



COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES

Thirty-fourth Session

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SUPPORTING SMALL-SCALE AND ARTISANAL FISHERIES

Executive Summary

This document summarizes achievements of FAO to support sustainable marine and inland small-scale and artisanal fisheries governance and development. It reports on progress under the FAO Umbrella Programme for the Promotion and Application of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines) and related developments. It highlights the contribution of small-scale and artisanal fisheries to food system transformation in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as innovative efforts to improve technical capacities for data collection and analysis in small-scale fisheries. Finally, it presents preparations for the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAFA) in 2022. Complementary and additional information is provided in COFI/2020/Inf.12 (Small-scale and artisanal fisheries: Progress on implementing the SSF Guidelines since the Thirty-third Session of COFI in 2018), COFI/2020/Inf.12.1 (Status update on the global study 'Illuminating Hidden Harvests. The contribution of small-scale fisheries to sustainable development'), COFI/2020/Inf.12.2 (Draft planning roadmap for the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture 2022).

Suggested actions by the Committee

The Committee is invited to:

Reiterate the importance of enhancing the **contribution** of small-scale and artisanal fisheries to global, regional and national efforts to eradicate hunger and eliminate poverty and note progress by FAO and partners concerning the implementation of the SSF Guidelines since the Thirty-second Session of COFI in 2016. More specifically, the Committee is invited to:

- Note progress to implement the SSF Guidelines under the auspices of the SSF Umbrella Programme; and consider supporting the FAO SSF Umbrella Programme to initiate additional national participatory processes for the sustainable development of small-scale fisheries and to improve their contribution to food security and nutrition;

- Reiterate the value of the SSF Guidelines as a tool to support achieving the SDGs, in particular SDG 14, but also other goals related to food security, poverty eradication, gender equality, sustainable livelihoods, and responsible consumption and production; and provide guidance on how FAO should focus additional capacity development to Members in support of achieving SDG target 14.b.;
- Note the progress in improving information on small-scale fisheries, in particular through the study, “Illuminating Hidden Harvests: The contribution of small-scale fisheries to sustainable development”; and provide guidance on how FAO can further support improved data collection and analysis methodologies for small-scale fisheries, and related capacity development at country and regional level;
- Provide inputs and suggestions on the Draft planning roadmap for the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture 2022 (IYAFA 2022); and share national plans to celebrate sustainable development of small-scale fisheries and aquaculture during IYAFA.

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. Since the Committee's Thirty-third Session in 2018, the Fisheries Division has continued to provide support to and encourage the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines), which were endorsed by the Thirty-first Session of the Committee in 2014. This support has mainly been provided through the FAO Umbrella Programme for the Promotion and Application of the SSF Guidelines (FAO SSF Umbrella Programme), established in 2015, but also through other FAO initiatives and projects incorporating SSF Guidelines principles and provisions in relevant activities.
2. Further, a significant number of independent initiatives by governments, development organizations, research institutes, etc. to support the implementation of the SSF Guidelines, including uptake in policies and strategies, are noted and applauded. Small-scale fisheries actors themselves and their organizations continue to actively engage in capacity development and awareness raising, and increasingly participate in local, national, regional and global fora.
3. Key activities and achievements in the context of the SSF Guidelines implementation are described below. The document also reports on preparations for International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture in 2022.

II. PROGRESS TO IMPLEMENT THE SSF GUIDELINES UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE SSF UMBRELLA PROGRAMME

4. The FAO SSF Umbrella Programme supports the implementation of the SSF Guidelines by creating partnerships and synergies with other actors in the fisheries and development arena. The FAO SSF Umbrella Programme is also a mechanism for collaborating across FAO. It takes guidance from an SSF Technical Network with membership from FAO technical divisions and regional and sub-regional offices. This inter-disciplinary collaboration is essential for successful results.
5. To ensure the sustainability of the FAO SSF Umbrella Programme, it is imperative that activities are firmly anchored within existing structures and processes and that work is carried out in a participatory manner, involving all major stakeholders, especially those whose livelihoods are directly impacted. FAO's comparative advantage lies in its ability to provide an enabling environment, provide guidance and promote partnerships and the sharing of good practices at global, regional and national levels. By promoting conditions such as supportive policy and legal frameworks and appropriate institutional structures, in particular empowered organizations representing small-scale fisheries actors, progress towards sustainable small-scale fisheries can continue beyond FAO's support.
6. At global level, FAO has further elaborated the different functions of the SSF Guidelines Global Strategic Framework (SSF-GSF); with particular attention given to the Advisory Group of the SSF-GSF, in collaboration with the IPC Working Group on Fisheries¹. The Advisory Group brings together representatives from global small-scale fisheries organizations, including representatives of indigenous peoples and rural workers, as well as the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The group provides advice on how to best implement the SSF Guidelines around the world and engages in global policy processes to represent the perspective of small-scale fisheries. Regional Advisory Groups are also being set up to facilitate engagement in different

