

International
Collective
in Support of
Fishworkers



Social Development & Fishing Communities

Antigua and Barbuda • Bangladesh • Brazil • Costa Rica • Ghana • India • The Philippines • Thailand

Antigua and Barbuda
Bangladesh
Brazil
Costa Rica
Ghana
India
The Philippines
Thailand

**Social
Development
& Fishing Communities**

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Cover image:
Fish landing station, Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. Photo by Din M Shibly



Social Development & Fishing Communities



Small-scale Fisherman casting a net, Bangladesh. Photo by Din M Shibly



Source: Wikipedia commons, Equirectangular projection topographic world map

Contents

- 1) [Antigua and Barbuda](#) / 8
- 2) [Bangladesh](#) / 22
- 3) [Brazil](#) / 34
- 4) [Costa Rica](#) / 46
- 5) [Ghana](#) / 60
- 6) [India](#) / 74
- 7) [The Philippines](#) / 88
- 8) [Thailand](#) / 104



Reef fishes. Antigua and Barbuda. Photo by Ian S. Horsford

Antigua and Barbuda

Antigua and Barbuda is a twin-island state in the eastern Caribbean. It is located between the Caribbean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean, with a total land area of 443 sq km and a mid-year projected population of about 98,100 in 2020. They have a total shelf area of 3,568 sq km including the Antigua and Barbuda shelf (3,400 sq km), South Bank (40 sq km), a section of the Anguilla shelf (7 sq km), the Redonda shelf (98 sq km), the Havers Shoal (5 sq km) and a section of the St. Christopher and Nevis shelf (18 sq km). These relatively extensive fishing grounds support a substantial demersal resource of reef fish, Gastropoda (queen conch, for example) and Crustacea (Caribbean spiny lobster, for instance).



Source: Wikipedia commons

Definition of fisher, distribution of fishers

The Fisheries Regulations of 2013 define the term 'fisher' so: "any person engaged in the harvesting, taking, processing, culturing or trading of fish or fishery products, to include any aquatic flora or fauna".

Fish Production

Conservative estimates from various sources, including the Fisheries Division, suggest that demersal resources provide an annual sustainable yield of between 3,409 metric tonnes (MT) and 6,585 MT. In 2018, the resources yielded 5,499 MT worth EC \$65.7 million (US \$24.3 million). For 2019, the fisheries sector contributed to 53 per cent of the agricultural GDP and 1 per cent of the national GDP (in current prices). In addition, seasonal large pelagic species—tunas, dolphinfishes, wahoos and billfishes—pass through the waters of Antigua and Barbuda. Preliminary estimates indicate that these migratory fish could yield an additional 3,000 MT to 4,000 MT annually.

Aquaculture

Aquaculture production—mainly from aquaponics—was 24.8 MT in 2019. It was valued at EC \$601,000 (US \$222,593). The main species cultivated were the Nile tilapia (*Oreochromis niloticus*) and the Red tilapia (*Oreochromis spp.*).

Fishing fleet and gear

Over the past 50 years, the country's fishing fleet has undergone significant modernization. Most wooden sloops and dories, dominant in the 1970s, have been gradually replaced by modern fibreglass launches and pirogues with the latest fishing equipment (e.g., Global Positioning System, depth sounder, and fish finder). Traps or

'fish pot'—used to target the demersals— remain the dominant gear due to the extensive nature of the island shelf.

Fishing Communities, Landing Sites and Infrastructure

In Antigua, fishers and their households are generally dispersed across the island. The exceptions are the coastal villages of Urlings, Old Road, Johnson Point and Crab Hill (collectively called the Round South Community), where 9 per cent of the population is directly dependent on fishing; and the coastal urban communities of Point-Villa and Grays-Green, where 7 per cent and 10 per cent of the population, respectively, are directly dependent on fishing. In Barbuda's Codrington Village, one in four persons (26 per cent) of the population is directly dependent on fishing or fish exports.

At the end of October 2020, there were 861 active fishers in Antigua and 76 in Barbuda engaged in the fisheries sector. This included approximately 50 individuals employed solely in an underdeveloped processing sector.

Landing sites range from rural beaches with limited or no infrastructure, to fishery complexes with potable water, slipway, ice-making and chill storage facilities. Some also have facilities like washrooms, lockers and meeting rooms. Only four of 32 landing sites meet the EU technical requirements for export of fish and fishery products.



Typical modern fishing units in Antigua and Barbuda. Photo by Ian S. Horsford

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Destruction of fishing vessels and buildings in Codrington, Barbuda by Hurricane Irma, September 2017. Photo by Ian S. Horsford



Traditional "wattle" fish pot (left) and modern steel frame fish pot (right). Photo by Ian S. Horsford



Antigua and Barbuda: Challenges and Recommendations					
#	Component	Key points		Focus on fishing community	Recommendations
1	Poverty eradication policies and programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Poverty Reduction Strategy for Antigua and Barbuda (NPRS), 2011–2015: Five pillars Poverty reduction programmes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fortnightly allowance to the poor and destitute School Meals Programme for children in public schools School Uniform Grant Programme, available to all children (public & private schools) Peoples Benefit Programme under the management of PDV Caribe Antigua and Barbuda Ltd (food subsidies – beneficiaries need to pass means test) Food programmes managed by various service clubs (Lions, Rotary) 		<p>Fisher incomes were generally above the minimum wage (EC \$1,420 or US \$525.93 per month)</p> <p>At risk of poverty due to vulnerability to natural disasters and exogenous economic shocks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While fisher incomes are generally above minimum wage, risk of poverty due to vulnerability to natural disasters and exogenous economic shocks. Need for diversification of the tourism-based economy to mitigate the risk posed by exogenous economic shocks. E.g. Development of the under-exploited pelagic fishery
2	Social security	<p>Social Security Act in 1972: social security fund to provide the insured population and their dependents with some degree of income security in the event of sickness, injury, invalidity, maternity, retirement or death.</p> <p>Entitlements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sickness benefit Maternity benefit Invalidity benefit Age benefit Survivors benefit Funeral grant <p>Some reforms planned: increase in the contribution rate, insurable earnings ceiling, and the gradual movement of the pensionable age to 65 years; widowers should be entitled to survivor benefits</p>		<p>Earning bands for Social Security among the self-employed: Fishers, mechanics, horticulturalists, taxi and bus drivers get not less than EC \$2,500.00 (US\$925.93) per month</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite achievements, major reforms recommended
3	Education, Training and the Digital Divide	<p>Basic education: Education Act in 1973: Education free and compulsory for children; literacy rate among 5-16 years at 99 per cent</p> <p>Adult and continuing education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gilbert Agricultural and Rural Development Centre (GARD) has offered agricultural and enterprise training to women and youth in the 16-30 age group Work Experience Programme is a six-month on-the-job training opportunity, with a stipend for young people Antigua and Barbuda Institute for Continuing Education (ABICE), the Antigua and Barbuda International Institute of Technology (ABIIT), and the Antigua and Barbuda Hotel Training Institute (ABHTI) Youth and Education Empowerment Programme (YEEP) Antigua and Barbuda Investment Authority (ABIA) 		<p>Fishers' education generally reflects conditions of wider society; - the exception is tertiary education in which ~28 per cent of fishers were college or university educated in 2019, which is thrice the national average (8.7 per cent) from the last population census in 2011.</p> <p>Fisher Professionalization Programme</p> <p>In accordance with Section 35 (3) (e) of the Fisheries Regulations, 2013, anyone applying for a fisher license needs to undertake mandatory training and certification as specified by the Chief Fisheries Officer. This includes training and certification in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fisheries Laws and Protected Areas Record Keeping and Small Business Management Seafood Safety and Quality Assurance Navigation and Seamanship Engine Preventative Maintenance Dive Safety First Aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation 	
4	Health	<p>Healthcare services are delivered at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels through the public and private sectors: Services provided include medical clinics, maternal and child health, community mental health, dental care, screening for non-communicable diseases (NCDs), and prevention and control of communicable diseases</p>			

Antigua and Barbuda: Challenges and Recommendations					
#	Component	Key points		Focus on fishing community	Recommendations
5	Housing and Public Utilities (water, sanitation, electricity, ICT)	<p>Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical Planning Act 2003 governs the Development Control Authority (DCA) Housing key priority identified in Antigua and Barbuda's Medium-Term Development Strategy (Government of Antigua and Barbuda 2015) is "better access to adequate housing". 2015 OECS (Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States) Building Code, as well as the Antigua and Barbuda Building Guidelines: building back better after hurricane devastation <p>Social Housing programmes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home Advancement Programme for the Indigent (HAPI) – home repairs Central Housing and Planning Authority (CHAPA) Low Income Housing Project: affordable housing for vulnerable groups Government's Residential Assistance and Care (GRACE) Programme for the Elderly Fiennes Institute for the Elderly and Indigent <p>Water & Sanitation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A well-developed public utilities system that provides access to safe drinking water despite prolong periods of drought In 2017, up to 97 per cent of the population had basic access to drinking water, while 88 per cent had access to basic (private) sanitation <p>Electricity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fossil fuel (grid) + renewable energy (excess power flows back into grid) <p>Internet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2018, 76 per cent of Antigua and Barbuda's population used the internet 		<p>ICT: ~40% have their own email address. Females > Males</p> <p>Despite internet usage comparable to developed economies in Europe, digital divide (in terms of skills and resources) exists in the context of fisheries, gender, age and human development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased tropical storms (frequency, intensity) affecting houses. Securing tenure is a serious challenge because of high focus on tourism. Digital divide is an emerging challenge Integrated approach to land use Marine Spatial Planning for addressing user conflict
6	Employment policy, Labour Relations and Decent Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Antigua and Barbuda Medium-Term Development Strategy emphasizes "decent wages and work conditions" as vital to sustainable development Freedom of movement of nationals from OECS countries within the economic union area Antigua and Barbuda Labour Code 1974 establishes the minimum standards employers must meet regarding labour practices and decent work in the country <ul style="list-style-type: none"> protects workers fundamental human right of freedom, assembly and to form trade unions includes the terms of employment, health and safety issues, and collective bargaining allows trade unions to organize, conduct activities and bargain collectively (tripartite mechanism) without interference prohibits retaliation against persons who take industrial action equal pay for women in both the public and private sectors prevents discrimination "by reason of race, colour, creed, sex, age or political beliefs" 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occupational pluralism/occupational multiplicity common among fishers Occupational mobility as fishers have secondary school education or beyond Benefited from immigration (filling labour vacuum caused by tourism/construction; introduction of new tech) Increased discord between natives and immigrants regarding rights to fish, introduction of undesired fishing methods or gear (reflected in the amended list of prohibited methods/gear in the Fisheries Regulations 2013) Employment generation projects, skill development programmes for fishers 	

Antigua and Barbuda: Challenges and Recommendations					
#	Component	Key points		Focus on fishing community	Recommendations
7	Safety at Sea and Occupational Health and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labour Code is complemented by specific regulations related to fishing that governs Safety at Sea and Occupational Health and Safety (both dealt with in a separate section) • Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention, 1958 (No. 108) ratified • Relevant technical requirements of the Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (No. 188) incorporated into the Fisheries Act 2006 and Fisheries Regulations 2013 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – minimum age to engage in fishing (16 years); – medical benefits and mandatory social security; – training in occupational health and safety, and mandatory safety at sea; same for commercial and subsistence fishers; • minimum requirement for food and potable water on board 			
8	Human Rights and Access to Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preamble of the country's Constitution contains human rights provisions outlined in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Institutions to support human rights and access to justice: office of the ombudsman and the office of the Information Commissioner • Legal Aid and Advice Centre, a government assisted programme, offers advice and assistance to persons who cannot afford to pay the full legal cost of a lawyer in private practice • Escazú Agreement: environmental justice; seeks to ensure that all people have access to timely and reliable information, and are able to access justice regarding environmental matters • Low trust in judiciary system, the Magistrates Court, the High Court and the Court of Appeals 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less trust in judiciary system, the Magistrates Court, the High Court and the Court of Appeals
9	Social Inclusion, Domestic and Gender-based Violence	<p>Legislation available</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offences Against the Person Act, • Sexual Offences Act, • Domestic Violence Summary Proceedings Act 1999 • Domestic Violence Act 2015, • Criminal Law Amendment Act • Trafficking in Persons Act 2010 • Migrant Smuggling Prevention Act 2010 • Evidence (Special Provisions) Amendment Act 2016 <p>The government is in the process of developing a National Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination Policy to deal with cases of sexual harassment in public places (including workplace and public transportation)</p> <p>Institutions and programmes to support victims of domestic and gender-based violence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directorate of Gender Affairs Support and Referral Centre • Sexual Offences Model Court • Women Against Rape (WAR), an NGO 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women's role in fisheries sector not mainstreamed / recognized • Female fishers 7 per cent of active fishers, many unregistered, hence not recognized • Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) Secretariat 'Mainstreaming Gender Equality in the Fisheries of the Caribbean' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – CRFM five-year Gender Analysis and Action Plan on Gender Mainstreaming in Fisheries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of Gender Analysis and Action Plan on Gender Mainstreaming in Fisheries developed by the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM)

Antigua and Barbuda: Challenges and Recommendations					
#	Component	Key points		Focus on fishing community	Recommendations
10	Climate Change and Natural Disasters - fisheries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Among the most highly exposed to natural disasters • 2018: Protocol on Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Management in Fisheries and Aquaculture was approved for CARICOM States • Climate Smart Aquaculture Feasibility study • Caribbean Ocean and Aquaculture Sustainability Facility (COAST) is an innovative climate risk insurance mechanism to promote food security, livelihoods of fishers, resilient fisheries, sustainable management of coastal infrastructure and disaster risk reduction in the Caribbean 		<p>Losses (of craft) due to disaster</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low insurance uptake: Main reasons for not availing insurance included high premiums, unsuitable coverage (the maritime limits of the policy normally does not cover the extent of fishing operations), and the type of coverage (the deductible in marine hull insurance policy was high) 	<p>Climate change and ocean acidification impacts on fisheries is a challenge</p> <p>CRFM protocol on Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Management in Fisheries and Aquaculture</p>
11	Environment, Biodiversity and Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Protection and Management Act No. 10 of 2019 • National Strategic Biodiversity Action Plan (2014-2020) 		-	
12	Fisheries Management and Governance Approach	<p>National</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecosystem-based approaches to fisheries management and the 'precautionary principle' are the cornerstones of the Fisheries Act 2006 and Fisheries Regulations 2013 • National Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (NPOA-IUU) • National Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks (NPOA Sharks) <p>Regional level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ocean Governance and Fisheries Unit of the OECS • Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM): Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy • Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC) • RPOA-IUU 		<p>Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organizations (CNFO): observer status on CRFM</p> <p>Local fisher organizations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Antigua and Barbuda Fishermen Co-operative Society Ltd. • Antigua and Barbuda Sport Fishing Association • Antigua and Barbuda Fishermen's Alliance • Antigua and Barbuda FAD Fishers Association • Barbuda Fisher Folk Association • South Coast United • Spear Fishermen's Association 	<p>At the local and national level, fisher organizations need strengthening in the areas of leadership, management, policy advocacy and engagement</p>
13	Blue economy	High focus on tourism; construction of resorts, marinas, shopping complexes, coastal gated communities; restricting access to fish landing sites		Antigua and Barbuda's fishers are struggling to maintain their traditional access and user rights as they compete with coastal development, much of which is driven by the demands for infrastructure related to tourism	
14	Others	High dependence on tourism; need to diversify away from tourism		-	

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Women drying fish. Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. Photo by Din M Shibly

Bangladesh

Bangladesh is the world's eighth most populous country and one of the most densely populated. The country's per capita income is USD 2,034, up from USD135.62 in 1970. The country has 260 freshwater fish species and 475 marine fish species. One of the world's leading fish producers, Bangladesh produced 4.27 million metric tonnes (MT) of fish in the financial year 2017-18. Fish production is growing annually at the rate of 5.10 per cent.



