



Food and Agriculture
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General Fisheries Commission
for the Mediterranean
Commission générale des pêches
pour la Méditerranée

GFCM ONLINE FORUM: Building fisheries and aquaculture resilience post COVID-19

Webinar 3 – The experience of small-scale fisheries in promoting social resilience and economic innovation in the face of the COVID-19 crisis

Co-organized with WWF Mediterranean Marine Initiative

Wednesday, 22 July 2020 – 15.00–16.30 CEST – [ZOOM](#)

Webinar conclusions

Small-scale fisheries (SSF) are essential to maintaining livelihoods and food security, particularly of vulnerable populations in coastal communities along the Mediterranean and Black Sea. To ensure their resilience over the long term there is a need to:

Strengthen SSF organizations:

- Encourage cooperation among fishers;
- Enhance fishers' capacities to participate in decision-making discussions, including co-management;
- Engage fishers and fisher organizations in data collection and fishery monitoring;
- Reinforce the role of young people in cooperatives and engage them through innovative information and communication technologies;
- Enhance the capacity of SSF organizations to innovate and better link to market opportunities;
- Strengthen the role of SSF organizations in providing informal/semi-formal social protection services.

Ensure efficient management of all fishing activities, including SSF, towards sustainable exploitation:

- Prevent and reduce illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, including through the use of appropriate surveillance and control technologies, which can also support decent work and safety at sea by aiding search and rescue operations in case of accidents;

- Ensure SSF has equitable access to fishery resources;
- Ensure SSF activities are better monitored and accounted for (e.g. catches, effort) when assessing the status of resources, as well as their socioeconomic impact;
- Improve the engagement of SSF in the decision-making processes for fisheries management.

Identify and strengthen conditions that facilitate adding value to SSF products and enhancing the profitability of the sector:

- Strengthen short value chains:
 - Work on legal frameworks that facilitate direct selling, while ensuring traceability and food safety standards to combat IUU fishing;
 - Build capacities and facilitate the use of key technological innovations (apps, block chain, etc.) to support linking fishers to consumers;
 - Understand consumer preferences and stimulate local demand for seafood;
 - Support entrepreneurial skills of fishers, including the promotion of small-scale processing and value-addition activities.
- Enhance and facilitate links with key export markets:
 - Identify SSF target species typically destined for export markets (particularly from non-EU countries) and understand potential barriers to market access
- Reinforce the value added by SSF to local tourism sectors.

Ensure minimum social protection is coupled with economic inclusion programming to provide small-scale fishers with the tools to plan ahead and improve their resilience in the face of future shocks:

- Promote social protection access:
 - Facilitate adequate access to those social insurance programmes highly valued by fishers (health services, unemployment benefits, pensions) by removing barriers to their participation (informality, payment modalities, seasonality of payments, etc.);
 - Raise awareness among fishers to ensure SSF are appropriately informed about existing programs they are eligible to access and promote the benefits of participation;
- Ensure policy coordination:
 - Ensure small-scale fishers are considered in national social protection dialogues, raising awareness of SSF concerns within social ministries and other relevant organizations beyond just the ministries responsible for fisheries and sharing relevant data;
 - Engage all relevant government actors, including those responsible for social security, fisheries and port management in a dialogue on re-shaping the contributory system at the national level to account for the specificities of the SSF sector;
 - Facilitate a cycle of formalization, improved welfare, improved fisheries management and improved profitability.
- Ensure data is available to support interventions:

- Make available socio-economic data and indicators for the sector that can be used to develop social protection policies;
- Improve evidence to better support the idea of social protection as an investment – rather than a cost – which can contribute to achieving fisheries management objectives (by addressing, for example, fisher behavior and negative coping strategies like overfishing);
- Increase investment in, and economic inclusion of, the SSF sector:
 - Facilitate financial inclusion: access to financial resources, savings accounts and other tools that assist in planning for the future/future shocks;
 - Ensure that women, young people and other less visible groups are considered in economic inclusion programming.