

# International Legal Instruments Relevant to Fisheries and Fishing Communities: A Handbook

Theme V  
Fishing Vessels and Safety at Sea



**International Collective in Support of Fishworkers**  
27 College Road, Chennai, India

**International Legal Instruments  
Relevant to Fisheries and Fishing  
Communities:  
A Handbook**

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## Introduction

This section provides information on four binding and two non-binding instruments related to safety at sea. Fishing is known to be a high-risk occupation, and increasing safety at sea is an important concern. According to the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the fishing sector reportedly suffers around 24,000 human losses annually.

The IMO, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) are the three main organizations involved in formulating and implementing instruments related to safety at sea and fishing vessels and fishing vessels' personnel.

Several aspects are involved in the matter of safety at sea, from the design of seagoing vessels and communication equipment to the training and certification of personnel in charge of navigation. While many of the conventions relate to larger seagoing vessels, a specific few focus on fishing vessels of all sizes. There are also voluntary guidelines that are being formulated specifically for small fishing vessels, below 12 m length. It is worth noting that conventions that are specific to fishing vessels, have not yet entered into force due to the lack of minimum requisite ratifications by countries.

The Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREGs, 1972) was designed to update and replace the Collision Regulations of 1960.

The Torremolinos International Convention for the Safety of Fishing Vessels (SFV, 1977) was the first-ever international convention on the safety of fishing vessels. It contained safety requirements for the construction and equipment of new, decked, seagoing fishing vessels of 24 m or longer, including those vessels that process their catch. In 1993, the Torremolinos Protocol was adopted to update and amend the Convention, as it did not enter into force until 1993, due to the lack of required number of ratifications.

The International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel (STCW-F, 1995) is the first attempt to make mandatory international standards of safety for crew of fishing vessels. The convention contains requirements concerning skippers and watchkeepers on vessels 24 m or longer, and basic safety training for all fishing vessel personnel.

Besides these legally binding instruments, voluntary codes and guidelines have also been adopted for safety at sea and construction of fishing vessels. The Code of Safety for Fishermen and Fishing Vessels, adopted in 2005, provides guidelines for the safety and health of fishermen (Part A) and for the construction of fishing vessels (Part B) 24 m and over in length.

The Voluntary Guidelines for the Design, Construction and Equipment of Small Fishing Vessels specifically refers to small fishing vessels, and covers the design, construction and equipment of fishing boats between 12 m and 24 m in length.

It is worth noting that currently there are no international legal instrument relating to safety standards for decked fishing vessels of less than 12 m length and undecked fishing vessels of any size. In December 2004, the subcommittee on Stability and Loadlines and Fishing Vessels' Safety (SLF) of the the IMO Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) agreed to include in the work programme, a new item on "Safety of small fishing vessels". The aim is to develop, by 2009, safety standards for decked fishing vessels below 12 m in length and undecked vessels regardless of size, bearing in mind that the large majority of fishing fatalities occur in such vessels.

Texts from the instruments have not been reproduced, as most of them are not available for public distribution in electronic format.

# Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, 1972

## ACRONYM

COLREGs

## LEGAL STATUS

Binding

## TYPE OF INSTRUMENT

Convention

## OBJECTIVES

To maintain high level of safety at sea and bring up to date the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea annexed to the Final Act of the International Conference on Safety of Life at Sea, 1960

## DATE OF ADOPTION

20 October 1972

## PLACE OF ADOPTION

London

## DATE OF ENTRY INTO FORCE

15 July 1977

## RATIFICATIONS

146 (97.60 percentage of the world's tonnage) as on 24 March 2005

## CONTENTS

The COLREGs include 38 rules divided into five sections: Part A - General; Part B - Steering and Sailing; Part C - Lights and Shapes; Part D - Sound and Light signals; and Part E - Exemptions. There are also four Annexes containing technical requirements concerning lights and shapes and their positioning; sound signalling appliances; additional signals for fishing vessels when operating in close proximity, and international distress signals.

