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# COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES

## Thirty-fifth Session

5–9 September 2022

## THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF ARTISANAL FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE (IYAFA) 2022

### Executive Summary

This document summarizes the objectives, governance, celebrations, and achievements of the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAFA) 2022. It complements documents COFI/2022/4 and COFI/2022/Inf.9 on supporting small-scale and artisanal fisheries.

### Suggested action by the Committee

The Committee is invited to:

- note the objectives, governance, celebrations, and achievements of the IYAFA 2022 reached thus far;
- take action to celebrate or support the IYAFA 2022 celebrations until its closure; in particular the celebrations led directly by small-scale fisher, fish worker and fish farmers organizations;
- offer suggestions on how current celebrations of the IYAFA 2022 can be optimized for continued support to small-scale fisheries and aquaculture after IYAFA 2022, in particular by providing concrete experiences or suggested actions on how to a) improve visibility of the small-scale subsectors at the national and regional level, and; b) strengthen the inclusion of the small-scale subsectors in national policy recommendations and development programmes.

*Queries on the substantive content of this document may be addressed to:*

Ms Nicole Franz  
Fishery Planning Officer  
Email: Nicole.Franz@fao.org

## I. INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES OF IYAFSA 2022

1. In 2014, COFI approved the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines), which supplement the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF).
2. The SSF Guidelines seek, *inter alia*, to ‘enhance public awareness and promote the advancement of knowledge on the culture, role, contribution, and potential of small-scale fisheries, considering ancestral and traditional knowledge, and their related constraints and opportunities.’
3. In this regard, the 32<sup>nd</sup> Session of COFI endorsed a proposal to declare an International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture 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.
4. The 76<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 2022 as the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAFSA 2022), with the FAO serving as the lead agency in collaboration with other relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations system.
5. The objectives of the IYAFSA 2022 are to:
  - (i) enhance global awareness about, understanding of, and action to support the contribution of small-scale artisanal fisheries and aquaculture to sustainable development, and more specifically in relation to food security and nutrition, poverty eradication, and the use of natural resources; and,
  - (ii) promote dialogue and collaboration between and among small-scale artisanal fishers, fish farmers, fish workers, governments, and other key partners along the value chain, as well as to further strengthen their capacity to enhance sustainability in fisheries and aquaculture and to enhance their social development and well-being.
6. The IYAFSA 2022 acknowledges that small-scale artisanal fisheries and aquaculture hold a unique potential to promote changes in agrifood systems in relation to how, by whom and for whom aquatic foods and products are harvested, processed and distributed.

## II. IMPLEMENTATION MODALITIES OF IYAFSA 2022

7. The International Steering Committee of the IYAFSA 2022, comprised of members of the seven FAO regions and non-state actors, guides the celebrations of the IYAFSA 2022.
8. The IYAFSA 2022 Global Action Plan (GAP) provides inspiration for action by all stakeholders contributing to four expected outcomes:
  - (i) awareness raising,
  - (ii) strengthening the science-policy interface,
  - (iii) empowering stakeholders, and
  - (iv) partnerships.

The IYAFSA 2022 GAP is structured around seven pillars: environmental sustainability, economic sustainability, social sustainability, governance, gender equality and equity, food security and nutrition and resilience; and calls for a human-rights based approach to address inequalities.

9. The IYAFSA 2022 also acts as a springboard to implement the CCRF and related documents, such as the SSF Guidelines, the development of the new Guidelines on Responsible Aquaculture and concrete actions towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. It also falls within the UN Decade of Family Farming, an opportunity for greater visibility of small-scale artisanal fishers, fish farmers and fish workers.
10. Communication materials are publicly available on the IYAFSA 2022 webpage.

11. By May 2022 over 1200 posts related to small-scale fisheries and aquaculture were shared via FAO's social media accounts and the IYAFA website had almost 100 000 page views.

### III. IYAFA 2022 CELEBRATIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS SO FAR

12. Small-scale fisheries and aquaculture vary greatly from one region to another. Three IYAFA 2022 Regional Committees were established for the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC) region, for Mesoamerica, and for South America, respectively.

13. The IYAFA 2022 was launched virtually on 19 November 2021, including through a regional launch in the Latin America and Caribbean Region organized by the above-mentioned regional committees. It was launched virtually for the Pacific region on 31 March 2022.

