

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Wednesday, 12 May 2021 05:00 GMT -07:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	Centering Small-Scale Fisheries in National Food and Nutrition Plans
CONVENED BY	Willow Battista, Senior Manager, Oceans Climate Strategies, Environmental Defense Fund
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/13621/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Independent
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	No borders

The outcomes from a Food Systems Summit Dialogue will be of use in developing the pathway to sustainable food systems within the locality in which they take place. They will be a valuable contribution to the national pathways and also of interest to the different workstreams preparing for the Summit: the Action Tracks, Scientific Groups and Champions as well as for other Dialogues.

1. PARTICIPATION

TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

122

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0-18

10

19-30

65

31-50

42

51-65

5

66-80

80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

57 Male

63 Female

2 Prefer not to say or Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

70 Agriculture/crops

Fish and aquaculture

Livestock

1 Agro-forestry

21 Environment and ecology

Trade and commerce

Education

Communication

Food processing

Food retail, markets

4 Food industry

Financial Services

Health care

5 Nutrition

17 National or local government

Utilities

Industrial

4 Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

2 Small/medium enterprise/artisan

Large national business

Multi-national corporation

19 Small-scale farmer

Medium-scale farmer

Large-scale farmer

7 Local Non-Governmental Organization

51 International Non-Governmental Organization

3 Indigenous People

11 Science and academia

8 Workers and trade union

Member of Parliament

2 Local authority

9 Government and national institution

2 Regional economic community

4 United Nations

4 International financial institution

Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance

Consumer group

Other

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

HOW DID YOU ORGANIZE THE DIALOGUE SO THAT THE PRINCIPLES WERE INCORPORATED, REINFORCED AND ENHANCED?

****PLEASE NOTE:** In the Participation demographics section above, I indicated that we had 19 "small-scale *farmers*" as there was no option to indicate small-scale *fishers*. All of these "farmers" were actually fishers.** The Principles were incorporated in the themes of our presentations, and were central to the Discussion Question we posed to the groups. We referred repeatedly to how our efforts can and must contribute to achieving the SDGs, and directed people to consider a near-term future in envisioning a transformed food system. We were very careful and conscious in our efforts to invite and engage stakeholders from a wide variety of geographies and backgrounds, and carefully crafted our breakout groups to ensure people would feel most comfortable to share their unique perspectives and concerns. In addition, we provided simultaneous translation to ensure all participants felt empowered and comfortable to share their views. Our presentations/presenters were selected to showcase not just the emerging research on the value of small-scale fishery resources in meeting food and nutrition goals, but also to feature the voices of on-the-ground practitioners working to address hunger and of the small-scale fishers themselves. We then sought to ensure these perspectives were well-represented among our participants, as well as to bring food and nutrition policy and decision makers into the "room" with these voices to ensure multi-stakeholder inclusivity and to connect groups who don't often have a chance to make themselves heard at the government level with these key decision-makers. This Dialogue was part of a series of 3 that we helped to convene in partnership with the Blue Foods Assessment and WWF that sought to highlight the value of aquatic foods for food and nutrition needs, with this one seeking to elevate the voices of small-scale fishers. We thus built off of the work of others, and are carrying this work forward in our ongoing engagements.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

Our Discussion Question was posed as follows: Imagine a future roughly 10 years from now where Small-Scale Fisheries have been centered in your country's National Food & Nutrition Provisioning Plan, such that the resources that flow from these fisheries are being directed to the people who need them most. Consider the following questions as guidelines for articulating pathway(s) to this envisioned future: i. How are countries and communities ensuring their local food security and nutrition needs are met? (i.e., What data is being collected, by whom, and how is it being used?) ii. How are countries balancing this goal with their overall prosperity and boosting national food and nutrition security? iii. Who are the actors directly involved in decision-making? How are marginalized and vulnerable groups represented? iv. What do supply chains look like, and how have they developed to support or detract from this goal? v. How are the impacts of climate change being addressed/ responded to? vi. What other actions are needed to enable this future and address current obstacles (e.g., infrastructure changes, etc.)? vii. What happened at the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit to catalyze the changes that have enabled this future to become a reality? We thus explicitly directed participants to articulate their views with a sense of urgency, and to consider specifically what must happen at the Summit itself to enable success. In addition, our efforts to ensure a diverse group of small-scale fishers, representatives, and Indigenous community members could and have their voices elevated along with government officials and food/nutrition decision-makers was in service of ensuring a respectful and inclusive space for multi-stakeholder discussion. Finally, we sought to build trust with participants through careful pre- and post-event communications, adherence to the Chatham House Rules, and through the provision of simultaneous translation to ensure everyone felt valued. We will also be sharing a draft of this report with the whole group for feedback ahead of submission.

DO YOU HAVE ADVICE FOR OTHER DIALOGUE CONVENORS ABOUT APPRECIATING THE PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT?

