

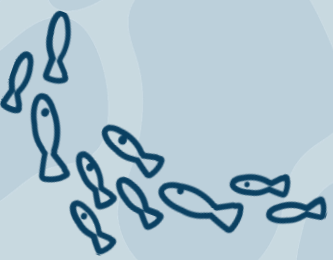
DECENT WORK AND SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS: An Institutional and International Perspective

Session 7

Integrating Social Metrics into Economic Growth Strategies for Small
Pelagic Fisheries

May 2026, La Paz, Mexico

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Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

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- IMPORTANCE OF THE SECTOR
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- UNDERSTANDING “DECENT WORK” IN THE SECTOR
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- WHY MEASURING THE SOCIAL DIMENSION?
- WAY FORWARD TO IMPROVE DECENT WORKING CONDITIONS IN THE SECTOR

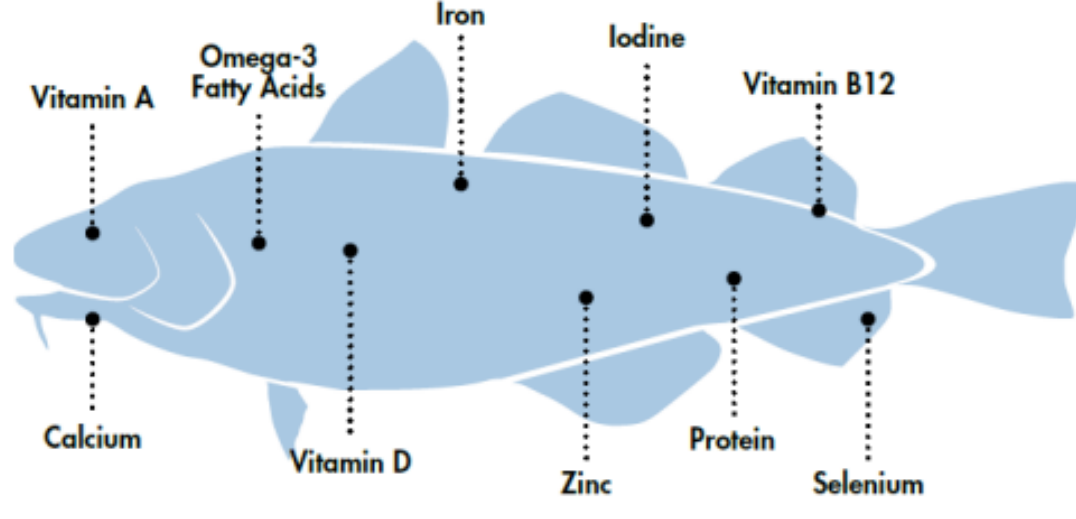


THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE SECTOR



IMPORTANCE OF THE SECTOR: (1/3)

Food Security



Vitamin A

Omega-3 Fatty Acids

Iron

Iodine

Vitamin B12

Calcium

Vitamin D

Zinc

Protein

Selenium

LONG CHAIN OMEGA-3 FATS

Mainly found in fish and fishery products, these fatty acids are essential for optimal brain development.

IODINE

Seafood is in practice the only natural source of this crucial nutrient. Iodine serves several purposes like aiding thyroid function. It is also essential for neurodevelopment.

VITAMIN D

Another nutrient crucial for mental development, this vitamin also regulates the immune system function and is essential for healthy bones.

IRON

During pregnancy, iron intake is crucial so that the mother can produce additional blood for herself and the baby.