¹ World Forum of Fishers People (WFFP), World Forum of Fish Harvesters & Fish Workers (WFF) are members of the International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC) Fisheries Working Group with which FAO has a partnership agreement.

geographies. The SSF-GSF also includes a Knowledge Sharing Platform for other SSF Guidelines partners. WorldFish and the NGO community have advanced this group by providing a forum for discussions on collaboration modalities and promoting the sharing of existing tools and resources.

7. Work is also ongoing to build a mechanism for monitoring of improvements in small-scale fisheries and of the implementation of the SSF Guidelines. Such a mechanism will provide information that helps guide future implementation efforts by creating learning and supporting identification of good practices. It will be participatory, relate to SSF-GSF and recognize the links with the SDGs, in particular SDG 14.b. An e-consultation was held in February-March 2020 to help elaborate this monitoring mechanism. Based on the outcomes of the e-consultation and other consultations and inputs, it will be finalized and then piloted in selected countries before being rolled out more broadly. This monitoring mechanism will also support national efforts to monitor improvements in small-scale fisheries.

8. So far, some ten regional and sub-regional networks and organizations, representing many thousands of small-scale fisheries actors, have been supported. The FAO SSF Umbrella Programme will continue this stream of work together with its other commitments at the global, regional and national levels with a view to create tangible impacts on the ground at the same time as creating the mechanisms and structures for securing sustainable small-scale fisheries at a larger scale.

9. While the global and regional policy processes and institutional structures are important as part of an enabling environment and to provide guidance, change and positive impact is only achieved if the SSF Guidelines are implemented at the local and national levels. The FAO SSF Umbrella Programme engages in a number of countries where participatory processes are used to agree on and implement priority actions for SSF Guidelines implementation. Based on experiences in countries where SSF Guidelines implementation planning is fairly advanced², a toolkit with practical advice on how to develop a national plan of action for the implementation of the SSF Guidelines (NPOA-SSF) has been developed and is currently being deployed. Examples of countries where SSF Guidelines implementation processes are being initiated since COFI 33 include Madagascar, Myanmar, Namibia, Oman, the Philippines and Senegal. SSF Guidelines implementation continues in Costa Rica and Tanzania and additional countries are supported by the FAO SSF Umbrella. Moreover, specific SSF Guidelines implementation support is provided from the FAO SSF Umbrella Programme to the FAO-GEF Coastal Fisheries Initiative West Africa project in Cabo Verde and Cote d'Ivoire in addition to Senegal. SSF Guidelines implementation is also underway in Ghana, Malawi, Sierra Leone and Uganda with a strong focus on the postharvest sector and women's organizations and entrepreneurship, putting into practice recommendations from the "Handbook on gender-equitable small-scale fisheries development and governance" (FAO, 2017).

10. FAO continues to receive requests from Members and organizations to support implementation of the SSF Guidelines and additional extra-budgetary funding will be required to respond to such requests. Resource partners are strongly encouraged to support the FAO SSF Umbrella Programme.

11. A full description of the work and achievements under the FAO SSF Umbrella Programme and related initiatives is provided in COFI/2020/Inf.12 (Small-scale and artisanal fisheries: Progress on implementing the SSF Guidelines since the Thirty-third Session of COFI in 2018).

² See the document COFI/2016/Inf.13, prepared for the 32nd Session of the Committee, for an account on where activities were started already during the previous biennium.

III. SSF GUIDELINES AS A TOOL TO SUPPORT ACHIEVING THE SDGS

12. Small-scale fisheries play an important role in food security and nutrition and offer development pathways for poverty eradication and equitable development. The SSF Guidelines provide a framework to enhance the contribution of small-scale fisheries to food security, poverty eradication and sustainable livelihoods, and directly contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular SDG 14 and target 14.b, but also other SDGs. As noted in previous paragraphs, and elaborated upon in COFI/2020/Inf.12, efforts of the SSF Umbrella programme support achievement of many SDGs, including 1 No poverty, 2 Zero hunger, 5 Gender equality, 12 Responsible consumption and production, 13 Climate action, 14 Life below water and 16 Peace, justice and strong institutions.

