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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Collaborate to provide pro bono legal advice to small-scale fisheries in Africa and Asia

## Overview

The Fisheries Law Centre (FLC) is pleased to announce it will coordinate with Sidley Austin LLP to facilitate the provision of pro bono legal services in the area of small-scale fisheries (SSFs) in Africa and Asia. Sidley Austin launched the Africa-Asia Agricultural Enterprise Program in 2012 to offer free legal assistance to small- and medium-sized agriculture-and aquaculture-related enterprises and smaller development NGOs in Africa and Asia, specifically enterprises that benefit poor farmers and fisherfolk.

This coordination will help FLC to improve empowerment and access to justice for SSFs, in accordance with the Voluntary Guidelines for Security of Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. SSFs comprise roughly 90% of all fishers around the world, and are often largely composed of family fishers. However, SSFs are frequently correlated with extreme poverty, and relegation to the periphery of governmental decision-making, as they lack the education, financing, and capacity to meaningfully participate.

One of FLC's primary goals is to facilitate legal representation to underprivileged SSFs. As such, FLC intends to focus its efforts on enabling access to legal services for small-scale fisheries, and on liaising between Sidley and potential beneficiaries of the Africa-Asia Agricultural Enterprise Program. Beneficiaries will receive advice on issues ranging from establishing new seafood plants or developing new cooperatives or corporations to financing, intellectual property, and international trade matters.

FLC looks forward to the further development and implementation of its partnership with Sidley, to countering marginalization of SSFs, and simultaneously enabling their access to justice.

For further information please contact Naazia Ebrahim, Partnerships Coordinator, at <a href="mailto:naazia@fishlaw.org">naazia@fishlaw.org</a>.

## Organizational Profile

**Sidley Austin LLP** is a global law firm committed to providing excellent client service, fostering a culture of cooperation and mutual respect, and creating opportunities for lawyers of all backgrounds. With more than 1,800 lawyers in 19 offices around the world, talent and teamwork are central to Sidley's successful results for clients in all types of legal matters, from complex transactions to "bet the company" litigation to cutting-edge regulatory issues.

The Fisheries Law Centre is a not-for-profit research centre in Vancouver, Canada. The centre has three mandates: to conduct research in the field of fisheries, aquaculture and seafood laws and regulations; to build capacity by educating law students, lawyers, and other stakeholders in the area of fisheries law; and to facilitate legal representation to under privileged small-scale fishers and NGOs wherever possible.

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