

**Ocean and Fisheries Working Group (OFWG)  
Road Map on small-scale fisheries and aquaculture  
2022 - 2027**

## **Background**

During the 17th meeting of OFWG, a special session to address small-scale fisheries and aquaculture relevance to OFWG was included, accordingly with strategic plan 2021-2023. The importance of this sector, which according to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) involves around 90% of the 35 million people recorded globally and a further 20 million people involved in the small-scale post-harvest sector, was highlighted due its relevance for the social and economic development of Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) economies. In this way, in Southeast Asia for example, coral reef fisheries alone comprise about 3.4 million small-scale fishers, and cumulatively, these generate around \$21 billion US, which represents 51% of the world's economic value of small-scale fisheries. Specially in these difficult times due to the COVID-19 pandemic, small-scale fisheries and aquaculture have a significant role in poverty eradication, providing livelihoods, as well as ensuring the food security and nutritional needs of many. Special consideration should be given to the approach towards coastal communities' development, heritage and integration of native cultures and gender equality.

The United Nations General Assembly declared 2022 the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAFA) and the FAO is the lead organization for the celebration of the Year, in collaboration with other relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations system. The Road Map on small-scale fisheries and aquaculture would be a crucial product for the recognition of the millions of small fishermen, fish farmers and workers, who provide healthy and nutritious food to billions of people and contribute to the advancement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including several of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): no poverty (SDG1), zero hunger (SDG2), life below water (SDG14).

The establishment of this Road Map provides specific actions areas to promote and develop this sector in which the objectives and outcomes related to small-scale fisheries and aquaculture that have already been identified can be included to improve results. The Road Map will pursue the APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040 on strong, balanced, secure, sustainable and inclusive growth by the support the small-scale fishers and farmers to be better, and stronger in the fisheries industry.

## **Vision**

Small-scale fisheries and aquaculture activities in the APEC region are fully recognized and supported as main contributors to human well-being of population, resilient and sustainable food systems and poverty eradication through the responsible and sustainable use of fisheries and aquaculture resources and socio-economic development in the APEC region.

## **Objectives**

### **General Objective**

Establish and develop actions to contribute to sustainable small-scale fisheries and aquaculture both inland and in coastal areas of the APEC region, through collaboration between key partners along the supply chain, with special consideration towards coastal communities' development, their heritage, and integration of native cultures and gender equality and equity.

### **Specific Objectives**

- 1) Enhance knowledge and understanding of the structure and characteristics of the small-scale fisheries and aquaculture sector in APEC economies to identify and address main needs and gaps.



- 2) Promote the implementation of the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries (SSF Guidelines) among APEC members as a way to improve the responsible and sustainable use of fisheries and aquaculture resources in inland, coastal and ocean environments.
- 3) Support gender equality and fishery rights of native minorities across small-scale fisheries and aquaculture in the APEC region.
- 4) Develop an action plan to enhance the capacity of small-scale fishers, fish farmers, fish workers and native minorities in matters of administration and sustainability of resources, including through the promotion of public-private partnerships.
- 5) Sustain and strengthen the role of small-scale fisheries and aquaculture through the production chain and market development among the APEC region, including through the use of innovative technologies and enhanced stakeholder participation.

### **Action areas**

The road map should focus in specific action areas as a frame for the development of projects and activities. The action areas identified include:

#### **I. Small scale fisheries and aquaculture sector characterization in APEC region**

To have a better knowledge and understanding of the structure and characteristics of the small scale fisheries and aquaculture sector in APEC economies to identify and address main needs and gaps on sustainable management of resources. In this regard, encourage gathering data and information on small scale fisheries and aquaculture in each APEC Economy, including:

- Sector governance and organization; including structure of public agencies and private organizations, registration and licensing for small scale fisheries and aquaculture, etc.;
- Types of small scale fisheries and aquaculture developed, such as, fishing methods and gear, aquaculture production systems, technologies, specifications of small-scale fishing fleet, etc.;
- Description of the supply chain from capture or harvest to the distribution and final destination of the products; including data on production volumes, local consumption, exports;
- Population involved directly and indirectly in the sector, considering the gender approach and indigenous people or native minorities, to the extent possible;
- Policies and strategies to address and mitigate the impacts of climate change and disaster risk, and;
- Requirements and priorities identified by stakeholders in the policy related to small-scale fisheries and aquaculture.

