

DRAFT



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**

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

INDIA (Inland Fisheries)

INCEPTION PHASE



**Bay of Bengal Programme
Inter-Governmental Organization (BOBP-IGO)
2026**

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

INDIA

(INLAND FISHERIES)

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Stage 1 - NPOA-SSF (inland fisheries) initiation

Step 1-1: Task Force formation

The Voluntary Guidelines for Ensuring Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in Relation to Food Security and Poverty Alleviation (SSF Guidelines) serve as an international framework addressing the requirements of developing nations. They are relevant worldwide and for all types of small-scale fisheries as well as the entire small-scale fisheries value chain. They offer an extensive framework to steer the governance and development of small-scale fisheries, yet are inherently general and not specific in terms of actions at the national or local level: they suggest what should be accomplished, but not the methods to achieve it.

Chapter 13 of the SSF Guidelines highlights the necessity of facilitating implementation and monitoring. Therefore, to ease their execution, customized implementation plans specific to each country are necessary to pinpoint the strategies and priority measures to be adopted at the country level. A detailed implementation plan can be developed as a National Plan of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries (NPOA-SSF).

This report is the inception phase document for **INDIA (INLAND FISHERIES)**.

1. Role and Purpose

Small-scale fisheries which sustain livelihoods, nutrition, and add local value across marine and inland systems in India, is the focus of development policy and schemes of Department of Fisheries (DoF), Government of India. The DoF envisions to develop a National Plan of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries (NPOA-SSF), to convert existing mandates into a single monitorable programme of work, by translating FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (VG-SSF) for sustainable small-scale fishers and fish workers into actions on fishing, safety at sea, decent work, social protection, disaster risk reduction, climate adaptation, value-chain upgrading, and bycatch and habitat measures, with measurable indicators and review cycles.

INDIA shall have a National Advisory Committee. The NAC shall serve as the national platform to provide strategic guidance, ensure inclusive participation across harvest and post-harvest activities, endorse key milestones, and oversee transparency and accountability in preparation and implementation of the NPOA-SSF across inland and marine fisheries of India.

- (i) Provide strategic guidance and ensure inclusivity, legitimacy and transparency in developing and implementing the NPOA-SSF.
- (ii) Endorse scoping, priorities, safeguards, and key milestones; review and recommend annual work plans and budgets.
- (iii) Oversee stakeholder participation across harvest and post-harvest value chains, with enabling measures for women, youth, and marginalised groups.

- (iv) Guide Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL), including indicators, baselines, reviews, and course corrections.
- (v) Coordinate with the National Task Force (NTF), which serves as the executive/implementing body and reports at agreed milestones.

The Task Force is a small group of persons dedicated to the inclusive, equitable and sustainable development of small-scale fisheries in **INDIA (Inland Fisheries)**. This document provides the terms of reference (ToR) for the working arrangements of this Task Force, which will guide and facilitate the development and implementation of an NPOA-SSF (Inland Fisheries) in **INDIA**.

The objectives of the Task Force are to:

- formulate a development plan for an NPOA-SSF that recognizes the needs of the small-scale inland fisheries sector in **INDIA**;
- establish a long-term, fully inclusive “National Platform” that will advise the Task Force in its development and implementation of an NPOA-SSF (inland fisheries); and
- depending on the desired set-up in the country, the Task Force may be in charge of developing, as well as implementing the NPOA-SSF, or pass the responsibility over implementation onto the National Platform.

The requirements of the Task Force are as follows:

- to assist with the initiation (Stage 1), development (Stage 2) and implementation (Stage 3) of the NPOA-SSF for inland fisheries;
- to identify and mobilize funding for NPOA-SSF for inland fisheries planning activities over Stage 1 of the overall development process; and
- to ensure that the NPOA-SSF for inland fisheries initiation process is effective, responsive and inclusive.

2. Term

These ToR are effective from <INSERT START DATE> and continue until the <EXPECTED DATE THAT STAGE 1 WILL BE COMPLETED, I.E. THE NATIONAL PLATFORM IS ESTABLISHED AND THERE IS FINAL AGREEMENT TO PREPARE AN NPOA-SSF> / will be ongoing until terminated by agreement between the parties.

3. Membership

The Task Force* is a stakeholder working group. Table 1 gives the composition.

