

SAMUDRA

INTERNATIONAL COLLECTIVE IN SUPPORT OF FISHWORKERS

REPORT

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR WORLD FISHERIES?





SAMUDRA

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Cover photo: The main fish market in Bangkok (Photo: F. Bellec)

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THE WAY FROM INTERDEPENDENCE TOWARDS SOLIDARITY

We live in an increasingly interdependent world. Trade, aid agreements, capital flows and migration of people between countries and from continent to continent, between North and South, are becoming more and more intensive.

The fishery sector is particularly subject to such growing interdependence. In order to make up for the depletion of certain fish stocks in northern waters, industrial fleets are looking more and more to harvest the richer fishing grounds belonging to tropical countries. They sign lucrative contracts with their governments, which enable them to supply the markets of Europe, the USA or Japan with high quality products at relatively low cost. In return, the countries that own the fishery resources receive financial compensation and technical aid or training. However, it must be said that this counterpart is usually neither a fair deal nor in keeping with the receiving country's needs.

A similar trend in interdependence is to be found in the development of intensive aquaculture in numerous Third World countries. To satisfy the wealthy nations' demand for high-value species, many thousands of hectares of land are being converted into ponds for raising shrimp, mainly for export. The monoculture of shellfish is not unlike that of cotton, soyabean or cassava, in that it takes place on land, which had hitherto been used for growing food crops, or in mangrove swamps, which are natural nursery areas for fish and crustaceans.

Of course, this type of aquaculture brings in the hard currency, which developing countries inevitably need in order to import capital goods. But here too, interdependence may carry risks for the ecological systems and populations of these countries: the destruction of ecosystems, pollution, the disappearance of certain fish species, reduced food self-sufficiency, the forced displacement of people...

Many other examples could clearly show how the increase in North-South interdependence, in the area of fishery economics, has unfortunately not been built on equitable grounds, and often leaves poorer countries on the losing end.

It is urgent that such policies and economic practices be denounced by demonstrating which interests are being served by the present trends in the fishery sector. Interdependence as such is not a bad thing insofar as it engenders new relations between different people and nations, between North and South; however, it can only augur well for the future if it is based on a just and genuine partnership. In other words, an interdependent relationship needs to be founded in solidarity.

Sheer utopia, some will say! I would not be so sure. Mutual interest can lead to changes in attitude and behaviour. The future of the industrial countries is closely tied to that of developing countries. The North will surely reap the harmful consequences of its present unequal trading system with the South, if it is maintained much longer.

An alternative policy does exist. It implies that all types of dependence and inequality should be resisted. The aim should be to put the relationship between people on a new footing. A number of fishworkers organizations have chosen to follow this road. With the prospect of finding their way from interdependence towards solidarity.

François BELLEC
Editor

The Bangkok Conference Thailand - January 1980

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR WORLD FISHERIES?

During the last few decades there has been a steady increase in the demand for fish by the industrialised countries. This trend has resulted in over-exploitation of marine resources and the anarchic development of large-scale aquaculture projects in Third World countries.

These trends which are in line with global economic strategies aimed at acquiring quick profits have often resulted in the destruction of aquatic eco-systems and of the marine environment, endangering the livelihood of fishworkers and their families.

With the aim of evaluating these trends and developments, the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF) convened an International Conference in Bangkok (Thailand, 22-27 of January). This event enabled academics, community organisers, fishworkers and representatives of fishworkers' organisations originating from 28 countries of the five continents, to exchange their experiences and to propose measures for the future.

The International Conference (1) was hosted by the Kasetsart University of Bangkok, a University noted for its concern and its direct involvement in the development of small agricultural and aquacultural producers in Thailand.

The future of small-scale fishermen the world over could be jeopardised if, unhappily, we do not undertake a serious struggle for the defence of resources and for the survival of our occupation", declares Humberto Chamorro-Alvarez, fisherman and president of the National Council of Artisanal Fishermen of Chile (CONAPACH), at the opening of the Conference. This urgent appeal exemplifies the fact that more and more the fishworkers insist on participating actively in global resource management. They do not put forward this claim excluding other sectors, as if only they have the answers. On the contrary, they insist on other organisations representing other fields of activity (farmers, scientists, ecologists, etc.) join forces to bring pressure to bear upon the governments and decision makers for the formulation of an alternative development policy.

Excessive pressure on natural resources

The situation is alarming everywhere, all along the coasts of the planet and within most of the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs). The general scenario is the same: overfishing, over exploitation of resources, indiscriminate destruction of the marine environment,

anarchic development of large-scale aquaculture for export.

"The future of fishworkers has to be seen in the context of modern development and the pressures that these developments make on those who subsist on the common property resources", specifies Nalini Nayak, coordinator of the ICSF, in her communication (see article p.10). "All of us who work with fishworkers", she continues, "are fully aware of the fact that the depletion of fish resources is a biological phenomenon which has an adverse effect on eco-systems through the use of over-efficient technology, water pollution and more broadly, the greed of capital to reap fast profits".

Due to the increase in the demand for fish, the industrialised countries assert the right of access of their fleets to the coastal waters of the developing countries and continue to appropriate the fishery products from these regions. This precipitates the negotiations for fishery agreements between northern and southern countries, capital-intensive investment policies, financial assistance to improve the productivity of local fisheries, development of intensive aquaculture projects (especially prawn culture), etc.

These global trends not only bring heavy pressure to bear on the natural resources, endangering the marine eco-systems, but also generate increasing dependence of small-scale fishermen on outside financial intervention with consequent greater indebtedness.

Growing mobility in the supply of fish

“The boundaries of the world trade in fish have been literally redrawn with the establishment of Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs)”, remarks Kevin Crean, Deputy Director of the Humberside International Fisheries Institute at the University of Hull (UK). “This process has brought about redistribution of the rights of access to the world’s fish resources”.

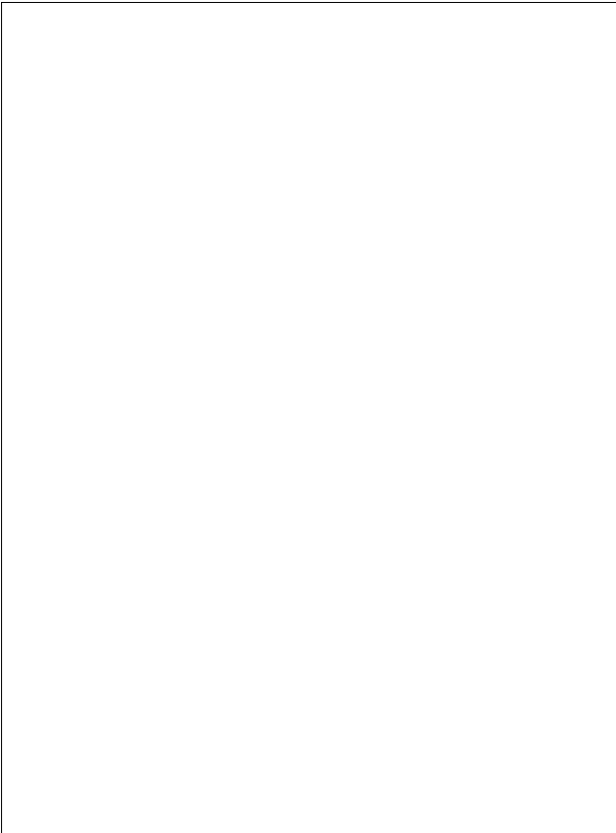
In fact, we witness today the mergence of new commercial flows, from developing countries towards the developed countries. Fish and fishery products are directed towards the consumer, wherever the demand is greater and the highest profits can be had. Transport by air has made it possible for northern countries to be supplied today with fresh fish coming from southern countries, where there exists a severe shortage of food to supply their own populations.

“The demand for fish and fish products has increased steadily over the last three decades. Nevertheless the differences in the level of consumption between developed and developing countries remained practically the same. The per capita consumption in the industrialised world is 3.5 times more than in poor countries and this trend is likely to continue”, remarks Kevin Crean.

Government policy for the marketing of fish and shellfish is dictated by the need for hard currency. Fish has become a luxury food item, to such an extent that certain species are no longer available to the local people in the producing countries. This situation raises a number of questions. Should one refer to ethical values when analysing the distortions created by market forces on the food supply of low-income populations? One may also compare the monoculture of luxury species to the monoculture of groundnuts, soya or cassava, which destroyed, as we know, the local food production which enabled rural populations in Third World countries to live decently.

In the light of the growing mobility in the marketing of fish and fish products and the unbalance it has engendered, the leaders of fishworkers organisations recognise the need for setting up mar-





keting channels which they could manage themselves with the required technical assistance. Without excluding production for export, priority should of course be given to supplying local, regional and national markets with the protein that is needed by deprived populations.

Is there a future for the blue revolution?

Over the past ten years, the anarchic development of aquaculture projects in Asia and Latin American countries has in many cases deprived local communities of their means of eking out a living. This “blue revolution”, thus called by analogy with the “green revolution” in agriculture, has largely taken place in vast mangrove areas the natural breeding grounds of numerous species of fish and shell-fish or in traditional paddy fields which were the source of staple foods for the local populations. This has also caused the forced displacement of entire communities.

This large-scale aquaculture development is essentially export oriented this is particularly the case with intensive prawn culture to the detriment of the protein needs of the local populations. Moreover the intensive type of aquaculture also causes pollution owing to accumulation of toxic organic and inorganic substances.

The large-scale production of certain species shrimp for example also causes a fall in prices on the international markets. Those involved in this type of economic activity do not hesitate, when such is the case, to invest their capital in other economic activities, but the fall in price has serious effects on the artisanal fishermen involved in the capture of similar species. Nevertheless, Hector-Luis Morales, sociologist from Chile and specialist on aquaculture issues (2), mentions a growing tendency towards the culture of more popular species in response to the food requirements of local populations. *“This was made possible in Chile because of the stricter control exercised by the community organisation. It is essential, he adds, to challenge certain policies that use aquaculture exclusively for export. This is the case in Bangladesh, for example, where the World Bank invests huge amounts of money to promote the aquaculture of shrimps for export”*

Finally, Hector-Luis Morales concludes that the blue revolution has its positive as well as its negative aspects. *“There is an urgent need to implement training programmes for people directly involved and to fight for reorientation of aquaculture production”.*

New types of organisations

“In the light of the present developments, there is urgent need to form our own organisations for the defence of our profession and of the rights of fishworkers”. This vehement appeal was repeatedly made during the Bangkok Conference.