Marginalized groups are not necessarily going to be able to engage in these Dialogue events without direct engagement and extra efforts to ensure they have the capacity to participate, such as hosting events in time zones that align with the groups you hope to reach, connecting them with technical support and providing simultaneous translation. Small-scale actors like fishers and farmers are not (necessarily) combing the internet for opportunities to get involved in UN-developed virtual events, so if we truly want to hear their voices we (the NGOs, governments, and other highly-engaged agencies) need to be the ones to actively seek them out and to create these opportunities in a way that will be truly accessible to them.

3. METHOD

The outcomes of a Dialogue are influenced by the method that is used.

DID YOU USE THE SAME METHOD AS RECOMMENDED BY THE CONVENORS REFERENCE MANUAL?

Yes

No

4. DIALOGUE FOCUS & OUTCOMES

MAJOR FOCUS

Small-scale fishers are especially vulnerable to food and nutrition insecurity as well as climate change impacts. Small-scale fisheries can also have an outsized role in meeting a country's food and nutrition needs and goals because they catch species that are high in key missing micronutrients, and that are local, culturally appropriate, easy to store and transport, etc. However, current policies that treat fish primarily as a commodity to be exported undermine the ability of small-scale fishers to help meet this need.

The aim of this Dialogue is to bring together representatives from SSF sectors around the world with key decision-makers who think about fisheries management and food and nutrition policies in order to spur discussion on what can be done to better utilize and support small-scale fishers in national food and nutrition plans.

ACTION TRACKS

- ✓ Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
- ✓ Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
- ✓ Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
- ✓ Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
- ✓ Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

- Finance
- Innovation
- ✓ Human rights
- Women & Youth Empowerment
- ✓ Policy
- Data & Evidence
- ✓ Governance
- ✓ Trade-offs
- ✓ Environment and Climate

MAIN FINDINGS

Our key findings fall roughly into three high-level categories: 1) "top-down" changes (i.e., things that governments and/ or food and nutrition decision-makers must do) which are necessary to support small-scale fishers (SSFs) and better utilize the resources they are catching to help meet national and global food and nutrition goals; 2) "bottom-up" changes (i.e., things that fishery managers, scientists, and other local stakeholders must do); and 3) action items for the Summit.

Top-Down Changes:

- ~Consider the fishing sector, and specifically the resources of small-scale fishers, as a key element in national and global nutrition policies.
- ~Emphasize the value of small-scale fishery resources for consumption and F&N needs, rather than for export -- find a way to value fishery resources in terms of micronutrients or mouths fed rather than pounds or dollars. Design policies to ensure aquatic foods are available at a fair price to the people who catch them.
- ~Engage and center SSF needs and perspectives in policy discussions and empower them to help shape decisions.
- ~Emphasize contributions of SSFs to local economies and formalize the sector.
- ~Break down siloes between production sectors – consider creation of a "Food Czar" to help bridge gaps.
- ~Design policies to align incentives for diversification of production and consumption to increase resilience to shocks and climate changes.
- ~Empower local groups to develop and implement policies locally through community-based management.
- ~Fund capacity building efforts and support innovations developed by SSFs seeking to build resilience and transition to nature-positive production systems.

Bottom-Up Changes:

- ~Expand management "lens" and jurisdictions to encompass the whole food system – Look at production on a watershed scale, for example. And remember that humans are part of the ecosystem and must also be part of ecosystem management.
- ~Utilize data and traditional knowledge held by SSF communities.
- ~Strengthen SSFs' role as protagonists through policies/initiatives/capacity building efforts to give them more agency and power.
- ~Improve access to tools and training programs that can enable SSFs to take control of their own businesses.
- ~Emphasize value over volume – and clarify value to *whom*, with a focus on equity – in management goals.
- ~Prepare for, don't just react to, climate change. Implement forward-looking management that develops and incorporates an understanding of the climate-driven changes expected (and being experienced) in a given community.
- ~Prioritize infrastructure and other supply chain improvements to improve resilience of small-scale fisheries.
- ~Seek to incorporate perspectives of marginalized racial, ethnic and gender groups, and recognize that the groups that are marginalized will be different in each context, and thus tailored approaches are necessary.

Action Items for the Summit:

- ~Ensure SSFs are represented in every Action Track.
- ~Emphasize the need to meaningfully incorporate aquatic resources into food and nutrition plans in order to reduce food insecurity and malnutrition and to improve the sustainability and lower the footprint of food production and consumption. Emphasize value of aquatic foods beyond just for protein.
- ~Highlight especially the potential value of small-scale fisheries in meeting these goals, as well as the specific challenges faced by small-scale fishing communities.
- ~Catalyze the commitment of funding and financing for "bottom-up" changes.
- ~Draw attention to economic policies and trade structures that are creating negative incentives, pushing SSF resources away from the groups who need them most.
- ~Rather than focusing on trade-offs, center human rights, livelihoods, and wellbeing of SSF communities in order to identify *synergies* between sustainability and food and nutrition goals.
- ~Address *social causes* of food waste, not just technical ones.
- ~Center climate change in all decisions and support SSF communities in preparing for climate change impacts with funding, capacity building initiatives, and increased access to data on impacts.
- ~Overcome the overwhelming incumbent emphasis on agriculture and terrestrial food systems → policymakers are not thinking about aquatic foods, let alone SSFs. These resources may be subsumed under broader food programs and thus ignored.
- ~Recognize the responsibility of the developed world to diversify fish consumption beyond the few species primarily eaten by wealthy consumers, to reduce food waste, and to support sustainably sourced seafood.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC

We chose to ask each of our 10 breakout groups to address the same discussion topic (see Principles of Engagement section, above). Here we present a compilation of the outcomes of these discussion groups, organized into main topic areas.

