they embark. The contract copy is needed for the fisher and his family to ensure his allotment is fair, and that (for Fiji vessels) the Fiji National Provident Fund (FNPF) contribution is paid up. The men are forced to accept that “the captain will decide” their wage during the voyage because they have families to support.

- \* **Underpaid:** For 14- to 20-hour days, wages now range from FJ\$ 28 to FJ\$ 35 (about US\$ 13 to US\$ 18); rarely, it is FJ\$ 40. Even the older men get low wages despite being much more experienced. Sometimes, the men are cheated of their wages.
- \* **Poor sleeping conditions:** The bedding provided always has bugs and the galleys always have cockroaches and rats. The men are allowed to sleep only for four-five hours.
- \* **Lack of potable water:** While senior fishers get bottled water, drinking water for the other fishers is stored in tanks that are often rusted. Sometimes the men have to strain the water through cloth

continue even in cyclonic conditions. Sometimes fishers are swept overboard, and few are rescued. It attests to how little value is accorded to a fisher’s life.

- \* **Forced into dangerous work:** Fishers often have to dive to uncoil the mainline from the propeller; they have to accompany transshipped tuna by raft; and they have to free-swim to transfer between vessels.
- \* **Unequal work allocation:** As Pacific Islanders are normally physically larger than the migrant fishers, they are assigned tasks that are more difficult and carry greater risk.
- \* **Poor protective equipment:** Very often, the personal protective equipment (PPE) issued to the men is thin and of small size, especially for the man handling the ice. Its cost is deducted from the wages yet the men are not allowed to retain the PPE.
- \* **Loneliness:** When a man is the only Fijian on board, he lacks the comfort of safety in numbers and having someone to talk to.
- \* **Lack of injury compensation:** Compensation is not paid after an injury. The injured are sometimes not allowed even to rest for a few days. We recommend that companies also supply safety equipment to protect the eyes and backs of the fishers; many injuries occur to the face and eyes from the hook or a snapped mainline. Older men are often crippled after years of lifting and carrying heavy tuna on an unstable platform.

Three other matters are worth noting: one, transfer of men should be reported in real time; two, migrant fishers unfamiliar with fishing should not be hired, and, three, the lack of security of Pacific Islanders working on foreign high-seas vessels.

In addition, there were many individual complaints spanning a range of matters. They include racism, being threatened with knives, being chased by a hatchet-waving cook, and denied food for days as a form of punishment. Fishers are often considered the scum of the earth, and their situation is worse when they are recruited from poorer countries (F. Coles, [www.splash247.com](http://www.splash247.com), 2 June 2021).

These labour issues are not supposed to happen because for almost

... there were many individual complaints spanning a range of matters. They include racism, being threatened with knives, being chased by a hatchet-waving cook, and denied food for days as a form of punishment

to make it drinkable. Sometimes, water runs out and the men have to capture water to drink from the air-conditioning units.

- \* **Passport withheld:** Some Fiji companies hold on to the men’s passports, even though it is against the law. This is a form of blackmail, inhibiting the workers’ right to freedom of association.
- \* **Poor and insufficient food:** The ‘lesser’ fishers are usually given meals low in quality and quantity, while the captain and senior fishers get better meals of chicken, beef or pork along with vegetables, even though the deck crew work hard over the day and need to be properly fed.
- \* **Fishing in bad weather:** On many vessels, the master directs fishing to





Fishing vessels at Wallu Bay, Fiji. Fishers and their families face dire consequences because of the lack of laws regulating wages and conditions on fishing vessels

all them there are laws and regulations to protect fishers. Here's an outline:

**Hours of work, remuneration:** The minimum wage rate in Fiji was recently raised to FJ\$ 4 per hour. If these men work an average of 14 hours each day, they should earn FJ\$ 56 daily. Often, they work longer hours into the night, depending on the amount of tuna and other fish caught on each fishing trip. Moreover, considering their vast experience, the minimum wage for unskilled labour at FJ\$ 4 per hour is inadequate. The skilled and experienced men deserve even double that hourly rate.

Fishing companies obfuscate the quantum of remuneration by not giving written contracts; often, they give no contract at all. They leave the decision on wages to the captains, merely stating on pay slips (when given) that the hours worked were 9-to-5. They may not deliver the agreed allotment to the men's families—in the absence of a contract, the families do not know what they are supposed to be given. They may deduct provident fund contribution from the men's wages also, without actually making that contribution. In other words, the companies use every trick at their

disposal to exploit these desperate men.

**Poor conditions on board:** The employers are responsible for fair dealing and looking after their workers. The companies should also acknowledge the work the men do for the companies' profits. They have no business expecting the men to deliver when they are poorly fed. Could this be a ruse whereby the companies keep wages low so that the hungry and sleep-deprived men work a bit slower than desired?

**Withholding documents:** Competition among companies might be the reason they hold on to men's passports and papers at the end of each voyage. Such action prevents the men from going to other (high-seas) fishing vessels offering better wages. Passports and personal documents are the property of the person named on them (and the State) and may not be held by employers unless a written agreement is in place, which also enables the named holder to recover his documents at any time.

**Poor working conditions:** Employers are obliged to attend to the welfare of their workers. The conditions in which fishers are sometimes made

to work are extremely dangerous. There are several internationally approved means of transferring personnel between vessels at sea—in grouped or individual baskets, cranes, capsules, knotted swing ropes—but never by swimming. The paucity of safety equipment on vessels is a matter of concern: eye damage or loss is not uncommon, for example. It is noteworthy that if the victim manages to secure compensation, it is the State that pays the most with the companies paying a smaller portion.

#### **Improper safety equipment:**

Regulations under Fiji's Health and Safety at Work Act, 1996, Regulations 2003 state that 'the employer shall ensure that PPE and clothing of approved standard is provided without cost to the workers where a risk could be minimised by its use'. Companies charging the men for their PPE either do not understand the law or deliberately flout it.

#### **Unequal workload:**

This issue arises from the fishing companies and the departments of immigration not verifying migrant crew's qualifications. Almost certainly, fishers who know how to fish will engage in fishing activity so those men who are inactive are simply 'living out' the days of their two-year contracts.

**A social life:** Not having fellows from your own culture and language can turn a difficult voyage insufferable for workers. This can be negated by skilled vessel masters and astute recruiters.

#### **Additional matters:**


Regional fisheries management organizations should regulate the recording of fishers' transfers and the compilation and checking of the crew list at every port. Company recruiters and local immigration authorities should be enabled to check the veracity of migrant fishers' documents. Foreign-flagged high-seas vessels follow the rules of their flag State and so citizens of other countries working on those vessels have no protection except through the crew list. They have no guarantees of safety, wages and even of returning home.

Pacific Island Members of ILO should ratify the Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (No. 188), in addition to the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency's (FFA's) Harmonized Minimum Terms and Conditions (MTC) for Access by Fishing Vessels, as amended in May 2019.

**The nub of the matter is enforcement:** Once in place, enforcement of laws and regulations is based on MTC and the enforcement of laws and regulations by national immigration departments, departments of labour, maritime safety authorities, departments of foreign affairs, and the regional fisheries organisations (Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, and the FFA).

Fishers themselves are expressing a desire for their own organisation, like a trade union to protect their rights. In the absence of government authorities fulfilling their obligations, the men feel they cannot turn to any organisation for support.

This article shows a world 'out there', a world few people have experienced. It is a frightening world. Yet Pacific Islander men go willingly to participate in it: they are driven by the urge to survive, to somehow provide for their families, to remain alive and uninjured at the end of each voyage, to be fairly fed and paid. These are basic demands. Even so, the workers remain at the mercy of the fishing companies and their own Pacific governments that fail to enforce existing laws or to pass new laws to protect these most vulnerable citizens.

These men's work brings in our Pacific governments' and companies' incomes from the tuna fishery. These men deserve a better deal. They deserve a great deal of respect. 

#### **For more**



##### **Next to Slavery**

[https://www.icsf.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/4178\\_art\\_Sam72\\_e\\_art03.pdf](https://www.icsf.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/4178_art_Sam72_e_art03.pdf)

##### **A new set of minimum terms and conditions for crewing employment conditions in the Pacific**

<https://www.sas.com.fj/ocean-law-bulletins/a-new-set-of-minimum-terms-and-conditions-for-crewing-employment-conditions-in-the-pacific>

##### **Providing Decent Employment for Pacific Fishers**

[https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---ilo-suva/documents/publication/wcms\\_486720.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---ilo-suva/documents/publication/wcms_486720.pdf)



# Better Governance

**Better maritime governance can enable a fair deal to offshore tuna fisheries' workers of small island Pacific States who labour under a difficult working environment**

**B**etter governance in offshore tuna fisheries can achieve fair dealing for fishery crew. In this article I paint a rough picture of what it is like to be a fisher on some—not all—longline fishing vessels for weeks or months at a time. I also explore the measures in place to protect the fishery resource. And finally, I identify 'small' matters that, if taken up, would go a long way to protecting the fishers and raise the status of the fishery.

Mr Able Seaman's story, published in 2010 in the *Pacific Community Fisheries Newsletter*, drew my attention to the work conditions of deckhand fishers in the Pacific's regional longline fishery. He talked about the work he and others do as crew on Distant Water Fishing Nations' (DWFN) vessels in the Pacific tuna fishery. Mr Able Seaman wrote that being employed by a foreign vessel fishing in the Pacific waters felt as if he were fishing in foreign waters because foreigners were working Pacific Islander crews almost to slavery in their own backyard, and that no Pacific politicians had taken any initiative to check on the working environment, treatment, and salaries made to their countrymen who risked their lives for such little money to be able to feed their families back home. Mr Able Seaman declared that anything could happen to the crew on those foreign vessels and that nobody would be able to tell what really happened.

That 'nobody would be able to tell what really happened' is true, because what happens at sea remains at sea, an area comprising 20 per cent of the Earth's surface.

Ian Urbina's book *The Outlaw Ocean* (2019) comes alive in the Pacific Convention Area, although it is uncertain whether abuses here are at the level of his discoveries. Nevertheless, in casual enquiries spanning six or seven

years, I have been told many first-hand accounts of injuries and deaths – such as a man with scars on his back from being savaged by the captain's dog; of men being beaten by the captain and later dying; of men drunk from lack of sleep, one of them falling into the fish hold and breaking his arm (and made to continue working) and another mistakenly standing on the mainline during hauling and subsequently being dragged overboard and drowned when the line wrapped around his ankles; of men made to jump overboard in the night and unscramble the mainline from the propeller while sharks were feeding on the hooked tuna nearby, one of the men later dying; of men being chased by crew on board (often

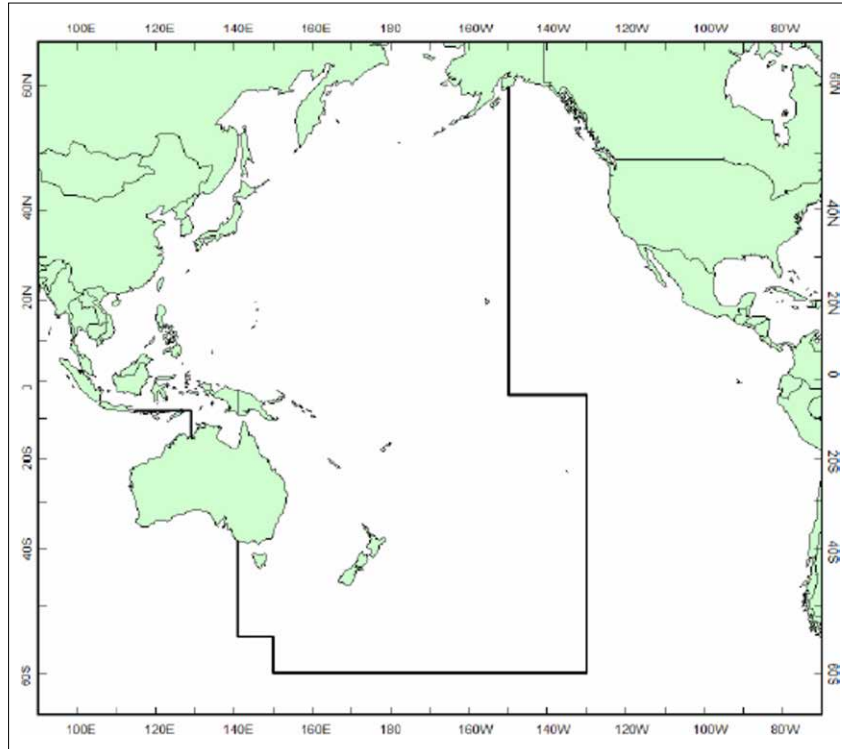
**Mr Able Seaman declared that anything could happen to the crew on those foreign vessels and that nobody would be able to tell what really happened**

Chinese) with knives or kitchen chopper and being seriously injured or killed; of a captain forcing men to fight to the death and then killing the winner; of men transshipping tuna on a flimsy wooden raft as sharks circled them, or being themselves transferred by swimming; and I've met a man with no fingers because of frostbite caused by being made to work an hour in the minus 30-degrees fish hold without proper Personal Protective Equipment. And accidents – losing an eye from a marlin spear; another from a fish hook; another from the snapped mainline; of deaths from septicemia caused by either accidents or beatings. And there are more ....

Who are these fishers? They are men looking for a job—any job—

*This article is by Patricia Kailola (pkailola@gmail.com), Tropical Fish Systematist, Human Dignity Group, Fiji*

WCPFC



The Convention Area of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC). The recorded tuna landings from the WCPFC Convention Area for 2021 amounted to 2.6 million tonnes, representing 54 per cent of the global tuna catch

14 per day is common; no payment is made for overtime which often is half of each day's work, no medical check-ups, no accident insurance, no checking of documents, no seafaring certificates as required by the International Maritime Organization (IMO), working hours averaging 14-16 each day, usually poor and accommodation, sometimes having to bathe in seawater, and sometimes limited or dirty drinking water.

Pacific Islander crew on longliners are subject to at least six of the International Labour Organization's (ILO's) eleven indicators of forced labour: abuse of vulnerability (needing the money); deception (sometimes, with respect to promised wages); intimidation and threats; retention of identity documents; abusive working and living conditions; and excessive overtime. Another indicator, isolation, applies if workers do not have anybody else on board who shares their language.

There is the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), established in 2004. It has 26 members, seven participating territories, and nine co-operating non-members. The Commission manages the Convention Area and works by consensus. Independent organizations associated with the WCPFC are the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) for stock assessment; the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) for licensing; the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA), a consortium of eight Pacific Islands Nations in the west of the CA; and the Te Vaka Moana Arrangement, a group of easterly Pacific Island States.

There is no doubt that the WCPFC, the PNA and the Te Vaka Moana Arrangement support the Blue Economy because they aspire to the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth and ocean ecosystem health. The recorded tuna landings from the WCPFC Convention Area for 2021 amounted to 2.6 million tonnes, representing 54 per cent of the global tuna catch. To ensure that fishing entities in the Pacific CA do not overharvest the tuna resources, nor upset the health of the ocean ecosystem, the Commission does make rules – such as against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU)

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to provide for themselves and their families, young men picked up off the streets in need of work, men who left school at primary or early secondary level, targeted by recruiters, and often men who believe they are unworthy.

If only they knew how essential they are. The longline fishing industry relies on lower-level crew to feed out and bait the line, haul it in, take off the

**Only in recent years have vessel crew been discussed briefly at Commission meetings—and even though the vessels cannot catch the fish to sell without crew**

fish, gut, clean and stack it and, at the end of the voyage, offload it.

Working conditions for lower-level crew on fishing vessels are generally (but not always) poor, smacking of forced labour and human trafficking. Often (but not always) there are no work contracts, very low wages, and US\$11-



fishing; on transshipping; on reporting of the catch; on catch quotas; and on protection to whale sharks and other sharks. Furthermore, the FFA maintains a 'Vessels of Good Standing' register.

To demonstrate his assessment of the current state of global maritime governance, the Indonesian Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany, Arief Havas Oegroseno, used a simple line drawing of balloons during a 2021 Archipelagic and Island States Webinar on the topic of 'Maritime Governance and the SDGs'. He was highlighting the existing fragmentation within the international institutional framework of specialized agencies. Ambassador Oegroseno's delightful allegory showed that as the balloons drifted above the world's oceans making decisions and pronouncements and jostling for position, below them vessels continued to fish unhampered, unreported and unseen. In my view, his simple drawing captured the story of fishing in the world's oceans.

"Lax rules and a maritime bureaucracy [are] designed more to protect anonymity and secrecy of ship owners than to enable oversight and transparency of the industry," said Ian Urbina, author of *The Outlaw Ocean*. And in the *SPC Women in Fisheries Information Bulletin* Issue 34, 2021, the World Wildlife Fund for Nature stated "Maritime regulations that could address these issues are also in place; however, implementation and enforcement of existing regulations have not been effective" and that "Research into deceptive and coercive labour practices in the fisheries sector is not comprehensive or coordinated."

Hundreds of people attend the Commission's annual meetings: for five or six days, they discuss the state of the resource, vessel numbers and how to manage them, and also the ocean environment. This is understandable. Small Pacific Island nations have few saleable resources other than tuna (and tourism); foreign fleets wish to harvest the tuna in the nations' EEZs so they pay access fees; those fees mean a lot to the economies of small island nations. And the companies seek to maximize profits at the lowest cost. Fishing operations are very expensive (especially

without subsidies) and any savings are worthwhile, including those on crew. As identified earlier, cost-cutting on the crew results in poor working conditions for crew and forced labour. Only in recent years have vessel crew been discussed briefly at Commission meetings—and even though the vessels cannot catch the fish to sell without crew. There's no money in people.

Fisheries observers are an example. The Commission established the Regional Observer Programme (ROP), the overarching body in charge of deploying trained observers to independently monitor tuna catches and determine whether companies' vessels are adhering to management rules. Single observers placed on vessels are in a precarious situation because they are watching and recording what goes on. Every so often, one of them 'goes missing'. Initially, there is a flurry of concern – which shortly fades. Liz Mitchell of the Association of Professional Observers, remarked to a newspaper reporter that "[Observers] are ... like an afterthought—more of a tool than a human being." For at least 10 years, the Commission has been dithering on whether to insure the observers, even though more than 10 observers have been lost since 2009:

**The market can prove to be a very effective means of improving crew conditions, so long as these are reported**

no charges were laid and, usually, no compensation was paid; the particular vessels keep on fishing.

