

MARE Publication Series 14

Svein Jentoft
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Nicole Franz *Editors*

The Small- Scale Fisheries Guidelines

Global Implementation

MARE Publication Series

Volume 14

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The Small-Scale Fisheries Guidelines

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Cover Illustration: A typical morning in Hann Bay, a landing site near Dakar, Senegal, with purse seiners returning from an overnight fishing trip, while hook and line fishers in smaller crafts are getting ready to go to sea. Photo credit: Aliou Sall, July 2014.

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Foreword

At 9:30 am, on May 20, 2013, in the Green Room at FAO Headquarters, started the Technical Consultation to draft the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines). On that spring morning, in Rome, the tide of the small-scale fisheries in the world, hopefully, started to change for the better. A little more than a year later, on June 9, 2014, the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) endorsed the first internationally negotiated document explicitly devoted to small-scale fisheries. Despite its comprehensiveness and density, with more than a hundred paragraphs, and a very broad and bold scope, a consensus text was reached after only two 1-week meetings, in addition to side negotiations during COFI. The building process, however, had started much earlier, with several meetings and conferences, including the 2008 Global Conference on Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries, co-organized by the FAO and the Royal Government of Thailand. Therefore, the so-called zero draft that served as the basis for the negotiations of the Technical Consultation was already the result of a very broad, open, transparent and participatory consultation with thousands of stakeholders. The same spirit of broad participation and openness also guided the entire negotiation of the text during the Technical Consultation, with an unprecedented level of engagement and participation from civil society. It could not have, of course, been different, regarding a fisheries sector that accounts for the vast majority of fishworkers worldwide.

From the very early stages of the negotiation, which I had the honour and the privilege to chair, it became very clear for all delegations that we were not discussing the fate of an economic activity, but of livelihoods and communities – that small-scale fisheries are not about an economic sector but they are about families, culture and tradition. Considering the importance of small-scale fisheries for food security, nutrition, livelihoods, rural development and poverty and hunger eradication, it becomes clear that the adoption of a human rights-based approach in the SSF Guidelines, therefore, was much more a consequence than a choice. Or, as put by Chandrika Sharma, the executive secretary of the ICSF – to whom the Guidelines were dedicated – to adopt a human rights approach for improving the life and livelihoods of fishing communities was not really a matter of choice, but an obligation.

Since its official adoption by the FAO Conference, the SSF Guidelines have become a beacon to guide national and international policy, aimed at the sustainable development of small-scale fisheries and fishing communities, to establish political hierarchies and to elevate small-scale fisheries in the agendas of governments and international organizations. The document itself, however, is worthless unless the words and provisions it contains are able to find their way into the real world. The place of the SSF Guidelines is not in the shelves of public offices or ministerial departments, but at the beaches, aboard the canoes, in the hands of the fishers, by the sea. This is the challenge now lying ahead of us: to make it actually happen and to ensure its implementation at the local, national, regional and international levels.

In this context, the role and responsibility of the academic community cannot be overestimated. The present book, produced by the global research network 'Too Big To Ignore' (TBTI), is a very important step into the right direction. Its 37 chapters, from authors of so many different countries and regions of the globe, clearly show that implementation is already happening. The SSF Guidelines have been born and, beyond the talking, they are now already starting to walk by themselves. Let's hope this book will help guide the steps of this young but brave toddler, so that it may grow into a strong and energetic adult. To walk through the path ahead, nevertheless, it will be very important to understand, and never forget, that 'science' cannot prosper without 'experience' and that we will get nowhere unless scientific knowledge walks hand in hand with traditional knowledge. To empower fishing communities is not the best way to ensure the sustainability of small-scale fisheries, but the only one. And small-scale fisheries are not a problem to be solved, but a solution to be unfolded.

