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| *All correspondence should be addressed to***“**THE SECRETARY”**Telephone: 706081/9****Fax: 734646**Telex: ZIM AGRIC: 22455 ZW |  | **MINISTRY OF LANDS, AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES, WATER, AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT**1, Borrowdale RoadNgungunyana BuildingPrivate Bag 7701CausewayHarare |

Ref.

21 November 2023

Secretary for Foreign Affairs and International Trade

**Attention: Mr M. T. Chikawa**

**RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ON CALL FOR INPUTS BY SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON THE RIGHT TO FOOD: THE RIGHT TO FOOD AND**

 **SECURING SUSTAINABLE SMALL-SCALE FISHERIES.**

Reference is made to your letter dated 6 November 2023, requesting for the responses on the questions on ‘’The Right to Food and Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries”.

Please find attached hereto, the responses on the questions to the call for inputs to the report on right to food and securing sustainable small-scale fisheries from the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development.

Regards,

Prof. O. Jiri

**SECRETARY FOR LANDS, AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES, WATER AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT.**

**CALL FOR INPUTS: THE RIGHT TO FOOD AND SECURING SUSTAINABLE SMALL-SCALE FISHERIES: RESPONSES ON THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.**

**1. How do you work to ensure gender equality in the fisheries sector?**

The fisheries and aquaculture extension services ensures 50% of participants trained for aquaculture programmes comprise of women to encourage participation in the sector operations. Through collaborations with organisations such as WorldFish (Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation-Fish Compact) the department has allowed diverse women and men farmers and fishers, government agencies, and research and development partners to overcome these inequalities and their underlying causes. Through innovative research-based policies and development interventions that close the gender gap in fisheries and aquaculture, without increasing women’s time and labour burdens, the department is aiding in creating opportunities for all. Ensure equal access of men and women to fisheries resources.

**2. What actions have been taken by your country to implement the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries?**

Zimbabwe has taken steps to implement the Voluntary Guidelines by training and supporting small-scale fishing communities through the Presidential Community Fisheries Scheme and the Conventional Fisheries Plan. The schemes allow participation in and taking responsibility for water resources on which communities have traditionally used for their livelihoods. The inshore fisheries management plan for Lake Kariba and the Tugwi Mukosi master plan are examples of community involvement in small-scale fisheries management involving the participation of women, youth, vulnerable and marginalised groups through co-management structures at district level. Monitoring, Control and Surveillance is playing a critical role in addressing illegal unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing issues in Zimbabwe promoting sustainability of small-scale fisheries.

**3. What are the challenges and opportunities in strengthening such implementation?**

The implementation of the fisheries regulations is still inadequate in Zimbabwe, hence small-scale fisheries guidelines, are not yet fully taken advantage of. The development of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Act currently underway will domesticate regional policies for domestication, including SADC Protocol on Fisheries, SADC Protocol on shared water courses, African Standardisation Organisation (ARSO) and FAO Voluntary Guidelines which will strengthen implementation at domestic levels. This will be the working policy document governing fisheries and aquaculture in Zimbabwe.

**4. How does climate change and environmental degradation impact fisheries and small-scale fisheries in your country?**

Inland open water small scale fisheries in Zimbabwe which are experiencing other non-climatic threats such as overfishing, loss of habitat, pollution and disturbance face complex and localised impacts due to limited mobility, remoteness, and high dependence on fishing. For the households and communities’ changes in food availability and affordability may lead to additional health burdens due to climatic disturbances. Climate change may lead to decreased catches leading to high risk of malnutrition and under- nutrition for communities who are highly dependent to get protein from fish. There may also be a reduction in fishery-dependent incomes.

**5. What are the main concerns regarding working conditions in the fisheries supply chain? Which parts of the supply chain are the most dangerous or problematic?**

The main concerns regarding working conditions in the fisheries supply chain involve the use of small fishing boats that are not suited for large weights and lack of protective gear such as life saver jackets leading to drownings. Harvesting is the most dangerous part of the supply chain with high incidences of human-wildlife conflicts. Crocodile and hippo attacks are prominent in the fisheries sector.

**6. What are accountability mechanisms in place for human rights abuses committed in the context of the fishing industry by large-scale fishers, illegal foreign fishers, and extractive industry?**

Prohibition of human rights abuses is cross-cutting in Zimbabwean law and that is in line with international practice, including International Labour Organisation (ILO) regulations. In the context of fisheries and rural livelihoods in general, there is a knowledge gap on human rights infringement and Zimbabwe is addressing the knowledge gap and offering capacity building regarding human rights impacts and implications of the fisheries and aquaculture sectors by producing new knowledge products, extension services and documentation. Specific topics for knowledge generation include the human rights impacts of aquaculture production and fisheries agreements, companies’ responsibilities to respect human rights; roles and responsibilities of the State, companies, and civil society in promoting participation, non-discrimination, accountability, and transparency.

**7. What is the position of your country on the WTO Fisheries Subsidies Agreement? Is Zimbabwe a member of WTO and honours all its commitments?**

By curbing subsidies to illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing in shared water bodies such as Lake Kariba, Zimbabwe plays a key role in the global fight against overfishing. By prohibiting subsidies to fishing on overfished stocks, Zimbabwe puts important protections in place where management measures are ineffective.

**8. What are the human rights implications of the new High Seas Treaty?**

There is potential for equal access to marine resources. The agreement states that the marine samples and genetic coding will be shared, leaving room for capacity building and marine technology transfer to all states.

SECRETARY Approved/Not Approved

CHIEF DIRECTOR Recommended/Not Recommended

DIRECTOR Recommended/Not Recommended

D/DIRECTOR Recommended/Not Recommended

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The Secretary’s signature and approval is being sought.

Vimbai Zirenga

**STRATEGIC PLANNING AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

21 November 2023