If observers are treated as 'more of a tool than a human being', then think how lowly are regarded the crew. It's all a matter of money, which is understandable. And that's just how it is.

### **ILO Convention**

Fishing vessels are not covered by ILO's Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC), which has rules for crew wages, hours of work, accommodation and safety. Even so, six countries (France, Italy, Spain, Nicaragua, Estonia

and Nigeria) have incorporated the Convention into their own legislation. The Pacific CA could do the same.

The IMO's 2012 Cape Town Agreement sets internationally-agreed minimum standards relating to the safety of sea-going fishing vessels through the design, construction and equipment of fishing vessels 24 metres or more in length. Requiring 22 States' signatures, as of July 2023, 17 States are party to it. Although the safety measures in the Agreement primarily apply to new fishing vessels operating outside of territorial waters, a few provisions apply to existing fishing vessels (such as life-saving equipment, emergency procedures and communications).

The ILO's Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (No. 188) is a 'replacement' for the MLC when it comes to fishing vessels. It is in force but no Pacific Islands nation, nor Pacific rim nation, has accessed nor ratified it.

**If crew lists were made and checked, and crew transfers reported well and recorded under real-time Internet service available to vessels, the whereabouts of every crewman would be known at any date and time**

(The C 188 is operational in Pacific French territories). South Africa is one nation that has ratified the Convention and the effect of its ratification was well-demonstrated by the seizure of the Taiwanese vessel *Fuh Sheng 11* in May 2018.

FAO's 1995 Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries is a voluntary instrument that sets international standards of behaviour for responsible fishing practices.

However, the FFA's Harmonized Monitoring Terms and Conditions (MTCs), revised in 2019, have good potential. FFA has used these terms and conditions to better regulate working conditions on fishing vessels that operate in the waters of the Pacific Island Countries. Derived from ILO's C 188, the MTCs first section lists standards C 188 regulating employment, vessel safety and crew numbers, which should

be applied to foreign vessels wishing to be listed in the FFA's 'Register of Good Standing'. Registration in this is a precursor to being granted, or retaining, a licence to fish in member countries' EEZs. The second section of the MTCs provides minimum requirements for crew employment contracts.

This all seems too good to be true! However, the MTCs depend on member countries adjusting their local laws, engaging in discussions and training, and co-operating with other member States in sharing information (such as identifying foreign vessels in breach of the MTCs). Yes, there's the rub!

International markets are another effective way of improving employment and working conditions of crew and I suggest they might be the only reason the topic of crews' work conditions has made its way to the agendas of recent Commission meetings. In August 2021, US Customs & Border Protection placed a Withhold Release Order on the Fiji vessel *Hangton 112* on suspicion of forced labour, as it has done for four or five other fishing vessels and/or companies such as Dalian Ocean Fishing Company. The market can prove to be a very effective means of improving crew conditions, so long as these are reported.

In recent years the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) has questioned individual MSC-certified fisheries on whether they ensure that child labour and forced labour are not practised on certified vessels. While this step is commendable, it needs better oversight because our experience is that the response of at least one Pacific Island State to the MSC's request is somewhat imaginary.

Three actions can be taken up at local levels. They are:

- \* all member States ratifying the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel (STCW-F) and subsidizing crew to at least be certified to Basic Sea Safety level, ensuring that only certified crew man the vessels;
- \* member States addressing the level of crew wages, guided by the recommendations of the

International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) and MLC; and

- \* better licensing and monitoring of recruiting agents. Indonesia has worked on this. A register of accepted (licensed) agents could be incorporated in the FFA's register of Vessels of Good Standing.

A minor house-keeping matter in addition to the above could be useful: monitoring the expiry dates of licences to ensure that all vessels on the commission's vessel register are current.

A final recommendation is to have real-time reporting of fisher transfers. So often, crew lists are hard to come by, and fishers are not checked off at ports of entry, which means that there is no record of whether a missing (or dead) person was on a particular vessel, or was transferred and, if so, to which vessel. If crew lists were made and checked, and crew transfers reported well and recorded under real-time Internet service available to vessels, the whereabouts of every crewman would be known at any date and time.

The last word surely belongs to Mr Able Seaman who kindly asked that our governments' appropriate authorities closely monitor the activities of the licensed fishing vessels and whatever circumstances may arise in the fishing grounds. He said that the Pacific Islander crew would prefer to struggle for the benefit of their own people and nations rather than work as slaves to others who treat them like dirt in their own territory. 3

#### For more



#### **A new set of minimum terms and conditions for crewing employment conditions in the Pacific**

<https://www.sas.com.fj/ocean-law-bulletins/a-new-set-of-minimum-terms-and-conditions-for-crewing-employment-conditions-in-the-pacific>

#### **Out of Sight: Modern Slavery in Pacific Supply Chains of Canned Tuna**

[https://media.business-humanrights.org/media/documents/files/Out\\_of\\_Sight\\_Modern\\_Slavery\\_in\\_Pacific\\_Supply\\_Chains\\_of\\_Canned\\_Tuna\\_4.pdf](https://media.business-humanrights.org/media/documents/files/Out_of_Sight_Modern_Slavery_in_Pacific_Supply_Chains_of_Canned_Tuna_4.pdf)

#### **The Outlaw Ocean Project**

[www.theoutlawocean.com](http://www.theoutlawocean.com)

#### **Ian Urbina: The ticking time bomb of lax shipping regulations**

<https://nationalpost.com/opinion/ian-urbina-the-ticking-time-bomb-of-lax-shipping-regulations>

#### **Death at sea: the fisheries inspectors who never came home**

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jun/20/death-at-sea-the-fisheries-inspectors-who-never-came-home>

#### **The FFA register of vessels of "good standing" is online**

<http://www.franciscoblaha.info/blog/2019/4/2/the-ffa-register-of-vessels-of-good-standing-is-on-line>



# From Waste to Wealth

**Fish smoking, which is the most widely used method for preserving fish in West Africa, can be ramped up by adopting improved techniques and innovative technology**

**S**moked fish is a delicacy in West Africa, making fish smoking the most important and widely used method for preserving fish. Fishing communities have poor access to fresh fish. What also drives the preference for this method is the scarcity of electricity, resulting in a lack of cold-chain facilities. Fish smoking is also a means of product differentiation.

Fish smoking is a gendered activity here, dominated by women operating popular traditional or local fish smoking kilns such as smoking platforms or altars, barrels/drum kilns, mud kilns, Chorkor kilns, Altona kilns, Banda kilns and firewood as the main fuel or energy source.

causes of product rejections at points of entry into the European markets. These unacceptably high PAHs levels can trigger risks of cancer in consumers. PAHs cause post-harvest loss because of problems in both food safety or quality and trade volumes. They are particularly difficult to remove because they are lipid-loving, accumulating in fish flesh during smoking.

Fish smoking in kilns also wastes time, requiring constant attention to turn the fish, else the smoked product may be charred and laden with deposits of tar particles. Fish smokers are exposed to several health hazards from the direct heat, with smoke entering their eyes and lungs, also suffering burns particularly on their fingers. Studies have shown a correlation of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), poor eyesight, headaches, burning eyes and dizziness with fish smoking, not only for the women but also for their children, who may be present while their mothers work at smoking the fish.

Despite these drawbacks, traditional and local kilns are still widely used among fish smokers in the small-scale fisheries sub-sector. This is despite attempts to introduce improved fish-smoking technology designs that are more fuel-efficient, reduce laborious rotation time, shorten batch process time, improve batch capacity, cause less smoke, and produce fish with low PAHs.

Research institutes, tertiary institutions, development agencies and cross-cutting collaborations and partnerships have produced several designs of charcoal smoking kilns for fish smokers. Some of these are built on existing technologies such as the drum kiln, the Chorkor kiln and the Banda kiln, improving them further to produce

**Fish smokers are exposed to several health hazards from the direct heat, with smoke entering their eyes and lungs, also suffering burns particularly on their fingers**

Traditional fish smoking kilns, characterized by fuel inefficiencies, consume more fuelwood than necessary and contribute to forest depletion. (This also compromises the forest's role as a carbon sink to combat climate change.) Burning of biomass, especially fuelwood, in the traditional kilns produces copious volumes of smoke that contain significant quantities of health-damaging pollutants, including several carcinogenic compounds identified as polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), a food safety hazard.

Several studies have reported impermissible Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs) levels in smoked fish in the informal or domestic markets, and high contents are major

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modified or improved technology such as the Altona kiln, improved box and mud kilns, the Kainji gas kiln, modified drum kiln technology, the Ahotor kiln and, recently, the FAO-Thiaroye fish-smoking technology (or FTT-Thiaroye).

### Major constraints

The major constraints to adopt improved fish-smoking technologies include the high cost of kilns available, low relative advantages, inadequate information dissemination and knowledge sharing by extension workers. Their low carrying capacity becomes a problem during the peak season. Acceptability of charcoal and gas smoking kilns particularly face more challenges than kilns which use firewood because the smoked products are reported to be devoid of the desirable smoky flavour and odour consumers cherish, which points to the exclusion of local end-users' knowledge in technology development.

Apparently, fish smokers have not been engaged in the design, construction or technology transfer of most fish-smoking equipment. This indicates the lack of a bottom-up or participatory approach in the research agenda. More so, the research approach tends to be monolithic and conducted in 'silos' without cross-sectoral or transdisciplinary interactions among stakeholders.

Biomass is considered the fuel of the poor, especially in communities close to forests, where it is easily available and 'free' to collect. The quantity of wood consumed is determined by the amount of fish requiring smoking and the type of kiln used. Wood quality is important in fish smoking and there are several species of trees used as fuelwood. The major factors determining wood quality choices or selection of fuelwood include the capacity of the species to provide heat energy, followed by the ability to colour the fish attractively, as also continuity of supply without any shortages.

A classic example of a popular fuelwood is the mangrove tree. In many West African coastal communities, mangrove wood is highly prized for smoking fish, especially the red mangrove (*Rhizophora racemosa*). The

wood of this species, burnt either wet or dry, is favoured because it has a higher thermal capacity and burns slowly. The rich tannins from burning the stilt roots infuse the fish with the much-coveted shiny, reddish-brown colour. It is also believed that the tannins increase the shelf life of smoked fish.

Nonetheless, harvesting of mangroves for smoking fish debilitates the major source of income for the fishermen who supply fish. Mangrove trees are an important habitat for the breeding of fish resources. Their loss decreases fish stocks. This trickles down the value chain and affects the livelihoods of fish smokers because the sustainability of firewood is sabotaged. This has a negative impact on food security among fishing communities. The other trees commonly used as fuelwood include mango, kola nut, plum, coconut and guava.

As in the case of developing improved fish-smoking kilns, there have been concerted efforts to replace, substitute or suggest fuelwood with alternative fuels. However, fuel switching has been hampered by a lack of access to alternative fuel sources, unaffordable costs when available and the low use of improved fish-smoking stoves. Charcoal is encouraged as a cleaner biomass to fuelwood in fish smoking but it is costlier. Also, local fish smokers exhibit a string of biases against fuelwood. As a result, charcoal continues to play second fiddle to fuelwood.

Charcoal, however, is a wood product and, like fuelwood, contributes to forest depletion. The charcoal supply chain sector is informal, poorly regulated and has its own share of challenges of quality and unsustainability. There are no clear indications or means of verifying locations where trees are felled or whether they are harvested from sustainable wood lots. Wood species may not be known and the major production technique—use of earthen kilns—is inefficient with small-scale producers using more wood to produce little charcoal with higher emissions, compared to emerging carbonization techniques. There may be a lot of intermediaries in the supply chain,

PROJECT ID -57



Mud oven with layers of fish trays in Lagos State, Nigeria. Traditional fish-smoking kilns, characterized by fuel inefficiencies, consume more fuelwood than necessary and contribute to forest depletion

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with skewed profits going to some over others. This could lead to sharp practices such as packing or bagging lower weights of charcoal or deliberate mixing or adding impurities to make up the standard weights before it gets to the end user.


#### Potential alternatives

Alternative fuels that could reduce wood consumption are rarely used as fuel; instead, they are used to improve the properties of smoked fish for better sales or to improve fuelwood combustion. Agro-wastes are potential alternative fuels that are easily available but have been poorly investigated in the production of carbonized biomass

briquettes. Bamboo, sawdust/wood shavings, rice husks, groundnut shells, melon seed shells, and invasive aquatic plants such as water hyacinth, to mention a few, are good candidates. The abundance and availability of such biomass make it ideal.

Paras 7.2 and 7.5 of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (the SSF Guidelines) state the following: support improvements to facilitate women's participation in the post-harvest subsector; avoid post-harvest losses and waste; and seek ways to create value addition, building also on existing traditional and local cost-efficient technologies, local innovations and culturally appropriate technology transfers. The SSF Guidelines also emphasized promotion of environmentally sustainable practices within an ecosystem approach, deterring waste of inputs like fuelwood in small-scale fish handling and processing. Converting wastes into wealth helps solve the environmental problems and challenges water hyacinth poses to several fishing communities and livelihoods highly dependent on fisheries in West Africa.

#### Advantages

Finally, biomass briquettes may offer competitive economic, social and nutritional advantages over charcoal and fuelwood in fish smoking. Though very little empirical research has been done in these areas, the prospects are quite real, just waiting to be tapped by the informal sector. 

#### For more



##### A Capital Choice

[https://www.icsf.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Sam\\_88\\_art10\\_Nigeria\\_Capital\\_Choice.pdf](https://www.icsf.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Sam_88_art10_Nigeria_Capital_Choice.pdf)

##### A Heavy Blow

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##### Fear of Flight

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# Flush for Change

**On-board bio-toilets help minimize accidents at sea, prevent marine pollution and foster healthier ecosystems**

A workplace should have a roof, proper flooring, entry and exit points, along with sufficient space for movement during emergency. The floor surface should be flat, stable and dry; it should be appropriate for the nature of work involved. The workplace should also have good lighting and ventilation, so that workers are safe and they breathe clean air. It is also necessary to protect the workers from extreme weather while working. A space for dining, rest places for sick workers, drinking water facilities, and toilets and hand-washing facilities are some of the other basic requirements in the workplace.

Fisher's workplace is their vessels that, often, do not provide the basic facilities. Life on a floating workplace is unsafe. While fishing technology is developing very fast, boat-making techniques and the conditions of onboard facilities lag behind. This problem demands serious interventions from governments, research institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other organizations.

Toilets are basic requirements that fishing vessels do not have. One reason for the large number of accidents at sea is the use of the gunwale as a toilet. If a fisher falls from a moving boat while using the toilet, chances are he will hit the propeller and meet his end.

Boat size depends on the type of fishing and the physical conditions of where they operate. Due to space restrictions onboard, toilets are not included in the design. A one-day fishing boat is smaller than a multi-day boat; a deep-sea fishing vessel is larger than a stay-fishing boat. Mostly, the

space is just about sufficient for fishing equipment. The task for boatbuilders, then, is to design toilet models to fit the space restrictions without affecting the work.

In 2016, a team of volunteers took on the task of finding a suitable boat under a pilot project of the Association of Deep Sea Going Artisanal Fishermen (ADSGAF), situated in the southern part of the Indian state of Tamil Nadu. It found support from the Madras Section of Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Artisanal (IEEE), an association of technical professionals in

**While fishing technology is developing very fast, boat making techniques and the conditions of onboard facilities lag behind**

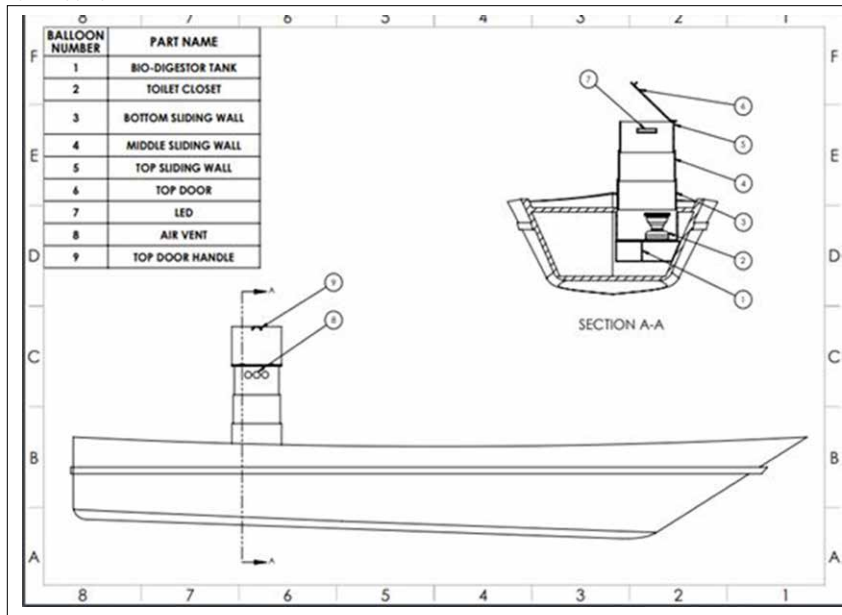
the south Indian state under its Special Interested Group on Humanitarian Technology (SIGHT) programme.

The team was able to select a boat under a subsidy scheme of the state's fisheries department, which required the boat to have a toilet. The team consulted bio-toilet makers from Indian Railways and other service providers of bio-toilets.

It did not yield results. After the project team members left, it became difficult to find volunteers and support staff. Yet, the idea of providing a toilet on a fishing boat was not given up. In 2021, a 3D modelling and designer joined the team. The work got going again. After continuous discussions with the fishermen, a model was designed for boats with no wheelhouse.

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AJITH. K. / SIFFS



Engineering Drawing. Bio-toilets can be installed on varying types of fishing boats such as outboard motor-fitted fibre-reinforced plastic (FRP) boats and inboard motor (IBM)-fitted FRP boats, steel boats, as well as on wooden boats engaged in trawling, purse-seining, gillnetting and longlining

size and requirements, the bio-digester tank can be designed and installed conveniently anywhere on board the vessels.

