

DRAFT



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

Developing and Implementing a
National Plan of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries
(NPOA-SSF)

**PROFILE OF
SMALL-SCALE FISHERIES IN
THE MALDIVES**

WORKING DOCUMENT



Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organization (BOBP-IGO)
2025

*Developing and Implementing a
National Plan of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries
(NPOA-SSF)*

**PROFILE OF
SMALL-SCALE FISHERIES IN
MALDIVES**

This SSF profile, developed in support of the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines), informs the initiation of an NPOA-SSF and will be reviewed and further developed as part of the NPOA-SSF development.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
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2025

Preface

The Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines) is an international instrument focusing on the needs of small-scale fisheries. The SSF Guidelines provide an all-inclusive framework for guiding small-scale fisheries governance and development. They advocate the development of a comprehensive implementation plan in the format of a National Plan of Action for the implementation of the SSF Guidelines (NPOA-SSF), that identifies strategies and priority actions to be taken at the country level.

This SSF profile informs the initiation of an NPOA-SSF. It is expected that this will be reviewed and further developed as part of the NPOA-SSF development.

The first draft of the country profile for Maldives was prepared by the BOBP IGO team using the template given in **Developing and implementing a National Plan of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries (NPOA-SSF) SSF profile** (1-2 template)¹. The section headers are maintained largely as given in this document, except that the numbering of tables is different with the addition of tables and figures.

The document was revised based on the critical inputs received from the subject matter experts from FAO and national experts. The revised draft was discussed during the FAO Regional Capacity Development Workshop on Development of National Plan of Action for Small Scale Fisheries (NPOA-SSF) held in Chennai from 17-19 September 2025, and the feedback obtained from the country's official nominees to the Workshop were incorporated.

The DRAFT Final version was then circulated to the Government of Maldives and all the experts and community representatives involved in the process for review and the document was further revised and improved based on the comments received.

This version of the SSF Country Profile for Maldives will serve as a working document for the National Task Force members and as reference material for outreach and communication, during the development of the NPOA-SSF for Maldives and will be subject to revision and adaptation based on continuous feedback and inputs.



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¹ https://www.fao.org/fishery/services/storage/fs/fishery/data/npoassfprocess/1-2_SSF_profile_template_en.pdf

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1. Operational Definition of small-scale fisheries

All fisheries in Maldives are considered small-scale. Only when longline fisheries were introduced, government decided that it would only be allowed to operate outside 100 nm in the EEZ as it was considered industrial.

The operational definition of SSF above is for use in the context of the implementation of the National Plan of Action for Small-scale Fisheries (NPOA-SSF).

TIPS:

Commonly used terms for small-scale fisheries' fishers, associated groups and the legal standing of these groups (that is, are they mentioned and recognized in national laws?).

Propose a working definition of small-scale fisheries, noting that the objective is for stakeholder inclusion and to cover the whole supply chain.

If there is uncertainty or disagreement over the inclusion of certain fisheries within the working definition of small-scale fisheries, the FAO characterization matrix could be used to compare fisheries. This matrix provides a semi-quantitative approach to enable fisheries to be compared against various scale criteria.

2. Small-scale fisheries

Table 1. Characteristics of small-scale fisheries in MALDIVES

Small-scale fisheries in numbers		A small-scale fishery is defined as...
National population (number) 526,000	Employed in small-scale fisheries (percent of national population)	
	Fishers	Total
	17000 ²	3.23%
	Male (%)	Female (%)
	ND	ND
Wetland or mangrove areas	Marine area/exclusive economic zone (km ²)	
8.01 ³		859,000 sq. kms ⁴
Average production (MT)	Contribution to GDP (percent)	
149000 ⁵		6 ¹

² Presentation made by Mr Husain Sinan on "Overview of the fisheries sector in the Maldives", High-Level Meeting on Policy Guidance for Mainstreaming EAFM in Small-Scale Fisheries, 20 February 2025.

