

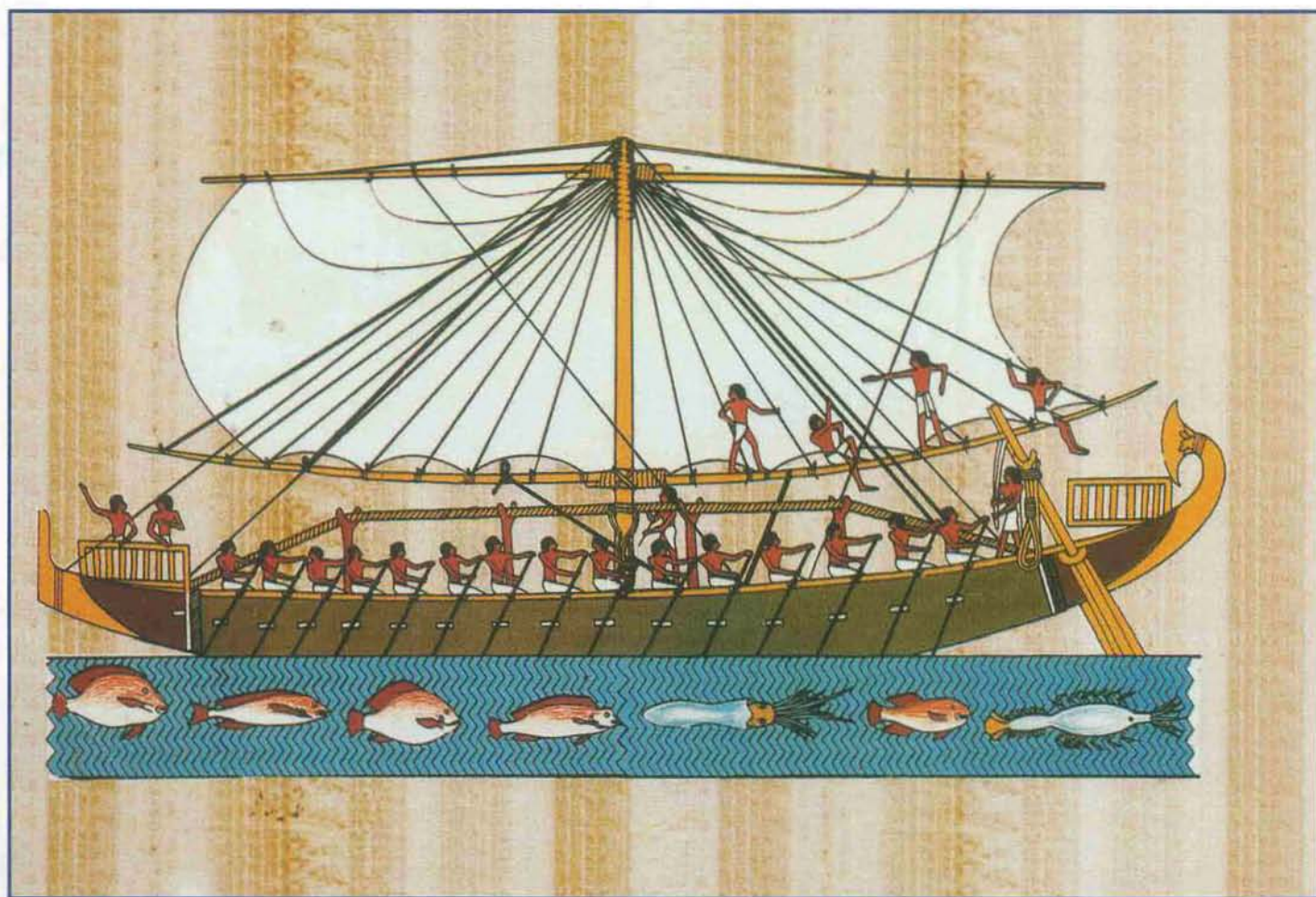
No. 28

April 2001

SAMUDRA

REPORT

INTERNATIONAL COLLECTIVE IN SUPPORT OF FISHWORKERS



ANCIENT EGYPTIAN FISHERIES

OYSTER FISHERS IN FRANCE

FILIPINO BAYWATCH

ORGANIZING FISHERS IN BRAZIL

BLOCKADE OF ROTTERDAM

WORLD FORUM DEBATE

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NEWS ROUND-UP

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Say yes to good subsidies

According to *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, a subsidy is a direct or indirect payment, economic concession, or privilege granted by a government to private firms, households or other governmental units in order to promote a public objective.

In the fisheries sector, depending on the 'public objective', subsidies would include grants, loans and loan guarantees to invest in fishing units; foregone government revenue in the form of tax rebates on fuel, and rebate on import duties on inputs like outboard motors, goods and services, other than general infrastructure, like fish-landing centres and fishing harbours. Export subsidies specific to the fisheries sector also exist.

In the post-colonial phase of history, many coastal developing countries have been using subsidies as a financial instrument to develop their fisheries in order to promote employment, income and food security, as well as to enhance foreign exchange earnings from seafood exports. These subsidy programmes received a further boost in the post-UNCLOS era, when coastal States acquired jurisdiction over living and non-living resources up to 200 nautical miles from their seaboard.

Until the early 1980s, subsidies went mainly to relatively larger vessels that were involved in capture fisheries for the export market. Since then, subsidies have been chiefly earmarked for the small-scale artisanal fisheries sub-sectors, mainly to offset the negative impact of large-scale bottom trawling on coastal, artisanal, small-scale fishers. The total subsidies granted to the fisheries sector in developing countries, including those for the artisanal, small-scale as well as the large-scale, industrial sectors, are, however, lower in magnitude than those prevailing in OECD countries. In the case of Sri Lanka, India and Senegal, for example, subsidies to the harvest sector, excluding harbours and fish-landing centres, would amount to 1.5 to 3 per cent of the total landed value of fish. This is significantly lower than the 17 per cent of the landed value of marine capture fisheries products, reported as the subsidy level in the OECD countries.

Clearly, therefore, the overcapacity and overfishing in the fisheries of several developing countries cannot be attributed to subsidies; these occur *despite* lower subsidies. Rather, they are mainly related to open-access regimes and an indiscriminate response to market signals.

Some people argue that there are no 'good' subsidies. We disagree. There are 'good' subsidies and 'bad' subsidies. Good subsidies are those that can bring about better control over the input of fishing effort and the output of fish; encourage participatory management regimes; introduce equitable property rights (which sufficiently recognize the characteristics of artisanal, small-scale fisheries); lead to effective monitoring, control and surveillance systems; relocate fishers from overcrowded inshore waters to labour-scarce fisheries or non-fishing activities; contribute to protecting fish habitats; and help build up an information base.

Subsidies, needless to add, are one among several means to an end, not an end in itself. If equity and sustainability could become the 'public objective', then transparent, well-targeted and suitably designed subsidies could be an effective tool to achieve these goals.

Gift of the Nile

The fisheries of Egypt, whose source is the River Nile, have always played a significant role, both in ancient and present times

The Greek philosopher, Herodotus (485-426) said, "Egypt is the Gift of the Nile". How true he was.

Several historians of ancient Egypt have concluded that fisheries were of major importance and that fish was predominantly present in the diet of Egyptians. The conclusion is built on the assumption that cattle and pasture land were scarce, while water bodies were abundant. The physical environment of Egypt, therefore, undoubtedly contributed to the development of an efficient fishing industry.

The River Nile, the father of African rivers, the longest river in the world (6,650 km) and the most important natural feature of Egypt, is the source of both its productive fisheries and agriculture fertility. The early Egyptians called the river 'Ar' or 'Aur', meaning 'black', alluding to the colour of the sediments carried by the river when it is in spate. In addition to the Nile basin, Egypt is blessed with several Nile tributaries, lagoon inlets and natural lakes, apart from being bordered by two major seas—the Mediterranean in the north, and the Red Sea in the east. Present-day Egypt has added a major man-made reservoir, Lake Nasser, in Upper Egypt.

Throughout Egyptian history, the fish of the Nile was an important part of the Egyptian diet. Perhaps it was not always prized by the upper class, but fish used to be served as a means of payment, reward and national revenue. At the same time, the connection of fish with the cyclical life-giving forces of the Nile became an image in the Egyptian conception of the world.

In spite of the obvious differences between the ancient and modern eras, the

River Nile is the most important link between the two civilizations, and fish continues to be a major component in Egyptian diets, accounting for almost 20 per cent of the national consumption of animal protein.

The history of fishing in ancient Egypt began before 4000 BC, before the various dynasties. The ancient Egyptians who lived along the shores of the Nile and the various water bodies, mostly in the delta area, used fish in their diet. They also invented various implements for fishing, and established different procedures to catch the fish. These implements, tools and fishing practices have been conveyed very plainly in tomb scenes, drawings, engravings, papyrus documents, skeletal remains, etc. These remains serve as the main sources of information of Egypt's prehistoric period and attest to the importance of fish as a means of subsistence.

Archaeological investigations of Egypt's ancient economy have demonstrated that Egyptians were well acquainted with their environment, and made good use of the animals of the Nile Valley and desert for subsistence, as well as for raw materials to construct tools. Furthermore, ancient Egyptians were known to be keen observers of nature. This is reflected in the precise depiction of the many characteristics needed to identify Nile fish. It is also reflected in the symbolic or marginal powers attributed to certain fish by virtue of their observed biological behavior.

Fish honoured

For example, mullets, having travelled from the Mediterranean Sea to the first cataract (Upper Egypt), were honoured at Elephantine as heralds of the flood god, Hapi, who was the most important among

numerous personifications of aspects of natural fertility.

The mouth-brooding habits of certain species of the genus *Tilapia* were also observed and associated with creation by the creator god, Atum, who is believed to have taken his seed into his mouth and spat out the world. It is also believed that the Egyptians may have been able to distinguish the habits of *Tilapia zilli*, a nest brooder, from the *Tilapia*. The Nile catfish, *Clarioides spp.*, because it favours muddy waters, was believed to guide the solar boat through the dark river of the underworld at night. Catfish-headed demons are depicted in New Kingdom royal tombs and numerous sarcophagi. According to classical sources, the catfish became holy manifestations of the cat-headed goddess, Bastet.

The Nile catfish prefers deoxygenated, shallow, swampy environments. The large quantity of remains of this species suggests that Fayum inhabitants heavily utilized these shallow water-resource areas surrounding the prehistoric Lake Qarun at Fayum. The Nile catfish is a relatively large fish, which can be effectively collected by spearing, netting or by hand, as a number of ethnographic reports describe. *Lates niloticus*, on the other hand, which need well-oxygenated waters, would be collected most effectively by netting or angling in the

open, deeper waters of Lake Qarun or the mid-channel areas of the Nile.

Fishing, being mostly a seasonal activity, led to a strategy of mobile settlement patterns whereby population or settlement shifts occurred in order to take advantage of resources, as they became abundant.

The annual Nile flood also played a major role in ancient Egypt. In mid-July, the beginning of the flood could be detected at Aswan (Upper Egypt). The Nile would ideally rise and crest in southern Egypt by mid-August. The flood waters would reach the last basins at the northernmost end of the Valley four to six weeks later. In shallow floodwaters, the fish left stranded as the Nile receded were associated with fertility, abundance and eternal life.

Egyptian fishing technology reached a point where fishermen could selectively fish for particular species. From the depictions of fish in tomb scenes, approximately 23 different forms of fish have been identified. These do not, however, represent all the fish that inhabit the Nile.

Preserved fish

Although fresh, unprocessed fish was sold in the market, large quantities were dressed and preserved. The fish were sometimes cleaned as soon as they were

dressed in different ways. As the tomb scenes indicate, the fish was grasped by the tail and laid, belly down, on a block or on a flat-sloped dressing board. It was then cut with a broad splitting knife, using downward strokes along the vertebral column, after which the viscera was removed.

The fish was then laid flat or hung to dry, the head and vertebral column often left intact. The most frequent fish scene was of mullet, which, besides being highly prized for its flavour, also contained roe. The roe, which was considered a delicacy, could be eaten fresh or dried.

Some fish served as nourishment for the marsh workers. Dried fish hanging next to tools in the temporary shelters of the marsh dwellers were, undoubtedly, for immediate consumption. Another segment of the catch was used as payment. Scribes recorded that fish and a portion of the catch were distributed to various officials. The fish remaining in the possession of the fishermen could then be bartered for other commodities in the market. Fish could be traded for a loaf of bread, one fresh mullet for a jar of beer, and an entire basket of dried *Mugils* for one amulet. Clearly, on the basis of the tomb scenes, fish was a cheap source of protein, and documents confirm this. Some historical reports point out that fish from Egypt reached Syria.

Present-day Egyptian fishing industry may be divided into three main sectors: marine, inland and aquaculture. According to the latest official fisheries statistics for 1999, issued by the General Egyptian Authority for Aquatic Resources, the Mediterranean and Red Seas provide Egypt with a coastline of about 2,420 km and a shelf area of 87,120 sq km. They account for about 27 per cent (172,343 tonnes) of the 1999 total fish production of 648,937 tonnes. A wide variety of fishing vessels and gear are in use. The registered fishing fleet consists of 3,258 powered vessels and 36,376 boats propelled by sail. The majority of motorized boats operating in marine fisheries are equipped with 30-800 hp engines. Boats equipped with small engines use hand-lines and trawl nets. The marine fleet is composed of 1,235 trawlers

and 369 purse-seiners, 915 line-fishing boats and 739 boats using other fishing gear, operating in the Mediterranean Sea. Non-motorized boats operate mainly in inland fisheries. Purse-seining is generally conducted at night, with light-attraction techniques. Nets are typically 200-300 m long and 50 m deep. The purse-seiners usually have 20-30 crew members. More than 60 per cent of the Mediterranean fish is landed at Dameitta, Port Said and Alexandria. Most landings comprise 30 fish and prawn species. Sardines account for the bulk of the catch (about 20 per cent), while mullet makes up 9 per cent, and shrimp and crabs, 11 per cent.

The Red Sea fishing grounds can be divided into two main sectors: the Gulf of Suez, a shallow gulf not more than 100 m deep, with a nearby flat bottom, and the Red Sea coast, which extends from the southern part of the Gulf of Suez to the Egyptian/Sudanese border. Landings from the Red Sea and the Gulf of Suez coast in 1999 reached 82,400 tonnes. More than 50 per cent of the catch is landed at El Attaka in the Gulf of Suez. Red Sea landings comprise more than 30 commercial fish species. Shrimp, crab, lizardfish, bogue, snapper, sardine, and red mullet constitute the main species landed.

Egypt's largest lake is Lake Nasser in Upper Egypt, which covers an area of 6,216 sq m. In 1999, 41,304 tonnes of fish were landed from this man-made lake. There are several littoral lagoons in the Delta area. The largest of these lagoons is Lake Manzala. Their total surface area is about 200,100 hectares. There are also two coastal depressions at Bardawil and Port Foad, as well as inland lakes, the River Nile and its tributaries. In 1999, all these water bodies together produced a total of 250,319 tonnes, or 39 per cent of the total landings. The main species landed comprise *Tilapia (Bolti)* and carp species.

