

## CLIMATE CHANGE

### Is this our last chance to act on the climate crisis?

In the Marshall Islands people are used to the vagaries of the ocean. But recently the monthly “king tide” has brought new perils to this small group of islands in the Pacific about halfway between Australia and Hawaii. Waves crash over the roads and airport runways, especially when the unusually high tide coincides with a storm surge, cutting off communication and making daily business dangerous or impossible.

The islanders’ lives are now full of inescapable reminders of climate breakdown, says Tina Stege, the climate envoy for the tiny nation of 60,000 people on 29 atolls. “We see stronger storms and storm surges. Droughts are more frequent and more intense and

longer. Growing up I remember just one very intense drought; now they’re happening maybe every three years. We recently had a dengue fever emergency, a problem we’re seeing now in the winter months as they get warmer.”

Stege is chair of the High Ambition Coalition, a grouping at the UN climate talks that brings together some of the world’s richest nations, including the EU, and some of the poorest and most vulnerable, to push for stronger climate action. Small island developing states are feeling the impact of climate change, but so, too, are far more populous countries, from low-lying Bangladesh to landlocked Rwanda, also members of the HAC, which represents more

than 1 billion people around the world.

“We are a small nation, but we have moral authority — our position on the frontline gives us that,” says Stege. “We need to raise our voice, as these changes will affect the whole world in time.”

Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/oct/30/is-this-our-last-chance-to-act-on-the-climate-crisis>

## BIODIVERSITY

### UN Biodiversity Conference adopts Kunming Declaration

The High-Level Segment of the UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15) closed today (13 October) with the adoption of the Kunming Declaration, where Parties to

the Convention committed to develop, adopt and implement an effective post-2020 global biodiversity framework that would biodiversity put on a path to recovery by 2030 at the latest, towards the full realization of the 2050 Vision of “Living in Harmony with Nature.” Critically, the framework would also include provision of the necessary means of implementation, in line with the Convention and its two protocols, as well as appropriate mechanisms for monitoring, reporting and review.

The landmark post 2020 global biodiversity framework is due to be adopted at part two of the UN Biodiversity Conference in May 2022, following further formal negotiations in January 2022. The Declaration gives clear political direction for those negotiations.

Source: <https://www.cbd.int/doc/press/2021/pr-2021-10-13-cop15-hls-en.pdf>

## ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

### Canoe and Fishing Gear Owners Association of Ghana (CaFGOAG)

Ghana has a coastline of about 550 km and a maritime domain, including the territorial sea and the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), of 228,000 sq km. The fisheries sector is the main source of food and livelihoods for coastal dwellers. Fish contributes significantly to nutrition and food security by providing for the bulk (over 60 per cent) of the country’s requirement for low-cost, but high-quality, protein, in addition to essential minerals, vitamins and fats.

The fisheries sector is categorized into three subsectors: industrial, semi industrial and artisanal. The artisanal sub-sector employs about 10 per cent of the population as fishers, processors, boat owners, The boat builders, and others in ancillary jobs. Direct workforce in the industry includes about 140,000 fishermen in the four coastal regions of Ghana. The sector comprises 14,275 motorized and non-motorized registered canoes which operate within the Inshore Exclusive Zone (waters between the coastline and the 30-m isobath

or the 6-nautical miles offshore limit, whichever is farther) and beyond.

Available data indicate a decline in fish catch from the mid-1990s, resulting in the rollout of several management measures, including closed fishing seasons in the artisanal sector. In spite of the enormous contributions of the artisanal



subsector, participation of artisanal fishers in Ghana’s fisheries governance has been limited and weak over the years. In artisanal fisheries, canoe and gear owners are the key stakeholders. They have the economic and social power to make decisions in the business of fishing, which drives the whole fisheries economy.

Such key identifiable actors and decisionmakers have to be mobilized and guided to play their role effectively. This is the fundamental reason for the

mobilization of the canoe and gear owners into an association, the Canoe and Fishing Gear Owners Association of Ghana (CaFGOAG), to ensure their meaningful participation in the fisheries-governance architecture.

