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Published by the  
 Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf)  
 PO Box 72135, Lynnwood Ridge 0040

**Subscription rates**

(4 issues and postage)  
 (for other countries, see subscription form)  
 Individuals/Institutions - R145.00  
 Students/schoolgoers - R72.00

**Design and layout**

Garneff Design Studio

**Printing**

Seriti Printing Digital

**Website and social media**

<https://questonline.org.za>  
 Twitter: @questSA1  
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**Cover image**

A man on a traditional fishing boat off the coast of Zanzibar, at sunset. Photo: Deposit-Photos (72084107, submitted by zlikovec).

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# International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture

In total around 492 million people depend at least partially on small-scale fisheries for their livelihoods, and small-scale fishers produce an astounding 40% of the global fisheries catch. Furthermore, small-scale fishers and fish workers account for 90% of the people who work worldwide in capture fisheries value chains. As a healthy source of protein and micronutrients like omega-3 fatty acids, selenium, calcium and zinc, fish are of course also essential to global food security.

These are some of the reasons why, in 2017, the 72nd Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations (UN) proclaimed 2022 as the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAF 2022), with the FAO serving as the lead agency and with the aim of raising awareness and promoting dialogue and collaboration. The vision statement for IYAF 2022 reads as follows: "A world in which small-scale artisanal fishers, fish farmers and fishworkers of both genders are fully recognized and empowered to continue their contributions to poverty alleviation, human well-being and resilient and sustainable food systems through the responsible use of fisheries and aquaculture resources and socio-economic development."

With August having been Women's Month, it is also apt to point out that 4 in 10 fishers or fishworkers globally, are women.

To be honest, before compiling this edition I knew very little about small-scale fisheries, and I have gone fishing myself maybe two or three times in my entire life. But, in reading

the articles from our contributing authors I was fascinated by the many facets of artisanal fisheries – proving once again how we are inextricably linked to the natural systems around us, and how important it is to protect that relationship.

Reading about the incredibly innovative traditional fishing methods of Africa, about new technology that allows scientists to use fin DNA to track great white shark populations, about the deep socio-cultural meaning that fishing communities attach to the water systems they call home, and about the unique ecosystems found in estuaries, my eyes were opened to a world I scarcely knew existed. In spite of the fact that I – like most of us – enjoy eating fish on a regular basis!

I hope reading this edition will be as interesting and illuminating for you as it was for me.

For more information about IYAF 2022, please visit [www.fao.org/artisanal-fisheries-aquaculture-2022/home/en/](http://www.fao.org/artisanal-fisheries-aquaculture-2022/home/en/). You can also watch a promo video here: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0s6N\\_89xXIU&t=10s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0s6N_89xXIU&t=10s).



**Fanie (RS) van Rooyen** (Quest Editor) with support from Susan Veldsman, Prof. Himla Soodyall (ASSAf) and Dr Linda Fick (ASSAf).

Lesisiqephu sihlange ne FAO's International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAF 2022). Kungacishe kube izigidi ezingu 492 zabantu ezincike ekudobeni ofishi ukuze baziphilise, laba badobi abancane bakhiqiza imikhiqizo engaba amaphesenti angu 40 yayo yonke imikhiqizo yokudoba ofishi emhlabeni. Inhloso ye IYAF 2022 ukusiza ukuba laba badobi abancane baziwe, babonakale futhi bathuthukiswe ukuze bezokwazi ukuqhubeka basize ukwehlisa indlala, basize ukwenza izimpilo zabantu zibencono kanye nokusiza ukuthi kuhlale kunokudla.

*Translated by Zamantimande Kunene*

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2022-09

# Quest Volume 18 Number 3

**Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf)**

Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf)

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Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) (2022) Quest: Science for South Africa, 18(3).

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