



Concept Note for a Side Event on

Transforming fisheries and aquaculture: new tools to eliminate child labour

at the 6th Global Conference on the Elimination of Child Labour, Marrakech,
Morocco

11 February | 4.30 pm | In-person

I. Keywords

Fisheries and aquaculture

Accelerating action

Policies

Root causes

SDGs

II. Background & Rationale

According to the 2024 Global Estimates on Child Labour the agricultural sector, including fisheries and aquaculture, accounts for the highest number of children in child labour. Although the share of children in child labour within the agricultural sector has declined from 70% in 2020 to 61% in 2024, child labour remains more widespread in agriculture and its subsectors than all other sectors together. The progress has been too slow to achieve the SDG Target 8.7 of eliminating child labour by 2025 and we will not be able to tackle this scourge for many decades to come unless effective action and joint efforts are scaled-up, which in turn calls for new approaches and the active engagement of additional stakeholders.

Fisheries and aquaculture are key agricultural subsectors, sustaining the livelihoods, food security and economies of millions of people around the world. Small-scale fisheries (SSF) contribute significantly to global fisheries, accounting for at least 40% of capture production and involving 90% of the workforce in marine and inland fisheries value chains. Around 492 million people depend, at least partially, on SSF for their livelihoods. In aquaculture, 70-80% of



participants are small-scale operators, with 95% of production located in developing countries eliminating child labour in the sector is key to ensure prosperity and sustainability in the sector and the realisation of global Sustainable Development Goals.

Therefore, the Durban Call to Action, adopted at the 5th Global Conference on the Elimination of Child labour in Durban, South Africa, in 2022, called for increased attention and action to eliminate child labour in agriculture, including fisheries and aquaculture. With the pace of progress significantly lagging, accelerated action is needed to achieve meaningful results. Coming out of the 6th Global Conference there will be an urgent need to accelerate action. Hence, this side event organized under the umbrella of the International Partnership for Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture intends to build on the recommendations in the Durban Call to Action and on the ILO policy guidelines on promoting decent work in the agrifood sector to identify concrete steps and measures that will eliminate child labour in fisheries and aquaculture and that can be scaled up and replicated.

III. Key Objectives

To support accelerated action in line with the Durban Call for Action to eliminate child labour in fisheries and aquaculture using the new [ILO-FAO Policy Guidance on the Elimination of Child Labour in Fisheries and Aquaculture](#).

IV. Expected Outcomes and Deliverables

Encourage to identify tangible and actionable outputs, such as:

1. policy recommendations;
2. documented good practices;
3. tripartite commitments;
4. sector-specific actions or tools;
5. key messages to feed into Conference outcome documents.

V. Session Format

This panel session will explore the dynamics in fisheries and aquaculture that drive the perpetuation of child labour in the sector, as well as potential solutions to address the fisheries and aquaculture management, economic, and socio-



cultural drivers and eliminate child labour. The session will draw on the guidance contained in the new ILO-FAO Policy Guidance on the Elimination of Child Labour in Fisheries and Aquaculture, developed through a multiple stakeholder participatory process, in the wake up of the 5th Global Conference at the request of ILO constituents and released in October 2025. The session will present the guidance through inspiring presentations of cases and personal stories and highlight the key characteristics of child labour in fisheries and aquaculture, including where they differ from other agricultural sub-sectors. Moreover, the event will be a call towards strategic partnership and integrated programmatic approaches that can help reaching scale in impact. The session will allow time for questions and discussions during and after the panel presentations.

VI. Proposed speakers and targeted audience

This session targets policy makers, representatives of government departments (e.g. labour, fisheries and aquaculture, social protection and welfare), workers and employers' organisations, other civil society organisations and academia.

Moderator: Mr. Benjamin Smith, Senior Child Labour Specialist, ILO

Panellists:

1. Welcome message from Ms. Vera Paquete-Perdigao, Director of the Governance and Tripartism Department, ILO
2. Opening remarks: Ms Zakia Driouich, State Secretary for Maritime Fisheries, the Ministry of Agriculture, Maritime Fisheries, Rural Development and Forestry, Government of Morocco.

Panel Discussion moderated by Mr. Benjamin Smith, ILO

3. Ms. Lilian Ibengwe, Principal Fisheries Officer at the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries of the United Republic of Tanzania
4. Ms. Florence Willie, Executive Director, Employers' Federation of Papua New Guinea
5. M. Andrews Addoquaye Tagoe, General Secretary for the General Agricultural Workers Union (GAWU), Ghana



6. M. Abdellah Lablihi, President of the Confédération nationale de la pêche artisanale, Morocco

Reflections on panel discussion and the ILO-FAO Policy Guidance on the Elimination of Child Labour in Fisheries and Aquaculture, Benjamin Davis, Director Rural Transformation and Gender Equality Division, FAO

Closing remarks: Representative of the Philippines (tbc)

Speakers and moderators will be participants attending the Conference to the greatest possible extent.

VII. Session Flow

Provide a short breakdown of the session structure.

Example :

Slot	Segment	Lead	Description / Notes
5 mins	Welcome remarks	Vera Paquete-Perdigao, Director of the Governance and Tripartism Department, ILO	One statement on behalf of ILO-FAO
5 mins	Opening remarks	Zakia Driouich, State Secretary for Maritime Fisheries, Morocco	To be discussed with the Ministry
20 mins	Panel discussion	Benjamin Smith, ILO	Panel moderation
		Lilian Ibengwe, Principal Fisheries Officer at the Ministry of	Fisheries managers are custodians of natural resour



		Livestock and Fisheries of the United Republic of Tanzania	ces – why should they be concerned with child labour and what action steps can they take?
		Ms. Florence Willie, Executive Director, Employers' Federation of Papua New Guinea	Child labour in fisheries is often understood within the context of global supply chains, But it exists equally in fishing and aquaculture farming for local and regional markets. What are the key steps that employers and other stakeholders can take to ensure that child labour in certain parts of the industry is not overlooked?
		Andrews A. Tagoe	Child labour in fisheries is not an isolated issue but ties in with wider issues of



			decent work in food systems. What policies need to be implemented nationally to create an environment that promotes decent work in food systems and create conditions that enable elimination of child labour in fisheries? How can different actors work together to ensure the policies are implemented?
		M. Abdellah Lablihi, President of the Confédération nationale de la pêche artisanale, Morocco	Child labour often exists in small-scale fishing, aquaculture farming and primary processing. How can small-scale seafood producers be mobilised to ensure that children do not



			work in small-scale operations and what support is needed from other duty bearers?
16 mins	Questions from the floor	Moderator and panellists	-
7 mins	Reflection	Benjamin Davis, FAO	Summary of the messages in the session and how the ILO-FAO Policy Guidance document can support accelerated action
7 mins	Closing remarks	Name TBC	

VIII. About Organisers at the 6th Global Conference on the Elimination of Child Labour (optional)

This session is organized under the umbrella of the International Partnership for Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture and the auspices of the Government of Morocco. The session draws on the combined knowledge and experience of the IPCCLA membership, as well as that of other FAO and ILO partners. This combined knowledge and experience allows situation of child labour and its elimination within a broader context of both decent work and fisheries and aquaculture managements, promoting comprehensive multi-partner solutions that address root causes and create enabling policy environments for elimination of child labour in fisheries and aquaculture.



FAO Focal Points: Bernd Seiffert, ESP, and Daniela Kalikoski, NFIFL.

ILO Focal points: Benjamin Smith, FUNDAMENTALS, and Elvis Beytullayev, SECTOR.