Source: Wikipedia commons

Fish Production

Bangladesh's fisheries sector is divided into inland and marine. Inland fisheries are further divided into capture and culture fisheries. Inland capture fisheries comprise rivers and estuaries, beels (billabongs), floodplains, the Sundarbans and the Kaptai lake. Inland culture fisheries are spread across ponds, seasonal cultured water bodies, baor (oxbow lakes), shrimp/prawn farms, crab pen culture and cage culture. Marine fisheries include industrial (trawler) and artisanal fisheries (wooden craft). Fisheries constitute a major part of exports that bring in foreign exchange.

Bangladesh's marine fisheries are spread across a coastline of 710 km; its total marine waters are spread over 166,000 sq km of which more than 24,000 sq km is shallower than 10 metres. In 2016-17, total marine fisheries production was 637,476 MT; of this industrial fishing accounted for 108,479 MT while artisanal fisheries contributed 528,997 MT.

Aquaculture or inland culture

The inland capture sub-sector has a total water area of 3,927,142 hectares (ha). The inland culture fisheries sub-sector's total area is 797,851 ha. In aquaculture, ponds are dominant, encompassing 50 per cent of the total area. Pond aquaculture production was about 1.9 million MT, which is 44.43 per cent of total fisheries production in 2017-18. Shrimp aquaculture contributes about 254,367 MT and seasonal culture contributes about 216,353 MT.

Fishing communities, landing sites and infrastructure

Several types of fishers' organizations in Bangladesh

- Fishers' cooperatives
- Fishers' groups established by various programmes
- Autonomous local-level fishers' organizations
- National-level organizations
- Fisher organizations as political wings of major political parties

Middlemen or intermediaries are a major problem; fishing co-operatives were promoted to address this problem. However, problems in the structure, non-representation of genuine fishers, influential individuals forming co-operatives to lease water bodies that are then sub-leased to fishers.

- Common Interest Groups (CIG) set up by various government projects and programmes
- Hilsa Conservation Group (HCG), Hilsa Ghat Group (HGG) and Community Saving Groups (CSG) were created under the ECOFISH-Bangladesh project
- All-women community saving groups (Bhola district)
- National networks like the Bangladesh Fish Workers Alliance (BFWA) and the Bangladesh Farmers' Forum

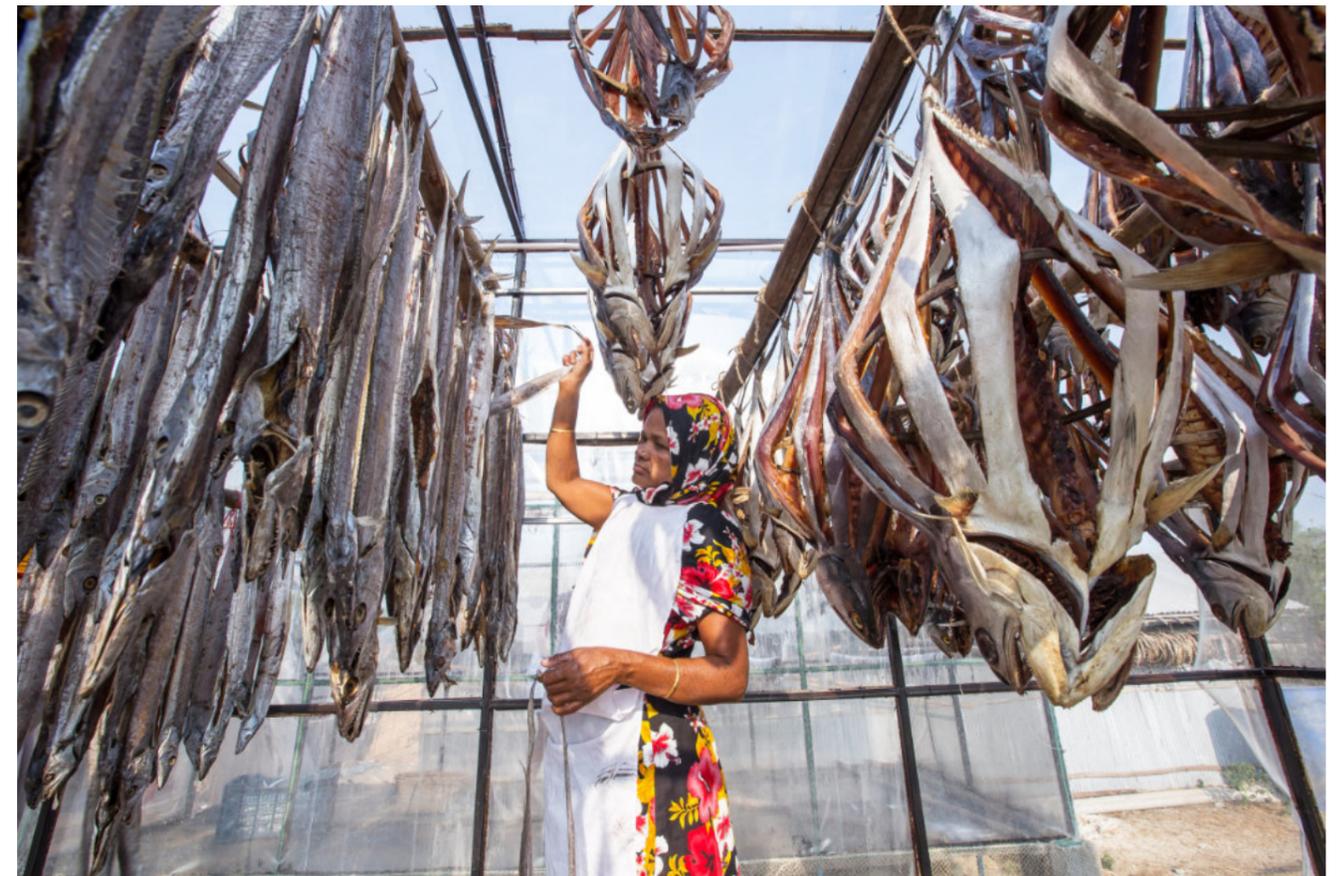
Women in fisheries

- 43 per cent of women work in agriculture or aquaculture. Their role is insufficiently acknowledged in national statistics.
- In the fisheries sector, women are chiefly involved in specific activities like stocking ponds, feed planning, feeding, supervising, liming, and harvesting fish for home use. In addition, women also play huge roles in market sorting, cleaning, and grading of fish.
- Cultural differences: women from Hindu families more involved than from Muslim families.
- In the southwest, while 0-1 per cent are involved in trading, 80 per cent of those involved in drying fish are women and children.

Recommendations

- Legal recognition of the small-scale fishers, fishworkers
- Access to the open water bodies and protection of resources
- Access to credit
- Market access: cold storage units at landing sites
- Floor price for fish to be set by government
- Gender disaggregated data
- Special IGA Support for Women
- Awareness on women's participation, women empowerment
- Community radio, using ICT

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Top: Fish transport. Bottom: Woman drying fish. Both images at Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. Photos by Din M Shibly

Bangladesh: Challenges and Recommendations					
#	Component	Key points		Focus on fishing community	Recommendations
1	Poverty eradication policies and programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social safety net programmes (SSNP) in Bangladesh cover food security, cash allowances and housing for the ultra poor and homeless • Corruption, incorrect targeting resulting in faulty implementation 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bangladesh government acknowledges the fishing community to be economically vulnerable; in reality there is no special quota for them under the regular schemes and SSNPs • 95 per cent of fisher families have income below national per capita income; 11 per cent households severely poor • National Fisheries Policy: strives to reduce poverty by creating self-employment and improving the socio-economic conditions of fishers 	-
2	Social security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Compulsory Social Insurance Scheme (NSIS) based on the premise that employers and workers collectively pay premiums to the National Insurance Fund for work injury 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registered and selected fishers received ration during seasonal fishing ban • ~35 per cent of families did not receive assistance during ban 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved social safety nets, income generating options during ban period • Elderly should get old age allowance • Women need training in fish culture, poultry farming • Insurance for fishers • Community Managed Savings and Credit
3	Education, Training and the Digital Divide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education: general and religious • Non-formal education: reaches out to young people and adults 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty rampant in fishing communities that also suffer from exclusion in education • Many fishers with primary education, none with secondary; girls lag behind boys • Fishing communities lag behind in literacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary schools need to be built on embankments and made accessible to children from fishers communities • Education materials free of cost, scholarships
4	Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Govt charged with responsibility of medical care and health 		-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community clinics and medical supplies need to be established within fisher communities • Mobile health centres, for emergency treatment, on rivers and at sea are also needed • Fishers should get health and life insurance and the government should arrange this free of cost
5	Housing and public utilities like water, sanitation, electricity, ICT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Housing Policy, 2016: ensure accessibility of adequate housing for people from all walks of life • Ashrayan project in phases for rehabilitating homeless; Khurushkul Ashryan Project in Cox's Bazar, the world's largest housing scheme for climate refugees • Bangladesh Delta Plan (BDP), 2100, a major policy for water and sanitation • National Policy for Safe Water Supply and Sanitation, 1998; National Water Policy, 1999; Pro-Poor Strategy for Water and Sanitation Sector in Bangladesh, 2005; National Hygiene Promotion Strategy for Water Supply and Sanitation in 2012 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90 per cent of the houses were made of bamboo, tin and wood; unsafe and vulnerable to storms • High percentage of semi-permanent and temporary homes, 2 per cent permanent • >60 per cent fishers landless or nearly landless • Riverbank erosion is a regular feature, houses nearby are vulnerable • Shrinking of islands due to erosion • Study surveys showed 100 per cent of fishers in Moheshkhali have access to drinking water and 84 per cent have a sanitary latrine, close to national average; but some districts lag • Local research indicates that fishers have to walk long distances to access water and sanitation services 	

Bangladesh: Challenges and Recommendations					
#	Component	Key points		Focus on fishing community	Recommendations
6	Employment policy, Labour Relations and Decent Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitution says the state is responsible for guaranteeing employment to its citizens; unemployment rate 4.3 per cent • National Job Strategy aims to ensure 30 million new jobs by 2030 • National Skill Development Policy, 2011 • Other policies such as National Labour Policy • Employment Generation for Poorest Project (EGPP) resulted in reducing the number eating only two meals a day and ensured no one eats only one meal a day • Ektee Bari Ektee Khamar (One House One Farm) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of decent working environment; no formal recruitment system; forced labour; take advance from boat owner and hence cannot negotiate wages; no paid leave or overtime payment despite working long hours at sea • In dry fish 20 per cent engagement of child labour; poor working conditions; skin diseases; no protective gear; work not guaranteed • Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock lists 53 development projects for the year 2016-17, of which 20 address fisheries and capacity building of fishing community • At the district-level fisheries offices, the following services are available: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Training on modern fisheries culture – Support in implementing fisheries-related laws – Pre-marketing support for prawn cultivation – Support in production of fish fry in appropriate healthy ways – License for a fishing boat – Support in increasing fish production • Draft National Job Policy, 2019, calls for assistance in the production of fish because it is included in 'green jobs'. It promotes access for groups historically under-represented in fishing skills training, recognizing fisheries' importance as a rural industry • After it joined the ILO in 1972, Bangladesh ratified 35 ILO conventions, including seven fundamental conventions. The country has implemented three Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs) between 2006 and 2020 • Provisions of the Bangladesh Labour Act 2006, for example, are not applicable to all fishworkers, especially those involved with fish culture/aquaculture, fish capture, post-harvest processing, fish marketing, and non-fishing economic activities • Recruitment unofficial; worker's job not guaranteed; no minimum hours of work; no leave/compensation for extra hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fishworkers working on craft or dry fish plants are severely disadvantaged • A special policy with strong monitoring is required to ensure adherence to labour rights
7	Safety at Sea and Occupational Health and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key legislation for occupational health and safety is the Bangladesh Labour Act, 2006 • National Occupational Safety & Hazard (OSH) Policy has made several obligations mandatory 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some fishers living near districts and sub-divisions have access to government hospitals • Fishers in islands typically rely on local pharmacies and quacks • At sea, they keep primary healthcare medication in craft, no access to medical facility in case of emergency; no mobile facilities • Complete lack of adequate safety equipment or medical kits on board for those fishing in the deep sea (Moheshkhali and Cox's Bazaar FGD) • Boat owners not responsible for employee healthcare; did not provide insurance • Workers have mobile phones, but no boat has a GPS tracker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life jackets and other safety equipment • Effective weather forecasting, radio communication for alerts • Speed craft for rescue • Shelter for those rescued
8	Human rights and access to justice			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite the constitution guaranteeing equal rights to all, fishers struggle to access justice systems, due to poverty and a lack of accessibility • Fishers had not heard of the NLASO or the free legal services; not aware of the position of a district legal officer • 80 per cent unaware of their rights 	

Bangladesh: Challenges and Recommendations					
#	Component	Key points		Focus on fishing community	Recommendations
9	Social inclusion, domestic and gender-based violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitution says equal before law, no discrimination; equal access to men and women in all • National Women's Agenda ensures an end to sexism. Bangladesh is signatory to CEDAW • Rank 7th in global gender gap in terms of political empowerment • However, gender-based violence still a problem 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The COVID-19 pandemic has magnified existing vulnerabilities • Social exclusion has been tougher than usual • <5 per cent received support from others, none received support except for advance salary from boat owners or fish traders • National Fisheries Policy 1998 says "Females will be encouraged in fish culture and be trained accordingly", a statement that is insufficient and basic • Women receive lower salaries than men; not active in taking decisions at home • High insecurity and gender-based violence 	-
10	Climate change and natural disasters – fisheries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High vulnerability to climate change and natural disasters; up to 70 per cent of the country's landmass is vulnerable to flooding • Floods, cyclones, tornadoes, and earthquakes are the major disasters • National Adaptation Plan of Action, 2005, was updated in 2009 • Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP, 2009) • National Plan for Disaster Management, 2010 • Bangladesh Delta Plan (BDP), 2100 • Two funding mechanisms, the Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund (BCCTF), and the Bangladesh Climate Change Resilience Fund (BCCRF) help implement the BCCSAP • Govt has allotted US \$400 million from its annual budget to the Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund • Focus on climate change adaptation 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of increased frequency of cyclones and adverse weather on fishing trips • Loss of nets and vessels due to cyclones • Flash floods; waterlogging in aquaculture • River erosion; forces fishers to change livelihood • Change in fish stocks; fish have changed habitat • Unusual diseases and death of fish in ponds and closed water bodies, attributed to climate change • Ingress of saline water • Forced migration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A high priority project to build embankments will reduce disaster risk; will aid fishers living in coastal areas
11	Environment, biodiversity and sustainability	-		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water bodies should be controlled by fisheries dept • Action against illegal gear, destructive fishing methods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability of water bodies
12	Fisheries management and governance approach	-		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaps within organizations and institutions involved in fisheries • Union Parishad (UP), the first tier of local governance, does not have fishers' participation • Extensive corruption, not neutral or honest • At the sub-district level, the Upazila Fisheries Office works directly with fishers on issues of fisheries production and some cases of livelihoods, but not socio-economic issues like health, education or justice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage community in decision making • Fishers to be trained in leadership and negotiation

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Beach with Jangadas Sailrafts, Brazil. Photo by Paul Seifert

Brazil

Brazil is a federal republic made up of the union of 26 states, that are further divided into 5,570 municipalities. These municipalities are the smallest autonomous tiers of governance in the country. Each municipality has administrative autonomy and its own laws, defined by the party that runs it. These administrative units are spread over 8,510,820 square km and they cover 10,959 km of the country's coastline. The 2022 census puts Brazil's population at 203,080,756. UNDP's 2020 data has ranked the country 84th out of 189 on the Human Development Index, with a score of 0.765. On the Gini index, Brazil has a score of 0.543.



Source: Wikipedia commons

Definition of fisher, distribution of fishers

The 2009 Fisheries Law legally defined artisanal fishing as professional fishing activity carried out autonomously and/or under a family work regime, without employment relationships. Close to 1.2 million people are directly involved in artisanal fishing activities in Brazil in 2024. This is in addition to those who work at several points in the fisheries value chain such as seafood processing, transport, marketing and equipment and gear production. Despite being vulnerable, marginalized and suffering social injustice, fisher communities are responsible for over 60 per cent of the country's fish production.