Canoe owners have existed since the beginning of fishing in the 18th century, and will continue to exist as long as fishing is done. After several years of struggle to have a voice in fisheries governance and management, and several years without proper representation at policy dialogues, CaFGOAG formalized its association on 28 May 2021.

The mission of the Association is to represent canoe and gear owners and facilitate stakeholders’ engagements whilst promoting sustainable fishing and the welfare of artisanal fishers. The Association is structured under national, regional and local branches, across the four coastal regions of Ghana: Volta, Greater Accra, and the Central and Western regions.

CaFGOAG has been instrumental in the organization

of 2,021 fishing closed seasons, educating the fishers and sensitizing them on the negative impact of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. It does so while advocating for the protection and promotion of artisanal fisheries and the effective implementation of fisheries laws and management plans. This is done through meetings, radio and television discussions, and press releases and conferences. The Association also organizes events to mark International Days related to fisheries, and maintains a good relationship with Ghana’s Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development, the Fisheries Commission, civil society and non-governmental organizations, and fisheries associations and traditional authorities. CaFGOAG is always open for engagements and partnerships towards rebuilding Ghana’s fisheries.

Source: Nana Kweigyah, Chairman, CaFGOAG <https://twitter.com/canoegear?lang=en>

Email: [canoowners@gmail.com](mailto:canoowners@gmail.com)

## Opportunities and challenges for the promotion of decent work in the aquaculture sector

### Addressing decent work challenges in the aquaculture sector

Despite its growing contribution to employment, rural livelihoods, economic development, food security and nutrition in many countries, aquaculture faces significant decent work deficits alongside other important social and environmental challenges. As demonstrated in the sections below, decent work deficits that often characterize the sector, especially in many developing and emerging economies, include: the prevalence of informality and discrimination; the presence of child and forced labour, primarily in the informal economy; a lack of organization and social dialogue; low and insecure wages and incomes; low levels of skills; low productivity; poor working conditions and occupational safety and health (OSH) practices; limited social protection; and lack of stable and formal contracts. The seasonality in the production of certain aquaculture species affects livelihoods and jobs not only of those engaged in upstream activities, but also in processing. Employment in aquaculture may be dependent on domestic and international market demand, as has been demonstrated by the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the sector. Addressing these deficits will be key to ensuring the future sustainability of the sector and of the economies to which it contributes.

While there are a number of international labour standards that are of direct relevance to the sector, their application is often limited, as some workers may not be covered by labour legislation due to the nature of their work, absence of an employment relationship or their legal status in the country of employment, as is often the case with migrant workers. Furthermore, in rural economies of developing countries, law enforcement, labour inspection and compliance are often lacking or ineffective. Limited

organization and opportunities for voices to be heard among aquaculture workers prevent them from exercising their rights and influencing decision-making processes that affect their working and living conditions.

The following section provides an analysis of the salient employment and labour issues facing the sector. While in describing these issues examples refer to individual countries, these challenges are common across most developing countries engaged in aquaculture production.

### Promoting decent employment creation, skills and enterprise development

In many countries, the aquaculture sector is characterized by the increasing casualization of waged labour and outsourcing practices. Although most countries have relevant legislation regarding casual work, workers are often engaged long term on a casual basis with limited or no entitlement to annual, personal or paternity leave, notice of termination or redundancy pay. In some countries, women are disproportionately represented in casual and informal jobs in the sector. Low literacy and skill levels, limited knowledge about rights and responsibilities and low levels of local organization hinder improvements in skills, productivity and incomes.

In countries where, despite its potential, aquaculture is still in its infancy, the sector's development is often constrained by a lack of people with the technical skills in fish farming. Skills and workforce shortages are also among key concerns in countries where the sector is in advanced stages of development. In addition to the challenge of finding highly skilled talent with the necessary technical training and knowledge required in operations using advanced technologies, enterprises often struggle to attract and retain a general workforce due to the

declining population in rural areas, where most aquaculture activities take place, and the laborious nature of the work. For example, in Canada, the sector suffers tens of millions of lost sales annually due to labour shortages, which hamper the sector's expansion. In some countries, the demand for low-skilled workers is addressed through labour migration. Attracting young women and men into the sector is particularly challenging and will require targeted interventions, including through modernization of the sector, increased use of modern technology, better wages and raising its status as a source of decent jobs.