Fishworkers organisations have a crucial role to play in the management of marine resources and in settling, by means of negotiation and dialogue, conflicts between different types of fishing. They are indispensable in affirming the economic, social, political and cultural role of fishworkers within society. In asserting the access to credit and insurance systems technological know-how, to health services and education.

The state, on the other hand, has to recognise their role in fisheries management and grant them rights and responsibilities. However, such recognition is usually allowed only when fishworkers organisations have pressurised the governments to redirect their fisheries policy.

During the last few decades, new types of organisations have in this way been established in many countries like the Philippines, India, Chile, Senegal, and New Zealand. In Senegal for example, a National Fishermen’s Collective was formed in 1987. With a membership of 1.800 the Senegalese Government is

obliged to take into account its propositions and demands. *"Fishworkers organisations are today becoming important forces which cannot be circumvented if any fishery policy is to be efficiently implemented"*, emphasises Aliou Sall, Senegalese sociologist and consultant of an organisation which supports fishworkers in his country.(3)

In the Philippines, with the support of various professional organisations, a national movement of small-scale fishermen, proposed a New Fisheries Code in 1988, after two years of broad-based consultation at grass-roots level. This Code has been put before parliament. It has been the subject of numerous deliberations with fishworkers which today constitute a powerful pressure group.

Similarly in Chile, India and New Zealand where the Maories are actively challenging the quota system of the New Zealand government.

Last but not least, the militancy of women active in the fishery sector has to be mentioned. All over the world women are rising up in protest against the hardships they have to face in every day life. In India, women are playing an important role in the struggle against pollution. In Europe they have organised international meetings and challenged their governments. They in fact play an important part within the fishing community in defence of social issues, are active within the profession itself, as well as sustaining the family, the children's education, In fact, the future of the fisheries sector depends for a large part on their commitment to the struggle. Without doubt, this Conference has shown on the one hand the complexity and universality of the problems facing the fishery sector and on the other hand the considerable innovative capacity and militancy of the fishworkers in meeting the huge challenges of a changing world.

François BELLEC



GLOBAL FISHERIES TRENDS AND THE FUTURE OF FISHWORKERS

Final statement of the Bangkok Conference (Thailand, January 22-27, 1990)

Before finalising the Conference, a general declaration on the global fisheries trends and the future of fishworkers was adopted by the participants. We publish here below some of the main points. The complete text of the declaration can be obtained at the liaison office in Brussels.

The Conference met at a juncture when the trends in the fisheries sector point to the imminent likelihood of major changes at the international level. These emerging changes arise not only from within the fisheries sector, but are also precipitated by pressures of ongoing development processes in the sectors of the economy. The cumulated effects of these changes, in the long-run, threatens to destroy irreparably the aquatic cycle which is the basis of life on our planet (...)

Global trends

During the last three decades there has been a steady increase in the world demand for fish. This tendency is predicted to continue and even to accelerate during the coming decades. Consequently, there has been tremendous effort to expand the production of fish to match this rising demand. This effort has taken place at a time when most maritime countries extended their Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).(...)

As a result of the new Law of the Sea signed in 1982, industrialised countries have been increasingly concerned with maintaining access of their long distance fleets to the water off the coast of developing countries as well as with ensuring a steady supply of fishery products from the Third World. The latter was often achieved by enhancing the productive potential of the local fisheries through the provision of international finance, both public and private.

This development was particularly visible in the field of shrimp aquaculture in developing countries and in the rapid increase of fishing agreements between Northern and Southern countries-especially between the European Economic Community and the African countries.

Along side these efforts to enhance fish production, there are increasing threats to the aquatic eco-system due to the developments which have occurred in the other sectors of the economy. Indiscriminate economic growth strategies have resulted in excessive pressure on natural resources, particularly in coastal region, and in growing amounts of effluents from industries and modern agriculture which affect

the biological productivity of rivers, estuaries and coastal seas. The anarchic development of tourism along coastal areas provides striking illustration of the detrimental effect which such profit-oriented strategies have on fisherfolk and fisheries.

These trends have accentuated in the 1980's because of the external debt problem of many developing countries. Indeed, the need to service their debts in the context of a world economic crisis has forced them to plunder their natural resources and to neglect the basic need of large segments of their people in order to earn foreign exchange quickly.

Issues in fisheries management and development

In the fisheries sector, export-oriented strategies as well as the provision of access rights to industrial fishing fleets, have resulted in enhanced competition and conflicts with local fisheries, particularly with small-scale fishing communities.

These small-scale fishing communities form a particularly vulnerable segment of the fisheries sector due to a variety of reasons. They are by and large powerless against physical intrusions in waters over which they had traditional rights. Poor access to credit, modern inputs and know-how have prevented them from upgrading their fishing technologies. The political and social marginalisation continue to reinforce all the above vulnerabilities.

In the case of some countries, the small-scale fishing communities have been able to get their governments to reorient fisheries policies. In other cases, they have succeeded in modernising their artisanal technologies which has enhanced their ability to compete with industrial fleets.

Unfortunately, this latter modernisation process in many countries has been only a short-term solution to the problems of these communities. This is so because fishery resources are already fully or even over-exploited when these measures are adopted.(...) Fishworkers from developing countries working on the industrial fishing fleets are also victims of exploitation.(...) Their work and service con-

ditions are abysmally poor and they are faced with the constant threat of dismissal.(...)

Fishworker's organisations

Collective action of fishworkers is necessary for monitoring fishing effort, controlling access to the sea and managing and rejuvenating the resources. It is also a prerequisite for performing a large variety of economic, social and political functions. These include cooperative organisation for purchase of input and sale of outputs; improving access to credit and insurance; developing appropriate technologies and related skills; and for health and educational measures.(...)

A new genre of fishworkers' organisations have emerged during the last decade in some countries (e.g. India, Philippines, Chile). These organisations have focused their attention on, and directed their struggle at, ensuring that the state take steps to ensure that appropriate fishery management measures are enacted and enforced.

However, it must be admitted that in many instances the same organisations are much weaker in their ability to cope with the self-defeating character of certain fishing methods and the anarchic increases in fishing capacity aimed initially at maintaining their incomes.

Therefore a processor education and awareness-building is a basic prerequisite for these fishermen and their new organisations. Equally important in this context is the need to revive and reinstate the encyclopedic knowledge which many of these communities possess about the aquatic-system, this cultural knowledge should serve as an important basis for devising ways and means of controlling and re-orienting fishing effort and rejuvenating fishery resources.(...)

Attempts by fishworkers to federate at the national level should be actively promoted. However, where such national federations are multi-sectoral, the small-scale fishworkers are likely to be marginalised within the larger structures. Such inter-sectoral problems should be openly discussed.

Aquaculture

In Latin America and Asia, coastal aquaculture has witnessed a phenomenal growth during the last decade.

Export-oriented aquaculture, it now appears, has created severe problems which jeopardies the livelihood of local peasant and fishing communities and in the long term will affect the sustainability of the natural resource base.(...)

In the case of shrimp aquaculture in tropical countries we see the destruction of large tracts of estuarine and mangrove areas which form the natural breeding grounds of many species of aquatic life. Often, shrimp aquaculture is undertaken at the expense of staple foods such as rice and fish species which were formally locally consumed. After a few years of continuous cultivation, the fields are polluted owing to the accumulation of toxic organic and inorganic substances. Since much of the demand for shrimp comes from a handful of industrialised countries the increase in shrimp production on a global scale causes a fall in the world market prices. This quickly affects not only those involved in aquaculture but is also bound to affect negatively the incomes of all small-scale fishworkers involved in capture-shrimp fisheries in developing countries.

However less intensive forms of aquaculture development can provide opportunities for fishworkers communities to manage fish resources in the areas where they live to obtain new sources of income and to enhance food production and employment. This requires that such communities are given exclusive rights to control the water bodies and the surrounding environment.

Perspectives for the future

- To face the future, it is imperative to emphasise the need for more holistic understanding of the intricate relationship between the aquatic environment and the total biosphere of our planet. As beacons of the sea fishworkers have a special role and responsibility in furthering this understanding.
- To achieve this holistic understanding there is an increasing need for fishworkers and their supporters to relate more closely to other deprived people whose survival is also affected by environmental damage, which as in the case of fisheries, is hastened by development processes that pay little heed to the rhythms of nature.
- These new alliances to protect the environment should not detract fishworkers either from the demands within the fisheries sector or from the autonomous functioning of their organisations.
- Sustainability of development requires that we move from exploitative to nurturing relationships with nature. Nurture and sustenance have always been the role of women in fishing communities. This role has often resulted in them being marginalised in their own communities. Only their active participation in the economy and a recognition of its centrality, will ensure that such new relationships with nature emerge.

STOP THIS DESTRUCTIVE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY!

“From many points of view we are at an historical cross road today. While there is a political regrouping of forces taking place, it is certain that the constraints of the existing development process have led to this juncture”.

With these words, Nalini Nayak, sociologist and coordinator of the ICSF, situates the setting and responsibilities, inviting the participants to the Bangkok Conference to analyse the present developments in the fishery sector from a global perspective. Even if these developments are not directly linked to this sector they nevertheless have its bearing upon it.

In 1989 the National Fishworkers Forum (NFF), India, undertook a month long national coastal ecological march called the Kanyakumari March - because it culminated at Kanyakumari, at the southern tip of India on worker's day May 1st.