14. National level launches took place in Uganda in November 2021, in Ghana, Tanzania, Turkey, and Uzbekistan in March 2022, in Zambia in May 2022, and in Namibia in June 2022.

15. Countries, NGOs, and others signed up as IYAFA 2022 supporters, totaling 44 at the time of writing.

16. This document provides a non-exhaustive highlight of IYAFA 2022 initiatives.

#### AWARENESS RAISING

17. Raising awareness is critical for securing the long-term sustainability of small-scale fisheries and aquaculture through sharing information and experiences with a broad range of audiences at all levels. At the time of writing, over 60 IYAFA 2022 events had been organized<sup>1</sup>, and a monthly IYAFA 2022 newsletter has about 1,000 subscribers.

18. Selected IYAFA 2022 events organized include:

- Webinars: such as 'Women and a changing tide: how to break the bias' organized on International Women's Day by the Government of Norway with Kenya, Malawi and Tanzania; and on supporting the creation of an aquaculture network in the Maghreb region.
- In-person or hybrid events: such as the Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States bordering the Atlantic Ocean in February 2022 in Morocco; the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF) workshop on SSF Guidelines and Women in Fisheries in India in April 2022; a IYAFA 2022 side event at the Our Ocean conference in Palau, April 2022.
- Presentations or sessions: such as the Regional dialogue towards building resilience and adaptation in artisanal fisheries and aquaculture in Southern Africa organized by the Southern African Development Community (SADC); and the Benguela Current Convention in April 2022 in Malawi.

19. About 33 articles and publications dedicated to the IYAFA 2022 on specific topics such as food security and nutrition, and gender, have been published, including: - Articles in the INFOFISH magazine and in the Samudra magazine of the ICSF;

- IYAFA 2022 e-photobook for the Asian region;
- Infographic series on small-scale fisheries by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED).

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<sup>1</sup> See <https://www.fao.org/artisanal-fisheries-aquaculture-2022/events/en/>

## STRENGTHENING THE SCIENCE-POLICY INTERFACE

20. The small-scale fisheries and aquaculture subsectors rely on a robust science-policy interface informing policy and decision-making processes that shape the livelihoods of those involved in them. The celebration of the IYAFA is a major opportunity to collectively gather and disseminate multi-disciplinary evidence in a participatory manner. Activities organized or planned within this scope include:

- The Too Big To Ignore 4th World Congress on Small-Scale Fisheries series throughout 2022;
- WECAFC IYAFA Committee examined the intersectoral linkages between small-scale fisheries and aquaculture in the Caribbean to inform policy and law development processes.
- FAO publications, including on 'Women and men in small-scale fisheries and aquaculture in Asia: Barriers, constraints and opportunities towards equality and secure livelihoods'; on 'restoration of productive aquatic ecosystems by communities and fisher organizations in Asia: Good practices, innovations, and success stories'.
- A research and innovation week organized by the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in April 2022 to advocate for increased research aimed at solving small-scale artisanal fisheries development challenges.
- In September 2022, an International Conference on Artisanal Fisheries 2022 in Uganda and the Sri Lanka Forum for Small-Scale Fisheries organizes the 'Fishing for Life' conference for south and southeast Asian countries.
- High-level dialogue for fisheries Ministers from the Caribbean on the future of small-scale fisheries and aquaculture in the context of the Blue Economy in the 4th quarter of 2022.

## EMPOWERING STAKEHOLDERS

21. In many regions, small-scale fisheries and aquaculture often lack effective representation in relevant decision-making processes. To enable small-scale fishers, fish farmers and fish workers to engage as equal partners in such processes it is essential that they, as well as their organizations, benefit from capacity development. Parallel efforts to work with government agencies and legislators are required, especially in the formulation and adoption of participatory legal and policy frameworks. The IYAFA 2022 serves as a context for advancing this area of work. Some examples include:

22. Latin America and the Caribbean region.

- Mesoamerican Forum on Social Protection and Decent Working Conditions in Small-Scale Fisheries and Aquaculture in May 2022 for Ministries responsible for social protection and decent work to generate policy recommendations for the inclusion of small-scale fishers and aquafarmers in national social protection systems.
- First Mesoamerican Congress of Small-Scale Fisheries and Aquaculture in September 2022 to review the state of both subsectors, identify limiting factors for sustainable development and propose a roadmap to overcome them.
- Virtual meeting to promote the establishment of the Mesoamerican Network of small-scale aquaculture.
- National-level surveys for members of the IYAFA Committee for South America to review the status of small-scale fisheries and aquaculture associations, value chains, gender, fish consumption, and success stories; and on seafood safety and quality for small-scale fisheries products. They will inform summary reports and a policy brief with key results and public policy recommendations for authorities and communities to support small-scale fisheries and aquaculture.