In 2021, a real bio-toilet type was prepared and fitted to the model boat kept for demonstration at the boatyard of the South Indian Federation of Fishermen Societies (SIFFS) at Veli, Thiruvananthapuram, India. The four feet by three feet cabin enclosed a Western-style closet with flush tank, hand shower and wash basin, along with a 500-litre biodigester and a solar-powered lamp. The cabin size can be further reduced if space is constrained.

### Spreading the habit

This toilet's purpose is to spread the habit of using toilets on board fishing boats. Those who come to the boatyard to buy boats do visit the toilet; no one has shown interest in having them installed on their own boats. After officials from the fisheries department of the neighbouring state of Kerala learnt of the facility, they began encouraging the fishermen to avail of it. Eventually, two owners got interested.

*Nabesu*, IND KL 08 MM 2564 is the name of a boat in Kannur owned by a person called Usman. Ancil D'cunha is the owner of a boat named *Shymol*, IND KL 05 MM 2275, at Azhekode. Both of them came forward to have toilets installed in their boats. It is not difficult at the time of building the boat to fabricate the toilet cabins, fit them with bio-digesters and plumbing, and carry out related work. Yet it is very difficult to implement all these on an existing boat. A great deal of manpower went into fitting the toilets in *Nabesu* and *Shymol*. A team of six workers stayed at it for 10 days in two schedules.

The two boat owners and the fisheries officials were co-operative from the beginning and until the work's completion. SIFFS's working team established a communication mechanism with the two boats to assess the performance of the toilets.

The bio-digester technology is the important component of a bio-toilet, which is more expensive than the toilet designs in use. The unique bio-toilet

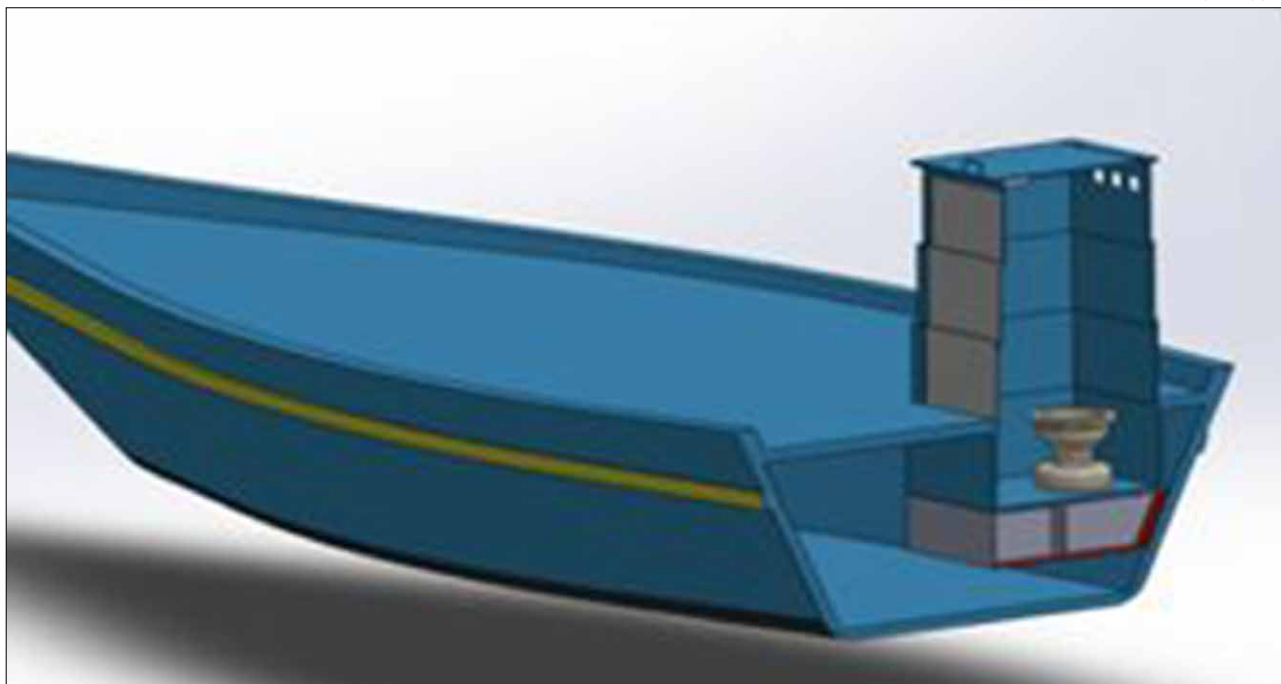
### Hardware parts

In this model, the closet and other hardware parts are fixed under the deck; its length is three feet, width two-and-a-half feet and it has a depth of one-and-a-half feet. The dimensions can be customized according to the boat's size.

The top portion of the toilet area is closed with a door. Three levels of vertically sliding walls one-and-a-half feet high cover it. Depending on the convenience of the users, the height can be adjusted to the maximum of six feet. It provides ample space for ventilation and ingress-egress.

In another model, the bio-digester is fixed either underneath the closet area or under the deck, based on convenience. Users open the top door of the toilet and close it after using it. This does not need any extra space to be allocated for the fishers over the deck.

Bio-toilets can be installed on varying types of fishing boats such as outboard motor-fitted fibre-reinforced plastic (FRP) boats and inboard motor (IBM)-fitted FRP boats, steel boats, as well as on wooden boats engaged in trawling, purse-seining, gillnetting and longlining. Depending upon the



Bio-toilet design. Toilets are basic requirements that fishing boats do not have. One reason for the large number of accidents at sea is the use of the gunwale as a toilet

decomposes human excreta, using bacteria to convert it into methane gas, water and rich, moist and soil-like material. It eliminates the direct discharge of septage in the sea. The discharge into sea meets pollution standards. Its design can be modified according to the requirements of the end-users. The toilet offers a waste-free solution. It is expensive to build now but further research is expected to reduce costs in the future.

Features of the bio-digester toilet:

- \* Anaerobic waste degradation
- \* Decomposes 99 percent of the waste
- \* Maintenance-free
- \* No need for sludge removal
- \* Discharge from tank is hazard-free water, odourless and colourless
- \* Requires one-third the space needed for a septic tank

It is common now for the houses of fishers in South India to have more than one toilet. The majority of the users are women, aged people, employees and students. The active fishermen are still using the seashore as their toilet. This may be one of the reasons for the deliberate avoidance of toilets

on fishing boats. A generation imbued with the habit of using the seashore as a toilet cannot be changed overnight.

#### Fewer accidents

One can only anticipate that custom and practice may give way to change. Certainly, encouraging bio-toilets on fishing boats can minimize the rate of accidents at sea and can also contribute to a clean ocean and healthy ecosystems.

#### For more



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# A Script for Success

**A group of Indigenous Peoples of the Western Brazilian Amazon have organized themselves around biodiversity conservation**

22

**T**he Paumari people of the Tapaua River are known as the ‘water people’. They belong to the Arawa linguistic family of the Western Brazilian Amazon, traditionally inhabiting rivers and lakes. Fishing is their strongest social and cultural representation. The Paumari’s aquatic skills have long been described in the literature, including their voracious spirit for water, fishing, catching turtles and manatees. Fishing is the basis of the Paumari people’s sustenance and self-reliance.

Historically, they inhabited the floodplains of the Purus river and its tributaries. They were also known as the ‘Purus nomads’ due to their navigational mobility in the middle stretch of the river and its tributaries. Their traditional dwellings, built atop rafts and sailing rafts, are called flutuantes.

The Paumari is among the few groups of Indigenous Peoples of the middle Purus river who managed to survive Brazil’s rubber booms without armed confrontations. The booms devastated other Amazonian peoples of the Purus in the mid-19th century. And in 1998, the Brazilian government demarcated the Paumari’s three Indigenous Lands (ILs) on the Tapaua River: Paumari ILs of Lake Manissua, Lake Parica and Lake Cuniua.

Commercial fishing stands out among the countless impacts of the non-indigenous world on the Paumari; artisanal small-scale fishing is intrinsic to their culture. But the informal trade system has pushed them deeper into exploitative relationships. The Paumari supplied their regional fish and other products to the Amazon’s urban centres. That, in turn, depleted their territorial fish stocks and jeopardized their food security.

By 2008 the Paumari were willing to upturn the predatory trade practices. They sought territorial management autonomy and asserted their rights. As part of this, they began to prepare the Territorial and Environmental Management Plan (TEMP); it was designed to sustainably manage the pirarucu fish (*Arapaima gigas*).

The underlining principle was environmental conservation. It required the community to organize itself. They also strengthened territorial surveillance in the following years. Such efforts have combined to increase the pirarucu stocks in the ILs by 631 percent over the past 15 years. It has been consolidated as a successful experience in productive areas due to good practices and investments in infrastructure to guarantee the quality of the fish.

The Paumari culture is traditionally closely related to fishing and aquatic environments. All the work that promoted the paradigm shift and a leap in socio-environmental development for the people evolved through pirarucu management. It leveraged social organization and the generation and distribution of income. The traditional capacity for social organization led them to create in 2019 the Indigenous Association of the People of the Waters (AIPA for Associação Indígena do Povo das Águas), providing them formal representation before the Brazilian government, expanding their capacity to act inside and outside the ILs.

## The SSF Guidelines

Considering their values and their campaign, the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF) stepped in to support the Paumari in 2022. In partnership with AIPA and the Operação Amazônia Nativa (OPAN), ICSF invited the Paumari to strengthen their campaign

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### Operacao Amazonia Nativa (OPAN)

OPAN is Brazil's first indigenist organization. For 52 years, it has worked to strengthen indigenous leadership in various locations among people facing multiple challenges. It values the indigenous cultures and models of social organization, encouraging them by training people on autonomous and sustainable management practices for their territories and natural resources. OPAN operates in the states of Mato Grosso and Amazonas. Since 2008, it has worked continuously with the Paumari people of the Tapaua River, supporting them in strengthening their territorial management and implementing sustainable management of pirarucu.

by implementing the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (the SSF Guidelines). It aimed to engage the youth to value traditional fishing by discussing the relationship between the SSF Guidelines, traditional fishing and the Paumari culture.

The training was held in the second half of 2022; it focused on instructing five Paumari in the 14-22 age group on audio-visual edu-communication. They produced audio-visual content related to the implementation of the SSF Guidelines and the Paumari culture. The training moved in three stages, two

of which were in-person and one was inter-modal.

The first stage introduced basic knowledge of equipment, terminology and planning for image collection. The inter-modal stage involved capturing images and sounds in the ILs, following the script established in the first workshop. The images were selected in the second in-person stage, after which began the editing. A professional technical team finalized the process later.

The training created an atmosphere for the young people to build awareness of concepts and practices related to planning activities, creating

ANA CATARINA / OPAN



The Paumari, Brazil. The Paumari is among the few groups of Indigenous Peoples of the middle Purus river who managed to survive Brazil's rubber booms without armed confrontations

ADRIANO GAMBARINI / OPAN



The Paumari fishermen traditionally practice bow fishing, dive for turtles, and use harpoons for fish and manatees

needs, difficulties and challenges. Strengthening the youth is essential for the Paumari communities' continuity and development. They are now participating considerably more in management work such as territorial surveillance and pirarucu inventory and fishing.

The youth are noticeably interested in online tools and social media. The Internet is more present in the communities' daily lives today. However, it is still new to them and they lack experience; the Internet often leads to weaker perceptions of their own world and of Brazil's political and social contexts. This highlights the need to enable dialogue to help understand audio-visual and internet communication tools.

A documentary film is the final product of the training and shows how the young underwent such a process. They posed their questions to delineate the Paumari fishing culture of the past and the present, addressing the social organization for the struggle for human rights within the Paumari ILS of the Tapaua River.

Collective fishing is a means for indigenous peoples in Brazil to fight to stay within the ILS and secure their rights. Indigenous populations are highly vulnerable and protecting their territories require complex strategies. Communication has also been identified as a powerful tool to equip the younger generation for the challenges that lie ahead. 3

an understanding of both individual and collective responsibilities. It also provided an opportunity for them to understand the elementary principles of audio-visual and cinematic terminology. Bringing new forms to document old practices also gave them a sense of pride in their customs.

The Paumari traditionally practice bow fishing, they dive for turtles, and use harpoons for fish and manatees. They also use nylon gill-nets incorporated from the non-indigenous world, depending on the interests and needs of the people.

Pirarucu management follows an annual schedule. It involves men, women and the young engaging in territorial surveillance, meetings and fishing activity. The principles taught during the sessions are already a noticeable part of the Paumari people of Tapaua. That training allowed the value of the Paumari people's culture and pirarucu handling to be seen, especially by the youth, who now face the great challenge of rural exodus. Paumari youth have increasingly seen the exodus as an alternative to a life in their region; many have left the territory in search of education and financial resources.

AIPA addresses everyone's present needs. It's devised strategies to increasingly involve young people in activities; it understands their

#### For more

**The importance of Fisheries Management, Purus River, Labrea, State of Amazonas, Brazil**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SeYuCqYY4B8>

**Operação Amazônia Nativa (OPAN): OPAN**

[www.amazonianativa.org.br](http://www.amazonianativa.org.br)



# More than Joining the Dots

A free online course offers training and tools to better understand the complex nexus between climate change and poverty, preparing participants to work for a sustainable future

**W**e are increasingly aware that climate change, vulnerability and poverty interact in multiple ways globally, contributing to interconnected cycles of negative impacts. This climate-poverty nexus challenges the efforts of coastal communities and small-scale fisheries (SSF) to build resilience. In this article, we present several new tools, including a recent report and a new free online course, co-designed and led by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the University of the West Indies (UWI) that offer frameworks and approaches for addressing the nexus.

Coastal small-scale fisheries communities around the world are on the front line of climate change impacts. They face unprecedented increases in the frequency and severity of acute weather events, like hurricanes, as also the ever-increasing chronic damage from slow-onset stressors like coral bleaching. Changes to marine systems are accompanied by increasing stressors and associated impacts on the terrestrial side. These include changes to rainfall patterns affecting freshwater availability as well as flooding and stormwater runoff impacting infrastructure and nearshore habitats. These impacts are also closely linked with social dimensions.

Coastal communities and SSF are disproportionately affected by climate change, due to a combination of factors such as high exposure to hazards, socioeconomic marginalization and vulnerability, inadequate infrastructure. They also lack access to services such as healthcare and social protection such as insurance or employment benefits. Repeated and continued exposure to shocks and stressors erodes the assets used for recovery, in a cycle of worsening existing vulnerabilities, creating

new poverty. Many communities, organizations and countries are struggling to adapt to these challenges. At the same time, there is a significant adaptation gap, apparent in the inadequate and inequitable allocation of climate finance globally to support

**Without effective policies and practical actions that work together, the livelihoods of millions of small-scale fishers are at risk...**

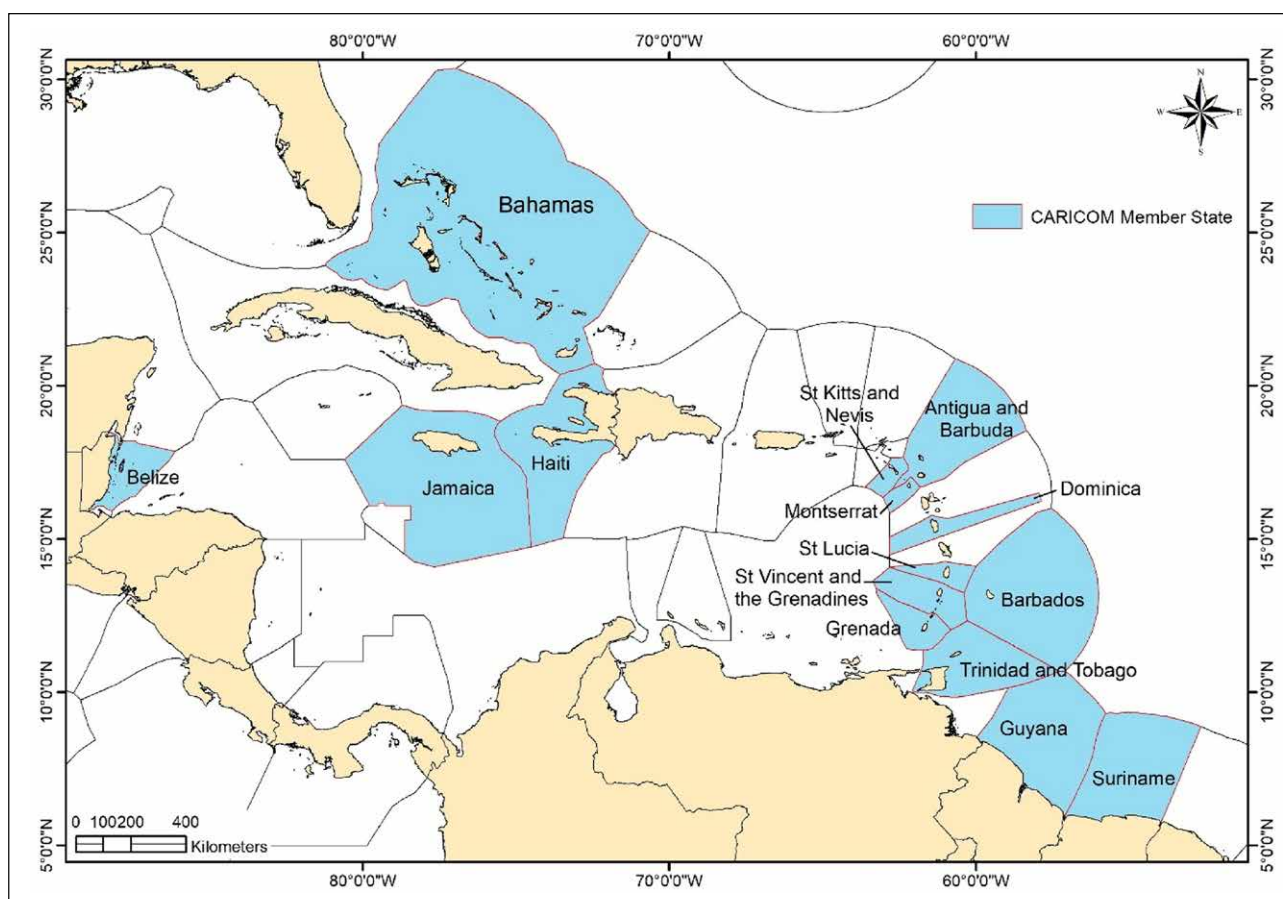
coastal communities and small island developing states (SIDS) seeking to build resilience.

