



Food and Agriculture  
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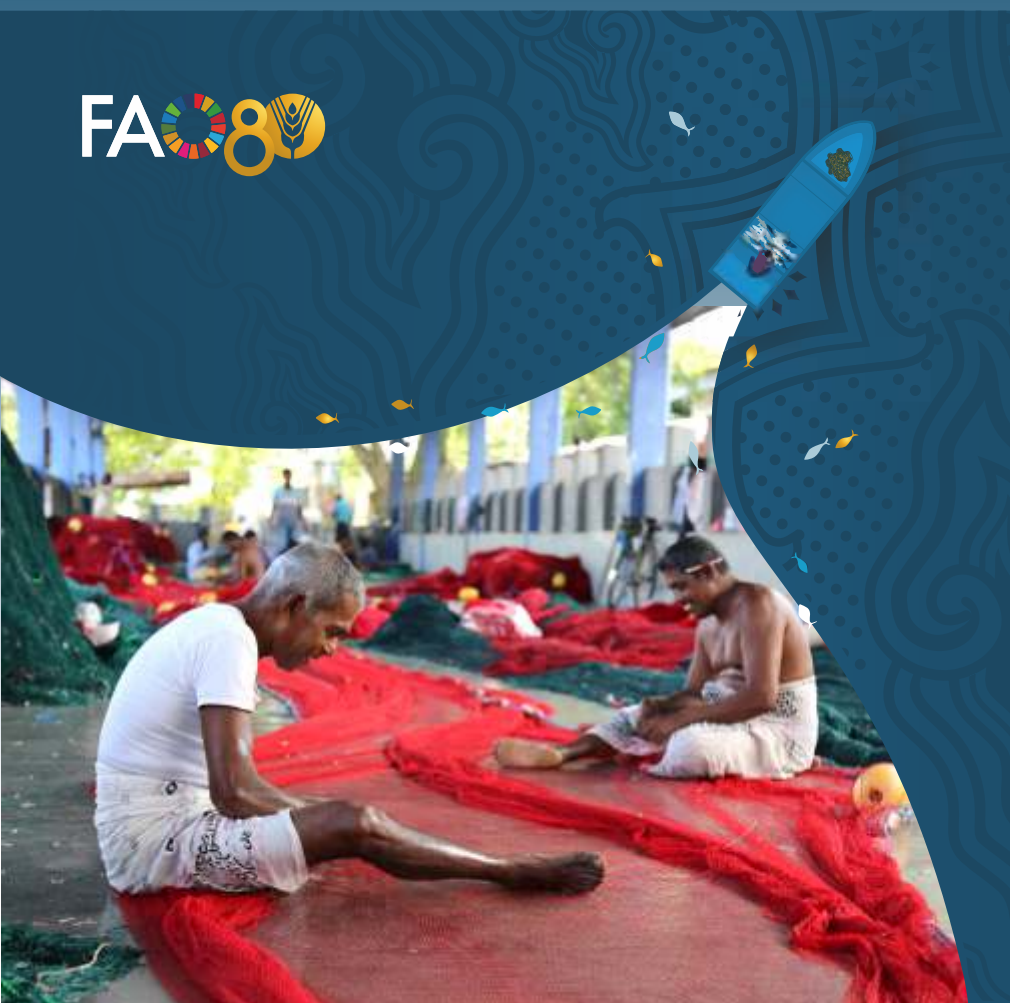
*Regional Inception Workshop on*  
**National Plan of Action  
for Small Scale Fisheries (NPOA-SSF)**