## ADDITIONAL INSTRUMENTS

- Amendments in 1981, 1987, 1989, 1993 and 2001
- The 1981 amendments - rule 10 amended
- The 1987 amendments - crossing traffic lanes
- The 1989 amendments - inshore traffic zone
- The 1993 amendments - positioning of lights
- The 2001 amendments - WIG craft

## INITIATING BODY

International Maritime Organization (IMO)

## WORKING OF THE INSTRUMENT

### *Decision-making body*

IMO General Assembly Council

### *Monitoring and implementation*

Maritime Safety Committee (MSC)

### *Periodicity of meetings*

The Assembly meets once in two years

### *Participation in meetings*

*Decision-making body:* IMO General Assembly

*Voting rights:* States who are members of the organization

*Observers:* Formal arrangements for co-operation have been established with more than 30 intergovernmental organizations, while more than 50 non-governmental international organizations have been granted consultative status to participate in the work of various bodies in an observer capacity. These organizations represent a wide spectrum

of maritime, legal and environmental interests and they contribute to the work of the various organs and committees through the provision of information, documentation and expert advice.

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**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

The amendment procedure for the convention: Under the “tacit acceptance” procedure incorporated in the Convention, an amendment must first be adopted by two-thirds of those present and voting in the Maritime Safety Committee. It is then communicated to Contracting Parties and considered by the IMO Assembly. If adopted by two-thirds of the States present and voting in the Assembly, it automatically enters into force on a specified date unless more than one-third of the Contracting Parties notify the Organization of their objection. In addition, a Conference for the purpose of revising the Convention or its regulations or both may be convened by IMO at the request of not less than one-third of Contracting Parties.

**SELECTED ARTICLES**

Regulations:  
Part A

**Rule 1:**

(a) These Rules shall apply to all vessels upon the high seas and in all waters connected therewith navigable by seagoing vessels.

- (b) Nothing in these Rules shall interfere with the operation of special rules made by an appropriate authority for roadsteads, harbours, rivers, lakes or inland waterways connected with the high seas and navigable by seagoing vessels. Such special rules shall conform as closely as possible to these Rules.
- (c) Nothing in these Rules shall interfere with the operation of any special rules made by the Government of any State with respect to additional station or signal lights or whistle signals for ships of war and vessels proceeding under convoy, or with respect to additional station or signal lights for fishing vessels engaged in fishing as a fleet. These additional station or signal lights or whistle signals shall, so far as possible, be such that they cannot be mistaken for any light or signal authorized elsewhere under these Rules.

**Rule 3:**

(d) The term “vessel engaged in fishing” means any vessel fishing with nets, lines, trawls or other fishing apparatus which restrict manoeuvrability, but does not include a vessel fishing with trolling lines or other fishing apparatus which do not restrict manoeuvrability.

**Rule 9:**

(c) A vessel engaged in fishing shall not impede the passage of any other vessel navigating within a narrow channel or fairway.

**Rule 10:**

- (e) A vessel, other than a crossing vessel, shall not normally enter a separation zone or cross a separation line except:
  - (i) in cases of emergency to avoid immediate danger;



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- (ii) to engage in fishing within a separation zone.
- (i) A vessel engaged in fishing shall not impede the passage of any vessel following a traffic lane.

### *Comment*

Fishing vessels “shall not impede the passage of any vessel following a traffic lane” but are not banned from fishing. This is in line with Rule 9 which states that “a vessel engaged in fishing shall not impede the passage of any other vessel navigating within a narrow channel or fairway.” In 1981 the regulations were amended. Two new paragraphs were added to Rule 10 to exempt vessels which are restricted in their ability to manoeuvre “when engaged in an operation for the safety of navigation in a traffic separation scheme” or when engaged in cable laying.

### *Rule 26: Fishing vessels*

- (a) A vessel engaged in fishing, whether underway or at anchor, shall exhibit only the lights and shapes prescribed in this Rule.
- (b) A vessel when engaged in trawling, by which is meant the dragging through the water of a dredge net or other apparatus used as a fishing appliance, shall exhibit:
  - (i) two all-round lights in a vertical line, the upper being green and the lower white, or a shape consisting of two cones with their apexes together in a vertical line one above the other; a vessel of less than 20 m in length may instead of this shape exhibit a basket;
  - (ii) a masthead light abaft of and higher than the all-round green light; a vessel of less than 50 m in length shall not be obliged to exhibit such a light but may do so;

