



The FISH Safety Foundation

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FISH Safety Foundation Overview

The [FISH Safety Foundation](#) (FSF) is a New Zealand-based international not-for-profit organisation promoting health, safety and sustainable development in all sectors of global fishing – marine capture, artisanal, inland fisheries and aquaculture. Our focus has been on developing educational and training material, working with governments and communities on-the-ground, and developing legislative frameworks. We work closely with the FAO, IMO and independent funders like the Pew Charitable Trusts and others.

We approach our interventions primarily from a social development perspective. By focusing on education and other activities to help keep fishers safe and well, we ensure their ability to continue contributing positively to their families, communities and to enhance general social development. Central to all these interventions are the adherence to, and promotion of the relevant UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – in our case: SDG's 1, 2, 3, 8 and 14.



Our work in fishing safety includes a focus on related issues like the Human Rights of fishers, stopping IUU fishing, reducing marine pollution, supporting small-scale fishing, and promoting the sustainable use of the world's oceans.

The Importance of the Global Fishing Sector

Fishing – both in capture fisheries (at sea and inland) and in aquaculture (fish farming) – if sustainably managed, has a critically important role to play in providing jobs and feeding the world, according to the 2022 edition of the FAO's [State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture](#) report. Food security has long been recognised as one of the world's main challenges. A safe, sustainable supply of fish and seafood products – for a global population expected to reach nearly 10 billion by 2050 – is a crucial component of this challenge. More people than ever rely on fisheries and aquaculture for food, and as a source of income. As stated in the FAO report, global fisheries and aquaculture production totalled 214 million tons in 2020 – with 87 percent of that for direct human consumption. Fish and seafood are therefore amongst the most traded food commodities with total production worth some USD 424 billion in 2020. And per capita fish consumption has soared – from 10 kg in the 1960s to more than 20 kg in 2020 and projected to reach 21.5 kg in 2030. In total, fish now accounts for almost 17 percent of the global population's intake of protein – in some coastal and island countries it can top 70 percent.

Fisheries contribute to livelihoods, employment and income with particular importance in coastal communities in developing countries. The FAO estimates that there are some 60 million people directly engaged in capture fisheries and aquaculture, and some 200 million along the value chain from harvesting to distribution, making the livelihoods of some 660 to 820 million people dependent on the sector. Employment in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors has grown faster than the world's population and faster than employment in traditional agriculture.

The total number of fishing vessels in the world in 2020 was estimated to be about 4.1 million, with some 82 percent of the motorized fishing vessels in the world less than 12m, highlighting the importance of the small-scale sector.

Fishing Safety Initiatives / Projects

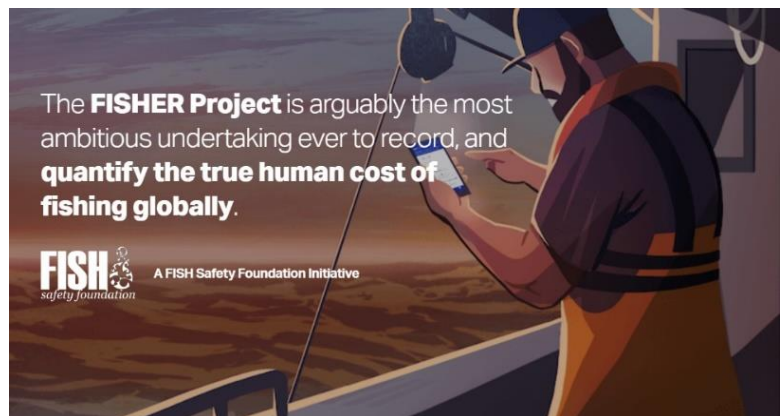
We work with fishing communities around the world on externally funded projects aimed at improving safety. This has included actively promoting, and providing practical assistance to clients in the ratification and implementation process of a number of United Nations Agency fishing sector instruments, including:

- The IMO Cape Town Agreement (CTA)
- The ILO Work in Fishing Convention (C188)
- The FAO Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA), and
- The IMO STCW-F.