Old activity

Fish culture is an old activity in Egypt. The first record of this was pictured on the walls of the tombs of Thebianes in 2000 BC. However, with an extensive water resource base, and a relatively low population density until the early twentieth century, no real interest existed in the culture of fish. Capture fisheries

provided the population with adequate fish. With the increase of the population in the last 50 years or so (Egypt's 1998 population was 65 million, with an annual increase estimated at 2.3 per cent), and the resulting increase in pressure on natural resources, fish farming has received more and more attention in recent years.

Aquaculture has increased considerably. In 1999, production from all farms and systems totalled 226,275 tones or 35 per cent of total production. This included fish from regular fish farm ponds, as well as from rice fields. Tilapia, carp and mullet are the main species produced. However, catfish, sea bream and shrimp are produced in lesser quantities. The government is the main supplier of stocking material for freshwater ponds. Marine fish farming depends on the wild fry collected and distributed by the government.

Recent estimates of the maximum sustainable yield (MSY) for marine and inland fisheries are not available. However, it is generally recognized that most marine and inland fisheries resources are fully exploited, and require a reduction in fishing effort, as well as other management measures to ensure sustainable production. In addition, the water quality of most inland fisheries is adversely affected by agriculture drainage, industrial effluent and sewage. There is inadequate mixing of fresh and

salt water in the coastal lakes and in Lake Qarun.

Water supply for aquaculture is generally polluted, since only agricultural drainage water may be used. Furthermore, land is leased for a short period of time, which prevents long-term planning for sustainable aquaculture.

Although some fishermen and fish farmers sell directly to the public, it is likely that most fish are bought and sold several times before reaching the final consumers. Fish is sold to private buyers at prices set by a local committee, by direct negotiations between buyers and sellers, or by auctions. Intermediaries may advance funds to producers, who are usually required to pay back such loans by deducting from the value of products delivered to the intermediaries. Marketing margins or commissions are generally not extensive.

Private sector

Buying and selling of fish is largely carried out by the private sector, operating in a free market, where prices reflect supply and demand. There are some exceptions, however. In some areas, prices are set under government control, in an attempt to bring fish to low-income consumers. As a result, some distortions occur. Poor-quality fish may result from little or no ice being used. Market forces, and not rules, regulations and fixed prices, tend to

be the determining factor, as far as quality is concerned.

Fish consumption in Egypt is characterized by a longstanding traditional preference for fresh fish, with a per capita consumption of about 13.24 kg/year. However, with increasing fish imports and developments in cold storage, frozen fish is becoming acceptable. In addition, fish consumed in areas far away from landing sites is salted, as in some sardine and mullet caught from the Mediterranean and Red Seas. Processing facilities include units of freezing, canning and smoking fish. In 1999, Egypt imported about 193,000 tonnes, valued at Egyptian Pounds 334 million (US\$88 million), mostly of low-value fish, to supplement local supplies, while exporting only about 692 tonnes, valued at Egyptian Pounds 4.1 million (US\$1.08 million) of high-value fish.

To develop the fisheries sector in present-day Egypt, attention must be paid to the development of its natural fish resources through better conservation and management of marine and fresh-water resources. This can be achieved through the careful implementation of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, to which Egypt is a signatory. Also, there is a need for more fisheries research and up-to-date surveys of the resources. Promotion of mariculture and fishing joint venture agreements with neighboring countries would help Egypt increase its local supplies of fish and, hence, reduce its dependence on imports. ¶

This article is by fisheries development consultant, Izzat Feidi (ifeidi@thewayout.net), former Chief, Fish Utilization and Marketing Service, Fisheries Industry Division, FAO, Rome

Oyster fishery

Femme de la Côte

This is the story of a woman of the isle of Oleron, in the southwest of France, who has reared oysters for more than 60 years

Like most other oyster fishers from the bay of Marennes-Oleron, the first bay in Europe for oyster production, Jeanne belongs to one of those deep-rooted coastal families, who have cultivated salt ponds, the land between the ponds and small vineyards, for many centuries. As far back as the 17th century—Jeanne’s genealogy has not been traced farther—her ancestors were already living in the same places as she does today, within a triangle of about 3 sq miles—her whole universe.

Until the turn of the 20th century, Jeanne’s ancestors kept working the soil belonging to richer landowners. After the French Revolution, they managed to buy small plots of land and vineyards. But only when artisanal salt production became threatened by a more industrialized production elsewhere were they able to buy the salt ponds they had cultivated from their former landowners. It was also only after the phylloxera crisis in the 1880-90 period that they could buy the vineyards at depressed prices and replant them.

Thus, on the eve of the First World War, Jeanne’s father had become one of the most powerful landowners and cultivators of his village. But the war was going to change his world forever. When he returned home injured, he still carried on producing salt and wine for a while, but progressively turned to what had become the only primary activity economically viable: oyster production.

The European coast had been covered with oyster beds for ages. In the beginning, there was just a sole bed from Denmark down to Portugal. In the bay of Marennes-Oleron, people had been eating flat oysters since antiquity. When the Romans invaded the area in the 1st

century after Christ, they brought with them refinement techniques, and started exporting oysters back home. In the 12th century, according to some historic documents, some kinds of constructions already existed, where oysters were let to grow. As centuries passed, oysters started to be consumed farther away from the coast, in the larger regional cities and in Paris.

The special characteristic of the Marennes-Oleron oyster is that it can turn green, thanks to an algae, the blue navicula. Mention of the green oyster can be found in historic documents as old as the 17th century, but the process might be much older. This green oyster was first produced on the left side of the Seudre river by salt producers. When working at their ponds, they had noticed that the oyster became green naturally. These poor people had the habit of going fishing at low tide to feed themselves. They used to pick the oysters stuck on the rocks, using a kind of hammer.

As they would spend a whole day out at their ponds before returning home, they also had the habit of stocking their oysters in a pond before eating them. This might be how they discovered that they could naturally turn green, in the process also becoming finer and tastier. Thus, they started growing the oysters in ponds, and began digging new ponds to grow more oysters. For them, this new resource was a way to get away from their dependence on the salt ponds owners who, most of the time, lived away in large cities and were only interested in speculating on salt prices.

New oyster ponds

In the 18th century, the development of thousands of new oyster ponds brought about a conflict between the different

social categories. The salt producers were summoned to destroy their ponds, but never did. On the contrary, a century and a half later, as salt prices sank, most salt ponds were turned into oyster ponds.

Until the midst of the 19th century, the oyster industry remained more or less the same in the bay of Marennes-Oleron: poor local families would invade the coast at low tide to pick young oysters on the rocks and sell them to salt producers.

Some fishermen would also keep dredging the beds, but most of the beds had been depleted by overfishing since the 18th century, forcing the government to forbid fishing during the reproductive months each year. They would also sell their fishing products to the salt producers along both sides of the Seudre, who would let them grow in their ponds for three to five years.

At the beginning of the 19th century, the fishermen of the bay, who used to stock their unsold production on the upper side of the coast, found that they could grow oysters on this upper part of the beach, called *estran*. This was a time-saving revolution. Oysters could become fat and mature without spending several years in ponds. From then on, the fishermen began leaving them for only about six months in ponds, sometimes even less, just long enough for them to turn green.

The major revolution, however, appeared in the 1850s, when, for different reasons, Emperor Napoleon III decided to modernize the industry. He first sent a scientist, Victor Coste, to Italy, where the French had maintained spat settlement techniques since antiquity. More particularly, they used to put wooden bundles into the water for the little oyster larvae to settle on them. On Coste's return from Italy, the Emperor launched a national natural bed replenishment programme on the basis of these techniques and others. As a matter of fact, the French had already started building their own tools to collect spat in Brittany. The Emperor also introduced a form of private property (the 1852 decree) to boost the industry. Each person who asked for it could obtain the lease of a public ground.

The beginnings were, of course, chaotic. After the first successes appeared the first failures. Coste died a doomed man. But shortly afterwards, the pioneers who remained in the industry, triumphed. The first to succeed were the fishermen from the Arcachon Bay, south of the Gironde estuary. They succeeded so well that in the 1880s already appeared what was to become the first national crisis of the oyster industry.

Good sales

The oysters were selling so well that each little bit of space that could be leased to grow oysters was given out.

Furthermore, the quality of the grounds in that bay has always favoured spat production over oyster rearing. Therefore, some Arcachon fishermen started leasing oyster grounds in the Isle of Oleron to grow their oysters.

Other people, particularly some industrialists from other French areas, had also started their company on the island. But, until the 1920s, most of the spat was not produced in the bay of Marennes-Oleron. The salt producers of the Seudre had been reluctant to change their way of life. They would keep buying young oysters from Brittany or Arcachon or even from the mouth of the Charente river and grow them in their ponds. Due to their insulation from the continent, most Oleron oystermen would also rely on the Seudre sellers to sell their production. These sellers from La Tremblade (the main city on the left bank of the Seudre) controlled the market in the big cities and made a lot of money with what was known as the *Marennes*.

In Arcachon, however, the success of the trade led to too many people entering it. Soon the oyster sellers (*expéditeurs*) of La Tremblade could only refine a limited quantity of oysters in their ponds. As prices went down, the producers tended to put more oysters on their grounds to compensate for the loss of benefits. As that happened, the quality of the oysters

deteriorated. The crisis, which had first started in Arcachon, eventually reached the bay of Marennes-Oleron. For 40 years, it went through ups and downs until the indigenous flat oyster eventually died from an epidemic in 1920-22. It was not until 1915 and 1919 that the law was modified to make the industry adapt to the changing circumstances.

Jeanne's father had started growing oysters in 1919. His account book remained empty until 1922. He had probably planted flat oysters that died. In 1922, he started planting oysters again. This time, it was the Portuguese oyster (*Crassostrea angulata*).

As the story goes, this species was accidentally introduced into France in 1867, by a boat returning from Portugal with a full cargo of oysters for an Arcachon producer. (In times of shortage, French oystermen have always imported oysters from Spain or Portugal to fill their markets.) The boat missed the entrance of the bay. The captain, who took refuge in the Gironde estuary, would later have dropped his cargo overboard, either because the oysters were thought to be dead or because he wanted to go home.

Oyster invasion

The oysters, however, were not dead, and, in a few year's time, they invaded the coast up to the Loire river. Thus, when the flat oyster disappeared, the cupped

Portuguese oyster, which had been denigrated until then, was adopted by the oyster sellers of the Sèvre river.

Jeanne's father developed his business in the 1920s. He turned former salt ponds into *claires* (the ponds where oysters are left to acquire a finer taste and turn green), built himself a shack, and leased new grounds. For a decade, the Sèvre oyster sellers who were not very numerous, made good profits. With the downturn in the market, around 1930, as a consequence of the international crisis and the development of the oyster industry in the bay of Marennes-Oleron and elsewhere, his first son started selling his production and that of others.

That was also when Jeanne started learning the trade. Leaving school when she was 13, she started learning sewing, before joining her parents in the oyster industry. She first learnt sailing and the male aspects of the trade with her father, then the female aspects with her mother. In this way, she would later be able to teach oystering to her husband, who had been trained as a carpenter.

Jeanne married Charles in 1938. Less than a year later, Charles was called to war. He was injured at the Front and came home in July 1940. During the German Occupation, Jeanne and Charles carried on working with her parents, while starting to 'buy' their first grounds. With the development of the industry, competition for space had increased. So had the value of the rent.

Jeanne and Charles could only truly start their activity after the war. For a decade, they re-invested most of their earnings into new grounds. 'What are we going to throw at the sea this year?' Jeanne would ask her husband each year. Up to 1958, they built a nice 'property' and made good money. In the industry, this period is

known as the Eldorado, especially for the oyster growers of the isle of Oleron. As demand kept growing, they started overexploiting their grounds. Ironically, as the quality of their oysters decreased, the prices kept on rising.

The oysters, however, could not survive the production boost. In 1966, and then in 1970, it was successively struck by two diseases, the second one being fatal. Fortunately, some oyster growers had clandestinely introduced the Japanese oyster (*Crassostrea gigas*) in 1966, which heroically survived.

Meanwhile, for Jeanne and Charles, the 1960s were decidedly a bad time. She first suffered from tuberculosis for three years, and then Charles was struck by a tumour that forced him to stop working.

Michel, their son, came to the rescue, with his young wife and baby daughter. They entered the industry the year of the epidemic.

Michel paved paths with the empty shells and replanted the grounds with *gigas* imported from Japan or Vancouver Island. The first oysters grew to maturity in 18 months and the oystermen started hoping again.

In two years, the industry was back to normal. But then other problems emerged. The government had been encouraging national production since 1977. Marennes-Oleron was now enduring the competition of new, and more modern, production sites, like Normandy and Brittany, which could produce faster and cheaper.


Supermarkets

At the start of the 1970s, the market had also turned into the hands of supermarkets, which tended to take advantage of thousands of small, unorganized oyster producers. The oyster growers of the isle of Oleron were among

In the industry, this period is known as the Eldorado, especially for the oyster growers of the isle of Oleron. As demand kept growing, they started overexploiting their grounds. Ironically, as the quality of their oysters decreased, the prices kept on rising.

those who suffered most from the new circumstances.

Most oyster growers started selling their own products directly, to avoid intermediaries. But this was a short-term solution. Out of 7,000 ground leasers in the 1960s, only about 1,200 remain today. And, out of every four leaving the industry, only one enters. Though the industry does not produce less of oysters, employment around the bay has been disappearing. The oyster industry is following the same pattern as agriculture: the crisis had led to a concentration of bigger businesses using more technology and equipment, and less manpower. The question raised now is of the future of the bay, in terms of employment and the environment.

Jeanne's son and wife, Michel and Colette, will soon leave the industry... 

This piece, by Catherine Simon Gouletquer (catgoulet@yahoo.fr), is excerpted from *Femme de la Côte*, Geste Editions, La Crèche, France, pp. 240, price: 98 FF

Between meal and market

Some initial experiences with community-based resource management in Danao Bay in the Philippines revolve around the humble sea cucumber

Balas Diyut (Small Beach), 30 October 2000:

Today, at 6 o'clock in the morning, it is low tide. There are a lot of people gleaning the small inter-tidal zone in front of the community. More than 40 backs are bent over the transparent, one-foot deep water. Oscar, my neighbour, has gathered around two kilo's of shells. In half of them, the original inhabitant, a snail, has been replaced by a hermit crab. Using a stone, Oscar breaks the shells and takes out the little hermit. "For my son," he says. "He will use them as bait to catch fish with his handline when the tide comes in." The other shells he takes home for breakfast, which will be complete with the eggs of a few sea urchins.

A little farther, Ibi carefully moves the sargassum weed aside, searching for the *bugalbog*, a very shy and perfectly camouflaged parrotfish. With her slow movements and small spear in one hand, she reminds me of a gracious heron. Her skills have made Ibi known as one of the best *bugalbog* fishers in the village.

Just as I decide not to disturb her, the little spear goes *tsjak!* and a *bugalbog* of around 300 gm flounders at the tip of the metal spoke that serves as a spear. The fish joins three others in Ibi's plastic bucket where, to my surprise, a large needlefish sticks out too. "I found it in between the weed. It has a wound at its belly probably from another fish. It is still fresh so I will take it home for breakfast," Ibi tells me.

