



ONLINE

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE AQUATIC FOOD SYSTEMS

EXPLORING YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES IN THE BLUE ECONOMY

9 – 28 NOVEMBER 2026

🕒 3 WEEKS, 5 HRS/WEEK

Information Note



International
Labour
Organization



International Training Centre



**Shape inclusive, sustainable
aquatic food systems that uplift
communities, protect our oceans,
and drive real economic change.**



BACKGROUND

Coastal fisheries and aquaculture and their associated value chains are significant contributors to livelihoods as they serve the basis of food production, consumption, and income generation. It is estimated that fisheries and aquaculture, together with related activities, provide livelihoods for 660-820 million people worldwide (Pita, 2021; FAO, 2022). Small-scale fisheries (SSF) supply more than 40% of global fisheries catches intended for direct human consumption, highlighting their essential role in addressing malnutrition (Teh and Pauly, 2018; Basurto et al., 2025).

SSFs are typically operated by fishing households and rely on relatively small amounts of capital and energy. They operate on a semi-subsistence model, where families produce, consume, and commercialize their catch (Bladon et al., 2022; Okamura et al., 2024). SSF fishers often utilize small fishing vessels, operate close to shore with short fishing trips, and primarily supply local markets for consumption. They serve both subsistence and commercial purposes, contributing to local consumption and export markets (FAO, 2024). SSF are deeply integrated into the socio-economic fabric of the communities they serve, reflecting a way of life that is inherently place-based (Dias et al., 2023). They make vital contributions to nutrition, food security, poverty alleviation, and livelihoods. SSF also support local and national economies, particularly in developing countries (Bladon et al., 2022).

WHAT

Despite the significant contributions of small-scale fisheries and aquaculture to livelihoods and food security, structural issues of poverty, unemployment, vulnerabilities, and lack of credit persist among SSF workers and their communities, especially in coastal and fisheries-dependent areas (Dias et al., 2023; FAO, 2019). Income levels remain heterogeneous and unpredictable throughout the year. The fisheries sector tends to be poorly planned and regulated, underfunded, and often neglected (March et al., 2022).

Additionally, participation of local communities in high-value species value chains is often limited, with opportunities concentrated in the hands of external companies and traders. Youth, women, older people, and other vulnerable groups face barriers to accessing training, finance, markets, and technology. Social protection programs that could support SSF in times of uncertainties and shocks are usually not available, particularly in many developing countries.

Developing countries and small island developing states face uniquely significant challenges, as many depend heavily on ocean-based resources and are overly exposed to the consequences of ocean and coastal degradation and climate change. There is vast opportunity in moving to more circular approaches and helping achieve the green energy transition while ensuring safeguards to protect and conserve the environment.

OBJECTIVES

This course examines how aquatic food systems can effectively address interconnected challenges across diverse contexts, exploring the principles, frameworks, and practical approaches that enable sustainable and inclusive development.

The course covers the following topics:

- The sustainable blue economy and aquatic food systems.
- Small-scale fisheries and aquaculture production systems.
- Practical opportunities for youth, women, and vulnerable groups across the value chain.
- Strengthening value chains: from harvest to market.
- Post-harvest handling, processing techniques, and infrastructure solutions.
- Circular economy approaches and resource efficiency.
- Cross-sectoral integration for sustainable food systems.

WHO ATTENDS THIS COURSE?

- Government officials working on Blue Economy projects.
- Project Implementation Unit (PIU) and Project Management Unit (PMU) members (coordinators, technical experts)
- Youth Civil Society Organizations
- Young professionals and entrepreneurs
- Cooperatives and SMEs in the sustainable blue economy sector
- Development practitioners

HOW TO APPLY

Applicants are kindly asked to send us:

1. A completed online registration form: <https://oarf2.itcilo.org/DST/A9718990/en>
2. If you are financed by your organization (or a donor), an official sponsorship letter is required to finalize your registration. The letter can be uploaded to the application form or sent by email to: itcilo_sids@itcilo.org
3. If you pay the course fees directly, please note that the payment is due before enrolment in the course. More details about payment methods can be found [here](#).

FEES

Total costs per participant: €1,205

FURTHER INFORMATION

DATES

9 – 28 November 2026

VENUE

Online (E-Campus).

LANGUAGE

English and French

CERTIFICATE

On completion of all required course activities, participants will obtain an official ITCILO Certificate of Participation

WITHDRAWAL, CANCELLATION POLICY, AND REFUNDS FOR OPEN COURSES

If an enrolled participant wishes or must withdraw from a course, they may choose to apply to a different course or be substituted by another candidate. The participant must notify the Centre, in writing, of their decision at least 14 days prior to the start date of the course. Cancellation of participation in regular courses will result in the following penalties:

- 14 days or more prior to the start date of the course: No penalty, 100% refund of amount paid less applicable bank charges
- 8 to 13 days prior to the start date of the course: Penalty of 50% of course price, refund of residual amount paid (if any) less applicable bank charges
- 7 days or less prior to the start date of the course: Penalty of 100% of course price.

INFO

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT

International Training Centre of the ILO
Development Investment Programme (DEVINVEST).
Viale Maestri del Lavoro, 10
10127 Turin – Italy

itcilo_sids@itcilo.org
www.itcilo.org

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