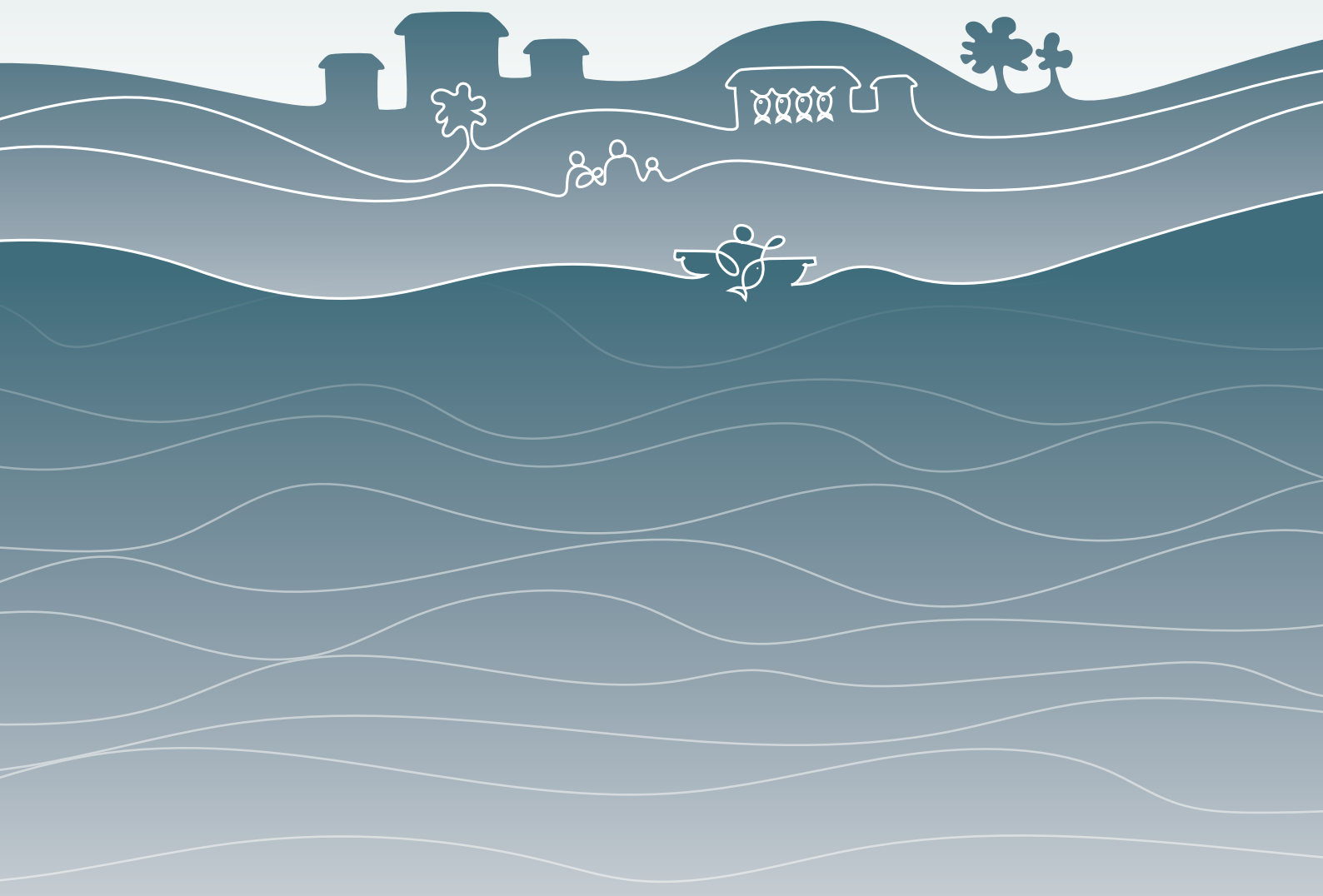




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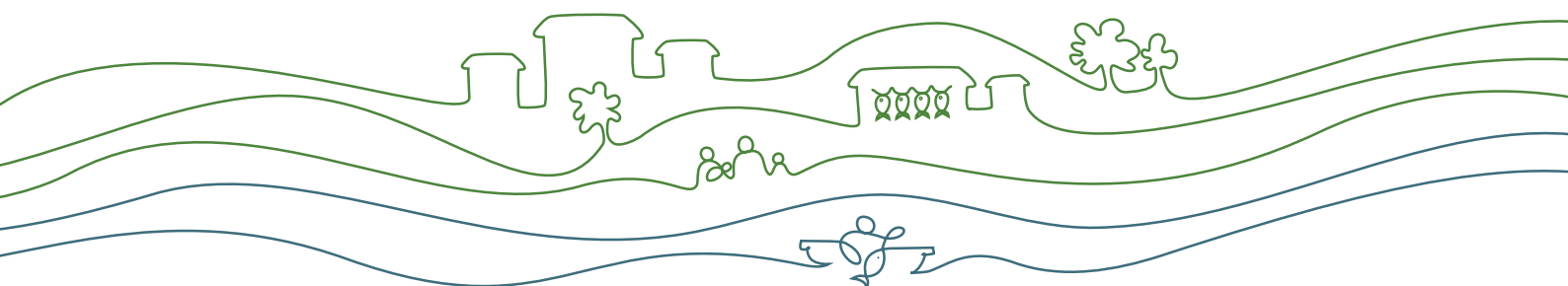
Developing and implementing a National Plan of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries (NPOA-SSF)

A manual in support of the implementation
of the Voluntary Guidelines for securing sustainable
small-scale fisheries in the context of food security
and poverty eradication



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Abbreviations

CSO	EQM	ICT
civil society organization	Evaluation questions matrix	information, communication and technology
LOGFRAME	MEL	MTR
logical framework	monitoring, evaluation and learning	mid-term review
NGO	NPOA-SSF	SDGS
non-governmental organization	National Plan of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries	Sustainable Development Goals
SSF	SSF GUIDELINES	SOP
small-scale fisheries	Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication	standard operating procedure
TOR		
terms of reference		

Introduction

Small-scale fisheries account for at least 40 percent of capture fisheries' annual global catch, which is estimated at 92 million tonnes. These numbers suggest the major contributions of the small-scale fisheries subsector in different areas such as nutrition and food security, employment, and contribution to national economies. For instance, it is estimated that over 60 million people are employed in the subsector, either on a part or full-time basis, with an additional 53 million people engaged in subsistence fisheries and approximately 379 million household members dependent at least partially on the small-scale fisheries subsector. Despite their contributions and involvement in the fisheries sector, small-scale fisheries stakeholders often face a wide array of challenges that range from underrepresentation in decision-making processes, lack of access to relevant information and overexploitation of resources, to gender inequality, overall marginalization, and multidimensional poverty.

Despite previous efforts in the international and regional arena to develop instruments that could increase and protect the innumerable benefits that aquatic systems provide, the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF guidelines) were the first international agreement that successfully united responsible fisheries with social development, hence bringing the human perspective into an area that for decades had almost strictly focus on the management of the resources, but not the people behind. Many efforts have been made at the global, regional, national, and subnational levels to implement the SSF guidelines, but numerous challenges have risen while doing so: legal frameworks that are only based on conventional fisheries legislation, limited availability of data, and lack of capacity at various levels, to name a few.

FAO provides support to States, other institutions, and organizations to increase capacities and facilitate the implementation of the SSF guidelines. In this effort, FAO also provides support to the development and implementation of National Plans of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries (NPOA-SSF). These processes allow countries to identify existing challenges that hinder the contributions of the small-scale fisheries subsector to sustainable development and that limit the possibilities of effectively implementing the SSF guidelines at country level. An NPOA-SSF is characterized by a high degree of participation from small-scale fisheries stakeholders throughout the process.

Given the complexity of such processes, FAO has developed a number of tools, templates and guidance materials that can assist interested parties in their efforts to develop and implement an NPOA-SSF in their respective countries. This Manual explains how the different parts of the NPOA-SSF process should be used to successfully complete the stages and steps required to develop and implement an NPOA-SSF. The Manual does not intend to provide the only way to develop and implement an NPOA-SSF, but instead builds on existing experiences from countries that have undergone such processes. For this reason, it is encouraged that countries assess the guidance provided in this Manual and, if needed, adapt it to the characteristics of the country and the small-scale fisheries sector present in it.

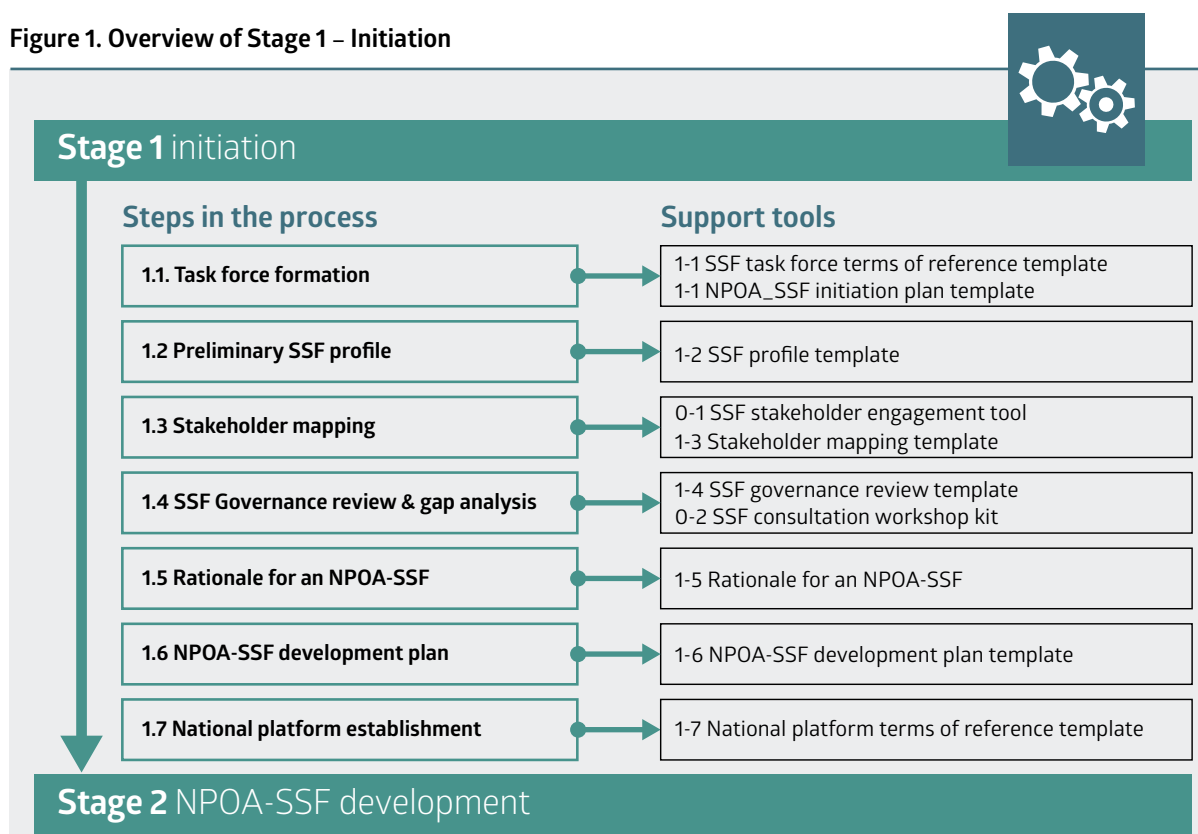
To complement this Manual, FAO has also developed a free-access, self-paced [elearning course](#) on how to develop and implement an NPOA-SSF and created a dedicated webpage under the SSF guidelines website to showcase relevant information and guidance materials on the NPOA-SSF.

Stage 1 NPOA-SSF initiation

Guidance on initiating a national plan of action for small-scale fisheries (NPOA-SSF)

The following guidance notes will lead you through the first stage of the process of developing an NPOA-SSF, namely the initiation stage. As illustrated in Figure 1 below, the steps under this stage are sequential and culminate with the establishment of the National Platform. Once Stage 1 - Initiation has been completed, Stage 2 - Development will begin.