Recife, Brazil

Fábio Hissa Vieira Hazin

Preface

Since its inception, the peer-reviewed MARE Publication Series, hosted by Springer, has devoted much attention to fisheries. Of the 13 volumes realized at the time of writing, nine have actually dealt with fisheries-related issues. Within the fisheries realm, we have been particularly interested in the fate of small-scale fishers and their communities. This is also a consequence of the cooperation between the Centre for Maritime Research (MARE), of which this Series is part, and the Too Big To Ignore (TBTI) project, which strives to elevate the profile of small-scale fisheries around the world. The first volume dedicated specifically to the condition of this subsector was monumental – *Interactive Governance for Small-Scale Fisheries: Global Reflections* (2015). This book provides an authoritative overview of the trends prevailing small-scale fisheries governance around the globe.

The present volume continues where the previous book left off, now focusing on the most ambitious international policy instrument ever to have been developed for the benefit of this subsector: the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries (SSF Guidelines). These Guidelines, passed by FAO's membership in 2014, offer a holistic perspective on the needs of small-scale fishers and their ways forward to address these needs.

While the SSF Guidelines are slowly percolating to national and subnational levels, assisted by government agencies and a large number of civil society organizations, this book provides an extra impetus and a contribution from the academic and research community. Detailing the experiences and challenges faced during the application of sections of the SSF Guidelines in both Southern and Northern Hemispheres, the book supplies a relevant baseline for reflection as well as action. As one of the Series editors, I am more than proud to be hosting the volume and wish it a wide readership. Importantly, it is our hope that the book will help promote and support the implementation of the SSF Guidelines, leading therefore to sustainable small-scale fisheries around the world.

Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Maarten Bavinck

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This book would not have been possible without the effort of the 95 authors from around the world. Thank you so much! Several other people have helped us with the production of the book. Ajit Menon and Brennan Lowery provided excellent language editing. Vesna Kereži and Mirella Leis, with support from David Bishop, were instrumental in communicating with the authors and in the formatting of chapters. Thanks also to Delphine Rocklin for producing the map for Chap. 1. Joseph Daniel and Fritz Schmuhl, as well as the Springer Books team, took care of the publishing process. We are enormously grateful for the effort of all the 65 reviewers, whose names are listed in Appendix 1. We are indebted to Maarten Bavinck and Fabio Hazin for writing the preface and the foreword, respectively. Professor Hazin played a key role as a chairperson of the FAO Technical Consultation on the SSF Guidelines, leading the 2 weeks of deliberations towards consensus. He was also the chair of the 32nd Session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries, when the strategies for the implementation of the SSF Guidelines were discussed.

Finally, we extend our sincere thanks to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) for the opportunities to observe the development of the SSF Guidelines and contribute to their implementation. FAO colleagues, especially members of the Small-Scale Fisheries Task Force, have also helped with the production of this book, acting as reviewers of several chapters and connecting us to key organizations and information sources.

The book is a product of the Too Big To Ignore: Global Partnership for Small-Scale Fisheries Research (TBTI), funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (grant number 895-2011-1011), headquartered at the Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, Canada, and directed by Ratana Chuenpagdee. Most of the contributors to the book are members of TBTI. Svein Jentoft wishes to acknowledge the Centre for Sami Studies, UiT – The Arctic University of Norway, for the logistical support while working on this book.

Tromsø, St. John's, Bremen and Rome
December 2016

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Part I

Vision and Ambition

In June 2014, FAO member states endorsed the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines). For millions of small-scale fisheries people around, this was a historic event. With their broad agenda founded within a human rights-based approach, the SSF Guidelines are breaking new ground. However, given that the SSF Guidelines address a range of issues that are complex and politically contentious, there are reasons to expect that their implementation will be challenging. The first chapter of this book (Chap. 1) by the editors (Svein Jentoft, Ratana Chuenpagdee, María José Barragán-Paladines, and Nicole Franz) introduces the topic and the contexts for this major endeavor, while also presenting its content in broad terms. Chapter 2, by Rolf Willmann, Nicole Franz, Carlos Fuentevilla, Thomas McInerney, and Lena Westlund, discusses the human rights-based approach and what it implies in the context of the SSF Guidelines. They also examine critical views from social scientists on this approach while drawing on concrete examples on how human rights advocacy and human rights law have actually supported fishing communities in defending their rights to subsistence, livelihood, and culture. Chapter 3, by Nicole Franz and María José Barragán-Paladines, provides an account of the developments that have taken place since the SSF Guidelines were endorsed, occurring at various levels in countries and regions around the world. The implementation of the SSF Guidelines is now underway, and the chapter provides examples of concrete actions being taken to facilitate their uptake.