Some of our recent and current projects include:

- **FISHER Project** (www.fisherproject.org)

FISHER is an accident reporting, recording and analysis program for fisheries globally. This project is particularly important given the number of accidents occurring in the fishing industry – particularly the small-scale sector. The current official fatality estimates are given as some 24 000 to 32 000 fatalities a year, but our research indicates the figure is at least three to four times higher (see details and link below).



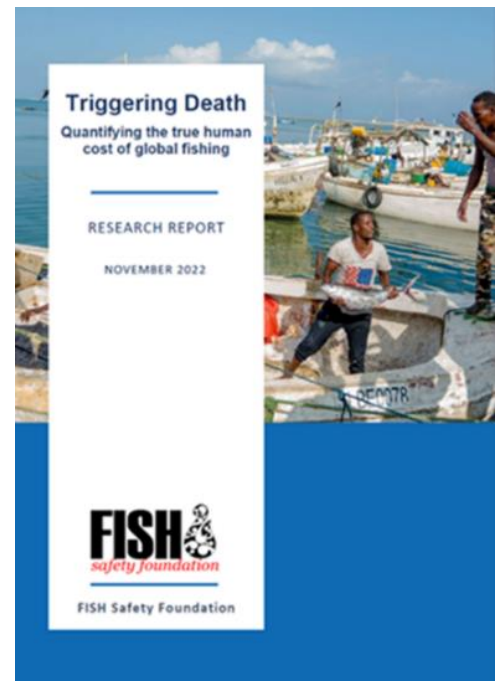
Some of the development highlights so far include:

- conceptualising the concept (and doing the original planning) back in 2017
- developing the FISHER website www.fisherproject.org
- launching the programme (and the concept of confidential reporting alongside official reporting) in Saint Lucia - in January 2020
- continuing to promote FISHER there - see the Case Study details on our website, noting the promotional TV Public Service Announcement (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ghK2dGt9Clo>) and posters etc.
- undertaking a survey in Saint Lucia as to fishers' perceptions, barriers and actions regarding accident reporting - see <https://www.fao.org/publications/card/en/c/CB4465EN/>
- we also developed a set of Guidelines for fishing accident management (<https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cb4726en>)
- we signed a Letter of Intent with IMO, Pew and Lloyd's Register Foundation to further develop the programme in 2021
- we undertook an in-depth study on the technological needs of a modern repository
- we published a report into the scale of fisher fatalities in 2022 (see <https://www.the-human-cost-of-fishing.org/>). [see the report information below, highlighting the 100 000+ figure]
- we managed to get FAO country member support at the 2022 COFI meeting, and include the need for a repository on to the FAO workplan – see res 18(j) at <https://www.fao.org/3/cc3652en/cc3652en.pdf>
- we have recently solved the difficulties that arise from fisher multiple language / illiteracy issues - we can now interact with fishers anywhere in the world in their own language, in real-time, using AI technology (<https://vimeo.com/848551074>)
- there is a daily update of fisher fatalities (with links to source material) available at <https://reporting.fisherproject.org/>, and
- we have just signed an MOU with the Bay of Bengal IGO (www.bobpigo.org) to implement our programme in the Bay of Bengal Region.

- **Triggering Death: Quantifying the true human cost of fishing**
(in collaboration with Pew Charitable Trusts)

In November 2022, we published a report, outlining eighteen months' worth of research into the number of fisher fatalities that occur globally each year, and to identify any drivers that contribute to the death toll. Despite limitations in available and accurate data on accidents and fatalities, our research indicates that the annual fatality number in global fishing is in excess of 100,000 fishers – which is three to four times higher than previously accepted estimates.

