

COVID-19

COVID closures, embassy intervention strands hundreds of Lao fishermen in Malaysia

Hundreds of Lao migrant fishermen are stranded in Malaysia after the Lao Embassy in Kuala Lumpur took control of their return travel plans to arrange pricier flights, which had already been complicated by coronavirus restrictions, the fishermen told RFA.

Drawn by the prospect of well-paid work at sea, around 700 Lao migrants traveled overland through Thailand to Pahang state on the east coast of the Malay Peninsula, entering Malaysia on tourist visas, one of the men said.

"The company or the owner of the fishing boats made all the paperwork for us, including work permits and contracts, so we are all legal workers in Malaysia," the fisherman told RFA's Lao Service Monday on condition of anonymity. But the coronavirus threw a wrench in their plans to return home when the fishing season ended in November. After an inexpensive bus trip back to Laos through Thailand became impossible when borders between Malaysia and Thailand closed, about 530 of the fishermen negotiated

passage to Laos from Pahang with V Travel, a Malaysian tour company.

With expenses piling up and no money coming in, hundreds of the fishermen illegally entered Thailand in hopes of taking the overland route. On Tuesday, a group of about 20 of them were arrested in Thailand's southern Songkhla province. As of Tuesday, 463 remain in Malaysia and are still waiting for the flights. The Lao Embassy in Kuala Lumpur on Sunday said that flights chartered for the end of November were postponed because the Lao Prime Minister's Office suspended incoming flights.

"The embassy made a second request to the Lao National Taskforce Committee for Covid-19 Control and Prevention to reschedule the flights, one on December 12 and the other on December 17, 2020. Now, the request is being considered by the taskforce. So, please wait," the statement said.

<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/laos/fishermen-1208202013103.html>

ARTISANAL FISHERIES

World Fisheries Day: How the EU can support sustainable African artisanal fisheries

In this declaration on the occasion of World Fisheries Day, the Coalition for Fair Fisheries Agreements (CFFA) calls on the European Union (EU) to integrate the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines) into all its policies that have an impact on this sector, particularly in the Blue Economy and Farm to Fork strategies and in its external action.

Therefore, we recommend:

-- That the EU systematically integrates the contribution to the implementation of the SSF Guidelines into its external action, both within the framework of its development co-operation policy and its CFP in its external dimension.

-- More specifically, that the European Commission, as

it has done through its new regulation on the sustainable management of external fishing fleets (SMEFF), integrate the implementation of the SSF Guidelines into its basic CFP regulation as well as into all other policies that have an impact on artisanal fisheries, such as the Blue Economy Strategy, or the "Farm to Fork" Strategy (F2F).

-- That the consideration, and implementation, of the SSF Guidelines be integrated as a specific objective of the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements (SFPAs), particularly as the guidelines are rooted in a human-rights approach.

-- And finally, that the EU encourages and supports the draft convention for an RFMO dedicated to the management of shared stocks in West Africa, being itself involved in the exploitation of these species.

The perspective of the year 2022 dedicated to artisanal fisheries is an opportunity to encourage the implementation of the SSF Guidelines to ensure that this sector fully integrates the strategic priorities for the development of fisheries in developing countries and that it is fairly integrated into the legal frameworks.

<https://www.icsf.net/en/samudra-news-alert/article/detail/61339-World-Fisheries.html?language=EN>

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

The National Commission for the Strengthening of Extractive Reserves, Communities and Traditional and Coastal and Marine Extractive Communities

The National Commission for the Strengthening of Extractive Reserves, Communities and Traditional and Coastal and Marine Extractive Communities is an aggregator network involving 72 grassroots organizations. These include 32 Extractive Reserves (of which 28 are federal, one is at the state level and three at the municipal level), four Environmental Protection Areas (APAs) and 6 'other' maretorios—the fishing communities, activists working on coastal and marine extraction—located in the 17 states along the Brazilian coast.

Created in 2007, CONFREM Brazil's mission is to develop, articulate and implement collective strategies aimed at the recognition and guaranteeing of the subsistence and sustainable production of resources in the coastal marine territories.

Constant conflicts and threats to the fisher's way of life are common in these maretorios, alongside poor environmental management and political pressure for the reclassification of conservation units as 'Extractive Reserves'. The aim is to allocate these areas for tourism, oil and gas extraction



and large-scale food production, like shrimp farming. Recent events, such as oil spills and the spread of COVID-19, affected the entire production structure and its modes of organization.