CALCIUM, ZINC, OTHER MINERALS

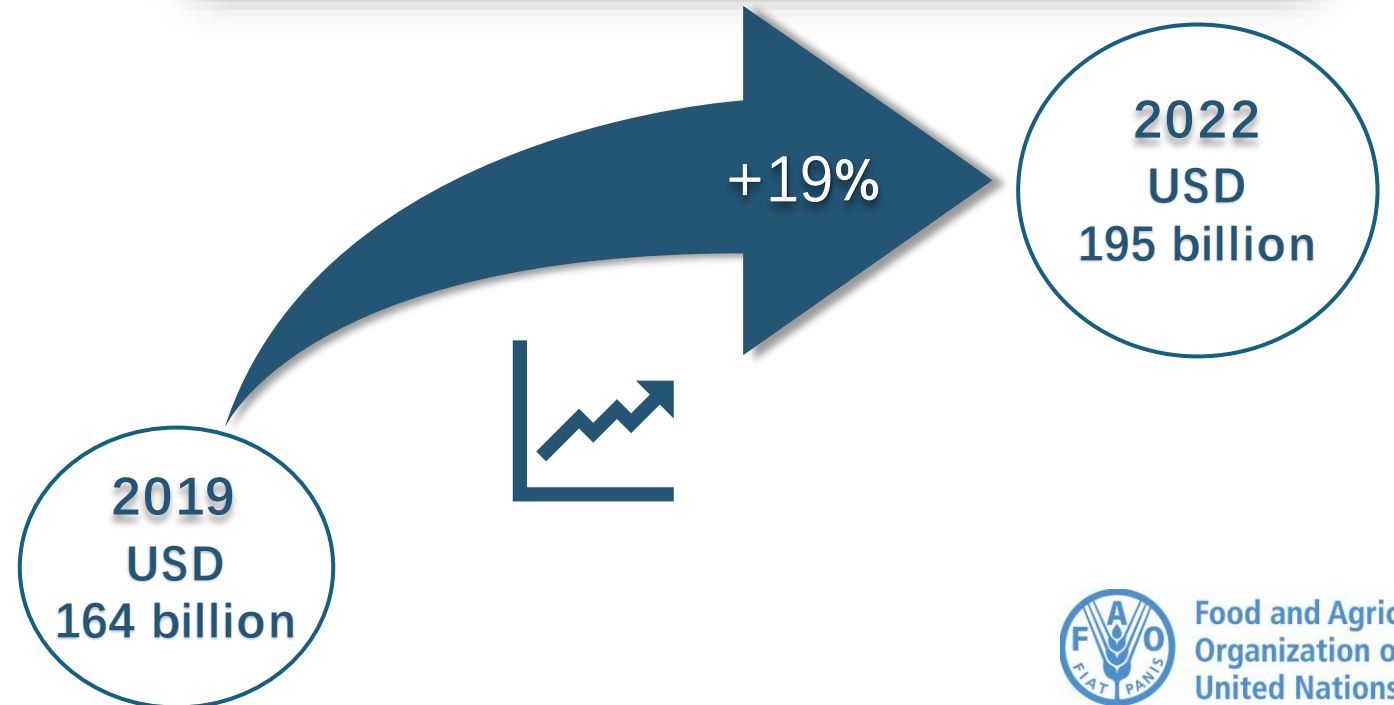
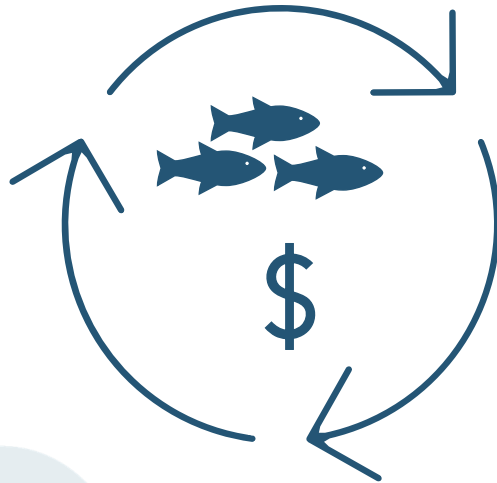
Diets without dairy products often lack calcium, and zinc deficiency slows a child's development.