Chapter 1

Implementing the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Small-Scale Fisheries

Svein Jentoft, Ratana Chuenpagdee, Nicole Franz,
and María José Barragán-Paladines

Abstract On June 9, 2014 the Committee of Fisheries (COFI) of FAO endorsed the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines). For millions of small-scale fisheries people around the world who are poor and marginalized, this was a historic moment and a potential turning point. The SSF Guidelines are the first instrument of its kind particularly aimed at promoting the sustainability of this sector. As the SSF Guidelines address a range of issues that are complex and politically contentious, there are reasons to expect that their implementation will be challenging and far from straight forward. In fact, one may assume that the SSF Guidelines will meet resistance as they are brought from the international level to local communities where fishing people live and work. This book examines the extent to which the SSF Guidelines' implementation is being initiated around the world and the limitations and opportunities involved in their contextualization and operationalization. It draws on case studies from more than 30 countries in which small-scale fisheries play an important role for food security and community well-being. What

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can the SSF Guidelines do to promote food security, alleviate poverty, and secure human rights, while at the same time empower fishing communities to take control of their future?

Keywords FAO • Small-scale fisheries guidelines • Human rights approach • Implementation • Empowerment • Governance

Introduction

No one really knows exactly how many small-scale fishers there are in the world. By certain estimates, for instance by the United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), about half of the world's 51 million fishers are small-scale and that most of them live in developing countries.¹ In addition, hundreds of millions of people depend on fisheries for their livelihood throughout the value chain. Likewise, it is difficult to know how much small-scale fisheries produce in terms of catches. According to the Sea Around Us project, about one quarter of the world's catches originate from small-scale fisheries.² In all likelihood, the majority of small-scale fisheries catches is consumed in the fishing household or distributed to local markets, thus supporting local food security. Despite these estimates, most small-scale fisheries and communities are often not recognized or are overlooked in national, regional, and global decision- and policy-making processes. Despite the uncertainty about the actual figures due to inadequate statistical information, these approximations certainly imply that the small-scale fisheries sector is 'too big to ignore'.

Small-scale fisheries are now high on the research agenda, as championed by the global research network 'Too Big To Ignore' (TBTI),³ which produced this book. The TBTI initiative and the work conducted by its members coincides with the development and implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines; <http://www.fao.org/fishery/ssf/guidelines/en>), facilitated by FAO. The SSF Guidelines, which is a consensus document, resulted from extensive consultation with governmental bodies, small-scale fisheries through their organizations, civil society organizations (CSOs), practitioners, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other stakeholders, including the research community, culminating in intense negotiations by FAO member states. On June 9, 2014, the Committee of Fisheries (COFI) of FAO endorsed the SSF Guidelines, marking a historical moment for millions of small-scale fishing people around the world. Never before has this sector received such global recognition. Indeed, what the member states supported was remarkable.

¹For more information refer to <http://www.fao.org/fishery/ssf/people/en>

²For more information refer to www.seaaroundus.org

³For more information refer to www.toobigtoignore.net

Expectations are now that the SSF Guidelines will make a big difference for small-scale fishing people around the world. Positive developments have already been observed in some places, but the full impact of the SSF Guidelines will undoubtedly take years, if not decades, to unfold. The voluntary nature of the SSF Guidelines implies that even if FAO member states have endorsed them, their implementation is not guaranteed. The SSF Guidelines call for major policy initiatives and governance reforms, which may involve legal and social innovation. The SSF Guidelines will not always meet fertile ground, as they befall in existing governing systems and their human rights and equity-based principles challenge and interfere with power relations. The more they challenge the *status quo*, the greater the likelihood that they will meet resistance, both at the governmental and large-scale industry level, especially when they call for reforms that involve the redistribution of resources and preferential treatment of small-scale fisheries. In some instances, small-scale fisheries may already be prominent on the political agenda, and the SSF Guidelines therefore will reinforce their status. In other instances, small-scale fisheries may have been forgotten, and great effort would therefore be needed in order to implement the SSF Guidelines.