CONFREM Brazil has sought to advance the agendas of fishing communities to national debates; develop and/or support capacities for intervention in social policies; strengthen the

fight to guarantee sustainability; and seek to give visibility to coastal and marine extractive maretorios, highlighting their ways of life and their relationship with the sustainable use of resources.

CONFREM Brazil has links with the following organizations: Mangaba Catadores Movement in the State of Sergipe; National Coordination of Traditional Communities Caiçaras; Network of Women in Fishing Communities in the South of Bahia; Network of Women in the Amazon Mangroves; APA Costa dos Corais Women Network; Parnaíba Delta Resex Women Network; and Articulations of Young Protagonists of Artisanal Fishing. CONFREM Brazil has also created synergies of action with fishers and their organizations in Latin America and Africa.

CONFREM Brazil participated in the creation of the 'Observatory Group on Coronavirus Impacts on Fishing Communities', created jointly with the Fishermen and Fishermen Movement of Brazil (MPP), National Fisheries Articulation (ANP), Fisheries Pastoral Council (CPP) and National Coordination of Traditional Caicaras Fishing Communities. The initiative brought together fishermen and artisanal fishers, researchers, health professionals and activists from almost all regions of Brazil who, since March 2020, have sought to monitor and collect data on the progress of the coronavirus in fishing communities.

- by Flávio Lontro (flaviolontro@gmail.com and confrembrasil@gmail.com), General Coordinator of CONFREM Brazil

Supporting Small-Scale and Artisanal Fisheries

This document summarizes achievements of FAO to support sustainable marine and inland small-scale and artisanal fisheries governance and development. It reports on progress under the FAO Umbrella Programme for the Promotion and Application of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines) and related developments. It highlights the contribution of small-scale and artisanal fisheries to food system transformation in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as innovative efforts to improve technical capacities for data collection and analysis in small-scale fisheries. Finally, it presents preparations for the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAFA) in 2022. Complementary and additional information is provided in COFI/2020/Inf.12 (Small-scale and artisanal fisheries: Progress on implementing the SSF Guidelines since the Thirty-third Session of COFI in 2018), COFI/2020/Inf.12.1 (Status update on the global study 'Illuminating Hidden Harvests. The contribution of small-scale fisheries to sustainable development'), COFI/2020/Inf.12.2 (Draft planning roadmap for the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture 2022).

I. SSF Guidelines as a Tool to Support Achieving the SDGs

1. Small-scale fisheries play an important role in food security and nutrition and offer development pathways for poverty eradication and equitable development. The SSF Guidelines provide a framework to enhance the contribution of small-scale fisheries to food security, poverty eradication and sustainable livelihoods, and directly contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular SDG 14 and target 14.b, but also other

SDGs. As noted in previous paragraphs, and elaborated upon in COFI/2020/Inf.12, efforts of the SSF Umbrella programme support achievement of many SDGs, including 1 No poverty, 2 Zero hunger, 5 Gender equality, 12 Responsible consumption and production, 13 Climate action, 14 Life below water and 16 Peace, justice and strong institutions.

2. These efforts include working with partners to promote a human rights-based approach, social protection, gender equality, and value chain enhancement, in particular in the postharvest subsector, as well as efforts to address climate change and extreme poverty in small-scale fisheries. FAO is promoting sustainable food systems to increase the quantity and quality of fish products for human consumption by empowering women, and working to strengthen the mitigative and adaptive capacity to climate change of traditional fishers and fish workers, and supporting the integration of Indigenous Peoples' perspectives in the implementation of the SSF Guidelines.

3. Target 14.b of the 2030 Agenda calls on States to "provide access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets". Governments have an essential role to play in ensuring equitable access to resources and markets for small-scale fishers and fishworkers, and the SSF Guidelines contain valuable recommendations to support achieving SDG Target 14.b.

