



**GIEI**



**PRESS RELEASE BY SMALL-SCALE FISHING PROFESSIONALS  
ON THE OCCASION OF WORLD OCEANS DAY**

Today, **08 June**, we are celebrating World Oceans Day. The theme for this year is “**Innovation for a Sustainable Ocean**”.

In Senegal, we, unfortunately, will be marking the day amid controversies, tensions, and concerns over requests for fishing licences filed by 56 foreign fishing vessels.

The vessel owners took advantage of the Coronavirus pandemic to file their requests for fishing licences at a time when fishermen, wholesale fish traders, fish processors and users of the ocean are grappling with the challenges inherent in COVID-19.

Even so, as fishing professionals, we still believe that these fishing licences will destroy the fishery resources left us by our ancestors, which we must safeguard for our children.

It is in these challenging circumstances for the fishery industry that we are marking this year’s World Oceans Day. The sector’s professional organisations, assisted by their partners and the civil society, will distribute masks on fishing wharfs and on small-scale processing sites to contribute to the resilience of fishing communities dealing with COVID-19.

This donation of masks is a symbolic gesture and gives us the opportunity to send the competent authorities a message from the brave men and women of the fisheries sector

To return to the theme of this celebration in Senegal, innovation means fighting against (i) the wholesale granting of fishing licences to fishing vessels and (ii) the negative impacts the licences will undoubtedly have on fishery resources, the national economy, jobs, communities and food security.

Our message focuses on four (4) points consistent with the chosen theme:

- 1. It is necessary to Innovate** for a sustainable ocean by **publishing the list of industrial vessels** authorised to fish in Senegal;
- 2. It is necessary to Innovate** for a sustainable ocean by **complying with the regulations in force** (the fishing code, the merchant shipping code, the sector policy letter for the development of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture);
- 3. It is necessary to Innovate** for a sustainable ocean by following through on the Head of State’s public commitment to a transparent governance and **to making Senegal a member of the Fisheries Transparency Initiative (FiTI)**;
- 4. It is necessary to Innovate** for a sustainable ocean by **protecting our oceans and safeguarding fishing trades** to ensure **food security for fishing communities and the people of Senegal**.