

# Yemaya

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ICSF'S NEWSLETTER ON GENDER AND FISHERIES

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## From the Editor

Dear Friends,

This issue of *Yemaya* features articles from Brazil, India and Europe, as well as information on resources available and forthcoming workshops.

As always, there is a focus on women's organizations in fisheries and their efforts to get together around issues of common concern and to create networks of solidarity. The article from Brazil, for instance, documents the process by which women are consolidating their efforts to create a national organization of women in the fisheries sector, based on principles of solidarity, autonomy, democracy, respect of differences, and regard for the environment. Their struggle is for rights, and, as they put it, for life itself.

The article from Netherlands talks about an exchange programme in which women from the Dutch women-in-fisheries network, VinVis, hosted their counterparts from the Northern Ireland Women in Fisheries Network (NIWIF). The programme provided a chance for women from both networks to share their realities, and to energize and inspire one another. Interactions such as this are helping build up solidarity networks among women in the fisheries sector in Europe—small steps in a larger process. Thus, NIWIF is hosting the Second Conference and the Second General Body meeting of AKTEA: European Network of Women's Organizations in Fisheries and Aquaculture, in Northern Ireland in April 2007.



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From India comes an article about women seaweed collectors in the Gulf of Mannar, in Tamil Nadu in southern India. This area is both a national park and a biosphere reserve, and several restrictions on extraction activities, including seaweed collection, are being put in place. For the 5,000 or so women seaweed collectors in the area, these restrictions have direct implications for their livelihoods. The article discusses some of the challenges facing these women and their future in the only livelihood they have known. The challenge lies in ensuring that their perspectives are incorporated into the upcoming management plan for the national park and biosphere reserve, and in its implementation.

Another article from India takes a look, from a gender perspective, at the just-published Marine Fisheries Census 2005. The need for reliable gender-disaggregated data on women's work in fishing and in fisheries-related work has often been stressed as fundamental to good planning and policymaking. Data from the census clearly establishes the important role of women in fisheries-related activities, particularly in marketing and processing fish, and should provide the springboard for further research and analysis.

We also carry information on several interesting publications and films, as well as announcements of meetings coming up. As always, we invite you to share with us your experiences and accounts of relevance to women in fisheries and fishing communities. Please send us articles for the next issue of *Yemaya* by 30 May 2007.