



A Civil Society Newsletter for 4SSF

## What's on Today

### Civil Society Preparatory Workshop

- Gender perspective on rights
- Key positions of co-ordinating groups
- Theme 1: Panel and group discussion, "Securing sustainable resource use and access rights"

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## Our Fish! Our Right!

*Civil Society Preparatory Workshop: Bangkok, 11 to 13 October 2008*

The Civil Society Workshop is being organized to prepare for 4SSF—the “Global Conference on Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries: Bringing Together Responsible Fisheries and Social Development”. Fishworker organizations and small-scale fisheries NGOs would like to see very specific outcomes from 4SSF. They would particularly like to see the widespread adoption of policies that promote the wellbeing of communities and sustain fisheries resources.

The workshop has the following objectives:

- To discuss and arrive at acceptable positions on how to engage with the three main conference themes: securing sustainable resource use and access rights, securing post-harvest benefits and securing social, economic and human rights;
- To decide on strategy for engaging with the conference, to ensure that fishworker/fishing community issues are well reflected in all discussions and in the conference report;
- To provide a forum to discuss women in fisheries related issues; and
- To generate wider support for campaigns against the abuse of rights of fishworkers and coastal communities.

The preparatory workshop is a joint initiative of the World Forum of Fisher Peoples (WFFP), the Sustainable Development Foundation (SDF), the Federation of Southern Fisherfolk (FSF), the International NGO/CSO Planning Committee (IPC) and the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF).

More details on the preparatory workshop are available at: <http://sites.google.com/site/smallscalefisheries> ★

“A rights-based approach should legally and formally recognize the rights of small-scale fishing communities to practise their livelihood.”

- Hahn Goliath, Coastal Links,  
South Africa

## Engendering Rights

*Developing a gender-just approach to rights in small-scale fisheries by Jackie Sunde, Masifundise Development Trust*

The FAO Conference aims to begin a process of developing an approach to small-scale fisheries management that brings together perspectives on responsible fisheries with the social development needs and rights of fishing communities. Such a perspective needs to resonate with the notions of rights expressed by local communities. Ensuring that such an approach to fisheries management is **gender-just** is extremely challenging as, in many contexts, the rights of women are not recognized as being integral to the concept of 'fishing rights'. Indeed, the concept of 'rights' has been used in many different ways, with a variety of meanings. The task ahead for us in the Civil Society Pre-Conference Workshop is to interrogate these notions of rights as we navigate the contours of the three themes of the Conference, and to ensure that they are reflective of the rights, interests and needs of men and women living in small-scale fishing communities.

Women play various key roles in the small-scale fisheries sector. However, much of the work that women do goes unrecognized or is hidden. Women are involved in nurturing, reproductive work, caring for their families and assisting their male partners prior to harvesting as well as in many post-harvesting activities such as cleaning and processing fish, vending and assisting with other marketing related administrative tasks.

In many communities there is a clear division of labour between the tasks women perform, and those of men. In many societies, systems of commonly recognized rights to harvest marine and inland resources have evolved; however, these have tended to recognize men as 'rights holders' with the entitlements to access and use certain natural resources. Women normally get access to these resources via their male partners but are not considered 'rights holders' in their own right. Linked to this, women are often not included in decision-making about natural resources as this is considered to be a male domain and a responsibility that flows from their rights to resources.

In moving towards developing a more structured system of access to marine and coastal resources, which aims to introduce measures to secure the sustainable use of these resources, fisheries managers in many parts of the world are looking towards introducing formal systems of rights allocations.

In some contexts these new systems attempt to integrate existing community-based understandings of access and use rights, whilst in other contexts new approaches to rights allocations based on individual, privatized rights have been introduced. In both contexts, however, fisheries managers and male leaders often ignore the interests of women and their right to secure equal access to and use of these fisheries resources.

Any approach to 'rights-based management' from a responsible, sustainable fisheries approach needs to integrate the universally recognized rights of women, as inalienable human rights. Several international instruments provide guidance on the nature of these rights that require protection. They include the following: freedom from discrimination at home and in the workplace, freedom from sexual harassment and violence, the right of rural women to participate in decision-making processes, to enjoy adequate living and working conditions, to benefit from social security and to access loans and credit.

In the context of this workshop, these rights mean that we need to be mindful of the need to ensure that women secure equal rights to access and use natural resources. In addition, approaches to the management of these resources need to ensure that women participate equally in decision-making about these resources. States should be urged to adopt particular measures that remove obstacles to women enjoying these rights and that will create an enabling environment for women, such as the provision of targeted post-harvest, processing and marketing policy support.

Most critically, we need to recognize the indivisibility of **all** human rights from any approach to fishing rights and fisheries management. We need to fight for the recognition, not only of these rights, but for the necessary capacity-building and support for women fishworkers and for organizations working with fishing communities so that men and women can be empowered to realize these rights. ★



## Naseegh Jaffer,

WFFP Co-ordinator, talks to *Daily Rights*

### **How significant is the Global Conference for WFFP?**

WFFP is going through a crucial process of both rebuilding the organization and extending and consolidating community structures and linkages on the ground. A forum like this to discuss fisheries issues internationally among both government officials and fishers, is an important part of that process. The conference has great value for fishing communities as it provides a platform to come together and share thoughts and ideas.

### **What are WFFP's expectations from the workshop and the conference?**

We are looking for a greater unity among small-scale fishing communities globally. We are not optimistic that there will be a single global position, but I certainly expect us to develop a common position or common perspective with respect to what rights-based fisheries mean for communities. I'm also looking for a greater sensitivity from governments and FAO itself to the position and views of fishing communities. Although this is not a decision-making forum, if we can get a sensitivity now at this level of interaction, I believe there would be a greater readiness in the future when decisions and resolutions are going to be made. The conference must be regarded as an important moment in the life of small-scale fishers in developing a global position.

### **What is WFFP's perception of rights?**

Our position is that rights-based fisheries should encompass every aspect and every process, from the point of harvesting to the point of consumption. Fishers should have the right to be a part of, and draw benefit from, all the processes in between. A rights-based fishery is not a commodity; it's not an item you can trade with. It's a basic human right. I would want to argue that within that, the tendency to isolate the different components and say that small-scale fishery harvesting alone is in the interest of small-scale fishers, would be shortsighted. We need to take a much broader approach to it.

WFFP has put in a lot of effort in preparing for this conference; we've had numerous workshops in various countries or sub-regions leading up to this moment. We are ready! ★

## **Fishers' rights=Human rights!**

*South Africa's Cape High Court rules in favour of small-scale fishers*

A recent Court Ruling in South Africa has upheld traditional small-scale fishers' rights to access fisheries resources for their livelihoods. These fishers have struggled for the past eight years to ensure that their rights were recognized. In 2007 they were finally successful in obtaining an Equality Court Order that obliged the Minister responsible for fisheries to begin a new policy process that would accommodate the social and economic rights to these fishers.

The order also made provision for a small group of 1000 fishers to be given access to the sea through an 'interim relief' measure whilst this policy is being developed. In response to this the West Coast Rock Lobster Association (WCRLA), representing large commercial interests, launched court action against the Minister and the fishers on the grounds that the Minister did not have the authority to grant the fishers this access to resources, that it was environmentally unsustainable and would weaken the value of their rights.

On the 7 October 2008, Judge Dennis Davis of the Cape High Court, South Africa dismissed an application by the WCRLA to stop the Minister from issuing this interim relief. In his judgment Judge Davis ruled that the Minister acted within the powers given to him by the Marine Living Resources Act (1998) in granting the exemptions. He also ruled that the Minister had weighed up several complex issues in taking his decision and that there is no evidence that he acted unreasonably or arbitrarily. The Judge also confirmed that the Minister was confronted with the order of the Equality Court and could not simply ignore it.

The court ruling was welcomed by traditional fisher organizations that supported the Ministers' actions. Naseegh Jaffer, Director of Masifundise Development Trust said: "this is a great victory in the struggle of poor fishers to put food on the table". "This is a clear vindication that the current fishing policies are faulty and should be reviewed urgently," he said. Jaffer called on the fishing industry to desist from their efforts to prevent poor fishing communities from making an honest living from marine resources. "Fishing companies cannot have the monopoly of natural resources—these must be equitably and sustainably shared amongst all who depend on them," he said. ★



## FYI

**Currency:** Thailand's official unit of currency is the Thai Baht (THB). As on 2nd October, US\$1 = 34 THB or 1 Euro = 47 THB

**Telephone:** Country code +66, Area code 089

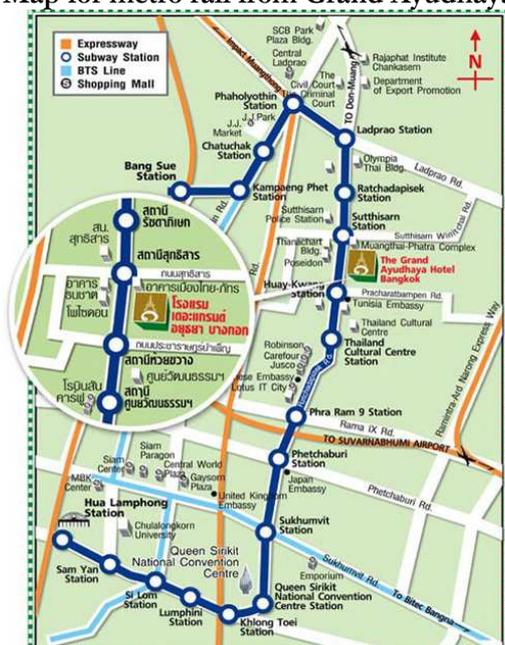
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**Internet facilities:** Contact reception for wireless access, internet cafes are also available within ten minutes from the hotel.

**Medical assistance:** Available at 5th floor of Ayudhaya Hotel, from 10am-6pm. In case of emergency, contact reception.

**Transportation:** Sutthisam Station is the nearest subway to the Grand Ayudhaya hotel, located five minutes away.

**Map for metro rail from Grand Ayudhaya**



## Language Matters!

*Human Rights*

- droits de l'homme (French)
- Derechos Humanos (Spanish)
- Direitos humanos (Portuguese)
- Van Menseregte (Afrikaans)
- Hak-Hak Asasi Manusia (Bahasa)
- Hominis Iurium (Latin)
- Mana O Te Tangata (Maori)
- Haki Za Binadamu (Swahili)
- karapatang pantao (Filipino: Tagalog)
- Olmmošvuoigat (Sami)

สิทธิมนุษยชน

Sittimanutsayachon  
(Thai)

## Wai

(Traditional Thai greeting)

- *Sawadee Krup* (male speaker) / *Sawadee Kaa* (female speaker) – Hello
- *Kop Koon* (*Krup/kaa*) – Thank you
- *Phoot Thai mai dai* – I can not speak Thai
- *Dtaawan raap* – Welcome
- *Tong karn mor ma raksa* – I need a doctor
- *Rong-raem* – Hotel
- *Nee tao-rai* – How much does it cost?
- *Kor thoad* - Sorry

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<http://sites.google.com/site/smallscalefisheries>

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A Civil Society Newsletter for 4SSF

## Sunday, 12 October

### Civil Society Preparatory Workshop

- Theme 1 reporting: Access rights
- Theme 2: Panel and group discussion: "Securing post-harvest benefits"
- Theme 3: Panel and group discussion, "Securing social, economic and human rights"
- Strategy session

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## Pitch for the small

By Sebastian Mathew, ICSF

Speaking first on the panel discussion on *Securing sustainable resource use and access rights*, Samaair Jeamoudor from Thailand highlighted problems caused by large-scale destructive fishing: it destroyed the resource base and reduced marine biodiversity. He expressed concern about coastal development projects leading to the dislocation of coastal communities. "It is important to develop own initiatives—community-based initiatives—to conserve fisheries resources", he said, and sought greater recognition of rights to participate, including that of women and indigenous communities, in decision-making processes for sustainable fisheries.

Andrew Johnston from South Africa was in agreement with Samaair that participatory decision-making processes should be developed. He stressed the importance of fishers speaking for themselves rather than being represented by others. Such an approach, he said, would not put fishers and fishing communities at the receiving end of bad policies. He had several worries. He was concerned about the destructive fishing operations of distant water fishing vessels in Africa, about mangrove decimation and environmental degradation, indiscriminate development of tourism, and mariculture operations. "Whilst distant water fishing vessels take away fish from us, mariculture operations take the sea away from us", he deplored. Governments should not be biased in favour of scientific knowledge, he argued, and highlighted the importance of reckoning traditional knowledge of fishers and fishing communities by government policymakers. He further deplored individual transferable quotas (ITQs) and castigated them as a "curse for the poor".

Harekrishna Debnath from India found common problems being discussed from different parts of the world. He said it was important to fight factors that made fisheries unsustainable. He identified industrial fishing vessels employing destructive fishing gear and practices as the main culprit. Marine and inland pollution from shipping, dumping of chemicals and nuclear waste into the marine space were also identified as threats to the wellbeing of coastal fishing communities and to the sustainability of fishery resources.