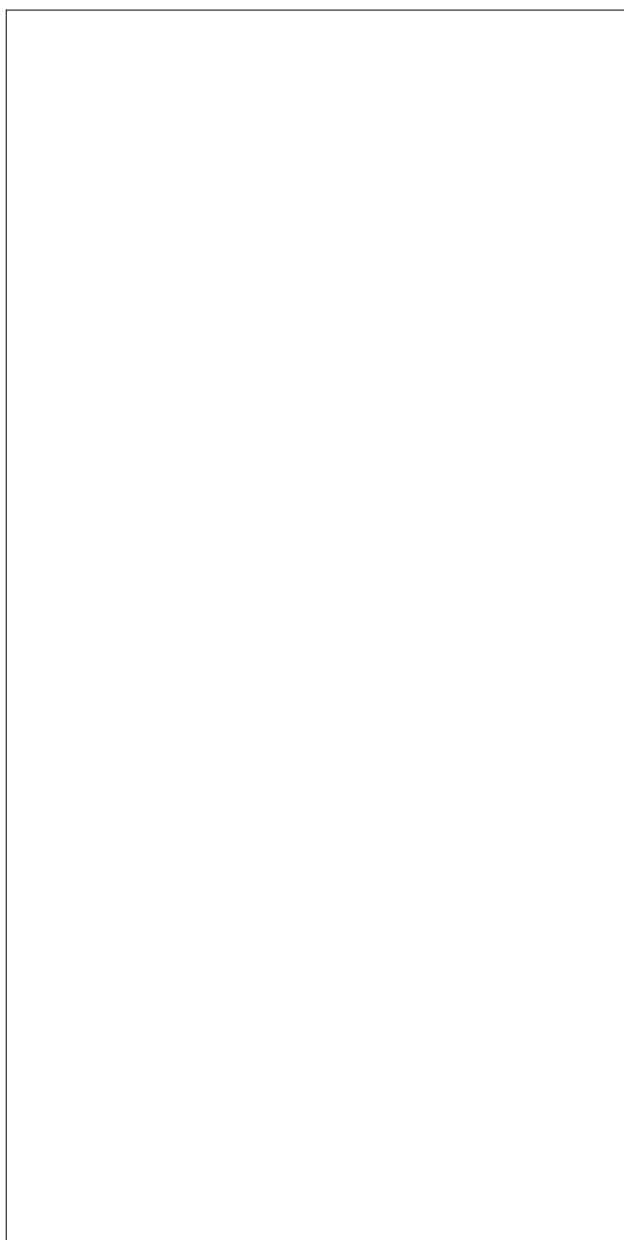
The reaction from other Trade Unions was: “What on earth does a worker's union has to do in an ecological march that is for the environmentalists?”

For all of us who work with fishworkers, we are fully aware of the fact that the depletion of fish resources is a biological phenomenon which has to do with the adverse effect on the eco-cycles caused by the use of over efficient technology, the pollution of the water and more broadly, the greed of capital to reap fast profits.

Working beaches converted to tourist beaches

National fishworkers unions in The Philippines, Thailand, India and Chile have led to struggles demanding the management of the resources so that the small fishworkers will have their space in which to operate and so that the regeneration of the resource may be safeguarded. But while we are all busy with our day to day struggles and organisational work, more violent development strategies are wiping us off our feet and threatening the very existence of the small fishworkers on land.

The Kanyakumary March highlighted some of these growing land based trends. Local people flocked to meet the marchers expressing their problems which were far beyond the imagination of the marchers before launching on the march. Thousands of fisher people gathered at Kanyakumari, particularly women



in large numbers, as they felt the march highlighted their problems of survival. Although I do not intend to give the details of the march here I feel the concerns expressed at this march will be the concerns of fishworkers all over the world and I would like to relate them here.

Most of the new issues relate to the displacement of the small fishworkers in the name of land based development. They are being displaced because of tourism. The working beaches have to be converted into tourist beaches, some of them making way for five star hotels and others of a cheaper nature encouraging druggies and sex tourism which ruin the local rural cultures.

The development of tourism is one of the ways in which the developing countries hope to increase their foreign exchange earnings and diversify employment avenues. A study done on the beaches of Goa, India, shatters all these dreams. The Indian tourists who come from the upper classes outweigh the foreign ones. On the other hand the hotel industry grows to be so self contained that no local skill is employed. The avenues for alternative employment of the local people is therefore a myth. The local people may have to provide the ethnic attraction which is anyway underpaid and is very seasonal.

There is large-scale displacement also taking place in the name of nuclear installations which carry with them the danger of radiation health hazards. We see the Pacific being made the base of the advanced countries for all their nuclear testing and they are aggressive about it too. The "*Green Peace Organisation*" suffered fatally because they tried to question this. The people of the Pacific Islands are considered less than human and therefore need no protection against these barbaric encroachments on their land, environment and culture. We know that the cost of producing one unit of hydro and solar energy. Yet the investment in research made to harness the energy of the sun is so meagre that it is not yet competitive enough to be considered an alternative source.

Who pays for the oil spills?

The fast depletion of the forests also has its impact on the fishery. Some of the most precious rain forests of the world have been destroyed. Other forest trees are mindlessly felled and large amounts of developmental are then spent on presences of social forestry. As a result of this depletion the rivers are drying up and with less nutrients reaching the seas, the regeneration of the stocks is also hampered. Together with this, the indiscriminate clearing of the mangroves, turning them into prawn fields, is a destruction of the

rich nursery grounds for the fish. We know that in many parts of the world and especially here in southern Thailand, fishworkers who took for granted that the sea provided them food, are starving today because this is not so.

Then again, who pays for the oil spills in the oceans? When the Union Carbide Company in Bhopal, India, caused the gas tragedy, at least the inhabitants of the area could sue the company for damages. Although this is no solution to the problem, at least the companies have to learn to take measures of precaution. Who can react to the oil spills in the oceans? Do we always get to know about them? Whom do they affect? What effect do they have on the future regeneration of the fish stocks?

The future of the fishworkers has to be seen in the context of modern development and the pressures that these developments make on those who subsist on the common property resources, I need not mention in detail the various kinds of pollution that destroy our waters today. While the fish kills that result from toxic pollution are recognised but not seriously monitored, the impact of this pollution on the health resistance of the fishworkers is nobody's concern be it in the first, second or third world. We hear how certain third world countries have to barter space to dump toxic waste of a developed country in return for food.

This waste is dumped in the territorial waters of a third world country thereby polluting the waters and ruining the ecology. SAMUDRA Review n° 2 - informs us of how West Africa refused to accept this in Guinea Bissau which was offered \$ 120 million for the same.

Then, aspects we are not allowed to speak about publicly are the defence installations. Most of them are situated near the sea. In India, instance, these are on the increase and new bases are being established leading to displacement and privatisation of coastal lands and waters. Since the main reason given for these installation is national security, the local people have no scope to react. Displacement is justified again in the name of progress so long as those displaced are compensated. Compensation means being paid off or given an alternative site. Neither of these meet the life needs of those displaced as employment and sources of livelihood are not guaranteed.

The determining role of women

These are other cases in which the oil and mineral wealth of the oceans are being exploited indis-

criminally and we still have not been able to know of or assess these in any detail.

We see from history that modern technology has already taken its toll on women. Besides ousting them from the labour force, it has relegated them to the homes where their labour is not remunerated and not assessed in the calculations of the gross national product. Today, in the third world especially we see how the processes of privatisation threaten the subsistence economies and thereby increase the burden on women. Women have to walk further away for water, fuel and fodder to keep the home fires burning.

In the developed world, women have to manage the home and households alone because their husbands are away at sea for long stretches of time. In the southern countries women bear the burnt of the increasing indebtedness of the fishworkers. It is they who have to struggle to make two ends meet for the survival of the family and again these costs of her deteriorating health and overwork are not calculated.

The concept of production for the market which becomes more and more capital intensive finally makes meeting daily needs more and more difficult. As capture fishery gets more aggressive and culture fishery more privatised and capital intensive, isn't it time we begin to think more in terms of a nurture fishery where men women and nature matter?

Nurturing, we will accept, has grown to be socially a women's role in society. While women have painstakingly nurtured human kind, men have ruthlessly plundered nature, and now realise there are limits to such exploitation and growth. A model of sustained development has to include the task of nurture and in fisheries it implies recreating and respecting the aquatic ecosystems and the respect for life as a whole. The cry for survival of the fishworkers today is a cry for a new model of development - a model that will first produce for need and not for want.

These present trends raise many questions to the supporters of the small fishworkers. What positions do we take on these questions? If we do take a position how do we act at the international level? Gone are the days when we could believe that modern development strategies would show us a way of meeting the survival needs of the millions. Gone also are the promises of our men folk that they know what is best for the development of our planet. Where do we place our hopes for the future? What should be our priorities?

Nalini NAYAK

Aquaculture in The Philippines

WE ARE ALWAYS THE LOSERS

Aquaculture - also known as the “blue revolution” - involves a radical change in mentality and attitude. It means in fact a transformation from the stage of capture to a progressive stage of breeding and control of the different phases in the cycle of reproduction of living organisms in an aquatic environment. This is without doubt a historical development.

Consequently, the “blue revolution”, on an intensive large-scale basis, brings with it serious ecological and social consequences.

We have asked a fisherman, Max-Jose Mendoza, president of the fishworkers organisation Bigkis Lakas from The Philippines and at Virgilio Cristobal, coordinator at the Asian Social Institute of Manila, their opinion on the issue based on the study they made on aquaculture in their country.

Samudra - Can aquaculture in The Philippines be considered a failure or a success?

M.J. Mendoza - Aquaculture in my country can be regarded as a success from the commercial point of view, but serious doubts arise when considering the good of the country as a whole. In fact, valuable natural resources are being sacrificed for the sake of aquaculture.

After the introduction of aquaculture, only 10% of the mangroves are left in the Philippines. The fishermen are likely to become workers on the aquaculture projects, because they do not have the required capital for converting their land into breeding ponds.

Samudra - Which strategies do you develop in your organisations in the face of this situation? How do you see the future in this area, given the contradictions the “blue revolution” produces?

MJ. Mendoza - The fishermen have decided to steer themselves the development of aquaculture in the communal waters reserved to them. Because of financial limitations, the fishermen will perhaps be able to develop only a small part of the area, unlike the large capitalist enterprises who have farms of 100 hectares and more, complete with electrical aerators, etc..

The small-scale fishworkers would only exploit the areas already under cultivation, thus preserving the mangroves which are still intact. This will be our management policy.

V.Cristobal- Small-scale fishermen are encouraging the reforestation of mangroves, which is the price to pay so that shrimps will continue to live along the shoreline.

