

Ensuring fishers' safety while managing aquatic resources

On 21 November 2019, FAO, the Vatican and the International Labour Organization (ILO) celebrated World Fisheries Day with a special event in Rome, which tackled topics around the fisheries sector and its contribution to food security and livelihood, "however, more needs to be done to improve working conditions which remain dangerous for many people," said, Maria Helena Semedo, FAO deputy director-general for climate and natural resources.



Unsplash via [Pxabay](#)

FAO has been working closely with governments, international partners and those working in the industry to tackle illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and ensure that fishers' rights are protected.

"Every hour four fishers die doing their job - not just men, women too," said Semedo. "Human rights violations and unacceptable practices at different stages of the value chain are increasing in fisheries and aquaculture."

Monsignor Bruno Marie Duffé, secretary of the Vatican's Dicastery for promoting integral human development, also took part in the event which focused on promoting social responsibility in the fisheries value chain.

Duffé said Pope Francis had spoken of the need for a more integral approach to ecology in his encyclical, *Laudato si*, and the Holy See called for greater synergy between governments and maritime authorities to protect human rights and social responsibility in the fishing sector.

"It is necessary to maintain a particular vigilance for the most critical situations of vulnerability, crime and poverty," said Duffé.

Sustaining food and nutrition

Marine and inland fisheries are critical to food and nutrition. But some 33% of marine stocks are being fished at biologically unsustainable levels - triple the rate recorded 40 years ago. Demand is expected to grow by 20% by 2025 as the world's population rises. Globally, over one in ten people depend on fishing to make a living and feed their families

Semedo said FAO recognises there are clear links between illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and safety concerns at sea. She called for better and more coherent action in promoting sustainability and fishworkers' safety.

FAO has developed a number of international instruments designed to promote dialogue, policy processes and action leading to sustainable fisheries management in line with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

FAO is also working with the Holy See and the ILO on guidance documents to support social sustainability through the value chain from harvesting through production and processing.

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