³ [Environment Management Framework - TransFORM, SWIOFish5 November 2003-1719308497229.pdf](https://www.environment.gov.mv/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2020/12/Environment-Management-Framework-TransFORM-SWIOFish5-November-2003-1719308497229.pdf)

⁴ Geography. <https://statistics.maldives.gov.mv/yearbook/2020/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2020/12/Geography.pdf> accessed 14 October 2025

Geography. <https://statistics.maldives.gov.mv/yearbook/2020/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2020/12/Geography.pdf> accessed 14 October 2025

Key small-scale fisheries	Name of species and fisheries (with annual production totals in MT, to give an idea of relative scale) Skipjack tuna 129,200, Yellow fin tuna 21,800, Frigate tuna 4,400, Kawakawa 2,400, Groupers ~600, Snappers (part of ~16,700 reef fish) ⁶
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Note: km² = square kilometer; MT = metric ton

2.1. Geographical scope and location

The Maldives archipelago includes ~ 1192 islands with a maximum natural elevation of 2.4 m, The EEZ is approximately 859,000 sq. kms (only 1% is land).

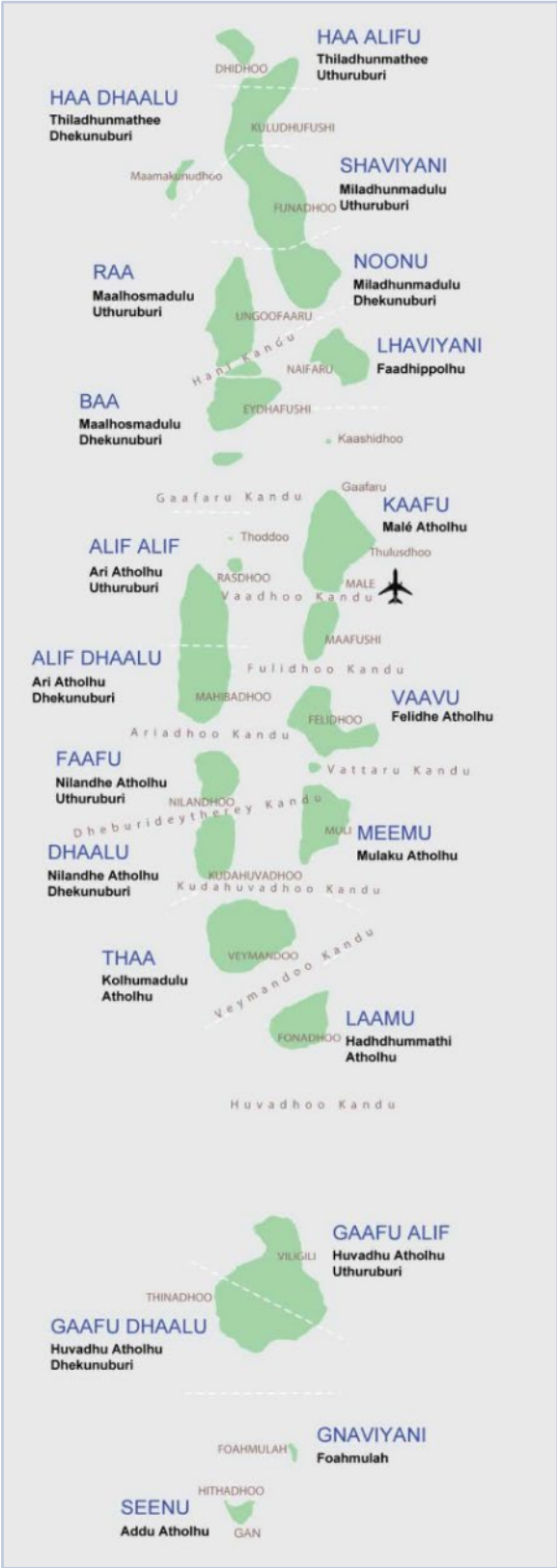
Table 2.1: Summary of key aspects⁷

EEZ area	916 911 km ²	www.seaaroundus.org
Shelf area	31 488 km ²	www.seaaroundus.org
Marine water area	31 488 km ²	www.seaaroundus.org
Length of continental coastline	644 km	Worldbymap