Figure 1. Overview of Stage 1 – Initiation



Source: Authors' own elaboration.

Implementation of the SSF guidelines should adopt a human rights-based approach

The guiding principles of the SSF guidelines enshrine human rights principles that require non-discriminatory and informed participation of small-scale fisheries (SSF) communities, in transparent and rules-based decision-making processes, which are based on the recognition of their dignity and on the accountability of all actors involved.

Developing the NPOA-SSF requires explicit recognition of the challenges for small-scale fisheries stakeholders to engage effectively with consultations and additional effort to ensure their participation.

Step 1-1: Task Force formation

Table 1 - Step 1-1 Task Force formation

Summary	This first step sets up a Task Force – usually a national working group – that will lead on the initiation of the NPOA-SSF. If appropriate, the Task Force can continue into Stages 2 and 3 as the working group to develop and implement the NPOA-SSF.
Process	1.1.1 Propose the scope of an NPOA-SSF and identify initial key stakeholders 1.1.2 Convene a group of key stakeholders to form a Task Force 1.1.3 Hold an inception meeting of the Task Force 1.1.4 Refine and agree on terms of reference for the Task Force 1.1.5 Develop an NPOA-SSF initiation plan
Output(s) from this step	· Task Force · NPOA-SSF initiation plan

Source: Authors' own elaboration.

Support tools

You can use the support tools provided as the basis for your outputs.

1-1 SSF initiation plan template

1-1 SSF task force terms of reference template

Paragraph 13.5 of the SSF guidelines affirms that “*States should facilitate the formation of national-level platforms, with cross-sectoral representation and with strong representation of civil society organizations, to oversee implementation of the Guidelines, as appropriate*”. A national-level platform can take time to agree and formalize; thus, forming a Task Force at an early stage will help guide and facilitate the NPOA-SSF through the initiation stage. The Task Force can integrate the SSF national Platform when such a platform has been created: either continuing as the Task Force or as a reformed working group, an “executive committee” of the National Platform.

The Task Force will lead on delivering the other steps in **Stage 1 – Initiation (Steps 1-2 to 1-7)**.

How to form a Task Force

1.1.1 Propose the scope of an NPOA-SSF and identify key stakeholders

An NPOA-SSF has to be initiated by someone. In the case of an NPOA-SSF, this can be a civil society organization (CSO), such as a small-scale fishing organization, a government department or simply an individual “champion for change”. This initiation process could consist of informal meetings to build a preliminary vision for an NPOA-SSF and formulate options for its scope.

First, identify who the key stakeholders are. Make an initial list of stakeholders, which will grow and change over time as additional participants are suggested by other stakeholders. You will do a mapping exercise later (**Step 1-3**) to identify what stakeholders and organizations exist and, equally important, where gaps in representation exist in terms of the NPOA-SSF’s intended geographic and sectoral

scope. For the moment, note down and find out what groups are involved in small-scale fisheries in your country.

You should speak with the key official agencies in relation to small-scale fisheries, which are not limited to the department of fisheries. These discussions may point to other departments that could lead in government involvement or at least participate in developing and implementing the NPOA-SSF.

Early engagement with government departments is also important, to agree to what extent the government will validate the final NPOA-SSF (that is, adopt it as a government plan) and if so, what the government validation process is likely to be and how long this takes (public consultation or feasibility assessment on the final NPOA-SSF). If the departments cannot commit to expected validation now, re-examine this position with them throughout the development process. Government endorsement of the plan may suffice, committing to delivering certain actions under the NPOA-SSF.

Members of the Task Force are likely to consist of existing stakeholder organizations and representatives from the following groups:

- organizations representing small-scale fishers, traders or processors if they are established (more than one fisher or processor group may be needed to cover most of the geographic scope and ethnic groups involved in the small-scale fisheries subsector), or national groups with small-scale fisheries members and/or interests;
- other supply chain organizations (groups that supply or purchase from small-scale fisheries, such as net makers, boat builders, ice suppliers and transporters);
- CSOs, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or community-based organizations with some involvement in small-scale fisheries and associated communities;
- government departments (the most relevant in relation to small-scale fisheries, which may be departments of fisheries, environment ministries or regional government bodies, or also those relating to health and education);
- academics and researchers (focusing on fisheries, natural resources or social scientists with experience in working with small-scale fisheries).

At the initiation stage, it is best to have a workable number of Task Force members (typically, no more than 12) to meet, agree and complete the steps of Stage 1. With relatively few members, it may not be fully representative of the whole small-scale fisheries subsector in terms of supply chain, gender balance or ethnic groups. This situation should be recognized in the Task Force terms of reference (ToR).

Ultimately, you should create a wider, more inclusive stakeholder process, the National Platform, to contribute to the NPOA-SSF. The National Platform will be established at the end of the initiation stage (see **Step 1-7**).

Once the initiation stage has been concluded, the Task Force may be either charged with leading the development and implementation of the NPOA-SSF or be integrated into the National Platform as an “executive committee”, with the overall National Platform having an advisory role, and the Task Force or executive committee having a decision-making role.

1.1.2 Convene a group of key stakeholders to form a Task Force

Identify and contact some key stakeholders (more members can be added later), explain your intention to develop and implement an NPOA-SSF and invite them for an inception meeting.

Agree on a chairperson and co-chairperson. These appointments should reflect gender equality, for example appointing one woman and one man. Think of who could be a good chairperson and co-chairperson, then discuss with them at an early stage to get them involved and (with their agreement) to take on those roles.

1.1.3 Hold an inception meeting of the Task Force

Plan an inception meeting, ideally a face-to-face one, during which attendees should discuss the steps to take towards an NPOA-SSF and the implementation plan is agreed. The meeting agenda can include the following.

- **Scoping** – discuss and agree, in principle, on the broad scope of an NPOA-SSF (for example, the geographic, sectoral and socioeconomic scope; see Box below).
- **Key principles** – The development and implementation of the NPOA-SSF should be founded on agreed principles. Review the 13 guiding principles of the FAO SSF guidelines (Chapter 3) and note any issues in relation to the national situation.
- **Implementation plan, roles and responsibilities** – agree upon the NPOA-SSF initiation steps and milestones. Then, identify and agree the roles and responsibilities of each Task Force member to lead and achieve these milestones.
- **Outline ToR** – Using the **1-1 SSF task force terms of reference template**, agree upon the roles and responsibilities, and the ToR for the Task Force and its members. The ToR should remain valid at least until the National Platform is formalized at the end of Stage 1.
- **Identify additional Task Force members** – If the ToR demands extra expertise or resources, identify the additional Task Force members to fill any gaps.
- **Next steps** – agree next steps, including the date and location of the next Task Force meeting.

Remember to take minutes of all meetings. You should circulate a draft of the minutes to all Task Force members soon after the meeting, asking for any comments to inform the final version.

Scope of an NPOA-SSF

An NPOA-SSF implements the SSF guidelines at national level. The SSF guidelines are deliberately non-prescriptive about the scope of small-scale fisheries activities to be covered: they are relevant to small-scale fisheries in marine and inland waters, and to men and women involved throughout the value chain

The scope of an NPOA-SSF should identify the focus and broad constituents of any NPOA-SSF in your country. It could specify what waters are included (for example, both marine and inland waters in all regions); identify priority groups (such as those that are vulnerable and/or marginalized); and state all relevant parts of the fisheries value chain that are included.

1.1.4. Refine and agree on terms of reference for the Task Force

Agree upon the Task Force ToR by consulting the Task Force members on a draft version, finalizing the document based on their comments, and presenting it back to the Task Force members to agree upon and adopt.

1.1.5. Develop an NPOA-SSF initiation plan

Carrying out **Stage 1 – initiation** of the NPOA-SSF will mainly be desk-based, supported by regular communication and occasional face-to-face meetings. It should be a low-cost, time-limited exercise. However, some funds will still be required, to run meetings and to support any desk studies that may be needed.

Agree on a plan that sets out how the Task Force will deliver the steps in Stage 1 – Initiation.

You can use the **1-1 SSF initiation plan template** as a format for a time-bound plan, setting out what is being done, who is doing it and by when.

The template also contains a simple budget sheet to help you estimate how much Stage 1 is likely to cost and how it will be financed. Ask the organizations involved in the Task Force to support it, either with direct financing or in kind, such as by providing a meeting room or secretarial support. For other essential costs, funds could be sought from a variety of public- and private-sector sources, including fisheries management authorities and NGOs. To raise this money, it is important to have a clear plan and a realistic budget. The NPOA-SSF initiation plan allows you to show potential funders your plan and budget.

Step 1-2: Preliminary SSF profile

Table 2 – Step 1-2 Preliminary SSF profile

Summary	This step helps you produce a quick profile of the small-scale fisheries subsector in your country. An SSF profile provides useful information for all participants. It can be used as the basis to inform others.
Process	1.2.1. Review reference material on small-scale fisheries 1.2.2. Review information on small-scale fisheries in your country 1.2.3. Propose a definition for small-scale fisheries in your country 1.2.4. Describe the small-scale fisheries subsector in your country 1.2.5. Identify key issues related to the small-scale fisheries subsector in your country
Output(s)	· Preliminary profile of small-scale fisheries

Source: Authors' own elaboration.

Support tools

You can use the support tools provided as the basis for your outputs.

1-2 SSF profile template

An SSF profile helps those involved to better understand the scope, issues and stakeholders associated with small-scale fisheries. This preliminary description and analysis should then be built upon and periodically reviewed.

In this step, you will compile available information about the small-scale fisheries subsector to provide a description and analysis. This will give a brief overview of the nature and scale of the fishery, including the fishers, fishworkers, organizations, catches, landing sites and markets, etc.

How to produce a preliminary SSF profile

1.2.1. Review reference material on small-scale fisheries.

Review key reference materials on small-scale fisheries in your country in relation to the definition of small-scale fisheries described in the SSF guidelines. This will encourage you to consider various aspects noted in the SSF guidelines that may not have been previously taken into consideration. Examples are the following.

- Does the official or informal small-scale fisheries definition include aspects related to gender and post-harvest activities?
- Does the official or informal small-scale fisheries definition include aspects related to land tenure and access to both resources and markets?
- Do these definitions describe participatory mechanisms for fishers and their organizations as well as for post-harvest groups and their support networks?

What are small-scale fisheries?

The SSF guidelines describes small-scale and artisanal fisheries as “encompassing all activities along the value chain – pre-harvest, harvest and post-harvest – undertaken by men and women”. The SSF guidelines recognize the great diversity of small-scale fisheries and that there is no single, agreed definition of the subsector. Still, the following general description may help frame your understanding of small-scale fisheries.

What small-scale fisheries look like varies from one place or culture to another. There is therefore no universal definition for what type of fisheries are “small-scale”; however, as the name suggests, they typically operate on a smaller, non-industrial scale. Although small in scale, they are often large in numbers and make an essential contribution to coastal communities.

Generally, small-scale fisheries refer to both the act of catching fish, and to the activities happening before and after the fishing itself. For instance, tasks such as building boats, repairing nets, processing fish and selling seafood are also part of small-scale fisheries.

Small-scale fisheries are often operated by families, communities or small organizations. The gear and technology used typically requires relatively low capital investment. The fish and fishery products are mostly sold in local markets; however, they can also reach national and international markets.

Note that fishing for sport or recreation are not considered small-scale fisheries.

Source: FAO. 2015. *Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication*. Rome. <https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/14356EN>

1.2.2 Review information on small-scale fisheries in your country

Review the information available on the small-scale fisheries in your country to establish the following.

How are small-scale fisheries described?

Note down what different terms are used (or have been used in the past) in your country in relation to the small-scale fisheries subsector, including post-harvest activities.

- Are terms such as “artisanal fisheries” or “subsistence fisheries” used?
- Is a maximum scale specified (such as vessel size or engine power)?
- Are types of fishing operation specified (for example, static gear, open boats, daily trips)?
- Are coastal and inland fisheries included?
- Post-harvest activities should be included and may be known by different names in different communities and fisheries.