"Economic liberalization in coastal developing States has led to coastal areas becoming hot destination for polluting industries, chemical warehouses and for establishing special economic zones", he said, and added, "lagoons are being reclaimed for housing and real estate projects". Fishers are being displaced, and fishing vessels are increasingly finding it difficult to find berthing space, he complained.

(Contd. pg.2)

“Fishing communities will vanish if we do not reverse these developments”, Debnath said. He proposed proscription of destructive industrial fishing and protection of traditional customary rights. He wanted livelihood-based fishing to be treated preferentially and capacity reduction programmes to be introduced from the industrial-end of fishing. Conservation and management of fishery resources should not victimize small-scale fishers, he said. He recognized the importance of social safety nets for fishing communities. He further proposed the need for legislation to grant entitlements to traditional fishing communities to coastal land and coastal water-bodies. He wanted fishers to collectively raise their voice and be heard.

Cosme Caracciolo from Chile drew attention to the current financial crisis gripping the world economy and was critical of any economic model that was based on speculation. He picked out ITQ-based fisheries management system as one such model and was of the view that such a model that made fishing rights a commodity, based on speculation would eventually lead to overfishing. The current crisis gives artisanal fishing the chance to show it is the only viable option.

Aristide Jean Claude Yoyotte from Guadeloupe agreed with previous speakers on threats facing small-scale fisheries. He said even in his tiny island artisanal fishers are facing several problems. Recreational programmes such as whale-watching, and creation of marine protected areas, have denied artisanal fishers access to their traditional fishing grounds, he said. He highlighted the importance of having a vision for the rational long-term development of artisanal fisheries. He also wanted coastal States to uphold all international commitments to legal instruments of relevance to marine fisheries.

The meeting was chaired by Sherry Mae Pictou from Canada. She gave a brief summary of the main points that came up in the panel discussion. “Small-scale fishing that support livelihoods, but not large-scale fishing—this is the main message emerging from the panel discussion”, Pictou concluded.

## Gender Monitor

By Nalini Nayak

“It was great that we started off the Civil Society Preparatory Workshop with the session on gender perspectives, which otherwise comes at the tail end,” commented one participant at the end of the morning session yesterday. Yes, there was a wide spectrum of issues raised that related to asserting rights and valorizing the contribution of women in sustaining coastal fisheries and coastal livelihoods.

The chairperson of the session clarified that the title: “Developing a gender perspective on rights issues in small-scale fisheries”, did not relate to women alone but to how the artisanal fisheries itself is conceived in the context of life and livelihood in coastal communities.

Panel presenters and delegates from the floor identified women as an integral part of fishing communities and stressed that if women’s roles and spaces are accepted, respected and valorized by the larger society and the state, then their rights to coastal resources—the fish, the land, the water, credit and social benefits like health care, education and further training in management and post harvest technologies—should also be accepted and budgeted for by the state.

It was emphasized that it was the nature of the development process and the patriarchal mindset, even within fishing communities, that marginalizes women and leads to the depletion of resources. This, in turn, is leading to extreme situations where women sometimes even have to sell their bodies to earn a living or have access to fish for sale. The plight of women in times of natural calamities and regional wars is also devastating.



Where women are involved in harvesting the resources for food, their rights are often not recognized, nor are they included in decision-making and management processes. When fishing licenses are granted as part of the process of professionalization within the fishery, women are the most discriminated against as they do not share the resource access rights of their husbands. The man alone is accepted as the fisher. There was a lot of debate on this, as some fishermen participants present interpreted this to mean that women are demanding a fishing right in an already overexploited fishery. It was clarified that this was not what was suggested.

On the whole, it was generally accepted that women’s contribution to sustaining life and livelihood has to be accepted and valorized. The session decided that in the deliberations and presentations in the coming days, all participants would make a personal commitment to bring in a gender perspective, form an informal gender monitoring group and, in all the session, moderators would make sure that presenters address gender dimensions in their presentations.

## **Guarding Rights!**

**Faki Ali Hassani,**

*talks to Rosemarie Mwaipopo*

*Faki, is a small-scale fisher and village chairperson, Jibondo Island, Mafia, Tanzania*

### **How significant is this meeting for Tanzanian small-scale fishing communities?**

Significant, as it will allow for sharing of experiences and ideas by fishing communities from different parts of the world. I believe that together we can make joint statements on how we think small-scale fisheries should be treated.

### **What are your expectations from the workshop and the conference?**

For the first time I will come into contact with people from different countries and learn about their views and perspectives. It will help me understand the situation of different fishing communities as well as the similarities and differences between them. I will be able to learn the best ways of addressing small-scale fisheries and also how to overcome hurdles. I expect to get information that will enable me to facilitate the empowerment of my fellow colleagues.

### **What is your perception of rights?**

Some regulations regarding the use of marine resources are affecting the livelihoods of small-scale fishers in parts of Tanzania. This is not right. This is because other people have been given the mandate to 'protect' our environment. "If nobody guards your home for you, you guard it yourself. If you cannot protect it, then you should be given education on how to guard it". This will give fishers the right to use resources in accordance with how they know is right, for example, by applying traditional knowledge on when to fish and where to fish in a particular season.

## **The Struggle of Phuket Fishworkers**

*By the WFFP Correspondent*

A field trip to some fishing villages in Phuket was one of the first items on the agenda for the international delegates who arrived in Bangkok on 7 October to attend the Global Conference on Small-scale Fisheries. WFFP, FSF, Thai Sea Watch Association, Phang Nga Bay, Save Andaman Network and SDF organized the tour, which culminated in an inspiring and passionate rally on the last day.

The international delegates were split into three groups to visit different areas. The first group visited Ban Yar Mee in Koh Yao District of Phang Nga province. At the island, the local fisherpeople narrated how they fought against a proposal to build a marina on the coastline. "When we heard about the proposal, local fisherpeople from neighbouring islands got together and started living on the beach. We made such a loud noise against this move that the government was forced to withdraw it," said Nik who works with the local fishing community.

The second group visited Yamu and Cuku villages. A major tourist center built in Thai style is being planned in Yamu village. There are also plans for conversion of salt water into fresh water and recycling of waste water. The local communities are against this and plan to block the road to the project. In Cuku village, the community explained how the 500 ha of mangroves belong to the Queen of Thailand. As her subjects, they are bound to protect this area and that was the guiding spirit in driving out investors from the area.

Ban Nam Kem, also in Phang Nga, may have overcome the horrors of the tsunami, but they are still finding ways to fight the new enemy—investors. "We have been asked to prove ownership to the land by the government after the tsunami. The investors are trying their best to get this land from us," said Ali, one of the leaders of this movement. "The land sharks want the land to build golf courses", he said.

The next day was the advocacy march where international delegates, along with the fishworkers, undertook a four-hour four-km march through central Phuket. Several community representatives, including many muslim women, participated in the rally. Participants raised flags, shouted slogans calling for fishworker unity and denounced the role of investors in Phuket. Participants also shouted slogans on the apathy of the authorities to their plight. The rally, attended by close to two thousand people, invited the attention of many passers-by—traders, shoppers and tourists. At one stage, the rally converged at the city centre clock tower where volunteers draped red and black flags from the top to the bottom of the tower.

A group of children carrying seahorse-shaped props staged a street theatre on themes of fishworker rights and depleting sea resources. Speakers climbed atop a makeshift dais on top of a moving van and addressed the crowds. The SDF Secretary Ravadee Prasertcharoensuk was one of the main speakers at the rally. Her speeches were passionate and inspiring. Thomas Kocherry of India, Andrew Johnston of South Africa and Geetha Lakshmi of Sri Lanka were the other speakers that addressed the gathering. Under the sweltering sun, the rally was a fascinating expression of solidarity to the cause of the fishworkers. The message to the larger community was clear—fishworkers and their supporters will defend themselves from oppression.

## Daily wrongs

Column by Vivek Storyteller

### Putting Gender First: *Lost in translation*

Putting gender first—at least that seemed to be the idea of the conference organizers when they took the radical step of having a session on gender, even before a formal introduction to the conference was made. While this needs to be seen as a major coup in a fisheries conference, the gender sensitive organizers had not anticipated the pitfalls of going first with a large multi-lingual group and relatively low-tech translation systems. Utter chaos prevailed for some time with one language group or the other dissatisfied with the reception on their ear phones, every time a start was made. Speakers made a number of starts, only to be asked to start again. Marie Ademar Cesar of Martinique was the main sufferer and she had to repeat at least thrice her opening lines on women facing violence and sexual harassment.

Another curious feature of the translation drama was that the entire cast appeared to be female. Nalini in the chair, calming every body with her measured tone, Ravadee the local organizer, keeping her cool and getting the technicians to do their job and of course, the translators themselves who kept smiling and uncomplainingly making fresh starts to their translation efforts. Undoubtedly, men in the same position must have started fretting and fuming and perhaps even cursing. However, I could not help wondering: is there any truth in the stereotype of women not being good with all these modern gadgets?

#### *A great relief for man-kind*

The panel made a superb set of presentations including one by Rene Pierre Chever, who was included with the objective of diluting (polluting, adulterating?) the all-female panel. I saw Rene walking to the conference venue like a man going to the gallows, the entire responsibility of asserting the gender credentials of the “men in fisheries” resting upon him. When he did a fine job of his presentation, he was not the only one relieved. All the men in the hall relaxed visibly. *Daily Rights* (and *Daily Wrongs*) fully complement Rene for rising to the occasion.

#### *One woman's right....another man's wrong?*

The gender troubles for men did not end with that. Rene himself invited more trouble for the men asking the difficult question: if a husband and wife can be co-owners of a boat, why should the fishing quota be only in the name of a man? Despite having to put up a gender-sensitive face in such a big international meeting, the fishermen were deeply troubled. Images of women usurping the role of the daring deep-sea fisherman so haunted some of them that they had to stand up and protest. They were ready to swear by full equality on land, but thought that extending this to sea was taking things a bit too far.

Taking pity, Marie Ademar, after a scathing reminder that men were born of women, explained that the women were not seeking to enter sea fishing in a big way but were only seeking recognition for the work they do on shore in post harvest activities and a number of other unpaid chores that keep a fishing enterprise alive. The men gave a collective sigh of relief—the last male bastion is still safe!

#### *Sweet words of relief*

For me, the most significant comment of the day was made by Geetha Lakshmi of Sri Lanka. She said that the Sri Lankan fisherwomen have no fight with their men. It is the development paradigm imposed by the state that is the root of all gender-evil, she said. It was music to my ears. Now I know what to blame when my wife complains about my insensitive behaviour: the Govt. of India.

***A policy that is unjust creates an unjust society***

- Andrew  
Johnston  
South Africa



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Issue No. 3

# Daily Rights

Bangkok, 13 October 2008

A Civil Society Newsletter for 4SSF

## Monday, 13 October

### Civil Society Preparatory Workshop

- Reporting of groups on: "Securing social, economic, and human rights"
- *Strategy session*
- *Discussions*
- *Registration at FAO Conference*

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## Securing Post-harvest rights

By WFFP Correspondent

The theme for the panel discussion for the day was on "Securing Post-harvest benefits". Natalia Laino Lojo from Spain, detailed the work her group AGMAR (Galician Shellfishwomen and Men Association) in Spain had undertaken to ensure better living standards and increased wages for the shellfish workers. She spoke of how AGMAR communicated to consumers how Galician products are guaranteed and how they maintain stringent quality control. As a result, small-scale fishworkers have started receiving better prices.

Sid 'ahmed Sidi Mohammed had a series of detailed examples and observations from his community on how to reap benefits from fish production. He stressed the importance of "organizing to survive". "Four years ago, there was a problem of overfishing. Now Mauritania's octopus stocks are doing well. Management is necessary and that's how we have effectively made ourselves relevant in the current environment. That is the only way we can be profitable." And thanks to management measures with community participation, fishers get more fish now.

Ephraim Patrick highlighted key issues in small-scale fisheries in the Philippines. "Finance and credit are important factors. Normally, those in the capture sector are linked to traders. In the Philippines, women play an important role in post-harvest processes. "Women can go in for co-operatives. Buyers prefer to deal with organised fishworkers and co-operatives", he said.

Mamayawa Sandouno highlighted issues faced by women fishworkers in Africa, especially Guinea Conarky. Mamayawa highlighted the importance of securing post-harvest benefits that will enhance the community's overall financial condition. She spoke about the health hazard issues for women who smoked fish. "They work in harsh conditions. Women are completely dehydrated and suffer from various health problems by the time they are 40. We need to improve their lives by removing fish smoking sites altogether."

Jorge Adalberto from Honduras expressed concern about trade pacts. Jorge felt that they are the root cause of the suffering of small-scale fishers. He wanted fishers to have better access to national markets. "How can there be post-harvest benefits if fish are bought by intermediaries and they keep all the profits," he asked.