Table 1: NTF members

Category	Inland
Government departments most relevant to small-scale fisheries and regional government bodies	Chair: Joint Secretary (Inland Fisheries), DoF, GoI
	Member Secretary: Fisheries Development Commissioner, DoF, GoI
	Members: 3. Deputy Commissioner (Inland Fy) DoF, GoI 4. ADG (Inland Fisheries), ICAR 5. Dir. of Fisheries, Assam 6. Dir. of Fisheries, UP 7. Dir. of Fisheries, Karnataka 8. Mr. Rajdeep Mukherjee, Policy Analyst, BoBP-IGO
	9. Sh. Sandeep, Director, MoEF&CC
Academics and Researchers focusing on fisheries, natural resources or social scientists with experience in working with SSF	10. Dr. Ananthan PS, Pr. Sci., ICAR-CIFE, Mumbai 11. Dr. Kamal Sharma, Pr. Sci. ICAR-RCER, Patna 12. Dr Shrikanta Samanta, Pr. Sci., CIFRI, Barrackpore 13. Dr. Ganesh Chandra, Sr. Sci. ICAR-CIFRI, Kolkata 14. Prof. Raman Kumar Trivedi, College of Fisheries, RCAU, Bihar 15. Dr Shanavas Ali, Pr. Scientist, CICFR, Bhimtal
CSOs, NGOs or community-based organizations with some involvement in SSF and associated communities	16. Mr. Nachiket Kelkar, Wildlife Conservation Trust, Mumbai 17. Mr. Venkatesh Salagrama, Independent Consultant, Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh
Organizations representing SSF, traders or processors	18. Sh. Pradip Chatterjee, National Forum for Small Scale Fish Workers, Kolkata 19. Mr. Suman Kalyan Mandal, World Forum of Fish Harvesters and Fish Workers (WFF), India East Coast Fish Workers' Union (ECFWU), Kolkata 20. Sh. Siddharth Sharma, CEO, Tata Trusts, Mumbai, Maharashtra 21. Sh. Gautham Sahani, Hajipur Prakhand Matsyajivi Sahyog Samithi, Hajipur, Bihar
Other supply chain organizations	22. Sh. Yash Agarwal, M/s Das & Kumars, Varanasi

***NOTE: To be revised as per notification**

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of the Task Force members are as follows:

(Note: it is preferable to establish the individual roles and responsibilities of each task force member. These could include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a) Chairperson
- b) Secretary/Treasurer
- c) Lead: Preliminary SSF Profile [Step 1-2]
- d) Lead: SSF Stakeholder Mapping [Step 1-3]
- e) Lead: SSF Governance Review & Gap Analysis [Step 1-4]
- f) Lead: Rationale for an NPOA-SSF and NPOA-SSF Development Plan [Steps 1-5 and 1-6])

Table 2: Overall Role in NPOA-SSF

Name of NTF member	Overall role for NPOA-SSF
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder mapping and communication strategy plan • Governance review, Rationale for NPOA-SSF • NPOA-SSF development plan
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance review, Rationale for NPOA-SSF • NPOA-SSF development plan • Preparation for public launch of NPOA-SSF process • Public launch: Awareness building and understanding expectations of target stakeholders
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder mapping and communication strategy plan • NPOA-SSF development plan • Preparation for public launch of NPOA-SSF process • Public launch: Awareness building and understanding expectations of target stakeholders

5. Meetings

All meetings will be chaired by **Joint Secretary (Inland Fisheries), DoF, GoI.**

A meeting quorum will be **1/3rd (at least 8)** members of the Task Force.

Decisions will be made by consensus (that is, members must be satisfied with the decision even though it may not be their first choice). If this is not possible, the Task Force chairperson makes the final decision.

Meeting agendas and minutes will be provided by the **Member Secretary (Fisheries Development Commissioner, GoI)**.

This task includes:

- preparing agendas and supporting papers; and
- preparing meeting notes and information.

Meetings will be held online **every quarter** or as and when required **virtually**.

If required, subgroup meetings will be arranged outside of these times, at a time convenient to subgroup members.

Table 3: Contribution and Coordination¹

Reference activity from roadmap	Who leads or coordinates	Who contributes
Stakeholder mapping and communication strategy plan	Leads:	Convener: Dr.P.S Ananthan (ICAR CIFE)
Governance review, Rationale for NPOA-SSF	Convener: Dr Mohammad Koya, FDC, Rajdeep Mukherjee, BoBP,	Dr. P. S. Ananthan, ICAR-CIFE Dr. Ganesh Chandra, ICAR-CIFRI
NPOA-SSF development plan	Leads: ADG (Inland), ICAR Fisheries Development Commissioner, DoF	All task force members
Preparation for public launch of NPOA-SSF process	Leads: Fisheries Development Commissioner, DoF	All task force members, along with the State DoFs
Public launch: Awareness building and understanding expectations of target stakeholders	Leads: ADG (Inland), ICAR Fisheries Development Commissioner, DoF	All task force members, along with the State DoFs
Intervention logic	Leads:	
Preparation (question, materials) for consultations	Leads: ADG (Inland), ICAR Fisheries Development Commissioner, DoF	Dr. Ananthan P S, ICAR—CIFE

¹ Based on presentation made at the Regional Inception Workshop on the National Plans of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries (NPOA-SSF) 20-22 Nov 2025, Colombo, Sri Lanka