13. These efforts include working with partners to promote a human rights-based approach, social protection, gender equality, and value chain enhancement, in particular in the postharvest subsector, as well as efforts to address climate change and extreme poverty in small-scale fisheries. FAO is promoting sustainable food systems to increase the quantity and quality of fish products for human consumption by empowering women, and working to strengthen the mitigative and adaptive capacity to climate change of traditional fishers and fish workers, and supporting the integration of Indigenous Peoples' perspectives in the implementation of the SSF Guidelines.

14. Target 14.b of the 2030 Agenda calls on States to “provide access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets”. Governments have an essential role to play in ensuring equitable access to resources and markets for small-scale fishers and fishworkers, and the SSF Guidelines contain valuable recommendations to support achieving SDG Target 14.b.

15. The governance and management of fisheries that recognize the participation of fishers, local stewardship, and shared decision-making, or co-management, empower fishworkers and balance rights and responsibilities between users and government authorities. Appropriate access to resources and secure tenure or user rights, together with co-management, are fundamental elements of sustainable fisheries. FAO is working to complement recommendations in the SSF Guidelines with specific practical guidance on options and opportunities for fisheries stakeholders to consider how to implement co-management and facilitate the formalization of appropriate tenure, access and user rights in fisheries, noting that these are key elements for realizing sustainable access to resources, as well as the food security and the economic contributions of the small-scale fisheries sector. To date, regional workshops have provided recommendations for national marine fisheries in the respective areas of South East Asia and the Bay of Bengal, and Latin America and the Caribbean. The next workshop, Great Lakes and Inland Water Bodies of the World, will provide further recommendations for inland fisheries guidance. Additional workshops are planned to cover other regions of the world.

16. The COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade³ emphasized the importance of market access, value chains, post-harvest operations and trade to enhance the contribution of small-scale fisheries towards the achievement of SDG14.b. A new FAO Technical Paper, "Securing sustainable small-scale fisheries: Showcasing applied practices in value chains, post-harvest operations and trade", examines good practices and successful initiatives consistent with the recommendations of the SSF Guidelines (included as COFI/2020/SBD.20) and can be used to inform future work by FAO.

³ COFI/2020/4. Decisions and recommendations of the Seventeenth Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade, Vigo, Spain, 25-29 November 2019.

IV. ILLUMINATING HIDDEN HARVESTS: THE CONTRIBUTION OF SMALL-SCALE FISHERIES TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

17. In June 2017, FAO, in collaboration with WorldFish and Duke University, initiated a global study entitled ‘Illuminating Hidden Harvests: the contribution of small-scale fisheries to sustainable development’ (IHH), which was introduced during COFI33 (see COFI/2018/Inf.18). A launch event for the report is due in 2021 and will provide an opportunity to discuss how the findings and the methodologies developed and used can be further applied, both to inform policy and to improve regular data collection on small-scale fisheries.

18. IHH will provide updated and more thorough information on variables such as catch and employment, but it will also present information on the nutritional contribution of inland and marine small-scale fisheries. The data and knowledge generated by the study is expected to contribute to more effective decision-making by policy-makers and empower small-scale fishing communities and stakeholders to call for greater government support and investment. It is also expected that the experiences of IHH will contribute to developing better inter-disciplinary and harmonized data collection and analysis capacity at the national and regional level, with support from FAO and partners. To support this a regional roll-out in partnership with relevant regional organizations, is envisaged to make full use of the data and methodologies developed by IHH.

19. More information on IHH can be found in the document COFI/2020/Inf12.1 (Update on the study “Illuminating Hidden Harvests: the contribution of small-scale fisheries to sustainable development”).

V. INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF ARTISANAL FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

20. The United Nations General Assembly in its Seventy-second session in December 2017 proclaimed 2022 the “International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture”. In its 33rd session, the Committee welcomed the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture in 2022 (IYAFA 2022). FAO is serving as the lead agency for IYAFA 2022 in close collaboration with relevant partners and bodies of the United Nations system. Since 2018, FAO has begun planning in earnest for IYAFA 2022. To guide and focus its efforts, FAO has developed a draft planning roadmap and welcomes inputs and suggestions from the Committee.

21. Countries and partners are encouraged to actively engage in and support the observance of this auspicious international year. IYAFA presents an opportunity to promote the sustainable development of small-scale fisheries and aquaculture food systems; enhance global awareness about, understanding of, and action to support the contribution of small-scale fisheries and aquaculture to the global fisheries sector; and promote dialogue and collaboration between and among small-scale fishers, fish farmers, fish workers, governments and other key partners. These efforts will further contribute to sustainable development of small-scale fisheries and aquaculture and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

22. A summary of preparations to date for IYAFA 2022 and the draft planning roadmap are included in session information document COFI/2020/Inf12.2 (Draft planning roadmap for the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture 2022).