



## ICSF-FSSF Sri Lanka Workshop

### 'Strengthening Collaboration and Capacity-Building in Small-Scale Fisheries'

24-26 February 2025

#### Concept Note

International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF) is committed to promoting and defending equitable, gender-just, self-reliant, and sustainable small-scale fisheries around the world. We believe in strengthening fishing communities and SSF organizations, protecting their local and ecological knowledge, enhancing their social development, and sustainable fisheries, based on a human rights-based approach embedded in the principles of the SSF Guidelines. ICSF prioritizes working in a spirit of diverse dialogue and cooperation, to influence the decision-making processes of multilateral bodies, governments and organizations in favour of small-scale fishing communities, particularly in order to cope with the multiplicity of accumulated and new threats. Based on the experiences of its members and allied SSF organizations, ICSF focuses its work around four key themes: tenure rights, access and use; food security and nutrition; marginalization within the blue economy; environmental crises and climate change; and social protection and social development. Forum for Small Scale Fisheries (FSSF), Sri Lanka, is a platform that is inclusive (all relevant stakeholders), participatory, integrated (all sub-sectors are present) and holistic (looking at fisheries as a component of the coastal ecosystem).

Building upon the four IYAFSA regional workshops ICSF hosted in 2022 and 2023 in Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa and Europe, and the two SSF Summits held in 2022 and 2024 in Rome; ICSF is pleased to be organizing a strategic international SSF workshop in Sri Lanka from 24 to 26 February 2025, in collaboration with FSSF.

#### **Objectives**

- 1) Strengthening **collaborations and alliances** between ICSF and its SSF allies, and enhancing its capacities as a support organization.
- 2) Creating a space for global and regional SSF movements and organizations, to embrace and be strengthened by our diversity, and collectively **move toward a common goal**.
- 3) Reflecting on ICSF's **strategy and programme of action**, and gathering inputs from SSF representatives on how the ICSF programme can best meet their needs and respond to their requests for capacity-building at global and regional levels (including in relation to key international spaces and processes).

#### **Participants**

The workshop will include 50 participants from Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe and North America – including ICSF members, representatives from global and regional SSF organizations, participants from the IYAFSA regional workshops, and allied support organizations.

#### **Methodology**

The workshop will be three days, and structured around a three-part programme focused on

setting the scene, deepening our discussions, and developing a collective strategy for the future. Discussions will be open and flexible, in order to foster horizontal brainstorming and a comfortable, informal environment. ICSF will facilitate the programme, but prioritizes using this space to hear from the SSF participants, and building an informed understanding of the kind of support SSF organizations need and seek from ICSF. The contributions made by representatives from SSF organizations will therefore be central to this workshop to guide ICSF's work in the coming years.

## **Programme**

### **Day 1: Setting the scene**

- Welcome, overview and objectives of the workshop.
- Introductions from the participants.
- Participants create a collective ideas board on crucial SSF issues.
- Presenting the key insights from the IYAFSA regional workshops and SSF Summit II (presented by regional groups of ICSF members and workshop participants)
- Introducing the context (expanding upon and developing ICSF's strategy and programme of work).
- Small group discussions on:
  - What are the key priorities for SSF organizations at the global and regional levels?
  - How can ICSF collaborate with and better support regional and global SSF networks?
  - How can we work together to be more present and proactive at the international level?
  - To what extent have the SSF Guidelines contributed to positive change in SSF, and what is still needed to make this process more effective?

### **Day 2: Deepening our discussions**

- Panel discussion: Resolving Transboundary Conflicts in Palk Bay
  - Panel includes participants from India and Sri Lanka on resolving the Palk Bay conflicts. Bottom trawl actors on the Indian-side will share their views on progressive elimination of IUU fishing on the Sri Lankan side; the SSF actors will share their views on how eliminating IUU fishing will improve livelihoods on the Sri Lankan side; and government, civil society, academia and media will share their views on possible means to resolving these conflicts towards empowering local fishers in northern Sri Lanka.
- Brief overview of key international processes/spaces, and discussions (including how to use the SSF Guidelines strategically in these processes and making implementation more concrete through National Plans of Action).
- Field trip to visit Sri Lankan fishers at Negombo Lagoon.

### **Day 3: Moving forward**

- Brainstorming about the future: Discussion on how we imagine a positive future for SSF; collective planning on where and how ICSF and SSF organizations can work together; potential international spaces to prioritize; strategies and ways forward.
- ICSF strategy and programme of action: Discussion on how it can best respond to the needs and context of SSF today; and how SSF and support organizations can move towards coordinated collective action.