To address these issues, urgent action is needed in key areas, including knowledge, policy, finance and on-the-ground action. Without effective policies and practical actions that work together, the livelihoods of millions of small-scale fishers are at risk, along with the food security of millions of people who rely on fish as a primary source of protein. Both the course and report discussed in this article offer insights and tools to improve the co-ordination between climate responses and poverty-reduction efforts in the fisheries sector to address this deficit of adaptive capacity.

## Climate agenda

The report is titled: **Addressing the climate change and poverty nexus: A coordinated approach in the context of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement** (Charles et al. 2019). It provides a framework to effectively link actions and policy towards achieving the goals of the climate agenda (mitigation and adaptation) and the development agenda (poverty reduction and food security). This includes designing and

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Source: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/08920753.2022.2082835>.

Figure 1. CARICOM Member States and the ocean areas under their jurisdiction

implementing climate responses more coherently with poverty reduction and food security measures, in a manner that is inclusive. It has five key elements:

- \* Applying a pro-poor lens and including targeted poverty-reduction actions in climate mitigation and adaptation;
- \* Climate-sensitive poverty reduction and food-security initiatives;
- \* Cross-cutting and sectoral synergies of climate and development agendas;
- \* Inter-sectoral and institutional coherence and co-ordination; and
- \* Strengthening and supporting local initiatives.

The online learning course, 'Addressing the Climate Change and Poverty Nexus', offers practical tools and approaches to address the linked challenges. It aims to support local leaders and sectoral organizations, policymakers and others working in coastal communities and with SSF. Co-developed by FAO and UWI's Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies and the

Global Institute for Climate Smart and Resilient Development, it brings together information/data from various disciplines and policy areas. It also offers tools to support innovation and the design of targeted, place-based approaches.

In this way, the course intends to strengthen awareness, motivation, understanding and capacity. It does so by supporting local, regional and national actors (sectoral organizations, inter-governmental organizations or IGOs), governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to advocate for and implement policies and good practices that will result in more equitable and inclusive Blue Transformation, one that prioritizes climate justice and resilient fishing communities.

A pilot edition of the online course was offered in 2022 from May to June. It included self-paced learning and seminar-style group dialogues, with 55 invited participants from fisheries, climate, development and environmental conservation sectors in 13

Caribbean countries. Following this, in November 2022, a live panel discussion was held with course organizers, alumni and invited specialists at the COP 25 Virtual Ocean Pavilion. Panel members shared insights and key lessons from the course, and discussed how they were able to put some of the tools and concepts into practice at institutional and local community levels.

### Life experiences

In Trinidad and Tobago, researchers undertook a Rapid Climate-Poverty Vulnerability Assessment of the small fishing village of Orange Valley. The community of 400 people already experiences general socio-economic challenges such as crime, piracy at sea, marine pollution and, more recently, increasing flooding. Focus-group discussions encompassed women, youth and the elderly who reside in the community.

Residents were eager to share their livelihood experiences, the role of the local and national agencies affecting their livelihoods and how weather events have affected and could further impact their livelihoods. From these discussions emanated the revelations that transient poverty affects the majority of households, a result of the volatility of fish and shrimp landings, due to seasonality, and declining landings.

Through community engagement and sensitization workshops with villagers, including primary school children, possible changes in fish landings and income due to climate change was discussed. However, residents have been resilient. They generally keep stores of frozen fish at home as a reserve protein source in the short term to reduce their vulnerability. This community engagement was successful in raising awareness of how climate change could impact the mix of fish landings, incomes and household diet and food security. It also encouraged youth to explore new livelihood approaches. It highlighted the need for the community to develop more long-term adaptation strategies.

As noted by one course alumni, in theory the climate-poverty relationship is apparent. But the depth of these

intertwined challenges become truly evident when you move from the classroom out into the field. In Guyana, following the course, the alumni collaborated with government technicians and aquaculture farmers who grow brackishwater fish and shrimp along the Corentyne Coast to implement a suite of training to improve the climate resilience of their enterprise. It was clear during the fieldwork how brackishwater farmers are quick to perceive their own climate vulnerability, relating decline in productivity during weather events to the sensitivity and exposure of their farms.

During the field training, specific modules targeted gaps in knowledge of production systems, and identified mangrove restoration as an exercise to build resilience to some of the physical impacts being experienced. As a result of the training, farmers have new tools to support thinking more critically of these inter-related phenomena. They are applying this new knowledge to mobilize resources from the UNDP Small Grants Programme for expanding mangrove restoration along the coastline, having an improved appreciation of their economic significance to brackish aquaculture.

Another course alumni and panelist from Jamaica observed that the forum provided an opportunity to concretize the value of the course, while highlighting important achievements in the climate change and poverty arena at the country level. It further facilitated reflection on what more needs to be done to strengthen multi-sectoral collaboration and implementation approaches that embrace the nexus and enable integration at all levels.

Climate change and poverty dynamics require careful consideration. The inclusion of stakeholders is key, specifically those residents of fishing and coastal communities who are most vulnerable to shocks and hazards. Social protection and poverty-reduction systems must be proactive and responsive in addressing the various needs of these groups. Through relevant programmes, institutional mechanisms and policies, Jamaica continues to build climate resilience and adaptation, while seeking to reduce informality,



strengthen access to social protection and build economic resilience among these groups.

### Promoting spaces

In sum, a key message from the report and the course is in recognizing that understanding integrated issues and approaches is more than simply joining the dots. We need to deepen our understanding of how the climate-poverty nexus impacts coastal communities and SIDS, SSF and the production of aquatic foods. Fisheries sector leaders and professionals working in climate, fisheries and social sectors need spaces that promote connecting, communicating and working with each other, to share data and perspectives and better understand the multiple issues, the ways that multiple shocks and stressors interact to increase vulnerability and worsen impacts, and the extent and distribution of these impacts.


Through this type of engagement, we can work to build the skills to recognize and communicate the interlinked problems clearly to colleagues and stakeholders, as well as developing and testing actionable tools. Further, developing this integrated understanding is an important entry point to ensuring that available resources are used efficiently and for the greatest benefit to those who most need it.

What is needed to address the nexus is often not more policy but better policy that considers coasts, fisheries and poverty in established processes for, say, climate action. Social protection can be one such type of better policy, a key investment that can be implemented with an integrated approach to help move people out of climate and social vulnerability towards well-being. Specifically, measures such as cash transfers, food assistance and insurance programmes can provide a safety net for small-scale fishers during times of environmental shocks, such as storms or droughts. Linkages with Early Warning Systems can help improve preparedness and reduce vulnerability.

Combined, this can help to reduce the economic and social impacts of climate change, allowing communities that experience high

levels of vulnerability to maintain their livelihoods and build resilience to future shocks. Additionally, by promoting sustainable fishing practices and reducing overfishing, social-protection policies can contribute to long-term conservation efforts and support the achievement of broader development goals, such as poverty reduction and food security.

Perhaps above all, fisherfolk organizations need to continue to be better engaged overall in sharing knowledge, building skills, planning and implementing for resilience. The free self-paced version of the course, 'Addressing the Climate Change and Poverty Nexus', is currently available online. The course takes an estimated 20 hours to complete and is co-certified by UWI and FAO.

Registering for this course offers a unique opportunity to deepen your knowledge and understanding of the complex and interconnected issues surrounding climate change, poverty and fisheries. Through engaging course modules and real-world case studies, you will learn about innovative strategies and policies to promote sustainable and resilient fisheries, reduce poverty and food insecurity, and mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change. By taking part in the course, you will become better equipped to contribute to a more equitable and sustainable future for our oceans and coastal communities, and to play an active role in the global efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement targets. 

### For more



#### Addressing the Climate Change and Poverty Nexus

<https://www.fao.org/in-action/capacitacion-politicas-publicas/cursos/ver/es/c/1608767/?submit=Course+overview>

#### Live panel session at COP 25 Virtual Ocean Pavilion

<https://youtu.be/ywwl8Ub5H1I>

#### Social Protection for fisheries and aquaculture - FAO's work

<https://www.fao.org/in-action/social-protection-for-fisheries-and-aquaculture/en>

# Politics or Policy?

## Reflections on a recent workshop on India's National Fisheries Policy (Inland)

**T**he Training of Trainers workshop on the National Fisheries Policy (Inland) in December 2022 in Kolkata was a great learning experience for the participants. Just that this time around, the learning was of a different nature. It was not from data, facts, meetings or experiences but from many uncomfortable realizations. A vote of thanks is due to ICSF for organizing it. However, a critique of the nature of participation and the tenor of voices is also important.

Every workshop, by design, follows an arc of narratives. Scientists and government representatives, some with a double role, speak about the problems facing inland fisheries, followed by their (almost always successful) solutions and future challenges. They speak about the revenue side and the welfare side of fisheries management in India's inland waters, providing a canvas across states. This discourse is largely based on facts and figures, yet partly driven by a subconscious ideology of modernist neoliberalism. According to eminent rights advocates present at the workshop, it was another version of top-down control cloaked in terms of welfare or justice. Fisher groups then respond saying that these big numbers and platitudes barely address issues they are facing on the ground.

One of the strengths of ICSF workshops is how they always provide this democratic, deliberative space. It is an encouraging attribute for those at the margins, who are not from the government nor aligned with fishing groups or the organizers. The core contention in the debate above is not new; but the management of that debate should be fresh—one workshop at a time.

However, three months after the workshop, what registers prominently is the political oppositions at all costs, especially from the louder rights advocates. The aim of a workshop is

mutual learning, neither consensus-building nor political polarizing. And so, we must grapple with what this tough rights-centred politics on the fisher groups' side may mean for the future of ecosystem-based management of inland small-scale fisheries (SSF).

With the National Fisheries Policy in the public consultation and revision process, and in light of the SSF Guidelines, the much-touted 'Ecosystem Approach' to fisheries management is soon to occupy its own policy niche in India. The phrase has not much traction beyond a buzzword because issues of people's rights and ownership remain unaddressed in the highly diversified and sprawling enterprise of inland fisheries.

**With the National Fisheries Policy in the public consultation and revision process, and in light of the SSF Guidelines, the much-touted 'Ecosystem Approach' to fisheries management is soon to occupy its own policy niche in India**

The low interest in ecosystem-based management probably stems from the belief that after communities have control of their fishery habitat and resources, an ecosystem-based approach will magically follow. Because communities will always have the intrinsic knowledge, wisdom, and foresight to understand and implement it. Importantly and arguably, this may not be true in most cases. Like all institutions, community institutions comprise people and their failings. So there is no rational reason, except faith, in expecting them to be better or worse than state or civil society organizations.

### Numerous experiences

Experiences from numerous SSF across the world show that, as much as collective action and equitable

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ICSF



A group photo. The aim of a workshop is mutual learning, neither consensus-building nor political polarizing. And so, we must grapple with what this tough rights-centred politics on the fisher groups' side may mean for the future of ecosystem-based management of inland SSF

management successes, narrowly focusing on rights had led to escalated conflicts, fragmentation and weakening of local informal codes and institutions (Kelkar and Arthur, 2022). It has also resulted in the abdication of responsibilities towards sustainability, environmental conservation, and ethical fisheries development (Bromley, 2009). There's no denying that the demand for rights and rightful 'stakes' in fisheries by community groups is absolutely critical. But increasingly so, the demand for rights is becoming narrower and narrower, with the mention of attendant responsibilities, social or environmental, being conveniently side-lined.

Politics is central and essential to organization and institutional management and use of resources by people. It allows for articulation of shared interests, of rightful demands to reverse long-drawn and normalized socio-economic inequities and injustices. Politics also creates ground for assertions that communities—and not the state machinery—are the naturally-selected institutions for taking decisions on resources. However, when these demands for entitlements become the end rather than a means to the larger goals of equity, justice, or sustainability, there is a problem of self-negation.

This can become a risk when fishers' interests regard themselves as sovereign in their sphere, as seen in the statements

of some workshop participants. In the process, it can disregard any other economic and ecological concerns of society. Researchers have pointed out multiple contradictions within the rights space in fisheries (Song and Solimann, 2019); between universal and specific rights, between rights to harvest and the duty to conserve, and between rights for individuals and community rights. Since this process begins with locating all State and civil society supporters as their sworn enemies, scope for any collaboration diminishes, and any such engagement is seen as weakness rather than conciliation.

Unfortunately, this can become the undoing of the activists' own cause. With a hard-line frame utilized to view all problems, everything appears dark and unfair only outside the community, and the scope for self-checks and constructive reform within the community shrinks. There are critical development concerns facing fishers.

### Social welfare

Continued lack of access to social welfare schemes is a big one there, as is increasing involvement in crime, as seen with many inland capture fisheries turning into a criminal political economy. The first part is a structural crisis, the second part is a combination of fishers' agency and opportunism. School dropouts among fishers' children, or health issues



among women and aged fishers, are all severe problems. But are rights-centred political demands helping change the situation? At least in my experience, they have not, what with the absence of constructive political discourse.

The workshop had surprising moments of vicious attacks by several activists against cooperative institutions. It is true, as they repeatedly emphasized, that cooperatives have been functioning poorly, faced elite capture, and were being managed by corrupt functionaries, among other problems. But to respond to historical trust deficits by blaming cooperatives for taking away fishers' rights was a revelation.

It was also ironic that the same fisher representatives who showed utter lack of faith in even a pale shadow of the State, also demanded, in the same breath, numerous benefits and help from the State entities. To think of it, the demand for fishers' rights to resources, having come from disillusionment with the State functionaries in the first place, should also be accompanied by alternative and confident visions of fisheries sustainability and community development. As those visions were sorely absent or missing, the way out of the crises of scale facing fishers and fish resources have to be addressed with collaborative efforts. Surprisingly, the seekers of rights consider this anathema.

The rhetoric from the scientists' is worth noting also. Scientists of fisheries research institutions at once highlight both 'overfishing' and 'unexplored or potential yield' in inland fisheries as problems of overcapacity as well as underutilization. Overfishing does not leave any potential yield to explore unless fishers start harvesting anything that comes their way. If there are still 'yield gaps', that is, the difference between actual yield and potential yield, then where is the overfishing?

It is a basic question with far-reaching ramifications. From a conservation standpoint, all fishing is overfishing. From a fisheries revenue standpoint, all fishing is under-fishing. This is seen in the way the state fishery departments have been mostly about exploitation of fishery resources. (At the fisheries department office in

Port Blair, a sculpture of smiling shark had a message inscribed on it to this effect: Exploit me for my fins, my skin, my meat.) But when both seem to be happening at once, the fisher becomes both an imprudent resource exploiter as well as a conservative and pessimistic entrepreneur.

Both perceptions may not be true, even though they appear so because of the desperation fishers face in overcoming poverty and social barriers, and adapting to declining and uncertain fish catches. The fishers display resilience in continuing to fish despite their resource base being degraded by dams, water pollution, climate change, and weakening of local institutions. Scientists need to examine that resilience in order to become more acutely understanding of socio-cultural-economic bottlenecks to address problems affecting inland fisheries.

The weakening of local institutions stares in the eye the optimistic faith and vain romantic belief in community power. One activist said he feels energized by the 'consciousness' he senses in local meetings. Event-energy, however, should not be confounded with daily practice, the gaps in which would become apparent if one incisively dissected what community itself has become today.

Community rights are easier imagined than implemented, for the simple reason that the so-framed community consists of increasingly desperate individuals. Inland fishers are rapidly exiting fisheries and migrating to far corners as workshops continue and national policies get developed. In this fickle age of opportunist daily-earning livelihoods and volatile economics, it is increasingly difficult to afford altruism. A common refrain among the poorest fishers during numerous discussions is that they cannot afford to sit in meetings. They would rather fish; even as the better off among their community do not fish anyway but always organize and attend the same meetings.

With these difficult-to-accept realities, why continue holding the belief that only communities can secure social justice or environment? With the notion of community being nebulous, only faith can lead us to promote community-based management as the

panacea for all governance problems in inland fisheries. Community organizations, even if strengthened and reinvigorated, can only be one of the institutions among the larger mix, and cooperative arrangements would be inevitable, even though they would limit politics of rights and rhetoric.

What is the scope for placing concerns of ecological responsibilities and biodiversity conservation, perhaps the most basic need for fisheries sustainability, in the intensively cultivated landscape of rights and demands? Because these concerns matter more, or at least as much as those of human development, equity, justice, ethics, and compliance, it is disappointing to see a rapidly declining scope for them within rights-centric political positioning.

The 'ecosystem' in the ecosystem-based approach, unfortunately, seems to be turning into a space in which the narrowly self-centred political subspecies of *Homo sapiens* can thrive. One cannot help but wonder if it is just 'politics-based fisheries management' that fisher activists and organizations target in the name of ecosystem-based fisheries management.

The workshop might have gone closer to its aim with a more representative and diverse selection of workshop participants, with wider geographic scope and state quotas delimited. Apart from representation being highly uneven, decibel power and prior participation seemed to be two obvious self-selecting variables. The contingents of Odisha and West Bengal had several experienced members, not all of them trainers, probably due to their proximity. Only Maharashtra and Assam had one or two with genuine trainer-level experience and contextual understanding.


The number from two very important Gangetic plains states was zero and two, respectively, and those who attended from the latter were local politicians who barely knew the basics of the National Fisheries Policy or the SSF Guidelines. Representatives from two other states barely attended most sessions. The organizers would need to push for a more well-rounded and careful selection of participants, moving forward, if such workshops

have to achieve the goals of knowledge transfer and mutual learning, rather than hearing the same problems and shouting over and over again, *ad nauseum*.

Notwithstanding the above observations, there's no need for pessimism or cynicism. We can collectively work towards resource-sustainable, environmentally-conscious, economically equitable, and socially just inland fisheries management in the future. Fisher collectives and unions, and their activists and advocates, have been giving voice and representation to many marginalized and neglected groups. They need to continue doing this important work, but probably not by staying dismissive or unseeing of the changing micro-political and economic realities within communities.