[ulture.pdf](#)

⁶ Maldives Tuna Fishery Management Plan <https://faolex.fao.org/docs/pdf/mdv218600eng.pdf?>

⁷ Maldives. <https://www.fao.org/fishery/en/facp/mdv> accessed 14 October 2025



Map 2.1: Map of Maldives

2.2. Main species and ecosystems

Table 2.2: Main species and methods of fishing

Main Species Groups Targeted*	Seasonality	Associated Ecosystems	Methods of Fishing (I)	Relevant Management Plan (MP)
Skipjack tuna (<i>Katsuwonus pelamis</i>)	Peak during Northeast Monsoon (Jan–Apr)	Open ocean (pelagic zone)	Pole-and-line, handline	Tuna Fishery MP
Yellowfin tuna (<i>Thunnus albacares</i>)	Year-round, peak in Northeast Monsoon	Open ocean (pelagic zone)	Handline	Tuna Fishery MP
Other tuna (Scombridae)	Year round	Reef-associated (Coral reefs, open ocean)	Trolling	Reef Fishery MP
Billfish (Istiophoridae)	Year-round, peak in early Southwest monsoon	Open ocean (pelagic zone)	Trolling, drifting droplines	Billfish Fishery MP
Emperor fish (<i>Lethrinus</i> spp.)	Year-round	Coral reefs	Handline,	Reef Fishery MP
Snapper (Lutjanidae)	Year-round	Coral reefs	Handline	Reef Fishery MP
Jack (Carangidae)	Year-round	Reef-associated (Coral reefs, open ocean)	Handline	Reef Fishery MP
Barracuda (Sphyraenidae) and Needlefish (Belonidae)	Year-round	Reef-associated (Coral reefs, open ocean)	Trolling, handline	Reef Fishery MP
Sweetlips (Haemulidae)	Year-round	Coral reefs	Handline	Reef Fishery MP
Groupers (Epinephelidae)	Year-round	Coral reefs	Handline	Grouper Fishery MP
Spiny lobster (<i>Panulirus</i> spp.)	Year-round	Coral reefs, reef crevices	Lobster traps, hand collection (diving)	Lobster Fishery MP

The scale of operation across the main species groups targeted as listed in the table differs significantly, with Skipjack and Yellowfin tuna accounting for over 90% of the total catch.

2.3. Scale of the small-scale fisheries sector

- Number of fishers 17000
- Number and type of vessels, number fishing without vessels 627⁸ (mechanized masdhoni -621, mechanised Maddhu-1, miscellaneous-5); licensed 455 as on May 2025
- Number of fish workers and others in the supply chain (and gender balance) 17589 in 2019⁷; gender no data available

2.4. Social and economic significance

- Contribution to gross domestic product (GDP), 3.6% of GDP in recent years (6% in 2024⁹); 11% employment¹⁰
- Production (volume and value)- 128,000–130,000 tonnes, USD 82.48 million¹¹
- Community reliance on small-scale fisheries for income and food security- island communities such as those in Gaafu Dhaalu and Haa Alif atolls depend heavily on small-scale tuna and reef fish fisheries for both household income and daily protein intake
- Ability to access to social services, housing, etc.- in these remote islands, fisher households often report limited access to consistent healthcare services, quality schooling, and secure housing, especially during monsoon seasons when transport is disrupted. Fishermen's income assurance scheme was established with the purpose of safeguarding a secure income for fishermen whose income is affected due to weather conditions and other nature related causes¹² (applicable only to registered fishers). Additionally, the Husnuvaa Aasandha health insurance scheme provides government-subsidized healthcare access, and insurance products such as marine fisheries insurance and life insurance through Allied Insurance further protect registered fishers against risks and livelihood shocks.¹³

3. Small-scale fisheries structure Small-scale fisheries fisher groups

⁸ Ministry of Fisheries - Fisheries Statistics 2022 <https://fisheries.gov.mv/publications/statistics/9>