Ideally, the terms that you choose should already be in use and thus easily identifiable to stakeholders. Remember that the aim is to be inclusive, recognizing all participants in the small-scale fisheries supply chain.

What is the legal standing of small-scale fisheries?

Do the terms used to define small-scale fisheries have any legal recognition? In other words, are they used in laws or regulations at various levels (national, regional, local or customary)?

Where definitions of small-scale fisheries are available, do they:

- describe a specific target species or resource in the different regions of your country?
- differentiate fisheries or communities associated with different post-harvest practices (roles and responsibilities between men and women, processing methods, processing tools, discarding residues, etc.)?
- specify with whom they are associated (how many people are estimated to be involved, in what geographical regions in your country)?
- state how small-scale fisheries contribute to local economies?

Are there data on the small-scale fisheries subsector?

If your country already collects official data on small-scale fisheries, explore the different databases available to improve the above formal and informal descriptions. This information may also be “hidden” in sources such as labour force surveys, which are not sector-specific.

1.2.3. Propose a definition of small-scale fisheries for your country

There may not be a formal definition of small-scale fisheries in your country. However, a working definition gives clarity and can help when considering aspects such as sector representation and inclusivity.

A working definition of the small-scale fisheries subsector in your country may adopt an existing definition, or it may incorporate new elements that were not previously taken into consideration.

Later in the process, this definition should be reviewed by the National Platform, when established, to ensure participants agree with it.

1.2.4. Describe the small-scale fisheries subsector in your country

Use the **1-2 SSF profile template** to structure your profile.

1.2.5. Identify key issues related to the small-scale fisheries subsector in your country

Describe the issues affecting the small-scale fisheries subsector in relation to the chapters of the SSF guidelines:

- 5. Governance of tenure in small-scale fisheries and resource management*
 - 5a. Responsible governance of tenure*
 - 5b. Sustainable resource management*
- 6. Social development, employment and decent work*
- 7. Value chains, post-harvest and trade*
- 8. Gender equality*
- 9. Disaster risks and climate change*

You can use the table at the end of the **1-2 SSF profile template**.

Consult with Task Force members and any other small-scale fisheries stakeholders you have identified and ask what are the priority issues in relation to each of the elements of small-scale fisheries, recognizing that many issues will be interconnected to some extent.

At this stage, you should not consider this to be a definitive list. A comprehensive list of issues should be developed through engaging with stakeholders during NPOA-SSF development. However, this preliminary list is still useful to highlight some of the issues that are likely to be raised by stakeholders.

Step 1-3: Stakeholder mapping

Table 3 – Step 1-3 Stakeholder mapping

Summary	This step describes how to carry out stakeholder mapping. The aim is to identify key people and organizations that have a stake in small-scale fisheries and then find out how best to engage with them.
Process	1.3.1 Conduct a stakeholder mapping 1.3.2 Map stakeholder connections and influence 1.3.3 Assess stakeholder capacity to engage 1.3.4 Identify champions of change
Output(s)	· Map of stakeholders · Engagement strategy

Source: Author's own elaboration

Support tools

You can use the support tools provided as the basis for your outputs.

0-1 SSF stakeholder engagement tool

1-3 SSF stakeholder mapping template

Organizations and individuals (stakeholders) are essential to the successful delivery of the NPOA-SSF and its outcomes. To develop and implement the NPOA-SSF effectively, you need to know who the stakeholders are. Building and maintaining robust relationships and maintaining an appropriate level of communication with stakeholders will ensure that:

- they receive the information they require;
- they are consulted and participating actively; and
- their needs and requirements are “heard”, and where possible, actioned.

By understanding who the stakeholders are and their capacity to engage with implementation of the NPOA-SSF, you are more likely to develop an effective strategy to have meaningful engagement with those stakeholders.

Mapping stakeholders

1.3.1 Conduct a stakeholder mapping

A stakeholder is any individual, group or organization who has an interest in, who can affect, or who is affected – positively or negatively – by small-scale fisheries.

Ensure that the stakeholder analysis is gender-sensitive from the very beginning, to ensure the proper representation of both men and women (more details are available in FAO. 2017. Towards gender-equitable small-scale fisheries governance and development - A handbook. In support of the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication, by Nilanjana Biswas. Rome, Italy) Use the SSF stakeholder mapping

template to identify the various stakeholders, by entering the names of organizations, groups or specific individuals in **Table 1**.

- Identify the different stages of the small-scale fisheries, including post-harvest activities.
- Who is directly engaged in small-scale fisheries activities, and in what capacity?
- What other stakeholders may be part of other livelihoods, in addition to small-scale fishers and fishworkers (farmers, etc.)?

Remember to cover the full scope of the small-scale fisheries in your country (refer to the SSF profile developed in **Step 1-2**).

1.3.2 Map stakeholder connections and influences

It is useful to identify the existing connections between stakeholders, as these can inform how you should engage with these stakeholders (for example, on a one-to-one basis, in focus groups of a single type of stakeholder or in multistakeholder groups). Sections 2 and 3 of the **1-3 SSF stakeholder mapping template** provides a format to do this.

Some stakeholders may have very little influence on the decisions that affect them. The NPOA-SSF process will attempt to ensure that these previously overlooked groups are engaged with and contribute to the NPOA-SSF.

Certain stakeholders may have no prior relationship with some of the other stakeholders listed, which is certainly worth noting. These relationships need to be built through the engagement process under the NPOA-SSF.

Now that you have mapped out the small-scale fisheries stakeholders, you can plan how to engage with those stakeholders. Use the **0-1 SSF stakeholder engagement tool** document to inform your thinking.

1.3.3 Assess stakeholder capacity to engage

Some stakeholders may lack the time or the ability to engage. This is particularly true of active fishers, who may well be out fishing during times when other stakeholder groups would want to arrange meetings, or women fishers and fishworkers who may need to balance work with household and childcare duties.

Some stakeholders may lack the ability to engage with certain communication channels: if you cannot read, you will not read newspaper notices. Others may not have access to all media channels: if you do not have a computer or smartphone, you will not receive emails or WhatsApp messages.

Diagnosing the capacity of stakeholders to engage with the process should include a recognition of the gender roles, evaluating what local men and women involved in small-scale fisheries can achieve and do with their resources. Identify the specific capacities of men and women stakeholders and plan engagement accordingly.

1.3.4 Identify champions of change

Champions of change are individuals within an organization that volunteer or are selected to facilitate change. The champion is an active member within a change management project, such as an NPOA-SSF, during all of its stages.

As an instigator of the NPOA-SSF, you are already a champion of change!

More support in effecting change is always helpful; look for individuals within organizations who “understand” and share a desire to see the SSF guidelines implemented.

Champions of change can be from any level within an organization. In fact, it is often encouraged to have champions from multiple levels; they do not need to be from the management level. Champions are key to a successful outcome of organizational change.

Champions of change are a positive driving force in instituting change: they advocate for and promote the change from within and are instrumental in implementing the change. The champion believes in the change, is driven by the vision, is a key communicator of the change and works to de-escalate conflict when necessary.

Approach suitable high-profile or influential personalities and other leaders at local, national and global level, and in different fields, to raise awareness of the importance of champions for change in NPOA-SSF development. These individuals will be useful allies in progressing the NPOA-SSF and delivering the change needed. You could invite them to join the Task Force, and certainly ask them to be part of the National Platform once it is established.

Step 1-4: SSF governance review and gap analysis

Table 4 – Step 1-4: SSF governance review and gap analysis

Summary	This step describes how to carry out an SSF governance review and gap analysis. It is based around an assessment tool that uses 10 themes related to the SSF guidelines in order to assess the ability of local and national governance structures to implement the SSF guidelines. Through this assessment, good practices and gaps can be identified. The assessment also helps understand the degree of participation of small-scale fisheries stakeholders in decision-making bodies and organizations, and how such degree could be increased.
Process	1.4.1 Undertake a desk review 1.4.2 Ground-truth results with stakeholders 1.4.3 Revise the governance review and gap analysis
Output(s)	· SSF governance review and gap analysis

Source: Author's own elaboration

Support tools

You can use the support tool provided as the basis for your output.

1-4 SSF governance review template

0-2 SSF consultation workshop kit

Small-scale fisheries governance review and gap analysis

This step within Stage 1 and the SSF governance review template are based on the work of Courtney, Pomeroy and Brooks (2018), which builds on work for USAID.

The governance review and gap analysis provides a country-level assessment of the status of small-scale fisheries implementation to inform NPOA-SSF development. The output of this assessment will highlight the strengths and gaps in a country's national, legal and policy framework for supporting sustainable small-scale fisheries.

Gaps in the national legal and policy framework highlighted by the assessment can inform the description of a country's development context and point the way towards strategic policy reforms. The assessment can also serve to highlight examples of local implementation successes that can inform the development of strategic approaches in project design and implementation.

The tool consists of strategies and good practices on how to enhance small-scale fisheries for food security and poverty eradication for each theme of the SSF guidelines. It is structured as an assessment matrix, assessing 10 themes and proposing 24 strategic actions. Each strategic action is associated with a number of good practices.

1.4.1 Undertake a desk review

Start the governance review assessment process with a **desk review**; that is, review existing documents and other sources describing the situation in small-scale fisheries

and what has been done, if anything, to implement the SSF guidelines. Think broadly when searching for information relevant to your country or location. For instance, this can be found in fisheries laws, national development strategies, national or regional policies, and more.

A range of information resources is provided on the [SSF guidelines](#) website, including regional and country reports on efforts to implement the SSF guidelines, as well as on cross-cutting themes such as advancing gender and expanding social protection, that may be relevant to your country.

As you are doing the desk review, **note down if there are any good examples of programmes, projects, initiatives or activities** that demonstrate local implementation and progress for each theme and action.

1.4.2 Ground-truth results with stakeholders

Ground-truth the information in the assessment matrix through focus group meetings and key informant interviews with relevant stakeholders. Use the stakeholder mapping exercise (**Step 1-3**) to identify the most appropriate stakeholders to approach.



Tip:

As the assessment matrix is a complex exercise, face-to-face interviews would be better than telephone interviews or surveys. This would help to avoid misinterpretation and allow you to ask for clarifications or further information to support the answers given. Face-to-face meetings are more time-consuming; however, a few detailed interviews with the right people are of most use for this exercise.

The choice of single interviews or focus group meetings will depend on cultural norms, timing and logistics. There are advantages and disadvantages to each approach:

Individual interviews can enable more detailed discussions. However, they take longer. Thus, you may get views from fewer people, which risks bias occurring and the feeling of exclusion for those who were not asked. You should be clear that this review is only to inform the initiation stage: more comprehensive consultation will be planned as the NPOA-SSF is developed.

It takes more time to arrange a focus group meeting; however, you can obtain the views of more people at a single time. A few strong voices may dominate such meetings; they therefore need good facilitation to ensure that all participants have the opportunity to comment.

Not everyone feels comfortable speaking to a large group or expressing their views to other stakeholder types (for example, fishers expressing views in front of government

officials) or people they do not know. Thus, the number of participants and how focus groups are organized is important. Organizing into smaller breakout groups helps to capture more opinions and focus on particular aspects for more detail. Breakout groups can be arranged into single stakeholder types if it is felt the interviewees would feel more comfortable about speaking openly in such formats.

Use the **0-2 SSF consultation workshop kit** to guide you through arranging a group consultation event.

The **1-4 SSF governance review template** will help you structure the discussions. Providing your guidance, ask stakeholders to add comments on the matrix and additional information, as well as to provide their own ratings (using the traffic light system: low, medium, high). If time is short, they could do a rapid assessment using the summary table at the end of the matrix (**Table 1**).

Table 1 can also be used as a reporting sheet for participants in focus groups and workshops: the facilitator explains what should be considered under each heading (the 24 different elements set out in the matrix) and the participants (anonymously) give a low, medium or high score in relation to (a) the national legal and policy framework and (b) implementation at a local level.

1.4.3 Revise the governance review and gap analysis



Note: interviewees' answers inevitably have some bias. For example, government workers may be defensive of governance performance, or NGOs may be very critical if lobbying for change in certain areas. This is why getting views from a range of stakeholders is important.