Samudra - Have the small-scale fishermen made a study of this along with other concerned groups such as farmers and ecologists?

M.J Mendoza- Because of different constraints in terms of resources and time availability, it is difficult to have a unified stand on this question with other groups.

Aquaculture is a most delicate question for fishworkers in the estuarine areas, where the land is most easily convertible into fish ponds. However, nearby farmers are already getting uneasy about aquaculture because of salt water penetration on their land. Intensive prawn culture requires a salinity of 20 to 30 parts per thousand. Sometimes the sea water content is too high so that fresh water has to be pumped in to dilute it, thus depriving farmers of part of their water supply. So, farmers develop an aversion for intensive aquaculture.

Samudra - What advice would you like to give to our readers on this question?

M.JMendoza -We should not develop aquaculture solely for export. If we do so, while local demands are not completely met, the price of the local fish supply is being raised indirectly. At present, the capitalist gets his dollars, but the poor people lose their proteins. On

the other hand, we fishworkers would be happy to see aquaculture being developed to supply local demands.

The industrialised countries and funding agencies should help us without strings attached to this assistance. At present they are dictating us which markets need to be supplied and where the means of production should be bought, from which consultants and technicians to get advise (with their money). In this way the fishworker becomes the worker for the capitalist.

V.Cristobal - Before implementing any aquaculture project is being planned, especially in mangroves or swamp areas, an analysis of the impact on the environment should be done.

We are continuously on the losing end when our natural resources are being destroyed. Our own people should generate the capital for an appropriate technology from within. The local people's organisation have the capacity and innovation to work towards a sustainable development.

CHALLENGES OF THE "BLUE REVOLUTION"

The challenges of the aquaculture are related to the need to seek a balance between capacity and the vocation of each region and each group of human beings, the demands for foreign trade and financial undertakings. The "blue revolution" must not be a new way of exploiting people, resources and coastal ecosystems. Rather it must be an occasion for rational and integrated management of their potential with the objective of ensuring the right of future generations to enjoy the products that nature has provided as a legacy to their countries.

In Senegal...

THE OCTOPUS SPREADS ITS TENTACLES

In Senegal, Japanese and Korean vessels, called "pick-up ships", take on board a few dozen traditional Senegalese canoes together with their crews—about two hundred artisanal fishermen and ferry them towards the rich fishing grounds off, say, Guinea or Liberia. As soon as they reach their destination, the fishermen and their craft are lowered by crane. The fish, which is usually very high quality, is bought dirt-cheap from the fishermen to be sent to Japanese, American or European markets.

This is just one of the new strategies which the industrialised countries are applying in order to satisfy their populations' increasing demand for fresh fish and highly-appreciated species. Other methods are more insidious, but just as efficient. Aliou SALL, sociologist and fisheries consultant for the Centre for Fisheries Research, Development and Intermediate Technology - Dakar (CREDETIP), examines here how multinationals redeploy their tentacles.

Faced with the international market's ever-increasing demand for fresh, rather than frozen fish (to supply restaurants, hotels, etc.), the market leaders have agents that penetrate right through to the smallest fishing villages. The agents, who are local people born and bred, represent international capital at village level. As I frequently tell my closest friends, the symbol of capitalism should no longer be a skyscraper in Washington or New York, crammed full of high performance computers. For capitalism lives with the fisherman in his home, and shares a cup of tea and even the same bed with him.

The myth of compartmentalisation

The dualistic approach, which theorists, technicians and development administrators have long defended, conceals the interpenetration and even complementarity of two supposedly antagonistic sectors: small-scale (or artisanal) and industrial fisheries. The idea that small-scale fisheries is inferior to the industrial sector no longer stands up to scrutiny. Where fish marketing is concerned, the quantity of fish caught by small-scale fishing vessels that finds its way on to the international market would justify the statement that the industrial sector is now dependent on the small-scale sector.

In Senegal, the myth that held that industrial fishing boats supplied local and international markets

with luxury fish, while the small-scale sector only served the local markets, has been shattered.

The increasing demand for fish—which is becoming more and more of a rare commodity — and the competition between buyers, who are anxious to maintain access to sea produce, compel the latter to enter into contracts with small-scale fishermen to enable them to do so. These contracts are essentially of two kinds, each one involving a different activity in the sector.

The international fish market's involvement in the so-called small-scale sector concerns firstly the initial investment required for the supply of appropriate equipment to ensure a quality product. Nowadays, it is a fact that almost all the fish exporting factories serving the American, European and Asian markets are located in the fishing villages themselves.

In order to bind the fishermen to them, the factories specialising in particular species designate a salaried agent, who may also be on commission, to fulfill the main role as intermediary. It is he who grants the necessary credit to the fishermen for the purchase of their gear, or to pay their running expenses. It is also he who provides the fishermen with polystyrene boxes. These ice-filled boxes are supplied to fishermen who go out to sea for no more than seven hours at a time, on canoes 7 or 8 meters long. They make for a very good quality product, essentially of species which are favoured in Europe, such as sea bream. The fish caught

under such conditions is ready for export because it has already been prepared on board the traditional boat.

Exclusive specialisation

The practices just described developed fast in the villages of Kayar, Yoff, Soumbédioune, Joal and Mbour, among others. The intermediaries have very high profit margins at the expense of the fishermen, who have no idea at what price the fish is sold to the European or Asian consumer. During the visit of a delegation of Senegalese fishermen to Brussels, one of them, who was from St. Louis, was astonished to discover the exorbitant asking price of one single sea bream. As soon as he returned to his village, the factory representatives got a piece of his mind!

In Senegal, agents representing the most modern processing factories, which even have their own fleets, patrol the beaches with their trucks. Of course, this type of small-scale fisheries development is bound to affect the fishermen and the communities they live in. In fact, the contracts between the factory bosses and the fishermen have various kinds of results.

First of all, one finds the specialisation on one export species tends to become exclusive in nature. It may happen that a fisherman who has already contracted a loan from a factory and who had previously used several techniques all year round, will concentrate on the species demanded by the lender (the factory) in order to reimburse the credit. The reimbursement is ensured by a deduction at source: on each kilogramme of fish delivered, a percentage is retained by the lender buyer.

Secondly, access of coastal populations, and of fishermen themselves, to good quality fish becomes very difficult. The good quality fish becomes too expensive for local fishing populations for reasons connected with the way the factories operate. The latter oblige the fishermen to deliver them the fish by paying a higher price for it and by advancing them credit.

This results in fish becoming scarce as a marine resource. In certain fishing areas, credit granted by the factories to the fishermen and the types of contracts drawn up induce the fishermen to catch species which are not part of the eating habits of the coastal population. This is the case with octopus, squid, sole and especially shark whose fins are greatly prized in Asia and are sought after by the fishermen with all the required precision.

Nowadays the fishing season offers the astounding and disturbing sight of fishing communities landing many tons of squid (at Mbour, for example), and of shark (at Kafountine), as a result of a change in

their catching habits. Clearly, a species such as squid cannot be eaten by a Senegalese, unless the habit has been learnt abroad...

Finally, the contracts result in the women traditionally involved in fish marketing being marginalised. Since the fishing gear (shark nets) and other inputs (such as ice kept in polystyrene boxes) are supplied by the factories, the women have difficulty in getting access to capital and find their role in the economy being eroded by the more financially sound newcomers on the economy scene. In fact, the fisherman's wife, who used to be first link (intermediary) in the chain, now finds herself excluded for good from certain areas, being replaced by the factories' agents.

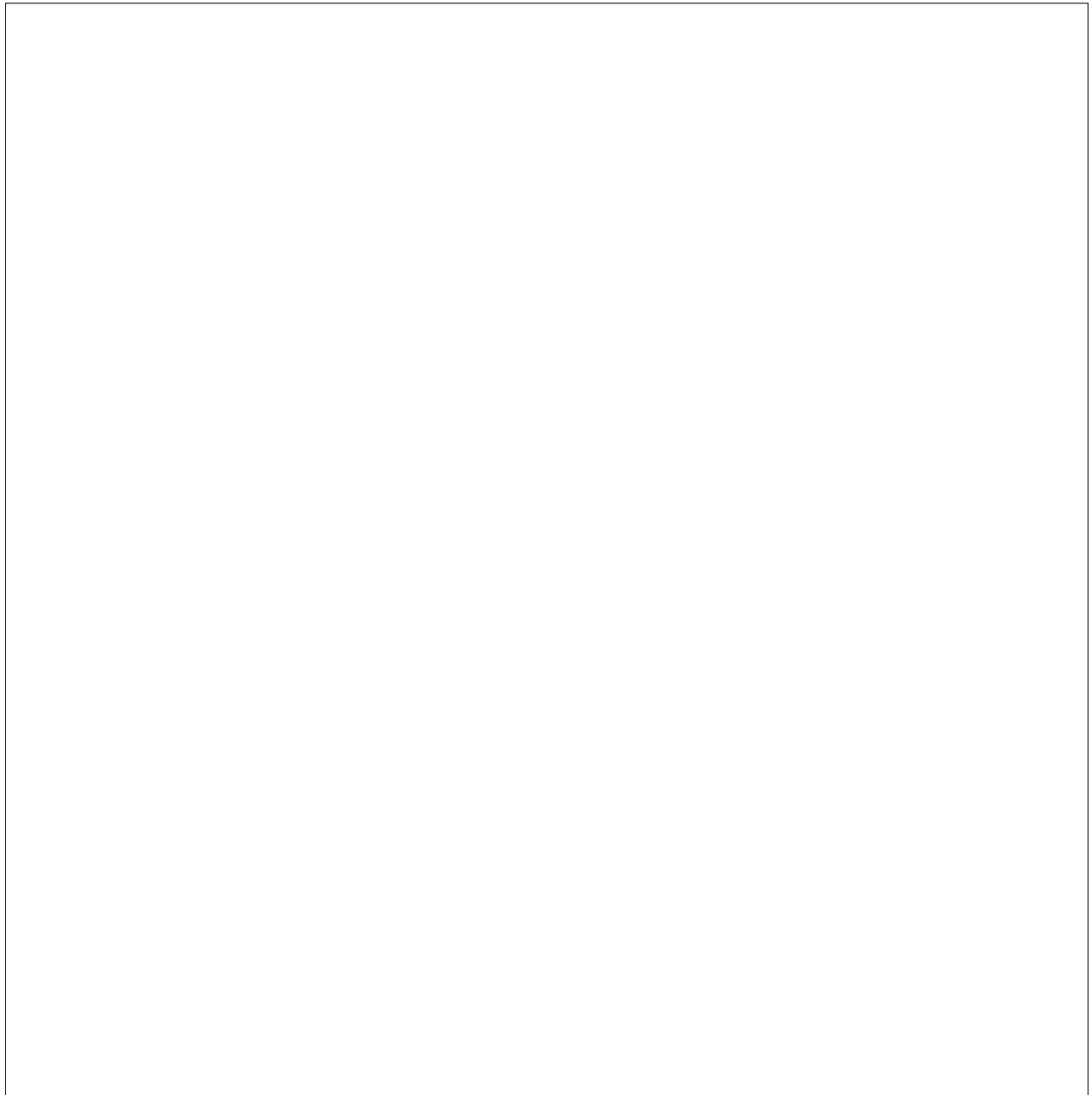
The "pick-up ships" sometimes turn and run

