



Southwest Madagascar Octopus Fishery Improvement Project

Human Rights and Social Responsibility Statement



I. Context

The Southwest Madagascar Octopus Fishery Improvement Project (FIP) is a collaborative effort to improve the sustainability and livelihoods of communities dependent on the octopus fishery in Southwest Madagascar. The FIP is committed to working towards a shared vision of a sustainable, equitable, and thriving octopus fishery in Southwest Madagascar that protects the human rights of the participating fishers. By prioritising the needs and perspectives of fishers and their communities, and providing mechanisms for their active participation and feedback, the Southwest Madagascar Octopus FIP aims to create a sustainable and equitable fishery that benefits all stakeholders involved.

The Southwest Madagascar Octopus FIP prioritises the following goals:

1. **Sustainable Resource Management** : The FIP aims to promote the long-term ecological sustainability of the octopus fishery in Southwest Madagascar by implementing evidence-based management practices that maintain healthy stocks of octopus while minimising negative impacts on the broader marine ecosystem.
2. **Community Empowerment** : The FIP seeks to empower local communities to take an active role in the management of the octopus fishery and to benefit from sustainable fishing practices. This includes providing training and resources to support community-led initiatives, such as improved gear and post-harvest handling practices, and ensuring that local voices are represented in decision-making processes.
3. **Economic Development** : The FIP recognizes that the octopus fishery is a critical source of livelihoods for many in Southwest Madagascar and seeks to promote economic growth and stability through sustainable fishing practices. This includes supporting the development of alternative livelihoods, such as eco-tourism and aquaculture, that can provide economic opportunities for local communities beyond the octopus fishery.
4. **Equity and Social Justice**: The FIP recognizes that sustainable resource management and economic development must be grounded in principles of equity and social justice. The FIP will prioritise the needs and perspectives of marginalised groups, such as women and youth, in decision-making processes and ensure that benefits from the octopus fishery are distributed equitably.
5. **Grievance Mechanism** : The FIP recognizes that the success of sustainable fisheries management is contingent upon the active participation and support of fishers and their communities. To ensure that the needs and perspectives of fishers are represented in decision-making processes, the FIP has put in place a grievance mechanism that allows fishers to raise concerns, provide feedback, and seek resolution for any grievances related to the FIP's activities.
6. **Fishers Awareness of Rights**: The FIP is dedicated to raising awareness of fishers' rights and promoting their protection. This includes ensuring that fishers have access to the necessary information and resources to make informed decisions about their

participation in the octopus fishery, and that their rights to a safe and healthy working environment are respected and upheld.

The Southwest Madagascar Octopus FIP recognizes that achieving these goals will require ongoing collaboration and partnership between government agencies, non-governmental organisations, local communities, and other stakeholders.

II. Human Rights and Social Responsibility:

The SW Madagascar Octopus FIP expects all FIP participants to share a commitment to protect human rights and promote social responsibility. The FIP and its participants are committed to a vision of a fishery free of human and labor rights abuses in which every fisher is assured dignity, decent working conditions, and the right to organize. The FIP and its participants recognize that efforts to protect the rights of fishers must be based on agreements that embody the principles detailed below.

A working environment free from:

1. **Abuse and harassment**, including sexual and gender based violence.
2. **Forced labor and debt bondage**
3. **Child labor** - which endangers children's health and educational opportunities
4. **Discrimination**
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A working environment in which:

5. Fishers are **free to form associations and to organize**
6. Fishing communities have **access to basic services***
7. Fishers are **informed** and able to **participate in resource management decision making**
8. Fishers have access to a **grievance mechanism**
9. Fishers enjoy **adequate rest***
10. Fishers enjoy a **safe working environment** that does not expose them to undue risk and have **access to medical response***

The purpose of this statement is to communicate to fishers and other stakeholders how the FIP prioritises and addresses human rights and social responsibility. This statement is not designed to outline specific actions FIP participants will undertake to effect social change in the FIP, which are detailed in other FIP and FIP participant documentation.

*While FIP actors support where possible the efforts to improve these conditions, improvements are not reliant on FIP actors alone and therefore this statement does not hold FIP actors accountable or responsible for ensuring their implementation.

III. Scope and Applicability

This statement applies to all fishers in the FIP.

IV. Responsibilities

The specific roles and responsibilities of signatories are outlined as follows:


- ❖ **The Comité de Gestion de la Pêche aux poulpes**, represented by the FIP Leads, the Executive Secretary and President, ensure that all current and future FIP participants are made aware of this statement, and the expectation to uphold the values and principles included therein. This includes sharing the statement in the language(s) participants understand. They are also responsible for managing the grievance mechanism and ensuring all participants are aware of it.
- ❖ **Fish collection companies** (Copefrito, Murex, Blue Ocean) are responsible for ensuring their staff and collaborators are aware of these commitments and may be held accountable in the event of a grievance.
- ❖ **Conservation NGOs and civil societies (WWF, WCS, Blue Ventures, SANSAFA, and RENAFEP)**, commit to providing support for fishers that their voices are heard and rights are respected. They will help raise awareness for fishers on their rights.
- ❖ **Fisher associations** commit to governing with transparency and equity, ensuring fishers are fairly represented and voices are heard on a wider stage. They may also launch grievances on behalf of individual fishers who would like their identity protected.
- ❖ **Fishers** will ensure they contribute to upholding the principles and utilise the grievance mechanism in an honest and responsible way.
- ❖ **The Direction Regional de la Pêche et de l'Économie Bleue (DRPEB)**, will support the maintenance of fisher lists (number of fishers by village), directing support to villages and areas without current NGO support. The DRPEB will also support outreach and oversight of legal matters contained in the policy statement.

V. Endorsement

This statement is written in three languages - English, French, and Malagasy - and can be found on the CGP website (cgp.mg) and Fishery Progress.

The FIP Lead's signature below acknowledges the understanding and agreement of all FIP actors of this Social Policy Statement.

FIP Lead

RAMISANA NDRASANA Sonya


22/01/2023