The romance of activist consciousness cannot be a delusional one about the virtues of imagined or supposedly united communities. Moving towards ethical fisheries would need to involve a careful revisiting of what and how demands for rights, and whose rights, are prioritized. And, in the process, who may be left out. Accordingly, demands for rights will have to be tempered with a more thoughtful, inclusive engagement for concerns about socio-economic, community-based development and environmental conservation.

### Democratic dialogue

These goals have to be joint, not one following another. One hopes that future workshops develop new ways and means for dialogue that remain democratic and healthily dissenting but also work towards problem-solving with a collaborative orientation across the political and institutional bouquet necessary for fisher communities and fisheries development. 

#### For more



#### National Training of Trainers (TOT) Workshop (Inland Fisheries) on the SSF Guidelines

<https://www.icsf.net/resources/icsf-tot-inland-fisheries-2022/>

# Creating a Cadre

**Inland fishers and activists mingled with experts at a workshop on training of trainers on India's fisheries policy**

A prerequisite for implementing the 'Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication' (the SSF Guidelines) is to mainstream these into the State's policy and legal framework. In inland fisheries, this task proves stupendous for several reasons. Chief among them is the diffused nature of resources and the continuing unorganized and unempowered nature of stakeholders at the grassroots.

The problem is further compounded in inland fisheries by the poor tenure system or, rather, the lack of it. Many fishers still operate under customary and traditional tenure rights that are ill-defined and are not mainstreamed into any legal or policy instruments. Thus, they are often exploited by vested interests working against social equity and environmental sustainability. Such flawed tenure systems can undermine all efforts to put in place development processes adhering to the SSF Guidelines.

The International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF) has been active in addressing this. It has organized events that catalyze efforts by the authorities at the policy and legislative levels to mainstream the principles of sustainable and equitable development of the SSF sector. ICSF events address international conventions and norms like the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF), the ecosystem approach to fisheries (EAF) and the SSF Guidelines.

During the two key workshops on implementation of the SSF Guidelines held in 2019, ICSF found it necessary to adopt a trainers' training approach. This is effective in creating awareness among the fishers so that they can become partners in removing the obstacles in mainstreaming the principles of the SSF Guidelines. Further to such efforts, ICSF organized a National Training of Trainers (TOT) Workshop for Inland Fisheries in

Kolkata on December 22-24, 2022. In attendance were key fishworker representatives from the states of Assam, Bihar, Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala, Maharashtra, Manipur, Odisha, Rajasthan and West Bengal.

The training programme tackled recognizing fishers' tenure rights, their participation in resource management, the recognition of their rights to development and to create social safety nets for protection and security. This is important to actually obtain legitimate tenure rights of the fishers, enabling them to play their role in implementing the SSF Guidelines.

The workshop helped create a cadre of trainers for training, preparing them to make the fishers and fishing communities aware of the present situation and explore ways to correct the situation so as to become key players in creating their future. The trainers obtained valuable inputs and knowledge from experts and researchers. The highlights included the voluntary participation of a set of leaders who offered to be the trainers, and the presence of a large number of fishers who attended both individually and through their organizations. The translators played a basic role in interpreting the experts' views to the fishers from various regions.

## Issues and concerns

The programme revealed the multiple challenges in the inland open-water fisheries where the depletion of wild fish stocks affect the livelihoods of fishers. The fishers who target different resources under varying governance environments narrated the issues and concerns they encountered. The experts at the workshop, in turn, advised them on how to deal with such issues. Conflicting claims for water from different user communities are affecting inland ecosystems, their fishery resources and the services they provide, namely, fisheries-

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Fishers check for fish after casting their cast net on the banks of Teesta river. The programme revealed the multiple challenges in the inland open-water fisheries where the depletion of wild fish stocks affect the livelihoods of fishers

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based livelihoods, also due to the low bargaining ability of the inland fishers.

There was a consensus at the workshop that concerted efforts by all players—from experts to those at the grassroots level—are needed to correct the situation. Although an uphill task, this is essential to inform the policy and legislative efforts about the rightful role of fishers in decision making while planning for water resource management programmes.

In sum, the Kolkata Workshop achieved the following objectives :

- \* Creating a cadre of trainers who can reach out to fishers and fishers' groups to, one, train them on the SSF Guidelines; two, explain the benefits of, and make them aware of their role in implementing, the SSF Guidelines; and, three, create awareness on sustainable and equitable utilization of inland fisheries resources.
- \* Providing an opportunity for fishers and their organizations to interact with scientists, experts and officials to share their concerns and clarify doubts.

This process will meet its logical end when:

- \* The trainers go back and interact with the fishers and transfer knowledge to them;
- \* ICSF keeps in constant touch with the trainers to monitor progress and provide them the necessary inputs;
- \* ICSF interacts with the experts to obtain clarifications that trainers might need;
- \* ICSF tracks and assess the output obtained by each trainer, as also its impact based on the quantified outputs generated by the trainers; and
- \* ICSF initiates appropriate follow-up activities based on the achievements of the training programmes.

#### For more



**National Training of Trainers (TOT) Workshop (Inland Fisheries) on the SSF Guidelines, Seva Kendra, Kolkata, West Bengal, 22-24 December 2022**

<https://www.icsf.net/resources/icsf-tot-inland-fisheries-2022/>

# Beyond Business as Usual

**The Illuminating Hidden Harvests report showcases the contributions of small-scale fisheries to sustainable development**

One of the final events marking the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAFA), 2022 was the hybrid launch of the report *Illuminating Hidden Harvests: the contributions of small-scale fisheries to sustainable development* (the IHH report) on March 16, 2023. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Duke University and World Fish joined forces to mobilize over 800 contributors for this global study to generate and disseminate new evidence about the importance of small-scale fisheries (SSF) to inform policy and practice.

The study uncovers the contributions and impacts of SSF through a multidisciplinary approach to data and analysis. It is grounded in a tapestry of methods, including data and information from 58 country/territory case studies, an *ad hoc* questionnaire, global databases and thematic studies. The IHH report provides a snapshot of the environmental, economic, gender, food security and nutritional, and governance dimensions of SSF globally.

The IHH report is directed not only to policymakers and small-scale fisheries advocates, but also to research and development partners and others with an interest in understanding the sector. Its information quantifies and improves our understanding of the crucial role of SSF in the areas of food security and nutrition, sustainable livelihoods, poverty eradication and healthy ecosystems. It also examines gender equality as well as the nature and scope of governance in SSF. The report ends with suggestions for the way forward.

The IHH report starts with a rationale, followed by a description of its methodological approach, expanded on in the two annexures. The third chapter looks at how we

define SSF, systematically applying a characterization matrix approach that allows assessing the various dimensions of small-scale fisheries in a way that aligns better with the high degree of diversity of this sub-sector, both at the global and national levels. Capturing and valuing the diversity and complexity of SSF is an important input to making informed management and policy decisions.

The subsequent chapters report on the outcomes of the study's investigation into five key dimensions: the environment, economics, gender, food security and nutrition, and governance. Chapter four deals with

**Capturing and valuing the diversity and complexity of SSF is an important input to making informed management and policy decisions**

the production and environmental interactions of SSF, providing answers to a number of questions, including the contributions of the sector to the global catch. The fifth chapter focuses on SSF's contributions to economic value and livelihoods. A key element here is the re-estimation of how many people depend on SSF for their livelihoods. The sixth chapter explores gender inclusivity and equality in small-scale fisheries, investigating how women contribute to and benefit from SSF.

## **Food security**

The contributions of SSF to food security and nutrition are dealt with in details in the subsequent chapter, the seventh, pushing the boundary to understand the importance of its catch to nutrition. Chapter eight illustrates global patterns of management and governance of small-scale fisheries;

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Women interested in buying fresh fish gather, waiting for boats that pull over with fresh products at the shore of the Lake Tanganyika in Kigoma, Tanzania. An estimated 44.7 million women worldwide participate in SSF value chains or engage in related subsistence activities

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the section on contributions towards the implementation of the SSF Guidelines looks deeper into how the sector is governed. The ninth and concluding chapter looks at the way forward: turning challenges into opportunities for securing SSF's role in sustainable development. It builds on cross-cutting issues in relation to data, analysis, capacity development and the importance of the SSF Guidelines as a policy framework, summarizing the findings and making policy suggestions.

**Volume of the catch:** At least 40 percent of the global fish catch comes from SSF, almost 37 million tonnes. Of the total SSF catch, 68 percent comes from marine fisheries and 32 percent from inland fisheries. It is important to note, however, that SSF's share in catch is highly variable across regions. It accounts for 66 percent in Africa, 47 percent in Asia, and 5 percent in Europe, respectively.

**The people behind this catch:** Globally, 60 million people are employed along the SSF value chain, either part-time or full-time. This comprises almost 90 percent of global fisheries employment. Additionally, an estimated 52.8 million are engaged in

SSF harvesting or processing activities for subsistence. These people are estimated to support about 379 million additional household members. That means almost 500 million people depend at least partially upon SSF for their livelihood. Almost 7 per cent of the world population in 2016! In terms of economic value, the average annual total revenues of SSF were estimated in the range of US \$77 billion - US \$58 billion from marine sources and US \$19 billion from inland fisheries.

**Women's contribution:** An estimated 44.7 million women worldwide participate in SSF value chains or engage in related subsistence activities. This means out of every 10 people engaged in the sector, four are women—40 percent—who either work for pay or for household consumption. Broken down by segments of the value chain or sub-sectors, women represent over 15 percent of pre-harvest labour such as gear fabrication and repair, bait and ice provisioning, boat-building. Women also comprise 19 percent of commercial harvest labour, including vessel- and non-vessel-based activities. In the post-harvest sector, women represent half of all those engaged in



activities like processing, transporting, trading and selling. Up to 45 percent of those engaged in subsistence fisheries (harvesting and/or processing) activities are women. Despite substantial participation in SSF, women's access to decision-making forums of the sector is often limited. Gender-disaggregated data on women's participation in SSF governance, however, is not routinely collected.

**Importance to nutrition:** By leveraging new data and information, the IHH study was able to illuminate global, regional and national contributions of SSF to nutrition. While all fish provide a good diversity of macro- and micro-nutrients, when looking at the relative nutritional value of various fish groups, the most nutritious fish, with the best diversity of nutrients, were small fish, constituting the bulk of SSF catch globally. Not only are small fish the most available and affordable for vulnerable populations, the fish from SSF have a considerable potential for nutrition—even at the scale of entire national or regional populations. The omega-3 fatty acids in SSF landings could provide 50 per cent of the recommended daily intake to 987 million women across Asia and Africa. The total nutrient yield from SSF landings could provide 20 per cent of the recommended daily intake across the four most abundant nutrients (calcium, selenium, zinc and O<sub>3</sub>) to 477 million women.

**Governance:** Management rights are formally granted to fishers in nearly 75 percent of countries included in the IHH study. Yet co-management is implemented only for 20 percent of the catch. More than 400 of the producer fishing organizations analyzed expressed having goals related to harvesting and sustainable fisheries management. More than 60 per cent also expressed goals related to human well-being. These findings suggest fishers are themselves active contributors to the implementation of the SSF Guidelines.

The IHH report proposes major actions to improve SSF to make the sector more sustainable and equitable. This following list carries a summary:

**Reconsider how SSF are characterized and defined:** The characterization matrix developed by

the IHH study provides a standardized tool to identify small-scale fisheries and distinguish them from their large-scale counterparts.

**Further explore and build on IHH country case study data:** The richness of information collected through the IHH study should be leveraged to enhance knowledge and develop indicators that can inform decision making.

**Go beyond business as usual:** This includes building on the IHH study approach to improve data collection and analysis, moving beyond the limitations of 'business as usual', including disaggregating data, applying participatory and innovative approaches, and using multi-disciplinary and multi-source approaches.

**Empower women in fisheries:** Collect gender-disaggregated data. Women play a crucial role in SSF but their contributions are often not recognized. To ensure gender equality, we must collect meaningful gender-disaggregated data to actively include women in decision making.

**Recognize the needs and benefits of effective participatory approaches:** The knowledge, culture and traditions of SSF communities must be recognized and put into practice. Greater and more equitable participation is necessary, including empowering fishers and fishworkers in decision making.

**Improve data and information for the SSF Guidelines implementation:** Better data is what the SSF Guidelines call for. This requires a substantial shift in how diverse information systems are integrated and linked.

**Capacity building and partnerships:** This is essential for better association and coordination among all stakeholders, including governments, SSF organizations and researchers includes the co-production of knowledge to further uncover the hidden contributions of small-scale fisheries.

**Incorporate the multi-dimensional contributions of SSF across policies:** SSF should be conceptualized and governed as multi-dimensional livelihood portfolios and not just as an economic activity. This because the sector has multiple functions providing an

OSCAR AMARASINGHE



Multi-day boats anchored in Beruwala harbour in the West of Sri Lanka. SSF's share in catch is highly variable across regions. It accounts for 66 percent in Africa, 47 percent in Asia, and 5 percent in Europe, respectively

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enabling environment for sustainable development. Strategies are needed to leverage the full range of benefits, particularly for vulnerable groups.

**Incorporate nutrition and other livelihood outcomes into management decisions:** Governance processes need to optimize the benefits from SSF for everyone by, for example, taking into account the nutrition potential of catch, and ensuring equitable access for women.

Activities based on the IHH study's recommendations already took off, even as the report was getting finalized. Firstly, at the country level, Tanzania and Madagascar have started a process with support from the Duke University and FAO to build on the IHH approach, improving SSF data collection and analysis for better management and policies. Tanzania, Uganda, Malawi and Zambia have prepared policy briefs on the multi-dimensional contributions of SSF based on IHH data and other relevant sources in a participatory manner.

Secondly, a number of IHH-related peer-reviewed papers have been published already. Others are in the pipeline for a Nature IHH collection due for release in early 2024. It will further engage the academic community and

inform policy. Further, data gathered and used for the compilation of IHH will also be released to the public.

Thirdly, the findings and recommendations of IHH will be shared through multiple information and communication products, including the release of the IHH executive summary as a stand-alone publication in English, French and Spanish; the release of the videos of the IHH findings and recommendations (also in the three languages); and IHH newsletter updates.

All of these efforts are timely interventions to advance the implementation of the SSF Guidelines, which will enter their 10th anniversary in 2024.

#### For more

**IHH report** - <https://www.fao.org/voluntary-guidelines-small-scale-fisheries/ihh/en/>

**IHH infographic** - <https://www.fao.org/3/cb8233en/cb8233en.pdf>

**IHH webpage** - <https://www.fao.org/voluntary-guidelines-small-scale-fisheries/ihh/en/>

# A Fish-eye View

Against a backdrop of social struggles, the 15th edition of the Pecheurs du Monde International Film Festival was successfully held in Lorient, France

The 15th Pecheurs du Monde film festival took place from March 19 to 26, 2023, with many spectators and exhibition visitors participating across seven municipalities in France. The strike against the government project on retirement and the anger of the fishers fighting for their existence did not undermine the event's success. The lives of fishers, it appears, do interest the public indeed.

At the festival, those who know the sea intimately were given the chance to speak about it. The topic 'Land and Sea: What Future?' showed how much the quality of marine waters depends on the quality of rivers and land-based pollution. Through 41 films from 21 countries, the audience was able to see, hear and share moments of life, as well as the fears and hopes of the people who make a living from the sea. The debates at the festival highlighted the importance of fishing in the local economy.

Two juries—one comprising fishers and film professionals, the other young students—awarded prizes to two feature films and five short films from seven countries. Apart from the plunder of anchovies for fishmeal for industrial aquaculture, a topic that is not tackled in the film, Peru has a large fishing economy that feeds its population. The documentary *Bruma* by Jose Balado Diaz from Peru is "a beautiful tribute to fishing in the north of Peru". Both the juries awarded it the top prize in the feature film category. Three particularly striking scenes in the film show the loneliness of the fishermen waiting in the open sea, the landings on the crowded beach, and the filleting and drying of the catch by the women.

A special award was given by both juries to *Austral* by Benjamin Colaoux of Belgium, in which fishermen from Cape Horn share their life stories and their knowledge of the sea. For centuries they have struggled against harsh natural

elements, and many of them were lost to the sea. The filmmaker shares his fascination for their choice of life.

The award for short films went to *The Bayview* by Daniel Cook from Scotland. In it, an old lady welcomes into her house fishermen from all over the world (Africans, Filipinos, etc.) who are waiting to embark or work off the coast of Scotland, a real lesson in hospitality. The youth juries and the audience chose *Stolen Fish* by Gosia Juszcak, a UK/Spain/Poland production that deals with the plundering of fish in Gambia, the catch getting diverted to provide fishmeal for industrial aquaculture in China and Europe. This food grab from the global South ends

Through 41 films from 21 countries, the audience was able to see, hear and share moments of life, as well as the fears and hopes of the people who make a living from the sea

up in misery and migration. With no future for them there, young people have no option. The theme of this film was echoed in *Poisson d'Or, Poisson Africain* by Thomas Grand and Moussa Diop, a documentary discovered by the Festival in 2018 which, since then, has been rewarded with nearly a hundred first prizes in festivals around the world.

The youth jury awarded a special prize to *Senegal Mbour, les Grandes Pirogues* by Christian Lajoumard from Senegal. It describes the ballet of large pirogues in search of small pelagic fish with their seines. It raises the importance of fishing as a livelihood threatened by international and financial pressures.

*The Fish War: Battle in European Waters* by Philippe Lespinasse won the schoolchildren's prize. The film questions the purpose of fishing in the

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JACQUES CHÉREL



The youth juries and the audience chose *Stolen Fish* by Gosia Juszcak, a UK/Spain/Poland production that deals with the plundering of fish in Gambia, the catch getting diverted to provide fishmeal for industrial aquaculture in China and Europe

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context of the Common Fisheries Policy in Europe: should fishing feed people or supply industrial fish farms? In order to continue to have quotas for cod in Norway, the European Union grants licences to catch hundreds of thousands of tonnes of pelagic fish to feed salmon farms in Norway. This film is available for free for a few weeks on the KUB platform, along with two other films from the official selection, *Dremmwel* by Pierre Vanneste and *Le Bateau de Mon Pere* by Cyril Berard.