IMPORTANCE OF THE SECTOR: (2/3)

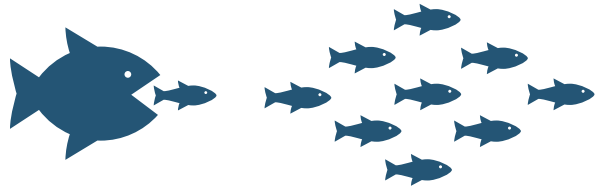
Economy

38%
of fish production entered
international markets



IMPORTANCE OF THE SECTOR: (2/3)




Economy



Small-pelagic fisheries



Affordable + highly nutritious

-  sardines
-  anchovies
-  mackerel

 **Key for local economies:**

Developing countries

Small-scale fishers

Coastal communities

HOWEVER

Small-pelagic fisheries are characterized by high vulnerability



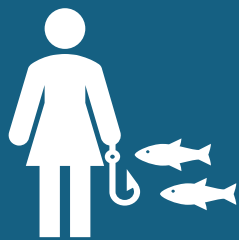
IMPORTANCE OF THE SECTOR: (3/3)

Employment and livelihoods

2022

62 million people in the primary sector of fisheries and aquaculture

WOMEN



53%
of the
workforce in
fisheries

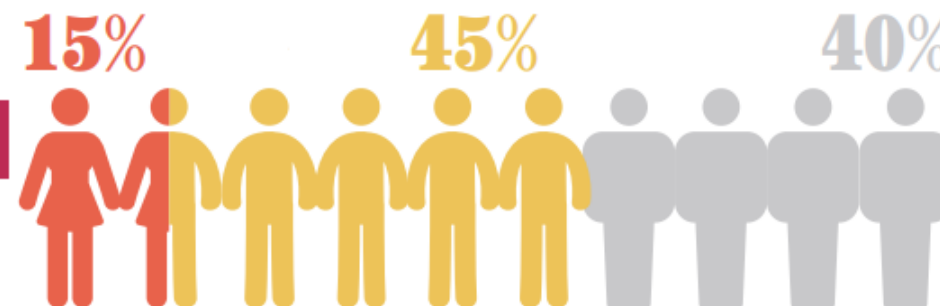
34
MILLION

CAPTURE
FISHERIES



22
MILLION

AQUACULTURE



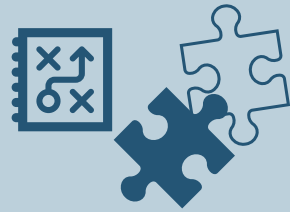
■ WOMEN ■ MEN ■ SEX UNSPECIFIED

*Excluding 6 million unspecified workers.

