



NATIONAL PLATFORM FOR SMALL SCALE FISHWORKERS

June 11, 2022

PRESS STATEMENT

On the Eve of the WTO Negotiations in Geneva

**National Platform for Small Scale Fish Workers (NPSSF) Implores the Government
Do Not Compromise on Subsidies for Small Scale Fisheries
Stop Subsidising Overfishing & Destructive Fishing**

The biennial meeting of trade ministers from all 164 member nations is going to take place between June 12 and 15 in Geneva. The ministerial negotiations are to finalise the fate of fisheries subsidies provided by the governments of the world in their respective countries including in India.

NPSSF strongly holds that subsidies provided to the small scale fisheries (SSF) are **instrumental to protect sustainable fishing, large employment, equitable distribution of income, food security and nutritional status of our society**. With more than 50% of work force being women the small scale fisheries sector has also to be supported for gender balance in employment. As such the **provision of subsidies for SSF is non-negotiable**.

NPSSF further holds that subsidies for Small Scale Fisheries in the developing countries is beyond the mandate of WTO since these subsidies pertains more to management of fisheries than to international trade.

NPSSF also holds that the traditional livelihood rights of small scale fisher people cannot be denied on the pretext of IUU (illegal, unregulated and unreported) fishing as the government has consistently failed to provide a legal, regulatory and reporting framework to protect the traditional and livelihood rights in small scale fisheries.

At the same time NPSSF urges the government to stop all subsidies to the large scale mechanized fishing sector which is responsible for overfishing and destructive fishing. Subsidising trawlers and mechanized boats means subsidising overfishing and destructive fishing. This should be stopped.

NPSSF has been very upset to know that **some persons have been handpicked** by the government and taken to Geneva as **non-government delegates** from the fisheries sector. There has been complete lack of transparency on the part of the government in this. The **small scale fish workers' organizations like NPSSF were not even informed** about the constitution of such non-government delegation. **The Government should refrain from such practices in future**.

NPSSF has already communicated its concerns and objections to Shri Piyush Goyal, Minister of Commerce & Industries, Government of India under Memo No. NPSSF/Conv/19/22 dt. June 11, 2022 (copy enclosed).

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