⁹ https://statistics.maldives.gov.mv/mbs/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/GDP2023-Annual_ProdExp.pdf

¹⁰ [mdv205058.pdf](https://statistics.maldives.gov.mv/mbs/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/GDP2023-Annual_ProdExp.pdf)

¹¹ Export of fish | MMA Statistics Database: <https://database.mma.gov.mv/viya/series/3468>

¹² National Social Protection Agency <https://www.nspa.gov.mv/v2/index.php/fishermens-income-assurance-scheme/>

¹³ Aasandha Company Ltd: <https://www.aasandha.mv/en/scheme/aasandha-scheme/overview>

Fisher Group Type	Fishing Methods	Scale & Coverage
Pole-and-line fishers	Pole-and-line fishing (mainly for skipjack tuna)	Predominantly small-scale, though some use larger mechanized vessels; active in most atolls
Handline fishers ¹⁴	Handline and dropline (for reef and deepwater fish)	Widespread across atolls; typically small-scale and artisanal

3.1. Supply chain

Other stakeholders in small-scale fisheries in the Maldives include crew members on dhonis, women involved in traditional processing of “hikimas” (smoke-dried tuna), local fish vendors, transporters, ice and fuel suppliers, and traders who collect and export dried or fresh tuna products. Women, in particular, play a key role in value addition through cleaning, salting, drying, and packaging fish, especially in atolls like Laamu, Gaafu Dhaalu, and Raa. ^{15 16} *Hikimas* processors, traders, and crew are generally outside formal fisheries groups, with only a few local initiatives and no large-scale organizations representing them, leading to limited involvement in fisheries governance. ¹⁷

3.2. Local community

Fisheries are deeply embedded in island community life, with strong social and economic linkages through family-based fishing crews, shared processing spaces, and local trade.

Fishers are represented by involvement in advisory committees in implementing Fishery Management Plans.

Fishermen are involved in representing fisheries interest via advisory committees in implementing Fishery Management Plans as per The Fisheries Act of Maldives Chapter 3, Article 20.

3.3. The role of women in small-scale fisheries

Table 3.1: Women in Fisheries

Aspect	Details – Maldives Context
Involvement in SSF	Women are primarily involved in post-harvest activities, especially processing (e.g. smoked tuna, dried tuna, and/or Rihaakuru (fish

¹⁴ <https://www.fao.org/fishery/docs/CDrom/bobp/cd1/Bobp/Publns/MIS/0007.pdf>

¹⁵ https://www.researchgate.net/publication/350725668_THE_MALDIVES_SEAFOOD_SECTOR_SUSTAINABLE_DEVELOPMENT_AND_RESILIENT_COMMUNITIES

¹⁶ Maldivian Gender Roles in Bio-resource Management <https://www.fao.org/4/ac792e/AC792E04.htm?>

¹⁷ State-led fisheries development: Enabling access to resources and markets in the Maldives pole-and-line skipjack tuna fishery - FarmHub <https://learn.farmhub.ag/resources/securing-sustainable-small-scale-fisheries/state-led-fisheries-development-enabling-access-to-resources-and-markets-in-the-maldives-pole-and/>

Aspect	Details – Maldives Context
	paste)), packaging, and small-scale trading. Few participate in fishing directly.
Representation in groups	Women are rarely represented in fishers’ cooperatives or associations, which are largely male-dominated and focused on vessel owners and fishers.
Participation in decision-making	Women have limited roles in formal fisheries decision-making, both at island and national levels.
Facilitating participation	Participation can be improved through women-led cooperatives, inclusion in fisheries committees, targeted capacity-building, and recognition of their roles in fisheries value chains.

4. Small-scale fisheries management

4.1. Fisheries laws

The Fisheries Act of the Maldives (Law No. 14/2019) is the principal legislation governing all fisheries, including small-scale, outlining licensing, management, monitoring, and sustainability provisions¹⁸. In addition, there are eight specific fishery management plans. A list of the key fisheries policies and laws is given in the table.