(Contd pg.2)

The moderator of the session, Rene Scharer (Brazil), summarized the discussion before opening the topic for further debates within language groups. Rene said: “Countries could follow the Mauritanian experience to make their produce more profitable. Rene highlighted Mamayawa’s presentation by underlining the importance to improve working conditions for women in Guinea and the significance of credit for women.



## Access participatory rights and fisheries management

*By René Schärer, Brazil*

Brazilian fisheries authorities have recently been making an effort to introduce participatory management of high value fisheries resources like the spiny rock lobster (*Panulirus argus*). After a futile attempt from 2000 to 2004 where fishing industry and company interests dominated the technical working group for the lobster fishery, at the expense of artisanal fishers, a second committee was formed by the government of President Luis Inácio da Silva Lula in 2005.

Under the leadership of fishers and civil society organizations like the Brazilian Fishermen’s Movement (MONAPE), Pastoral Fisher Council (CPP) and Terramar, a 16 member group with equal representatives from government and non-governmental organizations, revised the lobster fisheries regulations.

These regulations address the serious situation of near collapse of the lobster resource caused by a lack of any political interest in the fishery, poor industry compliance and a growing fleet using compressor for diving, along with lobster aggregating devices and the use of gillnets in an illegal manner.

Fisher representatives succeeded against industry opposition to secure over 1,500 lobster licences for the previously illegal artisanal sail fleet. Additional licences are pending due to a court intervention in the Ceará State.

Approved in December of 2006, the new management plan was introduced at the end of the closed season on June 15, 2007. Miraculously, the government spent over US\$20 million in management costs, to buy back illegal gear and fleet, and for enforcement. The plan seemed in the right direction as many illegal boat owners were intercepted by sea and land enforcement teams, with a large fleet of cars, and even speedboats that impressed fishers when they came roaring along.

The first problems came up in August when a fisheries enforcement division boat was stopped by the Brazilian navy for lack of documents and permits and when the military police started to have difficulty to recruit policemen for seagoing duty. Fisher communities and some municipal governments made up for this by actively supporting enforcement with fishers as volunteer agents, enforcement boats and even cash raised among fishermen.

But by the end of October 2007 for some strange reason – financial, political or both – fisheries authorities gave up enforcement and the speedboats were not seen again. This was the signal the illegal fishers and boat owners had been waiting for. They hedged their money for turning in illegal fishing gear. This continued till June 2008. They were the kings of the sea and applied their very efficient harvesting skills with the use of lobster aggregating devices and hookah compressor boats. The illegal fleet grew in response to the lack of enforcement and when the legal fleet came out of the closed season to catch lobsters, there wasn’t much left.

At the meeting of the management committee on August 29 2008, fishers and civil society members made it very clear that they wanted to have Mr. Carlos Minc, the new Minister of the Environment, to publicly speak out and guarantee funds for enforcement until the illegal fleet was removed from the sea. Since nothing happened the members of the Ceará state lobster fisheries committee have declared publicly that they will only return to the management group after talking to the minister or President Lula personally. The deadline expires on October 30 2008 and fishers and vessel owners are ready to take their protest to the streets of Fortaleza.

Brazil might be missing the opportunity for the first successful co-management effort in a commercially lucrative fishery, and that would be a shame.

## Asserting rights!

*Supaporn Pannarai and Tanu Nap Nien, Coordinators, Fishwoman Network, Federation of Southern Fisherfolk (FSF), Thailand*

### How significant is the global conference for FSF?

It is significant that issues of small-scale fisheries is taken up at this forum, as it helps in linking local issues of communities with global processes and organizations like WFFP. It is a rare event, as it provides space for communities to share experiences, and highlight problems and concerns of the small-scale fishers at the international level, where governments, international agencies and people's organizations are coming together.

We expect a good policy document to come out of the conference, to influence governments. FAO is looked upon as an organization to influence the national government. If they are not serious, discussions will not materialize into good quality document nor will there be faithful implementations of the same. If there is no faithful implementation, then the whole process loses its opportunity. The opportunity is there. It is just a matter of willingness to make it happen.

### What are FSF's expectations from the workshop and the conference?

The issues of the fishing communities are also the issues of the larger public, for example pollution of the seas, the degradation of resources, etc. We expect these issues that are important to the fishing communities are discussed and debated in the meeting, and not just confined to the meeting room, but efforts should be made to educate the public about these issues. We expect a common and clear position from the workshop, so that participant organizations can work collectively towards formulating strategies.

We also expect communities to be given opportunities to express their views without any hindrance, otherwise it is reduced to just an intellectual exercise other than reflecting the real concerns of the communities. Such process where their views are not taken onboard will mean nothing to them and will not significantly change the present situation.

### What is FSF's perception of rights?

The small-scale fishers do not use the word "right". The fishers realize that they are not somehow equal and are invisible, discriminated and the larger society is not being just to them and are pushing the fishers into more difficult situation, more than they could express. As people they should be treated better, equal to others, recognized as citizens of the country and not just as fishers. They need right to: secure livelihood for present and future generations, make their own decisions, to actively participate in decision-making processes, disagree, continue their way of life, express their views, access natural resources, and conserve them as they see fit. For a woman the scenario is even worse. The present policy does not recognize these rights, and it is time for change. Fishing communities will go ahead with asserting their rights, with or without the recognition of the law.

## Protect Ecosystems

*Right to protect the ecosystems,  
By Paul Molyneaux*

Fish is food; trade is secondary. Ecosystems must be protected. Fishing communities can demand the right to protect the ecosystems that support them. This last statement evolves from my interviews with Pisit Charmsnoh, director of Yadfon, an NGO operating in southern Thailand. Pisit sees healthy linkages between communities and their surrounding ecosystems as the foundation of sustainability.

By establishing the right to protect and restore productive ecosystems, fishing communities establish the right to benefit from their efforts, harvesting the surpluses—the interest generated by natural capital. Rather than fight allocation battles over scarce resources, Yadfon helps small-scale fishers fight for the right to increase resource availability. There is real power in taking this position, as fishers in southern Thailand have found. Villagers at the mouth of the Palian River abandoned use of destructive fishing gear, such as the push net, which destroys sea grass beds.

They have created sanctuaries, and as their fisheries rebound they are helping promote the benefits of ecosystem protection to upstream communities. By putting the ecosystem first, and harvest rights second, fishing communities establish their rights of governance over critical areas, and these in turn become less vulnerable to exploitation from outside interests.

As exemplified by the work of Yadfon, demanding the right to protect ecosystems has high publicity value; consumers can be encouraged to support good work—ecosystem restoration for community benefit—by refusing to buy shrimp from farms that pollute the waters communities are trying to protect.

They can be encouraged to demand that the global food production system that fosters export oriented fisheries and aquaculture, not displace local food production systems. This premise of action that Yadfon has nurtured in southern Thailand, offers a useful model for artisanal fishing communities wondering where their power rests. From what I have seen in southern Thailand, fishers' real power rests in restoring and protecting the ecosystems that sustain life.

## First Nations

*The Coastal Learning Community Network is a Canadian group that includes coastal indigenous and non-native organizations from across Canada. The network recently held a workshop that developed a position paper called Subsistence Fishing in Canada. The following are some excerpts from the statement.*

Subsistence harvesting is the hunting, fishing, and gathering of natural resources to meet the food, fuel, clothing, and livelihood needs of individuals, households, and communities. The exchange of subsistence products is embedded within the social relations existing with communities and can take various forms such as gift, reciprocal exchange, barter, and sale.

At a policy and regulatory level, subsistence fisheries stand in contrast with commercial fisheries. Before and during most of the Twentieth Century, the distinction between subsistence and commercial fisheries was not easily made. Most fisheries had components both of subsistence and sale of products to markets external to the community. Today commercial fisheries are conducted by professionally certified fishers with highly capitalized vessels and licenses usually within a corporate structure and selling their products largely for export in global markets. However, within this commercial fishery, there still exists significant numbers of smaller-scale fishing enterprises with strong community attachments.

As a community of First Nation and non-aboriginal residents of Canada, we are committed to working together to reverse restructuring and to foster livelihood fisheries through the restoration of fish, habitats, the commons, and community. We embrace the indigenous view of respect and relationship:

- *We respect all of Creation,*
- *We are related to the earth, forests, and oceans,*
- *We will provide for our existence in humbly respecting our place in the web of life,*
- *We respectfully acknowledge those who have passed on so that we might live,*
- *Our greatest restoration must be in restoring our relationships to each other and with Creation, while working toward a common vision to ensure a healthy world for our children.*

We urge others to form learning communities that are inclusive, collaborative, and engaged in a process of learning by doing through the identification and analysis of common issues and in taking actions together for their solution.

## ***Poem from Ban Ra Wai Village, Rangu District, Sathorn Province, Thailand***

*We are the people located along the coast line, on the island and along the canal,  
We are fishers,  
We use different boats for different culture and ecosystems,  
We use different nets for different fish,  
We do not greedily go after everything that is living in the sea,  
We use net for shrimp, net for crab, net for fish,  
Whatever type of boat and gear we use,  
We with our sweat and labour make our own survival,  
We collect seaweeds,  
We collect shells from the beach and the seashore,  
We also collect food from mangrove forest,  
These form our food, our medicine and our livelihood and income,  
Our survival depends on the rich natural resources,  
Sea is our life, and it needs to be taken care of,  
We learn how to look after the sea,  
We will protect it for our next generation,  
We are those who are called small-scale fisherfolk.*

*“The best way to add value to fishing communities is to send children to school. They represent savings and pension.”*

*Mamayawa Sandouno*

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# Daily Rights

Issue No. 4

Bangkok, 14 October 2008

A Civil Society Newsletter for 4SSF

**Tuesday, 14 October**

- Keynote
- Presentation: Challenges to sustainable resource use
- Presentation: Securing access/use rights
- Presentation: Sustainable livelihoods
- Panel Discussion: Access rights



## **We want, We want, We want our human rights!**

*Statement from the Civil Society Workshop to the Global Conference*

### **Preamble**

We, 106 participants from 36 countries, representing small-scale fishing communities and indigenous communities dependent on fisheries for life and livelihood, and their supporters, having gathered in Bangkok from 11 to 13 October 2008 at the Civil Society Preparatory Conference Workshop;

Building on prior preparatory processes, in particular the Statement developed by the World Forum of Fisher Peoples (WFFP) and preparatory workshops organized by the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF) and other organizations in Asia (Siem Reap, Cambodia), Eastern and Southern Africa (Zanzibar, Tanzania), and Latin America (Punta de Tralca, Chile);

Recognizing the principle of food sovereignty outlined in the Nyelini Declaration;

Declaring that the human rights of fishing communities are indivisible and that the development of responsible and sustainable small-scale and indigenous fisheries is possible only if their political, civil, social, economic and cultural rights are addressed in an integrated manner;

Recognizing that all rights and freedoms apply equally to all men and women in fishing communities and recognizing the continued contribution of women in maintaining the resilience of small-scale fishing communities;

Declaring that the dependence of fishing communities on aquatic and coastal living natural resources is shaped by the need to meet life and livelihood in their struggle to eradicate poverty, to secure their well-being as well as to express their cultural and spiritual values;

Recognizing the complementarity and interdependency of fisheries-related activities within fishing communities; and

Recognizing the interconnectedness between the health and wellbeing of coastal communities and of aquatic ecosystems;

Hereby call upon the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), other United Nations agencies, regional fisheries bodies and our respective national governments to:

### **Securing access rights**

1. Guarantee access rights of small-scale and indigenous fishing communities to territories, lands and waters on which they have traditionally depended for their life and livelihoods;

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2. Recognize and implement the rights of fishing communities to restore, protect and manage local aquatic and coastal ecosystems;
3. Establish small-scale fisheries as the preferred model for the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ);
4. Establish and enforce measures to prohibit industrial fishing in inshore waters;
5. Prohibit illegal fishing and all destructive fishing gears and practices;
6. Reverse and prevent the privatization of fisheries resources, as through individual transferable quotas (ITQs) and similar systems that promote property rights;
7. Reverse and prevent the displacement of fishing communities through the privatization of waters and lands of fishing communities for activities that include tourism, aquaculture, defence/military establishments, conservation and industry;
8. Ensure that the declaration, establishment and management of marine protected areas (MPAs) bindingly involves the active participation of local and indigenous communities and small-scale fishers;
9. Ensure the integration of traditional and indigenous knowledge and customary law in fisheries management decision-making;
10. Guarantee the equal participation of small-scale and indigenous fishing communities in fisheries and coastal management decision-making, ensuring their free, prior and informed consent to all management decisions;
11. Recognize the traditional fishing rights of small-scale and indigenous fishers from immediately neighbouring adjacent States and set up appropriate bilateral arrangements for protecting their rights;
12. Protect all marine and inland water bodies from all forms of pollution, and reclamation;
13. Reject industrial aquaculture and genetically modified and exotic species in aquaculture;
14. Recognize, promote and protect the diversified livelihood base of fishing communities.
15. Improve access of women to fish markets, particularly through provision of credit, appropriate technology and infrastructure at landing sites and markets;
16. Ensure that international trade does not lead to environmental degradation or undermine the human rights and food security of local fishing communities;
17. Put in place specific mechanisms to ensure that trade promotes human development, and that it leads to equitable distribution of benefits to fishing communities;
18. Effectively involve fishing communities in negotiations dealing with international trade in fish and fish products;
19. Guarantee institutional arrangements that give priority to fish for local consumption over fish for export or for reduction to fishmeal;
20. Regulate processing capacity, particularly in export-oriented fisheries, to be in line with the sustainability of the fishery;
21. Reject ecolabeling schemes, while recognizing area-specific labeling that identifies socially and ecologically sustainable fisheries;