- (iii) when making way through the water, in addition to the lights prescribed in this paragraph, sidelights and a sternlight.
- (c) A vessel engaged in fishing, other than trawling, shall exhibit:
  - (i) two all-round lights in a vertical line, the upper being red and the lower white, or a shape consisting of two cones with apexes together in a vertical line one above the other; a vessel of less than 20 m in length may instead of this shape exhibit a basket;
  - (ii) when there is outlying gear extending more than 150 m horizontally from the vessel, an all-round white light or a cone apex upwards in the direction of the gear;
  - (iii) when making way through the water, in addition to the lights prescribed in this paragraph, sidelights and a sternlight.
- (d) A vessel engaged in fishing in close proximity to other vessels may exhibit the additional signals described in Annex II to these Regulations.
- (e) A vessel when not engaged in fishing shall not exhibit the lights or shapes prescribed in this Rule, but only those prescribed for a vessel of her length.

### *Rule 35:*

In or near an area of restricted visibility, whether by day or night, the signals prescribed in this Rule shall be used as follows: (c) A vessel not under command, a vessel restricted in her ability to manoeuvre, a vessel constrained by her draught, a sailing vessel, a vessel engaged in fishing and a vessel engaged in towing or pushing another vessel shall, instead of the signals prescribed in paragraphs (a) or (b) of this Rule, sound at intervals of not more than 2 minutes

three blasts in succession, namely one prolonged followed by two short blasts.

**KEYWORDS**

Safety at sea, IMO, fishing vessels, collisions, navigation, signals, lights, COLREGs

**RELEVANCE TO FISHERIES/  
FISHWORKERS**

These regulations contain descriptions of the various signals to be used by different vessels to prevent collisions at sea. Rule 3 defines a fishing vessel as a vessel fishing with nets, lines, trawls or other fishing apparatus that restrict movement but does not include trolling lines.

Rule 9 of the Convention states that “a vessel engaged in fishing shall not impede the passage of any other vessel navigating within a narrow channel or fairway.” Rule 26 prescribes the lights and shapes that should be exhibited by fishing vessels of various types. Annex II contains additional signals for fishing vessels fishing in close proximity and include general rules as well as rules specific to trawlers and to purse-seiners. It is worth noting that Section 8.4.1 of FAO’s Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries makes a specific mention of the Convention.

# International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel

## ACRONYM

STCW-F

## LEGAL STATUS

Binding (when adopted)

## TYPE OF INSTRUMENT

Convention

## OBJECTIVES

The Convention will apply to crews of seagoing fishing vessels generally of 24 m in length and above. The Convention is the first attempt to make standards of safety for crews of fishing vessels mandatory internationally

## CONTENTS

15 Articles and an annex containing technical regulations. Chapter I contains General Provisions and Chapter II deals with Certification of Skippers, Officers, Engineer Officers and Radio Operators.

## DATE OF ADOPTION

7 July 1995

## DATE OF ENTRY INTO FORCE

Not entered into force.

## RATIFICATIONS

Four (3.26 percentage of the world's tonnage) (as on 24 March 2005)

## INITIATING BODY

International Maritime Organization (IMO)

## WORKING OF THE INSTRUMENT

### *Monitoring and implementation*

Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) and the sub-committee on Standards of Training and Watchkeeping (STW)

### *Periodicity of meetings*

MSC meets once a year.

### *Participation in meetings*

MSC: Membership is open to members.

### *Secretariat*

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## KEYWORDS

Certification, fishing vessels, training, crew, safety at sea, STCW-F

## RELEVANCE TO FISHERIES/ FISHWORKERS

The Convention is the first attempt to make standards of safety for crews of fishing vessels mandatory internationally. The Convention contains requirements concerning skippers and watchkeepers on vessels of 24 m in length and over, chief engineers and engineering officers on vessels of 750 kw propulsion power or more and personnel in charge of radio communications. Chapter III of the Annex to the Convention includes requirements for basic safety training for all fishing vessel personnel. The importance of certification and training of crew of fishing vessels is also emphasized in Section 8.17 of the FAO's Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

