Overview

Access to artisanal fishing measures the regulatory, economic, and physical factors that influence people's opportunities to fish. This indicator assesses how fisheries regulations, water access, and economic benefits support and facilitate artisanal fishing. If included in a fisheries management system, this indicator would be a valuable tool to address the needs of local fishers. It can be used to prioritize the development of fisheries in areas where artisanal fishing is crucial.

How was it measured?

Depending on the scale, measurement of access to artisanal fishing can be assessed differently. For the global assessment, scores are based on the implementation of a questionnaire-based study by More et al. (2019). Responses used to calculate the status of the Technical Fishing Opportunities tool included whether artisanal fishers are required to have a fishing license, whether there are regulations for the size and number of fish caught and the route of fishermen allowed to fish, and whether statistics are collected for this type of fishing. Responses to a similar set of questions for national-level fishers were also used.

Global variables were given a score between 0-100 in the More et al. (2019) study, with the lowest score indicating that there were no measures in place to support artisanal fishing. The score provided an indication of the effectiveness of the measures that support artisanal fishing. The lower the score, the more effective the measures.

For regional assessments, access to artisanal fishing can be measured at a more specific level. For example, in the US West Coast assessment, access to artisanal fishing was scored by looking at specific measures. Physical access was assessed by the number of public access points per mile of coastline, and economic access was assessed based on the 5-year trend of fish prices as a percentage of median income, a factor which would influence how far small-scale fishers might be willing to travel. In general, the framework for assessing the scores for both access and economic access is used.

For more information, see our US West Coast assessment.

What are the impacts?

Access to artisanal fishing opportunities helps local populations meet their needs for protein. If such fishing is done with sustainable methods and appropriate regulation, fish and other coastal areas should be able to meet people's needs for years to come.

References