

The Stage is Set

The International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC) has been active in IYAFA celebrations. It is all set to carry forward the energy

The United Nations designated 2022 as the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAFA 2022). The global action plan emphasized the objective for the year as “a world in which small-scale artisanal fishers, fish farmers and fishworkers of both genders are fully acknowledged and empowered to sustainably manage their aquatic resources and foster socioeconomic development”. As a part of this initiative, social movements and organizations representing small-scale fisheries (SSF) were encouraged to seize the opportunity to enhance the visibility of SSF and their significant social, cultural and economic contributions.

The International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC), an international platform representing small-scale food producers at the global level, participated in the celebrations through the efforts of the IPC Fishers’ Working Group (FWG). The group held the role of Vice-Chair within the IYAFA steering committee, contributing to the successful realization of IYAFA’s goals.

In its long-standing commitment to advocacy, FWG has consistently operated at international, regional and national levels through its affiliates, all of which have contributed with several national events to IYAFA. These aimed to propel the enforcement of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines), the primary and singular international documents encapsulating the rights and principles vital for safeguarding SSF rights. As part of its involvement in the IYAFA celebration, FWG, supported by the Advisory Group (AG) and the three Regional Advisory Groups (RAGs), dedicated substantial efforts throughout 2022 to develop the SSF

People-Centred Methodology to assess at the national level the SSF Guidelines.

This is tailored to assess progress and human rights violations within SSF communities, collaborating closely with these communities to comprehensively examine the implementation of the Guidelines. This pioneering methodology is intended to serve as a guiding document, enabling local communities to collect pertinent qualitative data regarding the status of SSF communities regarding the principles of human rights endorsed by the SSF Guidelines. This assessment aims to ensure that governments are held accountable for their commitments and present an accurate portrayal of

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the genuine implementation of the Guidelines. The timing is perfect with IYAFA’s momentum carrying over to the 10th anniversary of the SSF Guidelines in 2024, thereby shedding light on the realities faced by SSF a decade after the endorsement. Considering the lasting impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, this will aim to reinvigorate the advocacy efforts all across.

A report, a reckoning

The IPC Working Group on Fisheries and the SSF-GSF AG collaborated to spearhead the development of a first report using the SSF People Methodology. The preliminary report, titled ‘People-Centered Assessment of the Implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable

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Small-Scale Fisheries', was crafted based on this methodology involving IPC members of SSF movements from all over the world. The data collected from the 21 participating countries, as presented in the preliminary report, illustrated a distressing pattern of non-implementation. A few positive instances were overshadowed by a significant violations of human rights. This underscored the systemic marginalization of SSF within their respective societies.

Although the preliminary report was an initial attempt at utilizing this methodology, IPC members undertook the responsibility to deepen the analysis by conducting three additional assessments at the regional level through the RAGs in 2023. These will help assess the implementation of the SSF Guidelines, shedding light on human rights issues from a more regional perspective.

The preliminary report was presented during the first SSF Summit on 2 to 4 September 2022; IPC's Working Group on Fisheries had contributed to its organization. IPC seized the opportunity provided by the concurrent 35th FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) session, coinciding with IYAFA, to

commemorate the diverse SSF people's movements globally by organizing a one-day SSF global gathering during the SSF Summit. Dubbed 'The Peasants of the Oceans and Inland Water Bodies: Living with Nature', the event was a critical opportunity to establish a unified perspective on critical topics concerning the survival and dignity of SSF communities; to foster a collective space of solidarity; to emphasize the potential roles of fisher movements in transforming the global fishery system; and to introduce and launch the SSF People Methodology alongside its inaugural pilot report.

The open dialogue held during the summit greatly contributed to shaping a shared vision among several organizations and movements. The IPC's event gathered numerous SSF organizations from all over the world, including representatives from CAOPA, the Ibero-American SSF network RIPAPE and the Sambo Creek fisher association, as well as representatives from the Garifuna Indigenous Peoples, the Central American Network of Indigenous Peoples and Small-Scale Fishers, the NGO Mauritania 2000 and others.

To build on the solidarity of the SSF Summit and IYAFA, IPC organized

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The IPC Working Group on Fisheries delegation to the COFI35, FAO, September 2022



IPC Working Group on Fisheries delegation to the UN Ocean Conference in Lisbon, June 2022

a series of trainings and exchanges within the SSF sector, which continue to this day. The training programmes aim to build and strengthen SSF capacities by providing new and young leaders of small-scale social movements with a comprehensive understanding of the political and economic landscape in which they operate. The training is divided into two main sessions. The first focuses on the provision of theoretical tools and policy analysis through six modules covering topics such as the current economic system, the human rights approach, inter-governmental policy spaces, social movement politics and public policy on SSF. The second session focuses on practical skills and tools, such as developing an advocacy strategy, ensuring human rights, improving public speaking and enhancing leadership skills.

The first training programme was organized during the meeting of the Regional Advisory Group (RAG) for Africa in Cape Town, South Africa, from November 18 to 24. With the support from Masifundise Development Trust, TNI, FIAN and Centro Internazionale Crocevia, RAG organized a fisher-to-

fisher exchange and training. During which the RAG Africa members were joined by representatives from inland and coastal fisher communities from several regions of South Africa. On that occasion, the training delved into comprehending the political economy surrounding the utilization of ocean resources and the human rights-based approach (HRBA). ³

For more



International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC)

<https://www.foodsovereignty.org/>

The "People-Centered Assessment of the Implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries"

https://www.foodsovereignty.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/TNI_report-EN_web.pdf

IYAFA 2022 Small-Scale Fisheries Summit Report, 2-4 September 2022

https://ssfhub.org/sites/default/files/2022-10/SSF%20Summit%202022%20Report%20-%20English%20version%20_0.pdf