Review the responses from stakeholders. If you ask stakeholders to fill in the report sheet, compile the results to produce a summary assessment. Note where certain stakeholder types think differently or much more strongly compared to other stakeholders.

Based on the collation of information from interviews and focus groups, make any revisions and additions necessary to produce a final governance review assessment and summary table. The summary table provides the basis for the gap analysis. Draft some text with the table to explain:

- the results, providing more detail where necessary;
- what were seen as priority areas (key shortcomings or gaps in governance);
- where different stakeholder groups gave a noticeable different assessment; and
- what recommendations were made to address the gaps identified.

Step 1-5: Rationale for an NPOA-SSF

Table 5 – Step 1-5: Rationale for an NPOA-SSF

Summary	This step describes how to develop the rationale for NPOA-SSF. The rationale is a brief document; however, it is a very important one, as it is most likely to be read by high-level officials. It sets out how the NPOA-SSF contributes to the delivery of national policies and international commitments, including the Sustainable Development Goals.
Process	1.5.1 Identify relevant national policies 1.5.2 Identify relevant international commitments 1.5.3 Identify the NPOA-SSF's contributions to national and international commitments
Output(s)	· Rationale for NPOA-SSF

Source: Authors' own elaboration

Support tools

You can use the support tool provided as the basis for your output.

1-5 Rationale for an NPOA-SSF

Setting out the rationale for an NPOA-SSF

The rationale is a very important document, as the target readership is the national government. It effectively provides the information that civil servants are likely to include in a briefing paper to a government minister.

It builds on the outputs from the previous steps, particularly the governance review, to identify how the NPOA-SSF supports the delivery of certain policies in relation to small-scale fisheries. However, it also touches upon wider policy areas, such as poverty alleviation, human rights, gender equality and climate change adaptation.

The SSF guidelines, and therefore any NPOA-SSF to implement them, should be interpreted and applied in a way that is consistent with existing rights and obligations under national and international law and with due regard to voluntary commitments under applicable regional and international instruments.

1.5.1 Identify relevant national policies

Note: this information may have been gathered as part of **Step 1-2** or **Step 1-4** (for example, Table 1 in Tool 1-4). If not, undertake desk research and ask relevant parties (such as the ministry of fisheries or its equivalent) to answer the following questions.

Use the **1-5 Rationale for an NPOA-SSF** document to summarize the links between the relevant national policies, laws and regulations, and the specific aspects of the SSF guidelines.





1.5.2 Identify relevant international commitments

Note: this information may have been gathered as part of **Step 1-2** and **Step 1-4** (for example, Table 1 in Tool 1-4). If not, undertake desk research and ask relevant parties (such as the ministry of foreign affairs or its equivalent) to answer the following questions.

Table 6 - Correspondence between paragraphs in the FAO SSF guidelines and the SDGs

SDGs)	SSF guidelines										
	Principles	Topics of sustainable development					Enabling environment and implementation				
	SSF3	SSF5	SSF6	SSF7	SSF8	SSF9	SSF10	SSF11	SSF12	SSF13	
SDG1	1	1	1				2	1		1	7
SDG2	1	1		1		1	2	2		1	9
SDG3	1		2	2			1				6
SDG4	1		3				1	2	2		9
SDG5	2	4	6	2	4			4	2	2	26
SDG6	1		1								2
SDG7	1					1					2
SDG8	2	1	18				2				23
SDG9	1		2	2	1	3					9
SDG10	2	1	1	2				1			7
SDG11	2	1	1				1		1		6
SDG12	2		1	5				1			9
SDG13	1					9	1	1			12
SDG14	4	20	2	2		2	6	6			42
SDG15	1	2				3	1	1			8
SDG16	6	7	4	2	2	1	6	1	2	2	33
SDG17	1							1		4	6
TOTAL	30	38	42	18	7	20	23	21	7	10	216

SDG1: No Poverty	SDG10: Reduced Inequalities
SDG2: Zero Hunger	SDG11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
SDG3: Good Health and Wellbeing	SDG12: Responsible Consumption and Production
SDG4: Quality Education	SDG13: Climate Action
SDG5: Gender Equality	SDG14: Life Below Water
SDG6: Cleaner Water and Sanitation	SDG15: Live on Land
SDG7: Affordable and Clean Energy	SDG16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
SDG8: Decent Work and Economic Growth	SDG17: Partnerships for the Goals
SDG9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure	

	Nil
	1 – 3 paragraphs
	4 – 9 paragraphs
	10+ paragraphs

Source: Said, A. & Chuenpagdee, R. 2019. *Aligning the sustainable development goals to the small-scale fisheries guidelines: A case for EU fisheries governance*. Marine policy, 107. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2019.103599>

The SSF guidelines intend to promote the contribution of small-scale fisheries to the fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as evidenced by **Table 1**, which shows the linkages between the two texts.

The SSF guidelines support national, regional and international initiatives for poverty alleviation and equitable social and economic development and seek to improving governance of fisheries and promoting sustainable resource utilization in the spirit of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

The NPOA-SSF will therefore support the delivery of other international instruments with similar purposes – in particular, those related to human rights, sustainable development and responsible fisheries – and do not intend to alter their provisions or related commitments. Rather, they seek to add clarity with regard to their implementation in respect of small-scale fisheries.

The following are key standards to recognize.

- [Universal Declaration of Human Rights \(UDHR, 1948\)](#)
- [Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries \(CCRF, 1995\)](#)
- [The UN Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#)
- [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women \(CEDAW, 1979\)](#)
- [UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples \(UN DRIP, 2007\)](#)
- [The UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas \(2018\)](#).

The SSF guidelines also have strong linkages with the following voluntary guidelines.

- [Voluntary Guidelines on the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security \(the Right to Food Guidelines\)](#)
- [Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Contexts of National Food Security \(the Tenure Guidelines\)](#)
- [The CFS Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems \(the RAI principles\)](#).

Are there any related national statements of commitment?

Use the **1-5 Rationale for an NPOA-SSF** document to summarize the links between the relevant international commitments made by your country and the specific aspects of the SSF guidelines.

1.5.3 Identify the contributions of the NPOA-SSF's to national and international commitments

With the listing of national and international commitments complete, identify where the NPOA-SSF is expected to contribute. List these areas in the table to be included with the rationale text (see **1-5 Rationale for an NPOA-SSF**).

Compare the governance review and gap analysis review done in **Step 1-4** with the list, to identify any priority areas.

Step 1-6: NPOA-SSF development plan

Table 7 – Step 1-6: NPOA-SSF development plan

Summary:	This guidance helps you to prepare an NPOA-SSF development plan that will set out tasks, the budget and the time frame for undertaking Stage 2 – development . A template for this output is provided.
Process	1.6.1 Call a Task Force planning meeting 1.6.2 Agree the main actions and tasks to be carried out in Stage 2 1.6.3 Confirm the lead and partners in delivering the tasks 1.6.4 Identify resource requirements and costs 1.6.5 Produce a timeline 1.6.6 Allow for regular review and revision
Output(s)	· NPOA-SSF development plan

Source: Authors' own elaboration

Support tools

You can use the support tool provided as the basis for your output.

1-6 NPOA-SSF development plan template

1.6.1 Call a Task Force planning meeting

Convene a Task Force meeting to agree on how the development of the NPOA-SSF should proceed. You should allocate a significant amount of time (two to three hours) in the meeting to go through this task.

1.6.2 Agree the main actions and tasks to be carried out in Stage 2

Use the **1-6 NPOA-SSF development plan template** to steer discussions in the Task Force meeting. First, discuss and agree on the main actions proposed for Stage 2. The actions presented in the plan template follow the steps proposed in the **Stage 2: Development - Main guidance**.

For each action, set out what tasks are required to complete the action and what outputs and milestones would be appropriate for those tasks.

1.6.3 Confirm the lead and partners in delivering the tasks

Confirm who will take forward each task: you must be clear about who is responsible for delivering each task. One partner may lead delivery of an entire action, or several partners may contribute. The participation of multiple partners adds complexity; however, it means that the resource burden is shared. There is also more buy-in from partners if they take the lead on some aspects, rather than it being left to one partner alone.

Identify the resource requirements at the outset (see Section 1.6.4) so that partners know whether tasks can be delivered using their own resources or whether external funding or assistance must be sought.

1.6.4 Identify resource requirements and costs

You should identify resource requirements at this stage, as it will show whether a partner's intent to deliver a task themselves is realistic or not. Resource requirements may be staff time, specific equipment or costed items. For example, a launch event will require promotional material, publicity (which may be paid for), venue hire, catering, etc. The type and scale of these requirements depends on the planned scale of event. Thus, the estimated number of attendees must be considered now for budgetary purposes. The same is true of promotional material, if certain media channels are to be used or printed material produced.

Wherever possible, in-house resources should be used to minimize cost. These should certainly be recognized and ideally, costed, as they can count towards in-kind contributions towards funding applications.

1.6.5 Produce a timeline

Set a realistic timespan for each task. Often, plans are not delivered on time, as they are either faced with unforeseen delays or they were too optimistic in the first instance. A timeline set out as a Gantt chart will help to identify where tasks must be sequential or could be progressed together. It will also show where certain seasons or major public holidays will slow progress.

The timeline may also highlight where more than one task is being led by the same partner at the same time, leading to a rethink or to ensure sufficient resources to cover all commitments.

1.6.6 Allow for regular review and revision

Some changes to the original plan can be expected as the NPOA-SSF is developed.

The progress and status of each task should be checked and reported regularly. Make sure all partners have a copy of the latest version of the plan (which should include a version number and date of revision) and are aware of any changes that have occurred.

The final part of the NPOA-SSF development plan template is a status column, which helps track the progress of tasks as they are done. This will flag where tasks are behind schedule and the implications for the other tasks can be considered.

Step 1-7: National Platform establishment

Table 8 – Step 1-7 National Platform establishment

Summary	This step describes how to establish the National Platform. This is an inclusive body of stakeholders that provides an advisory role to the Task Force as it develops and implements the NPOA-SSF.
Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.7.1 Task Force agrees National Platform members 1.7.2 Invite nominated stakeholders to join the National Platform 1.7.3 Call a National Platform inception meeting 1.7.4 National Platform members refine and agree on terms of reference 1.7.5 Formally establish the National Platform
Output(s)	· A National Platform

Source: authors' own elaboration

Support tools

You can use the support tool provided as the basis for your output.

1-7 National Platform terms of reference template

According to Paragraph 13.5 of the SSF guidelines, “States should facilitate the formation of national-level platforms, with cross-sectoral representation and with strong representation of civil society organizations, to oversee implementation of the Guidelines, as appropriate”.

The Task Force is by necessity a relatively small decision-making body, while the National Platform is likely to be a much larger grouping of small-scale fisheries stakeholders that will advise the Task Force in its development and implementation of the NPOA-SSF.

The purpose of the National Platform will be to oversee the Task Force in delivering the NPOA-SSF: development (**Stage 2**) and implementation (**Stage 3**).

Make sure the ToRs for these two groups distinguish their roles: the Task Force is the decision-making and implementing body, while the National Platform is consulted at key stages in development and implementation to advise throughout the process.

You might decide to integrate the Task Force into the National Platform, for example as an “executive committee”, with the roles as outlined above.

1.7.1 Task Force agrees on National Platform members

The National Platform should be inclusive. The Task Force should review the stakeholder mapping (see **Step 1.3**) to identify other stakeholders that should participate in the National Platform. Consider stakeholder mapping in terms of inclusivity, identifying where there are gaps in representation. Inclusivity means that the members of a National Platform should not be limited in number.

Where organizations do not exist to participate in a National Platform, this gap should be explicitly recognized in the consultation actions during the development of the NPOA-SSF. It should be an objective of the NPOA-SSF to fill such gaps in representation.

1.7.2 Invite nominated stakeholders to join the National Platform

The stakeholders identified by the Task Force should be invited to join the National Platform. This invitation should set out the objectives of the NPOA-SSF and the National Platform (for example, those set out in the ToR template) and what would be expected of the members of the National Platform (meeting frequency, support to the NPOA-SSF process and communication to members).