#### **II. Implementation of SSF Guidelines in the APEC region**

To promote the implementation of the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines) among APEC members as a way to improve the responsible and sustainable use of fisheries and aquaculture resources in inland, coastal and ocean environment.

The SSF Guidelines represent a global consensus on principles and guidance for small-scale fisheries governance and development. They are directed at all those involved in the sector and intend to guide and encourage governments, fishing communities and other stakeholders to work together and ensure secure and sustainable small-scale fisheries for the benefit of small-scale fishers, fish farmers and fish



workers and their communities as well as for society at large.

Capacity Building Initiatives to improve the responsible and sustainable use of fisheries resources on inland, coastal and ocean environment, in line with the FAO SSF Guidelines seek opportunities to support the implementation of and benefit from activities, considering other related and relevant international instruments to Small-Scale Fisheries and Aquaculture, as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea; the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries; the 2021 Committee on Fisheries (COFI) Declaration for Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture; the Agreement on Port State Measures; among others.

Activities may include:

- Initiatives to improve the responsible and sustainable use of fisheries and aquaculture resources on inland, coastal and ocean environment in line with the SSF Guidelines;
- Promotion of the Integrated aquaculture approach;
- Capacity building for implementation of the SSF Guidelines;
- Promotion of practices of sustainable and green development of fishery and aquaculture among fishers, fish farmers and relevant stakeholders.

### **III. Enhance awareness of women's role and potential in small-scale artisanal fisheries and aquaculture**

To support improvement and participatory implementation of policy and regulatory frameworks to secure gender equality and equity across small-scale artisanal fisheries and aquaculture in the APEC region, enhancing:

- Strengthen of women's organizations to effectively participate in all forms of decision-making processes that affect their livelihoods, achieve autonomy and secure leadership roles in society;
- Support to the adaptation of technologies and infrastructures to accommodate the needs/roles of women in the production chain of small scale artisanal fisheries and aquaculture;
- Promote effective actions against discrimination and abuse in the workplace, as well as systemic gender discrimination.

### **IV. Support of coastal communities**

To support the development of coastal communities through empowerment of small-scale fishers, fish farmers, fish workers, native minorities and their organizations in the context of management of small-scale fisheries and aquaculture

In this area community-based coastal resource management (CBCRM) programs development experiences should be shared as an important conservation and fisheries management strategy in some economies within the APEC region:

- Encouraging, as appropriate, the development of initiatives for capacity building of small-scale fishers and fish farmers in matters of administration and sustainability of resources, promoting public- private partnership;
- Promoting exchange of experiences incorporating ecological and socio-economic considerations in setting fisheries management regimes, empowering the local fishing communities and improving the state of the local fisheries resources in line with the sustainable development of the small scale fisheries and aquaculture;
- Supporting and encouraging closer cooperation among universities/institutes and coast communities to enhance capacity building for fishers and fish farmers.



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## **V. Production and market development of small scale fisheries and aquaculture in APEC region**

To sustain and strengthen small scale fisheries and aquaculture through the supply production chain and market development among the APEC region, including the use of post harvesting technologies and stakeholder's participation, promoting:

- Aquatic products' standard for small-scale fisheries/aquaculture;
- Value adding on fisheries products including certified products, such as responsible/sustainable fisheries, environmental friendly and blue products, CBCRM products;
- Online marketing.

### **Implementation**

Reviews of the Roadmap will be undertaken during each first annual OFWG meeting, including sharing information on related activities by Economies and at regional levels, as well as discussing and addressing related challenges. At the first OFWG meeting in 2025, each Economy will report on the implementation of the Roadmap. The Steering Committee on Economic and Technical Cooperation has the overall responsibility for monitoring and evaluating the progress under the Roadmap. Senior Officials will report periodically to Ministers on progress and seek further guidance as appropriate. APEC economies will continue efforts to promote sharing of knowledge and success stories, lessons learned from various management approaches, best practices and creative solutions to foster small scale fisheries and aquaculture.