

## Canada's intervention on Agenda Item 6 – Small-Scale Fisheries & IYAFA

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Tens of thousands of Canadians make their living directly from fishing and related activities, and many of these people participate in small-scale fisheries. These fisheries range from subsistence fishing in remote areas, to commercial fishing co-managed by cooperatives, to inshore commercial fleets. We therefore have a keen sense in Canada of the importance of small-scale, independent harvesters as critical contributors to their communities, where fishing is an economic driver, a pillar of food security, a social bond, and a cultural activity.

Given the importance Canada places on our own small-scale fisheries, but also understanding their importance in other regions and for other Members, we appreciate the FAO's work in this area in recent years. Canada especially welcomes work that broadens and deepens our collective understanding of small-scale fisheries, including in the Illuminating Hidden Harvests project, which is yielding such a rich collection of information that can help steer policy. We also appreciate the wide range of work to encourage and support the policy uptake and implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines, and support the continuation of these contributions.

In recognition of the importance of small-scale fisheries, in 2021 Canada revised its legislative and regulatory framework governing inshore fisheries in Atlantic Canada. These changes, building on earlier ones, enshrined in law and in regulation the independence of the small-scale inshore fleet. The regulations are designed to keep the benefits from the fishery with licence holders and in coastal communities.

We also note that supporting small-scale fisheries in Canada intersects with our commitment to reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, as we recognize that fisheries are of great social, cultural, spiritual and economic importance to many Indigenous peoples. Canada is pursuing its commitment to reconciliation through renewed relationships that are based in: the recognition of rights, respect, co-operation and partnership. As we continue this work, we will look for opportunities to learn from initiatives at the FAO and among its Members that will support our own efforts.

Finally, we would like to offer a warm thanks to the FAO for assuming a leadership role during the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture, and for supporting and linking events among partners around the world.