



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

Draft Key Messages

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Strengthening the Policy-Science Nexus



This document lists the key messages emerging from the eight topical sessions of the International Symposium on Fisheries Sustainability, as presented in the concluding session.

The messages are in draft form and will be further elaborated in coming weeks by the Session Chairs and Technical Leaders, in consultation with Speakers and Panelists. They will be included in the Symposium Report, which in due time will be posted in the Symposium Web site.

All participants will be informed when the report is available.

SESSION 1– Main messages



1. Fill **information gaps** (e.g. in SE Asia) and improve transparency to better understand the status of fisheries at relevant scales (i.e. regional and national).
2. Promote **communication, knowledge mobilization and education** across all actors involved in decision-making (including fishers) for more appropriate and informed decision-making.
3. Incorporate **multiple types of information** (e.g. TEK) in data-limited assessment approaches with methods that are relevant for that context (data availability, the local capacity and the management needs).
4. Develop **information collection systems and fisheries management** that are cost-effective, community-based, have rigorous protocols for including local knowledge, be adaptive and institutionalized by management agencies, and make the best use of technology.
5. Build more **precautionary target reference points** (e.g. MEY) into management systems to account for uncertainty related to data-limitations and external factors.
6. Mobilize **resources for programmes** that include long-term strategies and investments aimed at strengthening fisheries assessment and management systems, particularly in developing world, small-scale and inland fisheries.

SESSION 2– Main messages



1. Support the development of **joint integrated biodiversity and food security objectives** that recognize **trade-offs** and are nationally and locally relevant.
2. Engage and influence **existing and emerging policy frameworks** (e.g. CBD post-2020 framework, SDGs) that represent opportunities to design, implement and monitor joint objectives.
3. Continue developing **inclusive integrated management frameworks** that rapidly move to reference points consistent with **sustainability from ecosystem perspectives, promoting stewardship and participatory management** that effectively translates into action at all scales.
4. Enhance our ability to **monitor and report on sustainability** by including information on ecosystems (including people) drawing on a diverse set of knowledge (social, economic and biological sciences, local and traditional knowledge) disaggregated by gender.
5. Promote and strengthen **diverse, inclusive and accountable partnerships**.
6. Integrate market-based mechanisms that advance sustainability into fisheries management.
7. **Act now** to achieve joint objectives using the tools at hand (including new technologies), building on previous experiences and mindful of specific context.

SESSION 3 – Main messages



1. Invest in **data collection and analysis** on aquatic food consumption and nutrient profiling (at species level, considering parts used, processing methods, preparation methods).
2. Ensure **aquatic food is reaching those that need it most**, across diverse communities within regions, and diverse individual needs within households – to ensure that essential micronutrients, fatty acids and bioavailable proteins reach children, women and men – now and in the future.
3. Deploy appropriate **messaging** through appropriate channels to encourage consumption of most nutritious and sustainably produced aquatic food.
4. Include aquatic food in **food systems policies** given its potential to address malnutrition in all forms.
5. Improve **utilization and stability of aquatic food supply** by supporting disruptions, innovations and targeted risks.

SESSION 4– Main messages



1. Change the rhetoric around small-scale fisheries and **develop a positive narrative** highlighting their contribution to food security and resource stewardship.
2. Recognize the role of women and make both sexes responsible for achieving **gender equality**.
3. Build and support **institutions and small-scale fisheries organizations**, so that the ‘aquatic majority’ can participate in land, ocean and water resource planning, development, and governance to secure access to resources and markets in achieving equitable and productive livelihoods in marine and inland systems.
4. Modify the **way data is collected**, and valued, to include disaggregated data to account for nutrition, well being and gender and other dimensions beyond catch and co-produce information that promotes trust and collaboration among governments, academia and small-scale fishing communities.
5. Use existing **policy frameworks** and apply the principles of the Voluntary Guidelines on Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines), promote a human rights-based approach (HRBA), participation and a holistic and people perspective for governance and development.
6. Ensure **actors along the value chain**, in particular women and small-scale producers and processors, have the capacity to seize opportunities and reap their fair share of benefits and engage fully in sustainable and equitable food systems.

SESSION 5 – Main messages



1. **Allocate property rights:** to improve the economic performance of fisheries, property rights must be well-defined based on local context, and allocated.
2. Fully utilize human capital: mainstream **gender-inclusive policies** to increase the role, well-being and working conditions of women in the sector, including at the decision-making levels.
3. Improve **access to credit, finance and insurance:** especially in the small-scale sector, and in particular women entrepreneurs and operators from disadvantaged groups.
4. Reduce waste and increase utilization by developing **new products and markets.**
5. **Reduce and eliminate harmful subsidies.**
6. **Promote social responsibility in the fisheries value-chain** working together through public-private partnerships, international collaboration with ILO, IMO and others.

