



Global Action Network

Sustainable Food from the Oceans and Inland Waters for Food Security and Nutrition

Summary from the Annual Network Meeting 22 October 2025, FAO Headquarters Rome and virtually

The Global Action Network, held its [annual network meeting](#) alongside [CFS 53](#). This was a hybrid meeting with in-person participation at FAO headquarters and virtual attendance via Zoom, bringing together people working in UN, government, institutions, NGOs, and industry. A total of 244 registrants from 67 countries.

Summary of high level opening remarks

Nosipho Nausca-Jean Jezile, **Chairperson of the CFS**, highlighted the strong alignment between the Network's Mission Statement and the CFS Policy Recommendations on Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture for Food Security and Nutrition (grounded in the human right to adequate food). These were developed inclusively with over 140 Member States and diverse stakeholders, giving them strong legitimacy. They will be updated in 2027/28. CFS emphasize collaboration among UN agencies, governments, civil society, and the private sector and has strengthened focus on implementing policy products and

Luz Maria De Regil the **Director of Nutrition and Food Safety at the WHO** congratulated the Global Action Network for advancing nutrition through sustainable aquatic food systems. She welcomed the extension of the UN Nutrition Decade's with more ambitious targets and new indicators, stressed the vital role of fisheries and aquaculture for healthy, sustainable diets amid challenges like climate change, conflict, and diet-related diseases, highlighted food safety as public health cornerstone and the urgent fight against antimicrobial resistance.

Lynnette Neufeld, **Director of the Food and Nutrition in the FAO**, highlighted that the 2024 FAO and WHO **joint** statement on healthy diets reaffirms four universal principles: adequate, balanced, diverse, and moderate- and explicitly includes aquatic foods in a diverse diet. She welcomed the Nutrition Decade's extension which renews commitment to ending malnutrition and noted the growing visibility of aquatic foods at key events (e Rome Nutrition Week, IUNS Congress of Nutrition, International Food Data Conference). FAO urged the Network to use the extended Nutrition Decade to accelerate progress and announced the updated global fish and shellfish composition database will be released in 2026.

Vera N. Agostini, **Deputy Director of Fisheries and Aquaculture in the FAO** highlighted that Aquatic foods offer nutritious, low-impact solutions, with production reaching 185 million tons in 2022. FAO's Blue Transformation focuses on expanding sustainable aquaculture, improving value chains, and strengthening fisheries management through initiatives like new [aquaculture guidelines](#), [Fish4ACP](#), [NAVAC](#), [EAF-Nansen](#), and [Common Oceans](#). The [2025 SOSI report](#) assessed over 2,500 stocks, showing 64.5% fished sustainably, representing 77% of global catch, underscoring the impact of effective management. FAO is also developing a Blue Transformation Dashboard to track progress and guide global action.



Participants shared action relevant for the [networks mission 2025](#)

WorldFish presented expanded work on holistic island food systems in the Pacific, and on inland fisheries in Asia and the African Great Lakes. They also highlighted increased engagement in global policy processes (including UNOC, SB62, UNGA and COP30), new efforts targeting vulnerable populations such as refugee camps, and the development of AI-based tools for small-scale fisheries data collection. **IFAD:** Nutrition is highly prioritized within IFADs investment programs ca 90 percent of IFAD programs in the aquatic sectors is nutrition sensitive projects. **CGIAR:** several events has demonstrated that aquatic foods are integral for transforming food systems to nourish people and planet. The momentum should be used. The expansion of the Nutrition Decade and the UN declaration of 2026 and the International Year of the Women Farmer offer key opportunities to further integrate aquatic foods into sustainable, inclusive, and resilient food systems. **EBCD:** is working alongside EU Private Sector actors in a call for the launch of an EU action plan on blue foods, has also been working to better incorporate aquatic foods in the climate change discussions. **Scaling-Up Nutrition (SUN) Yemen Secretariat:** investment and innovation in the fishery section are important to improve livelihood in coastal communities. **Iceland,** on behalf of the Aquatic Blue Food Coalition: highlighted their ongoing efforts to promote aquatic foods as a distinct and valuable food system, emphasizing their importance for nutrition, food security, biodiversity, and climate. They noted that aquatic foods are often undervalued in global discussions, which tend to focus primarily on terrestrial food systems.

In 2025 the **Global Action Network** has organized and contributed to five [events in support of the network mission](#) at [N4G](#), [OOSC](#), [UNOC](#), [IUCN-ICN](#) and [WIOMSA](#). The network will also host an [event at the UNFCCC COP 30](#) at the Nordic pavilion. The network has launched the '[Budstikke](#)', a communication tool that will carry key messages among scientists, policymakers, and stakeholders working across the entire food system on topics like ocean, fisheries, aquaculture, food systems, food security, nutrition and climate to foster collaboration and promote sustainable aquatic food systems for food security and nutrition.