In many developing countries, the challenge is compounded by an inadequate enabling environment for the development of sustainable enterprises and limited access to financial services, modern technology and infrastructure. Creating conditions for sustainable enterprise development, which, inter alia, encourage investment, entrepreneurship, workers' rights and social dialogue; improving access to financial services, technical or entrepreneurship skill development opportunities, in particular for women and young people; and enhancing agriculture extension services will contribute to improved sector productivity, performance and growth.

### Improving social protection coverage and occupational safety and health in the aquaculture sector

A growing diversification in work arrangements is increasingly making social protection less accessible to agriculture workers, including those in the aquaculture sector. Informality and lack of infrastructure and services in rural areas have traditionally posed significant barriers to rural workers' access to social protection services, even when

they are legally mandated. In view of the prevalence of informal, casual and migrant workers in the sector, aquaculture workers' access to social protection remains a challenge in many countries.

In Chile, for example, due to the increased use of subcontracting and casual labour, a significant number of salmon farm workers are not adequately covered by national social security legislation. Studies on the working conditions of shrimp processing workers in Kerala, most of whom are women employed as daily wage workers through contractors, found that the majority of them were not provided with state-mandated social security benefits. For instance, only 15.71 per cent of surveyed workers had Employees' Provident Fund accounts. While migrant workers in Thailand have the same right to access social security, including healthcare and paid sick leave, as local workers in reality many, including those in the aquaculture sector, lack coverage as they are employed informally. In recent years, the Government has been tackling this challenge through the regularization of undocumented migrant workers.

Aquaculture production is labour intensive and, as most agricultural activities, by its nature physically demanding, and those engaged in it are exposed to multiple OSH hazards with short- and long-term consequences. Aquaculture-specific OSH data is sparse, as it is often considered within the broader agricultural sector. In most aquaculture-producing countries, the focus of policies and regulations has mainly been on product quality, food safety and environmental risks, but less on worker safety and health.

*Source: The future of work in aquaculture in the context of the rural economy*

[https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_dialogue/---sector/documents/meetingdocument/wcms\\_8r8r49.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_dialogue/---sector/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_8r8r49.pdf)

## INFOLOG: NEW RESOURCES AT ICSF

### Publications and Infographics

**Social Impact Monitoring and Vulnerability Assessment (SIMVA) 2018: Report on 2018 baseline survey of the Lower Mekong mainstream and floodplain areas 2021**

<https://www.mrcmekong.org/assets/Publications/SIMVA2018.pdf>  
Covering 2,800 households in 200 villages the 2018 survey shows that communities in the Mekong mainstream corridor were still dependent on the river resources for their livelihoods, income, and well-being.

### Global Gender Gap Report 2021

[https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_GGGR\\_2021.pdf](https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2021.pdf)  
As the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic continues to be felt, closing the global gender gap has increased by a generation from 99.5 years to 135.6 years.

### Lockdown lessons from South Africa's fisheries: Building resilience in small-scale fishing communities

[https://www.cms.int/sites/default/files/publication/cms\\_report\\_migratory\\_species\\_and\\_plastic\\_pollution\\_31AUG2021.pdf](https://www.cms.int/sites/default/files/publication/cms_report_migratory_species_and_plastic_pollution_31AUG2021.pdf)

The Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown restrictions exacerbated and amplified many pre-existing vulnerabilities in small-scale fishing communities.

### Indigenous Peoples' food systems: Insights on sustainability and resilience in the front line of climate change

<http://www.fao.org/3/cb5131en/cb5131en.pdf>

This publication provides an overview of the common and unique sustainability elements of Indigenous Peoples' food systems, in terms of natural resource management, access to the market, diet diversity, indigenous peoples' governance systems, and links to traditional knowledge and indigenous languages.

### World Social Protection Report 2020-22: Social protection at the crossroads – in pursuit of a better future

[https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms\\_817572.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_817572.pdf)

This ILO flagship report provides a global overview of recent developments in social protection systems, including social protection floors, and covers the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Infographic Video on SSF Guidelines

This video gives a brief overview of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (the SSF Guidelines), adopted by member countries of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in 2014.