1.7.3 Call a National Platform inception meeting

Set up a meeting, ideally face-to-face, to agree upon the ToR for the National Platform and the development plan for NPOA-SSF development. This is likely to be a much larger meeting than the Task Force meetings. It could be scheduled to coincide with other major meetings or events; however, there will be a lot of material to cover.

The meeting agenda should include the following.

- **Key principles:** review the “guiding principles in the SSF guidelines (see Chapter 3) and note any key issues that might arise when assessing the national situation.
- **Stage 1 outputs:** summarize the Stage 1 outputs (SSF profile, stakeholder mapping and governance review) with attendees, for their comment and feedback.
- **Road map, roles and responsibilities:** review the plan for NPOA-SSF development. Based on this, identify and agree the roles and responsibilities of National Platform members to lead and achieve specific milestones.
- **Outline ToR:** use 1-7 National Platform ToR template
- **Identify additional National Platform members:** if the ToR demand extra expertise or resources, it should identify additional members to fill any gaps.
- **Agree appropriate communication channels within the National Platform:** it may be difficult and costly to convene a large group of stakeholders regularly. Can other channels be used in between agreed meeting dates such as email, social media, etc.?. ensure that no National Platform members are excluded as a result of those choices.
- **Next steps:** the immediate next steps, including the date and location of the next National Platform meeting should be agreed.

Minutes should be kept, a draft circulated and a version finalized after the meeting.

1.7.4. National Platform members refine and agree on terms of reference

The draft ToR (see the **1-7 National Platform terms of reference template**) should be refined through consultation between the National Platform members and finalized for agreement and adoption.

1.7.5 Formally establish the National Platform

National Platform members should all sign a letter committing to the development and implementation of the NPOA-SSF, agreeing to abide by the ToR of the National Platform.



Congratulations on completing Stage 1!

You are now ready to move to: **Stage 2:** NPOA-SSF development

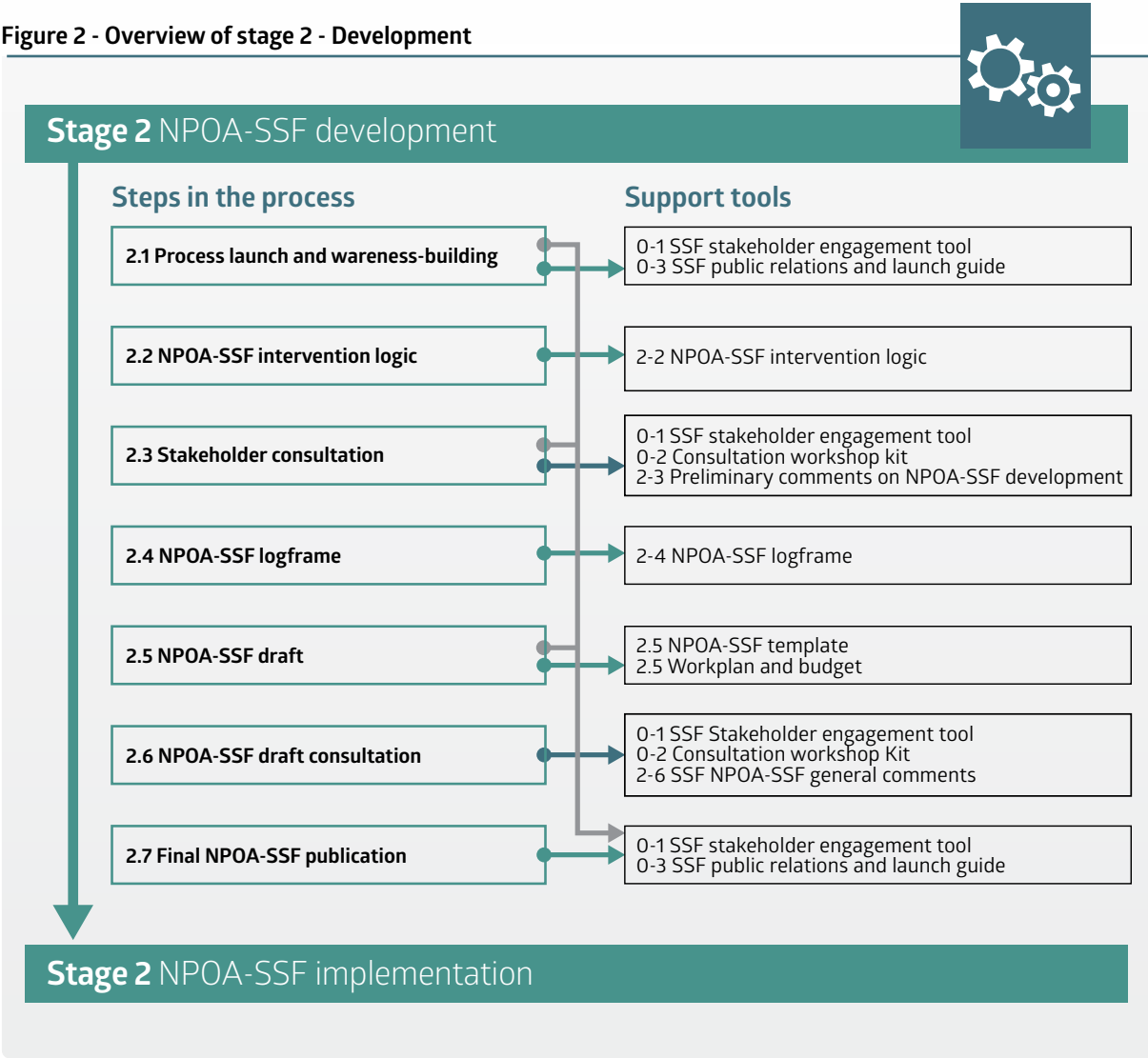


Stage 2 NPOA-SSF development

Guidance on developing a National Plan of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries (NPOA-SSF)

The following guidance notes will lead you through Stage 2 - Development of the NPOA-SSF process. As illustrated in Figure 1 below, the steps under this stage are sequential and culminate with the finalization and publication of the NPOA-SSF. Once Stage 2 - Development has been completed, Stage 3 -Implementation with begin.

Figure 2 - Overview of stage 2 - Development



Source: Authors' own elaboration.

Step 2-1: Process launch and awareness-building

Table 9 – Step 2-1: Process launch and awareness building

Summary	This step kicks off the development process by launching the NPOA-SSF, making stakeholders aware of the NPOA-SSF, what will happen during the development process and how they can be involved.
Process	2.1.1 Plan the launch 2.1.2 Publicize the event 2.1.3 Hold the event 2.1.4 Continue raising-awareness
Output(s) from this step	· NPOA-SSF development launch event · Other NPOA-SSF awareness-raising activities

Source: Author's own elaboration

Support tools

You can use the support tools provided as the basis for your outputs.

0-1 SSF stakeholder engagement tool

2-1 NPOA-SSF factsheet

0-3 SSF public relations and launch guide

Launching the NPOA-SSF development phase and other awareness-building activities.

2.1.1 Plan the launch

Launching the NPOA-SSF development process gives a clear starting point for the development phase. It is an opportunity to explain to a wide group of stakeholders what the NPOA-SSF is going to do, what the development process is and how they can be involved (see also the **0-3 SSF public relations and launch guide**).

Launch events are popular, as they give a focus to awareness-raising efforts. You can hold a launch at the same time as the inaugural meeting of the National Platform. This creates an opportunity to strengthen connections within the National Platform, whose members are likely to be invited to the launch.

Be aware that the cost of holding an event can quickly escalate; therefore, set a realistic budget for the event. Use all the opportunities that the National SSF platform provides in terms of resourcing, including contributions in kind such as a venue for hosting the event, or sponsoring a launch event.

The best location for the launch depends on whether it is linked to a National Platform meeting or a stand-alone event. If it is organized as part of a National Platform meeting, a centralized location may be most important, so that make travel is made as easy as possible for attendees. If it is a separate event, the location could be at a small-scale fisheries community, to help illustrate some of the issues faced by small-scale fisheries.

The NPOA-SSF needs to be developed with broad small-scale fisheries stakeholder involvement to help identify priorities and appropriate actions. Give the clear message that you are at the stage of *developing* the NPOA-SSF: it has not yet been designed or finalized. Its development is an inclusive process, to which those with an interest in small-scale fisheries will be asked to contribute.

You can use the **0-1 SSF stakeholder engagement tool** to help you plan the launch. There are many different traditional and new media channels through which you may share news and pictures of the launch. You should agree on where and how the event will be shared. Use the **0-3 SSF public relations and launch guide** to help you set out your intended messaging for launching the NPOA-SSF development process.

Send invitations out well in advance of a launch event. Even if some details are still to be confirmed, a “save the date” message could be sent out sooner, to inform people of the launch.

A detailed agenda (with timings and setting out exactly who will do what) for the launch is an important part of launch planning. The agenda for the launch event and the number of attendees will depend on the type of event. You might choose to hold an event with a smaller group, for example, gathering Task Force members and high-level attendees such as the relevant minister.

Invite journalists to the event to ensure media coverage (see the **0-3 SSF public relations and launch guide** tool).

2.1.2 Publicize the event

To maximize exposure and awareness-raising, the event should be:

- publicized in advance (when details are known, a press release and media advisory should be made available);
- publicized on social media while it is taking place (potentially, even by live stream); and
- reported on after it has happened.

Produce a media advisory and a press release well in advance of the event, when a date and venue are confirmed. Use the **0-3 SSF public relations and launch guide** to help you. The documents should give details of the event and, crucially, communicate clearly what the NPOA-SSF is and why it is important. As a background text, you can use the **2-1 NPOA-SSF factsheet**.

2.1.3 Hold the event

Whether the event itself is a launch only, or is part of a National Platform meeting, throughout the event you need to coordinate all those with an agreed role in the launch. Make sure everyone knows their roles and the detailed agenda, including times.

Give someone the responsibility to take pictures and/or video footage, and make sure that those posting on social media (if they are different from those taking the pictures) receive them immediately. Those attending the event should be made aware that

photographs and videos may be taken, which could be used in various media. You should ensure an appropriate disclaimer is communicated or that participants' permission is sought.

Share images on social media during the event if possible, after the event, and as part of follow-up press releases. Taking a group picture at the start of the meeting can have the benefits of:

1. a photo being available to share immediately on social media; and
2. ensuring that most attendees are included, as some may have to leave before the end of the meeting.

You could also arrange to interview attendees and ask them to give key messages about the NPOA-SSF.

2.1.4 Continue raising awareness

The launch will raise awareness among small-scale fisheries stakeholders of the NPOA-SSF and their involvement in it, which raises expectations. It is important that you follow up on these engagement promises.

In today's constant news cycle, public interest is quickly lost. Thus, continue to send out news of the NPOA-SSF launch: encourage National Platform members to share social media posts with their network and report back at a local level, where they are able to give comments specific to their context (for example, highlight some of the local small-scale fisheries issues, explain what the NPOA-SSF will mean for the local community and how small-scale fisheries stakeholders can get involved).