Reference activity from roadmap	Who leads or coordinates	Who contributes
NPOA-SSF Log frame	ADG Inland, ICAR (Lead), FDC (Coordinator)	Dr. Vivekanandan, Dr. Naveen Namboothri, Dakshin, Dr. Velvizhi, MSSRF
NPOA-SSF drafting	ADG Inland, ICAR (Lead), FDC (Coordinator)	All task force members + NFF + State DoFs + State fisher federations/leaders
Stakeholder consultations	ADG Inland ICAR (Lead), FDC (Coordinator)	

Table 4: Meeting Schedule²

Meeting name	Objective	Who participates	Frequency/ date	Roles
Inception meeting	Clarifying roles, scope, planning	All NTF members	20-22 November 2025	Given in Section 4
Stakeholder mapping	To list the organizations involved with small-scale fisheries, the relationships between stakeholders, and identify gaps	All NTF members	November 2025	Given in Section 4
Communication strategy plan	To develop the communication strategy for developing the NPOA-SSF	All NTF members, along with the State DoFs	March 2025	Given in Section 4
NPOA-SSF development plan	Developing Plan for the activities that follow (eg:	All task force members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intervention logic (December 2025) Preparation (question, 	Given in Section 4

² Based on presentation made at the Regional Inception Workshop on the National Plans of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries (NPOA-SSF) 20-22 Nov 2025, Colombo, Sri Lanka

Meeting name	Objective	Who participates	Frequency/ date	Roles
	Process launch and awareness building (NPOA-SSF, intervention logic Stakeholder consultation, etc.) till final publication of the NPOA-SSF		materials) for consultations (February 2026) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPOA-SSF Log frame (January-February 2026) • NPOA-SSF drafting (March- June 2026) • Stakeholder consultations (April – September 2026) 	
Preparatory meeting for public launch	Preparation for public launch of NPOA-SSF process.	All task force members, along with the State DoFs	October 2026	
Actual Launch	Media planning and event publicity Public launch event	All task force members, along with the State DoFs	21 November 2026	Given in Section 4
Awareness building and understanding expectations of target stakeholders	To build awareness among stakeholders and document expectations of target stakeholders	All task force members, along with the State DoFs	November 2026 to March 2027	Given in Section 4

6. Amendment, modification or variation

These ToR may be amended, varied or modified in writing by Task Force members after consultation and agreement.

Step 1-2: SSF Profile

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 detailed SSF Profile for India is available in Annexure 1.** Information presented below is extracted/ summarized from the document.

1. Definition of small-scale fisheries in INDIA

The following points need to be considered while finalizing the definition: addition of exclusionary clause as per MFRAs on area of fishing, and addition of 'subsistence fishers' as they are important in terms of household nutrition security

Table 5: Fishery Unit³

S. No.	Fishery unit	Main Characteristics	Numbers	Key issues/challenges facing fishery unit
1.	Riverine hilsa			
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				

2. Characteristics of small-scale fisheries in INDIA

Table 6: Characteristics of small-scale fisheries

Small-scale fisheries in numbers (2019-20)			A small-scale fishery is defined as...
National population (number); 1364892691	Total fishermen population = 2,80,63,538	=	No legal definition

³ Based on presentation made at the Regional Inception Workshop on the National Plans of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries (NPOA-SSF) 20-22 Nov 2025, Colombo, Sri Lanka

	Employed in small-scale fisheries (percent of national population) = 2% (considering all fishermen as SSF)	All inland fishers are considered small-scale	
Fishermen population	Male		Female
Fishers total	15,665,630		12,397,908
Inland	13,013,978		10,103,842
	Inland		
Area	7.08 million km ²		
<u>Average production (2023-24)</u>	13.9 million tonnes		
Fisheries GVA in 2024 ⁴	~₹1.8 lakh crore; ~7.43% of Agriculture GVA (3.5 times growth since 2010-11)		
Key small-scale fisheries production - Inland (tonnes)	Major carps (Catla, Rohu, Marigal)	6,736,000	
	Catfishes (<i>Wallago attu</i> , pangasius)	569,000	
	Minor carps	345,000	
	Exotic carps	1,085,000	
	Others	2,569,000	

3. Small-scale fisheries structure

Fisher organisations include cooperatives, self-help groups (SHG), joint liability groups (JLG), Fish Farmers Producers Organisations (FFPOs), trader associations and others. A large number of fisheries cooperatives exist throughout the country. A [National Federation of Fishers Cooperatives](#) (FISHCOPFED) exists under the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying. There are also local level organisations which may not be formally recognised.

Women in Indian fisheries are crucial to the inland sector, engaging in direct harvesting in small-scale and inland fishing. With respect to decision-making, the general view is that women have a very small role to play in decision-making.