4. The governance and management of fisheries that recognize the participation of fishers, local stewardship, and shared decision-making, or co-management, empower fishworkers and balance rights and responsibilities between users and government authorities. Appropriate access to resources and secure tenure

or user rights, together with co-management, are fundamental elements of sustainable fisheries. FAO is working to complement recommendations in the SSF Guidelines with specific practical guidance on options and opportunities for fisheries stakeholders to consider how to implement co-management and facilitate the formalization of appropriate tenure, access and user rights in fisheries, noting that these are key elements for realizing sustainable access to resources, as well as the food security and the economic contributions of the small-scale fisheries sector. To date, regional workshops have provided recommendations for national marine fisheries in the respective areas of South East Asia and the Bay of Bengal, and Latin America and the Caribbean. The next workshop, Great Lakes and Inland Water Bodies of the World, will provide further recommendations for inland fisheries guidance. Additional workshops are planned to cover other regions of the world.

5. The COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade³ emphasized the importance of market access, value chains, post-harvest operations and trade to enhance the contribution of small-scale fisheries towards the achievement of SDG 14.b. A new FAO Technical Paper, "Securing sustainable small-scale fisheries: Showcasing applied practices in value chains, post-harvest operations and trade", examines good practices and successful initiatives consistent with the recommendations of the SSF Guidelines (included as COFI/2020/SBD.20) and can be used to inform future work by FAO.

II. International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture

6. The United Nations General Assembly in its Seventy-second session in December 2017 proclaimed 2022 the

"International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture". In its 33rd session, the Committee welcomed the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture in 2022 (IYAFA 2022). FAO is serving as the lead agency for IYAFA 2022 in close collaboration with relevant partners and bodies of the United Nations system. Since 2018, FAO has begun planning in earnest for IYAFA 2022. To guide and focus its efforts, FAO has developed a draft planning roadmap and welcomes inputs and suggestions from the Committee.

7. Countries and partners are encouraged to actively engage in and support the observance of this auspicious international year. IYAFA presents an opportunity to promote the sustainable development of small-scale fisheries and aquaculture food systems; enhance global awareness about, understanding of, and action to support the contribution of small-scale fisheries and aquaculture to the global fisheries sector; and promote dialogue and collaboration between and among small-scale fishers, fish farmers, fish workers, governments and other key partners. These efforts will further contribute to sustainable development of small-scale fisheries and aquaculture and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

8. A summary of preparations to date for IYAFA 2022 and the draft planning roadmap are included in session information document COFI/2020/Inf.12.2 (Draft planning roadmap for the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture 2022).

Source: Supporting Small-Scale and Artisanal Fisheries, Committee on Fisheries Thirty-fourth Session, 1–5 February 2021, Rome, Italy
<http://www.fao.org/3/ne712en/ne712en.pdf>

INFOLOG: NEW RESOURCES AT ICSF

Publications

The Human Relationship with Our Ocean Planet by Edward H. Allison, John Kurien and Yoshitaka Ota

<https://oceanpanel.org/sites/default/files/2020-09/Human%20Relationship%20with%20Our%20Ocean%20Planet%20Final.pdf>
By enhancing humanity's relationship with the ocean, bridging ocean health and wealth, working with diverse stakeholders and harnessing the latest knowledge, the Ocean Panel aims to facilitate a better, more resilient future for people and the planet.

Cast Out: The Systematic Exclusion of the KwaZulu Natal Subsistence Fishers from the Fishing Rights Regime in South Africa, by Jackie Sunde and Kira Erwin

https://static.pmg.org.za/201027Cast_Out_Policy_Document-2020.pdf

This report illustrates a process of systematic exclusion from the legal and policy regime for Durban fishers, who view themselves as subsistence fishers but are not legally recognized as such.

Guide for the implementation of the COVID-19 prevention and mitigation protocol in shrimp fishing and peeling work at the Barra del Colorado Association of Women Fishermen and Processors by ILO

https://www.ilo.org/sanjose/publicaciones/WCMS_764285/lang-es/index.htm

This guide is for people who work in fishing and peeling shrimp belonging to the association of women fishermen and processors of Barra del Colorado to whom the prevention and mitigation actions of COVID-19 will be directed.

My Fear is Losing Everything: The Climate Crisis and First Nations' Right to Food in Canada

<https://www.hrw.org/report/2020/10/21/my-fear-losing-everything/climate-crisis-and-first-nations-right-food-canada>

This report documents how climate change is reducing traditional food sources, driving up the cost of imported alternatives, and contributing to a growing problem of food insecurity and related negative health impacts for First Nations in Canada.

