


Regional Plan of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries (RPOA-SSF) Mid-term event

 6-7 July 2024

 Rome, Italy



Background

The [Regional Plan of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea](#) (RPOA-SSF) is a ten-year Ministerial declaration that sets forth a political commitment prescribing concrete measures to address challenges and reinforce opportunities for small-scale fisheries. It has paved the way to include this strategic sector in national and regional priorities and has been recognized as a best practice in advancing towards global goals, including those highlighted in the [FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication](#) (SSF Guidelines).

This year – 2024 – represents the mid-term point in the implementation of the RPOA-SSF. To mark the occasion, the GFCM is organizing a dedicated RPOA-SSF mid-term event within the context of the [SSF Summit 2024](#), with the objective to evaluate advances made and reassess priorities and actions needed towards reaching the objectives of the RPOA-SSF by 2028.

The first SSF Summit, organized in 2022 by FAO – including the GFCM – together with the IPC Working Group on Fisheries and the SSF Hub, brought together small-scale fisheries stakeholders from across the globe to celebrate the [International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture](#) (IYAFA 2022). Recognizing the success of the SSF Summit, the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) agreed to organize a SSF Summit every two years. The next edition will take place on 5–7 July 2024 in Rome, Italy, ahead of the thirty-sixth session of COFI, and will also offer the opportunity to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the SSF Guidelines.

Objectives and overview

The RPOA-SSF mid-term event aims to evaluate advances in the implementation of the RPOA-SSF, assessing changing circumstances and shifting priorities, and providing guidance towards a more sustainable and resilient SSF sector by 2028. Designed for small-scale fisheries stakeholders, fishers and fish workers, this event aims to give voice to the SSF sector, facilitating the exchange of ideas and experiences on the way forward. It is also envisaged as an occasion for dialogue with high-level representatives of signatory countries, in view of fostering collective engagement.

The RPOA-SSF mid-term event is not a standalone occurrence; rather, it is a pivotal step within an ongoing process, building on consultations with technical experts held during the GFCM Working

Group on Small-Scale Fisheries in March 2024, and to be further enriched by decision-makers during the GFCM annual session in November 2024, towards informing the vision for the SSF sector for future commitments after the [MedFish4Ever](#) and [Sofia](#) Declarations.

The RPOA-SSF mid-term event will be composed of two break-out sessions within the SSF Summit, providing a space to discuss key strategic priorities and objectives specific to the Mediterranean and the Black Sea region, while also offering participants the opportunity to participate in the plenary sessions of the SSF Summit, sharing lessons learned and listening to the experiences of other regions of the world.

Agenda

**Saturday,
6 July**

Afternoon session
(1h30)

Taking stock of progress in RPOA-SSF implementation

Open discussion among Mediterranean and Black Sea small-scale fishers and fish workers

This session is envisaged as an open discussion to share the views of fishers and fish workers from across the region on the progress in implementing the RPOA-SSF, as well as to start collecting ideas for future priorities and objectives. The outcomes of the discussions will be shared in plenary with all SSF Summit participants.

**Sunday,
7 July**

Morning session
(3h)

Consolidating a common vision for the future of the RPOA-SSF

Open discussion among Mediterranean and Black Sea small-scale fishers and fish workers and roundtable dialogue with decision-makers

This session will continue the previous day's open discussion, consolidating the vision of the SSF sector on future needs and priorities. Results of the assessment of the implementation of the RPOA-SSF, carried out by the GFCM, will be presented, highlighting the key advances and main challenges faced. A roundtable dialogue is envisaged to facilitate exchange between SSF stakeholders and representatives of RPOA-SSF signatory countries on the way forward towards reaching full implementation of the RPOA-SSF.

Interpretation will be available in Arabic, English, French and Spanish and efforts will be made to accommodate other languages according to the needs of the participants.