# The Torremolinos International Convention for the Safety of Fishing Vessels (SFV), 1977, being the Protocol of 1993

## SHORT TITLE

Torremolinos Convention

## ACRONYM

SFV Protocol

## LEGAL STATUS

Binding (when adopted)

## TYPE OF INSTRUMENT

Convention

## OBJECTIVES

*1977 Convention:* to provide safety requirements for the construction and equipment of new, decked, seagoing fishing vessels of 24 m in length and over, including those vessels also processing their catch. Existing vessels were covered only in respect of radio requirements

*1993 Protocol:* to update, amend and absorb the parent Convention, taking into account technological evolution in the intervening years and the need to take a pragmatic approach to encourage ratification of the instrument. The Protocol applies to fishing vessels of 24 m in length and over including those vessels also processing their catch

## CONTENTS

The safety provisions addressed by the Protocol, incorporating and amending the 1977 Convention, are included in an Annex consisting of ten Chapters. The provisions include automatically controlled machinery spaces, improved life-saving appliances, immersion suits and thermal protective aids, satellite communication systems and other components of the global maritime distress and safety system.

## DATE OF ADOPTION

2 April 1977 (Convention)  
2 April 1993 (SFV Protocol)

## PLACE OF ADOPTION

Torremolinos, Spain

## DATE OF ENTRY INTO FORCE

Not yet entered into force

## RATIFICATIONS

SFV Protocol – 10 (9.71 percentage of the world's tonnage)

## INITIATING BODY

International Maritime Organization (IMO)

## WORKING OF THE INSTRUMENT

### *Decision-making body*

Conference of Parties (COP)

### *Monitoring and implementation*

Maritime Safety Committee (MSC)

### *Periodicity of meetings*

MSC meets once a year.

### *Participation in meetings*

MSC is open to members of the organization.

### *Secretariat*

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## **GUIDELINES**

Code of safety for fishermen and fishing vessels as well as a set of voluntary guidelines for the design, construction and equipment of small fishing vessels.

## **REGIONAL AGREEMENTS**

Guidelines for the safety of fishing vessels of 24 m and over but less than 45 m in length operating in the East and South-East Asia region, adopted at a Conference in Tokyo in February 1997.

European regional agreement applicable from 1 January 1999. The European legislation introducing a harmonized safety regime for fishing vessels of 24 m in length and over was adopted in December 1997 and is entirely based upon the 1993 Torremolinos Protocol.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

The 1977 Convention, adopted at a conference held in Torremolinos, Spain, was the first-ever international Convention on the safety of fishing vessels. The Convention has been superseded by the 1993 Protocol. Despite the importance of the Protocol, however, it is yet to enter into force.

## **SELECTED ARTICLES**

### ***Article 3. Application***

- (1) The present Protocol shall apply to seagoing fishing vessels including vessels also processing their catch entitled to fly the flag of a Party.
- (2) The provisions of the Annex shall not apply to vessels exclusively used:
  - (a) for sport or recreation;
  - (b) for processing fish or other living resources of the sea;
  - (c) for research and training; or
  - (d) as fish carriers.
- (3) Unless expressly provided otherwise, the provisions of the

Annex shall apply to fishing vessels of 24 m in length and over.

- (4) In a case where a limit of the vessel's length is prescribed as greater than 24 m in a chapter for the application of that chapter, the Administration shall determine which regulations of that chapter should apply, wholly or in part, to a fishing vessel of 24 m in length and over but less than the length limit prescribed in that chapter and entitled to fly the flag of that State, having regard to the type, size and mode of operation of such a vessel.
- (5) Parties shall endeavour to establish, as a matter of high priority, uniform standards to be applied by Administrations to fishing vessels referred to in paragraph (4), which operate in the same region, taking into account the mode of operation, sheltered nature and climatic conditions in such region. Such uniform regional standards shall be communicated to the Organization for circulation to other Parties for information.

### ***Article 4. Certification and port State control***

- (1) Every vessel required to hold a certificate in accordance with the provisions of the regulations is subject, when in a port of another Party, to control by officers duly authorized by the Government of that Party in so far as this control is directed towards verifying that the certificate issued under the provisions of the relevant regulations is valid.
- (2) Such certificate, if valid, shall be accepted unless there are clear grounds for believing that the

condition of the vessel or of its equipment does not correspond substantially with the particulars of that certificate or that the vessel and its equipment are not in compliance with the provisions of the relevant regulations.