Not everybody is as lucky. After two hours gleaning the reef, Lourdes, an experienced reef gleaner, returns home with only 15 small shells, one tiny butterflyfish, two anemones and three sea cucumbers. "Those people from other places come gathering sea urchins here,"

she complains, "picking them even when they're not bigger than a ping-pong ball. We gather only those that are at least as big as my fist."

In this case, there was only mere complaining. A few months ago, however, people were throwing stones. The sea cucumber had become the symbol of mismanagement and conflict between meal and market.

Before 1984, sea cucumbers were very abundant on the reef. "You had to watch out not to slide over them," locals warned. Several species were gathered as food and a few sold in the municipal market. People had the habit of bringing cooked rice, bananas or root crops to the beach, to eat together with these fruits of the sea.

In 1984, fishers all the way from Malaysia and the Sulu Archipelago arrived in the area and harvested the sea cucumbers by the boatload, for the export market in Hong Kong. The local fishers complained, and the municipal mayor prohibited the gathering of sea cucumbers by outsiders. The traders, however, remained, and the local fishers took over the job of gathering the sea cucumbers and supplying the traders with *beche-de-mer* (dried sea cucumbers).

Business stopped

After one-and-a-half years, most of the traders left, for lack of business. By that time, they were being offered 10 times the initial price but still, fishers could not deliver. Two local buyers continued buying *beche-de-mer* as a secondary source of income. In 1995, the mayor issued an order banning the gathering of sea cucumbers. As a result, one of the buyers stopped his business, but the other, a close family friend of the local executive, continued. Also, the local gatherers acted

Baywatch

Danao Bay is located in the province of Misamis Occidental on the island of Mindanao, and encompasses an area of 2000 hectares. A large part of the bay belongs to the municipal waters of Baliangao town, but the eastern side belongs to Plaridel.

Danao Bay is shallow, with a large inter-tidal zone. About 54 per cent of the bay is composed of mangroves, mudflats, reefs and sea-grass beds, and is considered among the most productive ecosystems in the world.

Seven hundred households make up the six coastal villages and are estimated to have a population of 3,500. Of them, almost 1,000 are engaged in fisheries (pre-fishing, capture, processing or selling activities). The main resources exploited are fish (by around 550 persons), shells (450), sea urchins (100) and several crab species (90). Though shell gathering is mainly done by women, 30 per cent of the reef gleaners are male. Fish capture is mainly done by men, but 85 women are directly engaged in fish capture. Four out of 10 resource users report that they are fully dependent on fisheries for their livelihood. The other resource users combine fisheries with farming, carpentry, small businesses and farm labour.

The population comprises mostly settlers and their descendants. These settlers arrived here

in the early years of the 20th century, and the majority came from the (neighbouring) islands of Bohol, Cebu and Siquijor. The population of the Danao Bay, therefore, can be considered as a society of second- and third-generation immigrants. There are also descendents of Spanish and Chinese settlers, who are today the main political and economic actors in the area.

Neither Baliangao nor Plaridel has any large industry. Plaridel municipality, nevertheless, is more integrated into the national economy because of an existing port, which is visited thrice a week by ships from Cebu, Siquijor and Bohol. The highway connecting the cities of Dipolog, Pagadian and Cagayan de Oro also runs through this municipality, giving it a distinct advantage in trade.

Both municipalities—especially Baliangao—have a rural economy and are primarily dependent on (coconut) farming and fisheries. There is no sharp demarcation between those engaged in fisheries and agriculture. Both augment their incomes either from fisheries or agricultural labour. The agriculture of the area is still dominated by feudal relationships.

Most of the (coconut) land is owned by large landowners, who employ tenants on their lands under a sharing system, where the landowner

as if no ban existed. They continued gathering the sea cucumbers, both for consumption and for export. Given this continued exploitation, there seemed to be little hope for a recovery of the sea cucumber population.

In 1991, at the request of some church leaders, the Pipuli Foundation, a local NGO, started a programme to establish a sanctuary or no-take zone and the rehabilitation of mangroves.

The established sanctuary area covered mangrove, sea grass and coral reef, and occupied 6 per cent of the total inter-tidal area in the bay.

The Foundation started to assist fishers and shell gleaners to unite around resource management, drawing on the positive and negative experiences of sanctuary establishment and

community-based resource management initiatives in other parts of the Philippines.

In early April 1998, it was again a sea cucumber that took centre stage in the battle over limited resources in Danao Bay. This time, the conflict was about the sandfish (*Holothuria scabra*), a gray, valuable sea cucumber. It was a month before the national and local elections when reports reached the office of the NGO from the organized community members that some fishers from Tugas village in the municipality of Baliangao were landing sacks full of sea cucumbers. Undoubtedly, these large quantities of big sea cucumbers could only have been poached from the last refuge of the sea cucumber in Danao Bay—the sanctuary.

Alarm signals

Alarmed by these reports, the sanctuary guards sharpened their watchful eyes

gets two shares of the harvest, while the tenant gets only one, and also has to shoulder the costs of production.

Fish caught in Danao Bay is sold to local fish buyers, who sell to fish markets in the neighbouring town of Calamba. Commercial species (big mangrove crabs and groupers) are sold to Manila, while sea cucumbers are sold to Zamboanga for the international market (Hong Kong).

Baliangao is known for its beautiful beaches. The present administration is exerting a lot of effort to improve Baliangao's image as the most peaceful and hospitable municipality in the province. Its potential as a tourist destination has not yet been fully exploited. The absence of a good water system is a major stumbling block for tourism development.

The 1000 resource users (or one person per hectare of the inter-tidal zone) heavily exploit the resources of Danao Bay. Most of them concentrate on the inshore area, where 82 fish corrals have been set up; 70 trammel net fishers beat the fish into their nets, 80 gill-net fishers set their nets, 30 night-time speargun fishers operate, 60 fishers use hook-and-line, and 450 persons glean the reef for an average of 10 days/nights a month.

Fishing on the seaside of the reef crest is seasonal. Amihan (or the northeastern monsoon) brings gusty winds and strong waves

that make fishing in the open sea outside the protection of the reef too dangerous for small, non-motorized boats. From December to April, even the 54 fishers who own boats with small inboard 4-16 hp engines have to fish behind the protection of the reef crest.

The destruction of the mangroves, the heavy damage wrought on the reef by the use of explosives and the increase in fishing pressure brought about by a growing fisher population and the use of more efficient technologies have contributed to the steady decrease in catches. Through community workshops, involving fishers of different ages, the recent history of Danao Bay was reconstructed. The catch per unit effort (CPUE) for fish corrals and trammel nets has decreased significantly and is presently less than one-third of the CPUE in the 1980s.

Fish species caught in Danao Bay, like the rabbit fish (*Siganidae*—around 35 per cent of the catch), parrot fish (*Scaridae*), squid, blue crabs and goatfishes (*Mullidae*), command a high price in the market. This has somewhat offset the effect of the decline in catches on the income of the fishers, but income levels have definitely dropped in the last 10 years.

In 1998, fish corral owners earned an average of 45 pesos per day—far too little to pay for the basic needs of a family of four. Fish corral owners are really forced to augment their income with other activities.

and, after only a few nights of close patrolling, they found themselves facing 19 poachers inside the sanctuary, harvesting sacks of sea cucumbers.

The poachers had eluded the guards the nights before, because they worked without lamps—the sea cucumbers were quite visible by moonlight. One man, who appeared to be the leader of the poachers, threatened the guards with his *bolo* (long knife), asking them why they so wanted to play the hero. Luckily, cooler heads prevailed.

The trespassers, who were all from one small community, were not arrested, but their names were handed over to the local *barangay* captain. The next day, he summoned the poachers to his office, but they did not show up, probably confident of the protection they enjoyed from one of the influential local politicians.

For the leaders of the fisher organizations, the threat of the sanctuary and the sea cucumber becoming a political issue was evident, and they decided to send a delegation for a dialogue with this politician. The four representatives, all women, were confronted by the politician, who reasoned that he was only helping his people to survive the drought caused by the El Niño. “Would you continue to support them even if they broke the law?” one of the women shot back. The man fell silent. There was nothing more to be said. He just sat back in his chair, apparently surprised by the fierce reaction. For the women, it was a point, boldly made and won.

Poachers summoned

The next day, the *barangay* captain again summoned the poachers to his office. This time, a hearing was held with the guards, leaders and staff of the community-based

coastal resource management (CBCRM) programme. Confronted with the testimonies of the guards, the poachers admitted their offence and signed a statement saying that a second violation would land them behind bars.

Meanwhile, a lot of lobby work was done by the NGO staff and the fisher leaders to explain the merits of the sanctuary and other resource management regulations. The incident had shown the fisher leaders that solving conflicts over resource use can not be left to politicians, and that they themselves will have to play a major role. Sea cucumber poaching in the sanctuary stopped totally a week after the newly elected mayor took office.

It was clear that there was an attitudinal change within the community since the CBCRM programme started. Based on the number of sacks of dried sandfish transported to Zamboanga City by the sea cucumber dealer, it was estimated that the people around this dealer poached for a total value of one million pesos. Poachers made a lot of money out of poaching—in one night they earned 10 times the daily catch of a fish corral, and in much less time. Although the fishers knew this, they did not follow the bad example. Some of them reasoned: “If this continues, they will destroy the sanctuary and we will all be victims”. This was an attitude much changed from the time the sanctuary was

just being formed. People then would have jumped at the chance to harvest from the sanctuary, if they were assured of protection from political figures.

It was a happy surprise for the people from Balas Diyut, when, in early 2000, a reasonable population of the *mani-mani* (*Holothuria difficilis*), a brown-black sea cucumber with a maximum size of 20 cm, appeared on the reef. For several months, during low tide, whole families once again enjoyed their breakfast on the shore. However, it did not take long for the commercial gatherers to literally surface on the reef. At night, aided by the light of their kerosene lamps, they picked up kilos of sea cucumbers to be sold to their neighbour, the sea cucumber dealer.

This did not remain unnoticed by the gleaners and fishers from Balas Diyut. Remembering their experiences of the 1980s, a few of them decided that the sea cucumbers on the reef in front of their communities could only be harvested for local consumption. The next night, they shouted to the divers to leave the area. To further clarify their point, others started throwing stones. Afraid that their lamps might get damaged, the intruders hurriedly left the place.

Community assembly

Lourdes, an experienced reef gleaner of Balas Diyut, says, “By coincidence, a community assembly was scheduled in

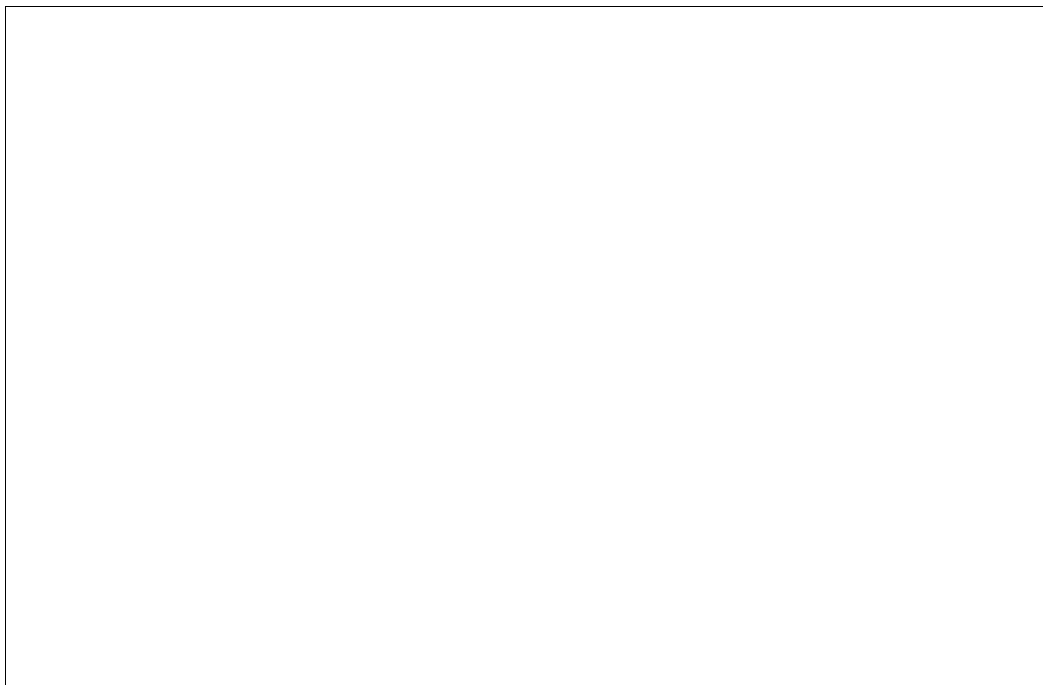


Table : Historical overview of catches of fishers in Danao Bay.

Kind of gear	1950 ¹	1960 ¹	1980 ¹	1997 ²
Fish Corral (kg per day)	25	14	3	1.3
Shell gathering (litres per 3 hours)		18	6	3
Sea cucumber gathering (kg live weight per hour) ³		100	100	0.5 ⁴
Status of the source of production:				
Mangrove	800 ha	30ha	Some natural regrowth	300 ha (90 hectare reforestation)
Corals	First fishing with explosives	Heavy explosive fishing	Heavy explosive fishing	Some explosive fishing around election time

1. Data based on results of workshops with fishers of different age groups
- 2.. Data based on catch sampling interviews and satellite data on mangrove cover
3. For 1950 to 1980, the catch stated is the potential sea cucumber catch. During the 1960s and 1980s, people would only use around half a kilo (which would take them less than a minute to gather) for their home consumption during a few days of the month.
4. Only fishers who specialize in gathering sea cucumbers at night could catch half a kilo per hour.

the village where the commercial sea cucumber gatherers live. One of the older fishers from our village attended this assembly and explained that we wanted to preserve the sea cucumbers for our own consumption. It looked as if the others understood, but four months later, they were back again. Chasing them away was not done systematically and this is the result." Disheartened, she shows me her poor harvest of the day.

Resource management is indeed more than getting angry once in a while and launching some immediate actions. It demands a structurally different way of treating the resource and fellow resource users. So, the local fisher leaders and the NGO Pipuli began to work on a written resource management plan, based on the experiences and ideas of the community. The plan projects some major changes in resource use. In the first place, the principle of open access was denounced as the main factor for the present dismal state of the resources. Only a limited-access regime would be able to generate enough fisherfolk support for

resource rehabilitation measures. In the future, fishers who want to make use of the bay's resources will have to register and contribute time for guarding and/or monitoring. Secondly, the stationary fish corrals will have to abide by the minimum mesh-size rules, in exchange for a total ban on the use of fish-scaring devices inside the bay. Also, there would be a two-year moratorium on the gathering of sea cucumbers for export. During that period, the stocks would be monitored and a sustainable harvesting scheme devised to give priority to local consumption, rather than foreign markets.

These measures call for sacrifices from people who sometimes find it hard to generate three meals a day. Still, a majority of the resident resource users has accepted the draft joint municipal ordinance (for Baliangao and Plaridel).


Draft ordinance

In the six communities around the Bay, the draft ordinance was presented during community consultations initiated by the local legislators. During these

consultations, the fishers who had not been part of the process because they were not members of one of the village-level organizations, raised a lot of critical questions.