Defined by the executive-secretariat of CONFREM Brazil, "maritime territories, or maretorio, are coastal marine areas, composed of people who traditionally live there and use its natural resources for food sovereignty, production of consumer goods, decent and sustainable work, with a zeal for socio-biodiversity, recognition and appreciation of discoveries and an effective relationship with nature."

The four coastal regions of the country are: One, the Amazonian Mangrove Area that covers the states of Amapa, Para, Maranhao and a small portion of Piauí. Two, the Northeastern coast including Piauí, Ceara, Rio Grande do Norte, Paraiba, Pernambuco, Alagoas, Sergipe and Bahia. Three, the Southeast, located in the states of Espirito Santo, Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo. And, four, the South coast covering the states of Parana, Santa Catarina and Rio Grande do Sul.

This study focuses on coastal territories and marine extractive reserves in various Brazilian regions. Approximately 110,000 families live in these territories, especially in

the Northeast and North regions, highlighting the importance of Amazonian mangroves. These areas are used traditionally by communities whose livelihood is based on resource extraction, subsistence agriculture and small-scale animal husbandry. Basic Resex objectives include protecting the livelihood and culture of these people while guaranteeing sustainable use of natural resources, as regulated by law.

Fisher Associations:

- National Fisher Movement (MONAPE), 1988
- National Fisherwomen Articulation (ANP), 2006
- CONFREM Brazil, 2007
- National Fishermen and Fisherwomen Movement (MPP), 2009

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Fishers preparing their craft and gear on the beach, Brazil. Photo by Katia Regina Aroucha Barros

The fishworker association building, Penedo city, Brazil. Photo by Katia Regina Aroucha Barro



Artisanal Fisherwomen and children. Caetanos de Cima, Ceará, Brazil- 2009. Photo courtesy of Naina Pierri.



Brazil: Challenges and Recommendations					
#	Component	Key points		Focus on fishing community	Recommendations
1	Poverty eradication policies and programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bolsa Familia (PBF) or Family Allowance Programme, a social protection scheme aimed at conditional cash transfer • Bolsa Verde or Green Grant for people who live in protected areas; discontinued in 2018 and reactivated in 2023 • Poverty, based on more than just family income; therefore necessary to implement other policies to support it • COVID-19: Emergency Aid, established by Law 13, 982/2020, a financial benefit granted to informal workers, individual micro-entrepreneurs (MEI), the self-employed and unemployed • Four-fold reduction in emergency aid for informal workers 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families of artisanal fishers who received the Bolsa Familia in Brazil: 20 per cent no, 80 per cent yes • People (artisanal fishers) 14 per cent no, 86 per cent yes • COVID-19 Emergency Aid; includes artisanal fishers • Increase in people in extreme poverty post-pandemic; women and Afro-Brazilians worst affected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need focus on artisanal fishers in economic policies
2	Social security	-		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seguro-Defeso is a form of unemployment insurance; artisanal fishers receive a monthly minimum wage in the closed season (varies by species) • Informal nature of artisanal fishing; social protection of fishers guaranteed by special insurance • Shellfish gatherers and fishers do not have paid leave, or the security to guarantee recovery if affected by serious illnesses and accidents; they cannot access insurance benefits commonly granted to salaried workers if they are not registered in Fisheries Ministry Register 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subsidies for fishing communities; reallocation of public resources or through public/private partnerships; increasing income in the community; providing access to new technologies and advocating environmental conservation
3	Education, training and the digital divide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article 6 of the constitution: education, health, work, leisure, security, social security, protection for motherhood and childhood and assistance to the destitute are social rights • Article 205 declares education as the right for all 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fishing communities have access to many policies aimed towards literacy and education in rural areas • 61.4 per cent of the people in fishing communities have received elementary education but only 8 per cent high school and 0.3 per cent attended university • Schools shut down in rural areas; resulted in increase in illiteracy and school dropouts in rural areas • Youth and Adult Education Programme; do not take into account fishing schedules, teachers without local knowledge • A CONFREM initiative, the School of Tides and Waters, in partnership with CAPES/Ministry of Education and various universities; from 2024 the Open University of Brazil offers undergraduate courses in Community Tourism, Fisheries Resources, and postgraduate courses in Socio-Environmental Management of Territories and Matorios. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More schools in the countryside • An education system that is more participatory, inclusive, and concerned with practical knowledge; policy needs to respect, value and preserve their culture, knowledge and way of life • Digital inclusion policy that considers rural populations
4	Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brazilian Unified Health System (SUS) created by Law No. 8,080, on September 19, 1990 • General: While expenses have remained the same, a lack of investment has meant budgets have decreased dramatically, leading to overcrowded facilities and a shortage of healthcare professionals 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of the Unified Health System (insertion of a device on Indigenous Health, Quilombola Health and assistance in rural communities of farmers, artisanal fishers, among others) by the SUS law of 1990 • Fishers and shellfish gatherers are susceptible to many forms of disease at work and also suffer a variety of accidents; despite this, they lack access to effective diagnosis, treatment or rehabilitation centres; there are almost no regulations to prevent accidents and work-related illness • Public healthcare equipment, doctors and specialists; located in state capitals, not easily accessible by fishers • COVID-19 accentuated vulnerability of country's health system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urgent need to address this by effecting policies that enable social inclusion

Brazil: Challenges and Recommendations					
#	Component	Key points		Focus on fishing community	Recommendations
5	Housing and public utilities like water, sanitation, electricity, ICT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Rural Housing Programme (PNHR), created under the 'My Home My Life Programme' (Programa Minha Casa Minha Vida or PMCMV); to provide decent housing in the countryside for farmers and rural workers by building new houses or renovating, expanding and completing existing ones Sanitation, drinking water and energy policies dealt with separately National Programme for the Universalization and Use of Electric Energy (Luz para Todos Programme or PLPT), supposed to mainly serve peripheral communities and traditional populations, including residents in conservation areas High shortage of housing in both urban and rural areas 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Artisanal fishers and indigenous communities are included in the criteria A little less than 50 per cent of the surveyed said they had access to housing credit Require a lot of supporting documents Specificities of fishing communities not considered in public initiatives to implement alternative sanitation ~60 per cent in extractive reserves have access to piped water, ~17.5 per cent consume poor quality water, ~30 per cent do not treat their water About 25 per cent of those in extractive reserves do not have access to sanitation ~54 per cent in extractive reserves have access to public power grid, only ~3 per cent have generators for use when grid fails 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government's housing programme needs to be restarted; consider local realities Basic sanitation, drinking water and electricity needs to be available to all
6	Employment policy, labour relations and decent work	<p>Legislation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quotas for inclusion of people with disabilities in the labour market under law number 8,213 of 1991 Quotas for black, brown, indigenous and disabled students via the Quota Law (number 12,711 /12) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No employment policy for fishing communities and traditional peoples and communities No job creation and skill development programmes for fishing communities, both marine and inland Isolated initiatives from NGO, fishing associations, indigenous organizations, Quilombolas 	-
7	Safety at sea and occupational health and safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Navy has the responsibility for supervising and coordinating maritime safety under law number 9,537 of 1997; set of norms called NORMAM under law number 7,273 of 1984; international conventions Federal constitution: Assigns the federal government the competence to legislate on maritime, lake, and river navigation 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fishers have difficulty to attend these courses to follow the norms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Navy has to do more inclusive courses and train fishers in norms
8	Human rights and access to justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criminalization of Racism (Racism Law), law number 7,716 of 1989 Guaranteed by constitution 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation is a problem Historical social inequality, magnified due to a large political and economic disparities Fisher rights are protected by local, regional and national organizations that rally together to help implement policies that provide justice; these include institutions such as the public prosecutor, and ministries responsible for delivering justice autonomously For indigenous communities, effective participation needed; violations were high during the pandemic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to recognize rights of fishers in particular women, children and young adults
9	Social inclusion, domestic and gender-based violence	<p>Legislation available:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protection of women against domestic violence under law number 11,340 of 2006 (Law Maria da Penha); it provides for five types of domestic and family violence against women: physical, psychological, moral, sexual and patrimonial National Forum to Combat Violence against Women in the Field and the Forest Specialized police departments for women, but only 15 per cent work round the clock; most are located in capitals and medium-sized municipalities Steady increase in violence against women and girls; femicides 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absence of data from rural areas Women in fishing communities face similar forms of violence as their counterparts across the country. Their situation has, over the years, worsened due to a lack of knowledge, housing and access to urban centres, where help and support can be found Absence of statistical data, gender-disaggregated data is not available Advocacy groups: National Movement of Men and Women Fishers (MPP); the Women Network of Fishing Communities of Southern Bahia; Women Network of Amazonian Mangroves (MA, PI, PA and AP); Women Network of APA Costa dos Corais; Women Network of the Delta do Parnaiba; and the Movement of the Mangaba Gatherers of the state of Sergipe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for survivors, education and advocacy

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Brazil: Challenges and Recommendations					
#	Component	Key points		Focus on fishing community	Recommendations
10	Climate change and natural disasters and their impact on fisheries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brazil has made many international commitments to combat climate change; reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, increase in renewables, strengthening forest code, ending Amazon deforestation 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2019 Oil spill: no compensation for those affected Access to water resources given to those with economic power 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More studies on the impacts of climate change on coastal and marine biodiversity; should also cover areas and species of socio-economic importance to fishing communities Dispute in coastal territories for the construction of large-scale enterprises
11	Environment, biodiversity and sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete dismantling of Brazil's environmental and social development policies, especially those aimed to aid indigenous and traditional communities, including small-scale and artisanal fishers Fisheries planning done independent of environmental ministry advice 'Adopt a Park' programme encouraged private, national and foreign individuals and companies to invest in the conservation, restoration and improvement of federal conservation units across the country 		-	-
12	Fisheries management and governance approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Law number 11,959 of 2009 provides for the National Policy for the Sustainable Development of Aquaculture and Fishing; the law regulates fishing activities 		-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-management governance model among fishermen, fisherwomen, civil society organizations, government and academia in extractive reserves Fishermen and fisherwomen need to be involved in collecting data on fish landings and environmental recovery Legal framework that monitors production, decline of resource and the supply chain will aid in transparency

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Henry, local fisherman getting ready to go out fishing. San Juanillo Bay Beach, Costa Rica
Photo by Asociación De Pescadores De San Juanillo/ISV/Biocenosis Marina

Costa Rica

Located in Central America, Costa Rica is a part of a bridge joining North and South America. This country is very rich in biodiversity. Only a tenth of its territory is land, the rest is territorial waters because of the possession of Cocos Island.



Source: Wikipedia commons

Definition of fisher, distribution of fishers

Fishing is a very important activity for the country. Tuna fishing makes a significant contribution to the economy, while at the local level, small-scale fishing is key for food security, culture and identity for indigenous peoples, Afro-descendants and local communities.

According to the National Institute for Fishing and Agriculture (INCOPECA) there are nearly 2,000 formal small-scale fishers in the country. International studies indicate there are more than 15,000 people involved in artisanal fishing. In 2020, according to the development network CoopeSoliDar R.L., 86 per cent of the sector consisted of informal undocumented workers, meaning more than eight out of every ten fishers. This does not account for women engaged in the fisheries sector.

With the objective of finding an equilibrium between conservation and fishers' well-being, the General Attorney of the Republic instructed INCOPECA to carry out studies that aid in issuing licenses, as required by Article 103 of the constitution. These studies are yet to be carried out; therefore the state cannot formally recognize fisher families and provide them social security.

The small-scale artisanal fishing sector is mostly informal. This structural problem has important socio-economic consequences, considering that a vast majority of people who engage in this type of fishing are economically vulnerable; many live in poverty.

Costa Rica's public policies recognize the importance of a fair and equitable distribution of wealth produced by fishing activity. There exists an important

institutional framework to support artisanal fishers who operate according to the law, that is the ones recognized formally. The country's main challenge is to recognize and incorporate small-scale artisanal fishers who operate informally, protect their fundamental rights and ensure for them a good quality of life.

The Fisheries and Aquaculture Law (FAL) of March 1, 2005, precisely defines various types of fishing. Article 2, in paragraphs 26 and 27, shows that both categories of artisanal and small-scale fishing are unified under the denomination of artisanal fishing, which is why the term 'small-scale artisanal fishing' needs to be used if we are considering small-scale differentiation from middle and advanced artisanal fishing.

Fishing Organisations

Artisanal fishing organizations in Costa Rica include cooperatives, associations, federations and chambers. Some are women only; for example, associations created to defend the rights of women shrimp peelers. Many organizations are not constituted in accordance with the law. Mostly local in nature, a few organizations are at the national level, such as the Network of Marine Areas for Responsible Fishing and Marine Territories of Life.

SSF Guidelines

Costa Rica is the first country in the region to incorporate the SSF Guidelines into its binding legal system through a formal decree.

Recommendations

- At the national level, public policies need to be oriented to the small-scale artisanal fishing sector; the Ombudsmen Office must be urged to recognize and formalize the small-scale artisanal fishing sector.
- Innovative rights-based approaches and holistic perspectives and approaches in public policy need to be put into practice.
- Rural development efforts need to be directed at women fishers beyond the assistance considered for extreme poverty conditions.
- Greater inter-institutional co-ordination to ensure implementation of policies and schemes for social in coastal marine areas.
- Land tenure issues and access rights for small-scale fishers need to be resolved.
- 'Route to Recognition and Formalization of Women Fishers in the Different Artisanal Fishing Value Chains'; this needs to be held up as a national example towards a mainstream approach to gender issues.
- Women fishers, indigenous people and Afro-descendant populations need to be acknowledged, be made visible.

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Returning from fishing, Costa Rica. Photo by CoopeSoliDar R.L.



Women linked to the sea in Costa Rica. Photo by CoopeSoliDar R.L.



Fishermen cleaning the fish, Costa Rica. Photo by CoopeSoliDar R.L.

