

FUTURE *of* FISH

Impact Report 2020





A fisher in Peru displaying his mahi-mahi catch

Director's letter

Dear friends,

2020 was one for the history books.

We started the year in a blur of activity. The fishery programs we've been collaborating on in Latin America for the past three years were firmly in their implementation phase, with team members and our partners on the ground and working deeply with communities in Peru, Chile, and Belize. We were full steam ahead designing new financial models for fisheries transformation and developing updated frameworks for fishery improvement projects, while working towards new programs in the Caribbean and Vietnam.

Then, a few months into the year, everything changed. The spread of Covid-19 and attendant shutdowns utterly transformed how we worked in 2020. With much of our in-person work suddenly on hold, we were forced to reassess how to best support the communities we work with as business-as-usual was upended. As always, fishers and coastal communities are at the center of what we do, so we asked fishers what they needed, and quickly iterated ways to support their urgent needs while still building towards longer-term, systemic change.

I am extremely proud of the commitment and innovation of our staff in their understanding and response to the changing conditions. I'm also in awe of the resilience and spirit of fishers and their communities. You'll see examples of this grit, resilience, and ingenuity throughout the pages of this report.

Despite the year's grand disruptions, our mission remains the same. We take a systems approach to understanding the issues facing fishers, their communities, and the ocean they rely on. Throughout the Covid pandemic, fishers have kept us informed about the interlinking social, health, and security issues that many of their communities face. Through their insights and those of our colleagues working in fisheries across the globe, the effects of the pandemic have reinforced our resolve to focus on building alliances to support worker safety and community health, advance the education and empowerment of women and girls, and working towards food security and sovereignty.

As always, we believe a human-centered approach, which bridges human health, community livelihoods and ocean health, is essential to driving long-term change. Making this transformation a reality is a massive challenge, and we can't do it alone. More than ever, we appreciate the support of our donors and partners that make this work possible.

Thank you for following our journey, and thank you for your support.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Battisti'.

Peter Battisti, Executive Director

Our story

Future of Fish is an international non-profit working at the intersection of social equity, economic resiliency and environmental sustainability. Established in 2009 to bring innovative solutions to complex systemic problems in seafood, Future of Fish leads with a human-centered approach to help communities build sustainable livelihoods while also protecting fish, a critical source of protein for billions of people worldwide. We currently operate in Chile, Peru, Belize, and the Caribbean, with developed partnerships serving South East Asia and Africa. From its beginnings as a grant-funded research initiative, Future of Fish was founded on the understanding that the fish problem is a people problem, and that change must begin with behavior on the water — not in the supermarket. Supporting fishers means supporting a more resilient and equitable system.

Supporting fishers also means listening to and learning from all seafood workers. The solutions we develop are grounded in the knowledge and expertise of seafood workers and coastal communities: fishers are keenly aware of the problems they're facing, and the roadblocks that prevent them from thriving. By co-designing with fishers and other stakeholders, we strive to support resilient communities while ensuring our programs are sustainable, scaleable, and effective for the communities and ecosystems we serve.

In the past three years, Future of Fish has grown in two complementary directions: deeply partnering with coastal communities and local supply chains; and working across domains to develop innovative models for fisheries development and financing. Coordinating with communities to ensure access to the basic services they need, we help ensure fishers have the security and opportunity to be stewards of the ocean and the fish stocks they harvest from. At the same time, we work locally with fishers and technologists to improve product quality and help fishers get a fair price for their catch. In order for these improvements to scale, we work in partnership with banks, development organizations, and NGOs to drive innovation in financing models, supply chains, and digital tools needed for systemic, enduring change.

The socio-economics and environmental issues in fisheries communities are complex. No one organization can be the expert in all disciplines. Our expertise comes from listening to fishers and communities — identifying their needs and the gaps in current solutions, finding the partners and resources that can help, and connecting the dots so change can scale.

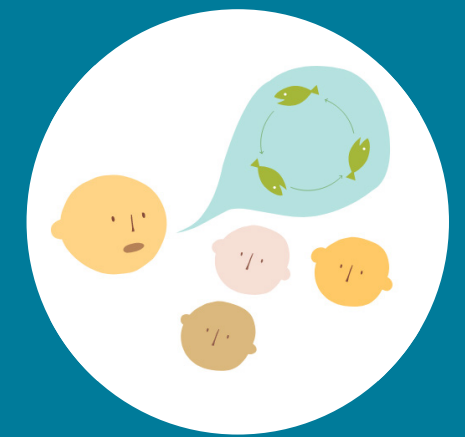
In the coming year, Future of Fish is continuing to grow our programs in Latin America, while designing and implementing new global initiatives that build Blue Economy opportunity areas in the Caribbean and delivering innovative models and approaches in data and finance for fisheries. Wherever we go, we are committed to the resilience and wellbeing of fishers, their communities, and the ocean ecosystems we all rely on.