### ***Securing human rights***

### ***Securing post-harvest rights***

22. Protect access of women of fishing communities to fish resources for processing, trading, and food, particularly through protecting the diversified and decentralized nature of small-scale and indigenous fisheries;
23. Protect the cultural identities, dignity and traditional rights of fishing communities and indigenous peoples;
24. Implement legal obligations arising from the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights (UNDHR) and subsequently-adopted human rights legislation, including the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIPS);
25. Guarantee the rights of fishing communities to basic services such as safe drinking water, education, sanitation, health and HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment services;
26. Guarantee the rights of all categories of workers in the fisheries, including self-employed workers and workers in the informal sector, to social security and safe and decent working conditions;
27. Implement the ILO Work in Fishing Convention 2007 and extend its provisions to include inland and shore-based fishers;
28. Ensure that States seek the free, prior and informed consent of small-scale fishing communities and indigenous peoples before undertaking any project or programme that may affect their life and livelihoods;

29. Adopt specific measures to address, strengthen and protect women's right to participate fully in all aspects of small-scale fisheries, eliminating all forms of discrimination against women and securing their safety against sexual abuse;

30. Take urgent and immediate steps for the release and repatriation of arrested fishers, in keeping with the provisions of UNCLOS and human rights instruments;

31. Protect men and women engaged in regional cross-border fisheries trade against harassment;

32. Enact and enforce legislation to create autonomous disaster prevention and management authorities based on the need to rebuild and revitalize small-scale and indigenous fisheries;

33. Establish mechanisms to support fishing communities affected by civil war and other forms of human rights violations to rebuild their lives and livelihoods;

34. Improve institutional co-ordination at all levels to enhance the well-being of fishing communities;

35. Guarantee rights of fishing communities to information in appropriate and accessible forms; and

36. Provide support to capacity-building of fishing and indigenous communities to participate in governance of coastal and fisheries resources.

National governments have a legal obligation to implement international human rights instruments. We demand that all governments take these obligations seriously and create the environment for fishing communities to fully enjoy these rights. We demand the urgent establishment of independent mechanisms to monitor, and report on implementation of human rights obligations.

We call on the FAO's Committee on Fisheries (COFI) to include a specific chapter in the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) on small-scale fisheries, recognizing the obligations of States towards them.

We also recognize our responsibility as representatives and supporters of the small-scale and indigenous fisheries to assist the local communities who have so far been marginalized to claim their rights at national levels.

We reiterate our deep sense of urgency about the neglect of small-scale and indigenous fisheries and demand immediate action to avert impending disaster and conflict.

## Coast to Coast

*Building solidarity amongst coastal communities across international waters, by Arthur Bull and Jackie Sunde*

On 24 September 2008, history was made when 12 First Nation and non-aboriginal small-scale fishers, community workers, researchers and activists working in support of small-scale fishing communities from as far afield as Canada's Pacific coast, up to the Arctic Circle and across to the Atlantic coastline linked up telephonically with 10 fishers living in fishing villages and towns on the west coast of South Africa. This conference call was organized by the Canadian Coastal Learning Communities Network on the initiative of John Kearney and Arthur Bull who thought that it would be interesting to see if the Learning Circles process that this network had established in Canada might also be a useful methodology to build solidarity and share lessons at an international level. The selection of South Africa, using Masifundise and Coastal Links as an organizational base, had its origins in prior exchanges between fishers from these two countries when South African fishing communities had sent a message of solidarity to clam diggers who had lost their tenure security to aquaculture developments. The conversation on the call was facilitated by Jackie and John, which enabled participants to take part fully in the conversation.

The telephone conference had a loose agenda but conversation immediately honed in on burning issues of relevance on both sides of the Atlantic. Conflicts between small-scale fishing and the industrial sector predominated, with the resultant negative impacts for the small-scale sector. Shared experiences of displacement by oil mining, tourism and other developments were highlighted. Common to both groups were concerns about the fact that the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries might have been agreed to by our respective governments but it is not fully implemented in Canada or South Africa.

The issue of the exclusion of youth and the social costs of the current management regimes echoed across the line as did concerns regarding how to address issues of gender equality. It was immediately agreed that these were all issues requiring much more exchange. The participants collectively agreed that there was a great deal to talk about and that both parties would benefit greatly from further exchanges. Ideas were proposed for how to ensure that the conversation was shared at local level. Exciting suggestions were made about how to expand this methodology to include twinning villages up across countries and facilitating internet exchanges as well as documenting stories in a newsletter that could be translated into local languages. Feedback from both sides was that this exchange had been 'inspiring' and everybody expressed their eagerness to continue with this exciting and novel way of sharing information and strategies for addressing common concerns.

South African fisher participant John Grandfield, summed it up when he said "this is a very good way of building solidarity – we all depend on fishery resources for our livelihoods and we are facing similar problems. If our governments realize that we are supported globally by fishers from around the world they will be forced to listen to the voices of the fishers... this will strengthen us all".

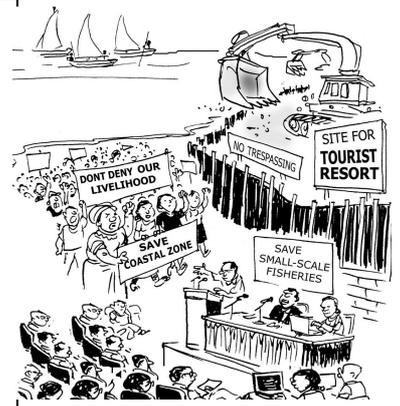
## 4SSF opens!

Welcoming the gathering at the Global Conference on Small-scale Fisheries on Monday 13 October 2008, Kevern Cochrane, Chief, Fisheries Management and Conservation Service, of FAO's Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, expressed his thanks to all the participants from some 70 countries, for having traveled far and wide to attend this conference.

Cochrane highlighted the many challenges that millions of small-scale and indigenous communities around the world are facing today, especially in the face of global financial crisis and rising food and energy prices. He observed that many participants present were from fishing communities themselves, hence facing this economic hardship first hand on a daily basis. He noted that one half of the participants for the conference are from fishworker and civil society organizations in equal numbers, with another 40 per cent from governments and intergovernmental organizations, again split into equal numbers and 10 per cent from the academic community. About half of the participants are from Asia, about 15 per cent each from Africa and Europe, 10 per cent from Latin America and the Caribbean, 5 per cent from North America and 2 per cent each from the Near East and Southwest Pacific.

He noted the tremendous efforts made by the civil society organizations in preparing for the conference, and specifically mentioned the three day preparatory workshop, they organized prior to the global conference.

Cochrane concluded by saying that the next three days would determine the outcome of this conference and where it would lead henceforth. The conclusions and outcomes from this conference will be presented to the 28<sup>th</sup> session of the Committee on Fisheries – COFI, to be held in March 2009. He added that while there could be differences in emphasis and opinions across different stakeholder groups, organizers hope there will be a wide consensus on principal strategies, policies and approaches to securing sustainable fisheries. The conference is not to come out with a statement, but a report is to be published reflecting the differences and consensus that emerge during the conference.



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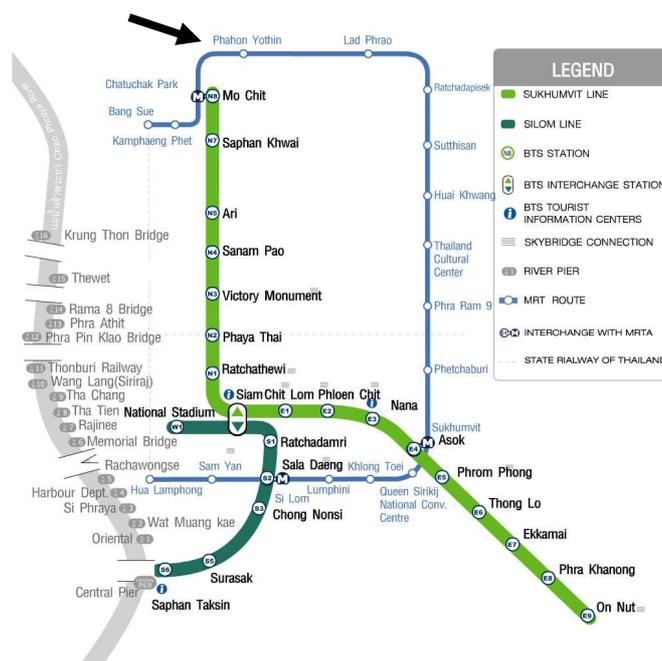
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## FYI

Hotel Address of 4SSF Conference:  
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 Chatuchak,  
 Bangkok 10900  
 Tel: +66 (0) 2 541 1234  
 Website: [www.centarahotelsresorts.com](http://www.centarahotelsresorts.com)

The Sofitel Centara Grand Hotel is located near to MRT Phahon Yothin Station (at the very top of the map, towards the left).





A Civil Society Newsletter for 4SSF

## Wed., 15 October

- Presentation: Post harvest and fisheries management
- Presentation: Securing post-harvest benefits
- Presentation: International fish trade
- Panel: Securing post-harvest benefits
- Group discussions

## Rights to the right people!

Delivering the keynote address at the inaugural session of the Global Conference on Small-scale Fisheries, Dr. Plodprasop Suraswadi, Deputy Director General to the Prime Minister of Thailand, said: “Fisheries development over the last 100 years has been flawed—the focus has been on fish resources and not on the resource users. The widespread degradation of marine physical and living resources and the worsening conflicts among the resource users have served as a testimony of a management failure.”

Dr. Suraswadi stressed the importance of moving towards a “people-focused strategy involving the grass-roots as a partner in development” to build upon the strengths of fishers, their commitment to the sustenance of fishery resources, and their familiarity with the fishing ground and the ecosystem. The government should not act as their patron, he said.

In the presentations that followed, Simon Funge-smith of the Asia Pacific Fisheries Commission (APFIC) said problems arising from interactions between small-scale and industrial fisheries were very pressing in the region. The problems facing small-scale fisheries in different member countries, although more or less common in the region had slightly different contexts, he said.

Whilst pressures arising from outside the sector beleaguered the inland small-scale fisheries—problems caused by water management, transformation of water flows, irrigation, etc – increasing intensity of fishing arising from motorization, declining catches, low prices, declining income, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, and creation of marine protected areas (MPAs) were problems that faced the marine small-scale fishing communities in the region, he said.

MPAs are not a magic bullet, he said. Beneficiaries of MPAs were not those who had lost their access to their fishing ground as a result of creation of the MPAs, he observed. Although co-management was discussed across member countries he was not sure how much capacity actually existed to deliver it at the national level.

Naseegh Jaffer, World Forum of Fisher Peoples (WFFP) read out the *Statement from the Civil Society Workshop to the Global Conference on Small-scale Fisheries*.

Kevern Cochrane of FAO highlighted the fundamental requirements for effective governance and management of small-scale fisheries. He pointed out how existing theory and practice of small-scale fisheries management was weak, and concluded it was important at least to adopt primary management to ensure sustainable social-ecological systems, which would contribute to food security and help prevent going down into poverty.

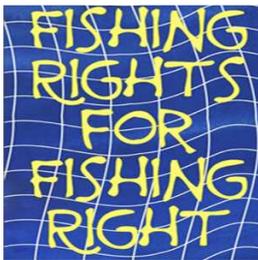
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Bjørn Hersoug, University of Tromsø, Norway, examined the wisdom of moving into a rights-based framework for managing small-scale fisheries in developing countries. He wondered if time was ripe to talk about rights-based fisheries in developing countries. Considering that fisheries continue to be an employer of last resort in many countries, how far such an approach could deliver fishers from poverty was questionable, he said. It was perhaps important to talk about providing better education, health and transport facilities to fishing communities than rights-based fisheries management, he argued.

Criticizing individual transferable quotas (ITQs), Cosme Caracciolo, General Secretary, CONAPACH, said ITQs have destroyed fisheries resources and that it has led to speculative practices similar to the events that precipitated the current global financial crisis. "Property to be owned by some and not by others was a flawed model", he said, and added that it was not recognized by the artisanal fishers. Instead of ITQs, he proposed collective rights. Employing such rights traditional small-scale fisheries can contribute to food security and can help combat hunger, he said.

Anthony Charles, Saint Mary's University, Canada said simplistic views were summed up in rights-based fisheries and he hoped this Conference would put an end to such views. From a narrow mandate it was important to move towards a broader perspective of coastal livelihoods, coastal communities and coastal economy, he said. It was important to look at community fishing rights and community human rights. This conference should be "a watershed for a new thinking on rights-based fisheries", he concluded.