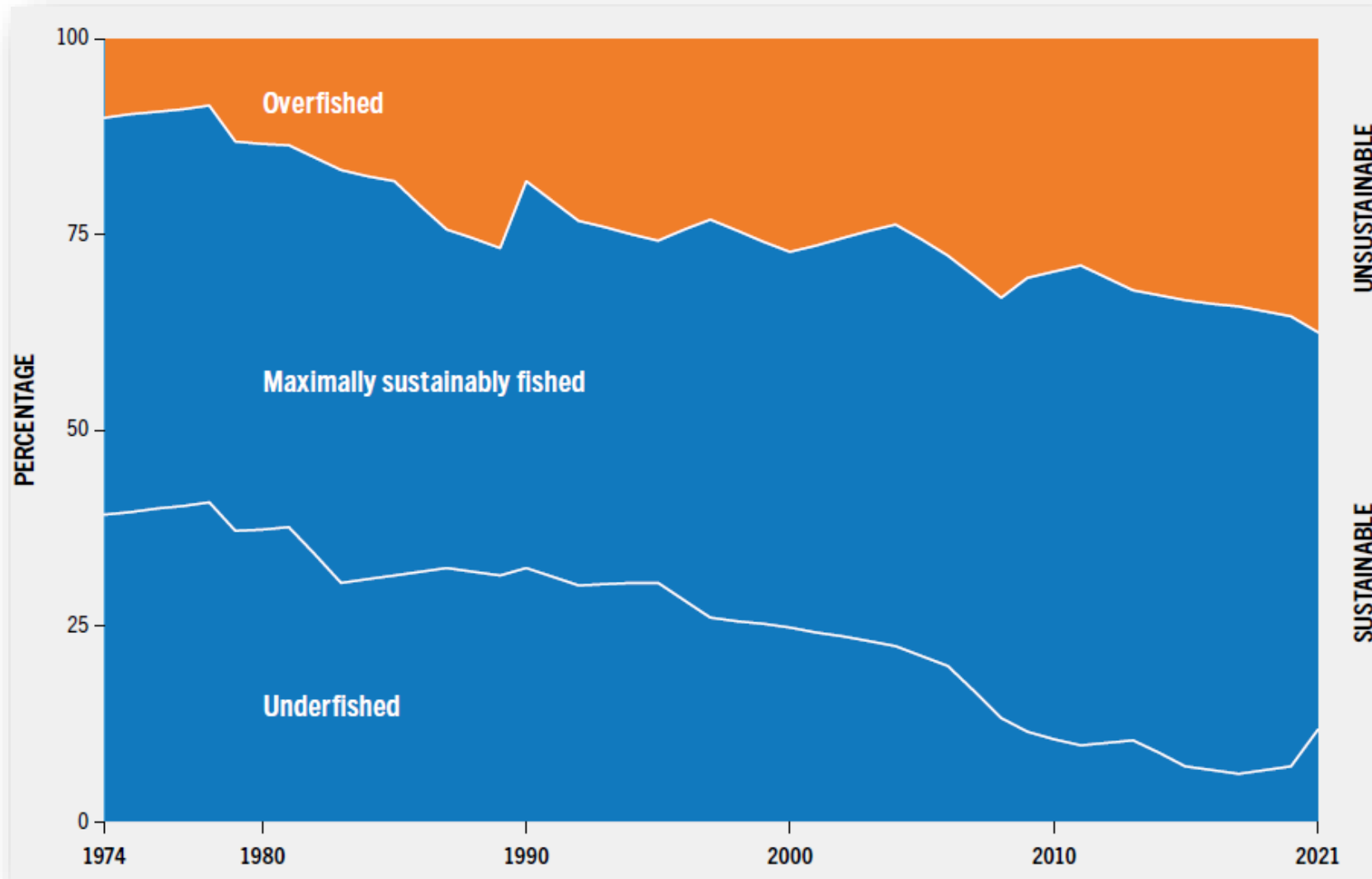
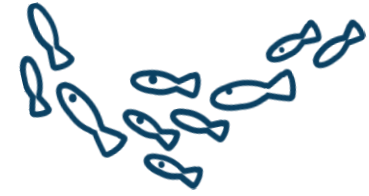


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MAIN CHALLENGES SHAPING THE SECTOR



THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S MARINE FISHERY STOCKS

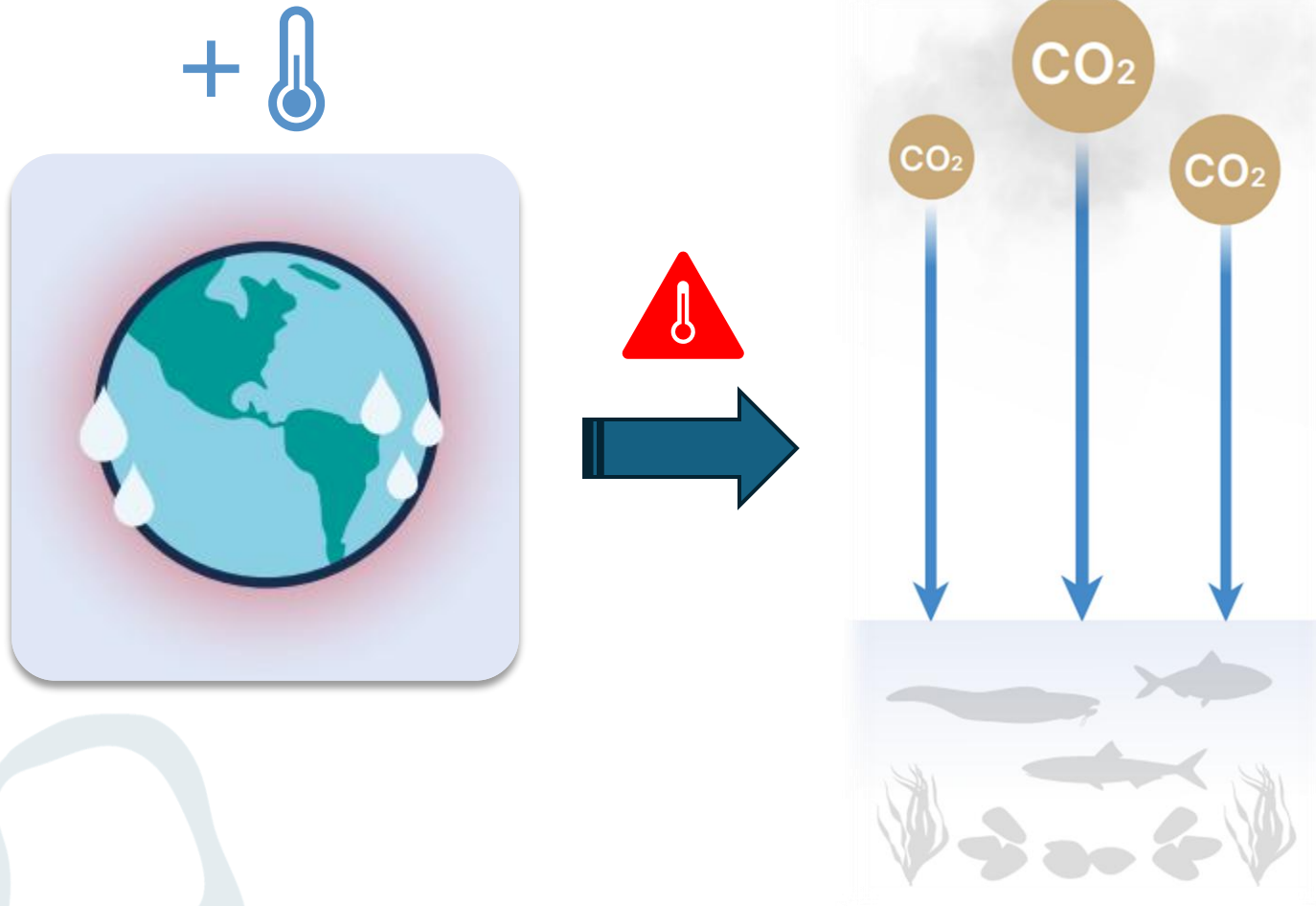


UNSUSTAINABLE

SUSTAINABLE



THE IMPACTS OF THE CLIMATE CHANGE



The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Dialogue:

- recognized the significant potential of aquatic foods to provide essential solutions to climate change;
- the importance of integrating them into both national and multilateral climate action processes.



WHY WERE THE IMPACTS SO ACUTE IN THE FISHERIES SECTOR



Fishers are particularly vulnerable to covariate shocks

- Happens at the high seas and in areas within national jurisdiction.
- Collapse of local fisheries,
- Associated with other crimes (forced labour).

Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing



- Global problem: involves developing and developed countries.
- Weak or limited enforcement.
- Physical violence, confiscation of passports, excessive working conditions, etc.

Human and labour rights



- Income variability.
- Gender inequality.
- Limited access to finance.
- High rates of self-employment.
- Informality.

Social protection



UNDERSTANDING “DECENT WORK” IN THE SECTOR



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WHAT IS DECENT WORK?

According to ILO:

Work that is productive and provides a:

Fair income



security in the workplace



social protection



equal rights



Opportunities for personal development



participation for all workers



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WHAT IS SOCIAL PROTECTION?