Neither the worldwide stakeholder consultations nor the negotiations among state delegates about the SSF Guidelines were straightforward. Consequently, it would be naïve to assume that there will only be tailwind from now on. It would not be the first time that international agreements are shelved. The anticipated opposition on the home front may well have motivated the tough stance of some country delegates during the negotiations. Nevertheless, the SSF Guidelines are here to stay and it is to everyone's benefit that the conditions, factors, limitations, and opportunities for their implementation are closely examined, even on a case-by-case basis.

This book is about what lies ahead as far as the implementation of the SSF Guidelines is concerned. It aims to highlight challenges and opportunities as the SSF Guidelines land on the ground. How receptive are stakeholders to the SSF Guidelines? Will they agree with the many principles and propositions within the hundred paragraphs of the document? Will diverse stakeholders see their concerns addressed, their interests protected and their rights secured, or will some of them feel threatened? The SSF Guidelines stress the need to create a more level playing field, where small-scale fishing people have an active role in governance. However, as the SSF Guidelines emphasize the need for small-scale fisheries empowerment, it is easy to imagine that this will imply a zero-sum game, where empowerment will happen at the expense of the powerful stakeholders, who are not likely to remain passive.

Since it is too early to expect major changes to have happened on the ground with the recent adoption of the SSF Guidelines, it is nevertheless possible to juxtapose the SSF Guidelines with policies and governance systems that exist at various scales. How do, for instance, the basic principles of the SSF Guidelines match with those that already inform fisheries policy and governance in a particular country? In other words, is there a gap between the political reality and the social situation in small-scale fisheries in a given country in relation to the SSF Guidelines? If so, what explains it, and what policy and institutional reform will be needed to fill the gap?

How ready are governments, CSOs and other stakeholders to recognize and take ownership of the principles and perspectives that the SSF Guidelines advocate, such as the human rights based approach? These are examples of research questions which have inspired authors of this book.

It is premature to evaluate the success or failure of the SSF Guidelines. Such an evaluation must come at a later stage. The kind of transformation that the SSF Guidelines aspire to does not happen overnight, not only because of the institutional changes that must follow, but also because it requires a change of mindset among policy-makers and stakeholders. But it is already possible to address what challenges lie ahead and why they are there. By knowing the small-scale fisheries as they exist in a particular community, region, or country, and by knowing the institutional set up and governance mechanisms under which they operate, it is possible to perform an *ex ante* analysis of what the SSF Guidelines would imply in those contexts. This is also what the authors of the more than 30 case studies from around the world do in this book. In comparing what the SSF Guidelines set out to achieve and what it would require in terms of intervention and change in the system, the authors contribute their research experience to the implementation process.

The book is a product of the TBTI research cluster devoted to the study of the implementation of the SSF Guidelines. Small-scale fisheries have long been a focus of several academic disciplines which cover a broad range of issues. The stock of research-based knowledge is considerable, with a rich body of literature that has also informed the development of the SSF Guidelines. Thus, the SSF Guidelines invite researchers with an interest in, and a heart for, small-scale fisheries also to become engaged in the very process of realizing the governance principles of the SSF Guidelines, by exploring what difference they will make for the people they mean to serve, and how. It is hoped that this book will inspire the academic community to take initiative in studying how the SSF Guidelines will be received, and what impacts they will have at all levels of governance.

The Relevance of the SSF Guidelines

Quoting from the document preface, the SSF Guidelines intend “to support the visibility, recognition and enhancement of the already important role of small-scale fisheries and to contribute to global and national efforts towards the eradication of hunger and poverty.”⁴ The expectation is that they will lead to policy change in the interest of current and future generations of small-scale fishers and fish workers and related activities. The SSF Guidelines will also:

...be in support of national, regional and international initiatives for poverty alleviation and equitable social and economic development, for improving governance of fisheries and promoting sustainable resource utilization. Their objective is to provide advice and recommendations on implementation, establish principles and criteria, and information to assist

⁴For more information refer to <http://www.fao.org/fishery/ssf/guidelines/en>

States and stakeholders to achieve secure and sustainable small-scale fisheries and related livelihoods.⁵

As the full title indicates, the SSF Guidelines are voluntary. States may therefore choose whether to support or ignore them, either partially or entirely. However, the SSF Guidelines, as a consensus document resulted from an extensive, participatory, and transparent process, where small-scale fishers, their organizations, state governments and other stakeholders were involved. Even if states and CSOs cannot be held legally accountable, they can at least be held morally responsible for their operationalization. States shall also report to FAO what they have done to implement them. Thus, if not legally, they are formally accountable.

