

Speech by the President of CAOPA, 10 years of SSF-VGs

Good afternoon,

Ladies and gentlemen, panellists,

Mr Minister for Fisheries and the Blue Economy of Madagascar,

Dear participants

Thank you for joining us for this webinar,

The Voluntary Guidelines to Ensure the Sustainability of Small-scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication, adopted in 2014, are important to giving our African small-scale fishing communities a future.

African Confederation of Professional Organizations of Artisanal Fisheries (CAOPA) wanted to organize this webinar to share the successes and challenges encountered in implementing these guidelines, at the level of African countries, over the last decade.

There is no doubt that, since their adoption, the guidelines have influenced the national and regional policies of many African countries, which have set up action plans to support small-scale fishing, for example in Tanzania, Madagascar, Namibia and Senegal.

But many challenges remain. There is still a major issue of ownership of these guidelines, both among fishermen and decision-makers. Still too many African fishermen and women are unaware of the guidelines, and don't know how they can be used to improve their living conditions.

Still too many African governments content themselves with unclear declarations concerning the implementation of these guidelines, without any real follow-up in the form of proactive policies for the benefit of their populations.

On the other hand, there is still a great deal of work to be done to ensure that the guidelines for sustainable small-scale fishing are better coordinated with other international tools and commitments made by our countries, such as the guidelines on land tenure and ILO Convention 188 on work in the fishing sector.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Dear participants.

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The FAO has done a great deal of work in implementing these programmes. However, to ensure the sustainability of this work and build the capacity of professionals and governments, CAOPA is determined to continue its collaboration with the FAO's Africa regional office. Together, we will continue to work towards better implementation of the SSF guidelines, ensuring that artisanal fishing communities are involved in decision-making processes and receive adequate support to improve their livelihoods.

CAOPA reiterates its commitment to work in favour of African artisanal fisheries stakeholders. We reiterate our determination to popularise the SSF Voluntary Guidelines, which provide a framework for the sustainable management of fisheries resources.

In this two-hour webinar, we will have the opportunity to discuss these and other aspects through personal testimonies and reflections, so that, ten years after the adoption of the guidelines, we have a clearer vision of the road still to be travelled to ensure a future for sustainable small-scale fishing in Africa.

Thank you very much