Costa Rica: Challenges and Recommendations					
#	Component	Key points		Focus on fishing community	Recommendations
1	Poverty eradication policies and programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2015, Costa Rica's constitution was amended to recognize traditionally marginalized groups of Afro-Caribbean origin, indigenous and other social minorities The Bicentennial Social Policy 2018-2022, based on the National Strategy for Poverty Reduction and 'Bridge to Development', has four components 20 per cent of households in the country identify as poor. After COVID-19 the incidence of poverty rose to 30 per cent Little change in the number of households in multi-dimensional poverty; this was contained by aid received in the form of food and cash transfers by public and private bodies 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coastal areas highly vulnerable to poverty No explicit mention of small-scale artisanal fisheries in any of the strategies in the National Strategy for Poverty Reduction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of 12 paddle model decree. Influence parliament with the objective of discussing and approving the General Law Proposal for the sustainability of the small-scale artisanal fishing sector, in the context of food security, poverty eradication and shared governance
2	Social security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fisheries and Aquaculture Law of March 1, 2005 (FAL), under Article 34, provides for closed season subsidy, given by the Joint Institute for Social Assistance to fishers in poverty Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MTSS): the National Employment Programme (PRONAE) provides subsidies and offers training, technical assistance and community assistance National Programme to Support Microenterprises and Social Mobility (PRONAMYPE) promotes small and medium enterprises through training, seed capital, technical assistance and credit 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mixed Institute of Social Assistance (IMAS) supports SSF during annual three-month fishing ban in the Gulf of Nicoya Government initiatives are limited to reactive responses; there is a great need for large-scale reform Social development programmes under the ambit of the Ministry of Labour, IMAS and INAMU can be accessed by small scale fishers, but the informal nature of the sector prevents authorities from working with them Payment support during COVID-19 difficult to access by fishers as it required, for example, a letter from an employer stating unemployment; fishers work informally and cannot produce such documents, many do not even have a bank account; no data on how many SSF /mollusc collectors actually received the support from the government Revolving SoliDario Fund for fair marketing of seafood products from the network of marine areas for responsible fishing and marine territories for life via the Urban Solidarity Market Executive Decree No. 39195 MAG-MINAE-MTSS of August 7, 2015 officially applies the Voluntary Guidelines for Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines) Most women fishers do not have social security, denying them the privilege of a retirement fund <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the fishing value chain a vast majority of women have access to social security In the shrimp and mollusc value chains though, women do not have access to social security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subsidies and support schemes can result in creation of dependence; Costa Rica must recognize the work of small-scale fishers in a way that promotes decent and dignified work and not merely an approach to reducing poverty or even extreme poverty conditions Development of an official fishing census that allows us to know the real number of small-scale fishers and mollusc collectors Development of socio-economic instruments, public policies, and economic remediation instruments that guarantee fishers and mollusc collectors that they do not have to bear the burden of conservation and recovery efforts of species, particularly during closed seasons or similar measures

Costa Rica: Challenges and Recommendations					
#	Component	Key points		Focus on fishing community	Recommendations
3	Education, training and the digital divide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic education be provided free of cost; the state divert no less than 8 per cent of its GDP towards educational spending Universal education for all children and young people and citizens of the country Indigenous Education Subsystem, 2013, respects the beliefs, languages and aspirations of indigenous peoples 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary school enrolment has declined from 97 per cent to 93.1 per cent, reflecting an increase in inequality and poverty in vulnerability of the sector Projects aimed at coastal communities (specifically those to do with fishing handicrafts) were developed in conjunction with state universities and in coordination with other public institutions; many projects in the pipeline Access to information technology limited in most schools in indigenous areas No specialized educational initiative or programme for artisanal fishing communities In rural and coastal communities, there is a high dropout rate in secondary school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More attention needs to be paid to technological development and education; formality is key for accepting and being able to advance in the use of technology An educational investment must be made in coastal marine communities that includes short-term and medium-term actions In the short term, development of informal training programmes that allow small-scale fishers to begin to reduce the gaps in access to education that currently exist. Ensure that open education programmes in small-scale fishing communities provide the best tools to enhance education in an economy of exploitation of fishing resources. It must be ensured that young people have the basic conditions that allow them to remain in educational centres, specifically access to scholarships for young students on the coasts In the medium term, investments must be made in educational infrastructure like schools and colleges to guarantee that young people in coastal communities have quality public education
4	Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Health System, 1989: implement universal healthcare, decentralize health services in accordance with the guidelines of the National Health Policy, operated by the Social Security Fund through the EBAIS and clinics located throughout the country Health system is efficient, funded by contributions of all the country's workers; all who contribute to the system have access. But system leaves out people not covered by the social security system As of 2010, migrant people residing in the country must contribute to the Health and Pension Insurance administered by the CCSS 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women in artisanal fishing have little or no access to health services or minimum wage. <p>Country has not yet defined a particular protocol for small-scale artisanal fishers and the payment they must cover; in many cases the contribution is too high and inaccessible for fishworkers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific policies need to be recognized for the fishers' conditions and type of work, especially in the case of mollusc gathering women and men
5	Housing and public utilities including water, sanitation, electricity, and ICT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Policy on Housing and Human Settlements (PNVAH) guarantees coverage to all citizens Access to water was enshrined as a human right in the National Drinking Water Policy 2017-2030 (PNAP); National Policy for Potable Water of Costa Rica 2017-2030 97.8 per cent of the population receives water inside the house 75.4 per cent of the population relies on septic tanks to dispose of excreta. 22.9 per cent have sewage systems, of which only 14 per cent are treated 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No specific guidelines on housing for artisanal fishers and coastal communities Water policy makes no mention of small-scale artisanal fishing sector that inhabits the coasts, island territories and the vicinity of rivers and wetlands Fieldwork indicates coastal communities, islands and indigenous territories are the most vulnerable groups in terms of access to water and sanitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urgent need for improving the conditions of people located especially at the coastal zones and mangroves, especially with their vulnerable conditions related to climate change impacts The right to land ownership and access to the sea, rivers or lakes must be guaranteed, allowing small-scale fishers to develop the activity and also generate belonging with the coastal territories The right to land tenure is the first step to promote integrated coastal development, educational infrastructure and access to banking entities

Costa Rica: Challenges and Recommendations					
#	Component	Key points		Focus on fishing community	Recommendations
6	Employment policy, labour relations and decent work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to work enshrined in constitution • Labour Code provisions refer to regulations regarding salaried work; various labour laws • The 1990 Law on the Promotion of Social Equality for Women guarantees “equal rights between men and women in the political, economic, social and cultural fields” • Robust regulations to ensure decent working conditions for both men and Decent Work Programme 2019-2023: tripartite agreement involving the government, trade unions and corporate organizations, as well as the ILO, which provides technical assistance for dialogue and agreements 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many who work in artisanal fishing are independent workers despite labour relationships existing in the sector • Majority of vulnerable groups (fishers, Afro-descendants, migrants) form the informal economy, left out of these rights and guarantees; knowledge among these communities regarding their rights is lacking • No specific provisions for women fishers. However, any woman fisher in a working relationship with an employer (like the shipowner or the owner of a vessel) is covered by the rights and guarantees protected in the code • Mangrove reforestation, community clean-up: support to very poor communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The state, through its various institutions, needs to make a greater commitment to improving working conditions and lives of people working in the small-scale artisanal fishing sector • Women fishers need to have support of public institutions, and be given projects related to their knowledge and fishing tradition
7	Human rights and access to justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judicial system is accessible to all • Alternative dispute resolution mechanisms also available; for example, the Centres for Alternative Conflict Resolution or RAC Centres; they also attend to labour issues 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No specific regulations aimed at small-scale fishers and mollusc collectors • Access to justice for basic land rights is greatly hampered because most fishers do not have licenses, and because of this informality, they are unable to claim their rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INCOPECSA, MINAE and the National Coast Guard Service must have an updated registry of people who are carrying out small-scale fishing activities, so that the fishers are not criminalized in the responsible practice of their activity
8	Housing and public utilities including water, sanitation, electricity, and ICT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many policies on social inclusion but no specific policy that focuses on the small-scale artisanal fishing sector • National policy for effective equality between men and women • National Policy for Children and Adolescents, 2009-21 • Indigenous Law 6172 (since 1977) • Comprehensive migration policy with a scope of 10 years (2013-2023) <p>Gender-based violence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many policies and laws to protect women and girls exposed to gender-based violence and sexual harassment • Law against Domestic Violence since 1986 • Code of Children and Adolescents, 1988 • Law of Criminalization of Improper Relations 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No policies on gender-based violence cover the specificities of those who live in coastal areas or engage in small-scale artisanal fishing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The government must implement the instrument called ‘Agenda of Women Fishers of Seas, Rivers, Coasts and Wetlands: Our permanent work agenda’, prepared by women fishers linked to the National Network of Responsible Fishing Areas and Marine Territories of life and presented to the national authorities
9	Climate change and natural disasters and their impact on fisheries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Climate Change Strategy (2009), aimed at the agriculture sector • Citizens’ Consultative Council on Climate Change (5C), 2018, a platform to give voice to the civil society 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change strategy does not mention interventions addressing the fishing sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sector affected by climate change. More needs to be done to protect them from the impacts • A differentiated and specific budget for attention to the coastal marine communities • Guarantee specific economic allocations that help remedy the impacts of climate change for small-scale artisanal fishers, just as the country’s agricultural sector enjoys

Costa Rica: Challenges and Recommendations					
#	Component	Key points		Focus on fishing community	Recommendations
10	Environment, biodiversity and sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MINAE's conservation area system; marine protected areas under the state governance model • All water bodies, lakes and lagoon systems are protected by Costa Rican regulations • INCOPESCA responsible for fishing under shared governance 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wetlands are considered protected areas, the only activities allowed by MINAE are recreation, ecotourism and research; mollusc gatherers cannot make sustainable use of wetland resources unless there is a management plan • Rigid enforcement of rules disregarding social problems and community needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problems due to public resistance and inadequate response from government authorities; need for dialogue to adequately understand the needs of the sectors and local communities • Indigenous populations need to recover their connections with the seas and rivers, in ways that knowledge and resources linked to terrestrial and marine biodiversity can be enhanced, protected, and used sustainably • The government must recognize the international treaties that it has signed and ratified, recognizing the diverse governance models as well as instructions provided in the Global Biodiversity Framework that indicate the implementation of conservation actions under a human rights approach
11	Fisheries management and governance approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fisheries and Aquaculture Law (FAL) of March 1, 2005 • INCOPESCA: the institute's primary responsibility is to look at the welfare and development of the fisheries sector, and protect resources to ensure sustainability 		-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is necessary to strengthen the National Institute of Fisheries and Aquaculture (INCOPESCA) to guarantee a balance between actions for the conservation of marine natural heritage and fisheries development • The government must begin the implementation of affirmative actions (business, social and educational) that guarantee that women are recognized as key rights actors in small-scale artisanal fishing activity and the value chain • The distribution of fishing and mollusc harvesting licenses that allows the formalization of this group of the population
12	Blue Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local governments do not have responsibility over the marine spaces • According to the spatial order established by Law 6043, maritime-land zone is subdivided into two territorial strips: Public Zone and Restricted Zone; this is specified in executive decree number 36642-MP-MOPT-MINAET, Regulation of Specifications for the Delimitation of the Public Zone of the Maritime-Terrestrial Zone 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spatial planning instrument is absent in most coastal areas and is one of the reasons artisanal fishers do not have access to land in coastal areas • Fishers can access land outside the public zone, but they have to adjust to the regulation plans, compete with land for tourism and live far away from where they work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of forums to discuss the social and environmental scope, and impact of the Blue Economy in the life of the artisanal fishing sector • The country should create the necessary safeguards against the advancement of the Blue Economy, along with the guarantee of their rights in the face of the structural problems they experience, like the lack of dignified and decent work, land ownership and access to the sea, education and health

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Landing of the catch, Prampram, Ghana. Photo by Jean Rivel-Fondjo

Ghana

Situated along the Gulf of Guinea, Ghana shares borders with the Republic of Burkina Faso to the north, Cote d'Ivoire to the west and Togo to the east. The country has a coastline of 560 km. This coastline, no more than 200 metres above sea level, is drained by four major rivers, over 90 lagoons, as well as marshes, estuaries and swamps. The Volta River and lake, a dominant geographical feature, covers a surface area of 8,480 sq km and has a shoreline of 5,200 km. Ghana's population was estimated in 2019 at 31 million, with 70 ethnic groups and over 50 indigenous languages. Ghana operates as a unitary democratic republic with separation of power among the executive, legislature and the judiciary. Designated a lower/middle income country by UN, Ghana practices economic liberalism. Agriculture, including fisheries, contributes 24 per cent to the GDP. The employment in this sector is declining but it still remains a significant source of livelihood for millions.



Source: Wikipedia commons

Fisher: definition, distribution

The Fisheries Act, 2002 (Act 625) does not specifically define fishers but gives recognition to small-scale fisheries as the artisanal sub-sector, distinct from the semi-industrial and industrial fishers through separate licensing and operational requirements. The Fisheries Act provides Inshore Exclusive Zone (IEZ) of six nautical miles or 30 metre isobaths to be used exclusively by small/semi-industrial vessels, canoes and recreational fishing vessels. Men are assigned with direct fishing tasks while women perform the bulk of post-harvest activities; particularly processing, marketing and distribution. There are an estimated 120,000 processing ovens nationwide; 117,000 processors serve marine fisheries and 72,000 in inland fisheries. The estimated total population of artisanal fishers stand at 215,000 of which 135,000 are in the marine sub-sector and 80,000 in its inland counterpart.

Fish Production

Fish production revolves round the industrial, semi-industrial or inshore, and artisanal or small-scale sub-sectors. Small-scale fisheries contribute 70-80 per cent from marine and inland waters. Of the total fish production of 452,679 metric tonnes (MT) in 2018, marine fisheries accounted for 302,431 MT or 67 per cent, followed by aquaculture accounting for 76,620 MT or 17 per cent, and then inland fisheries at 73,627 MT or 16 per cent.

Fishing fleet and gear

The dug-out canoe is the main fishing craft deployed with an outboard motor up to 40 HP, or sail and oars. The gear used include: purse seines, beach seines, trawl nets, gillnets and entangling nets (including set and drifting gillnets; trammel nets), traps

(including pots, stow or bag nets, fixed traps) and hooks and lines. The Fisheries Commission estimates about 15,000 canoes operating in the 550 km marine coastline and 24,000 along the Volta Lake.

Communities, landing sites, infrastructure

There are over 200 fishing communities and 302 landing beaches along Ghana's coast and 1,600 fishing communities along the Volta Lake. There are a few purpose-built harbours for small-scale fishers; notable ones being the Tema and Takoradi fishing harbours. Most of the landing sites are rudimentary and lead to high post-harvest losses. The chief fisherman exercises jurisdiction in a coastal fishing community and the headman in an inland fishing community. Assisted by a council of elders, they settle disputes; ensure peaceful coexistence of fishers and adherence to cultural norms and taboos. The fish queen mothers (*Koknohema*) perform similar roles and are well integrated into the value chain from landing, value addition and marketing.

Challenges and Recommendations

- The lack of a policy framework, specifically for small-scale fisheries, hampers sustainable and responsible management of the sector. The existing policies are generic with no specific objectives or measurable outcomes. The problems and concerns of fishing communities need to be addressed within a framework that has specific policy or legislative provisions or interventions applicable to the SSF sector.
- The Co-Management Policy of 2020 seeks to address problems of representation in governance and decision making in the SSF sector. It is in the early stages of implementation. There is an urgent need for sector-wide education and training as well as funding for the policy to be fully operationalized. If properly implemented, fishing communities can participate in managing their fishery resources and enforce mutually agreed regulations and by-laws.
- The SSF sector is characterized by severe deprivation, multi-dimensional poverty and a lack of social infrastructure. It is imperative that duty bearers work with SSF community to address the deficits in essential services, working conditions and social protection including but not limited to:
 - Essential services: access to education, infrastructure and quality issues; road network and accessibility; quality and affordable healthcare; water and sanitation hygiene; decent housing; affordable and reliable energy; and access to savings and credit.
 - Working conditions: occupational health and safety; child labour and trafficking (CLaT); and livelihood diversification.
 - Social protection: fisheries inputs subsidies (including pre-mix fuel), old age pension, healthcare, accidental /invalidity insurance.

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Top: Small-scale fishers carrying their nets to the sea expecting a good catch, Ghana. Photo by Peter L.A.
Bottom: Female fish vendors carrying fish for selling, Ghana. Photo by Peter L.A.