Step 2-2: NPOA-SSF intervention logic

Table 10 – Step 2-2: NPOA-SSF intervention logic

Summary	This step develops an intervention logic for the NPOA-SSF. It starts with clearly identifying the problems to be addressed by the NPOA-SSF and therefore what the overall objectives should be. The intervention logic process then sets out what the main activities might be, and how the outputs will lead to positive outcomes for small-scale fisheries. Holding a workshop for this purpose enables many stakeholders to contribute directly.
Process	2.2.1 Develop the problem statement and establish the NPOA-SSF objectives 2.2.2 Develop the NPOA-SSF intervention logic
Output(s)	· Small-scale fisheries problem statement and NPOA-SSF objectives · NPOA-SSF intervention logic

Source: authors' own elaboration

Support tools

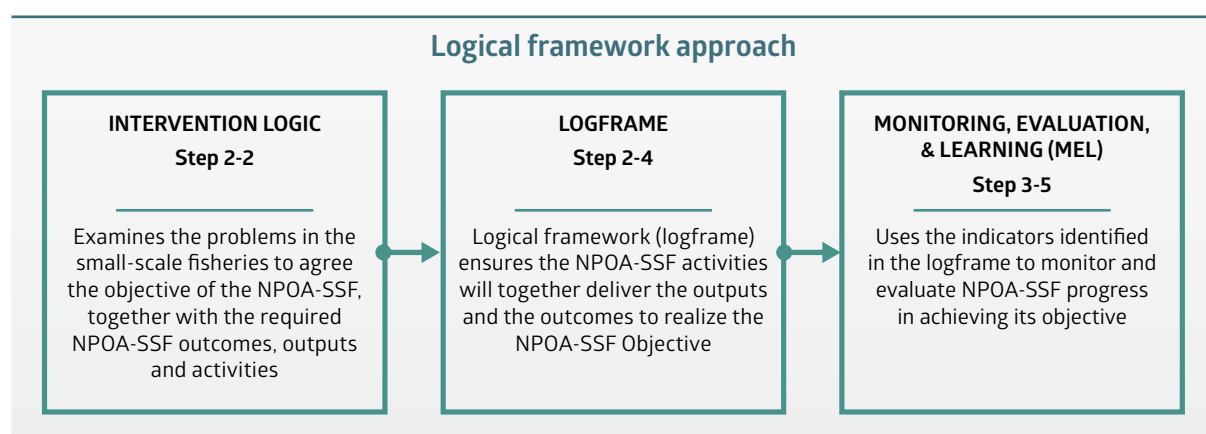
You can use the following support tools as the basis for your outputs.

2-2 NPOA-SSF intervention logic

Set out the intervention logic for an NPOA-SSF.

The intervention logic is the first step in the well-established logical framework (logframe) approach, used by many development agencies to design objective-driven workplans. The intervention logic will then be used to create the NPOA-SSF logframe in Step 2-4 and the monitoring, evaluation, and learning tasks in Step 3-5 (see Figure 1).

Figure 3. The logframe approach



Source: Authors' own elaboration.

This is an important first step, as it establishes the objectives of the NPOA-SSF and requires you to consider how the NPOA-SSF will achieve this. Consider the following.

What are the **key problems** to be addressed by the NPOA-SSF? This can be formulated in the shape of a problem statement (see Section 2.2.1 for a definition and examples). From this, you can then formulate an **overall objective(s)** for the NPOA-SSF.

- a. Once the overall objective(s) are agreed upon, you should work backwards to figure out how to resolve them: what are the **outcomes** needed to achieve the objective?
- b. What **outputs** are required to achieve these outcomes?
- c. What **activities** are needed to produce these outputs?
- d. What **inputs** are required to conduct these activities?

2.2.1 Develop the problem statement and establish the NPOA-SSF objectives

Use a small working group (for example, all or part of the Task Force) to agree on the problem statement and establish the NPOA-SSF objective. These elements can then be included in the intervention logic (see Section 2.2.2) and distributed for wider stakeholder review and validation (see **Step 2-3**).

The first step is understanding the problem, which can be done by setting out a problem statement. A problem statement is a concise description of the issues in the small-scale fisheries subsector to be addressed and improved. You can use the issues identified in the SSF profile and governance reviews (Stage 1) to draft the problem statement, setting out who is affected, how and why.



Example – *“The small-scale fisheries sector in [Country X] accounts for 60 percent of all employment in the national fisheries sector, yet, it is highly vulnerable to climate-driven and other environmental change. In particular, it is highly fragmented, with little organization and representation in the management system. Particular problems include a lack of secure tenure for small-scale fisheries, limited credit facilities – especially for women – to invest in more sustainable fishing techniques, and declining market access as traditional value chains are impacted by globalization”.*

Once the problem statement has been agreed upon by the working group, develop the overall NPOA-SSF objectives or goals. These need to address the specific problems outlined in the problem statement.



Example – *“The [Country X] NPOA-SSF will secure the livelihoods and improve the resilience of small-scale fishers through better organization, representation and influence in fisheries resource management and governance, resulting in more equitable and dependable value chains, and decent work opportunities for men and women alike”.*

2.2.2 Develop the NPOA-SSF intervention logic

Once the problem statement and NPOA-SSF objective(s) have been defined, you can complete the rest of the intervention logic.

The intervention logic is important, because it helps to ensure that your NPOA-SSF activities are directly linked to the problem statement and the overall objective(s) of the NPOA-SSF. The intervention logic will also be used in Stage 2 to develop the logframe (**Step 2-4**).

For more help on developing the NPOA-SSF intervention logic, including the problem statement and NPOA-SSF objective identification, see the **NPOA-SSF intervention logic**.

Step 2-3: Stakeholder consultation

Table 11- Step 2-3: Stakeholder consultation

Summary	In this step, the NPOA-SSF intervention logic from Step 2-2 is shared with the National Platform and other stakeholders to ask their views.
Process	2.3.1 Plan the consultation 2.3.2 Undertake the consultation 2.3.3 Collate and review feedback 2.3.4 Document the consultation process
Output(s)	· A revised NPOA-SSF intervention logic · Stakeholder consultation report (optional)

Support tools

You can use the support tools provided as the basis for your outputs.

0-1 SSF stakeholder engagement tool

0-2 SSF consultation workshop kit

2-3 Preliminary comments on NPOA-SSF development

2-6 SSF NPOA-SSF general comments

Consult small-scale fisheries stakeholders on the NPOA-SSF intervention logic

The previous step will have produced a draft intervention logic, proposing the objectives, activities and outputs of the NPOA-SSF, based on inputs from a working group involving part or all of the Task Force.

Now, you should give the National Platform and other small-scale fisheries stakeholders an opportunity to share their views on these proposals.

2.3.1 Plan the consultation

Carry out your consultation in a structured way to make sure you (i) give as many small-scale fisheries stakeholders as possible the opportunity to contribute; and (ii) can collate and consider that feedback effectively.

To be as inclusive as possible in your consultation, think about the following issues.

- What methods and format should you use?
- How should you structure the feedback?

Use the **0-1 SSF stakeholder engagement tool** document and the **0-2 SSF consultation workshop kit** to inform your decisions.

You might choose to consult stakeholders in different ways. For example, members of the National Platform could be sent the NPOA-SSF intervention logic by email, with instructions on providing comments (deadline, format). However, you should also carry out some specific consultation events to engage with small-scale fisheries stakeholders that you know are underrepresented. This might take the form of a “roadshow”, in which an Task Force team visits a number of small-scale fishing communities and stakeholders are invited to attend these open meetings to discuss the NPOA-SSF and the draft intervention logic. Whichever method is chosen, plan for enough time and resources to undertake the consultation.

2.3.2 Undertake the consultation

How the consultation is carried out will depend on your decisions on the channels, format and structure of the feedback. Use the **0-2 SSF consultation workshop kit**, remembering to work with the National Platform, and encourage the representatives not only to give their views, but also directly engage with their network of small-scale fisheries stakeholders to obtain responses from a wider group.

If consultation involves asking for written feedback, send reminders coming up to and after the deadline you have given.

2.3.3 Collate and review feedback

You should collect and record all the feedback received, whether it is written or spoken (during a consultation event). Note the guidance regarding open and closed questions given above.

Adapt the **2-6 SSF NPOA-SSF general comments** document by structuring it to the documents you present to consultees and any specific questions you ask.

Perform some simple analysis of the collated feedback, even if only limited to:

- total number, by type of stakeholder;
- proportion of positive and negative responses to the NPOA-SSF or specific questions;
- identify any recurring themes in responses;
- state if responses from each stakeholder type were consistent;
- include any interesting comments or examples, which should be suitably anonymized (e.g. “one fisher commented...”); and
- give your view (as the presenter or leader of the consultation) why some groups may have responded in certain ways – make sure this is clearly stated as your opinion.

Ultimately, the Task Force needs to agree to the revisions. Provide the collated comments log and your analysis to the Task Force. A meeting to examine the feedback would be useful, so that the group can discuss and agree on a response and any resulting revision to the NPOA-SSF intervention logic.

2.3.4 Document the consultation process

This step is complete when the revisions to the NPOA-SSF intervention logic are agreed upon and completed.

It is good practice to share the revised outputs and document the whole consultation process. The Task Force should agree on how revised outputs and the consultation document should be shared.

The stakeholder consultation report does not need to be lengthy, simply stating:

- who was consulted, when and how;
- majority views or comments;
- the main revisions resulting from the consultation, if any;
- where the revised output can be found; and
- what the next steps in the process are.

You can summarize the above via social media channels, expressing thanks to those who participated in the consultation. You should also reassure those who did not participate in this round that there will be further opportunities to do so, if they get in touch.

Step 2-4: NPOA-SSF logframe

Table 12 – Step 2-4: NPOA-SSF logframe

Summary	This step will develop a logframe for the NPOA-SSF. It is based on the objective, outcomes, outputs and activities from the intervention logic (see Step 2-2), with any revisions resulting from the consultation. For the logframe, more detail is developed, including quantified targets and indicators for monitoring the NPOA-SSF's progress.
Process	2.4.1 Develop the logframe 2.4.2 Develop the monitoring, evaluation, and learning framework
Output(s)	· NPOA-SSF logframe · Monitoring, evaluation, and learning framework

Support tools

You can use the support tool provided as the basis for your output.

2-4 NPOA-SSF logframe

An outline intervention logic for the NPOA-SSF is developed in Step 2-2, which is then discussed and agreed on by stakeholders in Step 2-3. In this step, you will produce a robust logframe that ensures that the NPOA-SSF addresses the key problems and issues facing the small-scale fisheries subsector.

2.4.1 Develop the logframe

The logframe is a tool for developing and monitoring the links between inputs, outputs, objectives and goals that sets out how a plan will be implemented. It helps to organize the plan, ensuring a structured design and monitoring and evaluation process.

The logframe uses the same hierarchical structure as the intervention logic (objective, outcomes, outputs, and activities and inputs). For each of these, it is then necessary to identify: (i) indicators; (ii) a means of verification; and (iii) any important risks and assumptions.

The logframe should be:

- simple and concise;
- a “stand-alone document” – comprehensive yet immediately understandable;
- not just a design tool – it should be maintained as the primary monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) tool throughout the project; and
- a “living document” – it should be reviewed regularly during the programme as per the MEL plan.

See the **2-4 NPOA-SSF logframe** document for more details.

2.4.2 Develop the monitoring, evaluation, and learning framework

Monitoring is defined as *the ongoing process of collecting and analysing data to measure the performance of a programme, project or activity.*

An integral part of project and programme management, monitoring provides the Task Force with feedback on implementation and progress towards the plan's objectives. Monitoring provides the basis for evaluation.

Evaluations are defined as *assessments of projects or programmes in terms of their design, implementation and results. They are often structured around considerations of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.*

Learning puts together all of the above to learn from the successes and failures of the NPOA-SSF's implementation in order to strengthen future planning.

Essentially, MEL asks three questions.

1. To what extent has the NPOA-SSF met its objectives? If not, why not and how can things be improved?
2. How have the different institutions, organizations and individuals implementing the NPOA-SSF performed, and how can these be improved?
3. What lessons can be learned from implementation to date, that can be applied both to: (i) any update of the NPOA-SSF; and (ii) to the wider small-scale fisheries community.

The MEL process evolves over the lifetime of the NPOA-SSF. We would suggest a combination of regular and periodic reviews as follows.

1. **Regular progress reports** – to be done quarterly, six-monthly or annually, to keep those delivering the NPOA-SSF (including the Task Force) and stakeholders informed about the progress of the NPOA-SSF.
2. **Mid-term review** – to be conducted at the midpoint of NPOA-SSF implementation period, to assess progress midway through the implementation period, and thus make any necessary adjustments to the second half of the plan.
3. **Endline review and evaluation** – this is to be conducted towards the end of the NPOA-SSF. It will be a key tool to learn lessons and inform the design of the next NPOA-SSF.

The design and implementation of the MEL framework is detailed in **Stage 3** (Step 3-5).