The questions focused on the necessity and costs for registration, the amount of time they would have to contribute to guarding and who would pay for the replacement of the fine-mesh nets with bigger ones. The fisher leaders themselves answered most of the questions, aided sometimes by the local legislators.

By August 2000, the ordinance had been well accepted and embraced by the municipal councilors of Plaridel, who passed a motion urging their colleagues in Baliangao to pass a joint ordinance. Their colleagues in Baliangao said they “didn’t have a problem” with the ordinance, but kept on postponing the decision.

Fisher leaders are now contemplating their next moves. A lot has been done to prepare for a structural change in the resource management regime in Danao Bay. Hopefully, the final steps will also be taken to allow a spillover to other areas, inspiring the small-scale fishers and shell gleaners in Balas Diyut to solve their problems in a more structural way. 

This article is by Arjan Heinen (aheinen@ozamiz.com), SNV advisor to Pipuli Foundation Inc. (www.ozamiz.com/earthcalls), with editorial inputs from Cornelia Quist (cornelie.quist@wolmail.nl)

Faceless no more

The Fishermen's Pastoral Council has effectively contributed to several political changes in Brazil

The Fishermen's Pastoral Council (CPP) is a Brazilian organization close to the Catholic Church structure. Recently, during the celebrations of its 30th anniversary, from 17 to 19 November 2000 in Lagoa Seca Village in Paraíba State, several people recalled various aspects of the history of the movement. Since its beginning, CPP has played an important role in supporting the fishermen of Brazil, and has effectively contributed to several political changes. Today, many *colônias* around the country are headed by active fishermen or fishworkers. (*Colônia de Pescadore* is the traditional name for the municipal or district-level organization of fishermen in Brazil.)

According to Bernardo Siry, the present national co-ordinator of CPP, at the end of the 1960s, when the movement began, it was made up of fishermen, priests, nuns and other supporters. Starting in some of the beaches of Olinda (in the neighbourhood of Recife, the capital of Pernambuco State), the movement centred around the work of a Franciscan priest, Alfredo Schnuetgen, a priest whose memory is still alive among many fishermen's groups, notably in the northeastern region of Brazil.

The movement soon outgrew its local character, spreading rapidly to other regions of Pernambuco and beyond. As Professor Luiz Geraldo Silva, from Paraná University, recalled at the celebration, around 30 years ago, two trajectories met—CPP's and that of the organized fishermen in Brazil. Since then, the histories of both have been intertwined.

Bernardo Siry nostalgically recollected the initial adventures of Alfredo the priest, who didn't want to be "confined to parishes, but wanted to find the people."

During his walks along the Olinda beaches, Alfredo had observed the neglected fishermen, whose lives were characterized by isolation, distance and subordination to merchants. He began to work in two communities in Olinda. Initially, it was not an easy task to get them to discover their own reality.

Out of the first meetings with the Olinda fishermen was born "Christian Fishermen", which began to publish an informative bulletin, *O Leme (The Rudder)*. One of the main difficulties the bulletin addressed was the existence of middlemen. Toinho, a fisherman who was part of the early movement, recalled that the middlemen owned the boats and the gear, and they forced the fishermen to sell their products through them. Soon, Alfredo's discussions stimulated interest in an effective organization for fishermen. Groups of fishermen began to form associations within the *colonias* to acquire fishing gear. These groups were the seeds of the future co-operatives.

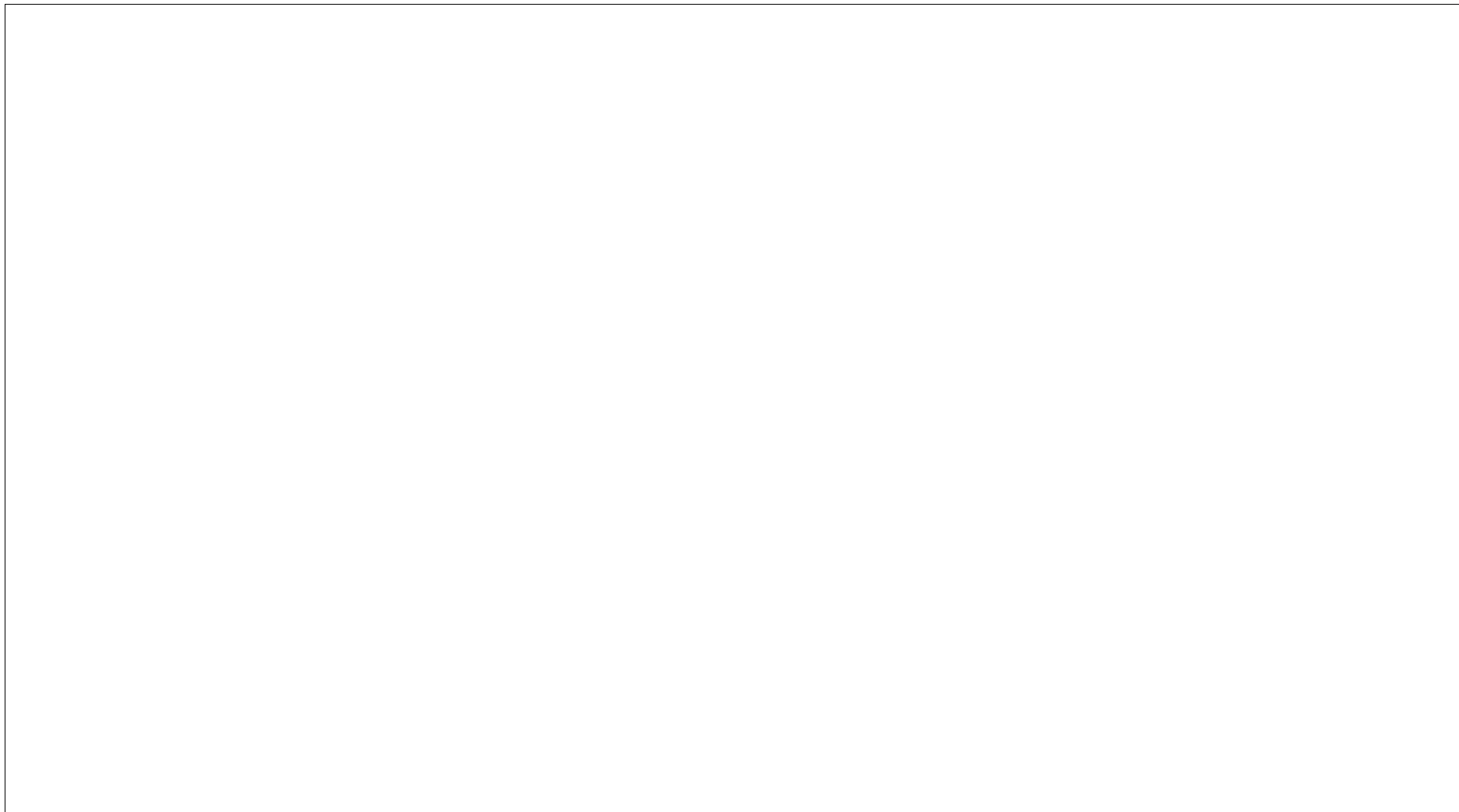
Those early initiatives soon expanded to the other beaches of Pernambuco and the neighbouring States. Literacy groups began to be organized for the fishermen and their families. Meanwhile, *O Leme* was increasing its circulation, while a radio programme, *Voice of the Fisherman*, began to attract listeners in the northeast region.

Autonomous entity

In 1974, Christian Fishermen was recognized by the Regional Northeast CNBB (National Conference of Brazilian Bishops) and, in 1976, it was declared a "pastoral of national interest", and named the Fishermen's Pastoral Council, with headquarters in Recife. In 1978, it became an autonomous entity, and began to hold general assemblies and meetings for national co-ordination.



Brazil



The fishermen wondered whether it should turn into a movement for fishermen or remain a pastoral service for them. After a great deal of controversial debate, they decided on the latter objective.

Today, the Council has both religious and lay members. It participates in the religious and cultural occasions of the community, and also in the struggle for the rights of the fishermen.

The profile of the fishermen is no longer that of a bunch of workers subservient to merchants, the military and politicians. Increasingly, more and more fishermen have been mobilized in a lot of *colonias*, and this has led to a national movement of fishermen.

Today, the role of women is an important part of the Council's work. As early as 1974, it supported the organization of *pescadeiras* (fisherwomen), as reported in the early editions of *O Leme*, copies of which were displayed at the 30th anniversary meeting.

At the meeting, Bernardo emphasized the pioneering role of Sister Nilza, who, in the 1970s, began working closely with a group of fisherwomen of Itapissuma, in Pernambuco. It was from Itapissuma that, for the first time in Brazil, a woman became the president of a fishermen's *colonia*.

The president of the fishermen's *colonia* of Remanso, in Bahia State, recalled, "The fishermen didn't know they had somebody who could do something for them." An added disadvantage was the lack of organization.

Today, thanks to the support of the Council and some parishes and dioceses that gave priority to the cause of the fishermen, four *colonias* in the Sobradinho area are ruled by fishworkers. "Today, a fisherman can sit down and talk with anyone, even with the head of the country," said the president.

The testimony of Divino Alves, another professional leader, was along the same lines: "The fishermen today see themselves as a category of workers, with specific problems. The Fishermen's

Pastoral Council began to show fishermen that they are individuals with rights and dignity."

Toinho, president of the *colônia* from Penedo, So Francisco River Region, recalled the initial support from Centro Josué de Castro, as well as the help of a technician from the old official fisheries institute, SUDEPE. Those days, he said, were marked by surveillance by the military regime of Brazil, which was suspicious of any workers' meetings.

As an important consequence of the work initiated by the Council, a fisherman was elected president of the National Fishermen's Confederation. Soon, the fishermen were clamouring to be officially recognized in the country's constitution, egged on by Dario, a fisheries technician who came to Olinda in 1986.

In Brasília, the country's capital and home to the federal government's headquarters and the National Congress, the fishermen participated in a seminar with deputies and senators who were engaged in the constitutional process.

A team of fishermen's leaders and support technicians took charge of lobbying the constitutional assembly in Brasília. As Toinho reminded the audience, MONAPE, the national fishermen's movement, was born of that early process. "The fight of the fishermen continues, but it was never easy," he recalled.

In 1986, a Constituent Movement was organized to put before the country's Constituent Congress, the views, interests and propositions of the fishermen. Ricardo Campos, a lawyer and an old member of the Fishermen's Pastoral Council, recalled that not more than 20 years ago, the *colonias* were dominated by the military.

Forced affiliation

The Constituent Movement sought to struggle against the obligatory affiliation of fishermen to the *colonias*. It also fought against State interventionism, which was manifested as statutes promulgated by the Ministry of Agriculture, and by the fact that the president of the National Confederation of Fishermen was nominated by the minister.

René Schärer, of Prainha do Canto Verde and a member of the NGO, Instituto Terramar, of Ceará State, pointed out the positive and negative aspects of the fishermen's history. Among the positive ones were the training courses for leadership. "The present leaders of Ceará came from the school of the Fishermen's Pastoral Council," he said. The courses that Instituto Terramar conducts today are inspired by those early programmes. As negative points, René pointed to the inefficient operations in a lot of the colonies. He also believed that a larger discussion on fisheries management is yet to occur.

The posters presented at the 30th Assembly meeting referred to several seminars and events that had taken place during the period, both locally and nationally. On display was a copy of a bulletin published by MONAPE, called *Fishing and Struggling*, as well as a copy of a "Letter on the Fundamental Rights of the Artisanal Fishermen of the World," which talked of the right for women to participate in fisherworkers' organizations and in fishing activities.

Professor Luiz Geraldo da Silva, a historian who had worked in the Council between 1986 and 1990, and who is the author of *The Fishermen in the History of Brazil*, reminded the Assembly that the first indigenous inhabitants of Brazil used the swamps, the rivers and the sea. With

the arrival of the Portuguese and, especially after the 18th century, slaves began to be employed in the fisheries. The price of a slave fisherman varied with specialization. There were shrimp fisher slaves, shell collectors, manufacturers of rafts, etc., Geraldo explained.

The professor also reminded his audience that since the 18th century, middlemen have been operating on the beaches. Then they owned corrals (fixed traps), nets, and ranches of coconut trees. Fishermen had to pay for the right to build the straw huts for their boats and fishing materials. Their freedom was restricted, as they were obliged to the middlemen.

Navy recruitment

In the 19th century, Geraldo continued, the State began to see the fisherman as an "ideal type of servant for the navy." After 1840, the navy began to create "Districts of Fishing" along the Brazilian coast, in a recruitment drive for warship crew. Fishermen, along with other seafaring categories, were supposed to enroll in those districts. Though those early mariners were seen as the advanced sentry for the nation, they met with repression, and were forced to move away from their families and communities. Around 1919, the navy embarked on a military mission of creating *colonias* of fishermen, along the whole Brazilian coast. The intention was, always, to recruit individuals into the navy.

In that era, male and female fishers were socially invisible, although they were essential as food producers, and were responsible for the profits of several categories of middlemen. In time, their profile changed, as different strategies entered their agenda, such as the fight for enlightened public policy and development programmes, the search for a rational use of aquatic resources, and the recognition of the role of women in fisheries. Nowadays, fishers are no longer content with fighting for mere existence and organization. They demand the right to dignity and public recognition, production infrastructure, a healthy environment, political representation, professional capacity enhancement, and social and welfare rights. 3

Brazil

This report was written by Maria Cristina Maneschy (crismane@terra.com.br), Professor, Federal University of Para, Belem, Brazil

North Sea fishery

Enough is enough!

The closure of an extensive part of the North Sea led to a blockade of Rotterdam, the world's biggest seaport, by angry Dutch fishermen

"This is an undemocratic decision, and we ask ourselves, for how long can the Dutch fisher community persist under these policies? Or are we soon only to see fishermen in museums?"

These words of indignation and despair were uttered at a meeting after the emergency decision of the Fishery Commission of the European Union to close an extensive part of the North Sea for fishing, from mid-February until the first of May. A big part of the closed area is exactly along the coast of the Netherlands and forms the most important fishing ground for the Dutch. For the Dutch fisher community, it was an enormous blow in the face, as they recently also had to accept a large reduction of their quota of plaice and sole, the most important target species for the Dutch fishermen. Furthermore, they are still recovering from the oil price crisis. As a fisher-woman said, "All together, it means that we will see our yearly income reduced by more than 25 per cent, and this is very hard for us women, who are responsible for the management of the household. We have not been given any chance to prepare for such an income reduction, even as our fixed expenses continue."

The emergency decision of the EU-Fishery Commission was due to the depletion of stocks of codfish, which have reached alarmingly low levels. Biologists, fishermen and policymakers all agree that something has to be done urgently to help the codfish rehabilitate. Therefore, consultations had already taken place between the Commission and policymakers and representatives of fisher organizations of the European member States, about the measures needed. This was not an easy process, because several interests were at stake,

and there were different ideas about regulations. Another factor was the fishery agreement of the EU with Norway, with whom the EU shares the codfish stocks. So, the decision was primarily based on political grounds, and the Dutch fisher community now feels victimized.