Ghana: Challenges and Recommendations					
#	Component	Key points		Focus on fishing community	Recommendations
1	Poverty eradication policies and programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessments of Ghana's poverty indicate a gradual decline from 31.9 per cent in 2006 to 23.4 per cent in 2017 Up to 45.6 per cent of Ghana's population suffers multi-dimensional poverty; 73.4 per cent of children are multi-dimensionally poor Five medium-term national development plans and Agenda for Jobs: Creating Prosperity and Equal Opportunities for All (2018-2021) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing poverty eradication policies and programmes are universal; they do not specifically target fishers, fishworkers or their communities Problems of access for SSF communities that are remote or geographically isolated; thus urban SSF communities benefit more from poverty eradication programmes than their rural counterparts; poverty is significantly higher in rural SSF communities than among urban SSF communities Increase in poverty in fishing communities; decline in fish landings, over-fishing and use of unsustainable practices, inability to access traditional fishing grounds because of oil and gas extraction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The use of aggregate indicators is a barrier to addressing issues of marginalization and extreme poverty in fishing communities not captured in conventional datasets The government's universal policies need to be adequately resourced to address the needs of rural and geographically isolated fishing communities
2	Social security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing social security schemes favour formal sector employees rather than informal sector employees Mandatory three-tier pension scheme in Pensions Act, 2008 (Act 766); the third tier focuses on voluntary provident fund and personal pension schemes for workers in the informal sector 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Third tier of the three-tier pension scheme yet to be operationalized for the SSF sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For education and investment in social protection tailored to the needs of SSF communities, including retirement pension, healthcare and disability/accident insurance
3	Education, training and the digital divide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education policy: Education Strategic Plan (ESP) of 2018-30 Significant expansion, with improved infrastructure and access to education at all levels Gender parity at kindergarten and lower school; at tertiary level proportion of females at 44 per cent 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to basic education in many fishing communities improved but policy has minimal or no benefit to adult fishers and fishworkers Many remote and rural fishing communities are still underserved and, in many cases, an entire community may not have a single classroom Adolescent girls' exclusion is reinforced when various sources of inequality—poverty, gender, geography—interact with one other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education policies must pay attention to the NFLP, with a focus on fishery-related occupational and vocational literacy It must also engender partnership with fishing communities to sustain the current high enrolment of girls Gender parity at the lower levels need to be extended to the junior and senior high school level
4	Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Health Policy is the key policy framework Healthcare in Ghana features three types of facilities: Community-based Health Planning and Services (CHPS); health centres and clinics; and hospitals; healthcare has improved with a reduction in mortality of children under five years of age Gaps persist in physical access to quality healthcare; emergency services are inadequate; accessing basic care sometimes requires travelling long distances; distribution of facilities is not equitable; quality of delivery is a problem also 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite the availability of the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS), majority of small-scale fishers and fishworkers are not enrolled in the scheme Only 35 per cent of the population has financial risk protection due to their active membership in the NHIS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health policies should address the inequitable distribution of healthcare and quality delivery in fishing communities. They must intensify efforts at preventive healthcare, ensure equitable distribution of health facilities, and improve quality of NHIS healthcare
5	Housing and public utilities like water, sanitation, electricity and ICT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Housing Policy in 2015 Severe housing deficit Large-scale urbanization, estimates at 3.4 per cent per year; half the population lives in urban areas, straining already limited infrastructure; increase in slum dwellers Massive lag in rural housing development Water and Environmental Sanitation Strategy; National Health Policy of 2020 Gains in improved water supply not reflected in improved sanitation Access to wastewater management services is very low, with only 3 per cent of liquid waste, properly disposed in major towns and cities Firewood, charcoal are major cooking fuels 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fishing communities desire decent housing, but cannot fathom achieving it under their present precarious socio-economic conditions Residents live in compound houses and share communal facilities like bathrooms, toilets and courtyards; while communal housing is affordable and within walking distance to the shore, its rundown infrastructure and amenities are in need of renovation Water: urban fishing communities have relatively safe drinking water; not so for rural communities Access to modern sewerage and toilet facilities is lacking; waste dumped in public dumps or burnt; refuse collection services in high density urban fishing communities Pit latrines in rural and KVIP latrines and WCs in urban fishing communities; open defecation also exists High national electricity access, but many rural and remote fishing communities lack access to electricity; firewood used in smoking of fish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active dialogue between government and fishing communities to examine priorities and options in social housing, community-led and government-supported schemes is necessary Policies on sanitation, drinking water and energy must make specific provisions for fishing communities and prioritize the needs of women and children who suffer disproportionately

Ghana: Challenges and Recommendations					
#	Component	Key points		Focus on fishing community	Recommendations
6	Employment policy, labour relations and decent work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to 71.1 per cent of the population aged 15 years and above in 2010 was economically active and 94.7 per cent were employed 9.1 per cent of labour force is unemployed, with the rate highest among persons with senior high school education; national youth unemployment rate is 12 per cent; underemployment also a problem National Employment Policy of Ghana: youth are the country's main focus for employment and skills development policies Limited success in employment policies that do not resulted in high quality decent jobs; bulk of population in informal sector with low remuneration and no safety nets 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addressing unemployment through skills development, entrepreneurship, apprenticeships and direct employment; the interventions do not specifically target fishing communities Also focus more on aquaculture and other alternative livelihoods because of dwindling fish stock Survey respondents complained that fishing communities were particularly disadvantaged because of the number of landing sites and the large number of fishing communities; rural, geographically isolated, with little or no social infrastructure Mismatch between policy and actual knowledge and experience of fishworkers; jobs require skills from formal education; fishing is built on traditional knowledge passed informally or through apprenticeship Women face double the burden of earning income and caring for the family Ghana Fisheries and Aquaculture Development Plan is generic on the SSF sector with no specific objectives and no measurable outcomes Impact of decent work policy is minimal; overall working conditions remain unsafe and unsanitary, with rudimentary infrastructure for post-harvest activities; women said capital outlay for improved alternatives was prohibitive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment policies should make specific provisions for SSF and address the root causes of high unemployment and underemployment. Decent work policy initiatives for SSF must be well defined; they must allow fishing communities access to social security, social assistance and social insurance
7	Safety at sea and occupational health and safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fisheries Act, 2002, enjoins the FC to establish requirement for manning fishing vessels and craft, safety for crew and vessels and for fishing gear in use to avoid damage by other vessels Occupational health and safety, a major issue in fishing and value addition activities There is a general lack of awareness of occupational health and safety Inadequate logistics/equipment like navigation equipment, life jackets and first aid supplies 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Male fishers in particular do not go for regular health checks Processors generally work in unsanitary conditions with the long exposure to heat and smoke There are reported cases of eye and respiratory problems; as well as sudden illness and death Large-scale destruction of property as a result of premix fuel explosions indicates inadequate hazard control and management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The need for a more structured sensitization and education on occupational health and safety tailored to the peculiarities of local fishing communities
8	Human rights and access to justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Backlog of cases: concerns have been raised about access to justice in Ghana in its ability to ensure efficient, affordable, and expeditious trial 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe and timely access to justice remain a challenge for most fishers and fishworkers High cost, delays in administering justice and a perceived bias in favour of wealthy and influential persons are the chief reasons for this; respondents particularly emphasized being deterred by high costs and delays that stretch into years FGDs showed that many rural fishing communities lack access to police stations and are therefore forced to rely on traditional arbitration to resolve disputes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To facilitate safe and timely access to justice the government must play a lead role and support FWOs and CBOs in educating communities on the judicial system

Ghana: Challenges and Recommendations					
#	Component	Key points		Focus on fishing community	Recommendations
9	Social inclusion, domestic and gender-based violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ghana was the first country to ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990); also ratified the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (2005) • Child labour, domestic violence, sexual abuse and exploitation of children are higher in rural areas, marginally higher for boys • Social protection for elderly not adequate • Many laws address gender-based violence • Gender equality and equity: women are under represented in parliament 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interventions for inclusion do not target fishing communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social inclusion policies should recognize the different forms of discrimination, as well as gender norms and power imbalances in the sector and ensure that social interventions reach the most marginalized • In order for the laws against gender-based violence to work as intended, victims should be supported with safe shelters • To encourage reporting of cases of gender-based violence and prevent cases from being withdrawn, medical bills and legal fees must be covered
10	Climate change and natural disasters with regard to fisheries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Climate Change Policy (NCCP 2014) • A signatory of the Paris Climate Agreement, Ghana is bound by a commitment to decrease greenhouse gas emissions 15 per cent by 2030 • It has also committed itself to a set of 20 mitigation and 11 adaptation actions between 2020 and 2030 • Increased recurrence of both natural and human-made disasters but institutional capacity for dealing with them has been limited 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tidal wave impacts on fishing communities • Coastal protection works 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To safeguard against climate change, there is an urgent need for fishing communities to be involved in the process and outcome of climate change remedial measures: planning, development, implementation, monitoring and reporting
11	Environment, biodiversity and sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food and Agriculture Sector Development Policy II (FASDEP) • The policy seeks to achieve sustainable management of land and environment; science and technology applied in food and agriculture development; and improved institutional coordination among others 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsustainable fishing practices like lights, explosives and undersized mesh sizes negatively impacting on the diversity and yield of SSF • Urbanization, real estate and tourism development along the coast/wetlands shrinking the size of natural habitats • Frequent incursions into the Inshore Exclusive Zone by industrial trawlers using undersized meshes adversely affects fish biodiversity and deplete stocks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration of sector agencies with SSF; sensitization and training of SSF communities on sustainable management of aquatic ecosystems • Concerted effort through the involvement of SSF communities to ensure stricter compliance to the fisheries regulations
12	Fisheries management and governance approach	<p>Small-scale fisheries are governed by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fisheries Act 2002 • Fisheries Amendment Act 2014 (Act 880) • Fisheries Regulation 2010 (LI 1968) • Fisheries Amendment Regulation 2015 (LI 2217) • Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy (2008). • The National Premix Fuel Committee Regulations (LI 2233) • Food and Agriculture Sector Development Policy II (FASDEP) • The Co-Management Policy, 2020 • Fisheries Sector Medium Term Development Plan (2022–2025) • The Marine Fisheries Management Plan (2022-2026) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National sensitization campaign on vessel registration to enhance voluntary compliance with regulations. • Small-scale fisheries allied institutions include statutory/regulatory bodies, traditional fisheries management authorities, fish worker organizations and trade unions • Traditionally, the chief fisherman—Apofohene (Fante), Woleiatse (Ga), Dortorwofia (Ewe)—exercises jurisdiction over a fishing community, assisted by a council of elders; the chief fisherman plays a major role in ensuring the peaceful coexistence of fishers and adherence to cultural norms and taboos • Occasionally the chief fisherman and his elders or appointed representatives may act as arbiters in fishing-related disputes • A fishing community has a fish queen mother and a number of ‘fish mummies’ or ‘fish wives’ who are well integrated into the value chain from landing, value addition and marketing; long post-harvest value chain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The government must build an inclusive, working relationship with all relevant SSF stakeholders as partners in sustainable development, including TFMA, FWOs, trade unions and NGOs • This will aid effective collaborations, networking as well as monitoring and reporting

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Ghana: Challenges and Recommendations					
#	Component	Key points		Focus on fishing community	Recommendations
13	Blue Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first ever National Blue Economy Summit was held in Accra, from 31 May to 01 June 2023 on the theme: Our Ocean's Health, Our Prosperity, Our Planet's Security The summit was organized by the SDGs Advisory Unit of the Office of the President, Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation, the Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development, the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Ghana, and the United Nations Development Programme A key output of the summit is a 'Blue Outcomes 2023 Document' to drive the mainstreaming of ocean action in Ghana's national development process 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fishing communities generally lack awareness of the concept of the Blue Economy Policy makers and technocrats in ministries, departments and agencies differ in their understanding on the concept and how it relates to the various users of the ocean Ghana's 560 km coastline is endowed with significant crude oil and mineral deposits with two major regional ports; any plan to use the ocean resources without engaging the SSF sector through free, prior, informed consent could adversely affect their livelihood, increase poverty and food insecurity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is imperative for the SSF community to actively engage the government on the Blue Outcomes 2023 Document and the modalities for its policy formulation and implementation The SSF community must build a deeper understanding of the Blue Economy and its likely implications as well as their expected roles and responsibilities in the event of a state policy on the Blue Economy

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A female fishworker in the fishing harbour, Kerala, India. Photo by A S Medha

India

India, the second most populated country globally, with an estimated population of 1.3 billion people, is also second in the world in fish production, after China. It has a coastline stretching 8,118 km in nine maritime states and four union territories, with a total fisherfolk population of 14.66 million, contributing as much as US \$4,845 million (or 1.47 per cent of GDP) to the GVA of India.



Source: Wikipedia commons

Distribution of fishers

India has 3,288 marine fishing villages and 1,511 traditional fish landing centres. The country's inland freshwater resources, which contribute 13 percent of the country's total fish production, consist of 1,95,210 km of rivers and canals, 2.9 million hectares of minor and major reservoirs, 2.4 million hectares of ponds and lakes, and about 0.8 million hectares of flood plain lakes and derelict water bodies.

There are 8,64,550 marine fishing households, of which 91.3 percent are traditional fisherfolk families. According to estimates of the fisheries department, in 2017, among 1,60,96,975 fishers engaged in fisheries activities, 55,70,217 were women, that is, approximately 34.60 per cent.

Kerala and Tamil Nadu (featured in the first study) are located in southern India, with Kerala on the Arabian sea coast and Tamil Nadu largely on the Bay of Bengal coast. West Bengal (featured in the second study) is an eastern state on the coast of the Bay of Bengal, sharing borders—and the Sunderbans—with Bangladesh.

Fish production

The total fish production in India in 2017-18 was 12.59 million tonnes, with a contribution of 8.9 million tonnes from the inland sector and 3.68 million tonnes from the marine sector. Fisheries involve over 16 million people at the primary level and many more along the fish value chain. In 2017-18, the volume of fish and fish products exported was 13,77,243.70 tonnes, worth INR ₹451,069 million. While marine fisheries is the mainstay of both Kerala and Tamil Nadu, inland fisheries dominate West Bengal. Fishing is the second largest occupation in West Bengal, after farming.

Communities, landing sites, infrastructure

The total fisher population in West Bengal is 23,76,898. Fishing is a hereditary occupation for 74 percent of fisherfolk. Mostly, communities engaged in fishing are Schedules Castes, including Bor, Rajbanshi, Jhalo, Mal, Halo and Jalia Kaibarta. More than 50 per cent are below the poverty line.

Most fishers in both Kerala and Tamil Nadu belong to traditional fisherfolk families. Kerala has 222 marine fishing villages and 113 inland fishing villages. The number of active fishworkers in the state in 2018-19 was estimated at 2,42,954, of which 88 per cent were men. The number of allied workers in fisheries in Kerala was 84,483, of which 80 per cent were women.

Tamil Nadu has 573 marine fishing villages with 1,92,697 marine fisherfolk households, with a population of 8,02,912, of which 48 percent are women. West Bengal has 4,014 mechanized craft, 6,564 motorized craft and 476 non-motorized craft, according to 2016 data from the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute. There are 35 boat yards, 17 cold storages, 191 ice factories, one freezing plant and one processing plant, and 78 curing yards.

Recommendations

- A considerable proportion of women are involved in fishing allied activities, which lack social security when compared to active fishing. There should be a provision of pension for fishing allied workers, especially women.
- Policies and programmes need to consider the unique characteristics and culture of small-scale fishers.

