



PROGRAMME HANDBOOK

“FOR A MORE SUSTAINABLE RESORT REEF FISHERY”



MALDIVES
**Resilient
Reefs**



**BLUE
MARINE**
FOUNDATION

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TOURISM-DRIVEN OVERFISHING

The Maldives owes its existence to coral reefs. These amazing underwater structures are not only the foundation of our islands but also support our biggest industries: tourism and fisheries, and the food security of our people. However, climate change, habitat destruction, overfishing, and pollution are putting our reefs at risk.

Visitors to the Maldives love to admire and sometimes catch and eat our vibrant tropical fish. The tourism industry relies heavily on these reef fish, but we do not fully understand the scale of fishing impact due to limited data. Declines in fish catches and smaller fish sizes suggest that our reef fish populations are dwindling.

For our reefs to stay healthy and protect us from climatic impacts and erosion, we need a balanced fish population. Every fish species plays an important role in maintaining the reef's health. Unlike tuna, reef fish live longer, mature later, and are more vulnerable to overfishing. Without them, our reefs will suffer.

As climate change continues to challenge us, it's clear that we must change how we manage our resources if we want our islands and way of life to thrive in the future. Being the biggest market for reef fish in the Maldives, the tourism sector has a crucial role to play in preserving healthy reefs, as the vibrancy and beauty of these ecosystems are essential to attracting visitors and sustaining the industry.



ABOUT THE FISH FOR TOMORROW PROGRAMME

BACKGROUND



The “Fish for Tomorrow” (FFT) programme, also coined “Laamaseelu Masveriyaa” meaning “exemplary fisher” in Dhivehi, was launched in 2020 by Maldives Resilient Reefs (MRR) and Blue Marine Foundation. The programme aims to encourage sustainable coral reef fisheries in the Maldives by creating a market that encourages resorts to source fish responsibly and engaging local fishers in minimising harm to the marine environment.

Initially piloted at Six Senses Laamu resort in 2020, the programme began expanding to other resorts in 2023. It has evolved through collaboration with resorts and local fishers. Each resort adapts the programme to fits its operational needs and community context, ensuring flexibility and adaptiveness, with [case studies](#) from two resorts available. MRR is now striving to roll out the FFT programme nationwide to protect Maldives’ coral reefs from the adverse effects of overfishing.

PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES

The FFT programme promotes sustainable and transparent local seafood sourcing at resorts. Resorts and local suppliers agree to follow a set [Code of Conduct \(CoC\)](#) that ensures that all locally sourced seafood:

- 1** Are caught with low-impact fishing gear
- 2** Are not protected or vulnerable species
- 3** Meet minimum size limits for catch
- 4** Are not taken from Protected or Conserved Areas (PCA) or known fish spawning sites.



If any of the seafood landed does not meet the sustainability criteria, that portion of the catch should be rejected, while the rest of the catch may be accepted provided it meets the guidelines.

Fishing gear

[Recommended sustainable fishing gear types](#) include handlines, droplines and trolling. These methods are chosen because they keep bycatch low and fish populations healthy. Banned methods in the Maldives for commercial fishing – nets, automated speargun, SCUBA, explosives, and drones, or aircrafts – are strictly prohibited. Destructive gears such as powerful lights, longlines, bleach, chemicals, and jigging are not allowed because they can harm fish populations and the environment.

No-take species

Resorts and fishers agree not to purchase, or fish for, any species on the no-take species lists. This includes [nationally protected species](#) like parrotfish and Napoleon wrasse and [vulnerable species protected under the FFT programme](#), such as several species of vulnerable groupers and surgeonfish.

These species are vital for reef health and ecosystem balance. Justification on why these species should not be on restaurant menus and how to explain it to staff and guests are provided in individual fish profiles.

Accepted species and minimum size limits

Only the fish and invertebrates listed in MRR's '[Recommended Landings Sizes Guide](#)' should be caught, adhering to minimum size limits to ensure they have matured enough to reproduce. Fish should be measured from mouth to end of the tail (total length) and checked for freshness at the point of purchase following the '[Guide to Checking the Quality of Fish](#)'. Lobster carapace length is measured from the eyes to the end of the carapace. The requirement for lobsters to be landed alive shall be determined by the resort, based on its operational needs.

Justification on why these species can be caught sustainably and how to explain it to staff and guests are provided in the individual fish profiles.

Catch and release guidelines

Fish not meeting CoC requirements should be safely released back into the water following the '[how to safely release fish](#)' guidelines, to boost their survival chances.

Protected and Conserved Areas

Protected and Conserved Areas (PCA) protect marine habitats and species from harmful human activities and help replenish fish populations. Fishers receive maps showing where the PCAs are located in the atoll. Fishers must report where each fish was caught to ensure compliance.

DATA COLLECTION

Landings data collection

When fishers sell their catch to the resort, they must fill out a '[Landings Data Collection Form](#)'. This form gathers details like the fisher's name, date and time of fishing, gear used, fish, size, weight, and whether any fish was released or taken home. The resort then enters this information into a digital database (like a Microsoft Excel sheet or an application) and shares it with the finance team to process payments. All data collected belongs to the resort and is managed by the resort for its own operational and sustainability management purposes.

Issue and complaints log

If any issues or complaints arise – whether from staff or fishers – they are recorded in an 'Issues and Complaints Log' by a designated staff member responsible for the programme. This helps ensure that issues are addressed in a timely manner and the programme runs smoothly.

HOW CAN RESORTS JOIN THE FISH FOR TOMORROW PROGRAMME?

I BENEFITS OF JOINING THE PROGRAMME

Joining the FFT programme means sourcing local seafood responsibly and sustainably, helping to protect our ocean and support local livelihoods. It also gives the resort access to local, fresh seafood at better prices, reducing the reliance on expensive imports. Working with local fishers builds stronger community relationships and promotes sustainable fishing practices, ensuring a healthy future for everyone

I CERTIFICATION

Resorts can choose to join the FFT programme at three different levels, called “tiers”, depending on their sustainability goals and operational needs. On joining, resorts will be required to sign up to a CoC applicable to the tier they are committing to and resorts will receive a certification that shows their commitment. This step-by-step approach helps resorts of all sizes and capacities improve their local seafood sourcing and be more transparent. The tiers are:

Fish for Tomorrow Steward

This tier is about starting the journey, building the foundation of knowledge, and committing to increasing the transparency of seafood sourcing by resorts:

-  This tier supports resorts in understanding and implementing their existing regulatory obligations under Maldivian fisheries law, and building the foundation of transparent local seafood sourcing. The template provided by MRR is a tool to help resorts fulfil their own record-keeping. Compliance with national protections and size limits is a legal obligation; the programme supports resorts in achieving it.
-  Resorts collect and retain their own seafood sourcing data. Where resorts choose to voluntarily share data with MRR, this will be used to provide advisory feedback and to the resort and assess their sustainability practices.
-  Agreeing not to source nationally protected and restricted species.
-  Adhere to national size limits for reef fish species.
-  MRR will provide in-person trainings to relevant staff in fish identification, no-take species, fish measuring and data management.

Fish for Tomorrow Guardian

Here, resorts not only audit their seafood sourcing and sustainability practices, but commit to responsible sourcing by actively improving practices and sharing knowledge with guests. Resorts must adhere to the requirements of the 'Fish for Tomorrow Steward' Tier in addition to the below.



All local seafood – both caught and purchased must meet [minimum size limits](#) of the FFT programme, to give the fish a chance to reproduce. Resorts can also set quotas for certain species depending on their culinary and operational requirements.



They host guest presentations on the FFT programme and join FFT network meetings.



MRR will provide in-person trainings for relevant staff and remote technical support where required.