The arrival of "pick-up ships" provides the second entry point for the penetration of international capital. Faced with problems regarding access to the resource and the viability of investments, large cargo-type ships, called "pick-up ships" take on board about thirty small-scale units each with an average crew of six or eight men. It should be pointed out that these ships do not fish but just ferry the artisanal fishermen towards the rich fishing grounds which the latter are more familiar with.

When they reach the grounds, the fishermen and their craft are lowered by crane so that they can work within a radius of 15km from the anchored ship. The trips generally take the fishermen away from their country for forty days at a time. In fact, some of these ships go as far away as Guinea Conakry, Liberia, and Guinea Bissau, etc.. These practices have similar effects to those produced by contracts between factory owners and small-scale units.

The "pick-up ships" catches are undeclared, thereby depriving the coastal states of some of their fishery resources. This is in addition to their exploitation of the artisanal fishermen who work with them and provide them with very high quality fish dirt-cheap (150 FCFA/kg, or 0.5 of a dollar).

Besides the problems already mentioned, the insecurity of the fishermen working with the "pick-up ships" gives cause for anxiety today. By embarking on these ships without a written contract and without ministerial approval, the fishermen work at their own risk. On many an occasion, having collected the catch, the "pick-up ships" have turned and run. About 6 or 7 months ago, during a trip, some Senegalese fishermen from Kayar found fishing in Liberian waters were arrested and imprisoned by the Liberian navy. As the arrest took place, the ship fled denying all responsibility and leav-



ing the fishermen's families who had remained behind in the village in an extremely worrisome situation.

Doubly exploited on land and at sea, the artisanal fisherman is once again trapped in the infernal spiral of international capitalism and hounded by the unbridled quest for profit. Those responsible for the problem are, of course, numerous.

Among the poorer people of our planet and all the more so among fishworkers, a fundamental problem persists: that of a lack of information about their environment and ignorance of their most basic rights.

It should be recognised that the situation of the West is diametrically opposed to that of Africa. Whereas Africa—and especially its fishermen—remains underinformed, Europe is suffering from a new ailment called “over-information” and finds itself faced with the problem of having to make a choice between all the items of information that come its way. As far as we in Africa, and especially the fishermen, are concerned, development priorities should focus less on a directive approach, as one finds in projects and traditional funding policies, than on ensuring the information and education of fishworkers' communities about their basic rights.

The future of fishworkers

WE ARE THE BEACONS OF THE SEA

He is himself a fisherman and president of the single largest organization of fishworkers of Chile (1). A union federation, born in 1986, uniting at present some 100 local associations all over the country. Humberto Chamorro-Alvarez recounts in this article the many problems challenging the profession and suggests means of facing them. (2)

We must clearly state that our profession is facing enormous challenges which, in course of time, could lead to its disappearance. Our responsibility is to make people aware of the values we represent and the dangers that await us for the future, and thus to be able to seek global solutions to guarantee a reasonable future for millions of fishermen, who on every continent, work daily on the oceans, lakes, rivers and lagoons of our planet.

In defence of democracy

The future of small-scale fishermen the world every morning I take to the sea in a small 6-metre boat equipped with an outboard motor and two long-lines prepared for catching hake and other demersal fish. But at the same time, for the past ten years, I have also been the executive of a union organisation that counts 250 members, all fishermen. Thanks to our struggle, we have achieved the establishment of a basic infrastructure. We have our Welfare and Health Service. We enlist our doctors and pay subsidies to our ill members. We bury our dead in our own cemetery. For all this, we have had to acquire great discipline, distribute jobs among committees with various tasks and share out our endeavour. Our fishing is undertaken by 80 boats, our production provides work for approximately 1000 people and food for the city of Valparaiso.

In 1985, following an invitation from a University, we launched the idea to create a national organisation of Chilean fishermen. A special commission was thus established and a national Congress held in November 1986, 74 grass-root organisations par-

ticipated in this Congress. With the aim of forming an organisation that could represent our profession, we created CONAPACH. Thus began a long struggle for bringing together all regional organisations. A second Congress took place in 1988 and we have presently 8 regional organizations with over 100 grass root associations from all over the country. CONAPACH is actively engaged in the struggle to defend the democratic rights of the Chilean fishermen. CONAPACH opposed strongly a law project in fisheries which would cause great harm to the fishermen and the country.

This experience shows us, small-scale fishermen, the importance of creating jobs, supplying good quality food, and contributing to the regional and national economies. As fishermen we are also beacons of the sea because we detect the dangers that threaten our various resources. We know that pollution from cities, industries, mines and farming is very high in a number of countries, and that it affects life and the marine species that are the resources of our activity.

Autonomy or submission

We are suffering from a mass dispersion because in general we live far from urban centres, near the coasts or on the banks of rivers or lakes; sometimes we live far from our villages. We are surrounded by nature and we rejoice in this advantage, but at the same time we suffer from a lack of services to satisfy our needs. This dispersion is even more serious when it affects the formation of representative organisations which fight for the defence of rights and seek solutions to the problems and needs of our families and of rights

(1) CONAPACH - National Council of the Artisanal Fishermen of Chile

(2) This article represents the main points of the intervention of Hector Chamorro-Alvarez during the International Conference held at Bangkok (Thailand, January 1990). The complete intervention has been published in SAMUDRA Dossier n° 3.

and seek solutions to the problems and needs of our families and of our profession

As fishermen, we are often marginalized and we do not usually benefit from the advantages of education, housing, health, communication and culture. These advantages of modern society do not come easily to us. The problem does not lie in the lack of these services because solutions can always be found, but our marginalization is more profound since we are not considered when it is a question of participating in taking the decisions which affect our activities.

As fishermen, we are enormously dependent on creditors, merchants, local politicians and leaders of social, and sometimes religious, organizations. In a number of cases we have mortgaged not only our assets, but also our dignity and future.

We find ourselves facing a large number of contradictions and that we must clarify in order to know at last who our friends are and who our enemies. On one side we are facing the contradiction that exists between the city and the country, and because of this, the contradiction between traditional and contemporary values. We are often people of the land. We live in the country and think and act like country people. But at the same time, we incorporate contemporary values and technology and our products enter into the network of world trade. For that very reason, we are in most cases the victims of a number of consequences to which the countries of the North subordinate the countries of the South. In developing countries, we are often exploited due to poor relations in the context of international trade imposed by the developed countries. It is hard to know when the developed nations are our friends and when they are our enemies.

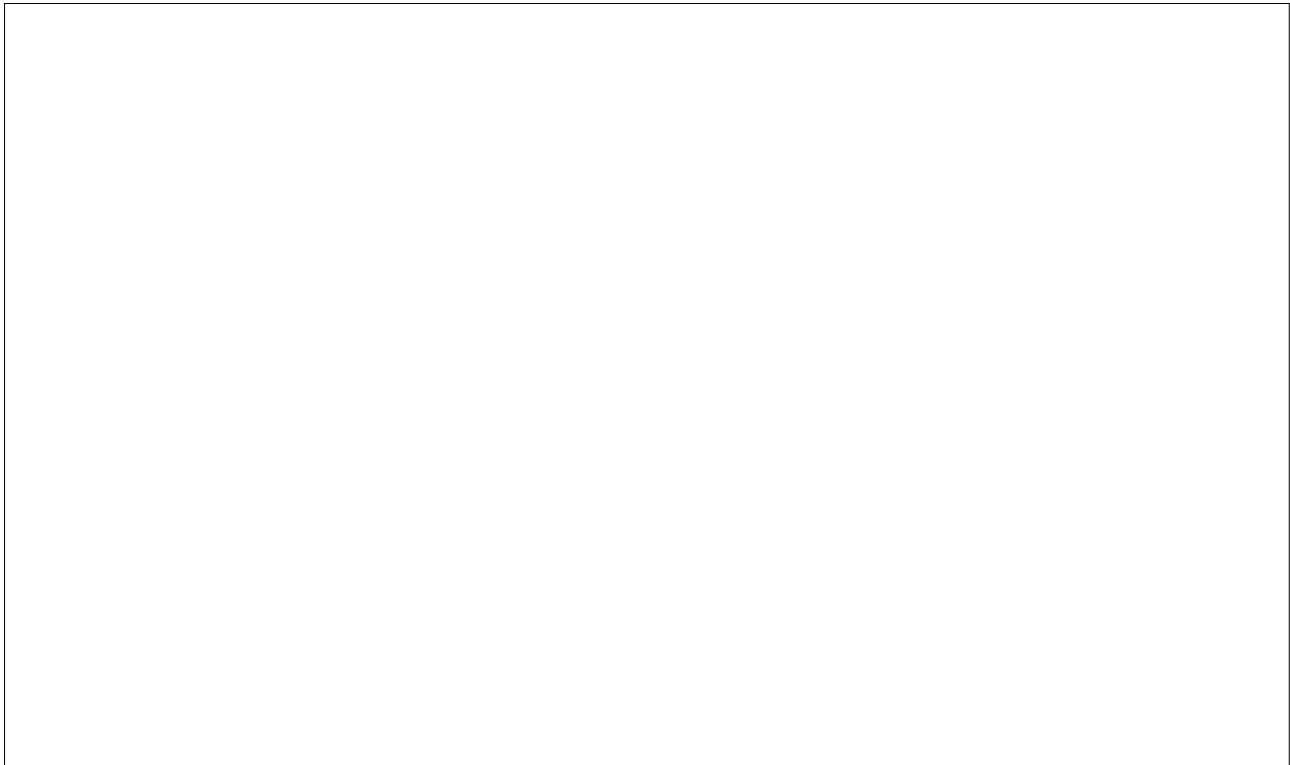
It is essential to move ahead, without losing hope, in order to seek a solution to our problems and to build our future. We already know the challenges: autonomy or submission. And the most characteristic element in the life of a fisherman is precisely his freedom, his independence to tackle the problems and the profession as a whole.