Step 2-5: NPOA-SSF draft

Table 13 – Step 2-5: NPOA-SSF draft

Summary	This step will produce a draft of the NPOA-SSF document. The document will provide further details on the activities in the logframe (see Step 2-4), in particular on what will be done, by who and by when. It will also contain information from some of the earlier (Stage 1) steps, including a summary of the SSF profile (Step 1-2), governance review and gap analysis (Step 1-4) and NPOA-SSF rationale (Step 1-5).
Process	2.5.1 Draft the NPOA-SSF
Output(s)	· A draft NPOA-SSF for validation and approval in Step 2-6

Source: authors' own elaboration

Support tools

You can use the support tools provided as the basis for your outputs

2-5 NPOA-SSF template

2-5 Workplan and budget

2.5.1 Draft the NPOA-SSF

The NPOA-SSF is a stand-alone document that provides a comprehensive description of what is being done and why.

The core of the NPOA-SSF is the logframe, which sets out what the actions and outputs will be. This is supported by sections that provide information on the small-scale fisheries subsector in your country for context, and sections setting out how the NPOA-SSF will be implemented, monitored and evaluated (the outputs from the MEL process described above).

The Task Force should review the **2-5 NPOA-SSF template** document, to agree on the structure and content of the NPOA-SSF, as well as on who is responsible for completing each section. You should already have the information you need from the outputs resulting from Stage 1 and Stage 2; however, this will need to be summarized and possibly updated.

These discussions might also set some general principles in drafting the document, such as keeping it brief and making it action-orientated.

The Task Force collates the draft NPOA-SSF for review and makes any agreed revisions following this review.

At the end of this step, you should have a draft NPOA-SSF that the Task Force is content with (or, where areas of disagreement remain, agree that these are to be decided based on feedback from consultation), and that is ready for sharing more widely through consultation.

Step 2-6: NPOA-SSF draft consultation

Table 14 – Step 2-6: NPOA-SSF draft consultation

Summary	The draft NPOA-SSF is presented to the National Platform members and small-scale fisheries stakeholders, their feedback reviewed and the draft amended accordingly.
Process	As in Step 2-3: Stakeholder Consultation
Output(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Revised draft NPOA-SSF· Consultation report on NPOA-SSF

Source: authors' own elaboration

Support tools

You can use the support tools provided as the basis for your output.

0-1 SSF stakeholder engagement tool

2-3 Preliminary comments on NPOA-SSF development

2-6 SSF NPOA-SSF general comments

0-2 SSF consultation workshop kit

In this step, a second consultation round is carried out to obtain stakeholder feedback on the draft NPOA-SSF document. It proposes the same consultation process as **Step 2-3**, and so does not repeat the guidance given there.

You should think of how effective the previous round of consultation was and whether a different approach may be needed to obtain feedback at this stage of NPOA-SSF development. Consider the following.

- This is the last opportunity to obtain input from a wider group before the NPOA-SSF gets finalized and you move to implementation. Even where the objectives and actions remain valid, you might find that priorities have changed.
- There may be stakeholders that you were not able to consult with effectively or at all in the first round; you should look to include them in this round.
- It is hoped that key partners in implementation are actively involved in the preparation of the NPOA-SSF, ideally as members of the Task Force. However, be certain to consult on the draft with those expected to contribute to implementation of the plan and other official agencies you will be seeking to support and validate the final NPOA-SSF (see Step 2-6).
- Feedback from the previous round may have highlighted where changes could improve the consultation process.
- While the NPOA-SSF is a document, consultation with small-scale fisheries stakeholders should not be limited to circulating the draft for comment. Some small-scale fisheries stakeholders may find it difficult to review and respond in this format.

As the draft NPOA-SSF is a document that contains information on the characteristics of the small-scale fisheries subsector, this consultation round gives an opportunity to ground-truth and update some of the information describing the subsector.

Step 2-7: Final NPOA-SSF publication

Table 15 – Step 2-7: NPOA-SSF publication

Summary	The final step in the development of the NPOA-SSF is to validate the plan and publish the document, which is then ready to be implemented in Stage 3.
Process	2.7.1 Finalize the NPOA-SSF 2.7.2 Endorse the NPOA-SSF 2.7.3 Publish the NPOA-SSF 2.7.4 Launch the NPOA-SSF
Output(s)	· A published NPOA-SSF

Source: authors' own elaboration

How to seek endorsement and publish the NPOA-SSF

Endorsement of the NPOA-SSF by official government departments and other key partners (such as NGOs or international donors) increases the validity of the NPOA-SSF. It reassures stakeholders that the proposed actions will be implemented and those tasked with delivering actions are accountable.

2.7.1 Finalize the NPOA-SSF

The Task Force will have reviewed the feedback received from the second round of consultation on the draft NPOA-SSF document. Agree and make any amendments resulting from this review.

Documents, particularly those with multiple authors, greatly benefit from review by a copy editor. Ask a professional or a colleague with good copy editing skills to thoroughly review the document. Such a review will improve the comprehension and readability of the NPOA-SSF, which will be shared and read by a wide range of stakeholders.

When the parties have agreed on the NPOA-SSF, the Task Force should confirm which official agencies and partners be asked to endorse the document.

You should have already involved these agencies and partners if they are expected to implement any actions of the NPOA-SSF. Such involvement could take place directly, as members of the Task Force, or at least as members of the National Platform, and thus consulted on the preliminary proposals and draft NPOA-SSF.

2.7.2 Endorse the NPOA-SSF

Plans can be endorsed by official agencies to varying degrees. The highest level of official endorsement is when the government validates the plan, adopting it as its own plan. As described In Step 1-1 of Stage 1 - Initiation, you should hold discussions at the initiation stage and throughout the development of the document to confirm whether official agencies intend to adopt the NPOA-SSF, or may adopt it depending on various assessments. A government agency may only be willing to adopt the plan as its own after it has conducted its own public consultation on the plan or a cost assessment of the plan to validate its feasibility. This means that implementation cannot officially start until the findings of these processes are completed and acted upon, which needs to be factored into the timing of Stage 3: Implementation.

Government departments may endorse the NPOA-SSF to the extent that they agree with the overall objectives and will support its implementation, which could take the form of participation in the steering group or a commitment to delivering those parts of the plan on which it has taken the lead or with which it is involved. You might agree that the relevant government departments can add their logos to the document and the relevant minister(s) provide forewords in the published NPOA-SSF document. There may be other key partner organizations that you would like to include in endorsing the plan.

If you have decided to include one or more forewords from some key partners of the NPOA-SSF, you need to share the completed NPOA-SSF with them and discuss, with these individuals, what the main messages should be. You might even be asked to provide draft text.

2.7.3 Publish the NPOA-SSF

With the finishing touches to the document completed (and a final independent check for typos), you are ready to publish the NPOA-SSF.

The NPOA-SSF will be the key reference document as you implement the project. It should be available as a print version (in PDF format) and online, as both HTML script on a webpage and as a downloadable PDF file.

Print runs to provide hard copies of the report are costly and the NPOA-SSF will be subject to regular review. You should therefore agree within the Task Force whether printed versions will be needed and, if so, how many. Has this been budgeted for, or is it something that NPOA-SSF partners could do?

You may choose to print only the summary to be handed out at launch of the NPOA-SSF. This summary of the NPOA-SSF should also be made available on the website, along with other key outputs of the inception and development process, such as the SSF profile, governance review and the rationale for the NPOA-SSF.

2.7.4 Launch the NPOA-SSF

Use the **0-3 SSF public relations and launch guide**.

As with the first step in the development process (**Step 2-1**), the finalized NPOA-SSF should be launched and you should make an effort to raise awareness of the document and access to it. Then, move to Stage 3: implementation.



Congratulations on completing Stage 2!

You are now ready to move to: **Stage 3: NPOA-SSF implementation**



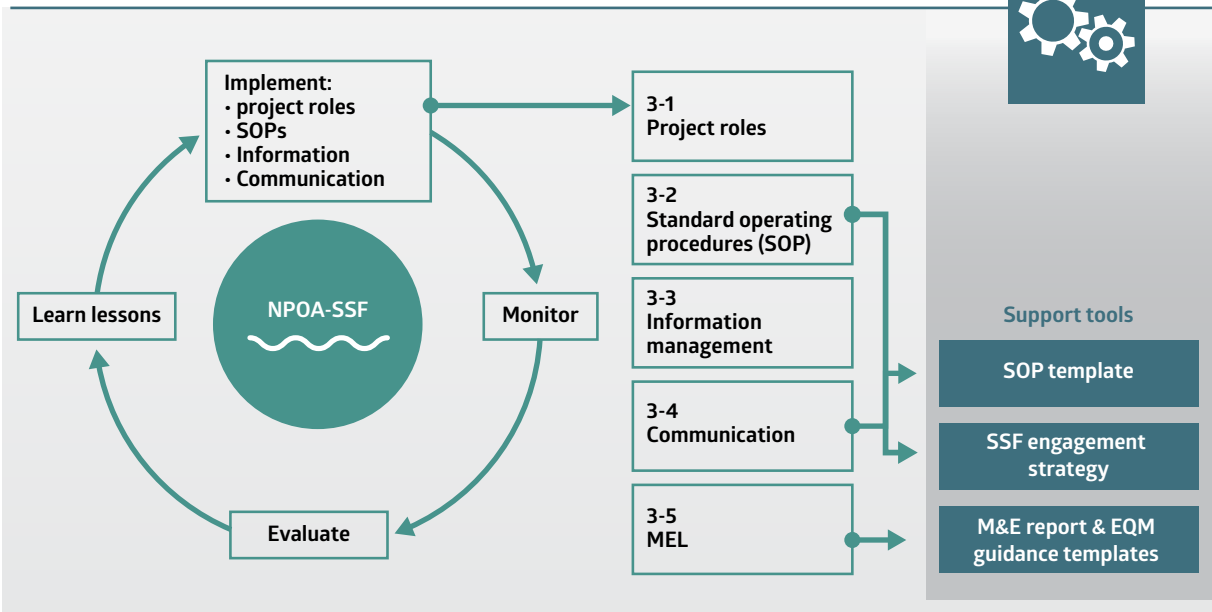
Stage 3 Implementation

Guidance on developing a National Plan of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries

The following guidance notes explain the various steps under Stage 3 - Implementation. Rather than sequential steps, as those set out in Stages 1 and 2, implementation is a cycle: throughout the NPOA-SSF, you will carry out actions and regularly monitor, evaluate, review and adjust.

This guidance will help you as you implement the NPOA-SSF, as well as setting out a monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) framework (**Step 3-5**) to track progress towards delivering the NPOA-SSF.

Figure 4 - Setting out a monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) framework



Source: authors' own elaboration

Implementation of the SSF guidelines should adopt a human-rights-based approach.

The guiding principles of the SSF guidelines enshrine human rights principles that require the non-discriminatory and informed participation of small-scale fisheries communities, in transparent and rules-based decision-making processes based on the recognition of their dignity and on the accountability of all actors involved.

Implementing the NPOA-SSF requires explicit recognition of the challenges for stakeholders in small-scale fisheries to engage effectively with consultations and additional effort to ensure their participation.

Step 3-1: Project roles

Table 16 – Step 3-1: Project roles

Summary	This section describes the roles and leadership you might expect to have in place to implement the NPOA-SSF. The specific structure and titles will depend on the agreed arrangements for your NPOA-SSF. You must clearly describe and communicate the roles of individual staff and any officeholders or groups involved in implementing the NPOA-SSF. These will form part of your standard operating procedure (SOP).
Process	3.1.1 Define project roles
Output	· Project roles

Source: authors' own elaboration

3.1.1 Define project roles

You should detail the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved in implementation. These descriptions can form part of the NPOA-SSF's standard operating procedure (SOP), as set out in **Step 3-2**. The usual roles for a large action plan are described below.

It is important to recall that ultimately, the implementation of the NPOA-SSF will be considered by all **small-scale fisheries stakeholders**.

The National Platform is expected to continue as a stakeholder consultative network that is kept informed of and consulted on progress of the NPOA-SSF. This group will be key in supporting your monitoring and evaluation of the NPOA-SSF through the MEL framework (**see Step 3-4**).