Vision

A world where coastal communities are thriving and resilient stewards of a healthy ocean environment.

Mission

To empower thriving, sustainable ocean economies.



SDGs

Sustainable Development Goals

Future of Fish contributes to achieving the United Nations' Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.



We focus on building collaborations that unlock resources to benefit fishers, coastal communities, supply chain companies, and consumers in order for fisheries to be more environmentally and economically sustainable for the people that rely on them. Future of Fish strives to build and sustain vibrant fishing communities worldwide.

Why fish?



The oceans feed us

Three billion people — 40% of the world's population— rely on seafood as their primary source of protein.



Blue economy

The oceans contribute over \$1.5 trillion in value to the global economy each year, and that number is expected to double by 2030.



Fishing for a livelihood

120 million seafood workers depend on wild-capture fisheries for their livelihood.



Small scale on a big scale

90% of the people who make a living from fishing work in small-scale fisheries.



A lobster fisher in Belize guides Future of Fish team members and a documentary crew to the fishing grounds



Future of Fish team members on the shore in El Quisco, Chile, visiting with small scale fishers.

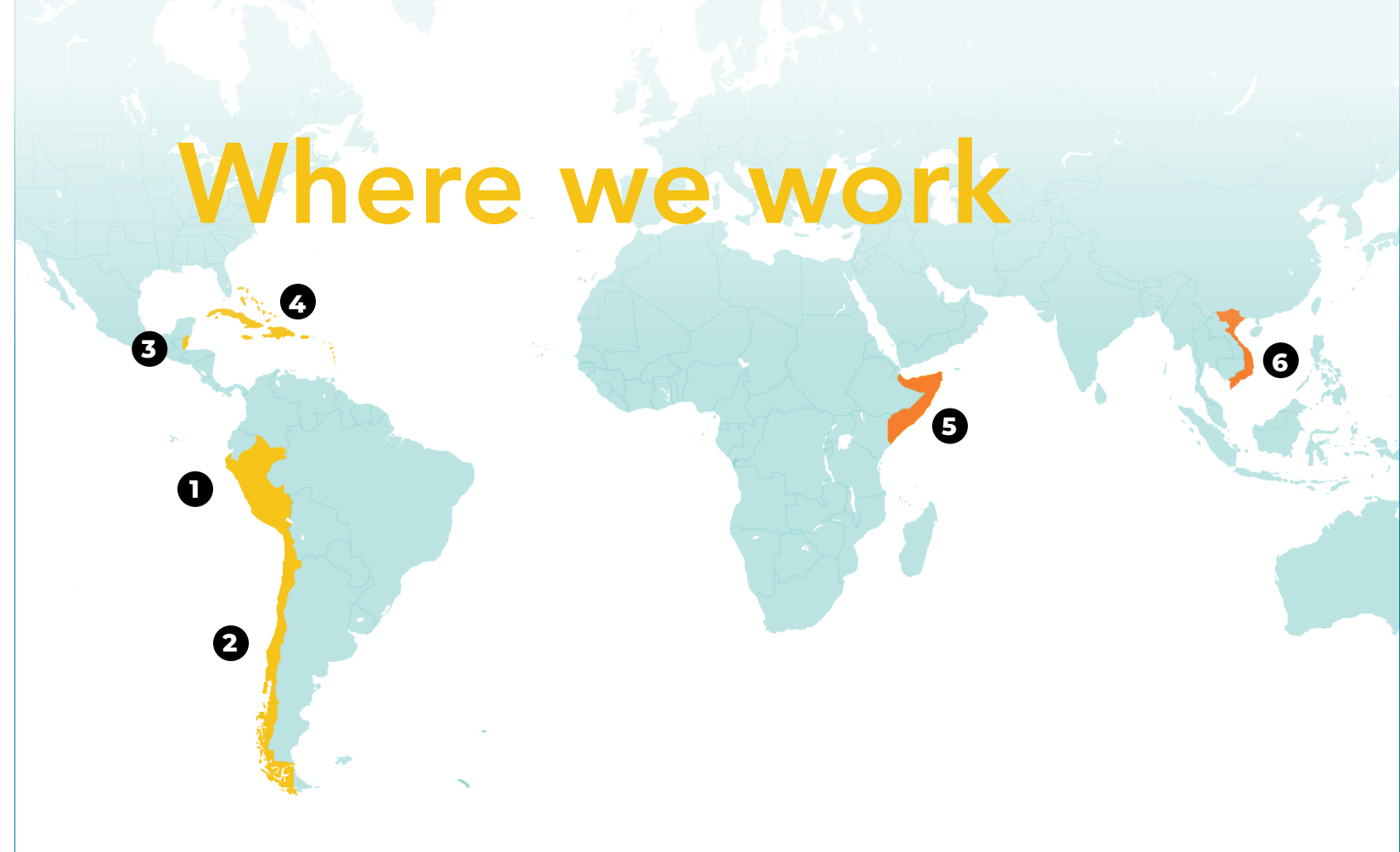
Driving change

We believe new models and approaches are desperately needed to build thriving, resilient ocean based economies. Our model for small-scale fishery development is based around three pillars of sustainable fishery development. Together, these pillars provide a “3E” approach to fishery development that balances environmental, economic, and equitable (the “3Es”) outcomes.

Each of our projects work to advance one or more of the pillars.



Where we work



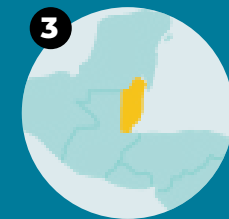
In 2020, our projects have taken us around the world, from Belize to Vietnam. Our work includes leading transformative projects (●) and partnering to lend our models and expertise to existing initiatives (●).



1 Peru: Improving supply chains for mahi mahi fishers, developing the market for sustainable seafood, and coordinating capital across fisheries.



2 Chile: Improving hake supply chains to increase the value of legal hake and provide business throughout the domestic value chain.



3 Belize: Supporting fishers and co-ops to achieve improved environmental, economic, and social outcomes in the spiny lobster fishery.



