



To: Member State Representatives of the UN FAO Committee on Fisheries
From: Eric Schwaab, Senior Vice President, Environmental Defense Fund
Date: 29 January 2021
Subject: Statement on behalf of Environmental Defense Fund respecting Agenda Item 8,
'Supporting small-scale and artisanal fisheries'

Environmental Defense Fund¹ (EDF) recognizes and applauds the FAO and the Committee on Fisheries' (COFI) continued attention to small-scale fisheries and dedication to supporting the implementation of the SSF Guidelines, in recognition of the contributions sustainable small-scale fisheries make to food and nutrition security, poverty alleviation and healthy oceans.

We invite and encourage Member States and others supporting SSF Guidelines implementation to access and share tools and resources for small-scale fisheries via the new [Small-Scale Fisheries Resource and Collaboration Hub](#) (SSF Hub), which supports the Small-Scale Fisheries-Global Strategic Framework and Knowledge Sharing Platform. The SSF Hub was developed through a participatory and collaborative process with a coalition of partners from the small-scale fishing and conservation communities. It aims to foster learning, information sharing, and capacity enhancement to the benefit of all stakeholders and accelerate the implementation of the SSF Guidelines.

Furthermore, we encourage Members to ensure adequate representation of small-scale fisheries in the pursuit of Sustainable Development Goal 2 (Zero Hunger), given the important role fish play in food and nutrition security. Ninety percent of catch from small-scale fisheries goes to human consumption, providing hundreds of millions of the world's people a source of irreplaceable nutrients; yet the role of fish in alleviating hunger and malnutrition has been underrepresented in global food policy discussions, decision-making and funding. Innovative policies and actions are needed to promote food systems that

¹ Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) is an international conservation organization with over 2.5 million members and supporters on five continents. The [EDF Oceans Program](#) works with communities, governments, academia, funders and others to manage fisheries with the goal of restoring and maintaining fish populations, coastal communities and marine habitats so they can thrive even in the face of climate change

recognize the criticality of fish as food (and source of essential micronutrients), and institute adequate governance of distribution, supply chains and post-harvest processes (as articulated in new publication by [Bennett et al.](#)). The [United Nations Food Systems Summit](#) to occur later this year provides a key opportunity for Members to elevate the profile of capture fisheries and aquaculture in both policy and action.

The International Year of Artisanal Fishing and Aquaculture 2022 presents an additional opportunity to enhance support for and collaboration amongst small-scale fishers, fishworkers, and other actors. We encourage Members to support activities that elevate the voices and experiences of small-scale fishers and fishworkers in national and international policy dialogues.

Thank you for considering this request. EDF remains eager to collaborate with the FAO and COFI on this important work.