Part or all of the **Task Force** will implement the NPOA-SSF as a project team. As a group of people involved in its initiation and development, it is very useful to keep the skills and experience of the Task Force within or at least available to the team implementing the NPOA-SSF.

The extent of staffing will depend on the structure, scale and complexity of the NPOA-SSF you have developed. If the NPOA-SSF is being led from within a government department or large organization, staff may be internally seconded. Nevertheless, the roles need to be defined and it is necessary to account for the required resourcing. If existing full-time staff are given roles in implementing the NPOA-SSF, some of their current responsibilities need to be allocated to others. Otherwise, staff capacity becomes a significant risk to the successful implementation of the NPOA-SSF.

To implement the NPOA-SSF, you need a project team; all teams need a leader. The project is led by a **project director**, who is ultimately responsible for delivery of the NPOA-SSF and accountable to any **external funders** that are supporting the NPOA-SSF. These funders will require some form of progress reporting throughout the period of their support. We have called the project team the **NPOA-SSF secretariat**.

Central to the project team is the **project manager**: who provides a link between those doing the work (support staff and external action leads) and those overseeing delivery of the NPOA-SSF (the project director and the National Platform. Not all of the actions

under the NPOA-SSF will be undertaken by the project team. The project manager must ensure there is appropriate management of any external action leads, whether working in other organizations or commissioned consultants. The example above shows the project manager directly managing those external inputs; however, this could be delegated to appropriate support staff. You must clearly and formally (in writing) communicate lines of management and responsibility, so that the roles are understood by all parties.

The project manager will require **support staff**. The extent of this support will depend on the structure, scale and complexity of the NPOA-SSF. However, it is likely to include support in administration; information, communication, and technology (ICT); and communication.

Step 3-2: Standard operating procedures

Table 17 – Step 3-2: Standard operating procedures

Summary	This section describes how to set up SOPs. A template is provided to assist you.
Process	3.2.1 Develop SOPs
Output	· NPOA-SSF SOPs

Source: authors' own elaboration

3.2.1 Develop SOPs

Support tools

You can use the support tools provided as the basis for your outputs.

3-2 NPOA-SSF standard operating procedures template

The NPOA-SSF can be considered as a project involving multiple partners, actions and deliverables. Its delivery needs to be managed in a structured way. Organizations achieve this by clearly setting out how those involved will work together. This is often described through SOPs, including the roles and responsibilities (as set out in **Step 3-1**).

All those working on the NPOA-SSF need to be aware of, and adhere to, the SOPs.

The NPOA-SSF template shows what a SOP could include and how it could be structured. However, this may differ depending on the particular organizational arrangements and work environment in which you are operating. If you are working as a team within a larger department or organization, there may already be SOPs in place.

There may be SOPs for partner organizations that you should review and potentially adapt for your own purposes. This may make it easier for you to comply with their expected reporting and budgetary conditions.

Step 3-3: Information management

Table 18 – Step 3-3: Information management

Summary	This section suggests setting up a single information resource and gives you ideas on what you might include in that knowledge base.
Process	3.3.1 Agree on how to manage the information
Output	· Centralized knowledge base

Source: authors' own elaboration

3.3.1 Agree on how to manage the information

Having all project-related data in a single place means that you can find material when you need it and this past knowledge can be used to deal with future issues. This does require someone to manage the storage of and access to electronic copies of documents; however, you should also consider the management of hard copies of documents, if these are to be kept.

The exact arrangements will depend on the organizational structure of your NPOA-SSF: whether it takes the form a project with its own delivery team, or if it is hosted within an existing departmental structure. However, the NPOA-SSF will certainly require some ICT support, as well as the necessary expertise to maintain any websites and social media associated with the NPOA-SSF.

You should consolidate all project-related information into a centralized knowledge base. Anyone working in project-management-related roles should be able to access this information freely.

The following can be a part of the knowledge base:

- tools, templates, and project-related software;
- project schedules and budgets;
- individual action information, especially lessons learned from project evaluations;
- background documents developed under the project or used by the project;
- a catalogue of all organizational project resources;
- a list of all project management best practices; and
- online collaboration forums and chat groups.

This can be a powerful resource for all current and future project managers. Keeping it up-to-date should be a priority for all project roles.

Step 3-4: Communication

Table 19 – Step 3-4: Communication

Summary	This section describes the various communication activities you should consider maintaining throughout the implementation of the NPOA-SSF.
Process	3.4.1 Communicate internally and externally
Output	· Communication strategy

Source: authors' own elaboration

3.4.1 Communicate internally and externally

Support tools

You can use the support tools provided as the basis for your outputs.

3-2 NPOA-SSF standard operating procedure template

0-1 SSF stakeholder engagement tool

Successful implementation requires effective communication.

You should therefore think about how best to communicate internally, between those directly involved in the project, as well as externally, to those interested in the project.

As set out in the diagram under **Step 3-1**, there are numerous project roles, partners and interested parties. You can set out in the SOP what reporting should be done, how frequent it is and who this should be shared with.

Remember to keep the small-scale fisheries subsector engaged in the delivery of the NPOA-SSF. Use the **0-1 SSF stakeholder engagement tool** to plan how best to maintain communication with small-scale fisheries stakeholders.

Step 3-5: Monitoring, evaluation and learning

Table 20 – Step 3-5: Monitoring, evaluation and learning

Summary	The NPOA-SSF is a time-bound process that takes place over a certain period, typically around five years. Its progress needs to be monitored and evaluated during this time. Only by learning from this experience – both the successes and the failures – will it be possible to improve national support to the small-scale fisheries.
Background	There are three, interlinked elements to this step. Monitoring: a process is put in place to check and measure progress towards (i) completing activities and outputs in the logframe; and (ii) achieving the intended outcomes and impacts. Evaluation: a formal process by which the monitoring results are studied and the progress of the Action Plan assessed. Learning: to put together all of the above, to learn from the successes and failures of the Action Plan's implementation in order to strengthen future planning.
Process	We suggest a combination of regular (for example, annual progress reports and periodic reviews, as follows). 3.5.1 Compile regular progress reports 3.5.2 Conduct a mid-term review 3.5.3 Conduct an endline review and evaluation
Output(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Regular NPOA-SSF progress reports · Mid-term review · Endline evaluation

Source: authors' own elaboration

Support tools

You can use the support tools provided as the basis for your output.

3-5 NPOA-SSF MEL Report templates

3-5 NPOA-SSF MEL EQM guidance and template

The purpose and content of these three reports are described below.

3.5.1 Compile regular progress reports

Purpose and target – Key stakeholders in the NPOA-SSF are kept informed about the progress of the Action Plan. One approach to this end is the preparation of regular progress reports. It is important to consider the purpose of these reports and their target audience. As a rule, formal progress reports are mainly used by key stakeholders (such as the implementation agencies and organizations). For other stakeholders and interested parties, the progress report can be summarized in a press release or article, or communicated in other suitable ways.

Content – There is no strict structure for this item. However, it is suggested that the report contain three main elements.

1. The progress made in undertaking the planned activities over the *past reporting period* (see “Timing” for more thoughts on this).
2. A review, and if necessary, revision of the proposed activities over the *next reporting period*.
3. The identification of any *critical issues* that have or are emerging that might compromise the implementation and impact of the NPOA-SSF.

You can use the **3-5 NPOA-SSF MEL report templates** document for guidance on how to structure these regular progress reports.

Timing – The number and timing of the progress reports depend upon the complexity and overall duration of the Action Plan. If the Action Plan is designed to be implemented over a five-year period, then annual progress reports would probably be adequate. Where the Action plan is shorter, or particularly complex, project managers may decide that more regular progress reports are necessary (for example, six-monthly, or even quarterly).

A key source of information for the progress reports will be the logframe indicators, especially at the “Activity” level.

3.5.2 Conduct a mid-term review

Purpose and target – A mid-term review (MTR) is useful in that it allows the National Platform to assess progress midway through the implementation period and thus make any necessary adjustments to the second half of the plan. It is therefore important that the MTR is practical and objective, so that the recommendations can maximize the likelihood that the plan will realize the anticipated outcomes for the small-scale fisheries subsector.

Contents – There is no strict structure; however, it is suggested that the report include a description of the methodology used, together with an assessment of both the processes applied and the progress made towards achieving the activities and outputs. At this stage, it may be too early to evaluate the emerging outcomes and impacts, although observations can be made as to whether those stipulated in the logframe are likely to be achieved. The key purpose of the MTR is to review progress and recommend corrective actions for the second half of the NPOA-SSF term, where necessary. The MTR can be conducted by an internal monitoring and evaluation team or a team from any funding entity; alternatively, it may be subcontracted to an independent and suitably qualified third party.

You can use the **3-5 NPOA-SSF MEL report templates** document for guidance on how to structure the MTR.

Tools – One key tool for conducting an evaluation is an evaluation questions matrix (EQM). This is essentially a table of evaluation questions (and subquestions) with columns for judgement criteria, indicators and data collection methods. The preparation of an EQM will assist evaluators in ensuring that the questions asked are appropriate, robust, evidence-based and comprehensive. You can use the **3-5 NPOA-SSF MEL EQM guidance and template** for guidance on how to prepare an EQM.

Timing – The MTR normally takes place around halfway through the NPOA-SSF implementation period. This will ensure that the lessons learned can be used to ensure the NPOA-SSF stays on track over its second half.

A key source of information for the MTR will be the logical framework approach indicators, especially at the “activity” and “output” levels.

3.5.3 Conduct an endline review and evaluation

Purpose and target – An endline evaluation is conducted at the end of a project and is focused on assessing the final results (outcomes and impacts), as well as its delivery. An endline study, usually part of the evaluation, is a measure taken at project completion to compare with baseline conditions and assess change. Baseline and endline studies should use the same indicators and measurement methodologies, to ensure consistency. As endline evaluations occur towards the end of the project, they focus on the emerging outcomes and impact of the NPOA-SSF. These evaluations also typically include key learnings and recommendations for future projects.

Contents – In this case too, there is no strict structure. However, it is suggested that the report include a description of the methodology used, together with an assessment of both the processes applied and the progress made towards achieving the output, outcomes and emerging impacts. Most endline evaluations use the evaluation criteria developed by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, which are the following.

- **Efficiency** – Were activities and outputs completed on time and to budget?
- **Effectiveness** – Did the NPOA-SSF meet its objectives as stated in the logframe? Why or why not?
- **Relevance** – Did the NPOA-SSF address the problems identified in the intervention logic? Have these problems changed over the implementation period, and did the project react accordingly (for example, based on the MTR recommendations)? Is it what stakeholders wanted?
- **Impact** – What was the impact of the NPOA-SSF? Has it fully addressed the problem statement?
- **Sustainability** – Are results of the NPOA-SSF sustainable? Will project impacts continue?

You can use the **3-5 NPOA-SSF MEL report templates** document for guidance on how to structure these regular progress reports.

Timing – The endline evaluation should take place just before the NPOA-SSF finishes, so that the results can be used to design its replacement.

A key source of information for the endline evaluation will be the logframe indicators, especially at the “output”, “outcome” and “objective” levels.



Congratulations on completing Stage 3!

Now that implementation is underway, you will need to regularly review and update the NPOA-SSF.



References

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Additional resources

FAO. 2019. FAO Umbrella Programme for the promotion and application of the SSF guidelines – Enhancing the contribution of small-scale fisheries to food security and sustainable livelihoods (FAO SSF Umbrella Programme). In: *Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication*. Rome. [Cited 8 September 2023].
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This Manual was developed to provide guidance on how to develop and implement a National Plan of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries (NPOA-SSF). These processes are unique in their kind because they ensure that the voices and concerns of small-scale fisheries are heard and allow them to actively participate in decision-making processes that shape their lives and livelihoods. In doing so, implementing an NPOA-SSF is an effective way to align legal frameworks with the provisions of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication. These Guidelines unite social development with responsible fisheries, hence addressing the marginalization and vulnerability present in the sector, promoting a human rights-based approach.



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