A challenge for the SSF Guidelines' implementation is the enormous diversity and complexity that characterize small-scale fisheries globally. They differ ecologically, organizationally, economically, culturally, and technologically, not just from one region to the next but often also from one type of fishery to another. They exhibit attributes that are often unique to a particular fishery or locality, and which must be taken into account when implementing the SSF Guidelines. Another important factor, which explains the broad focus of the SSF Guidelines, is that small-scale fisheries are rarely a distinct sector. They do not operate in isolation from the rest of the fishing industry, from other sectors or from society as a whole. Rather, small-scale fisheries are part of a larger social and ecological system – embedded as a 'system within systems', interwoven with economic, social, and cultural life in local communities.

The SSF Guidelines recognize that the well-being of people involved in small-scale fisheries relates more broadly to how they live and thrive in communities and how they are involved in decision-making on issues that affect them. Securing a healthy ecosystem is an important condition but only a step towards sustainable livelihoods and the general well-being of communities. This broad perspective is essential for the operationalization of the human rights-based approach that the SSF Guidelines promote, which includes, but is not limited to, the concept of fishing rights or tenure rights. Consequently, the SSF Guidelines also speak to other government departments that do not specialize in fisheries, as well as regional organizations, the private sector and CSOs, whose work impacts small-scale fisheries.

Small-scale fisheries must be understood in relation to their large-scale counterpart, as the two often interact. When there is conflict, keeping the two fisheries spatially apart is a solution but also a major challenge. The clash is not just between different ways of fishing and different economic rationalities; it is also a power relationship, where small-scale operators are generally the weaker party.

Small-scale fisheries form a complex system whose boundaries are permeable. What is happening inside small-scale fisheries is often due to what happens outside of them, which means that the problems that small-scale fisheries are confronted with are not necessarily of their own making. Instead, small-scale fisheries actors often find themselves at the receiving end of a string of causal factors, as when

⁵ *Ibid.*

poverty in other sectors make people take up fishing and thereby contributes to more pressure on the resource base.

A prevalent image of small-scale fisheries is that they are traditional and thus lag behind in the modernization process. Therefore, in the long run, small-scale fisheries are bound to lose out, and become supplanted by more efficient, capital-intensive harvesting technologies of a larger scale. According to this view, the community-based owner-operator is a thing of the past; the take-over by big corporations is the future. This is regarded as a natural process, which should be left to run its own course. When looking at current trends in global fisheries, and in other sectors of society, it is easy to deem this as unavoidable. However, it would be erroneous not to consider the economic, social, and political drivers behind it. Governments are among these drivers, often providing economic incentives, such as subsidies that favor large-scale fisheries. Small-scale fisheries never received the same attention or support.

Small-scale fisheries technology and practice are often well adapted to the particular ecological and social circumstances within which they must operate, often developed through a long-term learning process of trial and error. One cannot therefore deem small-scale fisheries technology as outmoded, just by the look of it. Small-scale fisheries can also be sophisticated in the way they communicate, organize, and serve markets. They often have a complex technological dimension that is linked to the development of potential strategies that may help them run a more economically efficient fishery without increasing the scale of their operation and overexploiting resources. Thus, small-scale fisheries are not necessarily stuck in the past, but are part of dynamic value chains, undergoing change that the SSF Guidelines may help to spur. This corroborates why the SSF Guidelines emphasize the relevance of the contribution of small-scale fisheries to food security and poverty alleviation, and why they deserve attention not just for their problems, but also for their capabilities and potentials.

