



COMMISSION OF SMALL SCALE, ARTISANAL FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

XVII SESSION

Lima - Peru, 27-29 October 2021

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF ARTISANAL FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE - 2022

Introduction

Fisheries and aquaculture are increasingly contributing to food security and rural employment in the Latin American and Caribbean Region. In less than 7 decades, both productive sub-sectors have reached a contribution of almost 15 million tons of food products to the world's population, as well as commodities such as fishmeal and fish oil which contribute with foreign exchange to the economies of several countries. In addition, fisheries and aquaculture generate more than 2.6 million direct jobs in the region and three times that figure in indirect employment, of which almost 90 percent are linked to small-scale fisheries, which provide up to 85 percent of the fish consumed in some countries and are the primary source of animal protein for hundreds of communities, many of them indigenous peoples, settled along the coasts and in the territories adjacent to inland water systems.

This important contribution to national economies and food security has prompted a growing number of governments to recognize the social relevance of fisheries and aquaculture, as well as the need to manage and protect fishery and aquaculture resources, strengthening their institutions and including these subsectors in the development agendas of rural territories.

The United Nations General Assembly, at the proposal of Latin American and Caribbean countries, has declared 2022 as the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAFA-2022). FAO is the agency in charge of promoting the activities related to this important milestone, with the collaboration of other entities of the United Nations System.



Objective

The IYAFA celebration is a recognition of the millions of artisanal fishers, small-scale fish farmers and fishery and aquaculture food system workers who provide daily nutritious food to billions of people around the world and contribute significantly to the achievement of a world without hunger.

The objective of celebrating IYAFA 2022 *is to focus world attention on the role that small-scale fishers, fish farmers and fish workers play in food security and nutrition, poverty eradication and sustainable natural resource use – thereby increasing global understanding and action to support them*

Small-Scale Fisheries Guidelines

One of the guiding instruments on the rights of fish workers in the framework of environmental sustainability, are the **FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries**, whose elements related to gender equity, building resilience to climate change, access to fishing rights, social protection and occupational safety and sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, among others, are gradually being adopted by countries of the region with the assistance of FAO and other intergovernmental bodies. Strengthening small-scale fisheries also contributes to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular SDG14.

Sub-regional Committees for the IYAFA-2022 celebration

In order to collectively reflect and internationally promote activities in the framework of the celebration of the IYAFA-2022, three Sub-regional Committees have been established. The Mesoamerican Committee is composed of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector Body of the Central American Isthmus representing the countries of the Central American Isthmus and the Dominican Republic; CONAPESCA-Mexico; the Confederation of Artisanal Fishers of Central America (CONFEPESCA); the Alliance of Indigenous Fishers of Central America; the Tilapia Network-Mexico; the Fish Farmers Association of Honduras and FAO acting as Technical Secretariat. The Mesoamerican Committee has held 4 sessions and has an agreed work plan under implementation. Its lines of action are:

- Formulate and promote the adoption of the "Guidelines for the inclusion of artisanal fishers and small-scale fish farmers in national social protection mechanisms", for which a sub-regional forum will be held with fisheries authorities, fishers' organisations and policy makers.
- Promote the creation of the Mesoamerican Aquaculture Association.
- Organise the 1st Mesoamerican Seminar on Artisanal Fisheries and Small-scale Aquaculture.



Committee of the Western Central Atlantic Fisheries Commission (WECAFC) for the celebration of the IYafa-2022

WECAFC created a Coordination Committee for the celebration of the IYafa-2022, composed of the member countries; the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM); the Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES) of the University of the West Indies; the Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector of the Central American Isthmus of the Central American Isthmus (OSPESCA); the Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organisations (CNFO) and the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI).

The Coordination Committee agreed to push forward three lines of action: i) the identification and recognition of good artisanal fishers practices, to highlight them as examples; to promote greater visibility of artisanal fisheries; and to negotiate with the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI), to hold a parallel session during the next IYafa-2022 Conference.

The South American Committee for the celebration of the IYafa-2022

This *ad-hoc* inter-governmental committee is in the process of being established. It is composed of the fisheries authorities of the South American countries at the invitation of FAO (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela) and will hold its first official meeting in early September to determine its plan of action.