4 Caribbean: Identifying Blue Economy opportunity areas, barriers, and pathways towards novel and fundable business ideas.



5 Somalia: Our partners at Secure Fisheries are using our Fishery Development Model to identify economic opportunities in fisheries.



6 Vietnam: Collaborating with the Asian Seafood Improvement Collaborative and Lotus Impact to design a financing platform for small-scale shrimp producers.



On the water and in communities, we're committed to driving change — together.



2440

reusable fabric masks
distributed to fishers
and processors



8 villages

PPE distributed to 8
fishing communities
along Peru's coast



7400 fishers

supported to work
safely with PPE and
sanitation supplies

**Supporting the health and safety of
Peru's fishers in a time of crisis, and
building towards healthier communities.**

Health and safety on the water in Peru

Future of Fish has been collaborating with Peru's mahi-mahi fishers for the past two years, co-designing solutions to help keep fish fresh longer during extended fishing journeys. The fishers are resilient, determined, and dedicated to their craft and way of life. But part way through 2020, everything changed. Covid-19 upended every-day life and we had to respond — fast.

Peru's small-scale fishers are the lifeblood of the country's fishing industry. They provide 95% of the seafood consumed domestically, and 50% of the world's mahi-mahi. Throughout the country, small-scale fisheries like these play a critical role in food security and the national economy. Not surprisingly, fishers are considered essential workers.

Covid-19 hit fishing communities hard. It also totally changed how we collaborate. Our on-the-ground work with fishing partners was put on pause overnight as everyday life came to a halt. In Peru's remote coastal villages like La Islilla, lack of medical infrastructure meant that any Covid spread would be catastrophic. Even essential work like fishing became too risky without proper personal protective equipment (PPE) — and this equipment was hard to come by. Fishers were worried for their health, and for their livelihood.

With our ongoing projects on pause or recalibrating, we stayed in close contact with fishers. From our various lockdown locations, we talked with fishers, nonprofit partners, and other community members. We heard loud and clear that to keep fishing — and keep safe — fishers needed immediate access to PPE. Jumping into action, we built a fundraising campaign to help us rapidly secure the funds to purchase PPE. We also turned to our local networks in Peru to help source PPE and get it to villages like La Islilla.