Resorts must avoid all species on MRR's '[Recommended No-Take Species](#)' list, recognising their vulnerable status in the Maldives and ecological importance for the coral reef ecosystem. Resorts can include additional species on their no-take lists depending on their culinary needs.

Fish for Tomorrow Champion

This tier embodies full integration of the programme: close collaboration with local fishers, responsible sourcing, and co-management of resources. Requirements of this tier will be tailored to consider the operational needs of the resort and local community, but include:



Full adherence to the guidelines outlined in the CoC, such as mandatory monitoring of fishing locations and only sourcing local seafood that has been caught using sustainable fishing methods (handlines, droplines and trolling).



Setting up a communication channel with local fishers for local seafood requests (e.g., a Viber group or use of resort operator function). Details of all fishers signed up to the programme are stored on a fisher database.



Resorts prioritise sourcing fish directly from local fishers in the atoll, rather than middlemen and develop a fair pricing system for registered local fishers. [Guidelines for setting premium pricing and guidelines for onboarding new fishers](#) into the programme can be found in the Annex.



Monitoring programme progress through regular data entry and analysis.



Co-managing the programme with local fishers by [hosting regular fisher meetings](#).



MRR is available as a long-term advisory partner for staff training, identifying and enrolling fishers, facilitation of fisher meetings and periodic advisory reviews. Resorts lead implementation of the programme.

I MONITORING AND REPORTING

MRR will provide advisory support to resorts. Where resorts voluntarily share data with MRR, MRR will use this to provide feedback to help resorts understand their sustainability performance. Follow-ups can be arranged remotely or through visits as required.

Where MRR conducts any independent research activity (for example, analysing broader trends in reef fisheries sustainability across participating resorts), MRR will apply for the appropriate research permit from the Ministry of Fisheries, Agriculture and Ocean Resources for that specific activity.

I HOW TO JOIN

If a resort wants to participate in the FFT programme, please contact the MRR team at contact@maldivesresilientreefs.com. We will then follow up with the resort to understand the level of engagement that the resort is open to committing to.

I BRANDING AND MARKETING

Resorts that join the FFT programme can use programme branding on their website, restaurant menus, in-villa information packs and brochures. The logo design will reflect the level of commitment. We will also display partner resort logos on the MRR website. Presentation materials to inform and educate staff and guests about the programme will also be provided. The fish profiles provide justifications for the inclusion and exclusion of certain species in the programme, in addition to fun facts about these fish species, which can also be used to guide conversations between resort staff and guests.



USEFUL HINTS AND TIPS



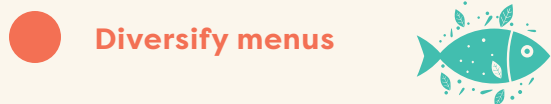
Plan for weather

Bad weather can make it difficult and unsafe for fishers to go out to fish and can reduce the consistency of your resort's seafood supply. Routinely check weather forecasts and if bad weather is expected, request more local seafood supply from fishers in advance.



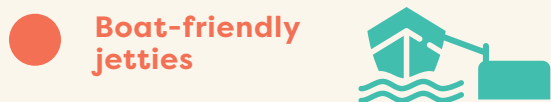
Plan for Ramazan and Eid periods

Fishers typically fish less during these religious periods. So, request more seafood supply from fishers in advance and adjust the menus to provide more flexible options.



Diversify menus

Adjust resort menus to include resilient and reliable local seafood options, allowing flexibility in dishes when local seafood supply is low. Speak with MRR to learn more about this.



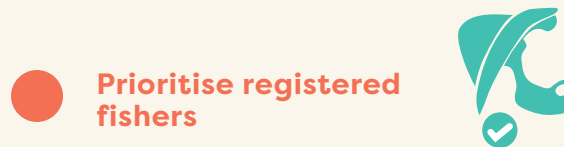
Boat-friendly jetties

Ensure your resort's supply jetty can accommodate small boats and dinghies easily, so fishers can safely dock and sell their catch.



Stay connected

Clear and regular communication with fishers is key to resolving issues quickly. Regular fisher meetings and transparent discussions help keep things running smoothly. Setting up a Viber group is a good way to clearly and fairly communicate with registered fishers. For fishers who don't have Viber, ask them to add a family member who can share the updates with them.



Prioritise registered fishers



Where possible, source local seafood from fishers who are registered in the FFT programme. Registered fishers have agreed to the Code of Conduct, completed sustainability training, and are familiar with the programme's quality and size requirements. This helps ensure consistency, builds trust with your fisher community, and supports the long-term success of the programme. Non-registered fishers should only be used as a back-up when registered fishers cannot meet demand.

CASE STUDIES

I SIX SENSES LAAMU: FISH FOR TOMORROW PIONEER

In 2020, MRR and Blue Marine Foundation launched the initial pilot of the Fish for Tomorrow programme at Six Senses Laamu. Following its inception, the programme was iteratively developed to adapt to the resort's operational needs and the community context, and it is still running successfully today. As of November 2025, 49 fishers from the neighbouring islands of L. Hithadhoo, L. Maamendhoo, L. Fonadhoo and L. Gan are signed up to adhere to responsible fishing practices and record their catch. In 2024 alone, over 6,500 fish and lobsters were landed through the programme at Six Senses Laamu, equating to a total weight of over 13,000 kg and contributing \$33,440 USD to the local economy. Guests at the resort enjoy this sustainably caught seafood, learning about the fish and fishers behind it. The resort also shares information about the programme on restaurant menus, helping guests understand the importance of sustainable fishing.



Implementation

Minimum size limits for various fish species accepted by the programme were established based on maturity data supported by the best available scientific research. A voluntary no-take list was introduced to protect reef fish species most vulnerable to overfishing and a national no-take list was implemented to highlight species protected under Maldivian law. The list of species on the programme's voluntary no-take list also was expanded in line with the Six Senses brand's conservation standards, to include additional species, such as the Moorish Idol and all grouper species. This demonstrates a strong commitment to protecting the reef and promoting sustainable fishing practices.

SIX SENSES LAAMU: FISH FOR TOMORROW PIONEER

LANDINGS

Executive chef submits local reef fish order to SSLM Operator.



SSLM Operator issues request for local reef fish to FFT fishers via SMS. SSLM fish purchasing time 08:00 – 22:30.

Note: The FFT Programme has been running efficiently since 2020 so these steps are no longer a requirement of the programme and will only occur when supply has not been met. Fishers have agreed with the resort that they can bring fish whenever they have caught it, as long as they deliver within the fish purchasing time.

Fisher arrives at resort supply jetty.



Security team at the jetty check that fisher is enrolled in programme and conduct fish quality check against the FFT protocols, including ensuring species sourced are in line with No-take Species Guide and meet the minimum size limits. If fish do not meet these sustainability requirements, they are rejected by the resort.



Security team and fisher work together to fill in data form, recording catch data which includes size per fish.



Fishers put the fish in wheelbarrow and transport to the kitchen after approval from security. Fishers take data form with them and record total weight per species group (Kg) at the kitchen.



Fishers give data form to SSLM staff at the store and collect a copy of the receipt before departing.



Fishers take wheelbarrow back to supply jetty.



Storekeeper updates the landings database (Microsoft Excel file).

Programme Development

During the initial roll-out, seven fishers were enrolled on the programme, which has increased to 49 in five years. Fishers are incentivised by to fish through the programme, because they are paid a fair, stable price per kilo for their catch. The resort also introduced a bonus points scheme as further motivation for adhering to the programme's sustainability guidelines – each time a landing meets all criteria, the fisher is awarded one point. 15 points per month results in an increased price per kilo of catch.