Table 4.1: Key fisheries policies and laws of the Maldives

S.No.	Name of the Law/ Policy
1	National Fisheries and Agricultural Policy 2019-2029
2	NPOA-IUU
3	NPOA-Sharks
4	Maldives Tuna Fishery Management Plan, 2021
5	Maldives Billfish Fishery Management Plan, 2020
6	Maldives Diamondback Squid Fishery Management Plan, 2020
7	Maldives Grouper Fishery Management Plan.
8	Maldives Lobster Fishery Management Plan.
9	Maldives Marine Aquarium Fishery Management Plan, 2020
10	Maldives Reef Fishery Management Plan
11	Maldives Sea Cucumber Fishery Management Plan
12	Fisheries Act of the Maldives (Law No. 14/2019)
13	Maritime Zones of Maldives Act (Law No. 6/96)
14	2020-R-4 (Regulation on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate IUU Fishing)
15	2020/R-75 (General Fisheries Regulation) 1. 2023/R-123 (1st Amendment to General Fisheries Regulation) 2. 2025/R-15 (2nd Amendment to General Fisheries Regulation)
16	2020-R-74 (Regulation on Administration of Penalties for Fisheries related Offences)
17	2020-R-91 (Regulation on issuing permits for the establishment of fisheries project)
18	2020-R-92 (Regulation on the General Process of Issuing Licenses and Permits for Fishing, Fishing Related Activities and Aquaculture Activities)
19	2020-R-93 (Regulation on the Establishment of Floor Prices for Fish Purchase)
20	2020/R-94 (Aquaculture Regulation) 1. 2023/R-141 (1st Amendment to Aquaculture Regulation)

¹⁸ [Ministry of Fisheries - The Fisheries Act of the Maldives](#)

S.No.	Name of the Law/ Policy
	2. 2025/R-35 (2nd Amendment to Aquaculture Regulation)
21	2020-R-100 (Regulation on Conduction of Marine Research in the Maldives)
22	2021/R-62 (Billfish Fishery Regulation)
23	2022/R-2 (Grouper Fishery Regulation)
24	2022-R-122 (Licensing Regulation for Foreign Fishing Vessels for Purchase of Tuna)
25	2022-R-123 (Regulation on IUU Fisheries of Foreign Fishing Vessels)
26	2022/R-139 (Tuna Fishery Regulation) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2022/R-220 (1st Amendment to Tuna Fishery Regulation) 2. 2024/R-97 (2nd Amendment to Tuna Fishery Regulation) 3. 2025/R-17 (3rd Amendment to Tuna Fishery Regulation)
27	2023-R-73 (Regulation on Use of Carbonmonoxide or Filtered Smoke in Fisheries Products and Export of Such Products)
28	2023-R-82 (Licensing Regulation for Fisheries Activities)
29	2024-R-121 (Fishermen’s Registry Regulation)
30	2025/R-3 (Sea Cucumber Fishery Regulation)
31	2025/R-4 (Reef Fish Fishery Regulation)

4.2. Governance structures

In Maldives, fisheries are governed nationally by the Ministry of Fisheries and Ocean Resources with support from the Maldives Marine Research Institute (MMRI), while island councils manage local coordination; regionally, the country engages with bodies like IOTC.

Fishermen are involved in representing fisheries interest via advisory committees in implementing Fishery Management Plans as per The Fisheries Act of Maldives Chapter 3, Article 20.