By July, we were able to start distributing PPE, and over the next two months we provided masks, sanitizer, soap, spray backpacks for cleaning, and full-body protective suits to support over 7400 fishers at 8 villages up and down the coast. These essential supplies helped fishers get safely back on the water, and provide essential nutrition to their communities.

As we worked closely with fishers and their communities, we learned that PPE was just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to keeping people safe. Many communities face other chronic systemic healthcare issues. Most small-scale fishing boats don't have first aid kits on board because of the expense, which adds to the risk of longer fishing trips. Many communities don't have the local medical infrastructure needed to keep people healthy and safe, so people need to travel long distances to get treatment — or go without.

These are complex problems that can't be fixed overnight. But they're deeply intertwined with our core mission of ensuring thriving, sustainable coastal communities. In 2021, we'll be building alliances with potential partners and local experts in health and coastal infrastructure, and figuring out how to work in collaboration towards the systems change needed to ensure a future with healthy oceans, healthy fishers, and healthy communities.

CASE STUDY

Building the Caribbean Blue Economy

The Blue Economy — a marriage between sustainable development and green growth — has huge potential benefits, especially for the Caribbean, a region known for its seas. For small island nations, the ocean provides resources and offers a rich set of opportunities for sustainable and equitable development that benefit communities and local economies. By World Bank's estimates, the value of the ocean economy in the Caribbean is around US\$407 billion. Today, momentum is building behind efforts to realize this uncharted, Caribbean Blue Economy promise.

Looking to support sustainable Blue Economy initiatives and government efforts in the Caribbean, the Inter-American Development Bank turned to a coalition among Future of Fish, Economic Transformation Group, and the World Ocean Council to identify trends in technology and innovation in the Blue Economy, and map those opportunities to the Caribbean context. Bringing our expertise in pattern-finding, FoF supported the team to identify promising emergent and existing Blue Economy opportunity areas throughout the region. These areas point to where energy and resources can be focused to accelerate and maximize success of projects that uplift communities, improve local economies, and preserve and protect the ocean ecosystem upon which all these innovations depend.

This kind of future-looking opportunities research is in our DNA: from our early days, Future of Fish has been oriented towards innovation, systemic trends, and sniffing out the entrepreneurs and visionaries working to grow their field and support their communities. Adapting our traditional Discovery approach to include a foresighting analysis, we did a high-level scan of the current state and momentum within mature and more nascent Blue Economy sectors from fishing (of course!) to tourism to marine products to offshore energy production.

With these opportunity areas charted we were ready to dive into what we love best: talking to people on the ground, learning from experts, and gleaning insights from the people already doing the work. This revealed potential barriers and found areas where conditions and interests align for Blue Economy initiatives to launch and grow. Of course, 2020 had other ideas. The pandemic kept us grounded, while contacts and allies in governments and industry around the Caribbean had their plates full and their attention fixed (understandably!) on executing timely responses to the present situation. Undeterred, we pivoted to phone calls and remote research, speaking to a range of experts to find out where exciting new models and innovation are emerging within the Caribbean and where barriers are blocking progress.

As always, our findings were clear: that oceans are about more than just fish. If you want to have thriving oceans you also need thriving communities, diversified industry, which requires a “just” Blue Economy that's truly blue — this means equitable access to economic benefit for local communities, and one where economic activities help build ocean environmental sustainability and resiliency. We're excited about the final report, which lays out a set of action plans for the kinds of policies that companies and governments could make to help advance a thriving and just Caribbean Blue Economy. By unlocking change and building economic opportunities that center equity and resilience, we can work together to elevate communities and environmental success across industries and across regions.



7

exciting Caribbean-specific opportunity areas to pursue



17

preliminary country-level initiatives identified



\$407 B

estimated value of potential Caribbean ocean economy

Blue Economy Discovery to support a sustainable approach for the Caribbean and beyond.

Empowering small-scale fishers in Chile

The artisanal hake fishers in Duao, Chile are organized and motivated. For them, fishing is more than a job: It's a lifestyle, a tradition, and a livelihood. In the face of challenges like unstable pricing for their catch and stock fluctuations due to climate change or overfishing, fishers in Duao and other coastal communities are looking to find more stable markets, increase their business capacity, and make changes to ensure they're fishing sustainably. But it's a struggle for small-scale fishers to access the resources they need to make changes.

In partnership with four Chilean fishing communities and an association of open air market vendors, Future of Fish and our local allies ECOS are helping build the financial infrastructure and source the funds needed so fishers and vendors can implement new business models that allow them to thrive and build resilience. Through our role as an intermediary, we have been working to connect fishers with capital from diverse and appropriate sources, and help build local business capacity so fishers can flourish and secure their livelihood.