## Access To What?

By Paul Molyneux

Nearly two hundred people listened to a series of informative speakers at the opening of the Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries Conference, in Bangkok yesterday. But one speaker in particular deserves particular attention: **Cosme Caracciolo**, secretary of the Confederation of Artisanal Fishers of Chile (CONAPACH), pointed out a long ignored yet extremely important fact in the fisheries discussion. "Here today we cannot ignore the economic crisis that is going on in the world," said Cosme. "The economic model has failed, and yet this same model is being used in fisheries in the form of ITQ's and aquaculture."

While the failure of the neo-liberal model is now evident, academic missionaries, to use a phrase coined by another speaker, continue to promote it in fisheries. Cosme went on to explain that fishers around the world try in many ways to tell their respective governments how this model has failed. "But governments listen more closely to others," he said.

"What works is the collective approach," Cosme asserted, and he speaks from experience. In Chile artisanal fishers have formed almost 1000 collectives that have gained jurisdiction over local fishing grounds for benthic resources, and managed to restore local ecosystems and increase production and profits from several important species. "Small-scale fisheries are the solution," said Cosme. As Cosme spoke, someone in the audience whispered: "He's a socialist."

But in a later discussion, Cosme pointed out that the small-scale fisheries approach to sharing, "equitable distribution," predates Marxism. Indeed, the concept is enshrined in the world's oldest religious tenets. When asked whether Capitalism had failed fisheries, Cosme looked bemused. "With seventy percent of the world's fisheries in trouble, that should be obvious," he said. "Once fishing became a solely commercial enterprise it was trapped in an endless quest for growth, always seeking greater efficiency to increase production, and this has had an inverse effect on sustainability." "The failure of fisheries is 100 percent the result of Capitalism," said Cosme.

Examples of truly sustainable fisheries in the world support this claim. Most are sustainable because they limit the Capitalist model's ability to function. One of the best known sustainable fisheries in the USA, the Maine lobster fishery, forbids absentee ownership of boats, the Captain must be the owner, and must be on board when the boat is fishing. In addition to this and other regulations, Maine lobster fishers are limited in the number of traps they can fish, and the horsepower of their boat engines. There is no place for the capitalist model of increasing efficiency and consolidating resource access under absentee owners, to gain a toehold in this fishery, and that is the fundamental reason for it's sustainability. While a state enforcement agency oversees the Maine lobster fishery, fishers themselves enforce these regulations, and the social stigma of getting caught breaking the rules is worse than any punitive fine.

The collectives of Chile operate in a similar manner. "For those of us for whom fishing is a way of life, sustainability is top priority," said Cosme. He believes, as many here do, that traditional modes of regulating fisheries hold the key to sustainability. And based on the crashing of industrial fisheries and the success of the ancient anti-capitalist system, one wonders when the governments and regulators will "get it".

## Community rights

***“Keeping our identity and local work, while being global at the same time”*** Interview by: *Patricio Igor Melillanca.*

*Zoila Bustamante Cárdenas is days away from completing her first year as President of one of the most important Fisherfolk organizations in Latin America, CONAPACH (National Confederation of Artisanal Fisherfolk of Chile). She is an artisanal divers assistant, and has been a leader, both within her local community and within the federation of the southern region of Chile for several years. “Both my parents were fisherfolk. That’s why I am proud to be at the head of CONAPACH, because it’s a big step for us as women to be representing all fisherfolk in Chile, although it has been a steep learning curve as well”, says Zoila. She goes on: “Being involved in the leadership at the national level meant that I had a lot to learn, but after a year I can stop and say that I represent the Chilean Fisherfolk. It’s been a good year with the programme we wanted to increase unity within the sector, unify and to continue the struggle.”*

### ***How diverse is artisanal fishing in Chile?***

*“Before becoming the national President, I was just a benthonic fisher woman, and represented shellfish divers. Now, I am a benthonic, demersal, pelagic and seaweed harvester, and all other work related to artisanal fishing. My involvement is not only out of concern for the community, but also for those who are fishing pelagic species in both shallow and deeper waters. My concern is also for women and men who collect seaweed, or work on the pier and beaches. They are all part of artisanal fisherfolk.”*

### ***Can you tell us about your meetings with Chile’s President, Michelle Bachelet?***

*“We have had three meetings with the President of the Republic. Unfortunately, all three occasions were not by invitation, but rather we had to be invited by other organizations. On the first two times we were invited to sign a social security agreement with a bank, and the third occasion was on invitation by a number of NGO’s to a meeting at Government House to request the President to establish a whale sanctuary in Chile.*

### ***How important are fisherfolk to whale conservation?***

*CONAPACH, Ecoceanos and Whale Conservation Centre are all behind the idea of protecting whales in all Chilean waters, and not only in a few small areas, as some had proposed. In our opinion, this would have been a way of profit-making for a few, and would have excluded artisanal fisherfolk. However, whale conservation is part of a wider vision. To protect the whales is to protect their habitat and their food, the Antarctic krill. The industrial fisheries want to start fishing krill on a massive scale for fishmeal for farmed salmon, which we oppose. So, the whale is a symbol of ecosystem protection in the South, where we have always coexisted with whales, without any problem whatsoever.*

*Up to 20 times a day we can see whales spouting in our caleta (hamlet), but there are never any problems.”*

### ***What were the issues discussed at the Latin American workshop?***

*A week was spent working in the coastal village of Punta de Tralca, half-way down the coast of Chile. We were able to draft a document that summarized all our discussions, although it was hard work. Some of these topics—pollution, industrial fishing, aquaculture and overfishing—were echoed as well here at the Workshop, and in other meetings. Most serious of all, however, is that in some places, we fisherfolk are disappearing because governments don’t take any measures to prevent this. Additionally, we want to prohibit trawling, but I have seen, thanks to these meetings, that other areas of the world have the same problem. We have also discussed Individual Fishing Quotas. For example, when the loco shellfish (Chilean abalone) started to be exported, the divers were given individual quotas, but they then sold their permits. As a result, people were left without work, and didn’t have enough money to buy food. This is what’s now happening with the Individual Quotas. They’re individual, and, therefore, go against the concept of community.”*

### ***An article was published in the Chilean press on salmon producers demanding a US\$ 250 million loan from the government to deal with the current crisis. What’s your stand on this?***

*“It’s high time the government stopped handing over our money, our tax money and our wealth, to the industrial fisheries. We’ve had enough of some of these public servants who are giving more money to these business owners who are awash with wealth, and destroy our ecosystems. I believe that this is not a problem exclusive to Chile. We have also seen this in Central America with the shrimp industry. That’s why at the Punta de Tralca Workshop, we demanded that governments urgently place a moratorium on the opening up of new salmon farms, which we’re also bringing up at this FAO conference.”*

### ***What does the participation of Conapach and other organizations and local communities mean in international forums?***

*We come from small caletas (hamlets) on the coast. We are leaders at the local level, participating in local questions. But we’ve realized that they have solutions, which come from international-level organizations, whether it be in Europe, in the United States, or at the FAO, where decisions aren’t decided by us, by our community, but rather for us. It was a big eye-opener for me to see that borders between countries are breaking down. This means that for us while keeping our identity as fisherfolk, and our local work, we also need to look at things globally.”*

## Gender Monitor

By Ali Abdullah, Pakistan Fisherfolk Folk (PFF)

It was strange to observe that on the first day of the Global Conference on Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries, there was no participation of women or fisherwomen representatives in both panels organized to discuss the management of fisheries resources. The members of both panels were sharing their observations and research findings on fisheries management. However, we, member organizations affiliated to the WFFP at the civil society preparatory meeting had made a commitment to ensure the equal participation of women in the activities carried out throughout the civil society meeting and the global conference. This type of discrimination is beyond my understanding. However, to my surprise, no one verbally protested about this. The inclusion of women representatives would have of course provided some insight about women's perspective on fisheries management.



## Guarding Phones

Rolf Willmann, Coordinator of the 4SSF, is sporting a new persona nowadays. His interventions on the first day of the conference brought out some unsuspected facets of his character. After making the mundane announcements about timings and logistics, the announcement on the return of headphones, with a sense of humour had the audience in splits, followed by a detailed demonstration on how to write on paper during group sessions, so as not to damage the *table cloth* of the hotel. Though all friends know him to be a jovial and friendly person, he has always comes out as the dry economist when he is put in front of the mike, till now.



Rolf is well acquainted with the issues of importance for small-scale fisheries. Starting his career in the Bay of Bengal Project with its exclusive focus on small-scale fisheries, Rolf has made major contributions to the SSF cause from the days of the Rome conference in 1984 and the subsequent formation of ICSF in 1986.

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*“Who has set these targets for MPAs? Why should it be 8 per cent or 10 per cent, or why not 12 per cent of MPAs? We want 100 per cent protection, we want an ocean’s perspective for management”.*

*“First fisheries is destroyed by industrial fisheries and pollution, then the declaration of MPAs, denies small-scale fishers access to fishing grounds, why are the victims “small-scale fishers” being victimized...”*

*Harekrishna Debnath, National Fishworkers’ Forum (NFF), India*

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All issues in different languages are available online at:  
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Issue No. 6

# Daily Rights

Bangkok, 16 October 2008

A Civil Society Newsletter for 4SSF

**Thursday, 16 October**

- Presentation: Securing economic and social rights
- Presentation: Human-rights approach to sustainable development
- Presentation: Indigenous peoples
- Panel Theme 3: Securing social, economic and human rights

## *Speaking from the heart*

In one of the most powerful presentations of the workshop, Zoila Bustamante Cárdenas President, Confederación Nacional de Pescadores Artesanales de Chile (CONAPACH) spoke from her heart. Naturally so, as she is a diver herself, and comes from a fishing family and community.

She started her presentation, pointing out that the FAO has taken a very long time to organize a conference on small-scale fisheries, and to invite fisherpeople, like herself, to them. And, reacting to the statement made by speakers the previous day, she added emphatically that: “We are not poor. We work with our hands, we work for our food”. This resonated well with an audience comprising of fishworkers and NGOs in large part, and was met with loud clapping.

Her speech drew heavily on the Punta de Tralca Statement adopted by the Latin American Workshop on artisanal fisheries, organized by ICSF, CONAPACH, Ecoceanos and CeDePesca. The workshop, held between 4 to 8 August 2008, had participants from 12 countries. In her speech Zoila strongly denounced bottom trawling, industrial aquaculture and the individual Transferable Quota (ITQ) system, all of which, she said, are destroying resources and threatening the livelihoods of communities.

“We uphold the common property nature of aquatic resources, and oppose the privatization of resource rights”, she said. She stressed that States should suspend the granting of further concessions for industrial aquaculture until they are able to ensure the conservation of biodiversity, aquatic ecosystems, fishery resources, public health and the rights of coastal communities.

Zoila went on to denounce free trade agreements that affect the sustainability of the fisheries. Regarding ecolabels, organizations of artisanal fishers should work to develop their own labels themselves that display their attributes, she said.

She highlighted that artisanal fishermen and women, indigenous people, and traditional fishing communities are people with their own territory, culture and economic activities grounded in fishery-related work, which form the basis of their identity and livelihoods. Artisanal fishing, she said, is a socio-cultural expression and not merely a form of employment.

As she ended her speech, she showed a photo of a small boat near her *caleta* in Chile. “I hope I can show you the same photo ten years later”, she said, capturing in a simple yet powerful way her aspiration to sustain a livelihood she loves, using traditional technology and knowledge.

Many participants were really moved by her speech. We can go home now they said—all that had to be said has been said.

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## Accessing Rights!!!

*Reporting of groups, by Nandakumar and Murlidharan*

**Governance of small-scale fisheries** should recognize the rights of the small-scale fishers in restoring and protecting their resource, reported the group. Government and civil society organizations have to play a joint role in this regard. Traditional institutions play a key role in small-scale fisheries governance, and an enabling environment is required for the participation of these institutions and fishers at different levels, said the group.

Group on **Equitable Access Rights** reported, the areas of challenges for this complex issue included, those relating to—protected areas, unsustainable models of resource management like ITQs, tourism developments and aquaculture operations. The group felt that Article 6.18 of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, on preferential access rights of small-scale fishers is often ignored, while encroachment of industrial fishing continues. Important issues identified included need for house hold level access and gender equity from a livelihoods perspective.

The group on **recognition and support of livelihoods and culture**, said small-scale fishers are not inherently poor, but the modernization made them poor—value equated with money by modern economic systems. Fishers have always valued the living resources and ecosystems, attributed by local knowledge and culture and not just in monetary terms. The group emphasized on past value and culture against modernization (that modernization is unsustainable).

**Local level management**, should be accommodated into the policy and legal frame work, with capacity building and empowerment of community institutions for implementation and to overcome challenges, said the group. It further said, gender mainstreaming and creating space for women to express, are non-negotiable, especially role of shore-based workers in fisheries legislation. Participatory approaches, networking of local institutions and ensuring equity are other important prerequisites.