The next phase of this project is to better understand the drivers behind these unacceptably high fatality figures, address data collection gaps and to develop targeted and effective safety initiatives to reduce the dramatic loss of life in an industry critically important to global food security. To download the full report, see the project website: <https://www.the-human-cost-of-fishing.org/>



- **Safety at Sea Essentials: A poster series** (in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization)

We have developed a series of thirteen safety awareness posters for small-scale fishers. These posters contain educational and practical information to promote safety at sea including first aid, fire hazards and weather conditions. These posters are free to download, print and share and can be used in educational / training environments. To see the full series, visit the FAO website: <https://www.fao.org/fishing-safety/news-events/news/detail/en/c/1628567/>



In addition to these funded projects, we are also developing (or have developed) a number of other initiatives – including the crewSAFE Safety Management Program, Fishing Alert!, etc. See www.fishsafety.org/our-initiatives/.

Training Resource Development

We have developed trainers' resource (capacity building) portals as a foundation of much of our work. These include:

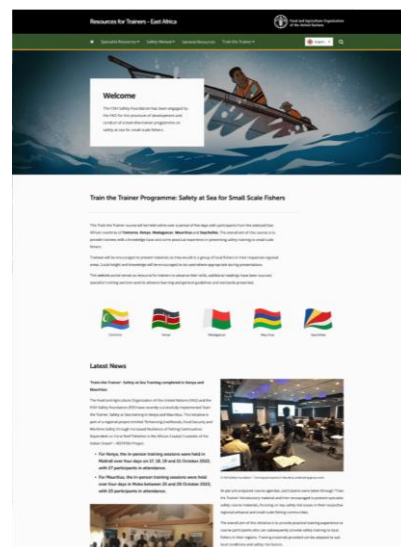
- The first package we developed was for the Caribbean under a FAO project. For this project we redeveloped the standard FAO publication “Safety at Sea for Small-scale Fishers” <https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/ca5772en/> into a Caribbean version (with emphasis on their operations – with more specific content and different graphics) – available on the FSF trainer resource: <https://www.fao.org/3/ca8626en/ca8626en.pdf> .

We then developed a PowerPoint package around this book with Caribbean imagery, etc. In addition, we developed a number of ‘specialist’ courses (where we felt more attention was needed). To each course we added a number of resources, trainers’ notes, etc. for trainers to pick from as needed. We subsequently ran a workshop in Saint Lucia in January 2020, spending a week training a group of trainers, government officials, Coastguard, Navy and Marine Police personnel from eight Caribbean nations in this material, as well as a specific “Train-the-Trainer” session - <https://www.fao.org/fishing-safety/news-events/events/detail/en/c/1319586/> We provided the trainers with a secure password-protected website for their exclusive use.

- For a project in Bangladesh (under a Lloyd’s Register Foundation contract), we used the FAO “Safety at Sea for Small-scale Fishers” booklet – which had been translated into Bengali – as our basis, and again supplemented that with a series of specialist courses. We developed Bengali versions of the PowerPoints for the various courses and again included a train-the-trainer component. We updated the imagery to reflect the vessels and context as needed. Trainers were provided with a secure password-protected website for their exclusive use. We also developed posters, billboards, etc to promote safety in the villages where we worked. The actual train-the-trainer session was undertaken in the middle of the Pandemic by our Associates on the ground with our input and support online. See some of the stories on <https://www.fishsafety.org/fishsafe2025>.

- Following the success of the Caribbean & Bangladesh Training Resource packages, we have since developed other resources for countries in North Africa, East Africa, South and Southeast Asia and the Pacific. These packages, each with their own dedicated portal, have learning material designed in the respective region's style with particular emphasis placed on imagery to highlight content. This content has also been translated into Arabic, French and Tamil.

- We were again contracted by the FAO to develop a global training package. This time it was aimed at providing trainers worldwide with a specialist package on “Rules-of-the-Road” (Collision Regulations) for small-scale fishers. This resource comprises a comprehensive PPT package (also available as an e-learning module) and guidance note, an e-learning knowledge test module, 25 posters and 30 day / night lights stickers for placing in boats. These were translated into French, Spanish and Chinese. As before, these resources are available on a password-protected website. This package is now an FAO certified e-learning training course, see: <https://elearning.fao.org/course/view.php?id=704>



For any further information please contact Eric Holliday (CEO) on eric.holliday@fishsafety.org / +64 27 7333 611
or visit our website www.fishsafety.org

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