

# The contributions of small-scale fisheries to sustainable development

A snapshot of findings from the Illuminating Hidden Harvests (IHH) report

## Harvesting aquatic foods

Total global fisheries catch is **92 million tonnes**<sup>1</sup>

**37 million tonnes**  
small-scale fisheries (SSF)



**55 million tonnes**  
large-scale fisheries

**68%**  
marine catch



**32%**  
inland catch



## Supporting livelihoods and jobs

**492 million people**

depend at least partially on engagement in SSF<sup>2</sup>

**60 million**  
employed in SSF  
part or full time

**53 million**  
engaged in  
subsistence fishing

**379 million**  
additional  
household members

Accounts for **90%** of capture fisheries employment

**USD 77 billion**<sup>3</sup>

total revenues from first sale of SSF catch<sup>4</sup>

**USD 58 billion**  
marine SSF catch

**USD 19 billion**  
inland SSF catch

## Shared governance

Fishers and fishworkers see themselves as **active contributors** to the SSF Guidelines

Of 424 SSF producer organisations:

**99%** have harvesting and sustainable fisheries management goals<sup>8</sup>

**60%** have human well-being goals<sup>8</sup>



**Co-management** is likely implemented<sup>9</sup> for **20%** of SSF catch<sup>10</sup>

## Valuing women's contributions

**45 million women**

participate in SSF<sup>2,5</sup>



4 out of 10 people in SSF are women

**Women in the value chain**<sup>2,5</sup>

**15%**  
Pre-harvest

**19%**  
Commercial harvest

**50%**  
Post-harvest

**45%**  
Subsistence fishing

## Providing essential nutrition

**Fish is rich in micronutrients**

essential for good health and development

Nutrient values vary greatly among fish types

**Small fish are especially nutritious**



SSF landings<sup>6</sup> could provide:

**987 million women**

globally with 50% of the recommended nutrient intake of omega-3 fatty acids<sup>7</sup>



**477 million women**

globally with over 20% of the recommended nutrient intake of calcium, selenium and zinc<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Average in 2013–2017 extrapolated from 58 IHH country and territory case studies.

<sup>2</sup> Extrapolation from 78 national household-based surveys for 2016, including full- and part-time employment along the value chain (numbers rounded).

<sup>3</sup> Extrapolated from 58 IHH country and territory case studies.

<sup>4</sup> From first sale of SSF catch (2013–2017).

<sup>5</sup> Supported by knowledge and insights of 28 gender advisors.

<sup>6</sup> Landings include only fish retained by fishers for consumption, sale or trade, whereas catch includes all fish caught.

<sup>7</sup> Based on predictive nutrient modelling by the IHH team and partners.

<sup>8</sup> Based on global IHH survey of 717 SSF organisations.

<sup>9</sup> Based on perceived high participation of fishers, which is used as a proxy for implementation.

<sup>10</sup> Based on governance data on marine and inland catch for 58 countries and territories, representing about 55% of the global catch.