The programme is regularly reviewed. Fishers and staff are provided with new educational tools when available, regular training the no-take lists and minimum size limits are updated in line with the best available evidence. This ensures it remains effective for the resort and the local community. Quarterly meetings are held with programme fishers to discuss progress and address concerns. The resort also sets monthly catch quotas based on seasonal needs, helping to measure success and guide future planning. The current agreed Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the programme is shown below.

COMMUNICATIONS

Any complaints?



Call SSLM Operator between 09:00 and 18:00.

PAYMENT

Fishers take a receipt to resort finance department to collect the payment via cash or bank transfer.

Note: Payment does not have to be collected straight away, some fishers opt to accrue a larger outstanding balance.

CASE STUDIES

I AMILLA MALDIVES: FISH FOR TOMORROW CHAMPION

After the successful programme pilot at Six Senses Laamu, MRR and Blue Marine decided to expand the FFT programme to other resorts across the country. In 2023, we introduced the programme at Amilla Maldives on Baa Atoll, using a four-step process:

- 1 Scoping:** The team visited the resort and nearby islands and spoke with local fishers and resort staff to assess whether the programme could work on Baa atoll.
- 2 Tailoring:** Based on feedback the team designed a customised programme suited to the local community and resort needs.
- 3 Implementation:** The team put the plan into action, training fishers and resort staff on sustainable fishing practices.
- 4 Evaluation:** Over six months, the team monitored and adjusted the programme to ensure it was working well.

Scoping and Tailoring

In August 2023, MRR and Blue Marine team visited five islands near Amilla Maldives (B. Kamadhoo, B. Kendhoo, B. Kudarikilu, B. Dhonfanu and B. Kihaadhoo) and engaged with local fishers. Many of these fishers were interested in selling their catches directly to the resort, which would give them a fairer price. The fishers felt they had limited access to the resort market, so they often had to sell their catch at low prices to middlemen, who charge the resort much higher prices – costing the resort more and limiting fishers' income.

MRR and Blue Marine team also consulted with 32 resort staff from various departments. We learnt that that resort had not sourced local reef fish for over

six months, relying instead on middleman in Malé who paid fishers three times less. This caused a loss of income for local fishers and higher costs for the resort. In response, MRR and Blue Marine designed a customised model for the FFT programme that would benefit both the fishermen and the resort.

Implementation

In December 2023, MRR and Blue Marine returned to the atoll, recruiting 48 fishers from six local islands and four fishers from the resort who could fish when supply was low. These fishers received training on sustainable fishing and the responsibilities outlined in the FFT programme. They also learnt through MRR's online platform Masmahaaveshi, completing a specialised FFT module. MRR also trained resort staff on how to follow the programme's SOP, collect data, and identify fish correctly. The resort's management provided ongoing support, helping to ensure that the programme ran smoothly.

Evaluation

After a few months of trial and adjustment, the FFT programme is now fully running at Amilla Maldives, meeting the resort's local seafood demands. In 2024, over 4,000 kg of local reef was sourced through the programme, equating to approximately 219,000 MVR in payments to local fishers. The resort recorded savings of \$12,000 USD by sourcing through the programme compared to sourcing from elsewhere. The strong buy-in of the resort management and effective communication between the resort and MRR was critical in ensuring the programme introduction was a success. This case study demonstrates that involving stakeholders from the start and designing such programmes together can create positive outcomes – for local fishers and resorts alike.

AMILLA MALDIVES: FISH FOR TOMORROW CHAMPION

LANDINGS

Purchasing Manager submits local reef fish order in viber group.



Once fishers catch fish, they inform resort in viber group that they are on their way (preferably 30 mins before).



Fisher arrives at resort jetty.



Security team at the jetty check that fisher is enrolled in programme and inform receiving team (storekeeper and purchasing team) of fisher arrival, who then meet the fisher at the jetty.



Receiving team conduct fish quality checks against the FFT protocols, including ensuring species sourced are in line with No-Take Species Guide and meet the minimum size limits. If fish do not meet these sustainability requirements, they are rejected by the resort.



Receiving team fill in data forms, recording catch data which includes size per fish and total weight per species group (Kg).



Receiving team issue delivery note to fisher as proof of delivery, signed by resort and fisher.



Receiving team transfer accepted fish to the kitchen.



Storekeeper updates the landings database (Microsoft Excel file).



PAYMENT

Storekeeper creates an invoice and a goods receiving note, with a copy of the delivery note.



Finance team deposits payment into fisher's bank account using their associated bank account number within 7 days of landing catch.

ANNEXES

I CODES OF CONDUCT



STEWARD CODE OF CONDUCT



By joining the Fish for Tomorrow Steward tier, our resort commits to improving transparency of local seafood sourcing.

We agree to:

- **Record all local seafood purchases, including fish size, species and source location.**
- **Collect and maintain local seafood sourcing data and voluntarily share data with MRR for advisory purposes.**
- **Not source nationally protected or restricted species.**
- **Adhere to national harvest and export size limits for reef fish species.**

I hereby understand and agree that our resort will abide by the 'Fish for Tomorrow Steward' Code of Conduct when sourcing local seafood.

Resort _____

General Manager _____

Signature _____ Date _____



GUARDIAN CODE OF CONDUCT



By joining the Fish for Tomorrow Guardian tier, our resort commits to improving transparency of local seafood sourcing and adopting stronger sustainability practices to limit the impact of fishing on the marine environment. We are committed to protecting reefs and ensuring healthy fish stocks.

We agree to:

- **Record all local seafood purchases, including fish size, species and source location.**
- **Collect and maintain local seafood sourcing data and voluntarily share data with MRR for advisory purposes.**
- **Not source nationally protected or restricted species, or any species on the recommended no-take species list because of their ecological importance.**
- **Only buy local seafood that meets the programme's minimum size limits, so fish can reproduce before being caught.**
- **Follow species-specific landing quotas as defined by the resort.**
- **Host guest presentations on the programme to raise awareness.**
- **Take part in Fish for Tomorrow network meetings.**

I hereby understand and agree that our resort will abide by the 'Fish for Tomorrow Guardian' Code of Conduct when sourcing local seafood.

Resort _____

General Manager _____

Signature _____ Date _____



CHAMPION CODE OF CONDUCT



By joining the Fish for Tomorrow Champion tier, our resort commits to improving transparency of local seafood sourcing and adopting stronger sustainability practices to limit the impact of fishing on the marine environment. We are committed to protecting reefs, ensuring healthy fish stocks and supporting local livelihoods.

We agree to:

- Record all local seafood purchases, including fish size, species and source location.
- Collect and maintain local seafood sourcing data and voluntarily share data with MRR for advisory purposes.
- Not source nationally protected or restricted species, or any species on the recommended no-take species list because of their ecological importance.
- Only buy local seafood that meets the programme's minimum size limits, so fish can reproduce before being caught.
- Only buy local seafood that has been caught using sustainable fishing methods (handlines, droplines and trolling). Hand collection is permitted solely for catching lobsters and *thai'kuraa vadhu* for billfish.
- Follow species-specific landing quotas as defined by the resort.
- Not purchase any local seafood that has been caught from within Protected or Conserved Areas (PCA), known fish spawning sites or resort boundaries.
- Host guest presentations on the programme to raise awareness.
- Take part in Fish for Tomorrow network meetings.
- Prioritise buying local seafood from fishers registered in the programme. Only use non-registered fishers as a back-up.
- Appoint a contact person for all communications with programme fishers.
- Keep an up-to-date list of programme fishers.
- Hold regular meetings with fishers to discuss issues and improvements.
- Share and agree on any changes to this Code with fishers.
- Display the programme's sustainability standards at the resort's purchasing point.
- Provide a fair, agreed price for local seafood.
- Pay fishers promptly (cash or bank transfer).
- Remove from the programme any fisher who repeatedly breaks the rules.
- Monitor and share programme results with fishers.