4. Small-scale fisheries management

India has a draft National Fisheries Policy, 2020. Most states/ union territories have enacted Fisheries Acts to cover inland fisheries as the state/UT has jurisdiction over its fisheries within the state.

5. Small-scale fisheries knowledge

A number of institutions belonging to the Indian Council for Agricultural Research such as the Central Inland Fisheries Research Institute as well as various colleges (especially on fisheries) as well as universities carry out studies and research related to small-scale fisheries. There

⁴ CMFRI Annual Report 2024

<https://eprints.cmfri.org.in/19030/1/CMFRI%20Annual%20Report%202024.pdf>

are many NGOs that carry out studies and interventions for small-scale fisheries. The information is scattered and not continuous.

6. SSF profile gaps and plans for updating or consideration for NPOA-SSF content

Table 7: Opportunity/ Gap Analysis⁵

S.No.	Opportunity/Gap analysis – key findings	Implications for NPOA-SSF content and activities
1	Definition of small-scale fishers	Unless SSF clearly defined, identification of stakeholder is difficult , targeted approach will be impossible
2	Institutional and administrative reforms	Data collection and management, policy gaps, implementation gaps, decision making challenges, unheard voices and invisibility of SSF including women, IPs
3	Tenure and access rights	There is no legally recognized tenure rights. They do not have legally enforceable rights, affecting their livelihood
4	Value-chains, post-harvest and trade	Loss in quantity and quality, direct producers not getting the benefit. Capacity building, Developing cold chain, Value addition, Direct Market access to the producers
5	Disaster risks and climate change	Social and assets protection, sea safety, Social protection, Insurance. Wetland and floodplain Adaptation strategies
6	Sustainable resource management and conservation	Ecosystem degradation, pollution, overfishing, climate hazards- Depleted resources, affects livelihoods. Sustainable/Eco tourism
7	Gender equality	Address the gap (technicality vs reality) in NPOA development

⁵ Based on presentation made at the Regional Inception Workshop on the National Plans of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries (NPOA-SSF) 20-22 Nov 2025, Colombo, Sri Lanka

SSF profile gaps and plans for updating or consideration for NPOA-SSF content

Table 8: main gaps in SSF profile⁶

S.No.	Main gaps in SSF profile	Action required to update or implication for NPOA-SSF content and activities	Responsibility (if action)	Timeline (if action)
1.	Lack of complete data on inland ecosystems and aquatic resources	Coordinate and obtain state-wise information on different kinds of inland resources	DoF, DoI, LSGs, Ministry of envt	
2	Lack of data- of fishers and catch	Develop a registry of inland SSF including women and Ips -Develop participatory, decentralized, uniform methodology for collection of gender segregated data across value chain	DOF-GOI, ICAR-CIFRI and State Fisheries dept through LSG support in consultation with the SSF community	-Legislature Development of uniform methodology- 3 months Testing the methodology-3 months Data collection
3	Lack of Post Harvest infrastructure information	Insufficient data regarding landing sites, cold storage, processing		1- 2 years

Data required for inland fisheries

- The separate national and state wise profile for inland fisheries is required
- Data should be segregated for both inland capture and culture
- Data – inland types of water bodies e.g. Riverine, reservoir – Disaggregated data at district and taluk level
- Resource user data – Fishers population of each water bodies - Disaggregated data at district and taluk level
- Catch and landing data – inland water bodies type and species specific
- Craft and gear used in inland water bodies
- Social welfare and security measures available and how many benefitted
- Extent of cooperatives, membership

⁶ Based on presentation made at the Regional Inception Workshop on the National Plans of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries (NPOA-SSF) 20-22 Nov 2025, Colombo, Sri Lanka

- Type of governance mechanism (existing in the different state) – tenure, licensing and registration
- Typology of data collection to be discussed at the national level

Considerations for NPOA-SSF planning

- Scope of inland of fisheries (capture and traditional culture) – riverine, reservoir, estuary, lagoon, wetland,
- Existing tenure system
- Identification of small-scale fish workers working in commercial aquaculture
- Preparation of infographics for each state
- Traditional aquaculture/ small-scale aquaculture (area and technology)
- Largely informal, unorganized and dispersed
- Social security coverage
- Mixed livelihoods – part time

Step 1-3: SSF Stakeholder Mapping

1. Stakeholder types

Table 9: Stakeholder types⁷

Stakeholder types	National	Regional	Local
Small-scale fish value chain			
Fisher groups (covering specific areas or fisheries)	National Federation of Small-scale Fishworkers (NFSF), FISHCOFED, East Coast Fish Workers Union (ECFWU)	State FISHCOFED, DMF (West Bengal), FISHCON, CSRF (AP), ALLAFUM (Manipur), AGRSSFU (Goa), PMWU (MP), OFU (Odisha), TFWU (AP), SMTF (Kerala), MTFWU (MH), NMASHFWU (Andaman), DTFWF (Andhra), Sea=MC2 (West Coast), Machwara Shramik Union (MP) South Canara Fisheries Federation (Karnataka)	Fishers cooperative society, district federations, Direct producers (includes fishers and traditional fish farmers) Federation of Vembanad lake protection Forum (SVKSS)