Organisation must lead towards development

Without a solid organisation, from the foundations up to regional and national structures, nothing good can be accomplished for our future as fishermen and the future of our families. But the organisation must be born of ourselves. It must be ours without outside dependence or intervention; we must take our decisions freely and completely autonomously. Only fishermen can take part in our organizations.

An autonomous organisation is the sole and major condition for building our future and for being able to confront our enemies. Based on the organisation, we will know who are our friends and who are our enemies, who is with us and who is against us. Our organisations must be profoundly democratic and the respect between us very deep. But our participation must also be highly responsible. We must accomplish our undertakings. We cannot corrupt our organisations by our own corruption or our own faults. Our organizations must distribute power and have the participation of all members on committees of various types.

The internal and autonomous organisation must be directed towards development. Donations and aid from governmental or non-governmental organisations—all the money in the world—cannot buy an organisation. Nevertheless, our organisation can lead us into spiralling development. From the moment we have a solid organisation, we can open the way towards cultural development, then towards social development. We will learn new technology and achieve economic growth. But first, we must have an autonomous organisation our own. Thanks to it, we will be able to advance and obtain social, technical, economic and cultural advantages. With all this, we will achieve our development. Many believe that outside plans and aid programmes can bring development. Yet we have seen how millions of dollars coming from banks or outside agencies are lost en route wherever there has been no truly autonomous organisation.



We must take care of our resources

The future of the organisation and internal development is also dictated by the survival of marine and aquatic resources in general. Yet these resources are in danger. Many nations have built fishing fleets or concluded accords for extracting existing resources in vast quantities along the coasts of West Africa, the South Pacific and Asia, or in coastal lagoons. On the other hand, the pollution which we have already cited affects the survival of fish, mollusks and crustaceans. For their part, nuclear experiments in the Pacific are placing in danger the quality of the water and concentrating radioactive elements in marine species. In the sea, everything communicates, and therefore, everything is in danger.

Over the coming years, we expect important changes due to the warming of the earth through the greenhouse effect caused by gas emissions and the hole in the ozone layer. These changes will affect marine life and we must not hesitate to warn about the sort of problems which are already being produced through temperature changes and rain.

Attention to the resources also means that we are seriously beginning to be “cultivators” or fish farmers within the realm of our possibilities. This is being realized primarily when resources are depleted. We must watch over our resources and be in close contact with the scientists who can cooperate and exchange

their experience and knowledge with us in order to start fish breeding and the cultivation of algae and shellfish.

Our participation must be real and not necessarily favourable to the established structures of power. If we can count on an autonomous organisation and internal and sustained development, especially in the economic sector, the authorities have to listen to us and give us the capacity to express our concern and our demands. Such was the experience of fishermen in some developed countries like France, Japan, Norway and Canada where fishermen’s organisations are both respected and respectable. They are given the change to discuss laws, and the laws protect their rights in the fact of industrialists, businessmen, and other authorities of the country.

Fishermen walk on a road strewn with hope and, as executives, we cannot disappoint the expectations of millions of fellow fishermen who are spread over five continents. The future will be ours if we build it ourselves with the joint aid of those researchers and technicians who are with us.

The day will soon come when a single voice will express the outcry of all the members of our profession within one international, autonomous organisation of fishermen and fishworkers.

Humberto CHAMORRO-ALVAREZ

FROM TAIWAN TO COLOMBIA VIA PORTUGAL

Taiwan; blood stains the blue seas

Last year the fishing boat Dong Chun had four killings at sea in Australian waters. According to Yu Tianshou and the other accused parties, they were driven to kill the captain and officers because they could no longer bear the mistreatment they suffered at their hands. Thus four bodies were thrown in to the sea, and the case created waves here and abroad.

Recently the Fisheries Section of the Department of Agriculture received another case, of a crew member losing his sight as a result of violent mistreatment from the officers of a fishing boat. Investigations by our reporters have revealed that this kind of violence is common in a day's work on Taiwan's fishing boats. The only difference is one of degree. The Dong Chun case, and other reported here, are but a few incidents from the dark side of Taiwan's fishing industry.

Zeng Canze, age 35, came on board Kaohsiung deep sea fishing boat Yi Man 3 last May, through a Taipei "introduction agency". It was his first time at sea. Six months later, he returned home with his left eye put out, his right eye with 1/3 vision (and this after surgery), four teeth knocked out, a split upper lip, and his body covered with obvious scars.

After unsuccessful attempts to work through the fishing company, and unable to track down the ship's officers who had injured him, Zeng took his case to the Department of Agriculture and the Newspaper of FSC (Fishermen's Service Centre-Presbyterian Church of Taiwan). On February 1 Zeng recounted his terrifying sea experience to the reporter from his bed in the ophthalmology section of Taiwan University Hospital.

He describes how the ship's officers made a habit of beating the six or seven new crew members at every turn. They broke one man's arm, and another almost died from loss of blood. The officers attacked them regularly with iron bars. The 1st mate of the ship used a whip to beat them. A knot on the whip hit Zeng in the left eye and he lost sight.

Although this case is currently under investigation by the Fisheries Section of the Department of Agriculture, for a long time past officials have always been party to the interests of the owners, so Zeng Canze will probably have a hard time getting any support from the bureaucrats. He will have to go to court and sue the people who injured him. But then he can't afford the huge expenses of a court case.

The severe beatings that Zeng received on ship are perhaps a more extreme example among cases of mistreatment of fishing boat crews, but if we look at the Dong Chun killings, mentioned at the beginning of this article, and other cases, we can see that the Zeng case is certainly not the isolated case claimed by officials. This kind of pattern is

a smouldering crisis in Taiwan's deep-sea fishing industry, but under official neglect and suppression by the power owners, it has never been fully exposed.

Yvon Lin for two years doing fishermen counselling and case research in the Kaohsiung fishing community. Out of her deep experience of the situation of fishing boat crews she says, "After all, the life of these men at sea is far removed from land society. Their sufferings take place at sea, and so get little notice from the larger society"

Senegalese fishermen leaders meet canadian fishermen

Two Senegalese fishermen, Dao Gaya and Malic Gueye of Kayar and St. Louis respectively, attended the 14th Annual Convention of the Maritime Fishermen's Union (MFU), held in Moncton in New Brunswick (Canada), on February 9th to 11th, 1990. The Senegalese attended on behalf of the emerging National Collective of Senegalese Fishermen (CNPS). Both the MFU and the CNPS are inshore fishermen controlled organisations that first established contact through the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF) members, Aliou Sall of Senegal and Michael Belliveau of Canada. Aliou Sall had previously visited the MFU in 1988 and Michael Belliveau met with Senegalese fishermen in 1987. There has been and continues to be a mutual recognition that the two fishermen's organisations have the basis for long term solidarity in their respective efforts to defend and develop the coastal and inshore fisheries.

Dao and Malic attended all sessions of the Annual Convention and were provided agenda time in plenary session to present their organisation and their fisheries. They established good relations with a number of fishermen and followed up with visits to the widely diverse fishing areas of Northern New Brunswick and Southwest Nova Scotia. They spent one day at sea, lobstering with Graeme Gawn, a fisherman, member of MFU, and another half day in the Government fisheries complex in Halifax. Their visit also coincided with an historic rally in the fishing town of Canso where fishermen, plant workers, and trade-union supporters from across the province were protesting the closure of the town's fish plant and main economic cornerstone by the corporate fishing giant National Sea Products Ltd. It was a unique opportunity to see the problems facing Canadian coastal communities as a result of a resource crisis.

The exchange was assisted financially by contributions from Development and Peace and the Atlantic Committee of the Canadian Council for International Cooperation.

The Senegalese have extended an invitation to the MFU to attend their anticipated 1st Annual Convention and

itis expected at that time to develop practical on-going working relations.

South Pacific: the flating curtains of death are still there

Who will not remember the violent protest actions of last year by the sixteen Pacific countries of the "Forum Fisheries Agency" against Japanese, Korean and Taiwanese fishing boats using extremely destructive fishing techniques? This most destructive fishing technology consisted - and unfortunately still does consist of the use of a nylon monofilament net to form a wall extending between 30 to 60km in length and 10m in depth. These drift nets are used for the capture of albacore tuna in the Pacific waters. (see SAMUDRA Report n82-p-20)

The "Forum Fisheries Agency" as well as various other national research institutes, have furnished scientific data proving the grave risks facing many different marine species, not only fish but also sea mammals and even sea birds, caused by this fishing technology. Some scientists have stated that this type of fishing may wipe out the entire albacore stock in the South Pacific within two years time if no action is taken.

Last January we came to know that Japan had to yield to international pressure and decided to back a United Nations draft resolution calling for an end to high seas drift-netting in the Pacific. What exactly has this resolution to say? The General Assembly recommends all members of the international community, calling upon their responsibility in the conservation and management of living marine resources, as reflected in the Convention on the Law of the Sea, to agree: "a moratoria on all large-scale pelagic driftnet fishing on the high seas by 30 June 1992". This moratoria should be based upon statistically sound analysis to be jointly made by concerned parties of the international community with an interest in the fishery resources of the region.

The draft resolution recommends: "to take immediate action to reduce progressively large-scale pelagic driftnet fishing activities in the South Pacific region leading to the cessation of such activities by no later than 1 July 1991, as an interim measure, until appropriate conservation and management arrangements for South Pacific albacore tuna resources are entered into by the parties concerned". (Draft resolution submitted at the General Assembly of the United Nations -11 December 1989).