I hereby understand and agree that our resort will abide by the 'Fish for Tomorrow Guardian' Code of Conduct when sourcing local seafood.

Resort _____

Signature _____

General Manager _____

Date _____



LAAMASEELU MASVERIYAA CODE OF CONDUCT



The 'Laamaseelu Masveriyaa' Code of Conduct is a sustainable fishing guide for fishers who supply local seafood to resorts to limit the impact on the marine environment.

By joining the Fish for Tomorrow programme, fishers are committed to adopting stronger sustainability practices to limit the impact of fishing on the marine environment, protecting reefs and ensuring healthy fish stocks.

As a Fish for Tomorrow fisher supplying local seafood to resort, I agree to:

- **Only handline, dropline, and trolling methods may be used. Hand collection is permitted solely for catching lobsters and thai'kuraa vadhu for billfish.**
- **Not use nets, traps, SCUBA, or torches at night.**
- **Release all protected species and species on the no-take lists.**
- **Release juvenile fish smaller than the minimum size in MRR's Recommended Landing Sizes guide.**
- **Only target local seafood listed in MRR's Recommended Landing Sizes guide.**
- **Not fish inside Protected or Conserved Areas (PCA), known fish spawning sites or resort boundaries.**
- **Fill in the data sheet when selling fish to the resort.**
- **Prepare local seafood properly (gut, gill, scale) and follow quality requirements, as required by resort.**
- **Only deliver catch to the resort during 'seafood purchasing hours' as stipulated by the resort.**
- **Respect catch quotas for each species as defined by the resort.**
- **Attend fisher meetings and training sessions (or inform the resort if unable to attend).**
- **Report harmful or illegal fishing practices to the resort or local authorities.**
- **Report any violations of this Code by other fishers to the resort contact.**
- **Keep my contact details updated and accept programme text messages.**
- **Always deliver local seafood to the resort in person.**

By signing this Code, I agree to fish responsibly to protect reefs and ensure healthy fish stocks for the future.

Fisher Details

Name _____	National ID Number _____
Address _____	Contact Number _____
Boat Name _____	Boat Length (ft) _____
Signature _____	Date _____

RECOMMENDED SUSTAINABLE FISHING GEAR TYPES

We recommend using these fishing techniques because they carry low levels of bycatch and remove fish from the sea at a rate that allows populations to remain healthy.



Trolling

Trolling draws a single lure and hook through the surface water behind a moving boat.

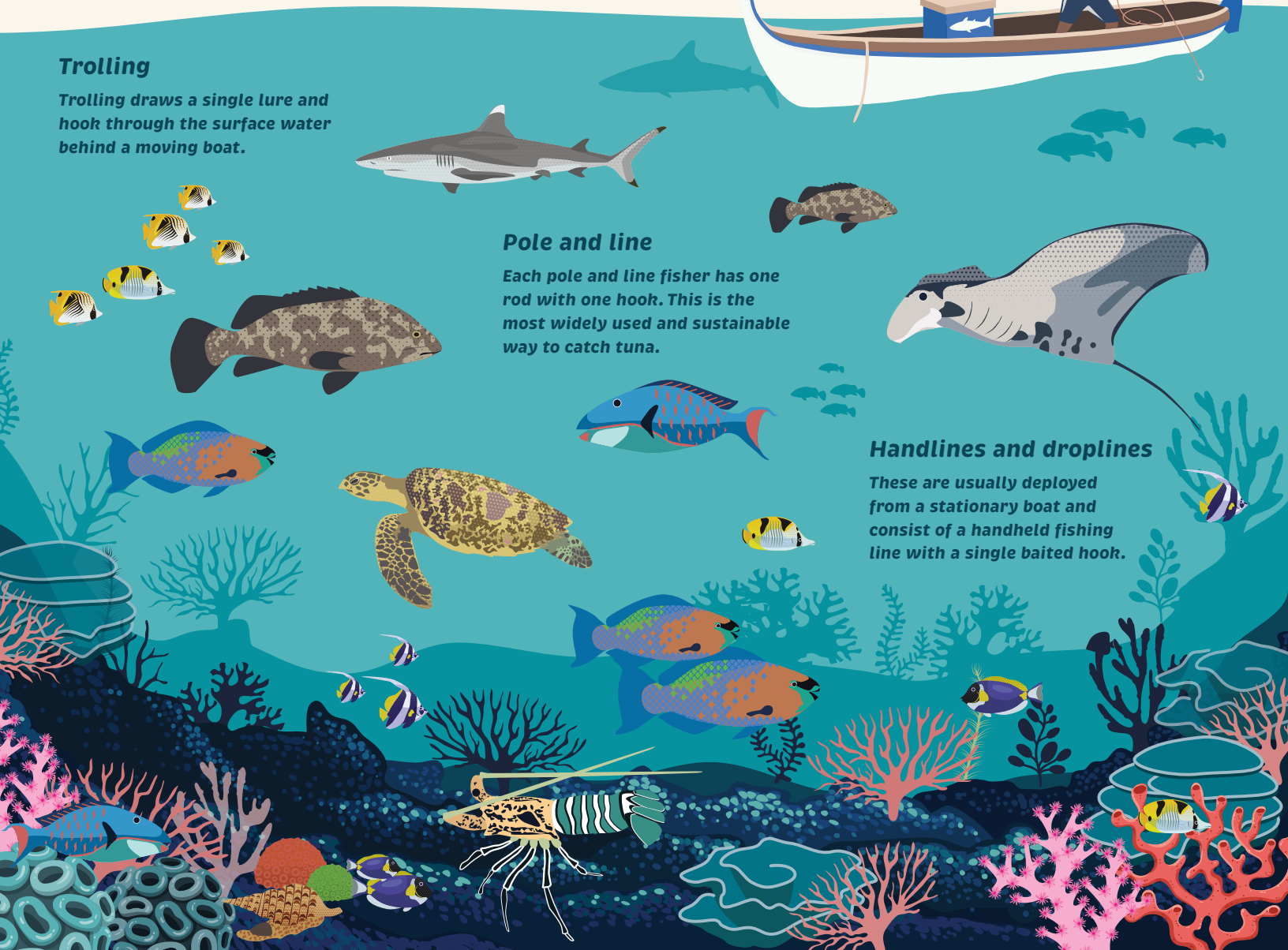


Pole and line

Each pole and line fisher has one rod with one hook. This is the most widely used and sustainable way to catch tuna.

Handlines and droplines

These are usually deployed from a stationary boat and consist of a handheld fishing line with a single baited hook.



I BANNED FISHING GEAR TYPES

We must avoid using these fishing techniques which are banned by law in the Maldives because they are harmful to fish populations and the environment.



Drones or aircraft

Drones and aircraft can locate large schools of fish very easily, allowing fishers to catch too many fish at once.

Nets

Most fishing nets have high rates of bycatch and many damage the seafloor. Fishing with nets allows fishers to catch too many fish at once.*

Automated speargun

Automated spearfishing equipment allows fishers to selectively pick off the largest and most productive individuals, which is damaging to the population.

SCUBA for groupers and lobsters

SCUBA gear allows fishers to stay in the water for a long time, reach deeper waters and select too many of the commercially valuable species.

Explosives

Blast fishing, or dynamite fishing, stuns fish and allows them to be easily collected. This technique is destructive to the reef and effects the health of all animals in the area.



The only net fishing allowed in the Maldives is for bait fishing or personal consumption.

I DESTRUCTIVE FISHING GEAR TYPES

We must try and avoid using these fishing techniques which can be harmful to fish populations and the environment.