According to FAO:

Social protection is a set of policies and programmes aimed at preventing or protecting all people against poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion

3 pillars of social protection:

Social Assistance

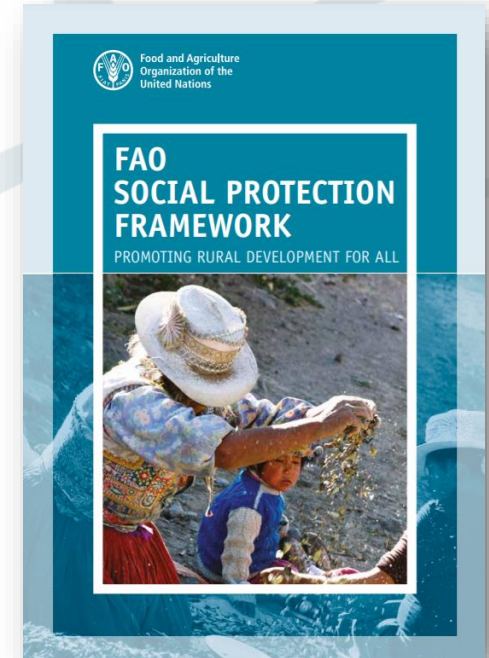
Offering cash and in-kind transfers and services

Social Security

Contributory, such as pensions and health insurance

Labour Market Intervention

Aim to build skills, and enhance employability and productivity



FAO WORK ON DECENT WORK IN FISHERIES

Projects

Building a safety net for Cabo Verde's peixeiras



Capacity building

FAO-CIHEAM International Advanced Course Strengthens Capacity to Promote Decent Working Conditions in Fisheries



Events and meetings

FAO advances efforts to strengthen social protection for fishers and fish workers



Beyond the catch: Advancing towards dignity and decent work for fishers and fish workers in the sector

📍 Virtual Event, 21/11/2025



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FAO FRAMEWORKS RELEVANT TO DECENT WORK IN FISHERIES



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Core principle: **Human rights and dignity**

BLUE TRANSFORMATION

Recognizes, respects and promotes and protects human right principles



Ensures:

- Equitable access to marine resources
- Sustainable livelihoods
- Social inclusion in sector



FAO INSTRUMENTS AND TOOLS

 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture
Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Alimentación y la Agricultura

Revised edition
Édition révisée
Edición revisada

AGREEMENT
ON PORT STATE MEASURES TO PREVENT, DETER AND ELIMINATE ILLEGAL, UNREPORTED AND UNREGULATED FISHING

ACCORD
RELATIF AUX MESURES DU RESSORT DE L'ÉTAT DU PORT VISANT À PREVENIR, CONTRECARRER ET ÉLIMINER LA PÊCHE ILLICITE, NON DÉCLARÉE ET NON RÉGLEMENTÉE

ACUERDO
SOBRE MEDIDAS DEL ESTADO RECTOR DEL PUERTO DESTINADAS A PREVENIR, DESALENTAR Y ELIMINAR LA PESCA ILEGAL, NO DECLARADA Y NO REGLAMENTADA




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THE Global Record
of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels



Providing a single access point for information on vessels used for fishing and fishing-related activities to combat Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing


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CODE OF CONDUCT FOR RESPONSIBLE FISHERIES





  International Labour Organization

Guidance on addressing child labour in fisheries and aquaculture

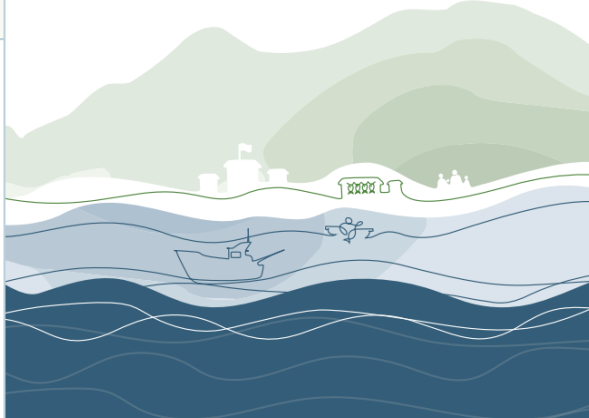
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Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries
in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication

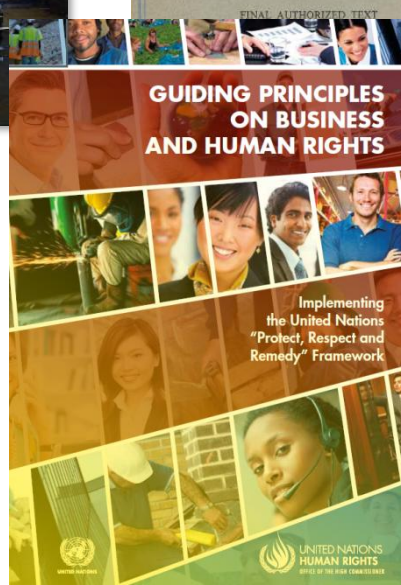
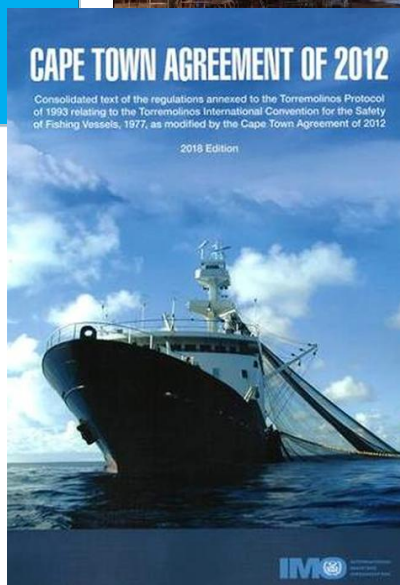
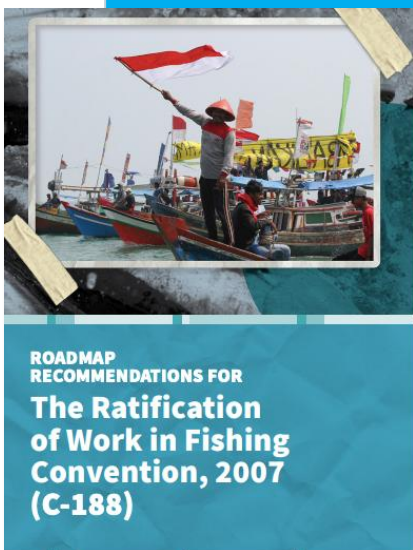
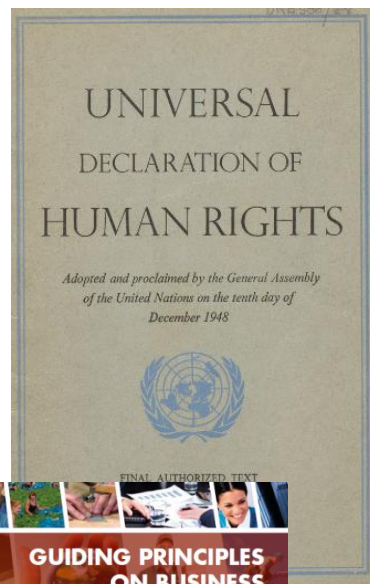
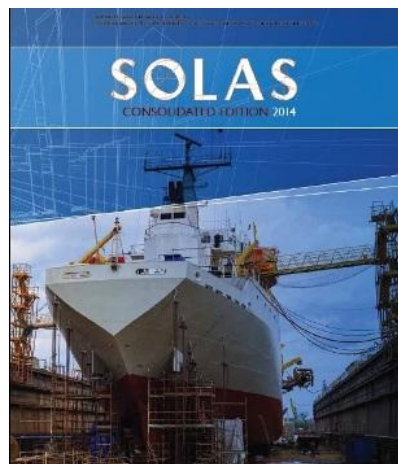
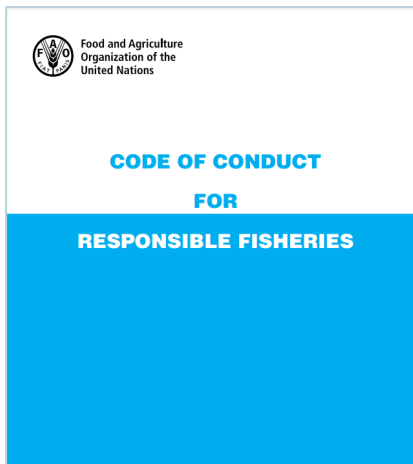


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Voluntary Guidelines for Catch Documentation Schemes



OTHER INSTRUMENTS AND TOOLS...