In Duao, we worked with fishers in an intensive co-design process to collectively identify strategies for improving supply chains and building more direct-to-market pathways that deliver greater value for legal, high-quality fish. The fishers' goal: to continue to provide food and income through sustainable fishing built upon better business practices. As a first step to achieving this goal, Future of Fish sourced funds and provided business support to help the fishers to form an official cooperative, named Co-op Duao. With the co-op formed, the fishers were ready to make things happen — once they had the resources.

Future of Fish took a deep dive into the regional and international funding landscape, developing a series of proposals that could pair appropriate capital and grant funds with different phases of the co-op's business plan. Sourcing capital from a wide range of foundations, government initiatives, and global funds, we secured over \$80,000 in funding for Co-op Duao by the end of 2020, with additional funds in the pipeline. These funds were earmarked to support the co-op in pooling its catch and developing ways to sell their hake directly to open air market vendors, shortening the time from boat to market, cutting out middle-men, and ensuring a higher quality of fish makes it to customers.

The spread of Covid-19 in early 2020 abruptly paused our on-the-ground work with fishers in Duao and elsewhere, but our work with Co-op Duao and our other partner communities continues, boats still set sail, and the fish still run. The initial successes of the supply-chain pilots have kept the fishers buoyed throughout the pandemic, and we're all eager to resume in-person collaboration once it's safe to do so.

The role of a system intermediary isn't just about moving fish; it's about moving information, money, and expertise along with a bit of hake. To do it effectively, we need to have strong relationships with communities, the ability to pull from diverse resources and pools of knowledge. Done right, we believe this work can greatly catalyze and accelerate successful fisheries transformation that delivers social, economic, and environmental gains.



\$115,000

raised for co-ops in two caletas to help build & modernize



2 co-ops

newly founded and now formalized with MOUs signed



2100 kilos

of hake sold directly from fishers to open air market vendors

Aligning capital to help Chile's small-scale fishers build sustainable businesses and long-term change.

Our approach

Our experience tackling systemic problems has taught us two important truths: there are no silver bullet solutions and no one organization can shift a system alone. That's why we bring other partners along, to build real, collective impact. Given the variety of global and local stakeholders, creative collaboration presents a significant opportunity to maximize impact. We do this by:



Centering people. We ensure our work is grounded in understanding human behavior as the key to solving the complex, human problem of overfishing.



Building incentives. We develop solutions that appeal to the varied interests of our constituents through incentives aligned to better business practices.



Creating value. We make the business case for catalyzing change through a focus on both generating new value and capturing lost value in supply chains.



Developing collaboration. We're the connector, and we listen and learn from those in fisheries, coastal communities and across the spectrum of government, industry and investment, to develop platforms and solutions that incentivize actors to collaborate toward actionable change.



Maximizing resources. We seek to leverage existing and create new resources for increased knowledge, capacity and capital flow among stakeholders.



Unlocking capital. We work to expand the pool of capital, understand investor risk/reward profiles and de-risk investments through creative structuring, all with the aim of funding scalable interventions for sustainable fisheries development.



Scaling solutions. We work with organizations that range from the community level to international development to create cross-collaborative solutions that maximize the effectiveness of both local and at-scale strategies.



Actively engaging. We do not just think and design, we implement our platforms with our partners on the ground. Through active engagement with communities, we learn and adapt our solutions to increase their effectiveness. We consider ourselves a stakeholder in the efforts to achieve thriving ocean based economies.

Our team

We're an eclectic bunch that includes design thinkers, entrepreneurs, business consultants and scientists.

Along with decades of experience in seafood and fisheries development, we also have backgrounds in structured finance, technology, education, renewables, international development, forest conservation and asset development.

Our team is distributed around the world, from Hawaii to Spain. Although Covid-19 prevented us from meeting in person for much of the year, we're experts at navigating the complex waters of multi-stakeholder video calls, remote collaboration, and long-distance partnership building.



Top row: Chris Giordano, Julie Budkowski, Oscar Vilela Seminario. Second row: Diego Undurraga, Fiona Lugo-Mulligan, Marah Hardt. Third row: Peter Battisti, Iván Greco, Cristina Rocca. Bottom row: Gretchen Thuesen, Charles Steinback, Laura Fernández Cascán.



FutureofFish.org