Powerful lights

Some fishers use powerful lights to attract baitfish and tuna during the night. This damages the reef ecosystem by interrupting fish behaviour.

Bleach or other chemicals

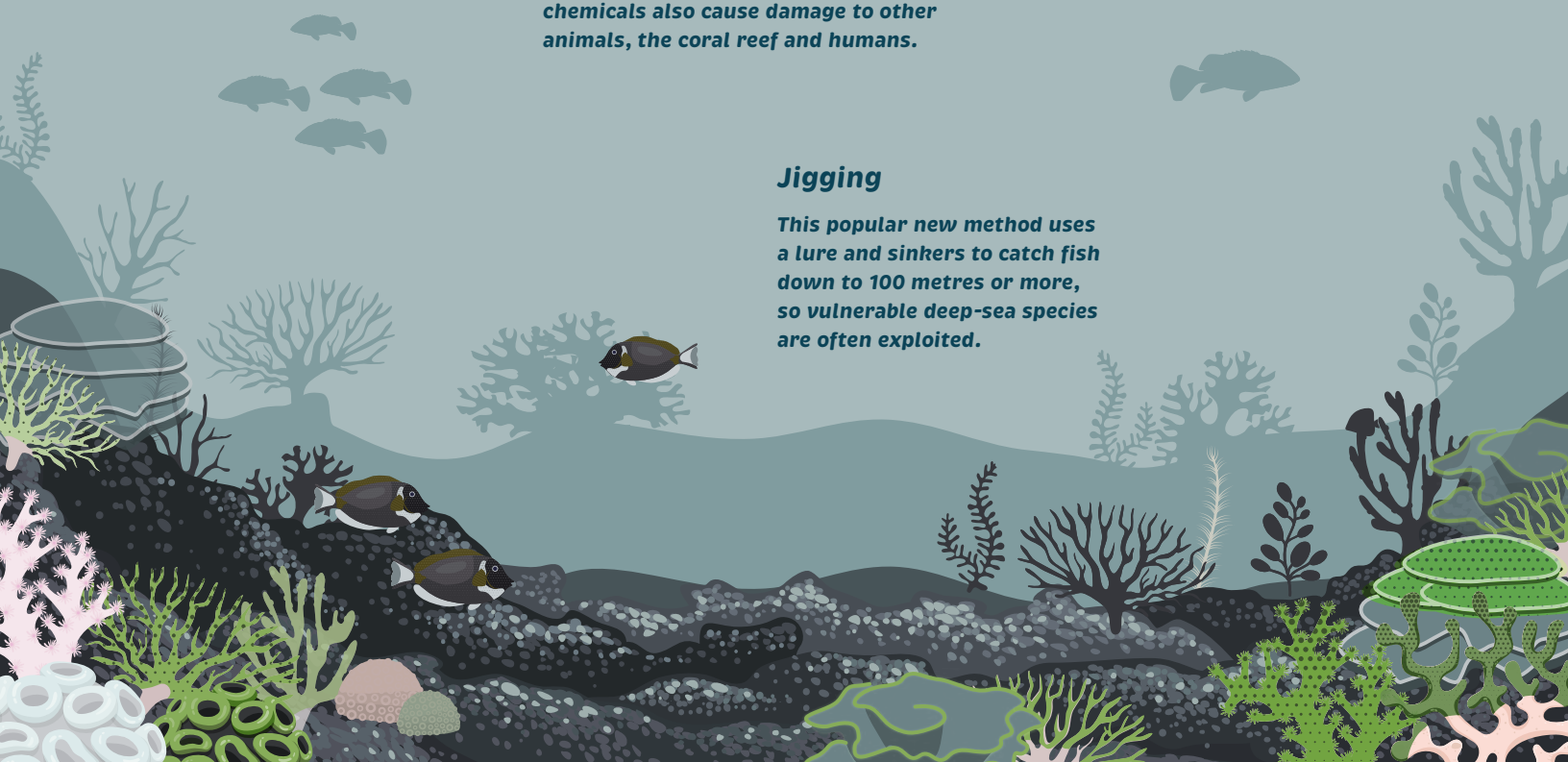
These are commonly used to flush octopus out of their burrows. Bleached burrows cannot be used by other octopus for a long time. The bleach and chemicals also cause damage to other animals, the coral reef and humans.

Longline

The use of long fishing lines with multiple baited hooks carries a high risk of bycatch. Sharks, turtles and seabirds often become entangled, and few survive, even if released.

Jigging

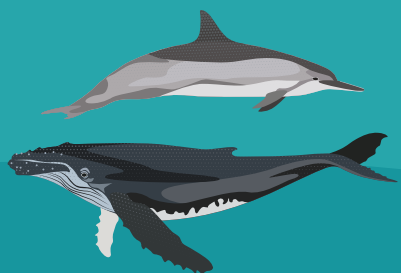
This popular new method uses a lure and sinkers to catch fish down to 100 metres or more, so vulnerable deep-sea species are often exploited.



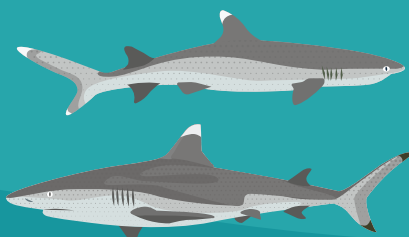
NATIONALLY PROTECTED SPECIES IN THE MALDIVES

It is prohibited to fish, collect, or harm these species in the Maldives.

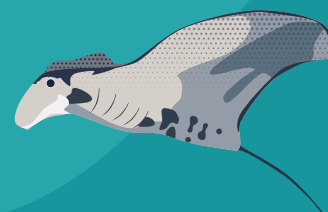
Whales and dolphins



All Sharks with the exception of Gulper Sharks



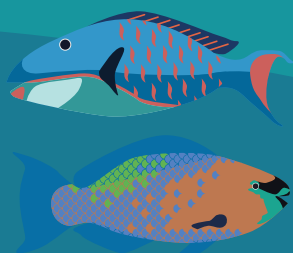
Rays



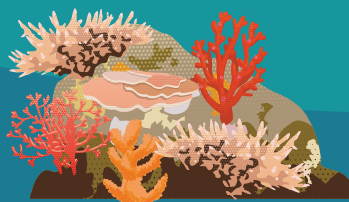
Napoleon wrasse



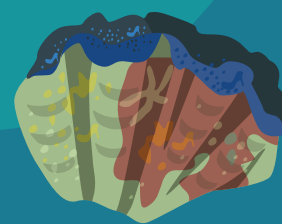
Parrotfishes



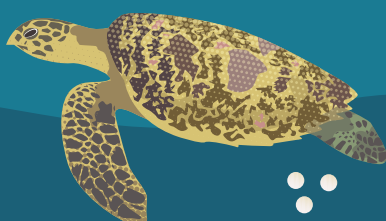
Corals (dead or alive)



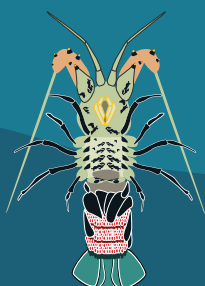
Giant clams



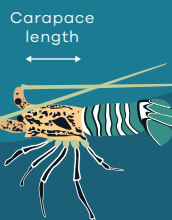
Sea turtles and their eggs



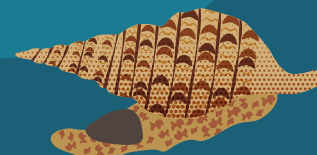
Berried (pregnant) lobsters



Lobsters with a carapace length smaller than 7.6cm



Triton conch



MALDIVES RESILIENT REEFS RECOMMENDED NO-TAKE SPECIES

KEY



Listed as 'Vulnerable'
on the IUCN Red List of
Threatened Species



Populations declining



Globally data deficient so
their population status is
not fully understood

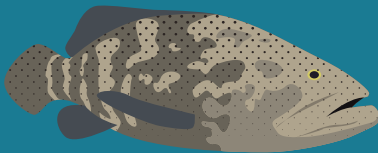


Slow-growing and
long-lived so are
easily over-exploited

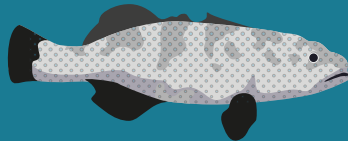


Important ecological
role

**Giant
grouper**



**Squaretail
coral grouper**



**Camouflage
grouper**



**Brown-marbled
grouper**



**Deep sea species such
as Ruby snapper**



**Indo-pacific
blue marlin**



**Surgeonfish
(all species)**



**Sweetlips
(all species)**



MALDIVES RESILIENT REEFS RECOMMENDED LANDING SIZES

We recommend that the following reef fish species are only caught above the minimum size limits indicated below. Total length is measured from the mouth to the end of the tail as shown here.