The United Nations draft resolution is nothing but a recommendation, the outcome of a laborious compromise between states. It remains relatively vague and will probably only be implemented after a scientific study has been done, a condition imposed by the Japanese in course of the negotiations. But what is even more worrying is the fact that, reckoning the proclamation by some scientists, by the time the resolution will be implemented it may well be too late. The stock of albacore tuna may have been wiped out!

In view of this resolution, the "Forum Fisheries Agency" decided to hold a Convention on albacore resource management in all waters because the text before the United

Nations does not include the Exclusive Economic Zones (ZEE), it only refers to the territorial waters.

Although the extent of drift netting is far from its extensive use as is the case in the Pacific ocean, similar conflicts have surfaced in the Atlantic ocean too, between Spain and France, for example. The European Community intends to draw up a plan for the ban on drift netting for tuna, marlin and swordfish. But this ban will only cover the Atlantic zone leaving the Mediterranean out of bounds.

It is clear that the use of drift netting will affect in the first place the small-scale fisheries, because this fishing activity obstructs the free movement of fish. The main victims are once more the weaker sections, again those sections who unfortunately have little bargaining power to put forward their grievances before international institutions.

A historical meeting in Portugal: fishermen and members of the European Parliament get together

On February 3rd 1990, a meeting between deputies of the European Parliament, members of the sub-commission of fisheries and local fishermen took place in Aguda near Porto (Portugal).

For the Portuguese fishworkers it was an important occasion to be able to have an open discussion with the Eurodeputies because the major decisions on fisheries and the sea are taking place at the level of the European Community. The main interest of the fishermen during this meeting was to be informed about the decisions that had been taken and to express their problems and concerns.

The theme chosen for reflection during the meeting was "Is there a future for the small-scale fishery sector? Some 100 participants exchanged ideas and had many constructive discussions in course of an entire day. They were represented as follows:

- 40 fishermen and owner fishermen from 18 ports and beaches of Portugal and Azores.
- 13 researchers, training personnel and supporters
- 15 delegates from Unions or Public Insurance
- 6 local elected delegates.
- 2 deputies of the Portuguese Parliament
- 3 European deputies.
- the national Director of the "Apostolate of the sea".

The fishworkers of Aguda welcomed the delegation, the preliminary and secretarial work was taken care of by a group of participants of the June 1989 Lisbon Symposium. After the Symposium this group composed of members of Public Insurance, fishworkers delegates of fishworkers unions, researchers, technicians and members of OIKOS (Portuguese NGO), have been meeting regularly. The subject for discussion proposed by them centred around the following five points:

- Support to the small-scale fishery sector by the European Community.
- Integrated development of fishworkers communities, the need for a social policy.

- Ecology and development.
- Hygiene and safety.
- Specific issues related to the Madera and Acores regions.

The district president made the remark that never could he imagine that fishermen would sit together with such dignity, such was the high level of questions posed during the meeting. All participants intervened as individuals, only the Northern Association of owner fishermen from Povoá do Varzim made their intervention as a group.

The regional press and local radios made a considerable coverage of the meeting.

The author of the document - under deliberation by the European Parliament, concerning the recognition and protection of "small-scale artisanal fisheries" (Mr Vasco Garcia) - explained in his intervention the reason for this deliberation not yet being adopted by the economic Commission in Parliament.

This proposal before the European Parliament aims at providing young fishermen substantial assistance in setting up fishing activity, vocational training, retirement benefits for older fishermen, assistance to fishermen's associations and cooperatives, subsidise mutual benefit schemes and credit systems, but most important is the integrated human policy, the social and cultural recognition of the fishing community. Talking about a change in the policy approach of the European Commission was for many participants, such a new attitude beyond their imagination. Everyone hopes to witness one day the recognition and protection by the European Community of local artisanal fisheries!

Mr Miranda da Silva, known for his many interventions at the European Parliament in favour of artisanal fisheries, proposed to hold a meeting between professionals of this sector on a European level. According to him, such a dialogue between fishermen from various countries would permit them to confront international decisions and settle conflicts "between countries" or gear conflicts between front-line states.

An other interesting fact which surfaced during the debates was the fact that the fishermen have little or no access to research studies and information available with the fishery administration. And that the scientists themselves are often handicapped to undertake the research studies which seem to them opportune because of the lack of means at their disposal or because of hierarchical impediments. On the other hand, the scientific data which the policy makers avail themselves to justify the decisions taken are not always available. No doubt the reason for this is towards the existence or the limitations of this knowledge which supposedly are to serve as the basis for the decisions taken. Ms Renee Conan, member of the European Parliament, pointed out, that at the level of the European Community similar problems exist.

Other questions debated were in particular questions relating to marine pollution, resource management, the existence of a six mile zone reserved to artisanal fisheries, the safety at sea, etc.

At present, no target has been set for the follow-up of these debates but the participants hope that once the information has been disseminated to the fishermen they will mobilise support and see to it that the Parliamentary Resolution is being implemented. It is of great importance not only to the Portuguese fishermen but to all fishermen of the European Community.

Mauritius : when fishworkers take the initiative

In November 1989, the Association of Professional Fishermen of Mauritius (APPIM), representing 600 out of a total number of 2.500 fishermen on the island, organised a workshop on the future of small-scale fisheries. It became quite clear that the majority of the fishermen of the island were feeling very unsettled about the future of their profession.

Four points for reflection were proposed:

- the problem of pollution
- unauthorised fishing
- security on sea
- the access to credits

In course of the preliminary work it was hoped that government officials could be invited for the workshop to allow them to be acquainted with the fishworker's problems. One fisherman, for each item of the agenda, briefed the government officials on the problems related to that particular subject, they put forward their worries and suggested solutions. In this way a dialogue could take place between the fishermen and the authorities. Two ministers and some administrative personnel took part in the workshop. Two journalists were also present to ensure the coverage in the media and allow a wider communication with other sections of the population, who are most often not aware or badly informed about the conditions of life of the fishermen. It is furthermore planned to sustain the dialogue with the authorities on the four themes treated during the workshop. Four sub-commissions are in charge of further studying the questions in detail and negotiating with the concerned authorities.

"The problem of pollution due to industrialisation and tourism has become today the main preoccupation of Mauritius", says Jacques Rose, fisherman and president of Ap-PIM. "We have therefore contacted some NGOs working on these problems and asked them to analyse the degree of pollution and propose actions to be taken". The beaches are more and more being polluted by tourist complexes and the fishermen are driven further inland where they have no access to the sea. On the other hand sewage water is discharged directly into the lagoons and causes the depletion of fish resources. The people of the island are becoming more and more conscious of these pollution hazards and the fishworkers side with this growing awareness to put pressure upon the authorities to take action.

"For what the safety at sea is concerned, the fishermen take always to the sea with their single boat and with-

out any safety devices", remarks Robert Fleurot, in charge of training at the Institute for Development and Progress (IDP), the institute that sponsors AAPIM. "The problems are twofold: safety jackets and the operational conditions of the boats. The government did provide the fishermen with safety equipment but without giving them training in the use of these appliances. Consequently, the fishermen sold these materials to make some extra money. For what seaworthiness of the boats are concerned, many old "rafts" are still being used which do not conform with any safety measures. Some of them are 30 to 50 years old and the owners spend very little money on repairs in order to keep up their profit margin. Thus, the fishermen have to face the risks. In heavy sea the boats break into pieces. Four fishermen were drown in this way in November 1987"

Concerning unauthorised fishing, dynamiting is the most common practice in Mauritius. This practice is on the decrease because of the implementation of new laws. An other illegal fishing activity, practised by the fishermen themselves, is underwater fishing. The youngsters, in particular, resent the laborious time spend on the construction of traps or long line fishing, which is often with little result. Because under-water gear is easily available, they prefer fishing with harpoon. This fishing activity gives them more leisure time. This situation has traps of others, cephalopods are particularly the target, the coral reefs natural habitat of many fish species - are destroyed in this way, causing serious implications for the future resources.

Under-water fishing is directly linked with the use of dynamite. In fact when exploding at sight a shoal of fish, 75% of the fish killed disappears to the bottom of the sea. With the help of diving equipment the entire capture is now assured. "At present, asserts Jacques, this abusive activities are on the decrease. APPIM strongly denounced this practice in a press conference and has alerted the authorities".

The problem of access to credit is becoming a major issue for the fishworkers organisation because the latter are unable to secure loans from the banks because of the high interest rates. Moreover the intermediaries - the "banians" in creole language - choose to maintain the fishworkers in a state of dependency. Moreover more and more outside investors induce their surplus capital into fisheries and exploit the small-scale fishermen.

To counter these problems APPIM and IDP established in 1976 a Revolving Fund Project. This people's savings scheme allows the granting of loans, almost free of interest, to small-scale fishery projects. But the demand is becoming considerably too heavy for APPIM, so they consider calling upon the government to make the official credit system more accessible to fishworkers.

Europe: the barrels of shame

Whether in the English Channel or the Atlantic, not a single month goes by without some fishermen pulling up in their nets barrels containing toxic substances lost at sea by cargo or container ships in their passage from the North

Sea to the Atlantic or vice versa.

Who will not remember the "Perentis" and her containers with lindane, considered as one of the twelve most dangerous pesticides lost in the Channel? The 1.500 barrels sank to the bottom of the sea never to be found. For the past two years they still remain till today a permanent danger to marine resources and the coastal populations.

The trawlers from Brittany (France) bear witness to the fact that this is not an isolated case, the fishermen frequently catch barrels containing a variety of dangerous toxic substances like ammonia, potassium hydroxide, chloromethan, etc. Not to mention those that are washed ashore on the beaches causing grave dangers of contamination to the populations.

Every year some 100 barrels are found with toxic substances lost at sea by container ships. Last February two ships lost in a heavy storm 23 containers near the coast of Brittany. One of these ships, an Israeli vessel, had a cargo of methyl chloride aboard, a very nefarious toxic gas.

