



## National Platform for Small Scale Fish Workers (NPSSFW) National Conference 2022

### Resolution on Natural Resource Conservation and Utilisation Based on Integrated Policy Position of Natural Resource Dependent Primary Producer Communities

Small Scale Farmers, Forest Dwellers, Small Scale Fishers & Fish Farmers as well as Pastoralists are all **self-employed primary producers** who are directly dependent on renewable natural resources and who work mainly for their **livelihood** as against commercial purpose.

They have **commonalities** in the need to access the natural resources and also in their concern to protect the natural resource base **against the over extractive and accumulative large scale interests** backed by the State. Their interests are opposed to the path of **so-called development based on capitalist growth** facilitated by the Union and State Governments at the expense of the life and livelihood of common people in general and of the people dependent on natural resources in particular.

Admittedly they have inter and intra sector conflicts of interest on the extent and mode of use of natural resources. Yet their convergence is called for by the **principle of sustainable use** of natural resources which holds that the **use or consumption of natural resources** has to **match with their regeneration** and over extraction of natural resources by a natural resource based sector adversely affects such other sectors and ultimately hits that sector itself.

The **spell of climate crisis** affecting all life on the planet is having most severe impact on natural resource based people and their livelihood. The small scale farmers, fishers, forest dwellers and pastoralists are the worst victims though they are the least responsible in precipitating the crisis. The ways and means dictated and promoted by the Government to address climate crisis has **been socially unjust** and **favours the big business and corporate** at the cost of the under privileged.

Considering the situation, characteristics and modes of operation of these sectors, NPSSFW resolves that the overarching principle that may serve as the common guideline for the protection of their natural resource base and address issues of both inter and intra sector justice and equity is ***ecosystem based human rights approach***.

**Ecosystem Based Human Rights Approach** stands for access, distribution and consumption of natural resources abiding by the principles of human rights without violating or transgressing the norms for sustainability of the ecosystem.

This **over-arching approach**, in its turn, is constituted with the following principles –

1. **Sustainable Livelihood Practice:** This means that the livelihood practices of workers involved should not adversely affect the regeneration of natural resources and furtherance of ecosystems;
2. **Workers' Welfare:** This means that the goal of the endeavour should be the welfare of the workers (primary and secondary producers) engaged in the sector;
3. **Participatory Governance by Community:** This means the community needs to take part in the governance of the respective livelihood sectors;
4. **Subsidiarity in Area and in Scale :** This means that in management of resources decisions that can be taken locally should not be left for taking centrally and the workers with smaller capacity must have preference to access resources over the people with larger capacity;
5. **Gender Justice :** This means that the women fish workers should not only get equal and non-discriminatory treatment in comparison with the male workers but also there should be positive discrimination in their favour to ensure equity given their unequal social condition;
6. **Inter-Sector Equity :** This means that in sharing of common natural resources like water, land, forest and grasslands for agricultural, fisheries, forest, pastoral or any other activities principle of equitable distribution of available resources should be maintained;
7. **Climate Justice :** This means that in addressing the climate crisis measures for protection and coping should be provided with preference to the sectors and people least responsible for the crisis and the people who profit from large scale carbon emissions must be made to pay;
8. **Inter-Generational Equity :** This means that the natural resources must not be consumed fully by the present generation and should be preserved adequately to be used by the future generations;
9. **Precautionary Principle:** This means that in this natural resource based sectors no technological or other ventures should be taken whose impacts on the ecosystem and livelihood of the people are not adequately known.

**The Guidelines/Principles stated above will have to be applied to specific situations in developing directions for action.**

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*Dt. November 9, 2022*