Translated in French and Spanish

#### French

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rQgO6RmQaiA>

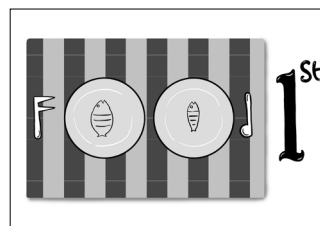
#### Spanish

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ItefaviIKa4>

## FLASHBACK

### Food First?

Fish is at one and the same time both a source of food and income. This is a quintessential characteristic which should be borne in mind while discussing the issue of food security. In fishing communities, on the one hand, there are large numbers who depend primarily on fishing for a livelihood. For them, it is



the income from the sale of fish that lets them pay for the bare necessities of life. On the other hand, there are those who rely on farming, fishing or mere gathering from the bush, in order to exist.

From the point of view of consumers, in several developing countries there exist underprivileged classes like agricultural labourers, plantation and mine workers, who bank on fish as a source of cheap protein. This demand for fish is met mostly by domestic or regional trade. In contrast, there are fairly prosperous consumers in developed countries whose culture, habits and dietary preferences, more than anything else, determine the demand for fish. The requirements for this large market are satisfied mostly from imports.

Recent international efforts to address the issue of food security have gone only part of the way. Consider the Kyoto Declaration and Plan of Action on the Sustainable Contribution of Fisheries to Food Security that sprung from last year's International Conference on the Sustainable Contribution of Fisheries to Food Security, as well as the 31st Session of the FAO Committee on Food Security in February this year. They provide only fragmentary approaches on how to effectively address the issue of food security in the context of fisheries.

Furthermore, concentrating only on the supply side, without in any way restraining demand, could be ultimately counterproductive. This is because the market is the worst enemy of good resource management. The market mechanism invariably proves efficient enough to absorb large quantities of fish and can thus subvert any management measure, however worthwhile.

In countries of the South, different policy matrices can be constructed, depending on whose food security is on the agenda. Thus it is important to develop a judicious programme for fishing communities that spells out regional priorities, based on social and economic considerations. Simultaneously, such a programme should also address the consumption requirements of local consumers. The over-riding objective—necessarily double-headed and thus somewhat contradictory—should be the welfare of both fishworkers and underprivileged consumers. Clearly, this is a difficult goal. But it will never be reached if two vital aspects are forgotten: better management and allocation of fishery stocks, and greater protection of fish habitats.

— from SAMUDRA Report, No.14, March 1996

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### MEETINGS

**Twenty-fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (Resumed), 12 - 28 January 2022, Geneva, Switzerland.**

<https://www.cbd.int/meetings/>

The resumed sessions of the 24th meeting of the SBSTTA 24 and the 3rd meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI 3) of the CBD, as well as the third Meeting of the Open-ended Working Group on

the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (WG2020-3) will take place in January 2022.

**Technical meeting on the future of work in aquaculture in the context of the rural economy, 13 - 17 December 2021, Geneva, Switzerland**

[https://www.ilo.org/sector/activities/sectoral-meetings/WCMS\\_815527/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/sector/activities/sectoral-meetings/WCMS_815527/lang--en/index.htm)

The meeting will discuss issues relating to the future of work and

the promotion of decent work in the aquaculture sector, with the aim of adopting conclusions, including recommendations for future action.

### WEBSITES

**ICSF Digital Library Online**

<http://www.icsfarchives.net>

A digitised version of ICSF library, with more than 2000 original documents and 12,000+ curated links, collected over the last 33 years.

### SSF Forum

<http://www.fao.org/gfcm/activities/fisheries/small-scale-fisheries/ssfforum>

SSF Forum is a place for small-scale fishers and fish workers from the Mediterranean and Black Sea region to come together, share knowledge and exchange best practices.

### Pamalakaya

<https://angpamalakaya.org/>

Pamalakaya is an alliance of activist fisherfolk groups in the Philippines with over 100,000 individual members.