



The human cost of fishing

The link between fisher safety and the
status of 3 treaties to end IUU

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The problem

“As many as 24,000 fishermen and persons engaged in fish farming and processing are killed every year putting fishing and related occupations among the most dangerous of all professions.”

- ILO, 1999

A history of numbers

Earlier estimates

- 80 deaths/100,000 fishers
- Limited reliable data
- “...partially representative”

Our ambition

- Official statistics as well as grey literature, special requests, journalism, and social media (2000-2020)



All artisanal, small-scale, industrial, commercial, municipal, diving, inshore, shore based (including shellfish or crustacean gathering), inland or riverine fishing, as well as aquaculture workers.

Processors and recreational fishers are excluded.





Who counts as a fisher?

 = 1,000 fisher deaths

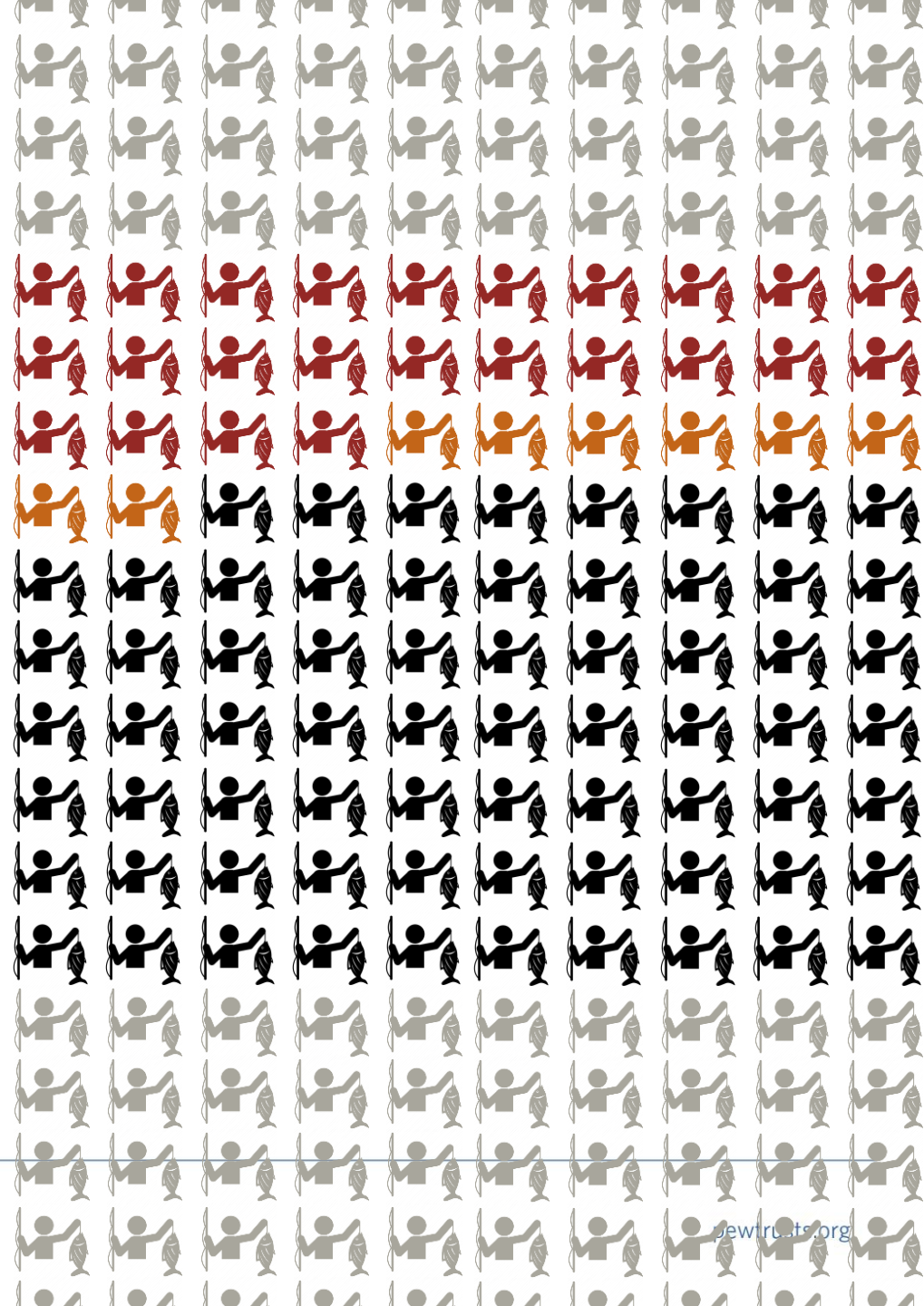
What we found

- >100,000 fishers die every year
- Who counts matters
- Consistent drivers



What we found

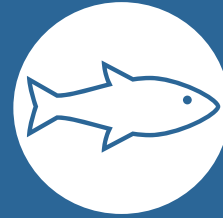
- >100,000 fishers die every year
- Who counts matters
- Consistent drivers
- Lack of reporting, records



Why is fishing so dangerous?



Climate change



Sustainability



Governance



Poverty

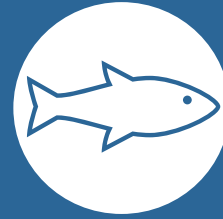


Safety

IUU by necessity



Climate change



Sustainability



Governance



Poverty



Safety

Global case studies



Image credit: [Abdulai Sayni](#) on [Unsplash](#)

West Coast & Inland Africa

Fatality rate: 1,000-1,800 / 100,000

Climate change, sustainability,
governance, poverty, IUU, human &
wildlife conflict, safety capacity



Images: Antonio Busiello



Divers of Central America

Fatality rate: 800 / 100,000

Climate change, sustainability,
governance, poverty, IUU, capacity for
and access to health care



Spain. Image Credit: Francisco Blaha

European Union

Fatality rate: 85-124 / 100,000

Smaller vessel – greater risk

Climate change, sustainability,
governance, exploitation

Opportunity for action

Global
ratification of
the Cape Town
Agreement

Joint Working
Group – IMO,
FAO, ILO

Capacity
development
on safety &
reporting

3 treaties,
related
synergies –
PSMA, CTA,
C188

Reliable,
accessible &
trusted data
repository

Continue
efforts on IUU
activities
globally

Transparency,
info sharing,
traceability

Investigate
& mitigate
drivers

In-country
focus on small
scale-fishers
and their
livelihoods

FAO COFI 2022

A fisherman in a green long-sleeved shirt and a light-colored apron is kneeling on a muddy, wet ground. He is focused on cleaning a fish in a large green bucket. Several other fish are scattered around him on the ground. To the right, a wooden boat is partially visible. The background shows a cluttered outdoor area with various items and people's legs, suggesting a busy fishing market or dock.

*"Requested FAO to **increase its support** to developing countries on fishing safety matters and to take a lead on the **establishment of a repository for fisher safety data and accident and mortality information.**"*



In summary...

Groundbreaking, comprehensive look

- Updated fatality numbers
- Clarity on the need for data, and definition of a fisher
- Uncovered trends and drivers, IUU by necessity
- Opportunities to act



A fisherman casts his net on Lake Victoria. Photo: Hennie Stander/Unsplash

Thank you