The **Network Working Groups** gave a short status report. **Small-Scale Fisheries** working group: P.A. Vikas presented himself, he has offered to take the lead and coordinate their further activities. **The One Food System** working group reported progress in advancing the integration of blue and green food systems, including efforts to secure funding for workshops and network-building. Key priorities identified were developing a shared language and understanding across sectors, highlighting concrete examples of integrated blue-green food production, and improving understanding of technical, regulatory, and food safety barriers and risks. **Bridging the Decades** working group: noted strong progress in linking the UN Nutrition Decade with the UN Ocean Decade, and growing emphasis on nutrition, ocean science, and science-based policy. With the Nutrition Decade extended to 2030, bridging between the two Decades are encouraged. The Ocean Decade's next five phase will focus on applying science for policy, directly aligning with the Global Action Network's mission. Key milestones include the UN Ocean Conference and the One Ocean Science Congress in Nice, and the upcoming global conference on ocean and human health, hosted by Portugal, with strong involvement from Ocean Decade Committees and the Global Action



Network. The **Food Composition Data** Working Group reported that several members participated in workshop in Rome organized by the International Community of Practice on Nutrient Composition of Aquatic Foods. They are currently working on three scientific manuscripts focusing on nutrient composition, data harmonization, and the role of aquatic foods for food security and nutrition. Members also organized a mini-symposium at the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA, Mombasa, Kenya) and actively participated in the 14th International Food Data Conference (Rome) and the International Congress of Nutrition (IUNS-ICN, Paris).

Network tools: The Network secretariat launched the updated Network [webpage](#). The secretariat invited participants to continue submitting relevant news, events, and content for the [Gain and Share](#) tool to exchange knowledge and solutions and also welcomed everyone to follow the network on [LinkedIn](#). The network newsletter is sent out four times a year to more than 2,000 subscribers from 131 countries. A new feature was also launched - a *Postcard*, to enable participants to share travel notes, initiatives or short updates. A template will be available on the website, and the *Postcard* will be rolled out in 2026. The proposal was well received.

Inputs for Network Activities 2026

Relevant arenas identified are now listed on our [webpage](#) and participants are encouraged to send other relevant events to the secretariat.

A representative from the Kenya Marine Research Institute proposed creating a Western Indian Ocean Community of Practice on food and nutrition security, noting strong support from a recent WIOMSA mini symposium, co-hosted by the Network, and alignment with the networks mission. The network welcomed the proposal and expressed interest in establishing a new working group open to all participants. We will return to this topic in 2026.

The network leadership discussed establishing a working group to promote dietary shifts toward greater consumption of aquatic foods for improved nutrition and climate outcomes. Both FAO and WHO expressed interest in such a working group. FAO noted that their team working on food-based dietary guidelines is increasingly emphasizing aquatic foods, they suggested a follow-up discussion with this team to explore potential collaboration. WHO informed that they are developing guidelines on the consumption of animal-source foods, based on assessments of health outcomes, food safety, environmental impacts, and potentially economic considerations related to dietary transitions. The work is progressing, with the guidelines expected by the end of 2026, and they offered to provide updates and invite member feedback throughout the process. The network leadership welcomed the inputs from FAO and WHO as valuable contributions. They also announced plans for a **kick-off event next year to mark what has been achieved and plan the final five years of the UN Nutrition Decade**. An open online meeting will be held early next year for those interested in helping plan the event. The kick-off will highlight actions across key dimensions of food security, including access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious aquatic foods, meeting dietary needs



and preferences, and leaving no one behind, and will serve to renew collective ambition for the remainder of the Decade.

Other topics mentioned by participants to be considered in the future are replacement of traditional, nutrient-rich diets; transfer advanced agri- and aquaculture technologies to developing countries; aquaponics; engage investors, entrepreneurs, and the wider private sector in future discussions; and strengthening engagement with Caribbean regional agencies on aquatic foods and food safety.

The network leadership reminded participants that they can actively join the task force and working groups to contribute throughout the year. Members can share information, collaborate on network activities, and help shape the network's direction. Participants are also encouraged to propose new working groups or engage in existing ones, which focus on specific topics and support initiatives such as side events. Interested members **may contact the [Network's secretariate](#) to join the Task Force or any of the [network working/resource groups](#).**

Summing up and closing remarks were given by **IFAD**, pointing out that it has been reaffirmed that aquatic foods are vital for global food security, nutrition, and livelihoods, and are a cornerstone of resilience to many communities

A full [recording of the meeting](#) is available on the website for those who wish to view the discussions in detail.

Suggested information from the meeting chat to be shared in the Network:

- [Safe food: A human right amid climate change](#)
- [Protocol on aquatic foods as a strategic resource for food security under the Caribbean community common fisheries policy](#)
- [UN Ocean Decade Blue Food Futures Program](#)
- [African Day for Food & Nutrition Security \(ADFNS\)](#), Kigali, Rwanda
- [COFI Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management](#), February, Iceland
- Micronutrient Forum, Ghana (autumn 2026, no operable link yet)
- [West Africa Shellfish Knowledge and Outreach Hub](#)