20 - 22 November 2025  
Lotus Tower, Colombo, Sri Lanka



On the Sidelines of

**WORLD  
FISHERIES  
DAY 2025**



# Introduction

The Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO), a regional fisheries body established in 2003, supports its member countries (Bangladesh, India, Maldives, and Sri Lanka) in enhancing livelihoods and quality of life for small-scale fisherfolk in the Bay of Bengal region. As part of its implementation of the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem (BOBLME) project, the BOBP-IGO organized a High-Level Meeting in the Maldives on 20 February 2025 to provide policy guidance on mainstreaming the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF) in small-scale fisheries (SSF) in the region. The meeting highlighted the need for better characterization of small-scale fisheries in BOBP-IGO member countries and recognized small-scale fisheries as vital for coastal livelihoods, food security, and sustainable development. Key messages included the importance of NPOA-SSFs, ecosystem health, climate adaptation, and capacity management. Countries requested BOBP-IGO's support to stakeholders that take part in the small-scale fisheries subsector regarding community-based capacity building, improved market access, piloting ecosystem-based projects, and technical support. These recommendations were endorsed by the XIII Governing Council, which mandated BOBP-IGO to lead regional capacity development and support NPOA-SSF formulation. To facilitate the preparation of NPOA-SSF, the FAO has developed a set of tools that outline the key stages and steps in the NPOA-SSF process and clarifies the foundational principles that should guide its development and implementation in line with the SSF Guidelines.

A Regional Capacity Development Workshop was organised during 17–19 September 2025 in Chennai, India, to build capacity on the NPOA-SSF development process. This training workshop brought together proposed core team members of the SSF national task forces (NTFs) that will be established for the NPOA-SSF process in Bangladesh, India, Maldives, and Sri Lanka, including small-scale fisheries actors, government officials, researchers, and CSOs/NGOs. During the workshop, each participating country drafted preliminary national roadmaps and made formal commitments to establish the full NTFs and initiate their NPOA-SSF development processes. Building on members' action, the Colombo workshop will mark the official launch of the NTFs, provide additional capacity building for members, and enable countries to complete initiation-stage activities as outlined in FAO's NPOA-SSF framework.

In addition, the Sri Lankan government is organizing a special event called “Aqua Planet” from 21st to 23 November in Colombo at the same venue – Lotus Tower. This event aims to create awareness about the World Fisheries Day and its importance and highlight Sri Lanka's Fisheries sector, seafood industry and sustainable practices. The event will be inaugurated on 21st November in the morning by the Hon. Prime Minister of Sri Lanka.

Hence, a special session on NPOA-SSF will be included in the inauguration programme agenda on the morning of 21st November. This high-level session will mark **World Fisheries Day 2025** and celebrate the contributions of small-scale fishers to livelihoods, food security, and sustainable development in the Bay of Bengal region.



## Specific Objectives

The workshop will:

1. Officially launch National Task Forces (NTFs) for the four countries and provide additional capacity building for the NTF members.
2. Advance initiation-stage activities: SSF profile validation, stakeholder mapping and consultation planning, national platform and NPOA-SSF development planning.
3. Celebrate World Fisheries Day on 21st November
4. Refine national roadmaps and detail NPOA-SSF development plans.
5. Consolidate a regional roadmap under BOBP-IGO.
6. Agree on immediate next steps, risks, and support needs.

## Participants

- **National Task Force (NTF) members** from Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Sri Lanka consisting of Government officials (nominated by the fisheries ministry and department of fisheries), SSF organizations, academia/research and NGOs.
- **Representatives** from BOBP-IGO, FAO, ICSF, RAG and other relevant experts.

## Expected Outputs

By the end of the workshop:

- NTFs officially launched with confirmed membership, roles, Terms of Reference (ToRs) and operating modalities.
- Capacity building of NTFs will have been completed.
- Initiation-stage-related outputs as below will be in an advanced stage:
  - o SSF profiles refined and validated for the four countries, including national policy and legal diagnostic reviews and the Illuminating Hidden Harvests (IHH) methodology, characterization and infographics
  - o Refined stakeholder maps for each country, with strategies for inclusive consultation.
  - o Updated problem/rationale statements articulating why each country needs an NPOA-SSF.
  - o Refined national roadmaps including a detailed NPOA-SSF development plan.
  - o Agreement on national platform and national communication/coordination mechanisms for NTF operations.
- A consolidated regional roadmap supporting national processes under BOBP-IGO.