- (3) In the circumstances given in paragraph (2) or where a certificate has expired or ceased to be valid, the officer carrying out the control shall take steps to ensure that the vessel shall not sail until it can proceed to sea or leave the port for the purpose of proceeding to the appropriate repair yard without danger to the vessel or persons on board.
- (4) In the event of this control giving rise to an intervention of any kind, the officer carrying out the control shall forthwith inform, in writing, the Consul or, in his absence the nearest diplomatic representative of the State whose flag the vessel is entitled to fly, of all the circumstances in which intervention was deemed necessary. In addition, nominated surveyors or recognized organizations responsible for the issue of the certificates shall also be notified. The facts concerning the intervention shall be reported to the Organization.
- (5) If the port State authority concerned is unable to take steps as specified in paragraph (3) or if the vessel has been allowed to proceed to the next port of call, the port State authority concerned shall notify all relevant information about the vessel to the Party mentioned in paragraph (4) and to the authorities of the next port of call.
- (6) When exercising control under this article, all possible efforts shall be

made to avoid a vessel being unduly detained or delayed. If a vessel is thereby unduly detained or delayed, it shall be entitled to compensation for any loss or damage suffered.

- (7) With respect to vessels of non-Parties to the present Protocol, Parties shall apply the requirements of the present Protocol as may be necessary to ensure that no more favourable treatment is given to such vessels.

### **KEYWORDS**

Safety, IMO, Safety at sea, equipment, fishing vessels, construction, convention, certification, SFV Protocol

### **RELEVANCE TO FISHERIES/ FISHWORKERS**

The Convention deals with safety requirements for the construction and equipment of new, decked, seagoing fishing vessels of 24 m in length and over, including those vessels also processing their catch. It stipulates regulations for the stability and associated seaworthiness of fishing vessels.

It also prescribes protection of the crew and requirements for lifesaving appliances and contains sample formats for certificates and records of equipment. Other chapters deal with matters such as construction, watertight integrity and equipment; machinery and electrical installations and unattended machinery spaces; fire protection, detection, extinguishing, and fire fighting; emergency procedures, musters and drills; radiotelegraphy and radiotelephony; and shipborne navigational equipment.

The Protocol takes into account the trend to exploit deep-water fishing grounds on

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a large scale, and to conduct fishing operations in distant waters, resulting in the building of a new generation of more sophisticated fishing vessels. To be successful in their operations, these vessels have to be fitted with advanced fishfinding and

navigation equipment. The Protocol calls for the development of regional guidelines for those vessels between 24 m and 45 m, taking into account the mode of operation, and the sheltered nature and climatic conditions of the region.

# Code of Safety for Fishermen and Fishing Vessels, 1968

**SHORT TITLE**  
Code of Safety

Headquarters, part A of the Code was adopted.

**LEGAL STATUS**  
Non-binding

Part B of the Code, which covers safety and health requirements with respect to the construction and equipment of fishing vessels, was adopted by the second Joint FAO/ILO/IMO Meeting of Consultants

**TYPE OF INSTRUMENT**  
Voluntary code

## OBJECTIVES

*Part A of the Code:* to provide information with a view to promote the safety and health of fishermen

*Part B of the Code:* to provide information on design, construction and equipment of fishing vessels with a view to promoting the safety of the vessel and safety and health of the crew

The application of these principles will lessen the risk of danger to the vessel and damage to equipment

## CONTENTS

The Code is divided into two parts – Part A for skippers and crews, and Part B for fishing vessel builders and owners.

Part A of the Code has 11 chapters and 6 appendices, which provide for the safety of the vessel, on deck, in fishing operations, in machinery spaces and of mechanical equipment; life saving appliances; and fire fighting and fire precautions.

