

July 2019

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والزراعة  
للأمم المتحدة

联合国  
粮食及  
农业组织

Food  
and  
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of  
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Organisation  
des  
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pour  
l'alimentation  
et  
l'agriculture

Продовольственная и  
сельскохозяйственная  
организация  
Объединенных  
Наций

Organización  
de las  
Naciones  
Unidas  
para la  
Agricultura  
y la  
Alimentación

## WESTERN CENTRAL ATLANTIC FISHERY COMMISSION (WECAFC)

### SEVENTEENTH SESSION

Miami, United States of America, 15-18 July 2019

### Update on the Implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines) in relation to the International Year of Small-Scale Fisheries and Aquaculture (2022)

This document provides information on the intersessional activities of the Commission and FAO under Resolution WECAFC/15/2014/8 on activities related to the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines).

#### Suggested action by the Commission

The Commission is invited to:

1. exhort Members to report on indicator 14.b.1 of the Sustainable Development Goals via information documents under a Small-Scale Fisheries agenda item in future WECAFC meetings.
2. formally support the road map development leading up to the International Year and nominate the Commission as a champion for the International Year.
3. call for the creation of a regional IYAFa coordination team, including Members and regional partners.
4. Review the inter-sessional activities and progress made by the Members and Working Groups on the implementation of the Work Programme for 2016–2018 and establish activities to provide support to planning and execution of the International Year under the Work Programme 2019-2020 (see WECAFC/SVII/2019/17).
5. recall Resolution WECAFC/15/2014/8 and adopt Resolution WECAF/17/2019/XXX on the “region-wide support to the development of a roadmap for the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture and the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the context of Food-Security and Poverty Eradication”.
6. highlight the importance of the Illuminating Hidden Harvests study and call upon Members to cooperate and share data and information with FAO, WorldFish and Duke University and other partners to assess the impacts of small-scale fisheries. Members are encouraged to improve data collection on small-scale fisheries, including through the methods used in the Illuminating Hidden Harvests study.
7. consider support, in-kind and/or financially, to specific activities related to the SSF Guidelines, including the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture and other activities under the draft Work Programme 2019-2020 (see WECAFC/XVII/2019/17) or to other activities that the Commission wishes to include in the Work Programme related to this topic.

## Background

1. The *Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale fisheries in the context of food security and poverty eradication* (SSF Guidelines) were approved and endorsed at the Thirty-first session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI). The SSF Guidelines aims to enhance the contribution of small-scale fisheries to global food security and nutrition, to contribute to equitable development and poverty eradication, to achieve sustainable utilization of fishery resources, and to promote an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable future of our planet and its people. It proposes guidance to States and stakeholders to enhance sustainable small-scale fisheries governance and development. It also promotes awareness raising and the advancement of knowledge on small-scale fisheries. The SSF Guidelines, endorsed by consensus, complements the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and all other international fisheries instruments.
2. Target 14.B of the Sustainable Development Goals is to Provide Access for Small-Scale Artisanal Fishers to Marine Resources and Markets. Indicator 14.b.1 measures progress by countries in the degree of application of a legal/regulatory/policy/institutional framework, which recognizes and protects access rights for small-scale fishers. The Target is the only one under the SDGs that specifically addresses small-scale/artisanal fisheries.
3. At its 15<sup>th</sup> Session, WECAFC endorsed Resolution WECAFC/15/2014/8 that encouraged implementation of the SSF Guidelines in all Member States.

## Review of the 2016-2017 Programme of Work on the Small-Scale Fisheries Guidelines

4. At its 16<sup>th</sup> Session, WECAFC included the following items related to the SSF Guidelines in its 2016-2017 Work Programme:
  - a. Under Technical Focus Area 1 (Improve regional fisheries governance):
    - i. Activity 1.7: Support to the application of the Voluntary Guidelines on Small Scale Fisheries and implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land Fisheries and Forests with a focus on strengthening of fisherfolk organizations.
    - ii. Actions 1.7:
      - Protocol on securing sustainable small-scale fisheries for Caribbean Community fisherfolk and societies adopted by CRFM.
      - SSF Guidelines included in the Fisheries and Aquaculture Integration Policy of OSPESCA.
      - Gulf of Mexico Large Marine Ecosystem Project currently implementing the SSF Guidelines.
      - Model SSF Law Developed by Parlatino and Draft National Artisanal Fisheries Law in Costa Rica
      - National activities across the wider region.
  - b. Under Technical Focus Area 2 (Increase regional information and collaboration in Fisheries)
    - i. Activity 2.3 Improved management of reef fisheries and MPAS- Increased capacity among fisherfolk and fisheries managers to participate effectively in coastal/reef management and MPAs.
  - c. Under Technical Focus Area 3 (Strengthen regional fisheries management and best-practice approaches for fisheries and aquaculture)

