



COUNCIL

Hundred and Seventy-first Session

Rome, 5-9 December 2022

Margarita Lizárraga Medal

Executive summary

The Margarita Lizárraga Medal is awarded biennially to a person or organization that has served with distinction in the application of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (the Code) by the Director-General upon proposal by the Council. The Selection Committee for the Margarita Lizárraga Medal 2022-2023, held on 6 September 2022, unanimously agreed that the Award be given to Dr Meryl J. Williams, Gender in Aquaculture and Fisheries (GAF), in Malaysia.

Suggested action by the Council

The Council is invited to endorse the nomination of Dr Meryl J. Williams and recommended that the Medal be presented by the Director-General at an awarding ceremony to be held before 31 December 2023.

Queries on the substantive content of this document may be addressed to:

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1. At its 29th Session in November 1997, the FAO Conference, by Resolution 18/97, instituted the Margarita Lizárraga Medal. The Medal is awarded biennially by the Director-General, upon a proposal of the Council, to a person or organization that has served with distinction in the application of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (the Code). The Medal pays tribute to the late Dr Margarita Saucedo Lizárraga, Senior FAO Fishery Liaison Officer, for her decisive role in promoting the Code, for her work in the field of fisheries for almost forty years, and for her strong commitment to fostering the promotion of the fisheries sector, especially in developing countries.
2. The Selection Committee for the award, composed of the Director, Fisheries and Aquaculture Division, and the Bureau of the 35th Session of the Committee on Fisheries, was held on 6 September 2022. The meeting was chaired by the Deputy Director-General, representing the Director-General.
3. The Selection Committee reviewed the three nominations for the 2022-2023 biennium, proposed by the ad hoc Screening Committee, taking into consideration that the nominee must have demonstrated:
 - an outstanding, practical and hands-on contribution to the application of the Code;
 - tangible output;
 - results achieved were a sustained effort and not a one-off initiative; and
 - results achieved have the potential for a snowball/catalytic effect.
4. The Committee unanimously agreed that the 2022-2023 Award be given to Dr Meryl J. Williams, Gender in Aquaculture and Fisheries (GAF), in Malaysia.
5. Dr Williams is a globally renowned and well-respected scientist, with over forty years of recognized leadership in the field of fisheries and socio-economics. Her great dedication to issues of gender and her strong commitment to fostering the promotion of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, especially in developing countries, reflect her active and tangible role in promoting the Code. She is an author of over 90 well-recognized publications covering a range of topics, including gender studies, public policy analysis, political ecology and food security. She is a tireless, substantive and globally well-respected advocate for matters of gender, globalization and development in the fisheries and aquaculture arena, sharing science-based knowledge and experiences on the ground, in academic dialogues, and in local and global fora. Her inspirational leadership and mentorship – both first-hand and through the various platforms she has created – are heralding a new generation of leaders in gender in fisheries and aquaculture firmly on the global fisheries and aquaculture and development agenda. Therefore, the selection of Dr Williams as a recipient of the Margarita Lizárraga Medal would send a strong signal that FAO is genuinely committed to supporting women in fisheries and aquaculture to have a greater voice and strengthened role as recognized drivers of transformative change as called for in the Code.