⁷ Based on presentation made at the Regional Inception Workshop on the National Plans of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries (NPOA-SSF) 20-22 Nov 2025, Colombo, Sri Lanka

Stakeholder types	National	Regional	Local
Suppliers to small-scale fisheries (port, boat, net and fuel suppliers)		Public and private seed hatcheries, Matsya Fed	Udupi Kinara FFPO (Karnataka)
Post-harvest (buyers, processors, traders and retailer)	Traders/contractors/ lease holders, FSSI	,Traders/contractors/ lease holders,	Traders/contractors/ lease holders, Medinipur District coastal fishvendors Union, SCODWES (Karnataka)
Public-sector organizations	NFDB, Irrigation and micro irrigation department, Forest Departments, Department of Land and Land Revenue, Department of Environment.	MatsyaFed (Kerala), Karnataka co-operative fisheries federation (Karnataka), State wetland Authorities	
Elected representatives (ministers, councillors and community leaders)	MPs, ministers of concerned departments (Irrigation, forest, environment, land, social welfare)	MLAs	LSGs
Civil servants (from fisheries and non-fisheries departments)	DoF, GoI, Inland fisheries	State DoF, Inland fisheries	District/block, DoF, Inland fisheries
Third-sector groups			
Research (fishery, social and economic)	CIFRI, CIFE, CIFT, DCFR, NBFGR, general universities/Foreign universities (TRU)	Fisheries universities/colleges	KVK
Non-governmental organizations (environmental and social)	ATREE, Wildlife conservation trust, Direct Initiative for Social Human Association, (DISHA), Institute for Motivating Self-Employment (IMSE)	JAL JEEVIKA and DFYWA	
Resource partners (donors and agencies)	Turning Tides, Rohini Nilekani Trust, Rainmatter Foundation and NABARD, RiseUp, NFDP, Oak Foundation,		

Stakeholder types	National	Regional	Local
Community associations		State level SHG's federation	SHG's, FPOs, FPCs, Cooperatives, Sundarban Tiger Widows Groups, Subarnarekha FPC,

2. Stakeholder Influence

Table 10: Stakeholder influence matrix⁸

ACCEPTED BY DECISIONS	Fishers, Direct producers (includes fishers, indigenous communities, women and traditional fish farmers)			
	SHG	Civil society organisations	Traders and contractors	Doners
	Fisheries cooperative federations	Research institutions	Elected representatives	
				State
	INFLUENTIAL POWER			

⁸ Based on presentation made at the Regional Inception Workshop on the National Plans of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries (NPOA-SSF) 20-22 Nov 2025, Colombo, Sri Lanka

3. Stakeholder Connections

Table 11: Stakeholder connections⁹

	Governance /government	Fishers	Post-harvest	Suppliers	Research	Non-governmental organizations
Governance /government	Weak (Coordination between and other allied departments)	-	-	-	-	-
Fishers	Weak	Weak (remote and dispersed)	-	-	-	-
Post-harvest	Weak	Medium	Weak	-	-	-
Suppliers	Medium	Weak	Nil	Medium	-	-
Research	Medium	Medium (Occasional and adhoc)	Medium	Weak	Medium/strong	Medium
Non-governmental organizations	Weak	Strong (but confined to few regions)	Weak/medium	Nil	Medium	Strong

⁹ Based on presentation made at the Regional Inception Workshop on the National Plans of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries (NPOA-SSF) 20-22 Nov 2025, Colombo, Sri Lanka

4. Stakeholder Interests

Table 12: Stakeholder interests¹⁰

Stakeholders	Stakeholders' interests	How much they know about the SSF Guidelines/NPOA-SSF
Fishers and fish workers	Tenure, Finance, Infrastructure, Social and occupational security, gender and climate justice, transboundary issues	Poor
Government officials	Conservation, livelihoods	Aware
NGO's	Rights, livelihoods enhancement, gender and climate justice	Well informed
Researchers	Conservation	Well informed

¹⁰ Based on presentation made at the Regional Inception Workshop on the National Plans of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries (NPOA-SSF) 20-22 Nov 2025, Colombo, Sri Lanka