As their first objection, the Dutch fishers say that the emergency decision will not have the expected results of rehabilitating codfish stocks, as the area, which is designated for closure, is not a typical codfish ground (a hypothesis supported by biologists). Secondly, there are only a few cod fishers left in the Netherlands, and the Dutch primarily fish flatfishes (plaice and sole) and shrimp.

The Netherlands has only been allocated 10 per cent of the Total Allowable Catch (TAC) of codfish, of which only 5 per cent is caught by cod fishers, while the other 5 per cent is bycatch by the flatfish fishers. The Dutch fishers fail to see why they should be the ones to be affected most by this measure. They are also angry by the fact that the Danish fishmeal fishery is allowed in the closed areas, although this type of fishery is generally considered very destructive. Finally, they also warn of unwanted side effects of the measure, which will lead to increased pressure on the fishing grounds outside the closed areas, resulting in overfishing, resource conflicts between fishermen, and other damages.

Sudden decision

Due to the sudden decision of the Fishery Commission, the two Dutch national fisher organizations were not able to organize any other form of protest than to meet the State Minister of Fisheries to urge her to plead with the Fishery Commission for an alternative proposal. This alternative proposal was to impose a

fishing ban during the spawning time of the cod for the whole of the North Sea, which would be more effective and fair, as far as sharing the costs is concerned.

In support, the Women in Fisheries Network of the Netherlands immediately wrote a letter to the State Minister, supporting the alternative proposal, but also telling her about the problems the fisher families face these days: "We want to fight for the position of our families. If the present situation continues, we will be forced to leave the fishery and choose jobs on the shore. This thought makes us unhappy, and we think this can not be the intention of policymakers."

Women of the Network also wrote letters to members of parliament and the media, which contributed to the mobilization of a broad support. The State Minister of Fisheries was sent to meet the EU Fishery Commission to plead for the alternative proposal of the Dutch fisher-community, but, unfortunately, without success.

To find support for their alternative proposal, the Dutch fisher organizations contacted other fisher organizations in Europe. But, again, they did not succeed. Unfortunately, there is very little solidarity within the fisher community of Europe. Every one tries to settle deals through their own fishery ministers, without considering the interests of the

other communities. So it happened that the EU member States that do not fish in the North Sea supported the decision of the EU Fishery Commission. That act will greatly affect the future of the North Sea fisher community.

"We fishermen, from north to south, have been talking a lot to each other these days through the radio. All of us are surprised and sad that the decision to close parts of the North Sea is pushed through, and that alternative and better solutions are not taken into consideration. We will now surely see a big reduction in our incomes. Our costs will even increase because we are forced to leave our fishing grounds and go farther. Our last hope now is to receive financial compensation. If not, we will no longer refrain from action." This quote from a Dutch fisherman, faxed to the national fishery paper, is a good summary of how the fisher community felt at that moment.

Emergency meets

The Dutch fisher organizations called their members for emergency meetings all over the country, to sound them out on what further action to take. For several fishermen, particularly the younger ones, this emergency decision of the EU was the limit, and they called for "hard actions." These days, the younger fishermen go through very hard times, because investment costs have increased enormously, while the value of their boats

The cutter fleet

In the Netherlands, the cutter fleet is the largest 'traditional' Dutch fishing fleet. In 1999, the Dutch cutter fishing fleet composed 399 boats, of which 56 per cent were small-scale boats (under 300 hp) and 44 per cent were medium-scale ones (301-2000 hp). The large majority of the boats (80 per cent) are more than 10 years old.

Most (84 per cent) of the fishing enterprises of the cutter fleet generally own one boat only. The enterprises are primarily family-owned, and are passed on from generation to generation. The official employment figure of the fleet is 1.815 fishermen, but, generally, family members lend a helping hand in the work. The remuneration of the crew is based on a share system, which means that no real employer-employee relationship exists. The Dutch cutter fleet is concentrated in the north and southwest parts of the Netherlands. The largest fishing village, Urk, is, strangely, situated in the centre of the country. This is because this village was once an island in the sea (Zuiderzee), but after the sea was closed by a dike and land reclamation began, Urk became part of the mainland. The community of Urk is still 80 per cent dependent on fisheries, including trade and processing.

The primary technology used by the cutter fleet is the trawl net (with beam and otter-board), and the major commercial species caught are flatfish (sole and plaice) and shrimp. Codfish

also used to be a target species, but, at present, there are hardly any cod fishers left in the Netherlands. The fish harvest is for human consumption only, mostly for southern European consumers.

Since the introduction of the EU's Common Fishery Policy and the TAC quota system, the Dutch fleet has faced overcapacity. To control and reduce the Dutch cutter fleet, the following management regulations were installed: (a) quota system (Individual Transferable Quotas, pooled in eight management groups); (b) obligatory auctioning; (c) licences (for boats and the 12-miles zone); (d) gear regulations (for engine capacity and mesh size); (e) limits on the number of days at sea (177); and (f) a decommissioning scheme for boats.

Fish prices in the Netherlands are still good, and the sector, as such, is economically 'healthy' at present. Yet, obviously, due to the yearly increase in operation costs and the reduction of quotas, more and more fishing enterprises of the cutter fleet fail to break even, and decide to go in for decommissioning.

This has led to a reduction of the number of fishing boats by 45 per cent since 1987, and a reduction by 40 per cent of the number of employed fishermen. In the last two weeks, another 12 Dutch cutters have reported for decommissioning, among them the last full-time cod fishers.

and quotas is decreasing. Some of them said that they would lose 60 to 70 per cent of their income because of the closure of their fishing ground. The fishermen criticized the EU fishery policy in these words: "The EU fishery management only means rules and restrictions, new ones every day. A fisherman has to go to university these days to understand the enormous amount of regulations. And what has been the result? The number of fishermen has declined, and the income of fishermen has declined, but the fish stocks have not significantly improved. These quota reductions have only caused an expansion of the black market of fish and all kind of other unwanted practices."

Soon, emotions were running high. The leadership, however, felt that they should be cautious not to lose the sympathy of the

public. In the past, the fisher community had often met with negative publicity in the media, partly because of the bad image spread by environmental organizations, which have a broad support with the public, and partly also because of their own attitude and weak public relations.

Meanwhile, the fishermen were provoked by the deployment of a large number of coast guard boats, helicopters and airplanes to control the closed areas. It looked like the State was preparing for a war with the fishermen, who read it as a sign of mistrust. One boat that violated the boundary of the closed areas was fined an exorbitant amount of 30,000 English pounds. When the Netherlands State Minister of Fisheries also refused to discuss any form of compensation or any alternative, the leaders of the fisher

organizations could no longer keep their members under control.

On the first of March, fishermen spontaneously started to blockade the major harbours of the Netherlands. Soon, practically all fishermen had joined in. The leadership of the fisher organizations could no longer maintain a reserved attitude. The action was effective, particularly because the fishermen succeeded in blocking access to Rotterdam, the world's biggest seaport. At night, the leaders of the two fisher organizations succeeded in reaching an agreement with the State Minister about a compensation. The blockade was immediately called off.

Compensation is, of course, not a solution. However, the good news is that the generally divided fisher community underwent the experience of being united. For a long time, both fisher organizations pitched in together with their strengths. Also very positive were the discussions and exchanges within the fisher community at meetings and also via radio communication at sea. For the fishermen, it became clear that it is now time to become more proactive about the fishery management of the North Sea, in order to survive as self-employed fisher families. A group of young fishermen decided to form a working group to prepare, together with the two fisher organizations, proposals for a fish rehabilitation plan for

the North Sea, and promote these proposals to the government. The proposals should aim to protect the marine environment in such a way that fishermen would still be able to run healthy fishing enterprises. Dutch fishermen are entrepreneurs, but, at the same time, fishing is a way of life for them, where they directly interact with nature.

Another good news is that the Dutch fisher community succeeded in winning the attention of the public. But now they have to work hard to maintain this attention in a positive way. Generally speaking, there exists some 'communication gap' between the fisher community and the rest of Dutch society. One reason may be that our fisher community has shrunk enormously during the last century and what is left are small pockets of well-organized, but also rather closed, communities. The latter facet is a strength, as these communities could retain a relative autonomy; yet, it is also a weakness, as they need the support of other sections of society to survive. It is also tragic that such a relatively small fisher community as exists in the Netherlands needs two national organizations to represent them.

Different interests

To be sure, the EU should learn to deal with the different interests within its domain in such a way that Europe's diversity is respected and her citizens are left their

The last of the Dutch cod fishers

Jaap Tuip, leader of the roundfish (cod) fishers, and vice-president of the Dutch Fishermen's Union, does not see a future anymore for his cutter boat, the *VD 19*, circa 1971, the last full-time roundfish fishing boat, along with the *UK 7*, the twin of the *VD 19*. (In the Netherlands cod fishing is traditionally done in pairs.) Both boats have reported for decommissioning. The closure by the EU of the fishing ground in the North Sea was the major reason for this decision. "Normally," says Tuip, "we make nice trips this time of the year to the inside of the Brown Bench and, thereafter, in the direction of the German Bight, but these areas are closed now. Going to farther areas is beyond the scope of the small boats."

Another problem is the reduction of the quota for cod by 50 per cent this year; renting of extra quota is too expensive. Though there is whiting, another roundfish, the cod fishers have no quota for this species. 1998 and 1999 were very good years for the *VD 19* and *UK 7* pair. "But, today", says Tuip, "you won't make a penny out of it anymore." Tuip himself will stop fishing, but fisherman van de Berg of the *UK 7* wants to look around for a new fishing boat. "We are looking for a multi-functional boat, because, these days, you need to be able to switch between gears easily," he says.

(From *Visserij Nieuws*, 23 February 2001)

dignity. Until now, fishermen are often seen as a nuisance, instead of partners in the management of European fisheries, which has a counterproductive impact. However, the attitudes of the EU fisher communities have to change too. There is still a lot of shortsightedness and inward looking tendencies within the communities. Hopefully, the leaders of the fisher organizations will put in more effort in meeting one another at the European level, and working together for the preservation of both the marine resources and the communities who depend on them. 3

This article is by Cornelia Quist (cornelie.quist@wolmail.nl), a member of ICSF, and the contact person of the Women in Fisheries Network of the Netherlands

Poking the bubble

Alarmed by declining fish resources like sturgeon, the Russian government launches a plan to revive its fishing industry

In an effort to revive Russia's foundering fish industry and protect its waters from poachers, the government plans to create a state-run National Fish Resources organization, within the existing State Committee for Fisheries. The new organization will deal exclusively with the protection and improvement of natural fish resources throughout Russia.

Western and Russian legal exporters of sturgeon black caviar, concerned about the large black-market trade, are also eager to eliminate poaching and smuggling channels. The State Committee for Fisheries data shows that black-market fish exports deprive the exchequer of \$300 to \$500 million annually.

The Russian fish industry plunged into a full-fledged crisis after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Russia's ailing fish-producing enterprises—from fleets to processing plants—may have already become obsolete by the year 2000. Two-thirds are already severely outdated and have become a burden for the State exchequer.

The government's intention to restructure the fishing industry was clear when, in late April 1999, the then Prime Minister, Yevgeny Primakov, described the fishing industry as "one of the most disorganized sectors of Russia's economy." According to data from the Russian Association of Fish Producers and Exporters, the national production of fish is currently only one-third of the 1990 figure, amounting to 2.6 million tonnes a year.

The director of the Federal Border Guard Service, Konstantin Totsky, says that illegal fishing in the Pacific Ocean strip belonging to Russia has lately increased significantly. Fishermen from Japan,

South Korea, China and Poland are taking advantage of Russia's reduced fish takes.

Russian border guards have already detained 222 fishing vessels fishing without licences off Russia's far-eastern coast this year; a third of them were foreign vessels.

But there is still hope for Russia's fish resources in the Pacific. Not so for Caspian Sea sturgeon, Russia's most valued fish. The sturgeon is on the brink of extinction because of mafia-controlled poaching for the fish's black caviar. Sturgeon and black caviar production has shrunk dramatically. In the 1980s, the Astakhan Fish Processing Factory (now Russkaya Ikra) was producing 1,300 tonnes of black caviar annually, mostly for export, with revenues of around \$350 million. The sturgeon catch from the Caspian Sea during the last decade was over 100,000 tonnes a year, and its black caviar production 1,500 tonnes. Black caviar production dropped throughout the past decade, reaching 150 tonnes last year. The sturgeon take from the Caspian also dropped a hundred times, to 1,000 tonnes.

Russian fish farms release 50 million baby sturgeon each year, but resources remain low, as increasing numbers of the fish are caught before reaching maturity and legal weight. Experts also warn that extensive oil-drilling development planned for the Caspian Sea will deal the last blow to its sturgeon population.

Not well known

In Russia, rational exploitation of fish resources is not a well-known concept. Lev Bucharov, director of the Pacific Fisheries Research Center, complains that some fish species, such as sturgeon, are caught in excessive amounts, while others are not fished at all.



Turkey, with no access to the Caspian Sea, is now the world's second largest exporter of black caviar. In 1998, Turkish exports reached 120 tonnes of caviar, bought mainly from Dagestan and Azerbaijan.

The flourishing black market, Russia's inability to pace fishing to suit existing resources, and increased fishing by other countries in its waters, are sinking Russia's fishing industry. Its Soviet-style facilities will only poke the bubble until it bursts. 3

This is from a story filed by Anna Vlasova in *The Russia Journal*

Wag the dog

This is a response to Brian O' Riordan's article in SAMUDRA Report No. 27 and an attempt to set the record right on what happened at Loctudy, France

The analysis of the events leading to the breakup of the World Forum of Fish Harvesters and Fish Workers (WFF) and the formation of the World Forum of Fisher Peoples (WFFP), authored by Brian O'Riordan, the Secretary of ICSF's Brussels office, and published in SAMUDRA Report No. 27, was disheartening and provoking.

In this response, what has been attempted is not a counter-analysis of the events in Loctudy in October 2000, nor is it a point-to-point rejoinder to O'Riordan's article. Rather, it attempts to take up, in the light of bare facts, some of the assumptions or implied suggestions of O'Riordan behind the breakup (or breakdown) of WFF.

O'Riordan refers to a struggle between the Indians and the Canadians to wrest control of the WFF. Yes, there was a struggle. Every struggle involves a minimum of two parties. But it is naive to think that both the parties struggle towards the same end. More often, when one side struggles for power and supremacy, the other party struggles for equality or even survival. We have seen this clearly in the struggles of nations for independence.

When the US or India struggled against the British, one side struggled to continue the imposition of domination over the other, while the other had no alternative but to join the struggle just to protect its due rights and to be accepted and respected as an equal. To the British, unity meant the continuation of the British empire; but, for the Americans and the Indians, unity meant collaborating to create a world order based on equality and respect for one another. Yes, both the Indians and the Americans who struggled against the British can be seen as breakers of unity or

the cause of a shipwreck, but that depends from which side one views the struggle.

