



Rules of the road at sea for small-scale fishers



©Fish Safety Foundation

This course introduces you to the maritime traffic rules that small-scale fishers in coastal and inland waters should know about. It provides guidance on actions to take in day-to-day traffic situations at sea, during daylight and at night.

Working in the fisheries sector is globally one of the most dangerous jobs, with an estimated 32 thousand fatalities annually and hundreds of thousands of accidents and injuries of crew on board of fishing vessels. Most of these accidents happen on board of small-scale fishing vessels, frequently resulting in disability and death among fishers. Increasing knowledge and understanding of the maritime traffic rules will help to reduce accidents. Application of the maritime traffic rules is an important safety measure at sea.



2 hours



Available in English

You will learn about

- The International Maritime Organization (IMO), International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREGs) and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Labour Organization (ILO) /IMO fishing safety codes.
- The right of way in normal visibility and restricted visibility situations.
- Actions to be taken for altering course and passing at a safe distance.
- How to avoid collision at sea.
- Day-time and night-time vessel recognition.
- Channel markers used in various regions and the main buoys.

Digital badge



Who is the course for?

This e-learning course is primarily aimed at small-scale fishers with vessels that are smaller than 12 metres in length in developing countries. The course is also of use to maritime-, safety- and fisheries authorities, as well as fisherfolk organizations, in their training programmes for fishers on safety at sea.

Key partners

This course was developed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in collaboration with the Fish Safety Foundation (FSF).

FAO elearning Academy



This course is available through the FAO elearning Academy.

Please visit the Academy and browse our extensive catalogue in multiple languages. Register once to access over 180 titles.

All courses are available as a global public good for free.

How to access the course

1. Go to the e-learning Academy: elearning.fao.org
2. Register and log-in with your user name and password



©FAO, 2022
CC2453EN/1/10.22

[😊] Registration is fast and easy