Small-scale fisheries do more than just provide society at large with a 'service'. They are important in and of themselves. Not only do millions of people depend on them for food, livelihoods, and well-being, small-scale fisheries also represent cultural heritage, a way of life, social cohesion, identity, and a lifestyle. They are not always 'an occupation of last resort', as they are frequently perceived, but provide an attractive livelihood and a meaningful and preferred lifestyle.

The lack of a precise definition of what small-scale fisheries are in the SSF Guidelines is justified by the extreme diversity of small-scale fisheries globally. Their multi-faceted nature makes definitions complex and rich. The only way to define them is to employ 'thick description', as the case studies reported in this book provide. Since definitions of small-scale fisheries refer to particular situations for which they apply, they often differ from region to region. For this reason, small-scale fisheries go by different names from country to country, with terms such as inshore, coastal, artisanal, subsistence, small-boat, municipal, and community-based fisheries, to name some. Rather than providing a standard definition, the SSF Guidelines leave it to the countries to determine what small-scale fisheries are, in accordance with their own context. Thus, the implementation of the SSF Guidelines

cannot follow a standard approach. Instead, the approach must be customized to the specific traits and circumstances of small-scale fisheries as they exist around the world.

Because of the emphasis on human rights and dignity, respect of cultures, non-discrimination, social justice, gender equality, and equity, the SSF Guidelines are universally applicable. They lead to the principles of ‘good governance,’ such as transparency, participation, and rule of law, which are all part of the SSF Guidelines’ guiding principles, and therefore can reinforce other instruments and policies that governments have already embraced. Although still voluntary, by endorsing the SSF Guidelines, FAO member states have confirmed and at least morally committed themselves to implement them. How they exactly do that in their particular context of small-scale fisheries is a matter of empirical investigation for years to come.

About This Book

It is always important to understand the context within which social events take place, as human life, and the communities and institutions they build, are always contextual. The SSF Guidelines are to be implemented in concrete situations, and must be sensitive to what limitations and opportunities exist. If not, they are likely to be ignored or resisted, as local stakeholders, be they government or fishers and fish workers, will not be able to see their relevance. Case studies are a well-suited method to illustrate this challenge. It is also important to stress that case studies are not simply in-depth, empirical descriptions of small-scale fisheries as they appear in concrete locations. They also serve to demonstrate the complexity of the challenges of implementing policy reforms, like those promoted by the SSF Guidelines. What is essential with case studies is what they are *a case of* because it allows us to draw general lessons from them that are beyond the particular case. Thus, as we learn about the case, we also learn about the issue, in this instance, about the implementation of the SSF Guidelines.

The book has 37 chapters, of which 32 are case studies (see Fig. 1.1). In addition to this first chapter, there is a chapter that lays out the human rights-based approach, which is foundational to the SSF Guidelines. This perspective is beyond the mere ‘rights-based approach’, which is basically about fishing and property rights, often associated with market-based approaches and privatization, something the SSF Guidelines do not promote as they are generally perceived to be detrimental to small-scale fisheries’ communities and culture. The SSF Guidelines have a strong focus on customary rights and rights of tenure, without which small-scale fishing people would be insecure, but the human rights-based approach also includes social development and decent work, gender equality, and basic civil and political rights, which are as essential to small-scale fishing people as to anyone else. Chapter 3 summarizes what has been happening around the world since their endorsement in 2014. Many state governments and civil society organizations are currently in the process of actually implementing the SSF Guidelines, whereas others have yet to