O'Riordan has simply stated that each side struggled for power, but he has not bothered to substantiate his statement. Even if one takes—or pretends to take—an impartial view of the situation, when the struggle is between a culpable party and an honest party, such a view favours the culpable. Surely, O'Riordan knows who is who, but, for some strange reason, he prefers to place both parties on the same level. A few facts amply demonstrate that while the lobby led by the Canadian delegation struggled for power, the lobby led by the Indian delegation was forced to join the struggle, not to wield power but for freedom, equality and survival:

- The Canadian Council of Professional Fish Harvesters (CCPFH) initiated a proposal to the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), which was never discussed in the Co-ordination Committee (CC), and the General Co-ordinator of the WFF (an Indian) had no information whatsoever that such a step had been taken by CCPFH on behalf of WFF. If that was not an effort to wrest control of WFF, what was it? When the Indian delegation questioned this action of the Canadians, O'Riordan discerned it as a struggle for power between the Canadians and the Indians!
- The CC had set a last date for admission of new members to the WFF and had decided upon procedures for such admission. This was to ensure that members who join the WFF towards the end of the three-year interim period

would not exercise undue influence on the proceedings of the Constitutional Assembly. But the Assistant Co-ordinator (a Canadian), who had not recruited a single member for almost three years, suddenly brought in 12 new members from Latin America, just before the Constituent Assembly began. This was done after the deadline for new members had lapsed, and did not follow the procedures agreed upon by the CC. Though this unlawful decision was clearly a means of gathering votes at the Constituent Assembly, the General Co-ordinator went out of his way to accommodate it, and had the new entrants declared as full-fledged members of WFF, with voting rights and so on, hoping that good sense would prevail. But that did not happen, as events proved later. If that was not a struggle, by hook or crook, for power by the Canadian delegation, what was it?

- The Canadian and the American leaders (of the WFF) were very keen on establishing a law by which they would have permanent membership at the CC. This insidious intention and outrageous ambition of the North American delegation was exposed by the lobby led by the Indians. But

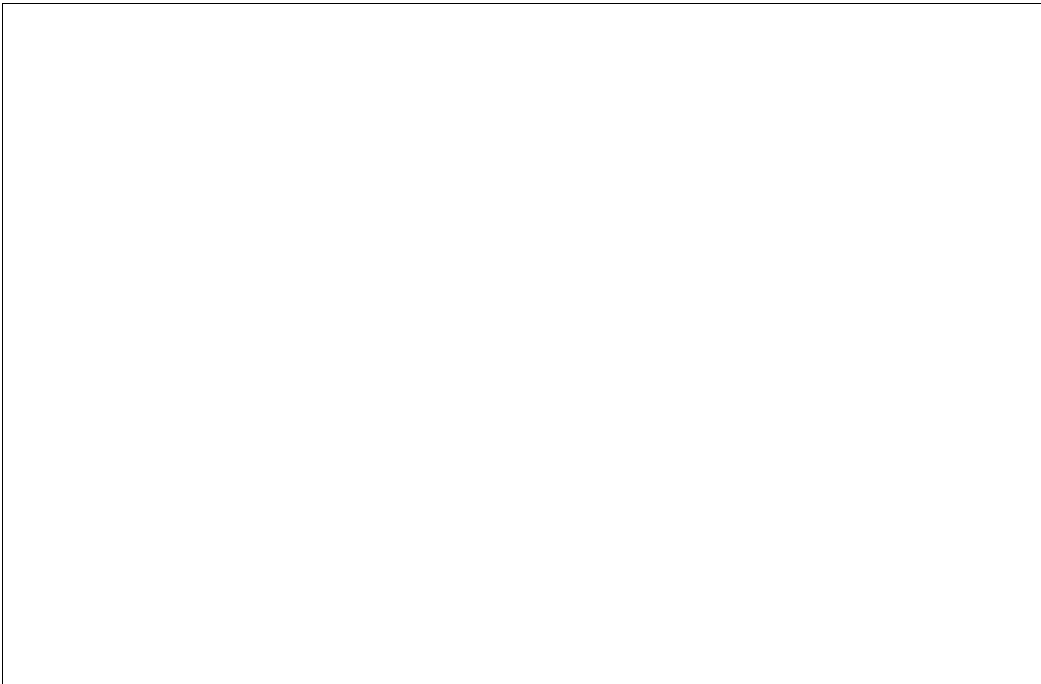
O’Riordan sees this as a “bizarre debate” over the number of continents. If that was not a struggle for power by the North Americans and a struggle for freedom and equality by the Indians, what was it? A bizarre debate? No, it was a struggle to free the North American leaders from their bizarre ambition for power.

A reference to the “bizarre debate over the number of continents” figures several times in O’Riordan’s reflections. Therefore, it is necessary to look at it a little more closely and understand both the foolishness and the seriousness of the issue. The question is what was bizarre—the debate or the understanding of the debate by O’Riordan?

The North American leaders wanted the world to believe that the debate was a bizarre one. What surprises us is that O’Riordan himself believes it! (Or does he?)

Escapism at work

Here we have a clear case of escaping the real issue, or rather insincerity in facing the real issue, and making it appear instead like a ridiculous non-issue. Well done, North American delegation! Since you could not fight the issue, you have successfully diverted the attention of even intelligent persons to non-issues.



The real issue was one of proportionate representation at the CC and at other levels of the WFF. That every country, generally, has one membership at the WFF was already an accepted principle. The Continental Councils were also under discussion, and each continent was supposed to send two members to the CC. Everybody knows that there are only two countries in North America, while other continents have 30, 40 or more. If North America were accepted as a separate continent, for the purposes of the WFF, it would mean that the US and Canada would each have permanent membership at the CC.

If one considers as bizarre a CC without both the Americans and the Canadians, then, yes, you are right, O’Riordan. If that were the case, the debate was indeed bizarre. Let there be six continents or ten—or any number, for that matter. That was not the issue. The real issue was of proportionate representation of member countries and the population of fisher peoples (the actual stakeholders for whom the WFF exists) at all levels in the WFF.

O’Riordan distinguishes between two different types of leadership. One is the charismatic leadership of mass movements, requiring unquestioning loyalty; and the other is the leadership for professional rights, requiring negotiations. He further implies that the style of leadership of the National Fishworkers Forum (NFF) requires unquestioning loyalty, which is (or seen to be) dictatorial and undemocratic.

Without going into the relevance or irrelevance of making such a distinction, and the misleading aspects of attributing a dictatorial and undemocratic style of functioning to the NFF leadership, it will be better to review facts and decide who was dictatorial and undemocratic. O’Riordan has made a learned statement, without giving even one example of undemocratic action by the NFF leadership, which demanded unquestioning loyalty.

Consider, instead, these facts:

- It took almost three years for the CCPFH to present an audited statement of accounts of the money it had collected for the

Delhi meeting. Some serious questions posed to the CCPFH regarding money, raised at the CC meetings and at the Constituent Assembly, still remain unanswered. Yet, the CCPFH expects its transparency in financial matters to be unquestioningly accepted.

- The CCPFH brought in 12 member-nations into the WFF after the deadline decided by the Co-ordination Committee, and without following the norms agreed for acceptance of new members. Members were brought in through the back door by the CCPFH, but, in the case of the NFF, they were allowed to come in through the front door through a democratic process initiated by the NFF leadership. If the General Co-ordinator and the NFF had demanded unquestioning loyalty to accepted norms, the CCPFH would not have had the democratic strength to stand where it does now.
- An opinion was expressed at a CC meeting that the WFF should not collaborate with Greenpeace. That was just an opinion, and no final decision had ever been made. And yet, the democratic CCPFH demanded absolute loyalty from Thomas Kocherry, the General Co-ordinator from India, and denounced him for joining a group to protest against globalization and the World Trade Organization (WTO), just because Greenpeace was also a member of that group.
- The American member of the WFF CC, as head of the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen’s Associations (which is a member of WFF), can have open collaboration with a group in which Greenpeace is also an active member. But, in any of his various capacities, Thomas Kocherry should not only shun Greenpeace at all times and in all places, but should also not collaborate with groups with which Greenpeace associates. Did the North

American and European WFF CC members think that they were charismatic leaders of mass movements that they could demand unquestioning loyalty and submission from Thomas Kocherry to their own whims and fancies? If such a stance is not dictatorial and a denial of an Individual's freedom, pray, tell us, what is it?

- The CCPFH, which is said to achieve its goals through negotiations and a democratic process, took the lead in writing to Greenpeace, denouncing Thomas Kocherry's collaboration with them. This was done in the name of the CC, though it was never discussed at the CC meeting. The CCPFH leaders did not find it necessary to clarify the matter with Thomas Kocherry or negotiate with him. They simply expected, or demanded, unquestioning loyalty from the head of their organization to their own whims and fancies, even as their sense of democracy and negotiation did not prevent them from denouncing their own democratically elected leader to a third party.
- The democratic negotiating group could not even accept for discussion a proposed resolution from the Spanish delegates. The French leader walked out of the CC meeting at the very suggestion of accepting the proposal for discussion at the general assembly, and the CCPFH strongly supported the French action of vetoing the resolution.
- In all discussions and decision-making at the CC meetings, Thomas Kocherry has always stood for consensus; he has not claimed the democratic right of deciding by a majority of votes. Had that right been claimed, there would have been at least one woman co-opted into the CC.
- During the three years that he held the office of General Co-ordinator of the WFF, there was one really

undemocratic action on the part of Thomas Kocherry. That was the initiative he took in getting Francois Poulin appointed as Assistant Co-ordinator, in 1997. The General Assembly, which had just concluded, had not created such a post.

Surely, O'Riordan should be in the know of all these facts because of his close collaboration with the WFF Secretariat and the then General Co-ordinator. It is really strange that he could even suggest that Thomas Kocherry's style of functioning was dictatorial and undemocratic. To be sure, a theoretical analysis of the two types of leadership (of professional representation and mass movements) has its merits. But O'Riordan's attempt at identifying them does not even take a casual glance at facts. But when one takes—or decides to take or is made to take—a deviant stance, then facts do not matter.

Was there a debate over Greenpeace at the Constituent Assembly, either at the CC meetings during the Assembly or at any of the general sessions? Greenpeace was jointly invited by the NFF and the CCPFH to the Delhi meeting in 1997. There was just one person (Arthur Bogason of Iceland) who voiced opposition to collaboration with Greenpeace, but neither did any discussion take place nor was any decision made. The matter did, however, come up again at later CC meetings, and a decision was made not to invite Greenpeace to the Constituent Assembly, a decision that was followed. During the Constituent Assembly, just one person raised the question as to why Greenpeace was not present. Again, there was no discussion or decision. How, then, does O'Riordan perceive an explosion on the issue of relationship with Greenpeace?

Ill perception

This, again, is a case of misperception or ill perception. The debate at the Constituent Assembly, both at the CC meetings and at the General Assembly, was not about Greenpeace, but about letting down the General Co-ordinator of the WFF to a third party, which happened to be Greenpeace. A letter was written in the name of the CC, when such a letter or matter was never discussed at the CC. That

letter, denouncing the Co-ordinator of the WFF, was sent to Greenpeace, without even a copy forwarded to the General Co-ordinator.

The letter was obviously formulated during the days of the CC meeting at San Francisco. This can be deduced from the fact that a member of the CC, who arrived at San Franciaco just after the CC meeting ended, was presented with that letter for a signature, and was deceived into believing that it was a decision of the CC to send such a letter to Greenpeace. The member concerned confirmed this at Loctudy.

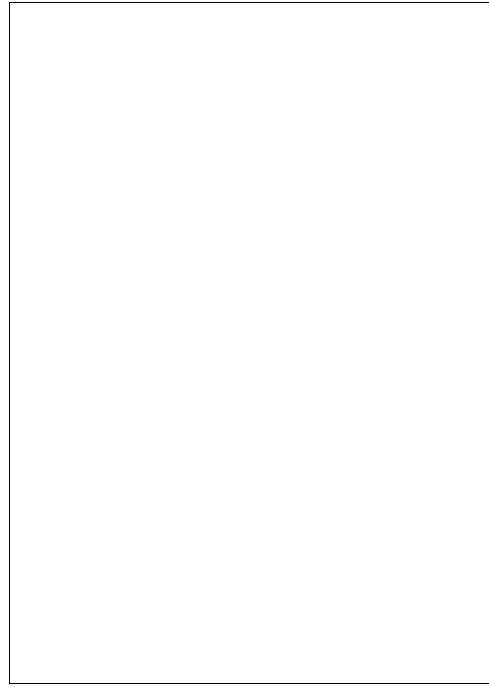
The whole issue of the letter to Greenpeace is very uncivilized, vicious and malicious. The issue at Loctudy was the undemocratic, indecent and stealthy action against the General Co-ordinator of the WFF, authored by his own top-level colleagues, the North American and European members of the WFF CC. That letter could as well have been written to any other group. That was not the point at all. How could O’Riordan possibly pick up relationship with Greenpeace as an issue during the Constituent Assembly at Loctudy? It is even more outrageous that he missed perceiving the insidious aspect of this so-called Greenpeace issue.

In any international organization, persons from different countries hold various offices and responsibilities. When

criticisms are made against them, they are directed individually to those persons—who may happen to be from any nation. It is childish and immature to assume that such allegations are made against the countries they come from. How absurd it is to believe that their countries were being attacked! If someone, assuming that the attack was on his or her country, felt shocked or dismayed or wounded, one can be broadminded and generous in appreciating that sense of patriotism, misplaced though it is. But such patriotism is not going to do any good to the process of building up international solidarity. Such persons should be helped to grow out of their misplaced, token sense of loyalty to their countries. O’Riordan seems to have unconditional sympathy for such behaviour. What is even more absurd is that he seems to believe that allegations were made against Canada as a nation.

Whose voice?

O’Riordan’s conclusion seems to be that the existence or the non-existence of a World Forum—one or more—makes no difference to the lives and struggles of the fisher peoples all over the world. He states that, with or without these world bodies, the fishing communities the world over will find ways to express solidarity and unite to make their voices heard. One wonders which international collective he would propose as the voice of the fishing



communities. On the other hand, the editorial comment of SAMUDRA Report No. 27, an organ of ICSE, whose Brussel's office secretary O'Riordan is, expresses a different opinion.

Drawing a comparison from a graphic example or incident can make the reading interesting and help in understanding certain aspects of the matter in question. But when a complete parallel is forcefully applied, the example takes over the driver's seat, as it were, while the real matter under discussion gets pushed to the rear seat. It is like the tail wagging the dog! An example can only be a tool; an overapplication of it clouds the issue. ¶

This response has been written by Savarimuthu Santiago (nff@md2.vsnl.net.in), a former member of the WFF Secretariat

Economic ecology

An experiment with cuttlefish in South Brittany shows that it is possible to harmonize economy and ecology

Ecology, economy and community are three inter-related and indispensable aspects of sustainable development, comprising the three basic requisites of a triangular relationship that must be met if sustainable development is to be achieved.

In the current context, environmental concerns are all too often seen to conflict with economic interests and community needs such as food, income and waste disposal. Fishermen are all too often depicted as being at odds with environmental conservation, despite an obvious linkage between environmental sustainability and economic and social wellbeing. Rather than conserve stocks for tomorrow, fishworkers find themselves under increasing social and economic pressure to catch what is available today—never mind about tomorrow. However, as this article will try to show, fishworkers are all too aware of the need for ecological sustainability to maintain their ways of life. Increasingly, fishing communities are getting involved in promoting sustainable fisheries through self-imposed quotas, voluntary tie-ups, closed areas and the use of selective fishing gear.