## Logistic Arrangements

BOBP-IGO, in partnership with Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resources, Government of Sri Lanka, will coordinate all local arrangements, including venue management, travel and accommodation logistics, vendor contracting, outreach activities and technical support to the countries for NPOA-SSF related deliverables.

FAO will provide technical guidance, nominate experts and support the development of communication materials.

The workshop will be conducted in English.

### For further information, please contact

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# Provisional Agenda & Programme

## Day 1 (Thursday, 20 November 2025)

Time	Activity	Responsibility
08:30-09:00	Registration	BOBP-IGO
<b>09:00-09:45</b>	<b>Inaugural Session</b>	
	Welcome remarks (5 min)	<b>Dr. B.K. Kolita Kamal Jinadasa</b> <i>Secretary, MoFAOR, GoSL, Colombo</i>
	Context and Background (5 min)	<b>Dr. P. Krishnan</b> <i>Director BOBP-IGO, Chennai</i>
	Opening Remarks by FAO (5 min)	<b>Lena Westlund</b> <i>International Fisheries Analyst, FAO Headquarters, Rome</i>
	Country Statements on NPOA-SSF Development (15 min)	<b>Country Representatives / Heads of Country Missions in Sri Lanka</b> <i>(Bangladesh, India, Maldives)</i>
	Remarks from Government of Sri Lanka (10 min)	<b>Hon. Vijitha Herath</b> <i>Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment &amp; Tourism</i>
	Vote of Thanks (5 min)	<b>Mr. Susantha Kahawate</b> <i>Director General, Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources</i>
<b>09:45-10:15</b>	<b>Coffee/Tea Break with Group photo</b>	
<b>10:15-12:30</b>	<b>Session 1: Recap of NPOA-SSF Development Process and Launch of National Task Forces</b>	
10:15-10:35	Presentation: recap of NPOA-SSF development process and NTF role	<b>FAO</b>
10:35-11:30	Country group work: Discussion on NTF Terms of Reference, roles and responsibilities	<b>NTF Members</b>
11:30-12:30	Country group work: reviewing and validating legal and policy diagnostic	<b>NTF Members</b>
12:30-13:00	Plenary sharing and discussion	<b>Country Representatives</b>
<b>13:00-14:00</b>	<b>Lunch Break</b>	
<b>14:00-16:30</b>	<b>Session 2: Refining Country SSF Profiles and Applying IHH</b>	
14:00-14:05	Introduction to country SSF profile and IHH session	<b>FAO</b>
14:05-16:00 (including coffee /tea break)	1. Country group work: Discussion on applying IHH approach - characterization and discuss draft Working SSF definition 2. Country group work: reviewing and updating SSF profiles	<b>NTF Members</b>
16:00-16:30	Plenary sharing and discussion	<b>Country Representatives</b>



Time	Activity	Responsibility
<b>16:30-18:00</b>	<b>Session 3: Stakeholder Mapping</b>	
16:30-16:45	Presentation: recap of stakeholder mapping, consultation planning including practical consultation approaches used in other countries	FAO
16:45-17:50	Country group work: refine and finalize stakeholder mapping and analysis for the NPOA-SSF process. Review practical consultation approaches used in other countries and discuss consultation approaches for their NPOA-SSF.	NTF Members
<b>17:50-18:00</b>	<b>Day 1 Wrap-up</b>	BOBP-IGO