- i. Activity 3.1 Strengthen the capacity of the Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organizations (CNFO) national and primary fisherfolk organizations.
- ii. Action 3.1:
  - Regional Stewardfish Project to Strengthen Fisherfolk Organizations
  - Elements of REBYC-II LAC, CC4Fish and CLME+ projects on strengthening fisher and fish worker organizations

### **International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture**

5. The 34th FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Mexico from 29 February to 3 March 2016, agreed 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). As generators of this request, the governments of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC) recognized the importance of addressing small-scale/artisanal fisheries through a distinct policy dimension, given their crucial role to food and nutrition security and therefore to the eradication of hunger and poverty.
6. At its thirty-third Session in 2016, the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) formally proposed the International Year. COFI considered that 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 these activities, especially those in the most vulnerable rural areas that are constrained by poor governance and low capacity for sustainable use aquatic resources.
7. In the proposal, COFI considered that the International Year would also 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. This includes some core elements of the SSF Guidelines, including but not limited 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.
8. The 154<sup>th</sup> Session of FAO Conference endorsed the COFI proposal, forwarding it to the UN General Assembly. The Seventy-second session of the United Nations General Assembly, (December 2017) proclaimed 2022 as the “International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture” and invited FAO to serve as the lead agency for the Year, in collaboration with other relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations system.
9. At its Thirty-third session in 2018, COFI welcomed the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture in 2022, encouraged cooperation and support for the celebrations, and requested that FAO develop a planning roadmap. FAO and its partners are now planning the 2022 activities.

10. Currently, FAO has established an internal task force to coordinate the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture, as mandated by the UN General Assembly. The Organization is also developing a website and a visual identity. Furthermore, an external advisory committee composed by representative of Member States and partners will be created to support work on the road map leading up to the international year and guide its implementation.
11. FAO is currently looking for champions across the globe that will support the preparations of the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture. WECAFC Secretariat encourages Members to express their leadership and become a supporter of the International Year and calls upon the Commission to become a leader in the planning process at the regional level.
12. Through WECAFC, Members could provide FAO with suggestions for key messages and initiatives, as well as the strategy for their execution. Additionally, Members could provide specific resources to celebrate activities or achieve outputs related to the International Year. WECAFC and its Members and partners (including CRFM and OSPESCA) could establish a regional coordination team, tasked with leading the region's celebrations of the International Year and representing the Western Central Atlantic in the International Year Steering Committee as well as other organizing bodies.

#### **Updates on the preparation of the Illuminating Hidden Harvests study**

13. Millions of metric tons of fish from the small-scale fisheries sector are hidden (unreported). This was shown in the study Hidden Harvest: The Global Contribution of Capture Fisheries synthesized in 2012 by the FAO, the World Bank and WorldFish.
14. In response to a request from the Committee on Fisheries at its Thirty-third session, FAO and WorldFish are reviewing this report and are currently attempting to collect unreported data and information on small-scale fisheries in partnership with Duke University. This new study is called Illuminating Hidden Harvests (IHH).
15. The goal of IHH is to improve understanding of the social, environmental, economic and governance contributions of small-scale fisheries at global and local scales, as well as the key drivers of change, including both threats and opportunities.
16. The data and knowledge generated by this research are expected to contribute to effective decision-making on small-scale fisheries by policymakers and to enable fishing communities and advocates to make a strong case for support in the sector. The research supports the implementation of the SSF Guidelines, contributes towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and provides a solid scientific base for future decision-making.
17. Illuminating Hidden Harvests uses a case study approach, delving into the social, environmental, and economic and governance effects and roles of marine and inland small-scale fisheries at local and global level.
18. IHH also explores the approach to characterize fisheries through a matrix approach and the WECAFC Fishery Data and Statistics Working Group (FDS-WG) in May 2016 discussed this matrix for the characterization of fishing activities and provided pilot testing.