From March through June, a seasonal fishery for cuttlefish (*Sepia officinalis*) takes place in the coastal waters off Brittany, when they come to spawn off Finistere. This fishery is not merely a subsidiary fishery, but constitutes an important resource for the fishermen.

There is, however, a problem of large-scale destruction of cuttlefish eggs, which undermines the resource. The traps used in this fishery are the preferred spawning substrate for the cuttlefish. Their eggs are then destroyed when the

traps are cleaned, once the fishing season is over. Such destruction could have harmful consequences for the cuttlefish stocks that are apparently still in a healthy condition. A short lifecycle (one to two years) makes the cuttlefish a species whose stock levels can fluctuate considerably from one year to the next. If there are adverse environmental conditions offshore (coastal pollution, for example) during hatching, and they are combined with the destruction of eggs, a decline in the resources could be caused in the following year. Fishermen who undertake this seasonal activity every year are well aware of this problem, and that is what started the project for conservation.

First of all, it was a matter of finding the methods that would allow the eggs to hatch. The experiments undertaken in June-July 1998 did not pretend to provide solutions for managing the species, but showed the willingness and resolve of fishermen to play a role in managing the resource. The exercise consisted of leaving the traps in an area of sheltered water, once the fishing season was over, to allow the eggs to hatch. Monitoring the hatching of batches of eggs stocked in specific areas has provided the basis of this experimentation.

Second phase

In its second phase, the project sought to establish a resource management methodology adapted to the working routine of professional fishermen. With this end in mind, several related projects have been undertaken along the French coastline, where the cuttlefish constitutes a not inconsiderable resource. A synthesis of these has enabled us to make a number of proposals for sustainable resource use, which take into account the everyday constraints of the professionals. To

achieve this, it is necessary to engage in a collective consultation and come up with the most realistic solution, in terms of efficiency and cost.

The common cuttlefish, *Sepia officinalis*, is abundant in the Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean. It is a coastal species that is found at depths no deeper than 150 m. Its *sepion* (bone) is not resistant to hydrostatic pressure above 15 atmospheres. It lives on the sea bottom, on loose substrates, hiding in the daytime, and coming out at night, except during the breeding season, when it is equally active during the daytime.

The cuttlefish is a coleoid cephalopod mollusc, characterized by tentacles encircling the mouth. Its behaviour is more like that of fish than other molluscs. Octopus and squid are also coleoid cephalopods.

Like almost all cephalopods, the cuttlefish is a predator. It feeds on live prey, mainly crustaceans, fish and cephalopods. The crustaceans are mainly crabs, prawns and, for small cuttlefish, mycids and amphipods. The fish are bottom-living species, sharing the same habitat as the cuttlefish (gobies, wrasses, flatfish, etc), as are the smaller-sized cuttlefish on which they feed. The cuttlefish reproduce in spring (from March to June), but late spawning may take place in summer (June

and July). Sexual dimorphism makes it easy to distinguish the sexes: the males are larger with black stripes; in addition, they have a reproductive arm (the ventral left arm) with suction pads at the base; the females are smaller, duller and rounder bellied. Mating takes place head-on (in a head-to-head' position). The male seizes the female by the head, and the arms of the animals intertwine. The male places some spermatophores in the pocket situated under the mouth of the female; the discharged spermatophores are stocked there up to the egg-laying time, which takes place some time after mating.

The females attach their eggs in bunches, using their arms, on various substrates: tubes, seaweed, traps, etc. The external envelope of the eggs is stained black with a little ink. The black coloration and the arrangement of the bunches give rise to the cuttlefish eggs being named "bunches of grapes". The females deposit several hundred eggs during a period of several days. The spent animals die after reproduction.

Impact of traps

Various studies undertaken in the Gulf of Morbihan have shown that traps are the favoured egg-laying sites of the cuttlefish. The impact of traps is, therefore, very important in this sector, where it has been estimated that an average of 28 million eggs are laid every three years on these surfaces. Exactly the same problem is

faced in the estuary of Pont L'Abbé, the difference being that fishing effort is much less than in the Gulf of Morbihan.

The experiments carried out during June and July 1998 were meant not only to ensure the viability of the eggs attached to the traps, but also to allow them to hatch. The operations of hauling and setting traps during the fishing season could have affected the quality of the eggs.

At the close of the fishing season (end of May), 40 traps, each containing around 3,000 eggs, were placed in the lagoon at Loctudy. This lagoon is separated from the sea by a dike that allows access to the traps on foot at each low tide. What is more, the lagoon is in direct contact with the open sea, so that each high tide covers the dike. This allows the young cuttlefish to return to the open sea.

Ten traps were used in the study; the other 30 were immersed in the lagoon. A *vivier* (container) made from plastic meshes was attached in each of the 10 (test) traps, in which were placed 300 eggs taken from the test traps. The mesh size of the *viviers* was small enough (0.5 cm) to prevent the *seichons* (hatchlings) from escaping.

The experiment was initiated on 14 June, and, from that day onwards, the hatchlings were released every two days. The experiment was terminated on 18 July, by which time all the eggs placed in the *viviers* had hatched.

From the first days onwards, the experiment released 30 to 40 hatchlings. After the end of June, the number declined. It is important to note that the incubation time for the eggs depends on the water temperature, and, in the lagoon, this is higher than in the natural marine environment, where the hatching period is slightly longer. The hatching rate achieved—95 per cent of the eggs hatched—was excellent.


It is only thanks to the goodwill of a few concerned local fishermen, supported by the local and regional fisheries committees, that these experiments were repeated during the 2000 fishing season (March to June) on the Loctudy site. Promoting the hatching of eggs attached

to traps seems vitally important for recruitment and, thus, for the regeneration of stocks.

Using the sites least favoured for the storage of traps at the end of the fishing season, and placing removable collectors inside the traps (which are replaced once filled) might allow the harvesting of a large number of eggs. Structures adapted at low cost, to which the collectors may be fixed (for example, oyster tables, structures generally used for seeding oysters) might allow us to maximize the hatching rate of the batches of cuttlefish eggs.

In the Gulf of Morbihan in South Brittany, gridded, 3 x 1 m structures, equipped with floating cords of 30 cm (acting as egg collectors), are immersed when the first cuttlefish arrive (March) and collected at the end of the hatching period (July). This method avoids a larger number of operations.

We have promoted the above two methods because they allow the capture of cuttlefish, while allowing them to spawn; basically, once a cuttlefish has laid its eggs on an external surface, it will no longer enter a trap, and will die soon after.

Ecology and economy—don't they both share the same etymological roots? Harmonizing the two will surely provide us with the means for exploiting all fishery resources in a sustainable and efficient manner. 

This piece, by José Gouyen (jose.gouyen@libertysurf.fr), a small-scale inshore estuarine fisherman from Southern Brittany and a member of the Colectif Pêche et Développement, has been translated and adapted by Brian O'Riordan

Back to school

The Patagonian fishworkers have recognized the value of educating and training themselves

In February 2000, artisanal fishworkers from Puerto Madryn, together with their families, started a series of training courses for the sector. These courses included resource biology, on-board and shore-based fish handling, quality control and business techniques, and using the Internet for marketing.

These courses were conducted within the framework of an agreement made between the Artisanal Fishworkers Association of Puerto Madryn, the National Patagonia Centre (CENPAT), and the Puerto Madryn Town Council. The educational aspects of the project were prepared by the Education Secretariat in the National Ministry of Labour.

The course on resource biology lasted three months, and classes were given in a collegiate form by researchers from CENPAT, with the training in each specialist subject being provided in simple language, with no deadline pressures. This allowed the sharing of knowledge between scientists and fishworkers; scientific knowledge and, in the case of fishworkers, empirical knowledge gained through experience.

This was a completely new experience for both parties. They discovered that the classroom and laboratory environs enabled them to, on the one hand, determine criteria that could be used to scientifically define species of commercial interest in Patagonia and that would be included in a future Manual of Patagonian Artisanal Fishing. On the other hand, it enabled the fishworkers to identify contacts for in-depth information on a particular species.

What is more, this training has enabled fishermen to be included in technical working groups and has provided the

technical information required from time to time by national researchers and administrators.

There is an ever-increasing need to generate information that provides a true picture of the state of fisheries resources, to avoid overfishing.

Such information also provides the basis for strategies and efficient management plans that ensure the sustainability of the resources. It also helps those who live from artisanal fishing to recognize the value of adopting a code of conduct for responsible fisheries.

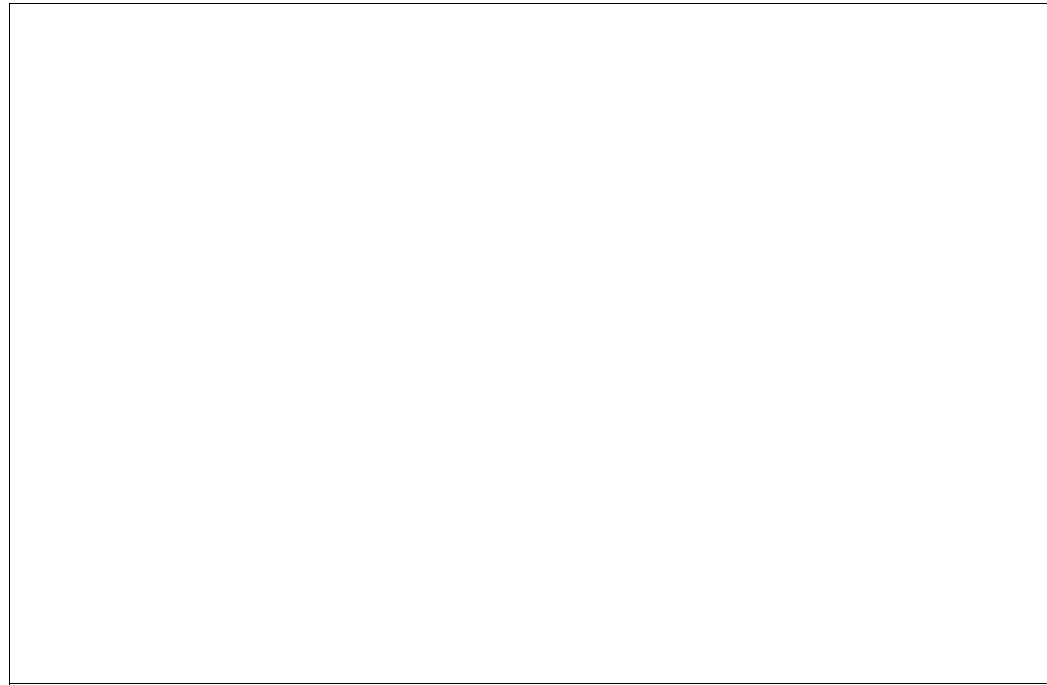
These courses have set an important precedent for training on artisanal fishing, in a country with around 5,000 km of coast.

Faced with the possibility of a massive transformation due to the industrial crisis, the fishworkers of Puerto Madryn have invested enormous efforts in training themselves and their families. This is to enable them to participate in the debates on setting the rules of the game for artisanal fishing, such as management and monitoring plans, and impart knowledge of laws that provide security to those who have always lived from artisanal fishing.

Some fishworkers have to travel 50 km to participate in the intensive, day-long classes, before returning to their homes on the coast.

Efforts rewarded

But the effort has been rewarded, as they have learned about biology, the distribution of resources, about ecology, the classification of species, their anatomy and reproductive behaviour, etc. In the area of law, they have learned about the



existing national and provincial regulations, sanitation laws, etc.

The Patagonian fishworkers have recognized the value of educating and training themselves, so as to be able to defend their rights, and they are proud of having accepted the challenge of going to classes. ¶

This piece, by Marta Piñeiro (apamadryn@hotmail.com) of Puerto Madryn, Patagonia, was translated by Brian O' Riordan

Louma Jiggeen ñi

The forthcoming West African Fair for Artisanally Processed Fish promises to be educative and useful

Between 2 and 3 June 2001, the first West African Fair for Artisanally Processed Fish will be held at Place de l'Obélisque, in Dakar, Sénégal. Artisanal fish processors and traders from several countries in West Africa will interact with organizations working with, and supporting, artisanal fishing communities in the region. The fair will also attract policymakers from participating countries, representatives of international and sub-regional organizations working on fisheries-related issues in the region, and organizations and individuals working with fish-processing technologies.

Titled *Louma Jiggeen ñi* (which, in the Wolof language, means "periodic market for women"), the fair will be inaugurated by Senegal's Minister of Fisheries and Maritime Transport on 2 June, to be followed immediately by a press conference.


Among the highlights of the fair will be a display of processed fish products from the region; exhibitions and demonstrations of improved methods of fish processing, preservation and storage; and information on support services (technology, market, credit and trade-related information) for artisanal processors and traders.

In West Africa, trade in such fish products is mainly through informal networks. These dynamic and diversified networks are constrained by poor transport infrastructure, problems at borders, and inadequate market facilities and information. It is to highlight these issues that the fair is being organized. Prior to the fair, a workshop will be held on the problems and prospects for the development of artisanal fish trade in West Africa. The workshop will bring

together about 50 women processors and traders from the region.

On 1 June, the region's policymakers will be invited to interact with workshop participants to understand the perspective of women fish traders and processors and to highlight the initiatives being taken to facilitate trade in artisanally processed fish products. Participants are expected from Senegal, Gambia, Guinea Conakry, Ghana, Mali, Guinea Bissau, Ivory Coast, Togo, Benin, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Mozambique and Uganda.

Among the organizations participating are the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Sustainable Fisheries Livelihood Programme in West Africa (SFLP) of FAO-DFID, Commission Sous Régionale des Pêches (CSR), West African Association for the Development of Regional Fisheries (WADAF), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Institut de Technologie Alimentaire (ITA), Senegal.

The organizers of the fair are Collectif National des Pecheurs Artisanaux du Senegal (CNPS), the Centre de Recherches pour le Developpement des Technologies Intermediaires de Peche (CREDETIP) and the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF), with the support of the FAO-DFID Sustainable Fisheries Livelihood Programme (SFLP). 

For more details on the West African Fair for Artisanally Processed Fish, please visit <http://www.icsf.net/fishfair>

Beyond bare bones

The ICSF Website has been continuously evolving to keep pace with the varying collection and dissemination needs of its multilingual constituency

The ICSF Website, first set up in 1996, has been undergoing periodic updates to reflect new content, and, at times, better Web technologies. The first Website, hosted in the UK, had only bare-bones information on ICSF and its programmes. After a couple of revisions, the site was enhanced to include online versions of SAMUDRA Report (in a printer-friendly PDF format) in all three languages (English, Spanish and French), as well as details of all ICSF publications.

Early in its operations, ICSF had realized the importance of a repository of information that could be used by its globally scattered constituency. This could finally be realized in 1998, when ICSF set up its Documentation Centre at Chennai, India. The Centre's primary objectives were collating, organizing and disseminating information of importance to artisanal fisheries. The inputs to the Centre included all possible media: books, journals, newspaper articles, photographs, slides and videos.

