

GLOBAL FISHER LEADERS' STATEMENT

We, the Fisher Leaders, who proudly represent fishers from Belize, Brazil, Federated States of Micronesia, Honduras, Southeast Sulawesi (Indonesia), Mozambique, Philippines and Palau recognize the importance of small-scale fisheries for food and nutrition security, livelihoods and cultural value, appeal to you Global Leaders at Our Ocean Conference 2022, at the UN Oceans Conference, and throughout this International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAFA) to commit yourselves and your organizations to support the following ideas, born of our experience and knowledge of our oceans and our people:

- First, listen to fishers and prioritize our needs when making decisions to address overfishing and other threats to fisheries;
- Second, protect the world's oceans, mangroves, estuaries and small-island ecosystems to ensure our lives and livelihoods and our unique biodiversity;
- Third, diversify our livelihoods beyond fishing to relieve pressure on fisheries and increase social resilience;
- Fourth, prioritize climate change adaptation and coastal resource and fisheries management in local, regional and national plans and programs; and
- Fifth, provide a seat at the table for the women and youth to become leaders for a sustainable future.

Therefore, we appeal to our National Leaders and to the Global Leaders to:

- Give a voice to fishers, women and youth in decision-making and share responsibility for the actions needed to ensure sustainable fisheries;
- Expand networks of no-take areas, replenishment zones and "*maretorios*" (water territories) to meet ecological, biological and social community goals;
- Give local fishers rights to fish in certain areas to ensure that licensed, responsible fishers benefit from replenishment zones and sustainable management within the fishing areas; and
- Allocate a permanent recurring investment for the full implementation of sustainable coastal resource and fisheries management programs.

Sincerely yours,
Representatives and participants of the Global Fisher Leaders' Dialogue
April 11, 2022