Small-scale fisheries sector intersects with tourism, trade, agriculture, energy and infrastructure development, with positive and negative implications, reported the group on **inter-dependencies**. Marginalization of small-scale fishing communities in national and international policies, weak capacity of the stakeholders to participate in policy debates, and lack of livelihoods diversification opportunities, were identified as major challenges.

**Marine protected areas** should not be looked at as only closed areas but as management systems, with the demand coming from the fishers, said the group. Major concerns included levels of participation, process of decision-making and the gender insensitiveness in the process. A properly designed MPA with the involvement of fishing communities, can promote biodiversity, identified the group.

Solutions to high fuel cost and uneconomic fishing operations, was the focus of the group on **appropriate energy saving technologies**. The group suggested technical specifications and others such as—long trips for fishing, using carrier boats, operation at optimum speed, use of GPS, gear selectivity for high value catches, and promoting traditional use of sails as well as other new technologies such as wind turbine, solar, hydrogen etc. Information on fuel consumption patterns and energy economization measures in developing countries need to be documented for wider use, and to inform fishers.

## Long Journey to 4SSF

*Interview with Rolf Willmann, FAO, by Paul Molyneaux*

*How do you feel about the sentiments expressed by some members of the civil society that the conference has not given adequate time for presentation of the civil society statement?* Well they [the organizers of the Civil Society preparatory meeting] insisted on presenting on the first day and I was under pressure to stick with the timetable. But they have been well represented in the presentations and on the panels. Today we had Zoila Bustamante's presentation, a wonderful presentation, and tomorrow we have Chandrika Sharma, and a panel with Nalini Nayak. So I did not think it was fair to say that civil society did not have a voice. And theirs is not the only voice. There is also the opportunity to listen and question. How often does civil society get a chance to question a representative from the World Bank? And Bjorn, I realize he is an academic, but he made some very good points. And believe me, everyone who is here is committed to small-scale fisheries.

At the same time civil society does not have all the answers, small-scale is not a guarantee of sustainability, I remember in 1990 in Kanyakumari, India, asking a small-scale fisher about limits, and he implied that there were none. He would not be saying that now. Ask Vivekanandan about what could have been avoided if they had listened to me back then. (Vivekanandan agreed that there had been over-capitalization in the small-scale sector, and that Rolf's warning about the impending collapse of the shark fishery had proven all too true.)

*Fair enough, but I think the position of some of the members of the civil society group feel that since collectively we represent thousands of fishers in 30 different countries, we should have more time than say government officials. I think there are a lot of people here who have fought very hard to get their voices heard, and they may have come with an expectation that this conference belonged to them.*

I admit this conference could have been better designed, if we could have known that civil society

*(Contd. pg 4)*

## What is my right?

*Seremos Kamuturaki, An inland fisherman and fishing community activist in Lake Victoria, Uganda, and Executive Director Uganda Fisheries and Fish Conservation Association (UFFCA), in an interview with Harini Kumar*

### Significance of the Global Conference

I see this conference as a great way to exchange knowledge, experiences, strategies and various approaches to similar problems being faced by small-scale fishing communities throughout the world. The discussions in the civil society conference were very good and I realized that although so many different countries were represented, the issues were all quite similar, whether in marine or inland. I come from the inland fisheries of Lake Victoria in Uganda and an important problem we face is overcapitalization.

### Issues faced by fishing communities in Lake Victoria

In Lake Victoria, there is a lot of pressure on fish stocks of Nile Perch and Tilapia. This has resulted in the near collapse of fisheries. Also, fish export trade has also resulted in the establishment of many fish processing factories along Lake Victoria, in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The fishermen are forced to put greater pressure on the existing fish stocks, and often resort to destructive and illegal fishing gear and practices for survival. Exports of fish products have been the motivating factor for overfishing in Lake Victoria.

There are many other consequences especially for women. In the past they used to get enough fish from their husbands, friends, relatives to process into smoked products, sun-dried products etc., for the regional and local market. Now because of the export trade that is prevalent, they have to compete with factory agents. Women are also forced to trade sex for fish and sell their bodies for survival means. This is on the increase, now that the fisheries resources have dwindled. The most important consequence of this is the increase of HIV/AIDS in Lake Victoria.

Unfortunately, there is not enough attention that is given to this situation and the government officials fail to recognize and make visible this problem.

### Perceptions of rights

Due to lack of awareness and weak social movements in our country, fishermen in inland fisheries are not aware of their rights. So there is nobody pushing the government to implement anything. How can you demand your right when you don't even know it is yours? Also, there is a fear in the community to demand for rights as the level of organization is very low in inland fisheries when compared to marine capture fisheries.

### Co-management initiatives

From 1994 we have been fighting for a fisheries law in Uganda.

In 2003, the government came up with the Beach Management Unit (BMU) legislation as there was a lot of poisoning of fish in the lake and the use of destructive fishing methods, and the government did not have the capacity to control the situation and find a solution to these serious issues. They saw no way out other than to work with the fishing communities themselves, hence the BMU law came into being. This law also created the space for the participation of women in the decision-making process; it was decided that women should have minimum 30% participation in the beach management committee.

Initially this was thought to be a good representation, but after a year or so we realised that there was no women's voice on the committee at all. Also, women on the committee started representing their own individual interests rather than the interest of the community as a whole. However, the major problem was not the women themselves but how the constitution was made. The majority of the men did not want women on the committee. They felt that they-owners of the boats-could not sit with workers, labourers and women and discuss the same issues. It took us a long time to convince people and raise awareness that it should be a collective effort to manage fishery resources. How can one make a decision when labourers or women are not around on the committee? This was the beginning of co-management.

However this system failed as it was a top-down approach; it did not come from the grassroots. The government imposed on the people to form a committee and the result now is that the committee members are more loyal to the government than to the people and hence there is a lot of corruption. Therefore the question of accountability and transparency is still looming large.

The government and committees are responsible for the collapse of fisheries in Lake Victoria but why are they not intervening in this time of crisis? The way forward is to dismantle the committee and review the law. We should give the fishing communities an opportunity to organize from the grassroots and not rush into these arrangements and assumptions like the government did.

### Way forward

Cooperation between Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda is very important. We need to realize socio-economic justice for all the fishers in the Lake Victoria region. The various civil society organizations around Lake Victoria, including UFCCA, have organized themselves into a regional network called **Lake Victoria NGOs Advocacy Network-East Africa (LAVNET-EA)**. We are now mobilizing a collective voice to tell our respective governments about the problems fishing communities are facing. This is clearly not only a regional concern but also an international one as I see my friends and colleagues from different countries facing similar situations.

would be producing a statement, of course we could have made time, but everything was put together rather quickly and none of our organizers from civil society raised the issue, and now the programme is set and there is no time. You have to understand too, how far we have come, this conference would not have been possible even a few years ago. But we have been working together, and some of these people, Dao from Senegal for example, he sits at the table with government, with the decision-makers when before they would not even listen. At the same time, small-scale is not a guarantee of sustainability

*Can you talk about that process, how did this conference come about?*

Well I started working with small-scale fishers in India in 1979, where I met John Kurien. All the work I have since done with small-scale fishers has been informed by my experience of those two years in India. This led to my participating in the formation of the ICSF in 1986 that came out of two conferences that were held in 1984: The World Fisheries Conference, organized by the FAO, and an almost counter conference, the International Conference of Fishworkers and Their Supporters, organized by John and others. That was the start of the ICSF, all the initials are there, just not in the same order.

Then, more recently, there were two other FAO conferences, Sharing the Fish in 2006 and COFI in 2007 and the small-scale sector was not well represented, and we realized there was a need to strengthen their participation. So we put this conference together very quickly, in two months really, from the time it was approved. And I have to say the only reason I was able to do that was because of my long association with the small-scale sector, and the many connections I have made over the years.

*So is this just the beginning, will there be more such conferences to come?*

I hope so, I hope that this is just a step that future conferences can build on, but I have to say this is the last one that I will organize. There may be others but they will have to be organized by someone else. For now, we are looking forward to the COFI in March of 2009, this will be the largest conference yet and we are looking for a strong representation of the small-scale sector. We are counting on all of you to show up there and make a contribution.

*Is there any point in particular that you would like to make?*

Just this: Fisheries are an example of all the problems humanity faces, we have seen it all, and Illegal Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing is comparable to greenhouse gases. We have the experience, and the lessons from all the problems of humanity. And humanity now is approaching a time of great difficulty.

## Daily Wrongs: Trade widens gaps

By Vivek Storyman

While there appeared to be some sort of a pro-SSF consensus with regard to issues of access and rights, the issue of trade and SSF is widening by the hour. Even in the civil society meeting preceding the conference, the agreement to reject eco-labels was a touch and go affair. Now in the Conference, the disagreement on most trade related matters is sharp with widely diverging opinions. For some, it is eco-labeling, as implemented by the MSC that is the problem. That the MSC represents an alliance between environmentalists and the corporate sector is in itself a matter of concern for some. For some others, eco-labeling itself is not acceptable since ecology or biology centred view of fisheries is blind to the complex socio-economic issues involved in fisheries management.

The presentations on the first conference theme on access rights clearly indicated that the application of science based tools to assess artisanal or small scale fisheries is difficult. If MSC still believes that its criteria, which seems to best fit a combination of developed country, temperate water and industrial fisheries, can be useful to small scale fishers in the tropics and developing countries, it is surely living in fool's paradise. Some civil society groups see social labeling as an alternative that can provide the SSF with an edge to compete with large scale fishing units that otherwise enjoy an unfair advantage in access to fish resources and markets. However, there is yet another group that is against all labels because they are opposed to export oriented production itself. Even within this group one can have those who are not opposed to regional trade or south-south trade but object to food moving from south to north.

Thus the supporters of the SSF are a rainbow coalition as far as trade issues are concerned. At one end of the spectrum we have the pragmatists who would like to get best results for SSF within the existing market constraints and opportunities. At the other end of the spectrum are those who are idealistic and normative and see their opposition as part of a fight for a different world. However, if the opposition sees this as fragility in the SSF camp, they are mistaken. This diversity of opinions has not prevented the SSF supporters from working together on a wide range of issues. Yet, this is definitely a weakness in terms of being able to articulate a coherent pro-SSF trade policy.

***In the Corridors: Branding SSF!** While the panel discussion heard voices of protest, civil society participants in the group discussion on ecolabeling felt their voices were not heard. In the first half hour, participants were asked down their points on little pieces of paper. Several participants felt that this process left very little time for constructive discussion and was extremely frustrating.*

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# Daily Rights

Issue No. 7

Bangkok, 17 October 2008

A Civil Society Newsletter for 4SSF

## Re-Casting our approach to small-scale fisheries

By Jackie Sunde

Friday, 17 October

- Panel: Way forward
- Plenary discussion

**Fishers' Rights ARE Human Rights!** This is the message that resonated through plenary on the penultimate day of the 4SSF Conference, articulated extremely skillfully by the keynote speakers. In her address on *Securing Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of Fishworkers and Fishing Communities*, Chandrika Sharma echoed the demands of the Civil Society pre-conference processes when she urged that fishing rights need to be seen as indivisible from broader human rights. Following on from this recognition comes the call to States to realize that the adoption and implementation of this approach to the life and livelihoods of fishing communities and indigenous peoples is an obligation, not a matter of choice. It necessitates a fundamental re-casting of our understanding of rights-based approaches to fisheries management and the introduction of new benchmarks by which we must evaluate our interventions, whether these are those of the state, of non-governmental organizations or community-based institutions themselves.

In his presentation entitled *Human rights based approach to sustainable development of small-scale fishers*, Eddie Allison suggested that this responsibility rests heavily on us when he reminded us that we are all guilty of contributing to the failure to address poverty in fishing communities if we do not hold our governments accountable. "Fixing fishing with property rights does not work", he argued, and we have to find more effective ways of preventing over-exploitation whilst supporting livelihoods and contributing to poverty reduction and food security. A human rights approach provides such a means towards guiding investment and development actions in order to secure sustainable small-scale fisheries. However, unless we address fishing communities' marginalization and vulnerability they will not be able to make claims on these rights. Emphasizing that this approach was a moral and legal obligation, Allison presented several good reasons why a human rights approach to fisheries management also makes good sense. Most significantly, if fishing communities' human rights entitlements are addressed, they will be able to demand and secure good governance, and in turn, claim access to rights, resources and the markets upon which their livelihoods and food security depend. According to Sharma, this will then enable them to secure their freedom, well-being and human dignity.

Steinar Pedersen, speaking on the coastal *Sami* people's struggles in Norway, highlighted very poignantly the economic, social and cultural significance of their native seascapes for the *Sami* and their dependence on, access to and use of, coastal resources for their life and livelihoods. The recognition by the Coastal Fishery Commission of Norway in 2008 that international law concerning minorities and indigenous peoples, as well as historical dependence on marine resources must be affirmed in fisheries law and management policies, raises hope. Similar recognition, in other countries could meet the aspirations of small-scale fishing communities as so passionately articulated by many delegates at the conference, that their fishing rights be recognized as human rights.