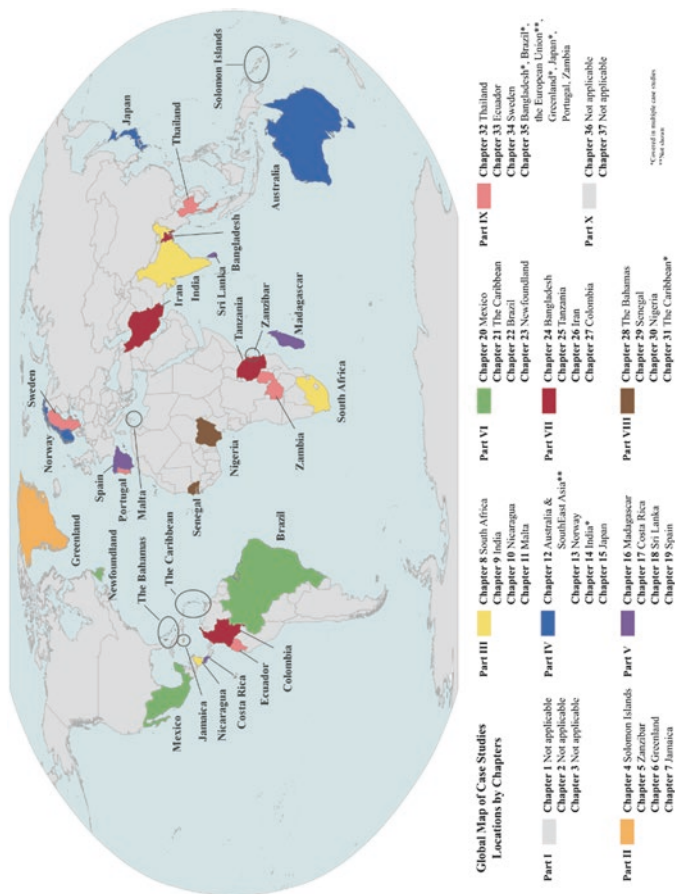


Fig. 1.1 Global map of case study locations by chapter

act on them. The latter group may find inspiration in exploring what other countries and organizations are doing, as far as the SSF Guidelines are concerned. Chapters that follow will be introduced individually for the ten parts of the book. They all report on specific countries or fisheries and explore what challenges and responses the SSF Guidelines meet on the ground, and why the implementation process is still going slow in some instances. This is particularly the case in the chapters that form Part II of the book: *Politics of transformation*. In this part, the reader is introduced to developments in the Solomon Islands, Zanzibar, Greenland and Jamaica as the SSF Guidelines are about to be introduced there. The chapters are all about the extent to which there is coherence between current fisheries policies and the kind of developments that the SSF Guidelines are advocating. In some situations, there is considerable overlap, whereas in others the two are in conflict. The greater the distance between what is and what should be, according to the SSF Guidelines, the more fundamental reform will be required. The chapters demonstrate how the SSF Guidelines must relate to an existing social and ecological system, already governed within an institutional and political framework, which may or may not be conducive to their implementation. Integral to the existing institutional framework are rules about who has secure access to fisheries resources and how such entitlements are governed, and by whom. Therefore, the SSF Guidelines devote a whole section to this issue under the heading of 'Responsible Governance of Tenure'. States are encouraged to make sure that tenure rights and customary governance arrangements are recognized and respected. In Part III, *Securing tenure rights*, the four chapters all focus on this issue, starting with South Africa, and followed by India and Bay of Bengal lagoon, Nicaragua, and finally Malta. In all situations, customary tenure rights are under threat, and governments have a way to go in order to make them secure, even if there is a statutory or customary legal framework that is supposed to back them up. If governments are serious about supporting poor and marginalized small-scale fishing communities, securing their tenure rights would be an obvious entry point.

Appropriate management systems and practices would be required to make small-scale fisheries sustainable, as the resource base must remain healthy. In some instances, that effort would imply the restoration of damaged marine and inland ecosystems and fisheries, while in other instances mechanisms must be installed to safeguard their productivity. This is a challenge discussed by authors in Part IV: *Strengthening the resource base*, which takes the reader to Australia and Southeast Asia, Japan, India, and Norway. What kind of management institutions and approaches would serve small-scale fisheries? All authors have something to say about what would be needed to make small-scale fisheries sustainable while making sure that marine and inland ecosystems remain healthy and productive.

There are obvious reasons why small-scale fisheries are marginalized and vulnerable: small-scale fishing people often lack the capacities and capabilities for bringing them out of the trap they are in. For tenure rights to be secure, and management systems to work for small-scale fisheries, collective action and the empowerment of people are essential. Those two priorities are interlinked, but they do not always happen spontaneously. Sometimes they need initiatives led by actors who are centrally or externally situated, like CSOs. These issues are explored and