Step 1-4: SSF Governance Review and Gap Analysis

1. Key Gaps and Opportunities

Table 13: Governance – gaps and opportunities¹¹

S.No.	Opportunity/Gap analysis – key findings	Implications for NPOA-SSF content and activities
1	Definition of small-scale fishers	Unless SSF clearly defined, identification of stakeholder is difficult , targeted approach will be impossible
2	Institutional and administrative reforms	Data collection and management, policy gaps, implementation gaps, decision making challenges, unheard voices and invisibility of SSF including women, IPs
3	Tenure and access rights	There is no legally recognized tenure rights. They do not have legally enforceable rights, affecting their livelihood
4	Value-chains, post-harvest and trade	Loss in quantity and quality, direct producers not getting the benefit. Capacity building, Developing cold chain, Value addition, Direct Market access to the producers
5	Disaster risks and climate change	Social and assets protection, sea safety, Social protection, Insurance. Wetland and floodplain Adaptation strategies
6	Sustainable resource management and conservation	Ecosystem degradation, pollution, overfishing, climate hazards- Depleted resources, affects livelihoods. Sustainable/Eco tourism
7	Gender equality	Address the gap (technicality vs reality) in NPOA development

¹¹ Based on presentation made at the Regional Inception Workshop on the National Plans of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries (NPOA-SSF) 20-22 Nov 2025, Colombo, Sri Lanka

Step 1-5: Rationale for an NPOA-SSF

1. Rationale for NPOA-SSF

The SSF Guidelines, and therefore the NPOA-SSF to implement them, will be interpreted and applied consistently with the existing rights and obligations of INDIA under national and international law and with due regard to voluntary commitments under applicable regional and international instruments. They are complementary to and support national, regional and international initiatives that address human rights, responsible fisheries and sustainable development. The SSF Guidelines were developed complementary to the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and support responsible fisheries and sustainable resource utilization in accordance with this instrument. Implementing the SSF Guidelines can also act as a springboard towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, in particular SDG 14.b: to “provide access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets”.

2. Contribution to national and international commitments

The NPOA-SSF will contribute to achieving the objectives of:

- National Fisheries Policy (Draft), 2020
- State/UT Fisheries Acts
- Other Relevant Acts

Nothing in the SSF Guidelines should be read as limiting or undermining any rights or obligations to which INDIA is subject under international law.

The NPOA-SSF will also support India’s commitments to the SDG.

Table 14: India’s domestic and international commitments

SSF Guidelines	National law or policy	International commitment
5a. Responsible governance of tenure	•	
5b. Sustainable resource management		•
6. Social development, employment and decent work		
7. Value chains, post-harvest and trade		•
8. Gender equality	•	

SSF Guidelines	National law or policy	International commitment
9. Disaster risks and climate change		
10. Policy coherence, institutional coordination and collaboration		
11. Information, research and communication		
12. Capacity development		
13. Implementation support and monitoring		

Step 1-6: NPOA-SSF development plan template

Table 15: NPOA-SSF Development plan template¹²

Action	Tasks	Action lead and partners	Outputs and milestones	Resource requirements	Cost (Lakh INR)	Time scale	Status
1	Process launch and awareness building (Step 2-1)		The NPOA-SSF development is launched	Costs for media, publicity One national workshop	3.00	December 2025 to March 2026	Inception meeting completed. To be carried out: Other activities to be planned.
2	NPOA-SSF intervention logic (Step 2-2)		SSF intervention logic to be developed	Stakeholder consultations	2.00	2 days of discussion	List of priority objectives have been identified.
3	Stakeholder consultations (Step 2-3)		6 regional public stakeholder consultations to be organised to get inputs on the NPOA SSF	Logistics for arranging the consultations	20.00	April to June 2026	Six regions and local partner organisations identified.
4	NPOA-SSF log frame (Step 2-4)		The objectives for the log frame have been chalked out. The activities, Outputs and outcomes will be	Workshop/ consultation meeting: National taskforce, relevant state	3.00	Day one of a three day consultation meeting held in August 2026	To be carried out: To be finalised after stakeholder consultations

¹² Based on presentation made at the Regional Inception Workshop on the National Plans of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries (NPOA-SSF) 20-22 Nov 2025, Colombo, Sri Lanka

Action	Tasks	Action lead and partners	Outputs and milestones	Resource requirements	Cost (Lakh INR)	Time scale	Status
			developed after the stakeholder consultations	department representatives and stakeholders to contribute			
5	NPOA-SSF draft (Step 2-5)		Will be finalised after the log-frame preparation.	Workshop/ consultation meeting: National taskforce, relevant state department representatives and stakeholders	3.00	Day two of a three day consultation in August 2026	To be carried out: To be drafted based on the finalised and approved intervention logic and log frame
6	NPOA-SSF draft consultation (Step 2-6)		After NPOA SSF draft is ready	Workshop/ consultation meeting: National taskforce, relevant state department representatives and stakeholders	3.00	Day three of a three day consultation in August 2026	To be carried out: Wide consultations with stakeholders on the draft NPOA-SSF will be
7	Final NPOA-SSF publication	DoF, Gol	NPOA-SSF published	Publication	1.00	World Fisheries day, 2026	To be carried out: NPOA-SSF published and