4.3. Management measures

Fisheries in Maldives are managed using tools such as licensing, gear restrictions (e.g., banning destructive gear), area and seasonal closures, and species-specific regulations (like size limits). While the sector has traditionally been open access, increasing management controls now regulate entry and practices, especially for export-oriented species (MSC system)^{19 20 21}

¹⁹ <https://fisheries.gov.mv/images/MBFMP2020-1728971042976.pdf>

²⁰ fisheries.gov.mv

²¹ Maldives Pole-and-Line skipjack tuna achieves MSC certification | Marine Stewardship Council
<https://www.msc.org/media-centre/press-releases/press-release/maldives-pole-and-line-skipjack-tuna-achieves-msc-certification>

The Ministry, in coordination with the Coast Guard, Police, Customs, Transport Authority, and other agencies, establishes and enforces monitoring, control, and surveillance systems to regulate fishing activities. Enforcement is carried out by trained officers from the Coast Guard, Police, and Customs, who can inspect vessels, seize illegal fishing gear, and arrest offenders without a court warrant. Additionally, the Ministry may appoint rangers from other government bodies to support enforcement efforts and work with local councils. These officers have powers to board vessels, inspect gear and documents, detain offenders, and confiscate illegal items to ensure compliance with fisheries laws.²²

²² [mdv195984.pdf](#)

5. Small-scale fisheries knowledge

5.1. Research

The Maldives Marine Research Institute (MMRI) conducts fishery-based research for pelagic and reef-based fisheries. The Maldives National University (MNU) has now established the College of Fisheries and Ocean Studies, which will contribute student-led initiatives on small-scale fishery research.

5.2. Data

Fishery sampling programs are conducted throughout the year by MMRI, focused on landing site sampling at key islands for fisheries, collecting data on species composition and fishery operation. Ongoing research programs collect catch and effort data on pelagic species, mainly Skipjack and Yellowfin tuna, as well as reef-based species targeted at local islands

5.3. Projects

The International Pole and Line Foundation (IPNLF) collaborates with local NGOs like *Dhivehi Masverin* to promote traditional, sustainable fishing methods such as pole-and-line and hand line fishing. Their initiatives include attracting youth to the tuna sector and launching the *eDhumashi* e-commerce platform, which empowers women fish processors by providing access to digital markets and capacity-building training²³.

Maldives Resilient Reefs, in partnership with the Blue Marine Foundation, focuses on restoring coral reefs and establishing Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). Their work aims to enhance the resilience of marine ecosystems and promote sustainable, small-scale fisheries that benefit local communities.²⁴ Additionally, the World Bank's Sustainable Fisheries Resources Development Project has been instrumental in improving fisheries management at regional and national levels, including supporting mariculture development in certain atolls²⁵.

²³ <https://ipnlf.org/edhumashi-empowering-women-in-the-maldives-turn-fish-into-money>

²⁴ [Home - Maldives Resilient Reefs](#)

²⁵ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2020/02/27/maldives-ocean-resource-conservation-sustainable-livelihood>

6. Issues and opportunities

Table 6.1: Key issues in the small-scale fisheries subsector

Small-scale fisheries dimension	Stakeholders to ask*	Key issues*	Responses	Opportunities
5. Governance of tenure in small-scale fisheries and resource management	Local leaders Local government	Are small-scale fisheries adequately recognized in government policy?	Yes, all fisheries are considered small-scale	
	Regional government	Do small-scale fishers have secure tenure?	Yes	
	National government	Are there conflicts between larger-scale operators, or other parties, and small-scale fisheries' fishers?	Expansion of industrial-scale tuna fishing, particularly by state-owned enterprises like the Maldives Industrial Fisheries Company (MIFCO), has raised concerns among small-scale fishers. These operators often use pole-and-line methods, which are considered sustainable, but their increased presence in fishing grounds can lead to resource competition and tensions with traditional fishers	
a. Responsible governance of tenure				

Small-scale fisheries dimension	Stakeholders to ask*	Key issues*	Responses	Opportunities
		*Suggestions for targeting stakeholders and prompting information concerning the main issues.		
5b. Sustainable resource management	Fishers, Researchers, scientists Resource managers	What is the status (e.g. stable, overfished, unknown) and ecological significance of small-scale fisheries resources?	<p>Yes</p> <p>Small-scale fisheries in the Maldives primarily focus on reef fish, such as groupers, snappers, and emperors, which are vital for local food security and cultural practices. However, many of these species are currently overfished. For instance, over 90% of groupers caught are below their maturity sizes, indicating unsustainable fishing pressures²⁶. Overfishing has led to the depletion of herbivorous reef fish populations, destabilizing reef ecosystems and increasing the likelihood of macro algae outbreaks, which can further harm coral reefs.²⁷ Ecologically, these reef fish play a crucial role in maintaining coral reef</p>	

