



Title of coalition:

The Coalition for Aquatic / Blue Foods

Main objective of the coalition:

Realize the full potential of sustainable blue, or aquatic, foods – such as fish, shellfish, aquatic plants and algae, captured or cultivated in freshwater or marine ecosystems – to help end malnutrition and build nature-positive, equitable and resilient food systems.

Science based evidence to prioritize this coalition (scientific references):

Robust and rapidly growing [evidence](#) in the FSS record demonstrates the vital potential of aquatic foods to meet protein needs and reduce micronutrient and other [nutrition](#) deficiencies, improve heart, brain and eye health, as well as the important role of sustainable aquatic food production as part of the solution to environmental and [climate challenge](#).. This evidence establishes the urgent need to integrate sustainably harvested blue foods into national and local food system policies and programs.

Recent [analyses](#) also show that climate change is impacting aquatic food production and aquatic ecosystems significantly, and that investment in climate resilient fisheries management and aquatic food farming is an urgent priority to avert significant negative impacts that will fall most heavily on many of the most vulnerable regions and populations in the tropics.

Coalition members – including Member States, civil society organizations, academic institutions, aquatic food producers and consumer groups – agree that sustainable blue foods will not only increase the supply of nutritious food but also contribute to community resilience, [decent jobs](#), gender equality, and poverty alleviation. Responsibly managed fisheries and aquaculture are climate friendly and contribute to the restoration of aquatic biodiversity and habitats.

Mechanisms of implementation (Global to National levels):

A series of international agreements reflect widespread consensus regarding much of what needs to be done. The urgent need is to mobilize action to deliver on those commitments. That is the ambition of the Coalition for Aquatic/Blue Foods.

The Coalition is grounded in the international consensus already achieved – the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, to which FAO members have renewed their commitment through the 2021 [COFI Declaration](#), [the SSF Guidelines](#), the [CFS](#), and [UN Nutrition](#). It will take advantage of existing leadership initiatives and networks, like the the [Ocean Panel](#), the [Global Action Network](#), the [Blue Food Assessment](#), the [Safe Seaweed Coalition](#), and [Rise Up for the Oceans](#). Coalition members – including Member States, civil society organizations, academic institutions, blue food producers and consumer groups – are coming together in a unified commitment to support actual, concrete implementation of key aquatic food priorities, especially at country level.

This coalition has two key missions:

- (1) to raise the profile of aquatic foods in the context of food systems overall, so that they will finally be placed where they belong on the agenda (and budget) of decision makers not usually aware of their significance, such as health ministers, development ministers, finance ministers and prime ministers, and
- (2) to mobilize support and cooperation for specific projects and opportunities to drive implementation of sustainable blue food priority objectives of members, in order to complement and accelerate the work already under way via the FAO and other Rome-based agencies



Coalition members may find opportunities to advance action at a regional or global scale. We anticipate, however, that most often Coalition initiatives will support action by countries – identifying a group of countries wanting to implement a core set of reforms or innovations and mustering investment, technical capacity and partnerships to support them.

Initiatives by the state of Odisha, India (population 47 million) and by the government of Liberia illustrate the possibilities.

- Odisha set out to integrate aquatic foods into diets. With support from USAID and advice from WorldFish, the government developed and launched a project to include locally-grown small fish in school feeding programs. Women-run aquaculture projects designed and implemented fish growing, drying and production systems on a pilot basis that were then scaled up.
- In Liberia, the IRFFS project (Integrated Rice-Fish Farming System), funded by the EU, aims to develop integrated, sustainable, climate-smart rice-fish production systems to improve food and nutrition security. It includes participatory research on rice-fish farming, extension service delivery systems, sustainable value chain development, capacity building and dedicated support to women to increase their chances of benefiting from these new systems. The project is being implemented by AfricaRice, WorldFish, the Central Agricultural Research Institute (CARI) and the Government of Liberia.

These successes embody the ambitions of the Food System Summit.

Coalition priorities could include:

- Bringing blue foods into food, health, transport, economic, research and energy system decision-making at the national level, working with ministries of health, development, environment, agriculture and finance, for example, as well as ministries of oceans and fisheries, to:
 - Measure and manage food production on a watershed/seascape/landscape scale, which accounts for production – and interactions – in both terrestrial and aquatic systems
 - Integrate sustainable blue foods into school feeding programs and other programs to promote healthy, balanced diets
 - Include blue foods in programs to cut loss of nutritional value and waste in food systems
 - Reconfirm a vital role of a balanced diet in our healthy life, based on cultural and traditional knowledge with locally and sustainably produced blue foods
 - Promote nature positive food production in aquatic production systems
 - Improve equity in blue food resource management and trade while ensuring that the secure access needs and interests of blue food producers, especially small-scale producers, are respected in spatial planning on land and in coastal waters
- Bringing a heightened recognition of blue and aquatic foods into key international forums and identifying further opportunities for international cooperation and innovation.
- Supporting FAO in its work on fisheries and aquaculture by, for example:
 - Conducting and sharing cutting edge research about the nutritional contents of aquatic foods, and nutrient flows, and linking this research to climate change science, to inform food policy decisions
 - Supporting small scale producers and partnering with FAO to ramp up implementation of the small-scale fisheries guidelines and tenure guidelines, particularly in the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture in 2022
 - Funding blue food research, innovation, governance and management at a level commensurate with their contribution to global nutrition and livelihoods to develop



sustainable and affordable sources of highly nutritious food, support vibrant markets for small producers, and build climate resilience.

- Promoting and realizing objectives related to the effective, responsible and equitable management of fisheries and aquaculture while combatting factors that undermine such efforts like IUU fishing.

Strategic partners (members, private sector, civil society, academia):

These are the Member States and other parties that have so far expressed interest in the Coalition; the formal structure of this group, including membership, will be determined after the Summit:

Bangladesh; Belize; Canada; Chile; EU; Fiji; France; Ghana; Iceland; Japan; Kenya; Korea; Mexico; Netherlands; New Zealand; Norway; Palau; Peru; Portugal; Spain; United States of America

Intergovernmental organizations: Pacific Community SPC- Communauté du Pacifique CPS; WorldFish/CGIAR

Academic institutions: Stockholm Resilience Center; Stanford University

Civil Society: EDF; WWF; WRI, Oceana, and Rare

Monitoring and Evaluation (clear quantifiable indicators and targets linked to SDGs)

Participating Alliance Member States and other stakeholders will develop and monitor appropriate SDG-related targets and metrics for each project or program that they undertake.