A special award was set aside at the festival to highlight the role of women in the fisheries economy. The Chandrika Sharma Award, created to honour the memory of the late ICSF Executive Secretary who passed away in 2014, was given to the short film *Invisible Faces, Inaudible Voices: Women and Aquaculture* by Kiran Mittal. This film, produced by ICSF, analyzes, with accuracy and sharpness, the changing role of women in aquaculture with the development of shrimp farming. While there are positive consequences for them, all of them do not benefit equally and the environmental effects are worrying. The film was screened at a special session with the Canadian film

*Femmes Capitaines* by Phil Comeau. Other films, such as *Rio De Voces*, also provided a large forum for women's voices. Finally, two feature-length fiction films, *Grand Marin* by Dinara Drukarova and the Italian cult drama *Stromboli* by Roberto Rossellini (1950), made powerful references to the lives of women among fishermen.

The festival organized a Youth Forum laying the foundations for a new approach to addressing current issues facing the fishing industry. All over the world, there are fewer young people in the fishing industry: how can we get them interested? Above all, the aim of the forum was to free up young people to speak out on the theme 'Fishing is my job, yes, but...'. *The Long Coast* by Ian Cheney features beautiful portraits of fishermen and fish farmers (men and women) from Maine in the US.

#### Future of fishing

In small groups, the young fishermen in training were able to talk about their concerns and wishes for the future of fishing in front of active and retired fishermen as well as before representatives of fisheries committees. In the end, the forum contributed to a

convergence between young people and professionals of the sea, an experience that will likely be repeated.

A special session of the 'Fishing Tomorrow' cycle addressed the challenges for the boats of the future: how to adapt them to energy requirements, to the need for safety at sea, and the need to respect biodiversity. Fishers, researchers and industrialists testified to the vitality of the research undertaken to fish with less impact on the environment and with greater respect for biodiversity. In addition to these sessions, numerous film screenings took place in schools and colleges. Students were also able to visit the port facilities.

The festival paid tribute to Emmanuel Audrain, a filmmaker and friend of the festival who has made several sensitive and moving portraits of fishermen. He showed extracts from films celebrating the human values upheld by these characters. In 2006, he had transmitted the message of scientists who warned about the disappearance of fish resources. An exhibition entitled *Le peintre, le poète, la mer* (The painter, the poet, the sea) and a film, *Le Chant des mers* (The song of the seas) by Christophe Rey recalled the life and message left by Alain Jegou, a fisherman from Lorient, a poet and well-known writer and one of the founding pillars of the festival.

The film *Des sauveteurs et des hommes* by Thierry Durand, screened in the presence of many volunteers, was quite moving. The screening of Cyril Berard's film *Le Bateau de mon Pere* (My Father's Boat) was an opportunity to evoke the problems of fishermen in the north of France, facing both the Brexit policy and competition from foreign fishing fleets, which led a young fisherman's father committing suicide. Alain Pichon's film on the history of the sardine canneries in Brittany, *Les conserveries, de l'atelier à l'usine: 1930-1960*, skilfully made from old films gathered by the Cinematheque de Bretagne, provided an opportunity to show the evolution of the industry, born in Brittany, which went on to mobilize hundreds of women.

Being open to the world is the major strength of the Lorient film festival, which has never ceased to assert the essential role of fishworkers in feeding the populations, particularly in the

global South. By addressing the public, the festival contributes to raising awareness about the role of fishers in ensuring food security, the urgent need to ensure greater justice in trade, and the need to safeguard the marine environment by directly involving the coastal populations dependent on it. The issue of a democratic management of marine spaces and fisheries still needs to be studied in greater depth.

Emphasis was placed on the campaigns that blame fishers for destroying the marine environment, thus leading to their own ruin. It is time to distinguish between marine areas that are subject to careful management in collaboration with scientists and those that fall prey to resource plunderers, particularly in Africa and Latin America, due to the lack of control and law enforcement at sea.

By highlighting the theme 'Land and sea: What Future?', the festival recalled that the threats to the oceans are essentially due to land-based pollution, which accelerates climate change with its effects on acidification and the increase in sea temperature.

**Being open to the world is the major strength of the Lorient film festival, which has never ceased to assert the essential role of fishworkers...**

It is, therefore, vital and a priority to eliminate all the chemical, plastic and waste pollution on land that ends up in the oceans.

**Story of Adyar River: Pollution and Floods in India** by Siddharth Muralidharan shows how poor management of wastewater destroys the ecosystem. **Acting for Biodiversity: Sentinels of the Mediterranean** by Felix Vigne suggests ways forward.

As these films proclaim, it is time to assert that the future of marine life and the sustainable management of fisheries resources by fishers go hand in hand. "To change reality, you need to know it and be able to imagine another world." That's the purpose of such films and of the Lorient Film Festival. Let's hope filmmakers from all over the world will continue to share their films with us so that the people of the sea can live on! 🐟

#### For more



#### Picturing the Coast

[https://www.icsf.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Sam\\_88\\_art15\\_Cinema\\_Jacques\\_Cherel.pdf](https://www.icsf.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Sam_88_art15_Cinema_Jacques_Cherel.pdf)

**The 15th Pêcheurs du Monde film festival, Lorient, France, 19 to 26 March 2023**

<https://pecheursdumonde.org/>

# Beyond Knee-jerk Reactions

**Ghana's efforts at providing social development, employment and decent work in its fisheries sector must focus on improving education, health and social protection in fishing communities**

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**G**hana has about 550 km of coastline on the Atlantic Ocean, along the Gulf of Guinea. Within the coastal space, more than two million people are directly and indirectly engaged in fisheries. The country's engagement with the sea results in about 300,000 tonnes of fish every year, apart from nearly 74,000 tonnes from its inland waters. These landings still meet less than half the national demand because almost all its citizens eat fish. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Ghanaians

have intervened in several ways. The benefits of decent work include a fair wage, security at work and social protection for families, improved opportunities for personal growth and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, to organize and take part in decisions that affect their lives, and equality of opportunity and treatment for women and men.

Decent work, therefore, encompasses much more than what is provided; it may not be fully realized in many industries; the absence of serious abuses is unquestionably essential. The International Labour Organization (ILO) identifies four interrelated pillars of decent work: one, employment generation and enterprise development; two, standards and rights at work; three, social protection; and, four, governance and social dialogue among, say, employers, workers and governments.

Based on these, the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (the SSF Guidelines) provided, to its member countries, some tenets for social development, employment and decent work in small-scale fisheries (SSF). In this article, we seek to assess Ghana's efforts at providing social development, employment and decent work in its fisheries sector.

## Decent work

In Ghana, work in fisheries and related activities is considered decent; fishers and fishmongers are proud of their work which carries no negative social attachment. Despite being a major

**In Ghana, work in fisheries and related activities is considered decent; fishers and fishmongers are proud of their work which carries no negative social attachment**

consume 25.3 kg of fish per person each year. Therefore, to meet the national demand, canned fish (mainly herrings and sardines) and frozen mackerels are imported.

Even as fishing continues to be a major contributor to livelihood and employment in many countries, the issues related to the working environment of fishworkers are paramount. Concerns for human rights in fisheries and the labour practices associated with producing seafood have increased recently, partly because of publicly-reported labour abuses and deplorable working conditions in the industry. As a response, numerous governments and civil society entities

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Fish smoking using the metal drum in Kumasi, Ghana. One initiative to mitigate the problem of smoke is the newly invented 'Ahoto' oven, which has proven to be healthier and safer

source of employment, livelihood and way of life, Ghana's fisheries industry is on the verge of collapse due to overfishing and over-capitalisation of the fishery. Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing is common. The largely artisanal industry competes for small pelagic stocks with industrial fishing boats. The political interests in both artisanal and industrial fishers make it difficult to find a way out. The artisanal fishers of Ghana, therefore, find themselves caught in a vicious cycle of IUU fishing practices as a coping strategy to declining catch.

The main artisanal fishing gear is the hand-crafted wood canoe, with or without an outboard motor. The promises of assistance to help them get fibreglass boats have not delivered. To exacerbate the situation, the average annual income per canoe has decreased by as much as 40 percent over the last 10 to 15 years. The fishery is overcapitalized and no fishing quotas or licence requirements for these artisanal fishers exist. The government has attempted to solve the free entry into the fishery through a canoe census and registration. These

have largely not worked because of the lack of political will to enforce the laws. Fisheries management is top-down in Ghana: the government is expected to put in place measures to sustain the industry. Ghana has been flagged by the European Union (EU) for IUU, and it

**Fisheries management is top-down in Ghana: the government is expected to put in place measures to sustain the industry**

is hoped that this will be an opportunity to introduce appropriate mechanisms to stop the bad practices.

#### **Knee-jerk promises**

The SSF Guidelines urge governments to increase the proportion of total government spending on essential services like education, health and social protection in the sector. What exists are knee-jerk interventions and promises during the election season. Nothing is sustained afterwards. With climate change, the risks and frequency



of disasters affecting fisheries are on the rise. Fishermen work throughout their lives and have neither retirement benefits nor social security. To improve the social protection of Ghanaian fisherfolk, the government initiated an insurance scheme. At its launch in 2016, more than one million fishers were to benefit. The scheme was going to safeguard their canoes, outboard motors, fishing nets and other fishing inputs. Till date, though, there is not proof of the scheme's implementation.

Ghanaian fishing communities labour under some of the worst social services and infrastructure that can be found. News about access to education in some fishing communities of the Volta River is widely reported through the frequent incidents of students from distant communities drowning in their quest to reach schools. They travel long distances on the water to get to schools and are exposed to danger. Such difficulties mean children have to wait till a relatively late age to begin school. The dropout rate is high in such communities.

**... the targeting and selection of beneficiaries for many of the government interventions are usually fraught with political interests**

The health sector is in a poor state also. People have no option to travelling over long distances to seek basic healthcare. The National Health Insurance Scheme, implemented to reduce the burden of healthcare, is highly under-subscribed among the fishers. Several studies have shown that fishworkers are at high risk of acquiring lung diseases due to their long exposure to smoke. Not surprisingly, the health of fishmongers has attracted the attention of researchers and civil society organizations (CSOs).

One initiative to mitigate the problem of smoke is the newly invented 'Ahoto' oven, which has proven to be healthier and safer. The new oven consumes less fuel and has a fat collector that retains the

fish oil, which can be used for other purposes. It also has a chimney that reduces the smoke or directs it away from the smoker. Unfortunately, the fishworkers have not adopted this new technology.

The SSF Guidelines seek to reduce child labour in the ssf. But child labour and trafficking has been widely reported in Ghana's fishing communities. The distinction between child labour and children's work is a very slight; many fishers neither agree with the categorization of their training nor deign to obtain assistance from their children under the guise of child labour. Some children have been rescued from hazardous fishing activities and are being given new opportunities. The incidence of poverty in Ghanaian communities drives parents to expose children to hazardous work. An increase in access to education will be a first step to reducing the incidence of child labour among fishing communities.

Poverty in fishing communities is deep-seated and efforts to reduce this must be as rigorous and as diametrical as possible through the building of capacity to change the lives of the people in these circumstances. Therefore, the SSF Guidelines recommend the setting up vocational training centres in ssf communities to build capacity and diversify into alternative livelihood sources. To this end, a school called the Anomabo Fisheries College is being set up to train the next generation of fishers about Ghanaian fisheries and aquaculture.

An alternative Livelihood and Revolving Fund has been set up to increase the profit of fisherfolk while strengthening the country's capacity to sustainably manage the fisheries, reduce illegal fishing, enhance value addition, and develop aquaculture. Furthermore, *ad hoc* training in financial management, savings and investment is being provided by several government agencies and NGOs. However, the targeting and selection of beneficiaries for many of the government interventions are usually fraught with political interests. A lot of these promises or interventions are yet to become operational.



Outboard motorised canoes loading goods and passengers on the Volta Lake at Yeji, Ghana. The incidence of poverty in Ghanaian communities drives parents to expose children to hazardous work

### Good news

Despite these shortcomings, it is possible to conclude this assessment with some good news. The sector has made significant achievements in governance. There are traditional institutions of fisheries governance, such as the chief fishman and *konkohemaa* (chief fishmonger), which are highly respected and play significant roles. At the national level, SSF representatives and their organizations have the membership of the managing authority of Ghana's fisheries, the Fisheries Commission. They are the National Fisheries Association (Fishing Vessel Owners), the National Fisheries Association (Artisanal Fishermen), and the Ghana Marine Fishing Officers' Association. These associations are vibrant; their presence and interventions are well appreciated.

In accordance with the SSF Guidelines, policies and programmes

related to fisheries in Ghana are being developed with the involvement of these organizations, along with other institutions. The successes in fisheries governance and representation must translate into reversing the situation of the fishery, which is on the verge of collapse, and help reduce IUU fishing. Programmes and initiatives of governments and CSOs with interest in fisheries should focus on improving education, health and social protection in fishing communities.

### For more



#### No Child's Play

[https://www.icsf.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/4308\\_art\\_Sam77\\_e\\_art07.pdf](https://www.icsf.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/4308_art_Sam77_e_art07.pdf)

#### Social Development and Sustainable Fisheries: Ghana by Peter L.A.

<https://www.icsf.net/resources/icsf-social-development-ghana/>

#### The smoke lingers on

[https://www.icsf.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/42\\_art07.pdf](https://www.icsf.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/42_art07.pdf)

#### The State of World Fisheries from a Fishworker Perspective: The Ghanaian Situation

<https://www.icsf.net/resources/the-state-of-world-fisheries-from-a-fishworker-perspective-the-ghanaian-situation-2/>

# A Good Year

Interview with Jojo Solomon, president, Ghana National Canoe Fishermen Council (GNCFC) on how artisanal fishers should fish responsibly

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## On responsible fisheries

Most countries look up to Ghana when it comes to responsible fisheries and management. Fortunately for us, this time around, we have a minister who has at least demonstrated a political will to do that which is right politically. Ghana is moving forward with a lot of reforms.

## On tenure rights

Most of our development partners, in collaboration with the Fisheries Commission, are trying to work alongside the Lands Commission to ensure that fishers are comfortable. That they have the right to remain where they have been over the years

**Light fishing is a serious issue for us. We are still educating the fishers. It is kind of difficult because we, as an association or a council, cannot and do not have the right to enforce**

they have been fishing, especially in the face of oil discovery and development. The Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development, in collaboration with partners, has taken up most of the issues pertaining to tenure rights. However, when we talk about fishing grounds, we have a few challenges. Most of the blocks have been, I think, allocated to these oil exploration companies. Taking all these things into consideration, we have started addressing these matters with the ministry and the commission. The Blue Economy will come with its own challenges and, therefore, we want to be proactive, instead of being reactive and waiting for something to happen before we show up.

## On access rights

Fisheries have existed for a long time. If we now introduce other people into this space, we must be mindful of those who are there already, those whose livelihoods are situated there. I think equity must be one of the issues of petition to the government from the Ghana National Canoe Fishermen Council. The fishing communities are at the seashores and, therefore, we cannot displace them because of oil and gas for hotels and modern development. Fisheries support over 3 million livelihoods directly and indirectly; that is about 10 per cent of the population, all adults. We know that development comes with its own challenges. We need to guard against all these things before they happen.

## On reforms

In the face of the problems confronting the artisanal fishers by the operations of industrial units, the minister has put several measures in place. For the first time in about 20 years, fishers are consistently landing fish, even species that we haven't seen in that duration. The ministerial directive on the gear regime reforms is very efficient. She personally would board the vessels and do a pre-departure inspection. When the vessels get back, nobody touches the fish until she is personally there. Again she is making sure that the vessels are duly seaworthy and registered before she even takes up talk about issuing licences or renewing them. She makes sure that any vessel that has committed an infraction years ago will have no licence; all charges are to be paid before the licences are renewed. That is how we now have about 25-27 vessels there, out of about a hundred vessels. Artisanal fishers must also live up to the expectations and fish

*This interview with Jojo Solomon (solomon.jojo1957@gmail.com), president, Ghana National Canoe Fishermen Council (GNCFC), Accra, Ghana was conducted by N.Venugopalan Programme Manager, ICSF (icsf@icsf.net)*



Jojo Solomon, president, Ghana National Canoe Fishermen Council (GNCFC). Artisanal fishers must also live up to the expectations and fish responsibly, says Jojo Solomon

responsibly. By giving out appropriate fishing nets at 50 per cent subsidy, the minister has ensured that every canoe and artisanal fisher gets an opportunity to discard wrong gear and replace it with nets of approved size. Very soon, there will be a massive inspection of gears in the artisanal sector as well, with the support of the Ghana National Canoe Fishermen Council.

#### **On compensation for workers working on industrial vessels**

Being on the Fisheries Commission's board, I am familiar with the reforms that are on-going. I am also familiar with the fisheries committee on settlement and, therefore, I am well informed that abuses on the vessels are now a thing of the past. Because the Ministry takes a very serious view of how the crew are treated, the sanitation and sleeping conditions on board, and the state of the vessels. The ministry has actually mandated the Ghana Maritime Authority to make sure that all vessels are fully certified internationally before they come for issuance of certificates. The International Labour

Organization (ILO) is also engaging them on issues related to decent work and compensation and allowance to meet international standards.

#### **On conflicts between small-scale fishers and industrial fishers**

The first thing to be tackled was the size of the nets, by the ministerial directive on gear reforms. Instead of 40 metres, the size is now down to 10 metres. These reforms are in place. There is no transshipment. The minister inspects the landed catch to make sure that there are no small pelagics, which is the sole preserve of the small-scale or artisanal fishers. That is why I say that for the first time in about 20 years, fishers are getting their due. I think this is fantastic.

#### **On implementation**

I know that we've always had the vessel monitoring system (VMS) on board. With the automatic identification system (AIS) becoming mandatory now, we have the human element to contend with, which is the observers on board. But then the ministry realized



there are so many unauthorized activities going on. So now they have decided to embark on closed circuit television (CCTV) camera or electronic monitoring system as well. Everything that is humanly, electronically or technologically possible to ensure that industrial trawlers live up to expectation, it is being put in place. It is not 100 per cent foolproof, but we are making immense progress. I think the goings-on in Ghana should be emulated by our regional neighbours. They are carefully monitoring what is going on in Ghana. We had a successful closed season to discuss the results. We are now also registering and embossing the canoe fleet, giving them identification cards to help in monitoring. The policy and budget processes are also expected to be reformed as well. There's a lot going on.