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Seaweed harvesters, Bharathinagar, Ramanathapuram, Tamil Nadu, India. Photo by Shilpi Sharma

Fish Landing center at Nagapattinam, Tamil Nadu, India. Photo by Shuddhawati Peke



India: Challenges and Recommendations					
#	Component	Key points		Focus on fishing community	Recommendations
1	Poverty eradication policies and programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> India is ranked 62 out of 107 in Multidimensional Poverty Index; 21.2 per cent of the population lives below the poverty line (BPL); for Kerala and Tamil Nadu (TN), it is 7.05 per cent and 11.28 per cent, respectively Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) is a centrally sponsored programme that guarantees 100 days of employment per year to rural households The Public Distribution System (PDS): in the government's targeted public distribution policy, households are classified based on economic criteria; subsidy is provided accordingly Free noon meal scheme for schoolchildren Various state governments run schemes to tackle poverty 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of fisherfolk below poverty line higher than state average. More than 66 per cent of the fisherfolk in TN and 55 per cent in Kerala are below poverty line Kudumbasree network in Kerala comprises women's self-help groups (SHGs) under the theme of poverty eradication and women's empowerment; Kudumbasree includes coastal women, found to have positive impact economically and socially In Kerala and Tamil Nadu, 55 per cent and 66 per cent of fisherfolk families, respectively, are entitled to benefit from the PDS scheme, as they are classified as BPL households Children of fishers form the majority in their areas in the free noon meal scheme Saving-cum-Relief Scheme is for the fish ban period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies and programmes should be based on climate change resilience
2	Social security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kerala has almost 35 social security schemes, and over 3 per cent of the state's budget is spent on social security measures, according to 2005 data from the state government; the programmes ultimately focus on poverty alleviation, food security and financial inclusion 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pensions to old fishers (₹450 per month); widow pension in Kerala No pension for fishing-allied workers Group insurance policy for both active fishermen and allied workers is present in Kerala; accidental death is covered in these two insurance schemes. West Bengal has accident insurance TN: fishing ban financial assistance, tax-exempted high-speed diesel to mechanized and motorized fishing craft, subsidized industrial kerosene is being provided to traditional fishing craft Daily allowance of ₹250 to the family of marine fishermen apprehended by other countries and the families of missing fishermen Support for higher education TN has group accident insurance schemes Matsya Samrudhi programme to improve inland and brackish water aquaculture Alternative livelihood programmes under project Theeramythri in Kerala 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There should be more and diverse alternative employment opportunities, especially during the fishing ban period; additionally, it would be beneficial to increase financial assistance during the fish ban period Comprehensive package scheme Matsyakanya to provide finance, infrastructure and social security for all women fishworkers and fishers in West Bengal Immediate steps to provide old age pension to every old and infirm fishworker
3	Education, training and the digital divide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> States have programmes for education of children, especially girls They have schemes such as noon meals for schoolchildren There are a number of skill training programmes available through the National Skill Development Mission, especially through the digital India push 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The percentage of uneducated population is higher among fisherfolk compared to the same in the general population; the share of the population that has studied beyond secondary school is lower among fisherfolk than in the general population The share of fisherfolk women who have not attained any formal education seems to be very high; however, the percentage of women who have only primary and higher secondary education is higher among fisherfolk than in the general population Various policies exist in Kerala for the educational upliftment of fisherfolk, for example, fisheries technical schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community study centres should be organized in these villages to make sure there are no school dropouts and no one is left behind The digital divide needs to be addressed by improving access to the internet and to information technology, which is important for access to education and resilience
4	Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health status was very poor among fisherfolk; it has not shown adequate improvement over the years (Government of Kerala, 2005) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In India, the ratio of the number of hospitals to the number of fisherfolk villages is low; more than half of India's fisherfolk villages have no hospitals nearby, meaning that access to healthcare is limited Kerala fares better with 75 per cent of the fisherfolk having access to healthcare, that is, a limited number of fisheries dispensaries to provide health services to fishers Jagratha, a programme to contain communicable diseases in Kerala, focuses on improving access to safe drinking water in coastal communities Swasthya Sathi Card in West Bengal offers coverage of ₹500,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social development and access to development are directly related to one's access to education and healthcare; more public hospitals need to be built near fisherfolk villages

India: Challenges and Recommendations					
#	Component	Key points		Focus on fishing community	Recommendations
5	Housing and public utilities like water, sanitation, electricity, and ICT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Water Mission, Ministry of Jal Shakti 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A lack of finances and scarcity of land results in poor housing conditions; also they need to be close to the coast due to their occupational needs The percentage of people living in makeshift (non-permanent) houses seems to be high in the fisherfolk community Central scheme: Under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G), construction of toilets has been made an integral part Kerala fisherfolk housing: Basic Infrastructural Facilities and Human Development of Fisherfolk scheme National Fishermen Welfare Fund Assisted Housing Scheme Water: Rain Centre scheme in coastal areas with limited access to potable water to promote rainwater harvesting and groundwater recharge Pradhan Manthri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY), an integrated watershed management programme Social welfare schemes in West Bengal cover community toilets in fish landing centres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to land must be ensured to improve fisherfolk's social development status; the state must ensure land security by assuring land tenure for the fisherfolk community
6	Employment policy, labour relations and decent work	-		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally, women dominate the marketing of fish Men only outnumber women as labourers and in making and repairing nets The central government's Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana promotes rearing of ornamental fish In Kerala, Matsya Samrudhi offers new employment opportunities through the development of inland and brackish water aquaculture Theeramythri: integrated development of fisherfolk's sustainable livelihoods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constitute Tribal Fishworker Cooperatives Societies in several parts of the Sunderbans The condition of Panchayat Samiti's approval in formation of fishworker's cooperatives societies needs to be scrapped Managerial subsidy for fishworkers' cooperatives should be a minimum of ₹48,000 per year; the amount should be paid regularly
7	Safety at sea and occupational health and safety	-		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Part of the state MFRA (safety at sea) provision of subsidized communication sets, training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Injury compensation and disabled compensation need to be more popular and generous
8	Human rights and access to justice	-		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The restoration of the traditional fishing rights of Indian fisherfolk in the Palk Bay area is one of the top-most agendas of the TN state government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strict implementation of MFRA Extension of exclusive fishing zone for small fishers Restriction on large fishing craft on number of craft, amount of catch and effort Complete stop to destructive fishing methods Implementation of SSF Guidelines Restoration, without delay, of the fishing communities' rights to drying fish in Jambudwip For quick disposal of grievances of fishing communities, special committees should be constituted from block to state levels with government officials, peoples' representatives and fishworkers' unions

India: Challenges and Recommendations					
#	Component	Key points		Focus on fishing community	Recommendations
9	Social inclusion, domestic and gender-based violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All over India, the most vulnerable and socially excluded are those who belong to the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and fishing communities 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social backwardness of the traditional small-scale fisherfolk community is also correlated to their lack of access to land rights, alien to most of the fishing community 	-
10	Climate change and natural disasters pertaining to fisheries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each state has a State Action Plan on Climate Change and also a Disaster Management Plan 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The coasts of Kerala and TN affected by floods and cyclones Various programmes to improve socio-economic resilience and safety; for example, the TN state government has taken several steps for shore protection, the safe berthing of fishing craft, and the construction of fishing harbours, groynes and RMS walls along with awareness programmes 	-
11	Environment, biodiversity and sustainability	-		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kerala Marine Fisheries Regulation (KMFR) Act and resource conservation focusing on fishery resources; registration and licensing of fishing vessels; enforcement of backwater patrolling and the prevention of illegal fishing in estuaries, mouth bars and backwaters Seasonal fishing ban TN Marine Fisheries Regulation Act delves into tech interventions to conserve fisheries resources, artificial reefs, sea ranching, diversification of fishing methods, participatory approach to resource management, and seasonal fishing ban West Bengal Marine Fisheries Regulation Act 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainability and social development should go together, as one is complementary to the other Any policy that aims to improve the sustainability of ocean resources should include policies to compensate the livelihood impact of that particular policy on small-scale fisherfolk, and vice versa
12	Fisheries management and governance approach	-		<p>Legislation: All states have their Marine Fisheries Regulation Act. In India, coastal states (=province) have jurisdiction in fisheries within territorial waters, with the Centre having jurisdiction in the EEZ.</p> <p>In all states, various agencies, governmental and non-governmental, are involved in various aspects of fisheries management and governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kerala State Cooperative Federation for Fisheries Development Ltd (Matsyafed) Agency for Development of Aquaculture, Kerala (ADAK) Kerala Fishermen's Welfare Fund (KFWEB) State Fisheries Resource Management Society (FIRMA) Fish Farmers Development Agency (FFDA) Kerala State Coastal Area Development Corporation (KSCADC) National Institute of Fisheries Administration and Management (NIFAM) Society for Assistance to Fisherwomen (SAF) Kerala Aquaventures International Limited (KAVIL) <p>Continued on next spread...</p>	-

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India: Challenges and Recommendations					
#	Component	Key points		Focus on fishing community	Recommendations
12	Fisheries management and governance approach	-		<p>...continued from previous spread</p> <p>Tamil Nadu</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tamil Nadu State Apex Fisheries Cooperative Federation Limited (TAFCOFED) consists of 484 marine fisherfolk cooperatives, 155 inland fisherfolk cooperatives, 174 women fisherfolk cooperatives and nine district fisherfolk cooperatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TAFCOFED has cooperative stores for the supply of cooking gas cylinders, fishing nets and essential commodities to fishers Tamil Nadu Fishermen Welfare Board Tamil Nadu Fisheries Development Corporation Limited is into fisheries' commercial activities such as fresh fish marketing, seafood courts, kerosene sale, reservoir fisheries, and ornamental fish production <p>West Bengal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In West Bengal, the performance of cooperatives, SHGs and associations of fisherfolk is poor A few are successful like the Maa Sarada Mahila Marine Fisherwomen Cooperative; fisherwomen run SHGs in the districts of Purba Medinipur and South 24 Parganas 	-

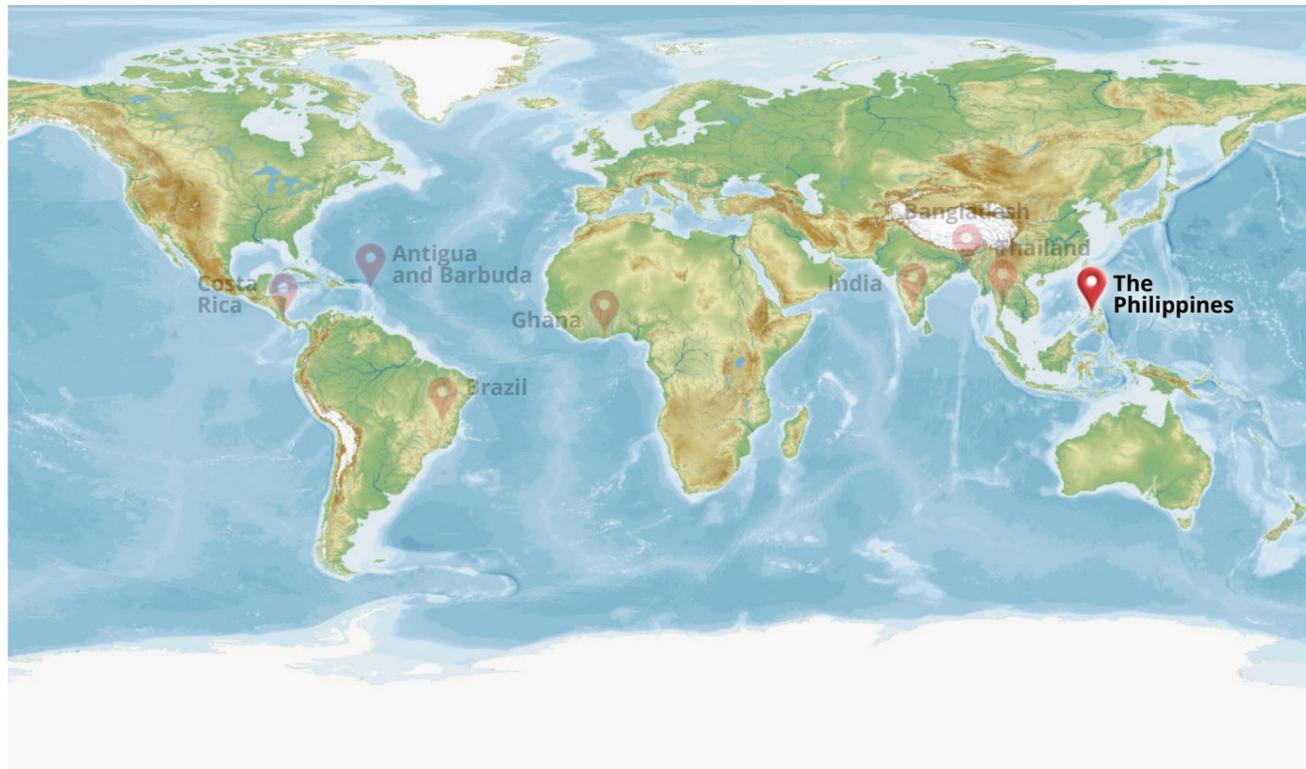
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A fisherman at Pamilacan Island, Philippines. Photo by Cornelia Quist

The Philippines

The Republic of the Philippines is an archipelagic country in Southeast Asia. In the western Pacific Ocean, it consists of 7,641 islands, with a total area of 300,000 sq km, which are broadly categorized in three main geographical divisions from north to south: Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao.



Source: Wikipedia commons

Fishers: definition, distribution

According to the 2022 Philippine Fisheries Profile of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), small-scale fishing employs a total of 2,302,648 in the municipal fisheries sector, of whom 1,174,350 are fisherfolk; the rest are men and women undertaking other activities in municipal fisheries. Data on fishworkers on board commercial fishing vessels is limited.

Legal support to fishers

- 1987 constitution grants subsistence fishers preferential use of the state-owned fisheries resources, both inland and offshore, supported with appropriate technology and research, adequate financial, production, and marketing assistance, and other services.
- Local Government Code of 1991 defines a marginal fisher as “an individual engaged in subsistence farming or fishing which shall be limited to the sale, barter or exchange of agricultural or marine products produced by himself and his immediate family”. This is for purposes of taxation and lacks the nuances of the definition of small-scale fishing.
- The Fisheries Code of 1998 (RA 8550) as amended by RA 10654, which intends to alleviate poverty in the fisheries sector, grants municipal fisherfolk preferential access to municipal waters. RA 10654, introduced provisions to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.
- The Local Government Code of 1991 grants preferential treatment to organizations or cooperatives of marginal fishers with respect to access and use rights to a number of fishery resources within the jurisdiction of LGUs.
- Under the Magna Carta for the Poor, small fishers are given the right to demand poverty-alleviation programmes as the state commits to the progressive realization of the following five rights: right to food, right to decent work, right to housing, right to relevant education and right to the highest attainable standard of health.

Fish Production

In 2018, the Philippines ranked eighth among the top fish producing countries in the world with its total production of 4.35 million metric tons (MT) of fish, crustaceans, molluscs, and aquatic plants including seaweed. The production constituted 2.06 per

cent of the total world production of 211.87 million MT, according to FAO's 2020 data. The total volume of fisheries production in the Philippines from January to December 2020 reached 4.40 million MT. The 2020 fisheries production also showed a 0.33 per cent decrease from the 2019 production of 4.42 million MT. The 2020 production value of Philippines peso (PhP) 273.49 billion at current prices is 2.90 per cent lower than the previous year's production value of PhP 281.65 billion.

Aquaculture

In terms of aquaculture production, the country ranked 11th in the world with 826,010 MT or 1.01 per cent of the total global aquaculture production of 82.10 million MT. The total value of the country's aquaculture production including fish, crustaceans, and molluscs is US \$1.89 billion. The Philippines is also the world's fourth largest producer of aquatic plants, including seaweed, having a total of 1.48 million MT or 4.56 per cent of the total world production of 32.39 million MT.

Fishing fleet and gear

In 2022, BFAR, through the LGUs, registered a total of 375,995 municipal fishing vessels. These operate within the municipal waters of the country with a capacity of three gross tonnage (GT) or less. There were about 5,090 registered commercial fishing vessels certified with a license in 2022. Up to 45.66 per cent were classified as small-scale; 48.39 per cent were classified as medium-scale; and 5.97 per cent were large-scale.

Commercial fishing vessels were classified into three sizes with a capacity of more than three GT. Small-scale vessels have a capacity ranging from 3.1 to 20.0 GT; medium-scale vessels have a larger capacity of 20.1 to 150 GT.

Challenges

- A triple whammy confronts the fisheries sector: the unequal access to and control over resources; the under-development of the fishing industry; and the country's trade policies that do not recognize fish as finite but renewable natural resources.
- Already vulnerable conditions of small fishers and poor coastal communities are exacerbated by the impacts of climate change, natural and human-induced hazards and fragmentation, with municipal fishers holding little bargaining power in markets.
- Conflict in the use of municipal waters needs to be resolved and the tenure rights of municipal fisherfolk secured. Among others, their access to municipal waters is constantly challenged by the intrusion of commercial fishers and the unmitigated impacts of aquaculture fishing to municipal capture fishing.

Recommendations

- Social development policies in support of the basic sectors, including small-scale and artisanal fisherfolk, have strong legal foundations with defined institutional support. However, much improvement is needed for implementation and translation into concrete economic gains and social protection.
- Community-based Monitoring Systems (CBMS) need to be institutionalized.

