

# SPEAKING NOTES IPC FISHERIES WORKING GROUP LAUNCH OF THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF ARTISANAL FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE 2022

Friday 19 November 2021  
13:00-15:00 CET

I speak on behalf of the International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty -IPC Working Group on SSF. We, in IPC, represent small-scale fisher people including Indigenous Peoples from the four global movements, the World Forum of Fish Harvesters and Fish Workers (WFF), the World Forum of Fisher Peoples (WFFP), the International Indian Treaty Council (IITC), and La Via Campesina (LVC). Our constituencies span across the entire world and both from coastal and inland fishing communities.

We are pleased to be part of the launch of the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture 2022 and welcome the opening of the launch by FAO Director-General, Qu Dongyu. We formed IPC in 2003 in efforts to ensure our participation in FAO processes and governance decision making more broadly. We are therefore also welcoming the Director-General's emphasis on working together with us and recognizing small-scale fishers and fish workers' contribution to ensure human well-being and healthy food systems. We wish to go further and underline the utmost importance of protecting and promoting the human rights of our constituencies, as enshrined in the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication – or SSF Guidelines, of which we were part in developing.

On the 21st of November, we will be celebrating World Fisheries Day all over the world. This day carries our rich history and was first celebrated when we formed the global fisher movements (WFF/WFFP) in Delhi in 1997. Back then, we denounced industrial fishing and aquaculture because it brings with it environmental destruction and expropriation of fishing communities. We decided that World Fisheries Day would be a day for the advancement of small-scale capture fisheries.

We, small-scale fishers worldwide, will celebrate the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture, focusing on small-scale fisheries, by sharing our experiences from the ground and showing the world that Food Sovereignty is the true solution to food systems transformation.

We will continue to build international solidarity and reinforce our Global Movement. We will also continue to hold states accountable in implementing the SSF Guidelines, a commitment made by all FAO member states in 2014, by using a people-centered framework for monitoring. To this end, we ask Governments to celebrate IYAFA by adopting the Small-Scale Fisheries Guidelines to secure the rights of small-scale fisher peoples and stop irreversible pollution of rivers and seas, the loss of livelihoods for our communities, and the grabbing of coastal and inland territories.

We call for a renewed support of FAO to the Global Strategic Framework in support of the Implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries and a real commitment from the Friends of the SSF Guidelines to support and work closely with fishers' communities all over the world for a shift from a market-driven model to a human rights-based approach.

We reaffirm our commitment to work with our governments and the FAO to implement the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries. Again, we welcome the Director-General's emphasis on working with us in these difficult times where our participation in governance processes are fundamental for getting us all through the Covid-19 pandemic and climate change and disasters.