SESSION 6 – Main messages



1. **Global problem with local solutions.** We need **transformative adaptation**. Fishers are adapting, institutions and policies need to step-up and follow suit. Learn from the examples of successful adaptation.
2. **Be proactive.** Shift the mindset, starting from improving fisheries management through the implementation of **cross-sectoral, holistic and precautionary approaches** that attain robustness to variability rather than stability.
3. **Space matters.** Develop **spatial management mechanisms** able to adapt to the fast pace of climate change, accounting for shifts in species distributions and incorporating effective communication between stakeholders.
4. **Winners & losers.** Negotiate **trade-offs** and build on climate justice and equity considerations when taking decisions on allocation of and access to fisheries resources. Drawing on ethics is one valuable option.
5. **Squid & chips.** Diversify supply chains by adding value to new or currently undervalued resources. Promote market diversification to avoid weak links that result in low resilience to changes and shocks. Educate consumers.
6. **Magic (wo)man day.** Design adaptation solutions that account for **gender** differences in terms of vulnerability and build on the specific skills and positive role women and youth can play.
7. **To do the new you need to drop the old.** Invest in innovation on modification of fishing and farming practices, modern insurance alternatives, early warning systems, communication, use of industry real-time data.

SESSION 7 – Main messages



- 1. Integration of data collection and supply chains:** Deficiencies in data collection are still important, but no longer the only driver in data gaps. There is strong need for developing countries to invest in the capacity to collect, compile and analyse data in fully integrated systems.
- 2. Tackling institutional and regulatory barriers:** Recognize the importance of institutional, governmental and regulatory barriers in the implementation of effective fisheries information systems and data-sharing, considering open data policies governed by principles that are **secure** and **transparent**
- 3. Building trusted knowledge from data:** Make well-defined, transparent, and inclusive processes to facilitate communication at the science-policy interface so to ensure trusted sources of data and information [including indigenous] are producing credible, relevant, and legitimate fishery knowledge, at all scales.
- 4. Reducing digital divide:** Invest in mobile data collection and use of remote sensing technologies, involve fisherfolks communities including women and youth and empower them with services (including analytics) improving their livelihood and facilitating ownership. Ensure awareness of new available technologies, build capacities to facilitate their adoption, ensuring sustainable choices.
- 5. Role of FAO:** FAO, as a neutral platform and through collaborations and partnerships, should develop policy guidance (international guidelines) on how to develop and equitably utilize emerging technologies and ensuring FAIR principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable).

SESSION 8 – Main messages



1. Integrate fisheries into broader governance frameworks - **fisheries management cannot act in isolation.**
2. **Remove harmful subsidies and invest more** in fisheries development and management for the economy, food-security and the environment.
3. **Generate political will and capacity** to improve implementation of existing policy frameworks, and support policy innovation for emerging challenges.
4. Make fishery policy and management decisions **inclusive, promoting respectful recognition of scientific evidence and local/traditional knowledge.**
5. **Improve public and governmental perception of fisheries** to justify investment and respond to criticism, thus increasing ownership of the fisheries agenda.
6. **Increase accountability and build greater trust** in the capacity and transparency of the fishery sector to be fisheries **part of the solution** and **improve cohesion with conservation** objectives.
7. **Include livelihoods and decent work in fisheries management**, involving fishers, rights and access, reconciling food security with economic objectives.
8. **Steer the blue economy towards sustainable development**, incorporating the rights of those whose livelihoods depend on the sea now **and for future generations of fishers.**

FAO Rapporteurs:

Session 1 – Yimin Ye, Nicolas Gutierrez, Rishi Sharma

Session 2 – Vera Agostini, Devin Bartley, Giuliano Carrara

Session 3 – Molly Ahern, Jogeir Toppe

Session 4 – Nicole Franz, Joe Zelasney, Lena Westlund, Alexander Ford

Session 5 – Audun Lem, Stefania Vannuccini

Session 6 – Manuel Barange, Florence Poulain, Marcelo Vasconcellos , Elisabetta Morello

Session 7 – Marc Taconet, James Geehan, Aureliano Gentile

Session 8 – Amber Himes-Cornell, Danielle Blacklock, Alexander Ford, Blaise Kuemlangan, Matthew Camilleri, Simon Funge-Smith

External Rapporteurs:

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Session 2 – Jessica Landman

Session 3 – Anna Farmery

Session 4 – Alexis Rife

Session 5 – Ingrid Kelling

Session 6 – Willow Battista

Session 7 – Paul Tuda

Session 8 – Cristina Pita