Other recommendations to increase resilience of fisheries sector:

1. Strengthen local fish production systems by:
 - a) Organizing and strengthening fisherfolk associations, savings clubs and cooperatives to serve as local consolidators

- b) Assist LGUs to establish/develop local markets for fish products
- c) Shorten the supply chain by directly linking producers to the market, for example, with local restaurants, food establishments, grocers, cafeterias/canteens of schools, hospitals and government offices and feeding programs

2. Establish a Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DFAR) to upgrade the agency's capacity and resources, as also to ensure timely response to the needs of the industry and to develop and implement new ways of ensuring food security
3. BFAR should carry out a national assessment, in collaboration with LGUs, partner NGOs and fisherfolk organizations, on the impact of COVID-19 on local fishers
4. Establish a comprehensive Social Protection Package for Fisherfolk, consisting of:
 - a) Health insurance
 - b) Health support package (like face masks, sanitizing alcohol and vitamin supplements)
 - c) Cash subsidies
5. Continue the implementation of fisherfolk registration/updating of the registry of fishers, craft and gear. This should:
 - a) Identify fishing vessels and gear to be allowed during lockdowns
 - b) Reduce IUU fishing by regulating fishers, craft and gear
 - c) Help identify qualified beneficiaries for assistance such as SAP and relief goods distribution
6. LGUs (through their 20 per cent development funds) and BFAR to establish fish-processing plants and community fish landing centres with ice-making machines, cold storage facilities and freezers
7. Absorb displaced fisherfolk in the newly established community fish landing centres, ice plants and fish-processing plants
8. Recruit fisherfolk in food-for-work type programmes for coastal cleanups and MPA maintenance and protection
9. Strengthen fishery law enforcement through the installation and utilization of Vessel Monitoring Mechanisms (VMM) and Visible Infrared Imaging Radiometer Suites (VIIRS)
10. Enact House Bill No. 5023: 'An Act Granting Benefits and Incentives to Accredited Bantay-Dagar and for Other Purposes', which would not only strengthen and ensure continued enforcement of fishery laws but also provide additional income for Bantay-Dagat volunteer fish wardens.

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Top and Bottom: Fishermen in Samar Sea, Philippines. Petri Suuronen/FAO



Fisherwomen in Carmen, Cebu, Philippines. Photo Credit: Cornelia Quist

The Philippines: Challenges and Recommendations					
#	Component	Key points		Focus on fishing community	Recommendations
1	Poverty eradication policies and programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1987 constitution on social justice and the vulnerable sectors • RA 8425, the 'Social Reform and Poverty Alleviation Act', passed in 1998, operationalized the commitment of the state to tackle poverty, prevalent in the basic sectors • National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC). • Community-Based Monitoring System (CBMS) Act was passed in 2019 to support the state's policy to ensure proper targeting of the beneficiaries of its poverty-alleviation programmes • Decline in poverty in the Philippines is slower than that of other nations in Southeast Asia 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having the highest poverty incidence, a large percentage of households under the Department of Social Welfare and Development's Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) belong to the fishing and farm sectors • Artisanal fisherfolk poverty is 40 per cent compared to national average of 26.3 per cent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutionalization of CBMS should be matched with effective capacity building for LGUs in terms of developing their comprehensive local development plans and the national government's commitment to the SDGs
2	Social security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-employed individuals, on registration and payment of premium have social security protection under the Social Security System (SSS) of the national government in case of sickness, maternity, disability, retirement and death 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inaccessibility of government benefits to fisherfolk because they live in remote areas made them prone to loan sharks, who charge monthly interest as much as 20 per cent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of social insurance for municipal fishers; the development of social protection programmes should go beyond addressing short-term needs • They must address the survival needs of fishing households by giving them access to sustainable livelihood and steady incomes • Many coastal municipalities are practising community-based management of MPAs and community-based coastal resource management (CBCRM)
3	Education, training and the digital divide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RA 11291, the Magna Carta for the Poor, 2019: Right to Relevant and Quality Education is the right to attain the full development of the human person • This is under the Department of Education, the Commission on Higher Education and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal fisherfolk household heads are below the national average in terms of educational attainment • The lack of training and education, including extension services, is an issue for both men and women in coastal communities; women have less access than men <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Research and extension in fisheries are not focused on the activities of women in the industry – Concerns of travel, safety – Responsibilities of caring for the family and the household 	
4	Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Healthcare Act, 2019, to protect citizens' right to health • RA 11291, the Magna Carta for the Poor, 2019: Right to Adequate Food is the right of individuals or families to have physical and economic access to adequate and healthy food, or the means to procure it • This is under the Department of Social Welfare and Development, and the Department of Agriculture. • Right to the Highest Attainable Standard of Health is the right to have equitable access to a variety of facilities, goods, services and conditions necessary for the realization of the highest attainable standard of health; the Department of Health is the implementing agency 			

The Philippines: Challenges and Recommendations					
#	Component	Key points		Focus on fishing community	Recommendations
5	Housing and public utilities like water, sanitation, electricity and ICT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RA 11291, the Magna Carta for the Poor, 2019: Right to Adequate Housing is the right to have a decent affordable, safe and culturally appropriate place to live in, with dignity, security of tenure in accordance with RA 7279, otherwise known as the 'Urban Development and Housing Act of 1992', in peace, with access to basic services, facilities and livelihood The implementing agency is the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Households have limited access to safe water, electricity and sanitation Many fisherfolk families also live in makeshift houses with no security of tenure Providing housing for fishing communities is embodied in the law; according to the Fisheries Code, certain areas of the public domain shall be reserved for the settlement of municipal fisherfolk The Department of Agriculture is mandated to establish a fisherfolk settlement area near fishing grounds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement guidelines on fisherfolk settlement areas; most fisherfolk families just settled into the land they are now occupying with minimal documentation; these are public lands and form part of the salvage/easement zones Those fishing families are not the only ones facing the threat of displacement and relocation. Even those who are settling in coastal lands beyond the salvage/easement zones are facing these threats; many of these settlers had been residing in their communities for years, some for generations, without any guarantee of tenure; some are even paying taxes for their land There have been instances where private claimants secured title over public coastal lands, with some resorting to land grab
6	Employment policy, labour relations and decent work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RA 11291, the Magna Carta for the Poor, 2019: Right to Decent Work is the right to the opportunity to obtain decent and productive employment, in conditions of freedom, equity, gender equality, security and human dignity This falls under the Department of Labour and Employment 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Labour and Employment: Department Order No. 156-16, or the Rules and Regulations Governing the Working and Living Conditions of Fishers on Board Fishing Vessels Engaged in Commercial Fishing Operation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutionalized regular employment for fishworkers working in commercial fishing operations registered in the Philippines or international waters Grants fishworkers benefits such as minimum wage, holiday pay, overtime pay and night differential; incentive leave; 13th-month pay; paid paternity leave under RA 8187; paid solo parent leave; paid leave for women recovering from surgery for gynaecological disorder; and retirement pay Fishworkers are entitled to a 60-minute break to take rest and regular meal, a daily rest period of 10 hours and a rest period of not less than 24 hours for every six consecutive days of work Fishers are entitled to social protection coverage of SSS, PAG-IBIG, Philhealth and employee compensation programmes; this is without prejudice to any other benefits that the employer may provide based on existing policies or collective bargaining agreement (CBA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement and enforce DOLE DO 156-16 Preventive measures against labour issues of fishworkers on board commercial fishing vessels (CFV) with Philippine registry is addressed by DO 156-16; it is aligned with ILO C188 in protecting fishworkers It provides the normative regulations and standards on employee-employer relations, compensation and benefits, and occupational safety
7	Safety at sea and occupational health and safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RA 11291, the Magna Carta for the Poor, 2019: Right to Relevant and Quality Education is the right to attain the full development of the human person This is under the Department of Education, the Commission on Higher Education and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Labour and Employment: Department Order No. 156-16 says owners or operators of commercial fishing vessels (CFV) are required to maintain a healthy, safe, injury-free and accident-free workplace They are required to have an occupational and health safety programme, provide protective gear and equipment, and appropriate facilities for sleeping and eating 	

The Philippines: Challenges and Recommendations					
#	Component	Key points		Focus on fishing community	Recommendations
8	Human rights and access to justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Supreme Court of the Philippines has issued the rules that will govern the procedure in civil, criminal and special civil actions in courts involving the enforcement or violations of environmental and other related laws Called the 'writ of kalikasan', the set of rules provide a remedy available to a person 'whose right to a balanced and healthful ecology is violated, or threatened with a violation by an unlawful act or omission of a public official or employee, or private individual or entity, involving environmental damage of such magnitude as to prejudice the life, health, or property of inhabitants in two or more cities or provinces' 'Continuing mandamus': linked to dereliction of duty by officials regarding environmental violations Temporary Environmental Protection Order (TEPO) is a temporary restraining order in cases where a petitioner prays for an Environmental Protection Order 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A person aggrieved may file a verified petition in the proper court, alleging the facts with certainty and with supporting evidence, specifying that the petition concerns an environmental law, rule or regulation, and praying that judgment be rendered commanding the respondent to do an act or series of acts until the judgement is fully satisfied, and to pay damages sustained by the petitioner by reason of the malicious neglect to perform the duties of the respondent, under the law, rules or regulations 	-
9	Social inclusion, domestic and gender-based violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly; often described as an international bill of rights for women, it defines what constitutes discrimination against women and sets up an agenda for national action to end discrimination Consistent with CEDAW, the country's Magna Carta of Women was signed in 2009 with support from the UN. It is a historic step forward in upholding women's rights. The law grants women, especially those in marginalized sectors, including farmers and fishers, the full enjoyment of their rights Framework Plan for Women (FPW) indicates actions planned for gender responsive governance to be undertaken by government agencies, LGUs and civil society The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) has issued annual budget circulars since 1997. These support the implementation of Gender Advocacy Development (GAD) budgets at the local level 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women in fisheries: absence of gender-friendly facilities, policies and rules against sexual harassment in the workplace An absence of female staff in human resources, which may result in women feeling undervalued 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutionalization of strategies and mechanisms to promote women's active participation in and benefits from small-scale fisheries and aquaculture in accordance with rights-based instruments such as CEDAW In particular, it shall ensure women's rights to genuinely participate and benefit from development Mainstreaming the agenda of women in fishing communities in the local development planning and budgeting processes; their issues include health and nutrition, water and sanitation, early childhood education, reproductive health and prevention of gender-based violence Provision of training and capacity building activities on aquaculture, post-harvest technologies, fish processing, value addition of products, packaging and marketing Enhancement of women's skills and competencies in organizing, leadership, communications, network building, negotiation and policy dialogue Establishment of structures and support mechanisms that would encourage women to take on leadership and management positions in community groups and participate in community activities

The Philippines: Challenges and Recommendations					
#	Component	Key points		Focus on fishing community	Recommendations
10	Climate change and natural disasters and their impact on fisheries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any impact of climate change in coastal areas is significant considering that the Philippines has 915 municipalities that are classified as coastal, and 62 per cent of the country's population lives in these coastal municipalities The law aims to mainstream climate change as well as disaster risk reduction into government policy formulations, establishes the framework strategy and program on climate change and creates the Climate Change Commission as the mechanism to ensure implementation of the law As mandated by the law, the Climate Change Commission (CCC) facilitated the formulation of National Climate Change Action Plan (NCCAP), which was supposed to be translated into Local Climate Change Action Plan (LCCAP); however there was no clear mechanism on how the NCCAP will be adopted by the local government units to form basis of their LCCAPs The Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act was signed on May 27, 2010; it aims to strengthen disaster risk management in the country. It repealed Presidential Decree 1566 that created the National Disaster Coordinating Council; the new body formed is the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) with counterparts at the local level, the Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Counterpart (LDRRMC) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coastal areas, fishers' communities and the fisheries sector are particularly vulnerable to climate change; rise in sea level and increasing sea surface temperature will result in damage to coastal ecosystems and displacement of fishing communities Extreme weather events displace fishers from their settlement areas and livelihood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impacts of climate change and disasters on coastal and near-shore fishery resources should be considered in coastal resource management to ensure the maintenance of coastal or marine biodiversity Promote coastal resilience programmes; systems to address socio-economic and environmental risks in fisheries are being developed and installed; however, climate change and natural disasters pose serious threats Responding to such challenges means that the impacts of climate change and disasters on coastal and near-shore fishery resources are considered in coastal resource management to ensure the maintenance of coastal or marine biodiversity
11	Environment, biodiversity and sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Stock Assessment Programme (NSAP) under the BFAR intends to have science-based policies, plans and strategies in managing fisheries by establishing an assessment programme of major fishing grounds throughout the country Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Management Program aims to manage the country's coastal and marine ecosystems, thereby increasing their ability to provide ecological goods and services; its components include networking of locally managed marine protected areas (MPAs) and sustainable management of coastal and marine resources The Department of Environment and Natural Resources is in charge of this programme 		Well-managed fishery resources guarantee sustainable harvest and livelihood of coastal communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issuance of Harvest Control rules based on the status of fish stocks should be prioritized through the Fisheries Management Area Bodies BFAR is to implement boarding and inspection protocols upon Philippine-flagged fishing vessels to ensure international treaty obligations of food safety are observed; illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing are curbed; and conservation and management measures are complied with
12	Environment, biodiversity and sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are locally managed resource management tools mandated through local ordinances, for example, fish sanctuaries, marine protected areas, and demarcated fishery areas, among others Governance of these areas are mandated by local ordinances and managed by deputized fish wardens with the Fishery Aquatic Resource Management Councils (FARMCs); annual budget allocation is also set by the local government for the management of these areas BFAR is implementing the ecosystem-based approach to fishery management through the setting of fishery management areas (FMAs), in which the important element is inter-LGU cooperation and establishment of zonation where access and control of fishers are clearly laid out FMAs can be implemented even in areas not yet delineated 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fisheries sector administratively under the Department of Agriculture, with BFAR as the policy and implementing agency on fisheries-related concerns Hence the fisheries sector must compete with other agriculture sub-sectors for budgeting and policy implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small-scale fishers believe the creation of a Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources is needed to manage water resources in the 7,641 islands of the Philippines There should also be inter-agency collaboration for a holistic approach to the fisheries issues, where each agency contributes efforts based on their respective mandates There should be delineation and harmonization of roles for more holistic approach to fisheries governance

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Cambodian women migrant fishworkers sorting fish in Thailand. Photo by Kyoko Kusakabe

Thailand

Thailand covers an area of 513,120 sq km and is located in the southeastern region of Asia. Its immediate neighbours are Myanmar to the north and the northwest, Lao People's Democratic Republic to the northeast, Cambodia to the east and Malaysia to the south. The water bodies that skirt Thailand are the Mekong River in the east, forming Thailand's natural boundary with Laos; the Gulf of Thailand to the southeast; and the Indian Ocean and the Andaman Sea to the southwest. The National Statistical Office of Thailand (NSO) reports an estimated population of 68.2 million. Bangkok is the capital and largest city, with approximately 12.97 million people.

Thailand is one of the world's major exporters of shrimp, fish and fish products, generating about 20 per cent of the country's total food product exports. Items accounting for over 70 per cent of total fishery product exports include canned tuna and sardines, processed shrimp, prawns and squid. Raw material is sourced from both the Andaman Sea and the Gulf of Thailand. The sector employs more than 250,000 people and represents up to US \$7 billion in exports annually.



Source: Wikipedia commons

Fisher: definition, distribution

Small-scale or artisanal fisheries involve fishing households, as opposed to commercial companies, who use relatively small amounts of capital and energy. They make short fishing trips in small craft close to shore, for local consumption and income. A severe degradation of marine fishery resources and ecosystems has taken place because of over-fishing, lower catch rates and large quantities of low-valued fish catches.

Fish Production

Thailand's commercial fish production is estimated at a little more than one million tonnes. Fish account for 57.68 per cent, mostly pelagics. Anchovies are the most commonly caught fish. Others include shrimps, crab, squid and shellfish. Juvenile fish are often used for making animal feed account for nearly 34 per cent of the total marine catch.

Fishing fleet

Data of the department of fishery, as of 30 June 2023, shows that the number of craft involved in small-scale fisheries in Thailand was 58,674. There are 48,776 local fishing craft, making up 83.13 per cent, consisting of craft less than five gross tonnes (GT). The number of craft was 43,555 (74.23 per cent), followed by boat sizes between five GT and 10 GT. There are 5,108 ships (8.71 per cent) with size between 10 GT and 15 GT. A large variety of gear are used for fishing.