Action	Tasks	Action lead and partners	Outputs and milestones	Resource requirements	Cost (Lakh INR)	Time scale	Status
							notified by DoF, Gol

Table 16: Logframe¹³

Step	Dec 2025	Jan 2026	Feb 2026	Mar 2026	Apr 2026	May 2026	Jun 2026	Jul 2026	Aug 2026	Sep 2026	Oct 2026	Nov 2026
Process launch												
Intervention Logic & Log frame												
Consultations												
NPOA-SSF drafting												
NPOA-SSF validation												
NPOA-SSF Finalization and launch												

¹³ Based on presentation made at the Regional Inception Workshop on the National Plans of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries (NPOA-SSF) 20-22 Nov 2025, Colombo, Sri Lanka

Step 1-7: National platform establishment

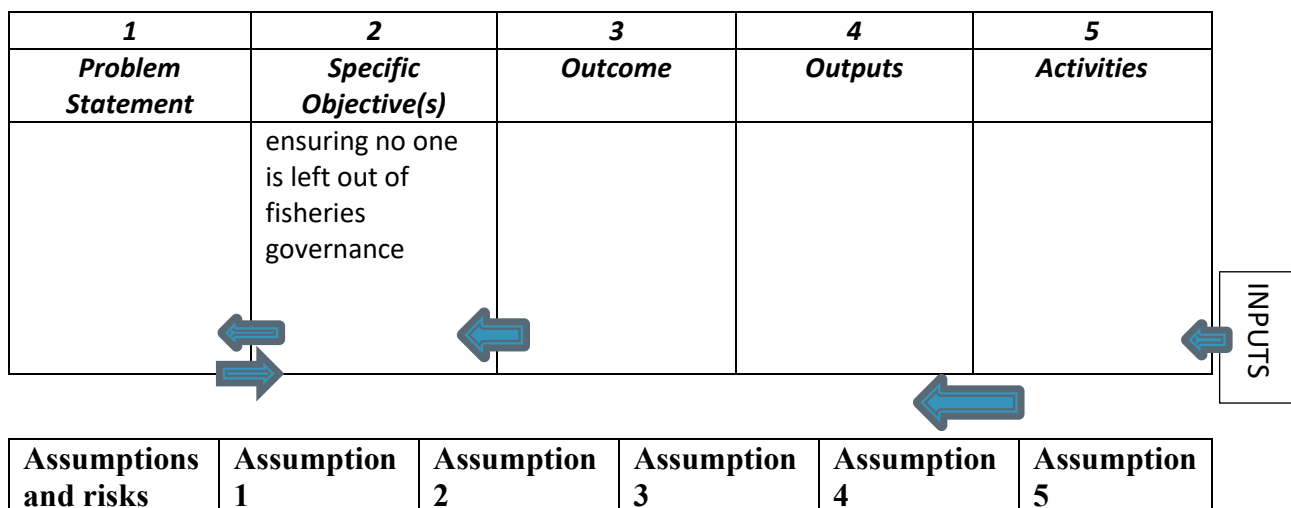
A narrative section could be added here after the finalization of the NTF.

Stage 2: NPOA-SSF development

Step 2-2: Intervention Logic

Table 17: Intervention Logic

1	2	3	4	5
<i>Problem Statement</i>	<i>Specific Objective(s)</i>	<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Outputs</i>	<i>Activities</i>
Lack of tenure rights (ownership, access & use rights)	To assure the food security, through the availability and nutritional values of fish between generations;			
Lack of social and occupational security	To adopt sustainable fisheries practices for long-term conservation;			
Gender justice	To achieve climate justice through climate disaster reductions;			
Inadequate knowledge and infrastructure	To ensure an adequate standard of living			
Lack of financial inclusion	To secure the tenure rights of the fishers			
Inefficient value chain	To recognize the traditional community rights of fishers			
Inequitable benefit sharing	To support the economic contribution along the value chain			
	To appreciate the preferential treatment of women and vulnerable groups			
	To value human rights considerations, including			



Columns 3,4 and 5 will be finalized after the stakeholder workshops.

Implementation Challenges

Inland capture resources in India are diverse, including riverine systems, reservoirs, ponds, and tanks. The ownership and rights over these resources vary, involving departments such as the Water Resources Department and the Public Works Department, while fishing rights are held by the Fisheries Department. As a result, it is difficult to coordinate among all these systems and implement effective management

Opportunities

- Strong involvement of cooperative societies across inland capture systems can be effectively leveraged for collective management and
- Community participation and stakeholder-driven governance models can be strengthened to improve implementation and monitoring.

