

Yemaya

No. 11

ICSF's NEWSLETTER ON GENDER AND FISHERIES

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From the Editor

Dear Friends,

Greetings! This issue of Yemaya has a special focus on South Africa. The recently concluded World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg, South Africa, was a disappointment on many counts. But for the traditional fishing communities along South Africa's West Coast it was a unique opportunity to highlight their problems to the world media and to the public at large.

The Fisher People's Forum was organized as part of the Civil Society Forum. Participating in it were about 240 men, women and youth from coastal fishing communities in South Africa, apart from some international delegates. The Forum was hosted by the Masifundise Development Organization, with support from the South African Artisanal Fishers Association and the World Forum of Fisher People (WFFP). Participants were able to draw attention to their struggle for access rights to marine fisheries resources and to sustainable coastal development.

There was significant participation of women of fishing communities, including those who have worked for years as workers in fish processing plants. Songs were used effectively, both during the sessions and the rallies held outside, to communicate much of what had to be said. The songs highlighted the quest of coastal fishing communities for fishing

rights, land rights, for security and human rights.

The first article from South Africa describes some of the reasons why traditional fishing communities on the West Coast continue to face problems in gaining equitable access to marine fisheries resources. Another article looks at the emergence of women as leaders in the struggle for the rights of traditional coastal fishing communities.

The article from Sri Lanka captures the problems many fishing communities face, that of sea erosion. The article looks at the way one such affected community in Sri Lanka has had to struggle to cope with the problem.

We carry an article from the Netherlands, updating us on *Vinvis*, the women in fisheries network there. *Vinvis* has recently completed two years and the article tracks how the network has grown and matured in this period.

And there is news from Spain, where women shellfish gatherers in Galicia are organizing. As news about the oil slick off the Galician coast comes in, caused by the sinking of the oil tanker, *Prestige*, we know that their struggle is entering a new phase. Our thoughts are with these women and men of affected fishing communities.

As we sign off, we take this opportunity to wish you the very best for the coming year. And to remind you to send in articles for *Yemaya* No. 12 by mid-February 2003.



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