EMPERORS (LETHRINIDAE)



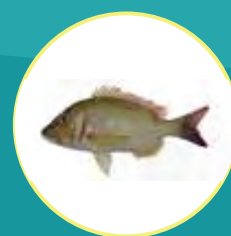
Grey Large-eye Bream
0.7ft / 20cm



Thumbprint Emperor
0.7ft / 20cm



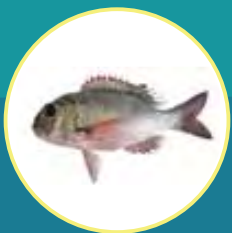
Orange-spotted Emperor
0.9ft / 25cm



Pink Ear Emperor
0.9ft / 25cm



Smalltooth Emperor
1ft / 30cm



Humpnose Big-eye Bream
1.2ft / 35cm



Sky Emperor
1.2ft / 35cm



Spangled Emperor
1.4ft / 40cm



Blue-lined Large-eye Bream
1.5ft / 45cm



Redaxil Emperor
1.5ft / 45cm



Longface Emperor
1.9ft / 55cm



Yellowlip Emperor
1.4ft / 40cm



Spotcheek Emperor
0.9ft / 25cm

We recommend that the following reef fish species are only caught above the minimum size limits indicated below. Total length is measured from the mouth to the end of the tail as shown here.



SNAPPERS (LUTJANIDAE)



Indian Snapper
0.7ft / 20cm



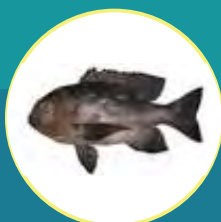
Yellow-lined Snapper
0.7ft / 20cm



Common Bluestripe Snapper
0.9ft / 25cm



Humpback Red Snapper
0.9ft / 25cm



Midnight Snapper
1.2ft / 35cm



Black and White Snapper
1.4ft / 40cm



Small Toothed Jobfish
1.4ft / 40cm



Green Jobfish
1.5ft / 45cm



Slender Pinjalo
1ft / 30cm



One-spot Snapper
1.2ft / 35cm



Two-spot Red Snapper
1.5ft / 45cm



Emperor Red Snapper
1.9ft / 55cm



Rusty Jobfish
2ft / 60cm



Mangrove Red Snapper
2ft / 60cm

We recommend that the following reef fish species are only caught above the minimum size limits indicated below. Total length is measured from the mouth to the end of the tail as shown here.



JACKS (CARANGIDAE)



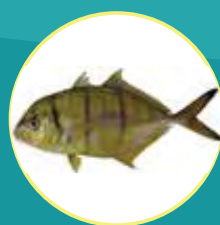
Coastal Trevally
0.9ft / 25cm



Bar Cheek Trevally
1ft / 30cm



Bluefin Trevally
1.2ft / 35cm



Golden Trevally
1.2ft / 35cm



African Pompano
2.5ft / 75cm



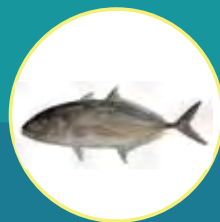
Island Trevally
1.4ft / 40cm



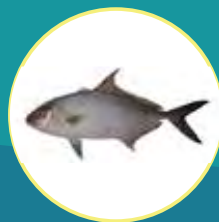
Longnose Trevally
1.4ft / 40cm



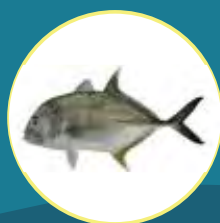
Bigeye Trevally
1.5ft / 45cm



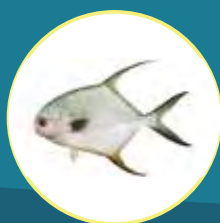
Bludger Trevally
1.7ft / 50cm



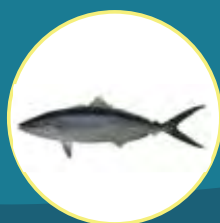
**Longfin Yellowtail /
Almaco Jack**
2.7ft / 80cm



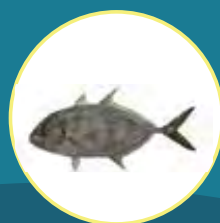
Giant Trevally
2ft / 60cm



Snubnose Pompano
2ft / 60cm



Rainbow Runner
2.2ft / 65cm



Yellowspotted Trevally
2.2ft / 65cm



Doublespotted Queenfish
2ft / 60cm



Small Spotted Dart
1.2ft / 35cm



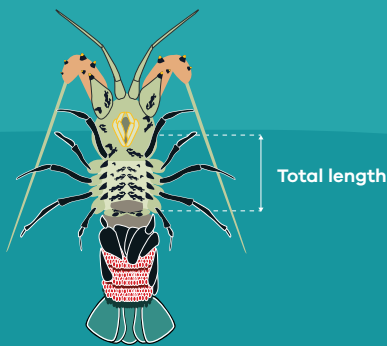
Blue Trevally
1.4ft / 40cm



**Black Trevally /
Black Jack**
1.9ft / 55cm

LOBSTER SIZE LIMITS

Maldives Resilient Reefs recommends that the following lobster species are caught above the size limits indicated below. Carapace length is measured from the eyes to the end of the carapace as shown on the left.



Japanese Spiny Lobster
7.6cm / 3 inches



Painted Spiny Lobster
7.6cm / 3 inches



Pronghorn Spiny Lobster
7.6cm / 3 inches

MACKERELS (SCOMBRIDAE)



Frigate Tuna
1ft / 30cm



Kawakawa
1.5ft / 45cm



Skipjack Tuna
1.5ft / 45cm



Wahoo
3.3ft / 100cm



Bigeye Tuna
3.8ft / 115cm



Dogtooth Tuna
4ft / 120cm



Yellowfin Tuna
3.5ft / 105cm

We recommend that the following reef fish species are only caught above the minimum size limits indicated below. Total length is measured from the mouth to the end of the tail as shown here.



DOLPHINFISH (CORYPHAENIDAE)



Common Dolphinfish / Mahi Mahi

2ft / 60cm

BARRACUDA (SPHYRAENIDAE)



Bigeye Barracuda

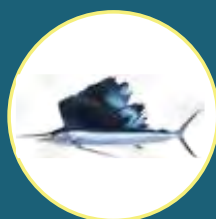
1.7ft / 50cm



Great Barracuda

2.3ft / 70cm

BILL FISH (ISTIOPHORIFORMES)



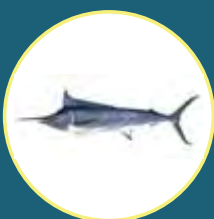
Indo-Pacific Sailfish

5.5ft / 165cm



Striped Marlin

6.9ft / 210cm



Black Marlin

7.1ft / 215cm



Swordfish

7.1ft / 215cm

We recommend that the following reef fish species are only caught above the minimum size limits indicated below. Total length is measured from the mouth to the end of the tail as shown here.



