



Milestones

By **Venugopalan N**
(icsf@icsf.net),
Programme Manager, ICSF

Taking action: Costa Rica initiates steps to implement the SSF Guidelines

Costa Rica is among the first few countries to respond immediately and favourably to the question of implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (the SSF Guidelines). In a move that extends overwhelming support to the small-scale fisheries, in particular to women in the sector, the Costa Rican government, in association with the country's fishers and their representatives, and civil society organisations, has introduced a bill for the implementation of the SSF Guidelines. Titled 'General Law for the sustainability of small-scale, artisanal fisheries in the context of food security, poverty eradication and shared governance', this bill is presently under consideration by the representatives of the Costa Rican Legislative Assembly.

The bill acknowledges and underlines the fundamental role played by women in the value chain of small-scale fisheries, promoting

their participation in coastal development, organisation and local entrepreneurship as well as strengthening their capacities. It acknowledges that all regulation, public policy, political decisions and administrative acts, in general, must be dictated and enforced in order to guarantee gender equality and equity, in particular, the economic or material equality between genders. Recognising the crucial role played by women engaged in the small-scale, artisanal fishing activity and in all activities along the value chain, the bill mandates the state to promote equal rights and opportunities, encouraging differentiated policies in pursuit of equity. The bill recognises that measures governing the small-scale, artisanal fisheries sector must be in harmony with human rights regarding women and based on the specific women's needs of each community.

The bill is available for download at:
<https://www.icsf.net/costaricabill>