**DATE OF ADOPTION**  
4 to 13 September 1968

## PLACE OF ADOPTION

Geneva, Switzerland in a joint FAO/ILO/IMO meeting of Consultants on Safety on Board Fishing Vessels held in ILO

## INITIATING BODY

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)  
International Labour Organization (ILO)  
International Maritime Organization (IMO)

## WORKING OF THE INSTRUMENT

*Monitoring and implementation*  
Maritime Safety Committee (MSC)

\* Sub-committee: Stability and Load Lines and Fishing Vessels Safety (SLF)

### *Periodicity of meetings*

MSC meets once a year

### *Participation in meetings*

MSC consists of all member states

### *Secretariat*

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## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

At the 43rd session of the sub-committee on Stability and Load Lines and Fishing



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Vessels Safety (SLF), it was decided to revise Part B of the Code and the Voluntary guidelines, which would be presented to the MSC.

### **SELECTED ARTICLES**

#### **Chapter 1**

1.2.1 For the purpose of this Part of the Code:

- (i) "fishing vessel" is a vessel used commercially for catching fish, whales, seals, walrus or other living resources of the sea. Certain provisions of this Part of the Code may also apply to vessels used for the processing and/or cold storage of the catch;
- (ii) "fisherman" is any person working on board a fishing vessel;

1.3.10 In order to minimize accidents due to fatigue, fishermen shall be granted adequate rest periods which should comprise at least six consecutive hours in every period of twenty-four hours.

### **KEYWORDS**

Fishing vessels, safety at sea, equipment, communication, signals, lights, radar, construction, design, fishing operations, certification, education, hygiene, health and safety, medical examination, vocational training, accommodation, fire, crew

### **RELEVANCE TO FISHERIES/ FISHWORKERS**

The Code deals with the fundamentals of safety and health of fishermen, and presents safety principles that should be common knowledge and practice and which, if followed, should greatly reduce

the risk of injury to fishermen and accidents to equipment. Its application is limited to fishing vessels of 24 m in length and over, excluding recreational fishing vessels and processing vessels.

The introduction to the Code points out that fishing has grown from being a primitive occupation to a highly developed industry, employing complex machinery. This development necessitates the introduction and expansion of safety measures along lines similar to those that apply to other major industries.

The Code provides safety principles designed to reduce risk of injury to fishermen, danger to the vessel and damage to equipment, incorporating provisions on navigation, fishing operations, life-saving appliances and other aspects of safety.

The provisions of the Code (Part B) are applied to new decked fishing vessels of 24 m in length and above and in the following categories:

1. vessels intended for fishing operations in unlimited sea areas;
2. vessels intended for fishing operations in sea areas up to 200 nautical miles from a place of shelter; and
3. vessels intended for fishing operations in sea areas up to 50 nautical miles from a place of shelter.

These provisions apply only for decked fishing vessels, and do not apply for fishing vessels for sport or recreation, or to processing vessels.

Part B of the Code is currently being revised by the MSC of the IMO.

# Voluntary Guidelines for the Design, Construction and Equipment of Small Fishing Vessels

## SHORT TITLE

Voluntary guidelines

## LEGAL STATUS

Non-binding

## TYPE OF INSTRUMENT

Voluntary Guidelines

## OBJECTIVES

To provide information on design, construction and equipment of small fishing vessels with a view to promoting the safety of the vessel and safety and health of the crew

## CONTENTS

Ten chapters

## DATE OF ADOPTION

October 1999 (MSC, IMO) and November 1999 (FAO)

## INITIATING BODY

International Maritime Organization (IMO)  
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)  
International Labour Organization (ILO)

## WORKING OF THE INSTRUMENT

### *Monitoring and implementation*

Maritime Safety Committee (MSC)

- \* Sub-committee: Stability and Load Lines and Fishing Vessels Safety (SLF)

### *Periodicity of meetings*

MSC meets once a year.

### *Participation in meetings*

MSC consists of all member States.

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## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

At the 43rd session of the Stability and Load Lines and Fishing Vessels Safety (SLF), it was decided to revise the Voluntary guidelines, which would be presented to the MSC. It was approved by the committee in December 2004.

## SELECTED PARAGRAPHS

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide information on design, construction and equipment of small fishing vessels with a view to promoting the safety of the vessel and safety and health of the crew. They are not intended as a substitute for national laws and regulations but may serve as a guide to those concerned with framing such national laws and regulations. Each competent authority responsible for the safety of fishing vessels should ensure that the provisions of these guidelines are adapted to its specific requirements having due regard to the size and type of vessels, their intended service and area of operation.