FAO Guidance on Social Responsibility in the Fisheries and Aquaculture Value Chains

Based on 3 pillars:



Human and labour rights



Decent work



Social protection

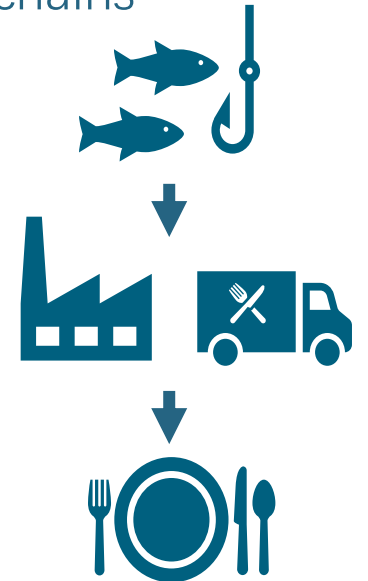
Target audience:



Business actors/private sector

Also, a valuable reference instrument for policymakers, regional fisheries management organisations (RFMO) and civil society.

Covers the entire fisheries and aquaculture value chains



FAO Guidance on Social Responsibility in the Fisheries and Aquaculture Value Chains

Build upon the wide variety of **existing** international conventions, agreements and standards (ILO, IMO, UN...)



Not a new standard.

Objective:



Promote the implementation of these international instruments and tools

Characteristics:

- voluntary
- practical
- complementary
- easy to understand
- supportive
- non-binding



Consider different **national realities and capacities**, especially in developing countries and small-scale fisheries.



First part



General framework

- Objective, target audience, scope and nature
- Internationally agreed principles
- Other cross-cutting aspects

FAO Guidance on Social Responsibility in the Fisheries and Aquaculture Value Chains

Second part



Industrial fishing



Small-scale fishing



Aquaculture production



Processing



Distribution



Wholesaling and retailing

WHY MEASURING THE SOCIAL DIMENSION?



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THE DATA GAP: A Barrier to Better Decision-Making

Social aspects **are often underrepresented** in fisheries data systems

A big challenge: LACK OF INFORMATION

Fisheries management is based on:

-  Biological indicators (stocks, catches)
-  Economic indicators (production value)

 Social data gaps



not
measured



not in
policy
decisions

Measuring social indicators could help to:

- Understand livelihood dependence on fisheries
- Identify vulnerabilities and inequalities
- Monitor working conditions and decent work
- Assess impacts of management measures on communities
- Support evidence-based policymaking

WAY FORWARD TO IMPROVE DECENT WORKING CONDITIONS IN THE SECTOR



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ADVANCING TOWARDS BETTER WORKING CONDITIONS IN THE SECTOR – KEY PRIORITIES

Strengthen implementation of global frameworks

FAO instruments, ILO conventions, recommendations and protocols, and other relevant UN tools

Improve social data and monitoring systems

social indicators, gender-disaggregated and inclusive data

Integrate social objectives into fisheries management

include livelihoods and decent work consideration in decision-making

Promote decent work in the sector and expand social protection programmes

improve safety, labour conditions and formalization/insurance, pensions, income support, shock-responsive systems

Strengthen participatory governance

empower fishers' organizations and communities, support co-management and local decision-making

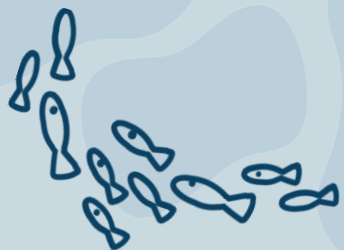
Promote climate-resilient livelihoods and enhance cross-sectoral policy coherence

adaptation strategies, diversification of income source, link fisheries with social, labour, and rural development policies



THANKS FOR YOUR ATTENTION

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