- Two virtual meetings on fish consumption and on the establishment of small-scale fisheries and aquaculture associations in South America in June and August 2022 respectively; and a virtual congress in November 2022 to present the key results from the national surveys and recommendations from each country to support the IYAFA beyond 2022.
23. Africa region
- Initiatives led by the African Confederation of Artisanal Fisheries Professional Organizations (CAOPA) including declarations and engagement in relevant regional policy processes and events.
  - The Federation of Artisanal Fishermen of the Indian Ocean (FPAOI) launched IYAFA 2022 in March 2022 for its members.
24. North Africa and Near-East region
- Inventory of small-scale fisheries organizations with an assessment of the socio-economic contribution of women in the small-scale fisheries sector in the Maghreb subregion;
  - Training sessions on small-scale fisheries governance and financial skills for professional organizations in the Maghreb countries;
  - Development of a catalogue of small-scale fishing gears and ancestral techniques in North Africa.
  - Video to celebrate the official launch of IYAFA 2022 in the United Arab Emirates
  - Seminar series during Expo Dubai 2020, with the active participation of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen and Norway (between November 2021 and March 2022)
  - Plenary sessions and panel discussions during the Saudi International Marine Exhibition and Conference (SIMEC), Saudi Arabia, 30 January – 1 February 2022), official sponsor of #IYAFA2022
  - FAO Keynote delivered by the ADG-RNE during the World Aquaculture Society conference AFRAQ21, Egypt, March 2022
25. Europe and Central Asia.
- Regional Workshop on aquaculture value chain actors' post-harvest practices in March 2022;
  - Workshop on Ethics in small-scale fisheries and aquaculture in May 2022;
  - Workshops bringing together small-scale fishers from France, Morocco, Senegal and Spain at the Festival of Marine Traditions in Sete, France; April 2022
  - General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) SSF Forum sessions for capacity development and experience exchange throughout 2022, among other things (also for the non-European member countries)
  - IYAFA 2022 session at the Second International Conference: Adriatic Biodiversity Protection – AdriBioPro2022, Montenegro, June 2022.
26. Asia-Pacific region
- ICSF organized workshops and events for members and partners, including an Asia Workshop: IYAFA 2022-Celebrating Sustainable and Equitable Small-scale Fisheries in Bangkok in May 2022.

## PARTNERSHIPS

27. The IYAFA 2022 is helping stakeholders strengthen and create partnerships. Examples include:
- Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) SSF Hub as a platform for partners to engage on relevant small-scale fisheries topics, share experiences and organize events.
  - The IYAFA initiative, led by the One Ocean Hub with UNOHCHR and FAO, to engage Special Rapporteurs on human rights, research and small-scale fisheries actors and related initiatives by the Danish Institute for Human Rights to advance the application of human rights in small-scale fisheries and aquaculture.

## **IV. LOOKING BEYOND THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF ARTISANAL FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE 2022**

28. The IYAFA 2022 celebrations will continue until the closure of the Year in early 2023. The Committee is invited to take action or support IYAFA 2022 celebrations, in particular those led directly by small-scale fisher, fish worker and fish farmers organizations.
29. The IYAFA 2022 is also a year for reflection on how to best support small-scale aquatic food producers beyond 2022.
30. In this regard, the UN Decade of Family Farming 2018-28, led by FAO, could be leveraged to further ensure the integration of support to small-scale fisheries and aquaculture in FAO's work.
31. Committee members are requested to offer suggestions on how to capitalize on current celebrations of the IYAFA 2022 for continued support to small-scale fisheries and aquaculture after the IYAFA 2022, in particular by providing concrete experiences or suggested actions on how to:
- a) improve visibility of the small-scale sub-sectors at the national and regional level; and,
  - b) strengthen the inclusion of the small-scale subsectors in national policy recommendations and development programmes, taking into account the information in this document as well as that in documents COFI/2022/4 and COFI/2022/INF/9.