#### **On overfishing, warming waters, plastics and marine debris**

These are global problems, not confined to Ghana. I think that neglect by the relevant authorities and indiscipline amongst the non-State actors themselves culminated in these problems. The ministry is now looking into all these. This has encouraged us to fish responsibly and be conscious to keep our beaches clean.

#### **On reduced catch of small pelagics like herring, sardines, anchovies**

This year, in the Volta region and part of the greater Accra region, two of our four marine regions, we have had cause to stop fishers because the landings of the anchovies were overwhelming and we realized we need to ask the fishers to slow down. We actually had to ask the fishermen to give us a break.

#### **On a moratorium of canoe fishing**

We have held a national dialogue. The minister and the commissioner met with the chiefs in the coastal region, the ministers in the coastal region, the district executives, and the municipal, district and metropolitan chief executives. We are now into community engagement and have reached regional agreements with the fishers and voiced the need for closure because clearly there is overcapacity

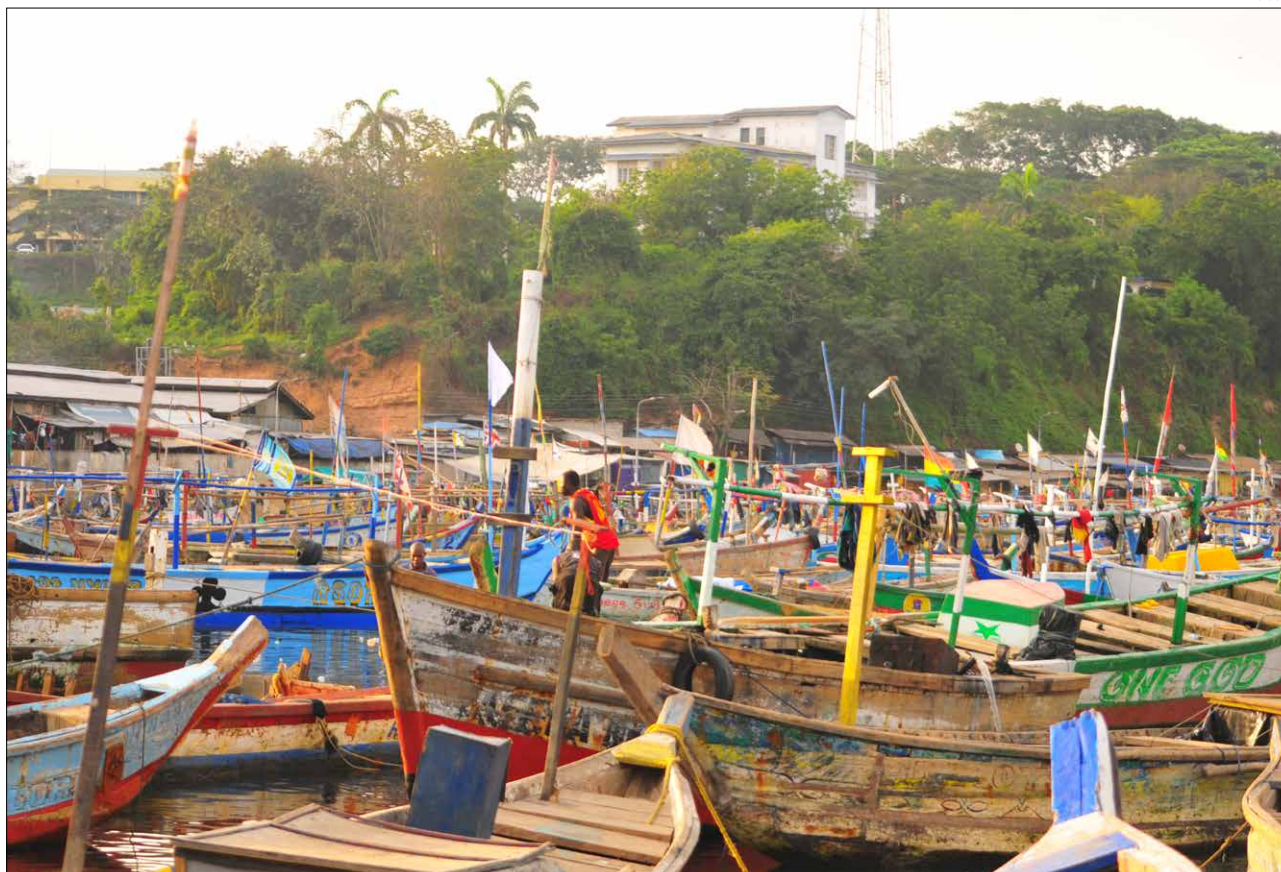
and overfishing. We cannot continue to practice the open-access system. There are too many canoes and fishers chasing very little, fast-depleting stocks, without letting them recover. So it does not make sense. We are now at overcapacity. Instead of around 9,000 canoes that can sustainably fish, we had almost 13,000 canoes. Clearly, we must close access.

#### **On the fight against destructive fishing**

Light fishing is a serious issue for us. We are still educating the fishers. It is kind of difficult because we, as an association or a council, cannot and do not have the right to enforce. So all we do is augment the government's efforts by educating our people and sanctioning them; but I must admit it is not easy. Sometimes these things were done out of desperation. One cannot compete with industrial trawlers; they have very good technology on board. They have GPS and everything that it takes to locate and capture fish, while we are still doing things the old artisanal way. We have come up with a communication strategy called the F2F (fisher-to-fisher) dialogue. It gets to the point that fishers must trust their own leadership. They need to listen when their own colleague fishers tell them to stop what they are doing. It does not help us if people from outside the industry come and speak to them, even if they are from the commission or from the partners; it is kind of difficulty. So we have cast out this avenue or channel called the F2F dialogue to help fishers understand why they should practise closed season, and why they should register their canoes. We have to surmount these problems and we cannot do it all in a day. It is not as if all fishers are engaged in light fishing. Some of them do not like light fishing. I think overcoming it is a process.

#### **On chemical pollutants**

I think our fishery is safe, by and large. We engage with the food and drug authority. We have the Ghana Standards authority working alongside our processors to test the fish. Even in the case of light fishing, we don't believe it uses any hazardous component,



Albert Bosomtwi-Sam Fishing Harbour, Sekondi, Western Region, Ghana. We cannot continue to practice the open-access system. There are too many canoes and fishers chasing very little, fast-depleting stocks, without letting them recover. So it does not make sense, say fishers

except that it aggregates all the fish, both the juveniles and the adults. Since the size of the nets are not prescribed, they catch almost everything, depleting stocks. We are pushing out the few recalcitrant fishers and educating them. The Food and Drugs Authority and the Ghana Standards Authority issue certificates to fishers and I think we can safely say that yes, our fish is wholesome.

#### On co-management

The co-management policy has not really taken off. The idea behind it is that fishers and policymakers would come together and take decisions so that nobody works blind and the right thing is done. As under the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, we believe fishers must be part of decision making right from the stage of conception through to implementation. Only then can we own the system and promote voluntary compliance. If we are part of the decision making, we

understand the issues clearly and there is no suspicion or acrimony. We end up with a system that also works well for industry.

#### On the potential theme for a training programme

First of all, I think responsible fisheries is the key. Our fishery has got into this stage because of indiscipline and irresponsibility. We need to recover our fisheries, we need them to support livelihoods. The government cannot be expected to find a million jobs let alone three million jobs. So fishers must be confronted with their bad habits. If these are taken out, I believe all other bad things will go as well. 📌

#### For more

##### The Missing Link

<https://www.icsf.net/samudra/the-missing-link/>

##### Ghana National Canoe Fishermen Council (GNCFC)

<https://twitter.com/GhanaCanoe>

##### MEL4SSF Piloting Ghana by Peter Linford Adjei

<https://www.icsf.net/resources/mel4ssf-piloting-ghana/>

##### Social Development and Sustainable Fisheries: Ghana

<https://www.icsf.net/resources/icsf-social-development-ghana/>

# Tap into the Potential

The limitations of India's local self-government institutions can be overcome through capacity building and institutional strengthening

Community participation and the use of technology in disaster response as well as the role of local self-government institutions (LSGI) in fisheries management were the highlights of a two-day workshop on Sea Safety and Fisheries Management in the southern state of Kerala. It was organized jointly by ICSF and the Kerala Institute of Local Administration (KILA) on March 1-2, 2023 at Thrissur. Sebastian Mathew of ICSF, emphasized the importance of conservation and sustainable use of fisheries resources, promoting a human rights-based approach in fisheries management. The workshop aimed to foster an understanding of key chapters and concepts related to social development and sustainable development of the SSF Guidelines, he said, calling for a coordinated approach to be

of natural disasters, he said these need to be reconstructed to address specific challenges from climate change. Community participation, he said, was crucial to address the impact of natural disasters, as they often affect local residents who are also first responders.

## A rescue, an idea

Continuing on this theme, Geetha Gopi, former member of the state's legislative assembly, presented an experiential account of the practical benefits of integrating novel technological advancements in the realm of maritime security within her constituency. On January 5, 2021, four fishermen from Naatika village went missing during a routine fishing expedition. Devang Subil, an engineering student and drone pilot, was roped in to develop a specialized search and rescue plan. Using a high-resolution drone camera equipped with GPS tracking, Devang conducted an aerial search and located the missing fishermen at sea. This guided a successful rescue operation. The incident underscored the importance of technology, youth engagement, and innovation in addressing challenges faced by vulnerable communities.

In her presentation, Shibina Elayi, a research scholar at the Central University of Kerala, examined the social and economic conditions of fishworkers in Kerala, including their livelihoods and income, in the context of fluctuations in the fish market. She also investigated the policy measures and programmes implemented by LSGIs to protect the economic and social well-being of fishworkers and reduce social inequality.

Sajeevan Moosamikandy of the Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences (KUFOS) spoke of the role and duties of LSGIs in enhancing safety at sea and regulating illegal,

**The potential for collaborative efforts and partnerships in addressing climate change impacts and disaster management measures were also discussed...**

implemented for integrated coastal protection and fisheries management involving local self-government institutions (LSGI). In attendance were representatives of a range of LSGIs, trade unions, cooperative self-help groups and related social organisations, apart from academics and practitioners.

In the past, Kerala relied on tapioca and sardines as a source of carbohydrates and protein, respectively. But climate change had led to fluctuations in temperature and rainfall, affecting the availability of sardines, said Joy Elamon, director general KILA. While institutions in Kerala had developed plans for adaptation to and mitigation

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unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing. He said that fishworkers in small vessels, particularly in territorial waters, were associated with significant risks and hazards. However, data on small-scale fisheries (SSF) and the individuals engaged in these activities were often limited, with only the names of boat owners known and little information about the fishers on board. This lack of information makes it challenging to understand their work and risks, delaying the implementation of effective marine protection measures and timely intervention in case of emergencies. He said that the involvement of local governments and community-based organizations could facilitate data collection, emphasizing that active participation, cooperation, vigilance and accuracy in data collection were critical for obtaining reliable information. To address illegal practices in fisheries like catching juveniles, there's a need for proactive measures such as establishing effective monitoring and reporting mechanisms and implementing regulations to discourage unregulated fishing.

### The challenges

Insights into the current system, services, and challenges encountered by various departments and LSGIs in the areas of sea safety, fisheries management, and social development of fisherfolk communities came from P. Anish from the fisheries department. He elaborated on the existing system and services while highlighting the challenges faced by these entities in effectively addressing the needs of fisherfolk communities and ensuring their social development. He explained that the state's fisheries department was responsible for various activities in the marine fisheries sector, including registration of fisherfolk and fishing boats, disaster management, resettlement and conservation of fish stocks. Other tasks included implementing awareness programmes, enforcing laws and regulations and operating fish-landing centres and harbours.

The department also engaged in activities to protect marine life and provided 24x7 master control room services. Anish said the government

had notified use of mandatory personal protective equipment and security devices for individual safety and protection. The list of equipment for each type of craft was available and if not provided as per the regulations, many small boats might not be eligible for a licence. He said the establishment of Fisheries Management Councils was on-going, headed by the chairperson of the village LSGI or the president of the municipality. These councils include councillors from municipal areas. It was essential that they get cooperation from organizations such as cooperative societies, trade unions and fishworkers' associations. Through proactive measures and stakeholder engagement, these councils aimed to promote sustainable and profitable fisheries while addressing challenges related to resource conservation and the livelihoods of fisherfolk, he said.

The safety of fishermen at sea, particularly those using large mechanized craft, was of paramount importance in the international maritime domain, said John Swamy, former merchant navy navigation officer, who had conducted studies as well as training programmes for fishermen in Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Heavy mechanized craft were used, and there were guidelines for the safety measures to be employed for the protection of human life on such vessels. However, it was worth mentioning that these guidelines might not be applicable or followed strictly in the case of small-scale craft. Typically, fishers acquire knowledge and expertise in safety practices through experience, ranging from early age to maturity. Along with a lack of proper facilities for safety measures on small boats, the absence of suitable infrastructure posed a significant challenge in ensuring safety, he said.

### Lessons from other programmes

The successful implementation of several specific components of tribal sub-plans (TSP) had facilitated the access of tribal communities to basic infrastructure, including clean water and electricity, which had been instrumental in improving their socioeconomic conditions, said Rajesh K. of KILA. However, reasons

for lack of similar initiatives for the fishing community were unclear. He said Kerala's fisheries sector did not receive a proportional allocation of plan funds based on population; that there was a lack of meaningful participation in policy making from the fisheries sector. Reorganizing and providing legal recognition to facilitate better participation was essential with emphasis on the discussion about the rights of the sea and the coast. Local learning centres and residential schools for fishing communities needed to be established in the manner similar to that of tribal communities.

One point got emphasized over and over: managing the coastal fisheries sector required a comprehensive understanding of the local context and the stakeholders. C. Ramachandran from the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) said that fisheries management concepts originated in cold-water marine regions of western countries; they hence focus on regulating and controlling fish populations to ensure sustainability. However, this approach might not be

tailoring units, provision stores, snacks units, flour mills, beauty parlours and dry fish sales.

### Recommendations

The final component of the workshop was a group discussion where participants were divided into three groups and asked to deliberate over four questions looking at the role of LSGIs with respect to fishing communities. The workshop's recommendations are as follows:

- \* Introduce a sub-plan exclusively for fishing communities of each LSGI of Kerala with a minimum population of 50 families. Budget allocation can be made following the number of families and region-specific needs and issues.
- \* Make plan guidelines more flexible and specific, indicating the potential activities that can be undertaken in formulating budget allocations to ensure sea safety, welfare and quality of life of fishing communities along the Kerala coastline.
- \* Follow patterns of tribal sub-plan under the 14th Five Year Plan in administering a sub-plan to benefit fishing communities.
- \* Make provisions for sea safety, coastal, marine and inland water disaster preparedness and response related to fishing, social development of fish workers, and develop common facilities for fishworkers' livelihoods development programmes as mandatory components within sub-plans.
- \* Strengthen local Institutional mechanism of fishing communities. For example, the
- \* Expand the network of fisheries inspectors.
- \* Develop a system for programme integration.
- \* Provide compensation for lost workdays due to adverse weather conditions, as notified by the government, and introduce parametric insurance through LSGIs.
- \* Introduce and operationalize through LSGIs a vessel monitoring system for fishing vessels to improve sea safety. For example, a QR-code or a punching-based system.

**Knowledge and expertise in safety practices are typically acquired by fishers through experience, from an early age**

applicable in the tropical region of Kerala due to differences in local social structures, traditional practices and unique coastal ecosystems. On the other hand, fisheries management in this region should consider and integrate local social, economic and ecological factors for effective conservation and sustainable use of fish resources.

Mathew A.K., described the experiences of Theeramythri programme on alternate livelihoods meant only for women in families of the fishing community, specifically to build business enterprises of women aged between 18 to 55 years. After identifying the women, training and technical help for new initiatives were given. A dedicated group was involved in this programme. The main businesses were



A Group photo. The workshop emphasized the need for continued development of the mechanisms of local self-governance to address similar issues

- \* Develop regional disaster management plans with LSGI participation and train Emergency Response Team (ERT) members, providing them with appropriate training and capacity building through institutions like the Kerala State Disaster Management Agency (KSDMA). The ERT should be trained in search and rescue techniques and operations, including the use of drones, and equipped to provide emergency medical assistance. LSGIs can provide the necessary resources for this team, such as life jackets, fuel and first aid kits.
- \* Develop a sea safety protocol at the local level, with the participation of local communities. Financial resources can be pooled through government and non-government institutions for developing such protocols.
- \* Establish Marine *Haritha Karma Sena* with the participation of the fishing communities to effectively address the issue of marine litter. The operation of recycling plastic units and generation of user fees can help meet costs associated with the removal of marine litter.
- \* Encourage LSGIs to cooperate with the fisheries department to enforce fishing regulations to prevent overfishing, protect stocks and to promote safety of fishing operations. This can include setting limits on the size and number of fish that can be caught, enforcing closed seasons, prohibiting destructive fishing practices, restricting fishing during extreme climate events, monitoring the movement of fishing vessels, and coordinating search and rescue missions with the participation of fishers.
- \* Assist LSGIs to build the capacity of local fishing communities and other stakeholders in fisheries management through training programmes. This can help ensure that local communities have the knowledge and skills they need to participate in sustainable fisheries management.
- \* Equip KILA to set up a centre to promote development planning of fishing communities and to support the LSGI when they prepare their plans.

#### For more



#### Workshop on Sea Safety and Fisheries Management: Training and Capacity Development of Local Self-Governments, 01-02 March 2023, Kerala, India

<https://www.icsf.net/resources/lsg-workshop-icsf-kila-kerala-india/>

#### Report of the Workshop on Sea Safety and Fisheries Management: Training and Capacity Development of Local Self-Governments, 01-02 March 2023, Thrissur, Kerala

<https://www.icsf.net/resources/report-of-the-workshop-on-sea-safety-and-fisheries-management-training-and-capacity-development-of-local-self-governments-01-02-march-2023-thrissur-kerala/>



## FISHERIES LEGISLATION

### Peru amends law to strengthen fisheries protection in 5-nautical mile zone

On 12 April 2023, Peru's National Congress approved some amendments to the 1992 General Fisheries Law, which have important implications for fisheries management and conservation within the 5-mile zone, especially for the activities of Peru's artisanal fisheries for which this zone is reserved.