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## Reflections on 4SSF

*By Arthur Bull*

As we head home we're all going to be reflecting on our experience in Bangkok over these past seven days—seven days of intensive discussion, debate, consensus-building and just plain hard work. These insights and lessons learned will probably be as diverse and varied as our group itself, and certainly impossible to sum up on this last day of the conference. It may be useful though to at least recount the sequence of events up to now.

For most of us this started with the process of listening to the voices of small-scale and indigenous fishers and gathering them into common positions. This included:

- Five workshops on four continents over a three year period
- The development of the WFFP statement which brought together statements from many of its member countries
- the results of the civil society workshop itself.

Bringing together all these expressions of hopes, fears, aspirations and struggles of small-scale and indigenous fishers from around the world was no easy task. And no matter what anyone says, by the end of the Civil Society preparatory workshop, I'd have to say that this group of people probably know more about consensus-building than any group I've ever come across. By the time we read the statement on Monday afternoon we felt we had achieved something of historical importance for small-scale and indigenous fisher people.

Many of us went into the FAO conference with a high sense of achievement and expectation. For many this quickly changed into anger and frustration when we learned that there would be little or no opportunity to present the results of all our work—four-minute slot on a panel on regional issues. Several people—notably Sherry Pictou, Tony Charles and Thomas Kocherry—strongly voiced the concerns of the group, demanding a better process.

As a result, a delegation for the Civil Society workshop met with Rolf Willmann and worked out a solution that included a presentation of the statement by a panel of three participants from the WFFP, facilitated by Naseegh Jaffer, co-chair of the WFFP.

Undoubtedly, there will be many and various outcomes and lessons learned from the 4SSF conference, but perhaps one of the most important lessons is that the civil society group was able to resolve this situation in a way that made possible an authentic dialogue. Our challenge now is to continue this dialogue on into the future, especially as we move towards the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) meeting in February 2009.

## Gender Monitor: Navigating in the malestream

*By Nalini Nayak, Cornelia Quist and Jackie Sunde*

As we near the end of the conference, is it time to undertake a gender audit? The idea of not having a separate discussion group on 'gender issues' was good as gender is meant to be a cross-cutting theme in all the mainstream discussions and not an isolated one. So did it succeed in finding a space in the mainstream discussion? Well, very minimally as an analytical category although there was a great deal of reference to the representation of women as speakers and in a few discussion groups that focused specifically on women. There were certainly areas that continued to be considered purely male domains like fishing access rights, sustainable technologies, ecolabels, marine protected areas and international trade as if only men have rights to the resources, as if women don't process fish and need appropriate technologies, as if women are not in the market, and need to find access to sell their products, or as if women have no role in fisheries management and conservation. So it was very frustrating when moderators had narrow and gender neutral frameworks in which discussions had to take place or when the methodologies of the discussion groups were paternalistic and centralized.

There was a lot of talk about women and their problems but little analysis of why women are in a disadvantaged position, their lack of power and the systemic causes of this and hence discussions tended to come up with very simplistic solutions. To our dismay, as in all other arenas where women are struggling to make interventions in the development paradigm, the language and ideas women have developed have been appropriated and distorted by the male stream. Most striking being the appropriation of language about resilience, participation and empowerment.

However, there were certainly some men who seemed to have engaged with the issues and contributed very meaningfully to convincing other men about the need to think in a more gender sensitive way. We appreciate that the effort was made to see that there was greater participation of women in the main workshop. The civil society workshop that preceded this event helped women to voice their concerns and as a result the statement that came from this civil society workshop raised these issues in a more in-depth and integrated manner. This, in turn, enabled women to participate more meaningfully in the main conference. We must acknowledge the efforts made by the Thai participants, both at the civil society workshop and at the official workshop who demonstrated their sincere and genuine concern for women and the efforts that they make to strengthen their roles and spaces in the fisheries.

*(Contd., pg 4)*

## **Panglima Laot**

**M. Adli Abdullah, General Secretary, Panglima Laot, Aceh, Indonesia, talks to Harini Kumar**

*Panglima Laot* is a unique system of management, which is both an institution and an individual, elected to represent the fishing community. It is a very resilient system that has been in existence for many generations, with the ability to bounce back strongly after adversity.

In Aceh the sea belongs to the community, not individuals. The norms of *Panglima Laot* guide us in fishing sustainably and giving back to the community what the sea gives to us. For instance, after a fishing trip, we give some of our fish to widows and disabled people who have no means of living. This is part of our customary law. We have a customary court, also known as the *adat* court, where issues are resolved by the elected elders of the community, who congregate and take decisions based on the knowledge about the law and the social respect it commands within the fishing community. The skippers (*pawang*s) usually form the *Panglima Laot*. They are men who have a good understanding of our customary law. The crew or the fishers (*nelayan*) do not have a problem with this as there is respect for one another in the community.

We are such a strong, self-sufficient community that the government is forced to respect us. We created the fisheries legislation which has become a part of the Aceh Constitution since 11 November 2006 after the peace agreement between Indonesia and Aceh, where the Indonesian Parliament passed a new law on the government of Aceh.

In Aceh, very few women go to sea and the fishers are mostly men. However, women play important roles in post-harvest fisheries, drying and smoking fish, selling and trading. The women mostly control the money. Also, women are highly respected in our community; it is part of the culture of the people of Aceh.

Everyone from our community should follow and respect the common law. Nobody has individual rights; there are collective community rights to the marine resources and land. Therefore, conflicts arise only from external forces when fishers from other countries fish in our seas.

I think the future will be a big challenge for *Panglima Laot* because there are many outsiders who want to exploit our resources; they do not respect our culture. In five months time, we hope to create a new legislation on regulation and management of resources that recognizes customary law, so that all people respect and have the obligation to protect it.

## **Who are Small-scale fishers?**

**By Paul Molyneux**

*Thomas Kocherry began his vocation working with fishworkers and fish harvesters on the coast of Kerala, India, in the mid 1970's, and has since become a well known, and often controversial, figure in the artisanal fisheries movement of India and around the world. He has been instrumental in the formation of several important fishworker organizations, including the National fishworkers' Forum of India (NFF), the World Forum of Fish Harvesters and Fishworkers (WFF), and the World Forum for Fisher Peoples (WFFP). One thing is certain about Tom: he cares deeply about fishing people, particularly those of developing countries. So Tom, what do you think about the conference?*

I will tell you, this is a great achievement of small-scale organizations coming together and interacting with each other. But we have a big problem. Who are the small-scale fishers? People from Iceland, America, India, Pakistan, Africa, all call themselves small-scale fishers. It's confusing. In my opinion there are certain characteristics that define small-scale fisheries: they are usually beach based, or in small harbours; they are owner-operators, and the people depend on fishing for their subsistence and livelihood. A big problem is that small-scale fisheries in Norway and Iceland, and the North, are often highly commercial and industrialized, and they are giving us, a solution to our problems, that we should modernize. This is ridiculous! Ten million fishers we have in India. If they all modernized it would be chaos. And who is going to invest in modernizing ten million fishers. This will only lead to consolidation as we have seen elsewhere. That's no solution at all, it's the problem.

So here we all are, all the NGOs, WFFP included, and we are talking about lots of ideas: the human rights approach, and socialism, when human rights are being violated all over the world and socialism is in total collapse. We have had many meetings like this; in some we have said we will reduce hunger, and yet hunger only increases. We have said we will reduce carbon dioxide emission, and still it increases. How can we achieve our human rights? How can we achieve socialism? What are we talking about without reference to how to achieve it? Of course we NGO's will go home from this conference and we will survive, but what about those who are hungry right now and are waiting for some solutions, how will we help them. This is what I am waiting for from this conference. Without real solutions it is just a ritual. My one hope is that there is still a day left and that in that time we will talk about how to actually achieve our goals, how to implement human rights. People are asking me for solutions, but I say no, let us discuss this together.

*So, for instance, I would offer that the "right to food," be changed to "right to local food."*

Yes, that's right. In India, in the mid-1930's people realized there was money to be made growing indigo. Suddenly everyone was planting indigo instead of rice. What was the result? A famine that left 20 million people dead.

*(Contd. pg. 4)*

### ***Who are small-scale fishers? (Contd.,)***

*I might also suggest we move immediately to owner-operatorS in fisheries and processing, that is if you own a boat you must be on it when it is fishing, if you own a processing plant you must be there participating. Eliminating absentee ownership will eliminate the numerous exploitation problems associated with it.*

Yes, that's what I am talking about, solutions. Let us demand that fisheries be confined to owner-operators, worldwide, and work to make this happen. Let us come up with ideas and act.

### **Life after 4SSF**

***By Naseegh Jaffer***

So here we are on the last day of 4SSF. We've come full circle. We started with our civil society preparatory workshop on 11 October and went straight into the FAO global conference. And as WFFP, and fishery civil society, we have reached the last day of the conference in a good and hopeful position. But it did not come comfortably.

From the start it appeared that the 4SSF agenda was tightly structured with the key speakers coming from the academia. Many of the break away group discussions were straight-jacketed (*at least the ones I was in*) and did not leave any room for engagement and debate. The only 'voice' we heard was that of the moderator who read out the abbreviated sentences that we had to delicately write on a small piece of square paper, while making sure that we do not soil the fancy table covers. I feared that this was another way of stopping small-scale fisher organizations from presenting and arguing their needs and views. But I am convinced that no conspiracy theory is necessary in this instance.

That Rolf Willmann agreed to give WFFP time to present and argue in support of the "consensus" statement reached at the preparatory workshop is a feather in his cap and an acknowledgement that civil society and indeed small-scale fishers' representatives do have a voice that should be heard. It also avoided the possibility of increased friction. The very conclusion of the consensus position reached by all civil society organizations, amongst members and non-members of WFFP, is in itself a positive achievement.

Fishing communities across the globe have differing realities and experiences. Often these realities take the form of contradicting perceptions and ideas in other countries and amongst various groups in society. But this time, we reached a position that everyone agreed to and were ready to support.

Earlier, I argued that fishers' rights and human rights are indivisible. This is also argued in the "consensus" statement. That no one at the conference challenged this view is highly encouraging. Likewise the view that small-scale fishing rights should not be a tradable commodity (through ITQs etc) was also not challenged. This is highly encouraging. It gives us hope.

What remains though is the development of an international regime that will promote and protect the interests of small-scale fishing communities. This has not yet been achieved. Our collective focus must now shift to the next COFI meeting. We must prepare recommendations that urge our national governments to implement all existing international provisions that protect the human rights of people. Then COFI and the UN must develop a new and additional international regime that specifically speaks to the needs and rights of small-scale fisher communities. Such a regime must be implemented alongside other management systems, like the ecosystems approach. In this manner we protect all forms of life—environmental life and human life.

4SSF is the beginning of another long road ahead. But for the sake of 'life', we must act with urgency.

### ***Gender Monitor (contd., from pg 2)***

Many of the presentations were very good, most notably, those focusing on the indivisibility of human rights from fishing rights and the proposal that enforcing human rights is the best way to sustain the small-scale fisheries. Whilst we support this approach, it is critical to argue the social justice imperative of this position rather than to argue that this approach makes economic 'cents'. With the commitment that we see being made by the organizers towards sustaining the small-scale fisheries, we hope that the challenges that a more nurturing and gender-just approach contributes will be high on any future agenda.



**Bye bye, See you again!**

*Daily Rights* thanks all its readers and contributors for their support to the newsletter. This is the last print version of the newsletter. Next week we will bring out an electronic version of the newsletter, with people's reflections on the conference. Please do send in your contributions for this. Thanks specifically to the French, Spanish and Thai readers, contributors and co-ordinators of the newsletter.

"*Daily Rights*" is a newsletter brought out by the co-ordinating committee set up to engage with the 4SSF. It is an initiative of WFFP, ICSF, FSF, SDF and IPC. It will be available everyday from 11 October 2008 to 18 October 2008 in four languages—English, French, Spanish and Thai. The language versions are not identical, and are meant to represent the perspectives of the language groups. All issues in different languages are available online at: <http://sites.google.com/site/smallscalefisheries>. All are welcome to contribute. Please send your contributions to: Harini Kumar (English): [harini747@gmail.com](mailto:harini747@gmail.com); Patricio Igor Melillanca (Spanish): [patricio@ecoceanos.cl](mailto:patricio@ecoceanos.cl); Madien Seck (French): [madiensec@yahoo.fr](mailto:madiensec@yahoo.fr) (French); SDF (Thai): [nusute7@yahoo.com](mailto:nusute7@yahoo.com). **Disclaimer:** The opinions expressed in the commentaries and articles printed in *Daily Rights* are those of the individual authors or organizations.