GROUPERS (SERRANIDAE)



Leopard Hind
0.5ft / 15cm



Darkfin Hind
0.7ft / 20cm



Strawberry Hind
0.7ft / 20cm



White-streaked Grouper
0.9ft / 25cm



Yellow-edged Lyretail
1.7ft / 50cm



Foursaddle Grouper
1ft / 30cm



Sixblotch Hind
1ft / 30cm



Snubnose Grouper
1ft / 30cm



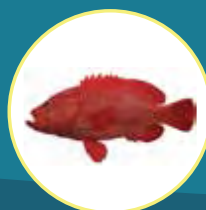
Golden Hind
1.2ft / 35cm



Blue-and-yellow Grouper
1.7ft / 50cm



Slender Grouper
1.2ft / 35cm



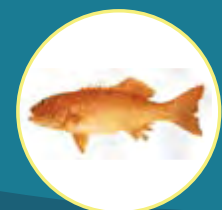
Tomato Hind
1.2ft / 35cm



White-edged Lyretail
1.2ft / 35cm



Whitespotted Grouper
1.5ft / 45cm



Roving coral grouper
2.2ft / 65cm



Blacktip Grouper
1ft / 30cm



Coral Hind
1ft / 30cm



Peacock Hind
1.2ft / 35cm



Redmouth Grouper
1.2ft / 35cm



Blacksaddled Coral Grouper
2.2ft / 65cm

HOW TO CHECK THE QUALITY OF FISH

Fish can spoil quickly if not handled properly. To serve fresh, high-quality local seafood, all fish purchased by the resort must pass a quality and hygiene check.

How to tell if a fish is fresh

Smell

Fish should smell fresh and mild, not fishy, sour, or ammonia-like.



Eyes

The eyes should be clear, shiny and bulging. Cloudy or sunken eyes mean the fish is not fresh.



Body and skin

The skin should look shiny with a natural metallic glow. It should be tight, and scales should stay firmly attached. When pressed, the flesh should bounce back quickly.

Gills

Gills should be bright pink or red, moist, and not slimy or dry.

* Tips for fishers

1

Keep fish out of direct sunlight and quickly store them in a covered box or container on the boat after catching. Fish should stay below 12° Celsius when you arrive at the resort.

2

Surround fish in ice if available and drain meltwater regularly to avoid fish sitting in warm water.

3

If the resort requires fish to be cleaned prior to landing, then bleed the fish immediately (cut the gills and let the blood drain) – this keeps flesh firm and fresh longer – and gut the fish quickly to slow down spoilage.

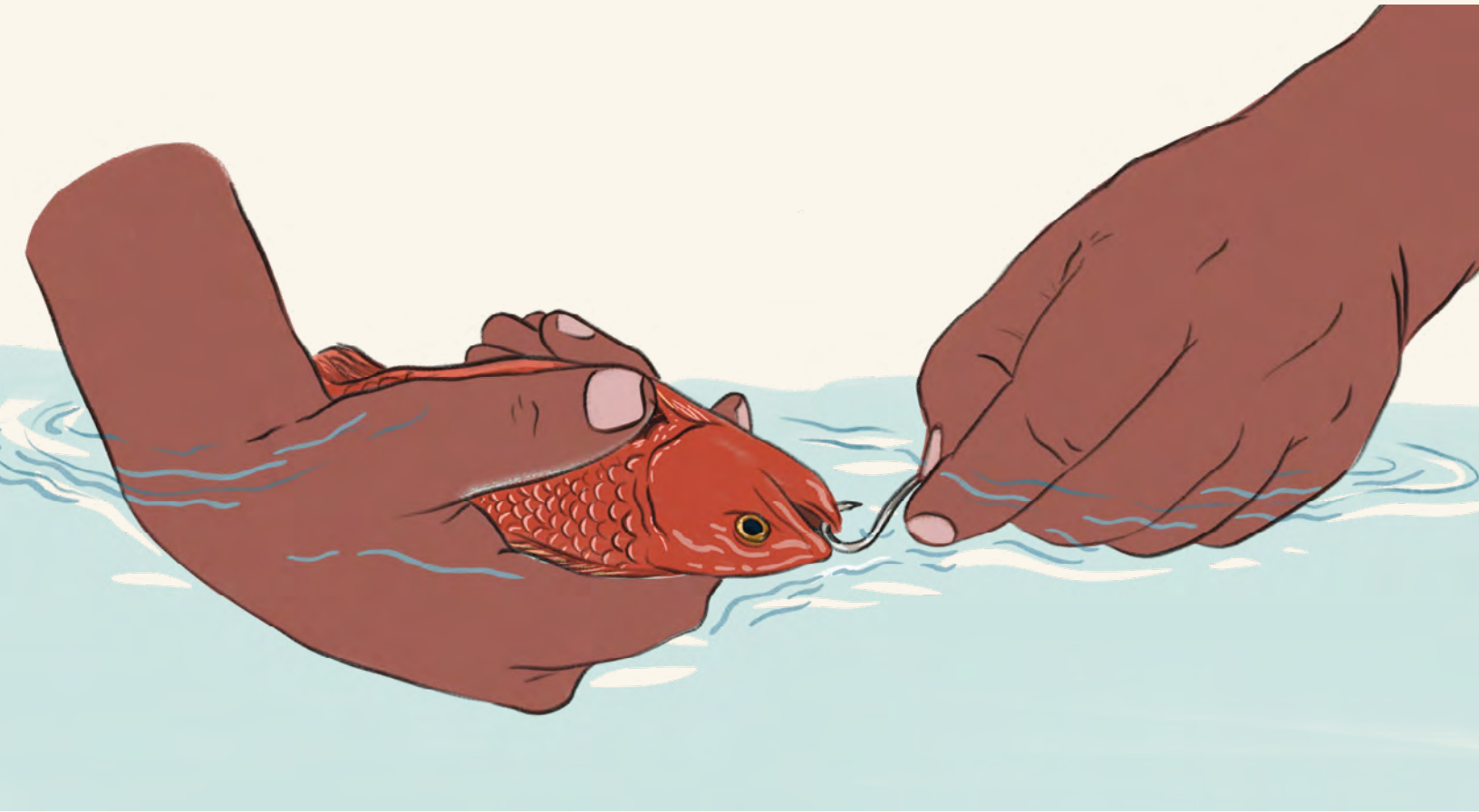
4

Deliver fish within 3 hours of catching.

5

Always wash storage boxes before use.

I HOW TO SAFELY RELEASE FISH



If a fish that is caught that is on either of the 'no take lists' (national protections or recommended by MRR) or is below the minimum size limit stated in 'MRR's Recommended Landing Sizes' guide, it must be released back into the water. This must be done safely and immediately, to minimise stress and improve the chance of survival. To do so, follow these guidelines:

- When handling the fish, wet your hands (avoid using sunblock).
- Keep the fish in the water whenever possible while removing the hook.
- Be gentle and avoid squeezing the fish to prevent damage to its internal organs.