²⁶ <https://www.blumarinefoundation.com/tourism-the-cause-of-or-solution-to-overfishing-of-reef-fish-in-the-maldives/>

²⁷ <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099120224122531951/pdf/P180529-cfd196cd-80e4-498d-a2d4-8d1030d906de.pdf>

Small-scale fisheries dimension	Stakeholders to ask*	Key issues*	Responses	Opportunities
		<p><i>*Suggestions for targeting stakeholders and prompting information concerning the main issues.</i></p>	<p>health by controlling algae growth and supporting biodiversity. The Maldives' coral reefs are among the most biodiverse in the world, supporting over 1,900 fish species and 187 coral species. The decline in reef fish populations threatens not only marine biodiversity but also the livelihoods of communities dependent on these resources. To address these challenges, the Maldives has developed legally recognized fisheries management plans aimed at sustainable development and management of these fisheries resources. ²⁸</p>	
		<p>Are other human activities affecting these resources or ecosystems? Examples are coastal development, pollution or mangrove cutting.</p>	<p>Yes, human activities are significantly impacting the marine ecosystems and fisheries resources in the Maldives. Coastal development, such as land reclamation and infrastructure projects, is leading to</p>	

²⁸ <https://faolex.fao.org/docs/pdf/mdv219853eng.pdf>

Small-scale fisheries dimension	Stakeholders to ask*	Key issues*	Responses	Opportunities
		<p><i>*Suggestions for targeting stakeholders and prompting information concerning the main issues.</i></p>	<p>the destruction of vital habitats like mangroves and coral reefs. For instance, the construction of airports has resulted in the loss of mangrove forests, which serve as crucial buffers against coastal erosion and provide breeding grounds for marine life.²⁹</p>	
<p>6. Social development, employment and decent work</p>	<p>Fisher groups (per fishery)</p> <p>Small-scale fisheries community groups, leaders, elders</p>	<p>Are there conflicts between groups across fisheries sectors (small-scale versus industrial; inland versus marine)?</p> <p>Across different sectors (small-scale fisheries versus agricultural sector, etc.)?</p>	<p>Yes, conflicts exist between small-scale and industrial fisheries in the Maldives, particularly concerning tuna fishing. While the Maldives has historically promoted sustainable, small-scale pole-and-line tuna fisheries, there have been considerations to reopen long line fishing, which is more industrial in nature. Such proposals have faced opposition from local fishermen, leading to the government's decision to abandon plans to reopen long line fisheries after consultations with stakeholders ; also there are tensions</p>	

²⁹ <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/01/23/maldives-protect-mangroves-further-loss>

Small-scale fisheries dimension	Stakeholders to ask*	Key issues*	Responses	Opportunities
		<p><i>*Suggestions for targeting stakeholders and prompting information concerning the main issues.</i></p>		
		<p>Do small-scale fisheries communities have access to public services such as education, healthcare and public safety?</p>	<p>between the fisheries sector and tourism. Recreational fishing by tourists and the expansion of resort developments have led to overfishing of reef fish, affecting local fish stocks and causing conflicts with local fishing communities³⁰</p> <p>Small-scale fisheries communities in the Maldives generally have access to basic public services such as education, healthcare, and public safety, although service quality and availability are often limited in remote atolls compared to Malé³¹</p>	
<p>7. Value chains, post-harvest and trade</p>	<p>Supply chain groups:</p>	<p>Are supply chain operators included in discussions and small-scale fisheries decision-making?</p>	<p>Yes, in the Maldives, supply chain operators—including fish processors, marketers, and exporters—are involved in small-scale fisheries decision-making through structured stakeholder engagement</p>	

