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للأمم المتحدة

# COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES

## Thirty-second Session

Rome, 11-15 July 2016

## INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF ARTISANAL FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

### Background

1. The launching of the International Year of the Potato in 2008 marked a new stage in the global reach of the work of FAO, by helping to fulfill its mandate through the promotion of food and nutritional security towards the eradication of hunger. The success of subsequent International Years (Natural Fibres 2009, Biodiversity 2010, Forests 2011, Cooperatives 2012, Quinoa 2013, Family Farming 2014, Soils 2015 and Pulses 2016) has highlighted the importance of the role of FAO as a knowledge institution in the dissemination of good practices and a catalyst of concrete actions.
2. Sustainable Development Goal 14 calls on all members of the international community to facilitate access of small-scale artisanal fishermen to marine resources and markets. Similarly, FAO Strategic Objective 2 advances the need to make fishing more productive and sustainable.
3. The Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication were designed to support artisanal fishermen around the world, with emphasis on developing countries, by promoting human rights and safeguarding sustainable use of fishery resources.

### Vision

4. Fishing and aquaculture are human activities that provide food to the population, as well as social and economic benefits. Nowadays this activity provides income and livelihoods to more than 50 million heads of low-income families. Furthermore, it contributes to nutrition and food security, poverty reduction and rural development of populations that benefit from these activities and utilizes oceans and marine resources in a more sustainable way. Additionally, it is one of the sectors with the greatest inclusion of women in the workplace. Women account for about 50 percent of labour force in artisanal fisheries.
5. The work of artisanal fishermen provides the population with a rich source of proteins and nutrients. Artisanal fishermen are also part of a chain of sustainable food production aimed at contributing to the achievement of food and nutrition security for all.

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6. Thus, governments from the Latin America and the Caribbean region recognize the importance of addressing fisheries and aquaculture—especially in its artisanal modality—in a distinct policy dimension, given that fishery and aquaculture resources are an important contribution to food and nutrition security, and therefore to the eradication of hunger and poverty.

7. The 34th FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Mexico from 29 February to 3 March 2016, decided to “initiate consultations and formalities for the establishment of an International Year of artisanal fisheries and aquaculture” (paragraphs 33, 35, 41, 49 (a), 50 (d), 59 and 71 of the report). The 154th Session of the FAO Council endorsed this recommendation.

## Objectives of the proposal

8. The purpose of the International Year is to sensitize public opinion and governments about the importance of adopting specific public policies and programmes to promote this activity in a sustainable manner, paying particular attention to the most vulnerable rural areas, constrained by poor governance, as well as low capacity to make sustainable use of natural, aquaculture and fishery resources.

9. The International Year will provide a unique opportunity to promote the objectives of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication. Furthermore, *inter alia*, it would highlight the need to:

- Improve working conditions in fishing and aquaculture, including safety at sea;
- Promote decent work and the elimination of forced labour and child labour;
- Encourage the development of social protection systems;
- Improve the infrastructure available to artisanal fishermen;
- Use in a more appropriate, responsible and sustainable way all inputs involved;
- Promote capacity building, as well as responsible and sustainable management;
- Support artisanal fishermen and fish farmers to cope with the challenges that exist in trade and to expand that trade both at the regional and global levels;
- Strengthen safety throughout the chain;
- Combat pollution and environmental degradation;
- Incorporate a gender component in all government programmes and policies relating to artisanal fishing activities;
- Integrate all actors in the production chain through social, economic and environmental dimensions.

## Activities

10. Lessons learned from the activities undertaken in International Years implemented since 2008 will allow for the development, once this proposal is accepted, of an agenda for action, activities to be undertaken at the local, regional and global levels, and the corresponding calendar.