LANDINGS DATA COLLECTION FORM



Fish Landing Sheet

މަސް ވިހާން ދަންނަވާ ފޯމު

Trip Information

ދަންނަވާ ފޯމު

Fisher name ފަރާތްގެ ނަންމު	Fisher ID ފަރާތްގެ ހައިދް	Date ދިންނަ ދުވަހު
Fishing locations މަސް ވިހާން ހިންނަ ތަން	Fishing end މަސް ވިހާން ހިންނަ ތަން	Fishing start މަސް ވިހާން ހިންނަ ތަން
Hand collection (*Lobster only) ފަރާތްގެ ނަންމު (ލޮބްސްޓަރު ހަންޑް ކޮލެކްޝަން) 	Dropline ފަރާތްގެ ނަންމު 	Handline ފަރާތްގެ ނަންމު
Other ފަރާތްގެ ނަންމު 	Thai'kuraa vadhu (*Billfish only) ފަރާތްގެ ނަންމު (ބިލްފިޝް ހަންޑް ކޮލެކްޝަން) 	Trolling ފަރާތްގެ ނަންމު
Gear used (circle) މަސް ވިހާން ހިންނަ ތަން (ކުރުމުގެ ތެރޭގައި ބަލާ) 		

Local Seafood Landings

މަސް ވިހާން ފޯމު

Weight (kg) މަސް ވިހާން ފޯމު (ކިލޯގްރާމް)	Fish Length (cm) މަސް ވިހާން ފޯމު (ސެންޓިމީޓަރު)	Species Code މަސް ވިހާން ފޯމު
Total weight މަސް ވިހާން ފޯމު		

Other Species Caught During Tip

މަސް ވިހާން ފޯމު

Comment(s) މަސް ވިހާން ފޯމު	Alive / Deceased މަސް ވިހާން ފޯމު / ފަރާތްގެ ނަންމު	Taken Home / Released މަސް ވިހާން ފޯމު / ފަރާތްގެ ނަންމު	Quantity މަސް ވިހާން ފޯމު	Species Code މަސް ވިހާން ފޯމު

I HOW TO SET PREMIUM PRICING

Setting a premium price for the sale of locally sourced seafood to fishers ensures fishers a stable, guaranteed, and equitable marketplace to sell their catch, while enabling resorts to maintain a supply of sustainably caught reef fish for their guests. Resorts should follow these guidelines to agree their purchase price prior to launching the Fish for Tomorrow programme:

- Research prices paid to fishers by other resorts or local island tourism operators on the atoll.
- Understand costs of existing local seafood sourcing practices and potential savings gained from sourcing from local fishers.
- Analyse the findings from the research to propose a price per kilo that the resort would be willing to pay fishers (price for fish versus price for lobsters will vary).
- Conduct a survey with local fishers interested in signing up to the programme to understand their level of satisfaction with the proposed purchase price.
- Conducting a 'willingness to pay' survey may also be useful for resorts who want to understand how much guests are willing to pay for sustainably caught seafood, which may inform the programme's premium pricing model.
- Adjust as appropriate following analysis of the survey results.



MRR can support these activities through long-term partnership agreements.

I HOW TO ONBOARD A NEW FISHER

When a new fisher is interested in joining the Fish for Tomorrow programme, please action the following steps for enrolment:

- Call and confirm a time when the fisher can come to the resort to go through the code of conduct (CoC). Request that the fisher brings their National ID card with them.
- Identify a suitable location on the resort to go through the CoC with the fisher e.g., the supply jetty.
- Print two copies of the CoC and request a Maldivian team member to talk the fisher through the CoC in Dhivehi, highlighting the following:
 - No-take species
 - Fish landings size requirements
 - Avoidance of Protected or Conserved Areas (PCA) or known fish spawning sites
 - Times that the resort accepts local seafood
 - Local seafood freshness requirements
 - Fisher can only bring fish once they have been registered on resort system
- Ensure the fisher signs every page of the CoC, indicating they understand everything.
- The resort's General Manager is also required to sign both copies of the CoC.
- Give one hard copy of the CoC to the fisher and store a second hard copy somewhere safe on the resort.
- Scan a copy of one of the signed CoC's and share with Maldives Resilient Reefs (MRR) via email (contact@maldivesresilientreefs.com) for their records.
- Record the following information and log in the fisher profiles document:
 - Name of fisher
 - A Photograph of the fisher (head & shoulders shot, no cap or sunglasses)
 - National ID card number
 - Bank account details (when and if the fisher wants payments to account)
 - Contact number
 - Address
 - Island
 - Date joined
 - Boat name, size and ownership
- Request the fisher to complete 'The Fish for Tomorrow Programme' module on MRR's Masmahaaveshi e-learning portal and provide evidence that they have achieved a score of 10 out of 10 on the knowledge quiz.
- Email the relevant resort teams to inform them of the new fisher's details (e.g., Purchasing, Store, Security, Finance).
- Add the fisher's contact details to the SMS and complaint log sheet.
- Add the fisher to the Viber group or inform the resort's telephone operator of the new fisher's details and request them to issue a welcome email.

HOW TO HOST A FISHER MEETING

Holding regular meetings with fishers helps manage the FFT programme better and helps build strong relationships with fishers. Below are best practice guidelines for conducting successful Fish for Tomorrow programme fisher meetings:

Before the meeting:

- **Frequency:** Hold meetings every few months, like quarterly or twice a year.
- **Location:** Because fishers come from different islands, it's best to hold the meeting at the resort. Alternatively, some meetings can be held on the islands where most fishers live to make it more convenient for them. The meeting should ideally take place in a shaded area with good airflow or in an air-conditioned room to keep everyone comfortable.
- **Timing:** Where possible schedule the meeting on a Friday as fishers usually don't go fishing on Fridays. Meeting should be arranged after Friday prayer and lunch, mindful of resort and Maldives time differences. Respect prayer times by including breaks if the meeting runs into afternoon or evening prayer and ensure there is a space nearby for them to pray.
- **Notification and confirmation:** The resort's FFT programme focal person, along with relevant staff from the kitchen, purchasing, and security teams, should attend the meeting. Confirm their availability for the planned date and time. Then, send a message to fishers two weeks beforehand to confirm the meeting date and time. Closer to the meeting, call fishers again to confirm who will attend.
- **Transport:** Arrange transport for fishers from their islands to the resort and inform them of the travel details.
- **Meeting content:** Create a presentation with updates since the last meeting and have the presentation translated into Dhivehi. Presentation should include:

- Top species and total weight landed, and fished locations
- Fishers of the quarter/year
- Action points from the previous meeting
- Any new changes to the programme
- Discussion about any changes/ concerns from both the resort and fishers.

During the meeting:

- **Arrival:** When fishers arrive at the island, someone should greet them at the jetty and accompany them to the meeting space. They should also be briefed on any important logistics, like resort rules, the location of toilets, and prayer rooms.
- **Refreshments:** Organise snacks and drinks for a break during the meeting.
- **Discussions:** Make sure there's plenty of time for open fishers to share their opinions and feedback. To ensure everyone gets a chance, especially if some fishers talk more, actively invite quieter fishers to share their thoughts. For small groups, you can give each fisher a set time (like one minute) to speak.
- **Minutes:** Assign a team member who speaks Dhivehi to record what's discussed, including and any issues/ concerns raised.

After the meeting:

- **Share meeting minutes:** Share the minutes with MRR and resort management and send a Dhivehi version to all fishers via the Viber group. This helps keep everyone on the same page and support ongoing communication.
- **Follow-up:** If there are any action points from the meeting, arrange meetings with the appropriate people to discuss them. Also, review and discuss previous action points at the next fisher meeting to ensure everything is on track.

FISH FOR TOMORROW PROGRAMME HANDBOOK

**“FOR A MORE SUSTAINABLE
RESORT REEF FISHERY”**



MRR works to nurture a future where Maldivians benefit from protecting marine ecosystems and managing ocean resources.

Blue Marine Foundation is marine conservation charity with a mission to protect 30% of the ocean by 2030.



MALDIVES
**Resilient
Reefs**



**BLUE
MARINE**
FOUNDATION