Aquaculture

Estimates of total aquaculture production in Thailand have gradually grown from around 0.6 tonnes to 0.9 million tonnes over the past 20 years. Farmed shrimp is the main animal aquatic product, accounting for an estimated 40 per cent of total yields of aquaculture production, closely followed by fish (38 per cent) and molluscs (22 per cent).

Landing Sites and Infrastructure

Landing sites are located along canals in coastal provinces. The scale of businesses is variable, depending on the type of middlemen, local retailers, processing factories and export companies, among other things. In landing sites for commercial fishing craft, the main fishing boat types were trawlers and purse seiners. The most common characteristic in the operation of private landing sites was the reliance of almost all transactions on individual relationships between fishers, landing site owners, and middlemen. Private landing sites were essential for fishers to land fish near fishing grounds and played the role of wholesaler for middlemen to acquire fishery products as per amounts and species needed. The management system of landing sites and fishery wholesale markets is now in the transition period in Thailand.

Challenges

- Implementation of social development and protection plans carried out separately by each responsible state agency, leading to a lack of integration and comprehensiveness.
- Policies on fisheries and natural resources and environmental management have been developed separately, without linkages to social development policies resulting in neglecting the need to provide security for small-scale fishers' livelihoods and occupations.
- The government has introduced an area-based approach for the national development agenda. However, work integration is still lacking both horizontally and vertically because most agencies continue to administer their work according to their own mandate and the policies determined by the departments they work for.
- Due to external (international) pressure, policies and practices concerning labour in fishing, especially relating to migrant workers, have recently been greatly improved to ensure that workers in the formal fisheries sector have almost all their basic rights. Major gap remains in right to freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining. Some laws are still inadequate in tackling some complex labour issues because they either are outdated or do not cover migrant fishers.
- Women in the fisheries sector have not been formally recognized. They do not have full access to social development. They lack access to occupational promotion services provided by government agencies, particularly in effective skills and capacity building. In addition, it was found that most government agencies do not recognize several gender-specific needs and conditions, so women have not benefited fully from the services. Women fishers also lack opportunities to participate and voice their opinions in decision making, as government agencies have not facilitated this. The national-level committees and sub-committees on fisheries comprise few women, far less than half of the number of men.
- Small-scale fishers, artisanal fishers, fishery workers, ethnic fishers and women fishers have limited access to government information. This prevents them from influencing the direction of development that affects them.

Recommendations

To small-scale fishery groups:

1. Asserting the identity of fisherfolk and small-scale fishers. This involves clarifying their space and role, especially their rights as small-scale fishers, and their importance in contributing to food and economic security at the national and international levels; mobilizing to participate in improving, rectifying and developing policies regarding social and economic development; and taking action to protect and rehabilitate ecosystems and to conserve the diversity of natural resources.
2. Conduct local initiative community project to conserve/protect coastal resource biodiversity.
3. Documenting the effect of climate change and its impacts on the SSF sector, particularly women fishers and marginalized groups knowledge and develop capacity to develop their own role and that of their families, communities and small-scale fisher networks. This is to integrate local traditional knowledge with modern knowledge to respond to the current situation and to be prepared to deal with future changes in a sustainable manner.
4. Creating concrete models of collaborative work and cooperating with related sectors to ensure that sustainable fisheries management is implemented to maintain the abundance of natural resources.

To government agencies:

1. Improving agency policies to reflect how their operations are linked to social development, specifically human development that integrates socio-economic dimensions with natural resource management, and to have specific policies on working with small-scale fisher groups.
2. Developing mechanisms to integrate the work among government agencies and to work in a participatory manner with related sectors, using them as key guidelines for work in social and economic development and natural resource and environmental management.
3. Developing mechanisms to support collaboration and integration among the central, provincial and local administrative bodies. This includes developing Marine Spatial Planning as a tool for the management of multiple users of resources as well as the resource base itself.
4. Improving the database system with gender-disaggregated data, developing a population database that covers the whole population and updating it in a timely manner. For example, the Department of Fisheries must be able to rely on the database to assist them in their analyses, leading to appropriate planning and communication, developing learning processes and providing welfare assistance and support.
5. Improving work plans and preparing measures for the ecosystem-based management of fisheries, natural resources and the environment through an

area-based approach. This ensures that the design and implementation of development work correspond with the local context and the needs of the local people, reducing economic inequality. The most important aspects are defining boundaries, analysing stakeholders and the joint determination of goals and methods among stakeholders. For example, ecosystem-based fishery resource management gives importance to three main components: abundance of the marine and coastal ecosystem; well-being of the stakeholders; and good governance in resource management. It is about building a symbiotic relationship between the ecosystem and the social system on the basis of participation, transparency and accountability.

6. Developing a new management tool of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to assist in policy making and project planning at the area level for sustainable development. For sustainable development, there must be reform of the organizational structure for clarity in power relations, as well as reform of inter-agency linkages.
7. Gender mainstreaming in development, leading to security and sustainability: opportunities must be open for marginalized groups and women to participate in self-determination and decision making, from the household level to policy level. Importance must be placed on building learning processes together with occupational, social and communication skills. This gender mainstreaming approach is needed because the current policies and plans lack gender perspectives as well as ethnic group perspectives, so they have not addressed the problems and needs facing these marginalized groups.
8. Resource management with good governance: This means collaboration among all sectors in striving towards justice, integrity, efficiency and effectiveness. The way to achieve good governance is to ensure that the working process is transparent, responsible, accountable and participatory. If such working processes are adopted, there will be cooperation between the government and communities in decentralizing management decision-making and synergizing the power to protect the rights of all small-scale, artisanal and freshwater fisheries and fishers, contributing to building a democratic society.

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Facing page:
Top: The family works together after a catch, making it ready for the market, Thailand. Photo by Kesinee Kwaenjaroen, SDF

Bottom: A fisherwoman mending a fishing net in Trat Bay, Trat province, Thailand. Photo by Kesinee Kwaenjaroen, SDF

Thailand: Challenges and Recommendations					
#	Component	Key points		Focus on fishing community	Recommendations
1	Poverty eradication policies and programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urgent Policy No.1: Poverty eradication and inequality reduction appeared as "addressing the people's livelihood problems" in Urgent Policy no. 1 In the long-term, the government included the main policies for poverty eradication and inequality reduction in Major Policy no. 5: Development of Thailand's economy and competitiveness The 13th National Economic and Social Development Plan (a level-two plan): five-year plan that links the National Strategy and Master Plans with integrated development programmes, complete with targeted outcomes for the period 2017–2021 The poverty rate has decreased from 9.85 per cent in 2018 to 6.24 per cent in 2019; poverty has been in continuous decline for the past three decades, but many people still trapped in chronic poverty 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To implement Urgent Policy No. 1 in the fisheries sector, it was determined that the goals would be to reduce the obstacles facing commercial and artisanal fishing practices and to provide assistance to artisanal fishers in accordance with international fisheries standards Fishers: lack of fair access to the natural resource base for those who rely on them for their livelihoods, such as the artisanal fishers, will generate further problems in social development 	
2	Social security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urgent Policy No. 2: "improving welfare systems and the quality of life of the people", involves the improvement of the state welfare card and living allowance systems, which target, for example, the elderly, people with disabilities, the poor and disadvantaged, the reduction of disparities in the quality of each system's services 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not all small-scale fishers can access state services because they have not been certified The existing database identifies only artisanal fishers with a vessel size of below 10 gross tonnes, while there are many artisanal fishers who have not registered with the authorities, including those who do not own vessels and women fishers who process and market the catch; these latter groups are not included in the current database system Ethnic fishers, due to a lack of official certification of their nationalities, cannot access any education or health services, or even space for housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need updating of database to be more inclusive
3	Education, training and the digital divide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major Policy No. 8 on learning process reform and capacity development The National Education Act (No. 4) B.E. 2562 (2019) specifies three types of education organization: formal education, non-formal education and the notable addition of 'life-long education' 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Among Thailand's fisher or coastal communities, all children can access basic education up to grade nine, although the quality of their education may differ The Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, prepared a Curriculum of School for Thai Fishers, aiming at developing the quality of life of fishers through income generation, while learning to become responsible fishers employing more sustainable fishing methods It is believed that this outcome will contribute towards Thai fishers' competitiveness and help build confidence in the world market for Thai fishery products so that they can compete without trade-related restrictions 	
4	Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major Policy No. 9 in the Government's Policy Statement of 25 July 2019 is to develop public health and social security systems by upscaling health security coverage; this would include workers in the informal sector, promoting health and sanitation measures so that people of all ages become healthy The Thai health security system comprises three types: social security-based coverage, medical cost coverage for government officials and health security for all 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The health security for all scheme enables artisanal fishers to receive medical care at any government hospital 	

Thailand: Challenges and Recommendations					
#	Component	Key points		Focus on fishing community	Recommendations
5	Housing and public utilities like water, sanitation, electricity, and ICT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major Policy No. 7 includes solving housing and agricultural land problems, building liveable and active communities and a comfortable and convenient society with safety of life Sanitation: Major Policy No. 5 on developing the economy and competitiveness under the guidelines on basic utilities development Water: Major Policy No. 10 promotes integrated water management of community water sources and the sea by linking with the country's 20-Year Water Management Plan, to ensure that rural communities can access clean water at affordable prices with proper community water management systems Energy is addressed in the 20-Year National Strategy 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To solve the housing problem for fishers on the water's edge, on public land that is under the supervision of the Marine Department, CODI's approach was to work with the Marine Department to set up rules for the inhabitants to report their residence to the department and to request the continued use of the same pieces of land The southern native fishing communities in Satun, Phuket, Nakhon Si Thammarat, and Surat Thani, among others, have already received permission to remain in their home communities In 2004, solar power for an artisanal fishing community was implemented (Ko Chik Nok in Chanthaburi province) Artisanal fishers in Prachuap Khiri Khan province had LED light bulbs on fishing craft with falling nets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customary rights of SSF communities need to be clearly stated in the marine law
6	Employment policy, labour relations and decent work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thai government has issued urgent policy guidelines to upgrade workers' capacity in both the formal and informal sectors, which are aimed at protecting their safety, health and welfare, and ensure that they receive benefits appropriate for a decent living, particularly workers in the fisheries sector Thailand Decent Work Country Programme 2019-2021 identifies priorities and outcomes of work to be implemented jointly by government agencies, workers and employers' organizations with the support of the International Labour Organization (ILO); the tripartite programme aims at promoting labour rights protection through integrated technical, financial and human resource collaborations Workers and employers do not have the rights and freedom to organize and engage in collective bargaining 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 19 conventions of the ILO have been ratified, including ILO c.No.188; Enacted Labour Protection in Fishing Work Act in 2019 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specifically applicable to fishing vessels of the size specified by the Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives, and exempts subsistence, freshwater and recreational fishing Key provisions are for the vessels' owners to comply with the minimum standards of on board working hours, accommodation, food, safety, and health and sanitation Other laws and regulations concerning fisheries passed since 2015: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emergency Decree on Fisheries, B.E. 2558 (2015), 2017 Amendment Ministerial Regulation on the Protection of Labour in Sea Fisheries, B.E. 2557 (2014) Anti-Human Trafficking Act, B.E. 2551 (2008), 2015, 2017, and 2019 Amendments Procedures for Human Trafficking Cases Act, B.E. 2559 (2016) Labour Protection in Fishing Work Act, B.E. 2562 (2019) Additional laws, regulations and guidelines have also been issued to prevent human trafficking for labour exploitation Workers employed on board artisanal fishing vessels are considered informal workers and are not covered by labour protection laws like those on board large vessels Restriction of artisanal fishing grounds because they move further out to sea, risking gear damage by commercial vessels Neither the Decent Work Country Programme 2019-2021 nor the Ministry's policies include small-scale fishers as a target group, instead focusing on workers in commercial fisheries and related industries As artisanal fishers, ethnic fishers and women fishers have not been included in any standardized systems, they have not benefited from the efforts to promote decent work in fisheries 	<p>Monitoring and implementation of actual law enforcement in practice regarding SSF workers in the commercial fishing sector</p>
7	Safety at sea and occupational health and safety	-		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the labour sector, the Ministry of Public Health has placed importance on occupational health and decent work for all in accordance with the policy of the ILO and SDG 8 on Decent Work and Economic Growth This includes the target of promoting safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants and those in precarious employment, and with the frequency rates of fatal and non-fatal occupational injuries and migrant status as indicators 	

Thailand: Challenges and Recommendations					
#	Component	Key points		Focus on fishing community	Recommendations
8	Human rights and access to justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Justice Fund has also been established under the Justice Fund Act B.E. 2558 (2015), which promotes access to justice for all, especially poor and vulnerable people Assistance provided by the fund includes financial support for legal aid and access to lawyers, temporary release of defendants on bail, assistance to victims of human rights violations and dissemination of legal knowledge to the public Labour courts are specialized parts under the courts of justice; they adjudicate cases related to public peace and order, mainly involving conflicts between employees and employers 		-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document good practices for public dissemination
9	Social inclusion, domestic and gender-based violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social inclusion included in the major policy of developing social strength from the base, involving community empowerment and networking, and development of public health and social security systems The 12th National Economic and Social Development Plan also includes strategies related to social inclusion <p>Gender-based violated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Victims of Domestic Violence Protection Act, B.E.2550 (2007) was replaced by Family Development Promotion and Protection Act B.E. 2562 (2019); however not yet in effect, the old law continues Gender Equality Act, B.E. 2558 (2015) Laws passed because of pressure from international agencies and civil society do not always get enforced properly Thailand has passed several laws and measures to deal with violence against women and children November is annually “the campaign month to end violence against women” 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Artisanal fishers, ethnic fishers and women fishers are left out of any decisions that determine the direction of national and social development This is due to the fact that the majority of them are not included in the database of the government and are consequently unable to exert their identities in public 	<p>Gender and social inclusion in the fisheries sector need to be clearly reflected in the socio-economic national plan. Integrated operation system needs to be established with clear mandate for monitoring</p>
10	Climate change and natural disasters and their impact on fisheries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the 2019 Government Policy Statement, this is covered under Major Policy No. 10, to rehabilitate natural resources and conserve the environment for sustainable growth, including addressing the problems of greenhouse gas emissions and climate change impact And Urgent Policy No. 11 on preparing measures against drought and floods 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current focus is on research and studies, knowledge and information dissemination; no clear measures to support fisheries sector operators, particularly small-scale fishers, in identifying potential adaptation measures or becoming part of the mitigation solutions Artisanal and small-scale fishers still rely on their traditional knowledge without opportunities to develop their capacity to adapt to climate change situations Artisanal fisher communities affected by coastal erosion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration of related Government agencies ensuring an integration of climate change and natural disasters in fisheries and marine and coastal resource management Omit private sector in mangrove management for carbon credit
11	Environment, biodiversity and sustainability	-		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus more on increasing fishery yields and maintaining, rehabilitating and conserving the resource base rather than the groups of people who use the resource base 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prior information and governance principles, ensuring meaningful participation of SSF in ecosystem-based fishery and marine, coastal resource management Provide support, promoting community project in addressing conflict over the use of natural resources Promote pilot project and participatory research to monitor the change to be used for policy development

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Thailand: Challenges and Recommendations					
#	Component	Key points		Focus on fishing community	Recommendations
12	Fisheries management and governance approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marine Fisheries Management Plan 2020–2024: contains key policies regarding the demarcation of marine and coastal areas for the protection of marine resources, application of strict fisheries measures, prohibition of fishing for small-size catches, control of illegal fishing gear, and protection of artisanal fishers It prioritizes the resolution of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and promotes sustainable fisheries and aquaculture 		-	-
13	Blue Economy	Focus on off-shore petroleum and mining industry, sea ports, industrial estates and the tourism service industry		Conflict with fisherfolk and small-scale fisher groups, ethnic minority groups and freshwater fisher groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human rights and customary rights need to be clearly stated as the principles in the resource management Scientific and local knowledge data and information are needed for planning with meaningful participation of SSF sector

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Fishing in the Bay of Bengal off Bhola, Bangladesh. Photo by Din M Shibly