The Environmental Impacts of COVID-19: Perspectives from Fishing Communities

https://cobi.org.mx/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/COBI_Covid19-environmental-impacts-16nov20.pdf

This document suggests general strategies for the new normal in Mexico that would have to integrate environmental issues and challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ghost Fleet: Battling Slavery in Thailand's Seafood Industry

<https://www.aljazeera.com/program/witness/2020/12/2/ghost-fleet-battling-slavery-in-thailands-seafood-industry>

This program follows a small group of Thai activists who risk their lives on remote Indonesian islands to find justice and freedom for enslaved fishermen.

FLASHBACK

Cracking the Code for Small-scale Fisheries

Should the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) be "opened up" to include a special Chapter on small-scale artisanal fisheries? This was called for by the civil society organizations at the FAO's Global Conference on Small-scale Fisheries (4SSF) in October 2008. The call was reiterated by the civil society at the 28th Session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI 28).



However, several delegations to COFI 28 opposed opening up the CCRF, which, it was argued, could prove to be a "Pandora's Box". If opened up for small-scale artisanal fisheries, then why not for other interests? While there was consensus on the need to support small-scale artisanal fisheries, there was no consensus on the best way to do so.

To follow up on the mandate given by COFI, the FAO organized three regional workshops in Asia, Africa and Latin America, in October 2010. This enabled a large number of both governmental and civil society participants to provide their views on how small-scale artisanal fisheries can be best supported and enabled to fulfil their potential. All the three workshops recommended developing a new instrument, complementing the CCRF, to address small-scale and artisanal fisheries issues.

ICSF feels that there is a need for both an international instrument and a global programme. With the world gripped by concerns about overfishing, excess capacity, declining biodiversity and climate change, as well as the challenges of food insecurity and poverty, it is increasingly evident that sustainable small-scale artisanal fisheries within a human-rights framework offers the most viable solution. There is recognition today that the small-scale artisanal fisheries subsector is relatively more sustainable, energy-efficient and less destructive, even as it supports millions of livelihoods across the world, and supplies diverse populations, and particularly rural and remote populations in food-insecure regions, with a rich source of nutrition.

The potential of a new instrument to strengthen the social pillar of sustainable development and to effectively complement the CCRF within the framework of a human-rights approach was well recognized by the regional workshops. The onus is now on the 29th Session of COFI, to be held from 31 January to 4 February 2011, to respond in a manner in keeping with these recommendations. If it is not possible to open up the Code, COFI should agree to develop an instrument, along the lines of FAO's Right to Food Guidelines. This would go a long way in meeting the aspirations expressed in the 2008 civil society Bangkok Statement. We hope that COFI obliges and decides upon the most appropriate instrument for further recognizing small-scale artisanal fisheries

— from SAMUDRA Report, No.57, November, 2010

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MEETINGS

Thirty-fourth Session of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI), 1-5 February 2021, Rome, Italy
<http://www.fao.org/about/meetings/cofi/en/>

World Aquaculture and Fisheries Conference (WAC 2021), 19-20 May 2021
<https://www.worldaquacultureconference.com/>

World Fisheries Congress, 20-24 September 2021, Adelaide, Australia
<https://wfc2020.com.au/>

109th Session of the International Labour Conference, 7-18 June 2021
<https://www.ilo.org/ilc/ILCSessions/109/lang-en/index.htm>

MARE Conference People & the Sea XI, 28 June to 2 July 2021
<https://www.msp-platform.eu/events/mare-conference-people-sea-xi>

WEBSITES

Seafood Risk Assessment
<https://seafoodriskassessment.hk/>
Sustainable seafood is increasing in popularity around the world, yet much of the seafood popular in Asia

has not been assessed in terms of its sustainability. Over time, the Seafood Risk Assessment site aims to gradually fill that gap, by providing sustainability assessments of seafood for the Hong Kong market thereby ensuring that consumers have access to the sustainable seafood of their choice.

Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication
<http://www.fao.org/voluntary-guidelines-small-scale-fisheries/en/>

This website is about the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines). What makes the SSF Guidelines stand out is that they go beyond fisheries and highlight the rights of fishers and fishworkers. In sum, they are about people, not just about fish. The SSF Guidelines are aimed at all actors striving to secure sustainable small-scale fisheries, to end hunger and poverty, and strengthen human rights. They are a tool to guide dialogue, policy processes, and action at all levels, from local communities to global fora.