# World Fisheries Day Celebration Agenda

## Day 2 (Friday, 21 November 2025)

Time	Programme Item	Presenter / Responsible Person
09:00-09:30	Tour to Aqua Planet Expo	
09:30-10:00	Assemble at Meeting Venue & Arrival of Guests and Delegates	Reception Committee
10:00-10:05	Welcome Dance	Cultural Performance
10:05-10:10	Lighting of the Oil Lamp and Digital opening	Dignitaries and Guests
10:10-10:15	Welcome Remarks	<b>Dr. B.K. Kolita Kamal Jinadasa</b> <i>Secretary, Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic &amp; Ocean Resources</i>
10:15-10:20	Opening remarks from FAO	<b>Mr. Vimlendra Sharan</b> <i>FAO Representative for Sri Lanka and Maldives</i>
10:25-10:30	Message from FAO Headquarters (Recorded)	<b>Dr. Manuel Barange</b> <i>Assistant Director General, FAO &amp; Director, Fisheries Division</i>
10:30-10:35	Overview of SSF Guidelines and National Plans of Action	<b>Lena Westlund</b> <i>International Fisheries Analyst, FAO Headquarters</i>
10:35-10:38	Regional NPOA-SSF Roadmap	<b>Dr. P. Krishnan</b> <i>Director, Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO)</i>
10:38-10:40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Release of NPOA Country Profile and Legal Review Report</li><li>Declaration of National Workshop &amp;</li><li>Launch of Development Phase of NPOA-SSF</li></ul>	<b>Event team (Digital)</b>
10:40-10:45	Remarks by the Deputy Minister of Fisheries of Sri Lanka	<b>Hon. Rathna Gamage</b> <i>Deputy Minister of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resources</i>
10:45-10:50	Remarks by the Minister of Fisheries of Sri Lanka	<b>Hon. Ramalingam Chandrasekar</b> <i>Minister of Fisheries Aquatic and Ocean Resources</i>
10:50-11:00	Address by the Chief Guest	<b>Hon. Dr. Harini Amarasooriya</b> <i>Prime Minister of Sri Lanka</i>
11:00-11:05	Vote of Thanks	<b>Additional Secretary</b> <i>Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resources</i>
11:05-11:30	Participants return to the Workshop Venue	



Time	Activity	Responsibility
11:30-12:30	<b>Plenary sharing and discussion on Stakeholder consultation approaches</b>	<b>Country Representatives</b>
12:30-13:30	<b>Lunch Break at Banquet Hall / Workshop Venue</b>	
13:30-18:00	<b>Session 4: NPOA SSF Rationale, Development Phase Planning and Communication Mechanisms</b>	
13:30-13:45	Introduction to Session 5 and presentation on NPOA-SSF development planning	<b>FAO</b>
13:45-14:30	Country group work: Updating the NPOA-SSF problem statement and objectives (linking profiles, diagnostics, stakeholder realities)	<b>NTF Members</b>
14:30-15:45	Country group work: discussion on draft roadmaps: any refinements required in aligning activities, roles, timelines  Country group work: NPOA-SSF development plan planning and discussion on risks, support required.  Outputs: NPOA-SSF Rationale and NPOA-SSF development plan	<b>NTF Members</b>
15:45-16:00	<b>Coffee/Tea Break</b>	
16:00-16:45	Country group work: communication flows and accountability mechanisms.  Output: Agreed communication/coordination mechanism for each NTF	<b>NTF Members</b>
16:45-17:30	Plenary sharing	<b>NTF Members</b>
17:30-18:00	<b>Day 2 Wrap-up</b>	<b>Country Representatives</b>

## WFD Special Outreach

**18:30-20:00 Cultural Event**

**20:00-2200 Musical Show**



## Day 3 (Saturday, 22 November 2025)

Time	Activity	Responsibility
<b>09:30-12:30</b>	<b>Session 5 Regional Roadmap</b>	<b>Chair: FAO</b>
09:30-10:00	BOBP-IGO presents draft consolidated regional roadmap	<b>Dr. P. Krishnan</b> <i>Director BOBP-IGO, Chennai</i>
10:00-11:00	Country feedback and agreement on regional coordination framework	<b>NTF Members</b>
<b>11:00-11:30</b>	<b>Coffee/Tea Break</b>	
11:30-12:00	Plenary Presentation & Adoption of Regional roadmap	<b>BOBP-IGO &amp; NTF Members</b>
12:00-12:30	Closing Remarks	<b>FAO &amp; DoF</b>
12:30-13:00	Presentation of National Workshop outcome	<b>SSF Representatives</b>
<b>13:00-14:00</b>	<b>Lunch Break &amp; Close of the Meeting</b>	
<b>14:00-17:30</b>	<b>Aqua Planet Expo Visit</b>	



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