Recommendations

- Coordinated efforts from fisheries and other relevant departments.

Step 2-3: Stakeholder consultation¹⁴

- *Based on the stakeholder mapping, which are the stakeholder groups to be consulted (including fishery sub-sectors)?*
 - NFDB, Irrigation and micro irrigation department, Forest Departments, Department of Land and Land Revenue, Department of Environment and all related national and state departments and authorities
 - Fisher groups, Suppliers to small-scale fisheries, Post-harvest, Public-sector organizations
 - Elected representatives, Civil servants, Third-sector groups, Research
 - Non-governmental organizations, Resource partners, Community associations
- *What are the criteria for selecting consultation workshop participants?*
 - Acceptance in Communities
 - Community based organizations (Unions, Cooperatives, FPOs,)
 - Influencing role in SSF
 - Decision making authorities (Govt. departments)
 - Supporting organisations (NGOs, INGOs, CSOs)
 - Related Knowledge based organisations (Research and academics institutions)
- *Are different consultation methodologies needed for different stakeholder groups? Do separate consultations need to be held with different groups (e.g., men and women)?*
 - What are the criteria for selecting consultation workshop participants?
 - Acceptance in Communities
 - Community based organizations (Unions, Cooperatives, FPOs,)
 - Influencing role in SSF
 - Decision making authorities (Govt. departments)
 - Supporting organisations (NGOs, INGOs, CSOs)
 - Related Knowledge based organisations (Research and academics institutions)
- *What are the key geographic areas to cover? Are there SSF hotspots?*
 - What are the criteria for selecting consultation workshop participants?
 - Acceptance in Communities
 - Community based organizations (Unions, Cooperatives, FPOs,)
 - Influencing role in SSF
 - Decision making authorities (Govt. departments)
 - Supporting organisations (NGOs, INGOs, CSOs)
 - Related Knowledge based organisations (Research and academics institutions)
- *How many stakeholder consultation meetings should be held and how many stakeholders should be reached in total to ensure legitimacy of the process?*
 - Based on the need.
 - State level consultations- Need at least one consultation in each states and Union Territories (minimum -35 consultations).

¹⁴ Based on presentation made at the Regional Inception Workshop on the National Plans of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries (NPOA-SSF) 20-22 Nov 2025, Colombo, Sri Lanka

- Regional level Consultations - 6 Region level consultations are also needed. Need to leverage district level representations into Region level consultations.
- District level consultations (as per need) - Resource based (waterbodies based) SSF communities need separate consultations.
- *How long should each consultation workshop be (1-3 days)? Will different lengths be required for different groups depending on their knowledge of the SSF Guidelines?*

It depends on the situation and guidelines and Knowledge Materials should be developed in local language.

- *What ongoing processes can be tapped into for consultations?*

Multiple institutions/individuals have programmes, projects, interventions going on in different regions. These institutions will leverage their existing networks to facilitate the consultation.

- *What budget is available (this may influence answers to some of the above questions!)?*
 - Need to assess and estimate the budget
 - State Fisheries Departments and public sector organisations will support
 - Resource partners will support
- *How do you ensure the maximum representation (e.g. regions, fisheries, different stakeholders, etc.)?*

Through the networks that existing partners bring to the table. Collective action by the various stakeholder will help mobilise a large constituency of stakeholders.

- *What materials you needs to prepare before consultations? (e.g. Do you draft the NPOA-SSF first? Do you develop questionnaires or presentations and only after draft the NPOA-SSF?, etc.)*

We prefer the translated drafts are shared beforehand. Translated drafts, powerpoints, screens, halls, venue, mikes, onsite translators,

- *What ongoing processes or structures, if any, can you tap into?*

Digitalization process and established database can be used for connecting the SSF communities.

- *How do you plan to communicate with the identified stakeholders? (e.g. Through SSF organizations, general media, mailing list)*

As mentioned earlier, this will be communicated beforehand through regionally translated drafts. The communications will be made through the NTF member networks. Existing WhatsApp groups.

- *How long the process should be? Can you predict a timeline?*

3-4 months.

Step 2-4: Log Frame

The Log Frame will be derived from the SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES given in the Intervention Logic (see 2.4). The specific objective will be achieved through activities that will have monitorable indicators to track progress.

Table 18: Log frame

A. Narrative summary	B. Objectively verifiable indicators	C. Means of verification	D. Important risks and assumptions
NPOA-SSF objective(s)			
Outcomes What are the intended effects of the outputs? What are the benefits and to whom do they accrue? What changes will the outputs and their use bring about?			
Outcome 1			
Outcome 2			
Outcome...n			
Output What outputs (deliverables) are to be produced in order to achieve the purpose?			
Output 1			
Output 2			
Output n			



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