³⁰ <https://www.blumarinefoundation.com/tourism-the-cause-of-or-solution-to-overfishing-of-reef-fish-in-the-maldives>

³¹ <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099050006092240654/pdf/P175692013149d03082ee01cbf1e014aed.pdf>

Small-scale fisheries dimension	Stakeholders to ask*	Key issues*	Responses	Opportunities
	Upstream – suppliers (net and boat builders)		mechanisms, such as the Sustainable Fisheries Resources Development Project (SFRDP), which ensures their participation in policy consultations and governance processes ³² .	
	Downstream – buyers, processors, traders, retailers	How do wage levels compare and how secure are jobs and income? Are there alternative incomes in small-scale fisheries communities (community-based tourism, etc.)?	In the Maldives, small-scale fishers typically earn variable, share-based incomes rather than fixed wages, with monthly earnings ranging around 15,000–20,000 MVR (\$970–1,300 USD) depending on catch volumes, making their livelihoods inherently insecure due to environmental and market fluctuations. Alternative incomes, such as community-based tourism, fish processing, and handicrafts, are increasingly being	

³² <https://ipnlf.org/about/>

Small-scale fisheries dimension	Stakeholders to ask*	Key issues*	Responses	Opportunities
		*Suggestions for targeting stakeholders and prompting information concerning the main issues.	adopted to diversify livelihoods and reduce dependence on fishing ^{33 34}	
		How the small-scale fisheries subsector affected by competition with larger is economic sectors (industrial-scale fisheries, shipping, etc.)?		
8. Gender equality	Small-scale fisheries community groups, leaders, elders	Do opportunities in small-scale fisheries differ for men and women?	Yes	
		Does access to public services differ for men and women?	Yes, in the Maldives, access to public services such as education, healthcare, and employment often differs for men and women: women face lower labour force participation (45.6% vs. 77.1% for men), more engagement in informal work with limited benefits, and barriers in	

³³ <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2025/sep/04/just-a-pole-and-line-like-they-fished-as-boys-how-a-maldives-tradition-is-ensuring-tuna-stocks-thrive>

³⁴ <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099062724090023235/pdf/P180529-4ffd31f0-eb2e-40d6-afc0-156a20523b73.pdf>

Small-scale fisheries dimension	Stakeholders to ask*	Key issues*	Responses	Opportunities
		*Suggestions for targeting stakeholders and prompting information concerning the main issues.	healthcare access due to distance, lack of female providers, and social norms ^{35 36}	
9. Disaster risks and climate change	Resource managers, scientists Fisher groups (per fishery) Small-scale fisheries community groups, leaders, elders	How is climate change affecting resources and small-scale fisheries communities?	Rising sea temperatures and increased frequency of extreme weather events, such as floods and storm surges, are leading to coral bleaching and degradation of coral reefs, which serve as critical habitats for fish species. This degradation threatens biodiversity and disrupts local fish populations, including skipjack tuna, a staple of the Maldivian diet and economy. Additionally, changes in ocean currents and temperatures are causing tuna to migrate to deeper waters, challenging traditional pole-and-line fishing methods. The decline in fish stocks and the increased unpredictability of fishing conditions are leading to reduced catches and	

³⁵ [Gender | United Nations Development Programme](#)

³⁶ [Maldives](#)

Small-scale fisheries dimension	Stakeholders to ask*	Key issues*	Responses	Opportunities
		<p><i>*Suggestions for targeting stakeholders and prompting information concerning the main issues.</i></p>	<p>income for small-scale fishers. This economic strain is compounded by the vulnerability of coastal infrastructure to flooding and erosion, further disrupting fishing activities and associated livelihoods^{37 38}</p>	
		<p>How are communities adapting to climate change, and to what extent are they able to adapt?</p>		

³⁷ <https://corporatemaldives.com/report-the-economic-impacts-of-climate-change-on-the-maldives-fisheries-industry>

³⁸ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2024/09/13/climate-change-threatens-maldives-fisheries-and-tourism-urgent-adaptation-needed>



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