



Statement by Coastal 500

World Oceans Day | June 8, 2021

We are **Coastal 500, a global Network of Mayors and local government leaders**, who have all pledged to work towards thriving and prosperous coastal communities.

We have come together, recognizing that **collective action and leadership** serve as a motivating force for effective change. That through the sharing of knowledge and solutions and a common vision, we can collaboratively address the challenges that face our coastal seas and the diverse communities and cultures that depend on them.

We further recognize that we must break down the artificial barriers between protection and economic productivity. That by **combining local efforts to protect critical habitat with effective co-management for coastal fisheries**, we can ensure food security, support the productive economy, safeguard livelihoods, and contribute to achieving national and global sustainable development goals.

We reaffirm the key points from the joint message¹ that our national government representatives signed about the **importance of coastal communities and small-scale fisheries during the global pandemic**. We have committed ourselves to key principles for supporting healthy and sustainable fisheries, which are now outlined in the **Coastal 500 Action Guidebook** as key actions and activities aligned with the needs and opportunities in our coastal communities.

As a network, we shall be preparing for the international meeting lineup starting in 2021 and going forward, including the **2022 International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAF)**, and commit to meaningful engagement in these forums.

We shall be focusing on these important topics for upcoming Network thematic discussions:

- Prioritizing coastal communities and the rural productive economy in COVID Recovery Plans
- Nature-based solutions and Ecosystem-based Adaptation in Coastal Ecosystems
- Local contributions to national and global goals for biodiversity, climate change, and the sustainable development
- The critical role of local leaders and communities, most especially women, indigenous peoples, and ethnic minorities
- Demonstrating the implementation of the UN FAO Small-scale Fisheries Guidelines

We **urge and invite other local government leaders of coastal communities** to share the vision and mission of the Coastal 500 and commit to finding ways to strengthen the resilience of our coastal communities, in recognition of the vital role that small scale fisheries play around the world.

1. High-Level Joint Message and Rare [Press Release](#).