



INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF  
ARTISANAL FISHERIES  
AND AQUACULTURE

2022

# Tunis Declaration on Artisanal Fisheries

We, Delegates of fishers and artisanal fisheries organizations in the countries of North Africa (Algeria, Egypt, Mauritania, Morocco, Libya and Tunisia) met alongside the Regional Workshop celebrating the closing of the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAFA) 2022 and the launch of the action plan of the Maghreb and North Africa Platform of Artisanal Fishery and Aquaculture, organized in Tunis, Tunisia (12-14 December 2022) in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean and Black Sea (GFCM), the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) and the African Union Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR),

**Emphasizing** the importance of fisheries and aquaculture for the sustainable development of countries, including in the fight against poverty, hunger and malnutrition, especially in the current context of declining growth and disrupted food supply chains,

**Noting** that climate change and ocean pollution pose significant challenges to the fisheries and aquaculture sectors and seriously affect the sustainable livelihoods of small-scale fishing communities, threatening their existence,

**Noting** with concern that measures taken to improve fisheries management have not been sufficient to reverse the global trend of overexploitation of stocks, given that 35.4 percent (2019) of all marine fish stocks monitored by FAO are currently exploited above a biologically sustainable level, three times more than in 1974 when it was only 10 percent,

**Recognizing** that the difficulties encountered in the implementation of effective fisheries management measures are complex, multidimensional and region-specific, and that they are often due to insufficient data being made available to inform science-based decision-making and to a lack of institutional and human capacity,

**Recognizing** that artisanal fisheries concern all segments of small-scale trades, including those of the sea, rivers, inland waterways and small-scale aquaculture,  
Recognizing that an organized, informed and well-equipped profession can contribute significantly to the objectives of sound management of fisheries resources and their environment, as well as to the fight against poverty, food insecurity, malnutrition and the reduction of youth unemployment,

**Noting** furthermore that women are central to all sustainable development goals, mainly as they contribute to food security and improved nutrition, particularly in poor and vulnerable households, and that fisheries and aquaculture have the potential to expand their opportunities,

1. We adhere to the principles of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries adopted by the FAO Conference on 31 October 1995, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including SDG14 (conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development), the Voluntary Guidelines on Sustainable Artisanal Fisheries and the FAO “Blue Transformation” Initiative,
2. We reaffirm that governance mechanisms based on international cooperation and broad stakeholder and professional participation are the best ways to ensure sustainable fisheries management,
3. We reaffirm our willingness and commitment to work toward the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Sustainable Artisanal Fisheries and the Global Plan of Action for the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAFA) 2022,
4. We commit ourselves to encourage responsible fishing practices and combat illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, discards, losses and waste, and various forms of damage to the natural environment and the balance of ecosystems,
5. We call on all artisanal fishers in North Africa and their organizations to adhere to our regional platform on artisanal fisheries and to disseminate and apply related principles,
6. We invite all partners and stakeholders to support the implementation of our action plan and facilitate its integration into its regional and international space, as well as the realization of our aspirations to ensure sustainable artisanal fisheries in our region,
7. We call on our respective Governments to facilitate the active participation of artisanal fishers and their organizations for better recognition of their contribution toward sustainable development of artisanal fisheries and to support the rights and interests of artisanal fishers,
8. We call on countries to create the necessary conditions to support sustainable artisanal fisheries and to actively participate in the implementation of the Global Plan of Action for the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAFA) 2022,
9. We give our thanks to FAO, GFCM, AMU and AU-IBAR for their continued support and invite them to continue this cooperation to which we are fully committed,
10. We thank the Host Country: Tunisia, for agreeing to host our meeting and ensure the necessary conditions for its success.

Done in Tunis, 14 December 2022  
Participants