Fisheries productivity in Peru is very high. With almost 3,300 km of coastline along the eastern South Pacific – the location of the Humboldt Current and the associated large upwelling system – Peru ranks among the top five countries with the largest fish catches in the world. All these catches are taken within the waters under its jurisdiction, within its 200-miles exclusive economic zone.

Peru also has important artisanal fisheries, with a wide diversity of fishing activities, and employs the largest number of people engaged in fishing and related activities. Such activities provide 80 per cent of employment in fishing and more than half of the income

generated by all Peruvian fishing activities. It is one thing to describe the Peruvian fishery in terms of tonnes caught, but quite another to account for the employment, income and food it provides by itself, as well as by activities that depend on it.

The first five nautical miles are recognized as an area of great importance for the reproduction and breeding of multiple coastal species, and, for this reason, since the beginning of the 1990s, it has been an area where the fishing activities of the industrial fleets (the most numerous being the purse-seine fleet, which catches anchovy for fishmeal, and a small trawler fleet that catches hake for frozen export) have been restricted.

The General Fisheries Law, enacted in 1992, needs to be updated, and this is a process that fishers' organizations and Peruvian civil society have been pushing for several years and which has been responded to in recent months in the Congress of the Republic.

Although it was not possible to approve a text

that completely updates the law, on 12 April the plenary of the Congress approved some amendments to the law...

<https://www.icsf.net/news/samudra-exclusive-peru-moves-to-strengthen-fisheries-protection-in-the-5-nautical-mile-zone-through-amended-law/>

## FISHERIES LIVELIHOODS

### 'Floating toilets' help Cambodia's lake-dwelling poor

Pointing to the murky waters of the Tonle Sap, Si Vorn fights back tears as she recalls her four-year-old daughter dying from diarrhoea after playing in the polluted lake.

Her family of 12 is among 100,000 people living in floating houses on Cambodia's vast inland waterway, and while their village has 70 houses and a primary school, it has no sanitation system.

Now a local social enterprise, Wetlands Work (ww), is trying to tackle the problem by rolling out "floating toilets" to filter waste, but the high cost of installation means for now they are available to only a lucky few.

For generations, villagers whose livelihood depends on fishing have defecated directly into the water that they use for cooking, washing and bathing – risking diarrhoea and even more severe water-borne diseases such as cholera.

"We use this water, we drink this water, and we defecate into this water. Everything!" Si Vorn, 52, told AFP, saying her family fell ill all the time.

"Every day, I worry about my health. Look at the water, there is no sanitation. I'm so worried but I don't know what to do."

More than a million people live on or around Tonle Sap, the world's largest inland fishery, but there is no system in place for managing human waste from the 20,000 floating houses around the lake.

Cambodia, ravaged by war and the genocidal Khmer Rouge in the 1970s, is one of the poorest countries in Southeast Asia.

Around a third of the population does not have access to proper toilets, according to the WaterAid charity, and diarrhoea is a leading killer of children under five.

Wetlands Work hopes its HandyPods, as the floating toilets are properly known, can help Si Vorn's village and others like it in other countries...

<https://www.icsf.net/news/floating-toilets-help-cambodias-lake-dwelling-poor/>

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## ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

### Ghana National Canoe Fishermen Council (GNCFC)

The Ghana National Canoe Fishermen Council (GNCFC) was founded in 1984 as an association to represent artisanal fishers in Ghana. Currently, it is the lead stakeholder in the artisanal industry, representing the vast majority of artisanal fishers. The council's operation permeates the four coastal regions in Ghana, with a membership of 100,000 fishers.

Fishermen in the artisanal fishing industry of Ghana have recognized the emerging challenges posed by multiple users of Ghana's marine space due to the increasing impoverishment in coastal fishing communities, and food and livelihood insecurity. Their role in safeguarding a sustainable artisanal fishing industry, the need for transparency and accountability

in Ghana's fisheries sector and the overall socio-economic empowerment of artisanal fishers necessitated the formation of GNCFC to contribute to an improved governance of responsible and sustainable



fisheries in the western African nation.

Over the years, the council has collaborated with the Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development and the Fisheries Commission. With the support of development projects and local NGOs/CSOs, it has successfully implemented various key fisheries management activities,

specifically in the areas of effort reduction, strengthening enforcement, empowering economic livelihood and building capacity.

Specifically, the GNCFC has contributed immensely to the successful implementation of closed seasons for artisanal fishers, registration of artisanal canoes, development and issuance of canoe identification cards for canoe owners, and formation of beach landing enforcement committees to assist in enforcement and compliance. The GNCFC has also contributed immensely to transforming fishing societies, especially in coastal communities, through community empowerment and integrated development initiatives.

The GNCFC has established networks with both international and local fisheries

organizations and associations. Some of these organizations include: CAOPA, Coastal Resource Centre, University of Rhode Island, Centre for Coastal Management, University of Cape Coast, USAID/Ghana Fisheries Recovery Activity Project, Hen Mpoano, Friends of the Nation and Environmental Justice Foundation, among others.

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## SMALL-SCALE FISHERIES

# Act for transformational change: The IHH study findings

By collating and analyzing the best evidence available, the Illuminating Hidden Harvests (IHH) study sets out to demonstrate the importance of supporting small-scale fisheries to fully realize their contributions to sustainable development. The key findings, embracing harvesting and production, livelihoods and economic value, gender, governance, nutrition and other important features and properties, are discussed further to indicate actions that can be taken.

### Harvesting aquatic foods

Small-scale fisheries are a significant component of global capture fisheries, reaching around 40 per cent of global production. According to the IHH study, the subsector contributes an estimated 36.9 mn tonnes of catch, corresponding to around one-third of global marine catch and nearly the entire inland catch. While these numbers alone are already significant, it should be remembered that they have almost certainly been underestimated, particularly on the inland fisheries side, due to the limited information available for subsistence and smaller-scale fisheries in more remote areas.

The findings of the IHH study highlight the importance of small-scale fisheries to global fisheries production. Although production varies across regions and national economic classifications, it can be quite significant in some areas: for example, a large majority (83 per cent) of total capture production in least developed countries comes from small-scale fisheries. With reference to species composition, small pelagics and tuna, bonito and billfish are highly represented in marine small-scale fisheries catch, and, likewise, cyprinids and tilapia for inland catch.

The environmental interactions of small-scale fisheries vary according to the nature of each fishery, with some having among the lowest footprints across all types of food production.

These interactions depend on various factors: for example, gear type, intensity of fishing operation, and the particular environment in which the fisheries operate. Coupled with local and global environmental changes (including climate change) that are imposing unprecedented challenges at a broad scale, these interactions have consequences for future small-scale fisheries catches and production systems, and the benefits that these create. While small-scale fisheries could, by definition, have a lower impact on the environment than large-scale fisheries, there is not sufficient evidence to conclude what their aggregate impact is.

The pressures and drivers, both cumulative and in isolation, need to be understood if they are to be remedied, mitigated or adapted to. At the same time as the environmental interactions of small-scale fisheries need to be understood and considered, the food security and nutrition and livelihood roles of small-scale fisheries need to be acknowledged in environmental and biodiversity conservation policies so that the trade-offs between environmental, social and economic goals, especially in situations of poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition, can be identified and included in related policies.

While the reported volumes of small-scale fisheries catch are significant in themselves for better understanding the overall importance of the subsector, there is also great value in understanding how this information is incorporated in policies, strategies and decisions relating to fisheries governance, food systems, livelihoods and poverty eradication. Understanding catch volume and species composition at

appropriate scales is also critical for effective fisheries management. In combination with qualitative information gathered from fishers, processors and managers (among others), data on catch and species trends can be used in quantitative or qualitative approaches to assess the state of fish stocks. This information is important to the implementation of adaptive management measures to ensure



biological sustainability, in line with SDG Target 14.4 (i.e. “effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing”). Moreover, additional data on fishing effort, fleet characteristics and gear types, as well as information on market trends and climate change, are essential in reducing uncertainties and improving the assessment and management of small-scale fisheries.

The use of a range of information from different sources is also in line with the SSF Guidelines, which recognize the importance of sustainable resource management and adopting measures for long-term sustainable use of fishery resources and securing the ecological foundation for food production. Appropriate management systems should be implemented, taking into account the

particular requirements and opportunities presented by small-scale fisheries (paragraph 5.13). For this, the SSF Guidelines also recognize the need for governments to “establish systems of collecting fisheries data, including bioecological, social, cultural and economic data relevant for decision-making on sustainable management of small-scale fisheries” (paragraph 11.1).

As small-scale fisheries often target and harvest species that are also exploited by large-scale fisheries, information on catch provenance and composition and the functioning of production systems is needed not only to inform management and governance of the small-scale subsector but also to establish where these fisheries fit within broader fisheries-management frameworks. This knowledge has implications for overarching decisions on fisheries sustainability and ecosystem effects at all scales. If data on small-scale fisheries catch are missing or inadequate, there can be significant ramifications for fisheries management that also affect the large-scale subsector. This widespread problem can be seen, for example, in small-scale tuna fisheries, whose activities and harvests have implications for stock assessments and harvest quotas. Some regional fisheries management organizations and stakeholders acknowledge that they require far more detailed information on small-scale fisheries catch to effectively manage some, or all, the species for which they have competence. Thus, filling this data and information gap would allow for improved monitoring and management of these resources across the harvesting segment of the value chain.

Source: *Illuminating Hidden Harvests: The contributions of small-scale fisheries to sustainable development*  
<http://www.fao.org/3/cc4576en/cc4576en.pdf>

## INFOLOG: NEW RESOURCES AT ICSF

### Publications and Infographics

#### Social Development and Sustainable Fisheries Series by ICSF

<https://www.icsf.net/useful-resources/all-icsf-publications/>

This publication details the series of studies on 'Social Development and Sustainable Fisheries' conducted by ICSF in eight countries to examine how social development of small-scale fishing communities contributes to responsible and sustainable small-scale fisheries. The following countries were studied: [Antigua and Barbuda](#), [Costa Rica](#), [Ghana](#), [The Philippines](#), [Bangladesh](#), [Brazil](#), [Thailand](#) and [India \(Kerala/Tamil Nadu and West Bengal\)](#)

#### Report of the Workshop on Sea Safety and Fisheries Management: Training and Capacity Development of Local Self-Governments, 01–02 March 2023, Thrissur, Kerala

[https://www.icsf.net/resources/report-of-the-workshop-on-sea-safety-lsg\\_icsf\\_kila\\_2023/](https://www.icsf.net/resources/report-of-the-workshop-on-sea-safety-lsg_icsf_kila_2023/)

This report on the two-day workshop organized to enhance the capacity of representatives of local self-government institutions, saw participation from officers of the Department of Fisheries, Kerala, and representatives from fishworker organizations, civil society organizations (CSOs) and community-based organizations. The publication is also available in Malayalam

#### MEL4SSF Piloting Philippines by Ronald B. Rodriguez

<https://www.icsf.net/resources/mel4ssf-piloting-philippines/>

MEL4SSF took into consideration the Philippines governance context, characterized by a more decentralized and devolved governance structure. The piloting process uncovered possible impacts and opportunities on the implementation of the SSF Guidelines initiatives, as well as in monitoring and evaluating initiatives under the SSF Guidelines.

#### MEL4SSF Piloting Ghana by Peter Linford Adjei <https://www.icsf.net/resources/mel4ssf-piloting-ghana/>

This report details a pilot of the MEL4SSF in Ghana in which 42 officials and SSF leaders were interviewed, 13 focus group discussions (FGDs) with 227 participants conducted, and over 20 major legislative and policy documents reviewed.

#### Report on Latin American and Caribbean Workshop – IYFA 2022: Celebrating Sustainable and Equitable Small-scale Fisheries, 2–5 November 2022, Brazil

<https://www.icsf.net/resources/report-on-latin-american-and-caribbean-workshop-iyafa-2022/>

The Latin American and Caribbean workshop was the second 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 (IYFA) by the United Nations. This publication is also available in Spanish and Portuguese

#### Report on National Training of Trainers (TOT) Workshop on the SSF Guidelines (Marine Fisheries) October 13–15, 2022, Asha Nivas Social Service Centre, Chennai, India

[https://www.icsf.net/resources/report-tot-marine-fisheries\\_2022/](https://www.icsf.net/resources/report-tot-marine-fisheries_2022/)

The three-day workshop was organized with an aim to enhance the capacity of fishworker organizations, CSOs and community-based organizations to engage with the SSF Guidelines to negotiate issues of concern in regard to policy, legislation, lives and livelihoods of the SSF communities.

#### Baffling Shades of Blue: Addressing the Impacts of the Blue Economy on Small-scale Fisheries in Latin America

<https://www.icsf.net/resources/baffling-shades-of-blue-economy-latin-america/>

This report draws on scholarship from the trenches and research centres across 10 Latin American countries. Based on extensive interviews, policy reviews, and analyses of finances and online datasets, it examines, in detail, how 'Blue Growth' affects artisanal fishers and their need for equity and justice.

## FLASHBACK

### Small scale, large agenda

The 25th Session of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) of the Food and Agriculture of the United Nations (FAO) was held from 24 to 28 February 2003 at Rome. Notably, one of the agenda items was on 'Strategies for Increasing the Sustainable Contribution of Small-scale Fisheries to Food Security and Poverty Alleviation'. The last time small-scale fisheries was on the agenda of COFI was 20 years ago, in 1983, in the lead-up to the FAO World Conference on Fisheries Management and Development in 1984.



The inclusion of this agenda item was particularly appropriate, given the recently organized World Food Summit and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, both of which focused on the importance of eradicating hunger and poverty. It was also appropriate in view of the process being initiated by the FAO to develop "voluntary guidelines to achieve the progressive realization of the right to adequate food", as a follow-up to the World Food Summit.

The inclusion of this agenda item once again reaffirmed the important role small-scale fisheries plays, especially in the developing world, in providing income, employment and in contributing to food security.

What was needed, however, was a much stronger endorsement that the small-scale model of fisheries development is inherently more suitable, even on grounds of environmental sustainability, a key issue of concern today. In this context, it is worth recalling the observation made in the report of a joint study by the World Bank, United Nations Development Programme, Commission of the European Communities and FAO in 1992, titled *A Study of International Fisheries Research*: "... in many situations, the comparative advantages may lie with the small-scale sector. It is labour intensive, consumes less fuel, generally uses more selective gear, and is less dependent on imported equipment and materials. The small-scale sector's capital is owned locally, often by the fishers themselves. And because the small-scale fishers depend on resources adjacent to their communities, they have a greater self-interest than large-scale fishers in management of their fisheries."

With many fisheries the world over showing evident signs of overfishing, the imperative is to create a policy environment supportive of small-scale fisheries using selective gear. One of the most crucial prerequisites for this, as mentioned in the paper prepared by the FAO Secretariat for this agenda item, is the need for "better management through the allocation of secure fishing rights—backed by appropriate legislation—to small-scale fishers in coastal and inland zones and their effective protection from industrial fishing activity or activities that degrade aquatic resources and habitats."

Moreover, in view of the increasing technological capacity of the small-scale fleet to harvest resources in deeper waters, as well as the greater pressure on inshore resources, it is appropriate that governments extend the areas reserved for exclusive exploitation by the small-scale fleet within their exclusive economic zones (EEZs). This will also, in no small measure, contribute to increasing safety at sea, as many accidents result from both the industrial and small-scale fleets using the same marine space. Many small-scale fishworkers have lost their craft and gear, and even their lives, as a result of accidents involving industrial fleets.

A clear recognition of the inherent superiority of the small-scale model of fisheries development and a reallocation of resources in favour of small-scale fisheries, is the need of the hour. Given that it is State policies that have supported industrial fisheries, often at the expense of both small-scale fisheries and environmental sustainability, and even in areas where small-scale fleets are capable of operating effectively, a reorientation of these policies is urgent.

A vote for small-scale fisheries would be a vote for long-term socioeconomic and environmental benefits over short-term profits, for livelihoods and a dignified existence for many over benefits for a few.

—from SAMUDRA Report No. 34, March 2003

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### MEETINGS

19th Session Sub-Committee on Fish Trade, Bergen, Norway – from 11 to 15 September 2023

<https://www.fao.org/about/meetings/cofi-sub-committee-on-fish-trade/en/>

Twenty-fifth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, 16–20 October 2023, Nairobi, Kenya

<https://www.cbd.int/meetings/SBSTTA-25>

European Workshop: IYFA 2022-Celebrating Sustainable and Equitable Small-scale Fisheries, November, 2023

<https://www.icsf.net/>

### WEBSITE

ICSF Archives/Digital library <http://icsfarchives.net/>

ICSF's Archives/Digital library is a repository of ICSF's collections of over three decades, built up since ICSF's Documentation Centre was set up in Chennai, India, in 1999, with the aim of gathering all kinds of information pertinent to small-scale fisheries and making it available to all stakeholders in an easy and rapid-access format. Currently, the digital archive has over 2,000

original documents and more than 12,000 curated links.

The archive's papers are listed under the following major themes related to fisheries: Aquaculture; Biodiversity; Decent Work; Disasters and Climate Change (including COVID-19); Fisheries Trade; Gender in Fisheries and Aquaculture; Right to Resources (including access rights and tenure); and the SSF Guidelines.





## Endquote

*When I was a young decky ships didn't have toilets on board. You can imagine what we had to do, how many men did we lose at sea through having no toilets. The Board of Trade then ruled all boats had to have a toilet on board, so what did the owners do? Cut a hole right through the boat put a hood over it and that was your toilet. Mean? And still very dangerous, you had to be there at the right time, when the ship was dipping its head you'd get out like hell because when the ship came down a great spout of water shot out the hole.*

— Mumby-Croft, Roger. 1999.  
**The Living Conditions on Board UK-Distant Water Trawlers, 1945-1970.**  
*The Northern Mariner/Le Marin du nord*, IX, No. 4  
(October 1999), 25-33.