The provisions of these guidelines are intended to apply to new decked fishing vessels of 12 m in length and over, but less than 24 m in length.

## **Fishing Vessels and Safety at Sea**

(This is only a summary of the instrument, and not the complete guidelines.)

### **KEYWORDS**

Accommodation, crew, fishing vessels, construction, fire, communication, navigation

### **RELEVANCE TO SMALL-SCALE FISHERIES/FISHWORKERS**

The Guidelines amplify Part B of the Code of Safety for Fishermen and Fishing

Vessels by providing guidelines on the design, construction and equipment of fishing vessels less than 24 m in length. It covers the design, construction and equipment of fishing boats between 12 m and 24 m in length, based on the points outlined in the safety codes. It is also worth noting that Section 8.2.5 of FAO's Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, asks Flag States to adopt safety requirements during the construction and design of fishing vessels in accordance with the guidelines.

# Document for Guidance on Training and Certification of Fishing Vessel Personnel

## SHORT TITLE

Voluntary guidelines

## LEGAL STATUS

Non-binding

## TYPE OF INSTRUMENT

Voluntary Guidelines

## OBJECTIVES

To improve the training, certification and watchkeeping standards of fishing vessel personnel

## DATE OF ADOPTION

2000

## INITIATING BODY

International Maritime Organization (IMO)  
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)  
International Labour Organization (ILO)

## WORKING OF THE INSTRUMENT

### *Monitoring and implementation*

Maritime Safety Committee

- \* Sub-committee: Stability and Load Lines and Fishing Vessels Safety (SLF)

### *Periodicity of meetings*

MSC meets once a year

### *Participation in meetings*

MSC consists of all member states

## *Secretariat*

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## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Document was first introduced in 1985, and was later revised by the MSC in 2000. The first document took into account the conventions and recommendations adopted by the ILO, IMO and FAO in the field of fishermen's training, and covered training and certification of small-scale and industrial fishermen. In 1995, a joint working group reviewed the document with reference to relevant resolutions of the 1995 STCW-F Convention. The outcome led to the revised Document. The IMO published the guidance Document on behalf of IMO, FAO and ILO in 2001.

## KEYWORDS

Fishing vessel, fishermen, small-scale fisheries, training, certification, standards

## RELEVANCE TO FISHERIES/ FISHWORKERS

This Document is of relevance to fishermen who are employed on board small-scale and large fishing vessels, as it provides standards for training and certification of fishing vessel personnel.

**International Legal Instruments Relevant  
to Fisheries and Fishing Communities:  
A Handbook**

**Published by**

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# International Legal Instruments Relevant to Fisheries and Fishing Communities: A Handbook

*International Legal Instruments Relevant to Fisheries and Fishing Communities: A Handbook* provides detailed information for a wide range of legal instruments relevant to fisheries and fishworkers. It covers 114 legal instruments, categorized into the following seven themes:

- Human Rights, Food Security, Women and Development
- Environment and Sustainable Development
- Oceans and Fisheries Management
- Environmental Pollution
- Fishing Vessels and Safety at Sea
- Labour
- Trade

The handbook also includes the working of the instruments (decision-making bodies, monitoring and implementation agencies, periodicity of meetings, rules for participation in meetings of the decision-making bodies and implementation agencies for States and non-governmental organizations), regional instruments/agencies and follow-up. Apart from being a ready reckoner to the instruments, it highlights the important sections of relevance to fisheries/small-scale fisheries/fishworkers.

The companion CD-ROM provides the full texts of the instruments in a searchable database. The handbook will be useful for fishworker and non-governmental organizations, and also for researchers and others interested in fisheries issues. It is also available online at [www.icsf.net](http://www.icsf.net)



ICSF is an international NGO working on issues that concern fishworkers the world over. It is in status with the Economic and Social Council of the UN and is on ILO's Special List of Non-Governmental International Organizations. It also has Liaison Status with FAO. Registered in Geneva, ICSF has offices in Chennai, India and Brussels, Belgium. As a global network of community organizers, teachers, technicians, researchers and scientists, ICSF's activities encompass monitoring and research, exchange and training, campaigns and actions, as well as communications.

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