Every year some 30 million tons of toxic chemicals transit through this area: the Atlantic, the English Channel and the North Sea. Storms and heavy weather are very frequent in these regions. Consequently, the danger of containers carelessly stacked on deck face a permanent danger of being lost at sea.

The frequency of such accidents imperil marine resources, the lives of the fishermen and health of the populations. The cup is filled to the brim in Brittany. The Local Fishery Committee of Guilvinec (Brittany, France) took the initiative to alert the government authorities for its negligence insisting upon preventive measures to be taken.

"The environment receives by each and every hazardous accident an irreparable set-back". the committee has alerted the minister of the sea. "At every instance when such accidents occur an imminent ecological catastrophe is likely to happen, maybe not in the near future, but beneath the surface of the oceans lies a bomb ready to explode".

"As the trawlers are the main garbage collectors of the sea, we propose that they be assisted by the government for the social service they perform. The captain who 'harvests' barrels of toxic waste should be relieved of them quickly either by helicopter or by a ship of the navy".

"It seems of utmost importance to make a start with working out rules and regulations with regard to the stacking of barrels and containers with dangerous substances. The safety rules and regulations in the construction of such goods need to be amended. The control on board at the time of embarkation, stop over, arrival and eventually at sea has to be intensified. To us it seems more reasonable to store such dangerous substances in the hull of the ship instead of fastening them on deck where they risk to be thrown overboard by the any minor storm".

The European Economic Commission has decided recently to finance an urgent programme at the

tune of 700.000 US \$ for a research study on accidental water pollution to be carried out by the Centre for Documentation, Research and Development (CEDRE) in collaboration with the USA, Canadian and Swedish coast guards. This initiative was, no doubt, prompted by the cry of outrage by the fishworkers against the damages done to humanity and the environment by the barrels of shame.

Boga; the birth of a bulletin

Its name is "Boga", meaning "Wave". This bulletin, addressing the fishermen's wives, is sure to navigate the high seas. This new initiative will doubtlessly be welcomed by all those who endeavour to validate the important role women play within the fishing community.

The bulletin was launched following the Second International Meeting of Fishermen's Wives held at Galicia (Spain) last year. This International Meeting, converging on the theme of solidarity, brought together fishermen's wives from 5 French and 14 Spanish fishing ports. Some 130 women took part in the deliberations. For several days they discussed the role of women within the fisheries sector.

"Opening these first pages of "boga" is a tribute to our commitment, we are embarking on the road of hope. A commitment to our many efforts, tenacity and steadiness. We shall walk cautiously but with firm step. The road we embark upon is paved with friendship, generousness and determination", says the editorial.

"If all women of the world decided to walk hand in hand, happiness would be assured by tomorrow. For us, we dare say, this happiness has been realised today", add Jacqueline and Cristina.

In this first issue we find the report of the Second International Meeting, the interventions of women. *For us, we dare say, this happiness has been realised today*", add Jacqueline and Cristina

In this first issue we find the report of the Second International Meeting, the interventions of women groups from Spain, "Pays Basque", France providing valuable information on the living conditions of the women at the fishing harbours and their courageous struggle in defence of their rights.

Bon voyage "Boga"!

"Boga" is published by; Apostolado del Mar, Dr. Cadaval 4-6°δG, Vigo, Espana.

Columbia: more than a question of drugs

Day after day, week after week we see in the media a country torn apart by the war against drug traffic. But that is not the only thing happening in Columbia, the Columbian people are also struggling for an other type of development.

In the fishery sector, for instance, the artisanal fishermen have in response to the hardship of their life been able, after 15 years of protracted struggle, to obtain from the government an integrated development programme. This programme includes:

- Vocational training
- technical assistance
- basic infrastructure
- credit and marketing facilities

The establishment of a Service Centre for Artisanal Fisheries (CESPA) aims at supporting at the national level the creation of economic production units. These Centres will look after the development of long distant as well as coastal fisheries.

The national strategy of the CESPA Centres aim at assuring the needs of the artisanal fishermen and obtain an optimal development of their productive activity. In order to reach this goal, it is planned to start an intensive promotion campaign and to organise the fish communities to enable their active participation in the management of the Centres. It is also intended to harness technical and financial assistance and integrated training facilities to fishing communities through the national institutions.

These various initiatives are designed to generate income, to improve the living standard of the fishing communities and to increase the availability of fish at the national market. The CESPA programmes also aim at a greater participation of women in the production process and the preservation of the environment by the fishermen.

The locations identified for these projects are situated along the Pacific coast, the Atlantic coast and the basins of the Magdalena, Cauca and San Jorge rivers.

Finally, a National Institute for Fisheries and Aquaculture has been set up, in order to strengthen the support base for the fisheries sector. The Institute will also contribute to an efficient sustenance of artisanal fisheries.

The International Collective in Support of Fishworkers

A NEW ANIMATION TEAM

On the day after the International Conference at Bangkok (seep.4), the members of the ICSF met for two days for its Third General Body Meeting, during which an evaluation was presented of the first three years of its activity and to define future programmes for the following three years.

Four main areas of activity were identified. These key areas will constitute the main fields of activity of the ICSF till 1993.

- **Monitoring and Research**

Continuation of the previous activities. The main point will be research on the impact of aquaculture.

- **Training and Exchanges**

The focus will be on the exchange between fishworkers from the industrial and the artisanal sector, and the training of representatives of fishworkers organisations.

- **Actions and Campaigns**

At the request of their organisation, the ICSF will support fishworkers in difficulty.

- **Communications**

Expansion of the SAMUDRA publication and its translation in local languages.

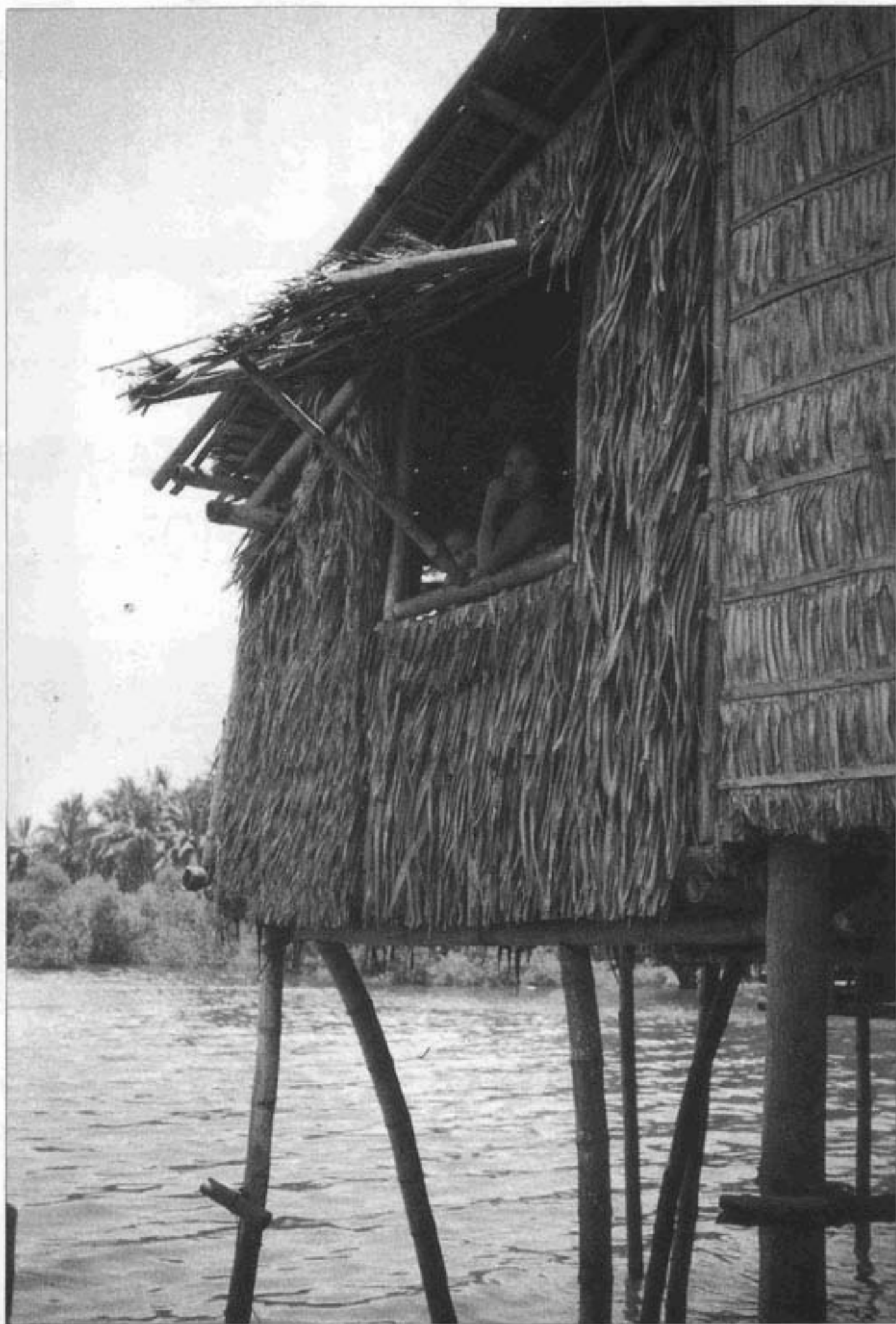
While consolidating its work in the other continents, the Collective has decided that one geographic area of new emphasis should be the Pacific and previous contacts from that region (prior to the 1984 Rome Conference) should be reestablished.

Finally, the General Body proceeded with the election of a new Animation Team in charge of implementing the four programmes put forward by the General Body. The members originate from the four continents:

Nenita CURA (The Philippines), Amporn SUGANDHAVANIJ (Thailand), Aliou SALL (Senegal), Francisco GUTIERREZ (Columbia), Luis MORALES (Chile), John KURIEN (India), Pierre GILLET (Belgium).

In its turn the Animation Team elected as coordinator **John KURIEN**, researcher at the Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum (India).

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Habitat of fisherman in Samar Island - The Philippines

(Photo: E. Bellec)



“History has shown that the fisherfolk have always been the true guardians of the sea. And our struggle has taught us that if we give up the rivers, lakes, and seas, there will be no one to protect them..!”

Max José MENDOZA
A Filipino fisherman