Key actions and solutions identified to enable better utilization of small-scale fishery resources, and better support of small-scale fishers, in national food and nutrition plans:

- ~Governments should promote access to fishing resources with the goal of increasing food sovereignty for small-scale fishers.
- ~Governments should support small-scale fishers through granting of secure and exclusive tenure rights for fishing to avoid competition with industrial sectors, and through investment in capacity building to enable co-management.
- ~Governments should fund and support initiatives to enhance the food and nutrition value of products (e.g., processing and packaging fillets to be ready for the table and to last longer in transit), strengthen infrastructure, and broaden market access.
- ~Governments should support national/ local seafood consumption programs targeting the groups most vulnerable to malnutrition. E.g., integrating sustainably caught local seafood into school lunch programs.
- ~Ecosystem-based management should be prioritized and catalyzed to build system resilience
- ~Interventions should focus on building small-scale fisher capacity and agency. E.g. shortening supply chains so fishers capture more value; increasing access to electronic technology and pricing info; more shoreside facilities to process and market catch; etc.
- ~Sustainability, food sovereignty, climate-resilience, and equity interventions should be developed in an inclusive, participatory way at the local level, and then scaled up through national support, funding, and enforcement.
- ~Climate change must be central in policies and plans.

***Biggest challenges/ obstacles*:**

- ~Meaningfully incorporating the needs, perspective and the risks taken by the SSF communities into decision-making processes and food and nutrition policies. Currently small-scale fishers are completely absent from these processes in virtually every country -- officials engage only with the large-scale sectors who have more financial and political power if they engage with producers at all.
- ~Redesigning international trade systems so that small-scale fishery resources may be profitably directed toward local consumption rather than export. I.e., Not treating fish as a commodity, but instead as a way to provision food and nutrients; Avoiding pressure to channel small-scale fishery resources to fishmeal factories; etc.
- ~Finding balance between using small-scale fishery resources to generate income and keeping necessary aquatic nutrient sources accessible to the people who need them locally/ within the country.
- ~Climate change impacts are coming too quickly for small-scale fisheries to respond to on their own - we must start preparing, not just reacting.
- ~In many countries small-scale fisheries are not managed at all and the sector is not formalized. This could be seen as an opportunity to "leapfrog" ineffective policies and implement sustainable, equitable, climate-resilient policies right from the start, but it would be naive to ignore the gaps in capacity, data, infrastructure, and enforcement.
- ~Competition with larger Blue Economy development--offshore energy, tourism, etc.
- ~The Pandemic has highlighted the struggles facing women in small-scale fisheries, which are not (generally) being addressed with any targeted or systematic efforts.
- ~Tackling illegal and unreported fishing, especially by distant water fleets.
- ~What works in one place may not work in another.

***Big "unknowns," data and/or knowledge gaps remaining*:**

- ~Social and cultural data, such as data on the importance of fish in people's diets, is lacking.
- ~Silos and gaps between the ecological/biological side of fisheries management and the socioeconomic side.
- ~Case studies to illustrate regional nuance.
- ~Coordinating and communicating among disparate/proliferating "blue foods" projects.
- ~Supply chain tracing is lacking in most small-scale fisheries. Not being captured in global databases.

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AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

Some participants pointed to a potential area of divergence between centering the needs and livelihoods of small-scale fishers and centering sustainability, however others argued that by focusing on the former with a long-enough time horizon and clear enough understanding of system dynamics, fishery impacts, and the effects of climate change, the latter goal will be synergistically achieved.

Some participants identified a potential area of divergence between "valuing small-scale fishery resources in terms of food/nutrition provisioning abilities" and the call to "center the livelihood needs of small-scale fishers." There may be contexts where these two goals are at odds with each other - where valuing fishery resources in terms of F&N provisioning may be less lucrative for the small-scale fishers themselves. Relatedly, we must be careful to respect and understand the cultures and preferences of these small-scale fishing communities in terms of what they eat and what they do with their incomes. We can't force people to eat the fish they catch just because we think it will be good for them.

Related to this last point, it will be critical to find balance between the ability of a country to have foreign exchange reserves and to keep certain aquatic nutrient sources accessible to the people who need them locally/ within the country. This balance will likely be different in each country.

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ATTACHMENTS AND RELEVANT LINKS

ATTACHMENTS

- **Event Agenda**
https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/UNFSS-Dialogue_SSFs-in-National-Policy_Agenda.docx

RELEVANT LINKS

- **Recording of Opening Remarks and Presentations (Spanish dubbed to English to allow for subtitling in any language)**
<https://youtu.be/ec5nCOD9Bg8>
- **Recording of Opening Remarks and Presentations (un-dubbed version in English and Spanish)**
<https://youtu.be/AljffqJlzg>