

Small in Scale, Big in Value

Despite the limitations of the COVID-19 pandemic, the smart use of communication tools can make IYAFA 2022 a success

This year we celebrate the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAFA 2022). One of the objectives of the Year is to enhance global awareness about small-scale fisheries, understanding its role and context, and actions to support the sector's contribution to sustainable development. A pre-condition for achieving this goal is that there is awareness about the Year itself—not only within the global fisheries and aquaculture community but also beyond. This includes the general public and policy domains relevant to fisheries, such as those dealing with food security and nutrition, the environment and gender issues.

And the number of those is growing: To date, 32 entities have signed up as official IYAFA 2022 supporters. They help raise awareness and promote action for small-scale artisanal fishers, fish farmers and fishworkers around the world. They come from various sectors: international and regional bodies; fishworker, farmer and producer organizations; academic and research institutions; civil society; governments; the private sector; and more.

They are lending their influence and networks to make IYAFA 2022 an international success by clearly communicating the importance of small-scale fisheries and aquaculture for our food systems and environment. Our supporters are spreading the word through media outlets, public events and campaigns.

In addition, IYAFA 2022 can count on the members of its International Steering Committee, representing seven FAO regions as well as a number of global non-State actors that represent or support small-scale fisheries and aquaculture.

Tools for IYAFA 2022

The set of communication tools for the international year are available on the IYAFA 2022 webpage in English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Russian and Chinese. Here is a snapshot of what is in store:

- * IYAFA 2022 communications handbook: A communications guide with resources and tips, all in one place!
- * IYAFA 2022 visual identity guidelines: How to best place the IYAFA 2022 logo!
- * IYAFA 2022 trello board: Too lazy to prepare social media messages? Use what is ready, and add the official hashtag #IYAFA2022

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The COVID-19 pandemic has made it particularly challenging to raise IYAFA 2022's visibility. The preventive measures have reduced physical contact; this has made travel, access to spaces and actual meetings very difficult. At the same time, new ways of communication have emerged and consolidated during the pandemic. In several ways, they can help us reach more people with fewer resources.

As the lead agency for IYAFA 2022, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has put together a suite of communication tools, available to all who wish to support the celebrations of the Year.

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Communication tools showing the IYAF 2022 logo. The Steering Committee and Supporters are lending their influence and networks to make IYAF 2022 an international success

- * Global Action Plan: Inspiration for action around seven inter-related pillars
- * Take action page: Learn how various sectors can take action to support IYAF 2022
- * Join us: Discover outreach activities you can organize to promote IYAF 2022
- * IYAF 2022 video playlist: Features the official IYAF 2022 video in many languages, and a growing number of related videos
- * IYAF 2022 events list: See what is being organized for the Year and share what you will do!
- * IYAF 2022 asset bank: Everything from virtual backgrounds, a PowerPoint presentation on IYAF 2022 with speaking notes, web buttons, video bumpers, specifications for IYAF 2022 gadgets like T-shirts, water bottles and bags, and much more
- * Monthly IYAF 2022 newsletter: Subscribe to the newsletter, which has a specific thematic focus each month, for information about IYAF 2022 events and IYAF-2022-related resources.

Now let's look at what is already happening or is planned this year. The International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF) is organizing regional workshops with fishworker organizations, starting with Asia in May. The Too Big To Ignore (TBTI) research partnership is organizing five regional small-scale fisheries

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congresses. The SSF Hub is featuring a series of webinars. The regional organization 'Ministerial Conference on fisheries co-operation among African States bordering the Atlantic Ocean' (ATLAFCO) just concluded a dedicated three-day event on small-scale fisheries and aquaculture in its 22 member countries.

Norway, a 'Friend of the SSF Guidelines', has partnered with others to organize a IYAF 2022 webinar

series on ‘Women and a changing tide: How to break the bias,’ starting on International Women’s Day (8 March), to promote gender equality and equity in small-scale fisheries and aquaculture. The One Ocean Hub, with the support of the FAO and the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), is launching a series of initiatives to raise awareness on the human rights of small-scale fishers, fishworkers and their communities and on the importance of adopting specific legislation, public policies and programmes to enable them to operate in a sustainable manner.


The academic journal *Reviews in Fish Biology and Fisheries* will publish a special issue on IYafa 2022. A private company in Italy has produced a IYafa 2022 calendar with satellite images of small-scale fisheries and aquaculture. The NGO Coalition for Fair Fisheries Arrangements (CFFA-CAPE) has published a video animation for IYafa 2022. In addition, a large number of webinars have been organized or are in the works under the IYafa 2022 umbrella. Articles have been published in magazines and the International Institute for the Environment and Development (IIED) has published the first of a series of infographics to illustrate small-scale fisheries contributions to sustainable development. There is more in the pipeline: A compilation of human-interest stories, as well as a call for photo content. Stay tuned and sign up to the IYafa 2022 newsletter!

All of these activities reach diverse audiences and all of them are designed to trigger more action—like ripples in water. But it will take much more to do justice to small-scale fisheries and aquaculture, which support millions of livelihoods around the world. The FAO Committee on Fisheries will meet in early September 2022, during which a special high-level session will be an important moment to take stock of the achievements of IYafa 2022. Help us to make sure that there will be plenty to report on!

Get involved!

Everyone has a role to play, from governments and private-sector

companies to the general public and youth. Let’s work together for a world in which small-scale artisanal fishers, fish farmers and fishworkers are fully recognized and empowered to continue their contributions for human well-being, food security and poverty alleviation through the responsible and sustainable use of fisheries and aquaculture resources.

To make the most of this opportunity, it is time to think creatively, join hands and start making plans for how to make IYafa 2022 a memorable year. Start by using our free material to give small-scale fishers, fish farmers and fishworkers the attention they deserve! 

For more

International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYafa 2022)

<https://www.fao.org/artisanal-fisheries-aquaculture-2022/home/en/>

IYafa 2022 Supporters

<https://www.fao.org/artisanal-fisheries-aquaculture-2022/supporters/en/>

IYafa 2022 International Steering Committee

<https://www.fao.org/artisanal-fisheries-aquaculture-2022/international-steering-committee/en/>