# Daily Rights

Issue No. 8

19 November 2008

A Civil Society Newsletter for 4SSF

## *Signing Off*

This is the eighth and final issue of Daily Rights. It comes almost a month after the dust from 4SSF held in Bangkok has settled. This final issue compiles the reflections that have been received from civil society participants on 4SSF. Specific proposals for the "next steps" after 4SSF are also given. This issue also carries an interview with one of the South African fisherwomen participants at 4SSF. And some photos from Bangkok!

Comments on this issue, and your own suggestions on the way forward, can be sent to [smallscalefisheries@googlegroups.com](mailto:smallscalefisheries@googlegroups.com). The message will go to members of the civil society co-ordinating group that had been set up to engage with the 4SSF, that is WFFP, ICSF, FSF, SDF and IPC.

For previous issues of this newsletter, please see <http://sites.google.com/site/smallscalefisheries/Home>.

The Daily Rights Team

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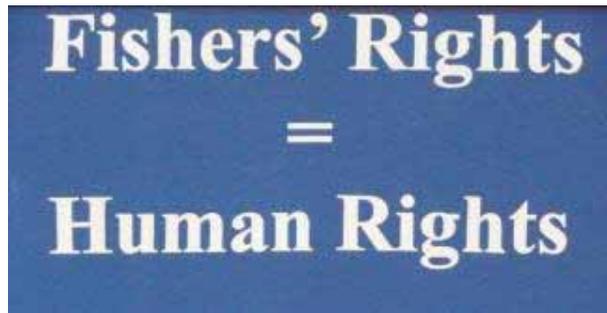
## 4SSF Feedback

The FAO 4SSF conference in Bangkok definitely steps forward in the approach of artisanal fisheries within the context of Human Rights & Sustainable Development. It is more than a remarkable step taken towards a shift in the international view of the global problem concerning fisheries worldwide. In my view, the FAO conference needs, therefore, a follow up within this process under the basis of 4 principles:

1. The civil society statement.
2. The principles of food sovereignty applied to SSF.
3. The recognition of the right to fish for subsistence as a fundamental right of small-scale fishermen and communities.
4. The establishment of domestic and international frameworks to protect those rights and principles.

**Xabier Ezeizabarrena, Basque**

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It is the first time that traditional and small-scale fisherfolk around the world talked for themselves and their interests from perspectives different from the development approach; their network and commitment to strengthen every effort locally and globally is the most powerful to continue to fight against marginalization.

The existing network is the start and it needs to be maximized; we need to work in a collaborative manner between the small-scale fishing community organizations, academia, NGOs and funding organizations. It is also very clear that the voluntary guidelines are not enough; we need to go further beyond those. The most important thing is how to empower the mass organizations, so as to enable them to argue and influence their national governments. For this, support from NGOs and funding organizations is needed and urgent. (We have a good vision already, the only thing that still needs expanding is the capacity and capability of the fisher people)

Let us unite nationally to fight against corrupt governments whose policies are drive by neo-

liberalism and free market interest, and let us struggle globally to fight against global neo-liberalism.

**Muhammad Reza, Indonesia**

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I was mostly interested in gender equality, the aspects and meaning of which I found very intense on the whole during the discussions. It better equipped me for future work on the people who have been extremely marginalized, the fisher widows. The pre-meeting was indeed an excellent opportunity to come up with new ideas and agenda.

On behalf of our organization, PUGAD, the next agenda should be on the care of our seas and its habitant. This is very urgent.

More power to the Small Scale Fishers!!

**Evelyn Bengco Sonderholm, Denmark**

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It was a celebration of the small fisher people of the world. The biggest achievement was the consensus statement from the Civil Society workshop, with 106 participants.

But there was no time given to respond in the 4SSF process. Though the group works were informative, the FAO was pushing its agenda wherever I went. If FAO's approach was to give positive and negative

points, there was no need for group work. An intelligent person is enough to give both sides? The challenge is to achieve a consensus.

Many presentations were ideal, without much discussion as to how to achieve these ideals. What after 4SSF? It is like FAO Food Summit, on how to reduce world hunger by half, by 2015. But these numbers are increasing. What is the use of such summits? These summits become mere rituals. It is good for FAO officials and some NGOs can survive through these rituals. All the ideals of 4SSF will remain on paper. I have no hope in COFI also. Nothing will come from there.

Let us call for a meet of all the small-scale fisher people of Asia, Africa and South America to discuss on how to achieve the Consensus statement realized, 106 of them?

At the end, poor fisher people of the world have to struggle to obtain their rights. They have to struggle, and give their lives for the same. There is no other way to realize these rights. All those who join these struggles have the right to exist as far as small fisher people are concerned. In the context of the Global Economic crises, the relevance of small fisher people is very high. They are becoming powerful in the world arena as producers. Land reform and aquatic reform are crucial. WFFP has proved that it was not born of out lies. It is powerful, democratic and has a gender balance of 50/50. We need struggles like Chengara in Kerala, India to realize Land Reform and Aquatic Reform all over the world.

**Thomas Kocherry, India**  
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*What did you get out of 4SSF?*

A lot of new friends, a lasting impression of the potential strength of the participating organizations, the impression that FAO staff and other governmental and Intl. organizations agree that small-scale fisheries are the solution to the fisheries crises and that we have a chance to bring about the changes to improve well-being of coastal communities and for integrated fisheries management. I also realize that the real enemies are in the fishing and aquaculture industry. These enemies, along with real estate speculation under the codename tourism, will be hard to fight as long as money and development is the global goal.

*What should we work towards in the coming period?*

We should first evaluate and clarify for ourselves where we stand as far as FAO is concerned—is our

participation in the COFI effective enough to guarantee the fishers rights as identified in the civil society statement? What other instruments of influence and development do we have? Is the sub-committee the answer or a Global Action Plan? I think we should develop a common position and coordinate with ourselves—NGOs and civil society—until December 2008 so that we can subsequently work on our governments to support our position and proposals in the next COFI Meeting.

**René Scharer, Brazil**  
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I was honoured to attend both the Civil Society Workshop, and the 4SSF conference, they were very inspiring for me, and left me with a guarded hope that maybe we can pull this off.

1. We need a cohesive strategy for action. Different areas require different actions, but can we coordinate our efforts?

I'm reminded of how Native Americans and the Irish fought the colonial invaders seeking to capture their respective lands and resources: The tribes and clans fought amongst themselves, they fought disjointedly, everyone pursuing their own strategies right down to the individual level, and they paid no attention to timing, and they lost in the short term, and it has taken hundreds of years for them to regain any shred of what they lost, we cannot afford to lose. So...

2. Can we develop a suite of tactics such as litigation, legislation, cooperative business ventures, and ecosystem restoration, and get these spreading among fisher communities around the world? Can we get media savvy putting out a message that resonates with the public at large? And can we utilize these tactics to serve a long term strategy aimed at creating the circumstances, the potential, for sustainable fisheries.

3. Somebody along the way asked how we could get government to help. That hadn't even occurred to me! But it is also worth considering.

**Paul Molyneux, USA**  
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Yes, reflections are always important and may differ from the diversity of perspectives from which we come, especially on critical matters. And if you don't mind, I humbly submit mine from a very difficult place, coming from Canada and with limited experience other than with regulatory regimes of highly commercialized and privatization imposed on Indigenous Peoples, and others who have always fished small-scale and sustainably for generations, such as the hand liners and the beach based shell fish harvesters.

The impact of global commodification is also felt in all the other sectors as well—either they be mining, farming, etc. Being from a so-called "Developed" country, international processes take for granted that the very ideologies and governance structures that cause so much devastation in other countries, also cause much devastation to Indigenous and Non-Indigenous fisher people who try to fight against the system within those "developed" countries. In a country where human rights and all the freedoms are supposed to be in place, they are marginalized and do not carry any weight in this type of commodified democracy or a country with a democratic deficit. This is what lies beneath the surface of appearance and has been witnessed by us who try to demand public processes, information and propose alternatives. In fact they are right out denied and shut down. This causes us concern, because if the so-called democratic developed countries will go to these lengths to shut down their own citizens, they will stop at no cost to carry out the neoliberal agenda globally.

Now having said this, when I turn to my reflections to the Bangkok Civil Society preparatory and subsequent FAO conference, it is becoming clear to me that FAO has been frustrating for most Social Movements. Yet, as Thomas has pointed out, it was historic that they even invited the small-scale fisher folk. However, with all the frustrations and problems the WFFP experienced with the funding and logistics and all the hard work in the preparation to put forward a WFFP statement as a foundation to participate in a wider process of a civil society consensus statement, the FAO process was indeed frustrating...

Other than this, it was a good learning experience, and I especially enjoyed working in the preparatory workshop as well as the opportunity to meet and work with others during the FAO conference as frustrating as it was for all the Civil Society Groups, including WFFP.

**Sherry Pictou, Canada**  
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I have learnt many positive aspects of dealing the issues of small-scale fisheries, from the various deliberations at the 4SSF conference. I have learnt that FAO is not an independent and enforcing agency that can change lives of small-scale fishers, but can only add or include proposals, suggested by representatives of small-scale fisheries. But what I would like to suggest to the United Nations and World Forum of Fisher Peoples (WFFP) is that they have to go beyond, and undertake concrete action, to save lives, livelihoods and culture of small-scale fishers. The United Nations must establish a separate body from FAO, called "Fisheries Management Organization", with the main objective to protect and preserve inland and marine resources. Until a separate organization is formed, WFFP can prepare strategic policy or plan in specific to inland water bodies and resources, their exploitation and sustainable use. It would be a big challenge for WFFP and its member organization, as it would be a matter of

implementation of WFFP universal sustainable fisheries policy.

Besides this, I would like to suggest establishment of fisheries court in each nation State, similar to labour courts. The court can be a separate UN Organizations with fisheries management authority, to promote the goal of sustainable small-scale fisheries purely in the context of social-economics, politics and cultural rights. The fisheries management organization should follow the guidelines/policy prepared by WFFP in support with international and civil society and other stakeholders.

These proposals are put forward to provoke all of us, to work hard to secure our future and the future of our next generation. I hope we all will feel and act responsibly to not merely secure sustainable small-scale fisheries but poor people who are or not associated with fisheries. If there is no fish, to fish, of course, poverty will increase and burden will shift to other sectors....

**Abdullah Khoso, Pakistan**  
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The 4SSF was a great opportunity for the civil society and primary stakeholders in the small-scale fisheries sector to voice the real concerns. We are happy that there were listening ears and open approaches. It also gave opportunities for many of us to reconfirm our belief that Fisheries management has to start from the grassroots and not from the top.



We have to work towards more practical and realistic approaches from the primary stakeholders for ensuring strategies for sustainable fisheries and livelihoods. A change in mind set towards this has to be brought about with the policy makers and implementers.

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## **Casting Women's Net beyond South Africa**

*Camelita Mostert, Coastal Links, South Africa, talks to Jackie Sunde, member of ICSF*

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Camelita Mostert comes from a fishing town called Saldanha, famous for its canning of pelagic fish, on the west coast of South Africa. Her family is a family of fishers and Camelita herself worked for one of the largest fishing companies as a machine operator for several years. Following a work related injury to her back she was forced to stop work with no medical assistance from the company. Neither her father nor her brother was successful in obtaining fishing rights during the long fishing rights allocation process of 2005. Camelita is a member of Coast Links, the community based network of fishing communities that has fought hard for the recognition of the rights of artisanal and small-scale fishers. In the past year Camelita has been an active member of the Women's Network within Coastal Links. Camelita shares with *Daily Rights* the process that the Women's Network has undertaken and why this Civil Society Preparatory Conference and the FAO Global Conference are particularly important for women in South Africa.

### **Why is this meeting significant for women in South Africa?**

In South Africa we won the right to participate in the development of a new policy for the fishers. We started this policy process at local, provincial and national level but this policy process has been dominated by fishermen. We have had a lot of debates in our workshops between men and women about what it means for women to get equal rights in the new policy. Women want the right to choose whether or not they go to sea but mainly they want the right to participate and to benefit equally from the selling and processing of the harvest. But women also want to make sure that the whole community benefits from this new process, and that we find a way of ensuring that the elderly are taken care of and that the youth also benefit.

We want this policy to help us set up many other livelihood opportunities. We decided that we needed to hold a women only workshop to discuss our views on the policy. In April we had a 'Women in Fisheries Workshop' where we learnt about the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and other instruments that we can use to fight for our right to participate equally. We looked at the draft

policy through a 'gender lens' and saw that the policy process did not include women equally. We then wrote our own policy statement that demanded that women's roles in the fisheries must be seen and that we must have one woman representative on the National Policy Task Team. The government has not yet let us nominate a woman to this team but we will fight for this.

This conference in Bangkok is very important for us as we need to learn from women in other countries what they have done to make sure that women benefit equally from the small-scale fisheries. It is wonderful to be together with women from all over the world and realise that they have the same problems that we have in South Africa. The field trip also showed me what women can do in their communities. We need to stand together and demand that FAO include this in international agreements because our government does not support us women on this and many fishermen do not want women to be seen as part of the fisheries. We need WFFP, ICSF and other organisations to support women in all countries to fight for this.



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