While the Centre first attempted to classify and organize around its own schema, it was decided, in 2000, that it would be better to standardize this around UNESCO's documentation package, WinISIS. By early 2001, over 2,000 references were entered into the WinISIS database. By now, it was clear that the Internet would be the most efficient and cost-effective manner to disseminate information gathered at the Centre. The next challenge, therefore, was to integrate the information collated at the Centre into the ICSF Website.

There were several difficulties in this process. The first had to do with the storage format of WinISIS. WinISIS uses a proprietary format, not very conducive for Web-enabling storage of the database.

The only export facility was to the ISO format, which was also not easy for direct use online. The second challenge was to synchronize the Chennai database with the online database, since WinISIS was not a distributed database. The third challenge was handling media elements such as images, slides and videos, as the support for these in WinISIS was minimal.

Another interesting challenge came up on account of the geographically distributed style of information collation. Since ICSF wanted to collect field-level information—and much of this was in local languages such as Spanish, French and Portuguese—the collection and dissemination mechanism had to be multilingual and distributed.

Work on the new Website started in January 2001. The first milestone was the porting of the ISO format into MySQL, the Web database used for the site. This was carried out within a month by a team of three people.

Once in the MySQL format, the database was easily searched using a Web-based front-end. Writing the search front-end was the second major milestone. The search had to be flexible enough to yield all matching records, and also had to organize the results in the order of relevance. The search programme was written in Java (using Apache's JavaServer Page technology, Tomcat).

Advanced search

The first beta version of the site was tested at Chennai in March 2001, and some more fine-tuning recommended. The site could do two kinds of searches: a two-tier, keyword-based search, and a keyword-or-author direct search. Each item of the search output would be given a score based on its relevance. Clicking on

the link would take the user to a details page, where more details, including abstracts, where applicable, are displayed.

In addition to the search, the site had other enhancements as well: an alphabetical list of online resources (URLs); an events calendar; news flashes; and a mechanism for ordering publications or documents output by the search process, using the familiar 'shopping cart' model.

All the earlier information at the site, such as ICSF programmes, membership and publications, was incorporated into the new site as well.

The site also incorporates an Admin(istration) interface, protected by passwords, for managing various aspects of the site. The Documentation Centre personnel can directly make changes and update all the dynamic portions of the site through this interface.

In addition, the Admin interface makes it possible to manage the multilingual thesaurus (the master list of keywords) that is simultaneously managed between India, France and Brazil.

The present site runs on the popular Free Software OS, GNU/Linux, and is physically located in the US. The Web server used is Apache, with Tomcat interfacing with the Java classes that run the dynamic portion

of the site. All tools and technologies are Free Software or Open Source.

In order to evolve a uniform methodology for information collation in other languages, ICSF's Documentation Centre organized a five-day workshop at Chennai, from 5 to 9 March 2001.

Participants at the workshop included representatives from Brazil and France, ICSF staff from Chennai and Brussels, an expert in WinISIS, and a member of the team developing the ICSF Website. The satellite Documentation Centre from Brazil (NUPAUB) was represented by Daniela Andrade, and from France (Pêche et Developpement), by Cedric Pincet.

The workshop discussed the overall strategy of ICSF's information gathering and disseminating operations, as well as specific issues relating to the proposed distributed and multilingual methodology.

WinISIS expert

While the French representative was aware of WinISIS and had used it before, the Brazilian representative was new to the programme. Prof. A. Neelameghan, the WinISIS expert and a member of the original UNESCO team that developed WinISIS, explained the different aspects of the programme to the participants. He also explained the existing means of interfacing WinISIS to the Web.

The workshop decided that the documentation centres at India, Brazil and France would develop a common thesaurus, which would be used for the keywording of documents in the respective centres. The system of documentation to be followed would be the CCF format in WinISIS, with the addition of two new fields to the existing database, namely, language and the location of the document. In the case of the Portuguese and Spanish documentation centres, the field stating the theme of the document would also be highlighted (for example, whether the document relates to fisheries or not). There would be a separate database for Spanish and Portuguese documents.

The new Website for ICSF is expected to open up access to the resources of the Documentation Centre to a much wider audience. The next step in the evolution of the ICSF Website would be to incorporate the three languages into the existing site (which is, at present, English-based, although several publications exist in the three languages). This is expected to take about a year. ¶

This report has been written by Ramya R (icsf@vsnl.com), of ICSF's Documentation Centre, and Satish Babu (sb@inapp.com) of InApp, an Internet applications and software company, based in Technopark, Trivandrum, India

Penny saved, penny earned

In this eighth instalment, the pioneer of Japan's co-operative movement lauds the value of thrift and saving

The New Fishery Co-operative Law was enacted early in 1949, and it included a provision regarding the prefectural Credit Federations of fishery co-operatives. Soon, 206 FCAs were established based on the new law, and the chairmen of all the FCAs in Hokkaido gathered in Sapporo on 15 October 1949, to discuss the re-establishment of Dogyoren (the Hokkaido Federation of Fishery Co-operative Associations) and of Shingyoren (the Hokkaido Credit Federation of Fishery Co-operative Associations).

It had been decided that the Hokkaido Fisheries Industry Organization, which had been established to replace Dogyoren during the war and of which I remained the managing director, was to be dissolved. Several of the FCA chairmen had discussed the question of how the property and staff were to be divided between Dogyoren and Shingyoren. They told me that, given the situation of FCAs in Hokkaido, they would not be allowed to establish an independent credit federation. Therefore, they would start by re-establishing Dogyoren, and, after the FCAs had accumulated enough savings, they would then establish Shingyoren.

I suggested that they establish it at once, since a financing system is necessary for the success of any business. The fishermen had to handle their money effectively and prepare to get help through the financial services of the Central Bank of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

Since the total amount of the savings of fishermen in Hokkaido amounted to only ¥400 million, they continued to waver. Therefore, I told them that it was all the more necessary to establish Shingyoren; if the FCA had that amount of savings, it was strange that there was no financial

function at the federation level, even though the total annual production of the fishermen reached ¥30 billion. They then decided to establish Shingyoren along with Dogyoren on that date, and these two federations have continued to exist to the present day.

As I had been involved in the co-operative movement for a long time, they asked me to assume the presidency of one of the two federations, as per my choice. I thought it strange that they would allow me to choose which position I would like, but they left it entirely up to me. I chose to become president of Shingyoren.

Even though I had no experience in the credit business, I believed that the fishermen would remember the difficulties they had in the early 1930s, and that their spirit of co-operation would live on.

The day following my inauguration, I met with the Board of Directors of Shingyoren and stated that, for the first fiscal year, I would like to work with a ¥5 million deficit. All the directors were, of course, surprised; so I explained that we would set up 10 branch offices independent of Dogyoren, at a cost of about ¥5 million. These branches, I said, would contribute greatly to promoting savings by the fishermen. In this way, we would make a sacrifice by running a deficit at present, so that we could save for future development. We could easily wipe out this deficit within two or three years, and then we would continue to provide financial services to the members of the FCAs.

Huge price

If they rejected this plan, I warned, they would have to wait at least five years before they could provide financial

services. The directors understood what I had told them, and the First Plan was adopted.

We were able to wipe out the original ¥570,000 deficit within the first two years, and, by the end of the eight fiscal year, the total savings increased to ¥2,200 million.

I would like to tell how the FCAs managed to increase the savings so much in such a short period. The reason wasn't simply that they had good harvests. The fishermen worked very hard and struggled to make it through the bad times.

In 1950, for example, the squid fishermen had an extremely bad harvest, particularly along the Sea of Japan coast. Many fishing villages were suffering financially, so the Hokkaido government provided ¥30 million in relief funding, of which ¥150,000 was to be allocated to the Sakazuki FCA in the centre of the Shakotan Peninsula.

One day, chairman Takei of the Sakazuki FCA asked me if we could loan his FCA ¥30,000 before they received the government loan, as they had no money to buy even the rice rationed to them by the government. Takei was afraid that the fishermen would not be able to make it through the severe winter season.

I replied that we could not extend such a loan from the relief fund because his FCA had no savings. Takei implored me, saying that they would all die if they didn't receive help, and promised that the loan would be paid back immediately after the fishing season.

I told him that he had things to do before they died. I suggested that he go back to the village and tell all the housewives to save and keep a record of their savings to show us. Takei replied that my suggestion was cruel, since it was impossible to save when they were hungry.

I suggested that they economize first of all by cutting down on the *shochu* potato liquor that all the fishermen drank, and also to try to cut down on many other things in order to save money. I then promised him that if all the member fishermen tried hard to save some money, no matter how small the amount, I would loan them some money, since they would have proved their ability to help themselves. He asked me to visit the Sajazyju FCA twice to speak to all the members and their wives about my plan.

In my speeches, I told them how Shingyoren was still small and not very powerful, since we had only a very small amount of capital. However, if each of the 300 Sakazuki fishermen saved ¥1 per day,

the FCA would save ¥300 per day, or ¥9,000 per month. In one year, they could save up ¥108,000, and I asked them to deposit this money into Shingyoren.

If the savings of all the fishermen throughout Hokkaido were deposited into Shingyoren, we would have not only a great sum of money, but also great credit. We would then be able to extend a helping hand to the

weaker FCAs. The members discussed this idea among themselves, and soon began to save.

At first, chairman Takei and the other directors visited each fishermen's house to collect their savings, but they soon decided to let the fishermen keep savings boxes in their houses.

These boxes would be collected every month and brought to the FCA. This system worked very well and all the other FCAs throughout Hokkaido eventually began to use this system to increase their monthly savings.

Monthly savings

These monthly savings practices were controlled by the women's groups, and the total amount reached ¥2 million within seven years. By the end of 1983, the

I suggested that they economize first of all by cutting down on the shochu potato liquor that all the fishermen drank, and also to try to cut down on many other things in order to save money.

total saved by these women's groups was ¥29 million.

We also developed another saving system in which all the money earned from sales passed through the FCA. The FCA deducted all commission, transportation fees and any other costs which the FCA was owed by the fishermen. The balance was deposited into the fishermen's accounts in the FCA. At the end of 1983, the total savings of this FCA had reached ¥440 million.

These savings movements were all based on a fundamental philosophy, which can be summarized in the maxim "A penny saved is a penny earned."

Eight years after they began to follow my advice, the chairman and the general-manager of the Sakazuki FCA came to me and asked me to write that slogan in large characters on a board which they would hang on the wall of the FCA meeting room. ♪

This is excerpted from the *Autobiography of Takatoshi Ando*, translated by Naoyuki Tao and James Colyn

News Round-up

Fishing for danger

With more than 70 fatalities per day, fishing at sea may be the most dangerous occupation in the world, according to a new report released in January by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

The annual death toll among fishermen, estimated at 24,000 worldwide by the International Labour Organization, may be considerably lower than the true figure because only a limited number of countries keep accurate records on occupational fatalities in their fishing industries, says the report.

More than 97 per cent of the 15 million fishers employed in

marine capture fisheries worldwide are working on vessels that are less than 24 m in length, largely beyond the scope of international conventions and guidelines, according to *The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2000*.

Where inshore resources have been overexploited, fishers have to work farther away from shore, sometimes for extended periods, and frequently in fishing craft designed for inshore fishing or not complying with security regulations, FAO says.

Hake hate

Artisanal fishermen in **Chile** are calling on fishing authorities to increase the Antarctic queen hake (*Merluccius australis*) quota in the X Region.

The artisanal fishermen said the agreement signed with the Chilean Fisheries Undersecretariat concerning a catch quota increase for that species should be modified. The quota now is 5,900 tonnes, distributed throughout April, May, June and July.

The controversy surrounds the extension of the fishing season to 11 months, with monthly quotas of 800 tonnes.

This would mean increasing the annual quota to 8,800 tonnes, the leader of the region's fishermen, Erick Vargas, told

Fish Information & Services (FIS).

According to Vargas, about 4,000 fishermen, who participate in the hake fishery, are

staging protests, and others who harvest seaweed and benthic resources have joined them.

Undersecretariat sources said the quota shouldn't be increased because the sustainability of the species is at stake. However, the fishermen insist that the agreement should be urgently modified. They have even called for a redistribution of the quota between the industrial and artisanal sector, as proposed for the quota of common hake in the central-southern region.

Pack off!

The fishing industry in **Pakistan** is suffering at the hands of deep-sea trawlers and could crumble if the federal government

continues to allow them to operate in Pakistani waters, according to Muhammad Hanif Khan, chairman of the Pakistan Seafood Industries Association (PSIA).

Pakistan's Ministry of Food and Agriculture has reportedly asked the government to review deep-sea fishing operations and reduce deep-sea fishing limits from 35 nautical miles to 12 nautical miles.

Hanif, however, thinks they should be banned from Pakistani waters altogether. He told a press conference that they could overfish Pakistan's resources, which, in turn, would cripple national fishermen, processors and exporters, causing the loss of more than a million jobs nationwide.

"If this happens, it would be a disaster for the local industry,

fishermen and the country's seafood exports," he said.

Hanif explained that deep-sea trawlers are very wasteful and throw 60 to 70 per cent, sometimes 90 per cent, of their catch back into the sea. It is estimated

that their discarded catches amount to 300,000 tonnes per year, which, if brought to the market, processed and exported, could fetch between \$500 mn and \$800 mn.

Hanif said Pakistan should work to conserve its marine sector, which earns \$140 mn per year and stressed that many countries support a reduction or ban on deep-sea trawling.

Deep-sea vessels catch more than 28 mn tonnes of fish each year, upsetting the ecosystem, said Hanif, who blamed them for practically depleting Pakistan's tuna resources.

Fish watchdog

The government of **Mozambique** will sign an agreement for satellite supervision of its rich fishing waters with British firm Racal by the end of this month, reports LUSA, quoting Fisheries Minister Cadmiel Muthemba.

The \$1 mn contract, he said, aimed to limit illegal fishing

and overfishing and to help assess and protect the country's

fish stocks, especially prized shrimp.

In 2000, fisheries exports, one of Mozambique's major economic resources, reached 15,800 tonnes, worth \$109.3 mn—20.2 per cent more than in 1999.

Labour chides

At the end of this month, the Chiloé Province Workers' Central Union (CUT) is to announce at the World Forum of Fish Harvesters and Fish Workers in Quebec, Canada, that certain salmon farming companies in **Chile** do not respect labour regulations.

The World Forum is presided over by Chilean national Humberto Mella Ahumada and is due to take place from 15-30 April, with the participation of representatives from all over the world.

CUT president Luis Sandoval will give a lecture on 18 April and, then, with the support of several worldwide artisanal fishermen's federations, he will put the accusation against the Chilean salmon industry before the Canadian State, writes *El Llanquihue*.

According to the fishing leader, some Chilean companies do not respect labour regulations. Other irregularities include a lack of respect for

maternity rights, low salaries, lack of security on floating cages, lack of basic services and anti-union practices, he said.

Sandoval believes Canada will consider the petition because Chile and Canada have a free trade agreement in force and because Canada is such an advanced salmon farming country.

The CUT will also denounce the Chilean State's subsidy policy, alleging that companies from the zones of Chiloé, Palena and the XI Region receive a 17.3 per cent subsidy to hire staff.

However, the managing director of the Association of Salmon and Trout Farmers, Rodrigo Infante, claimed that salmon industrialists were always willing to discuss such issues with both workers and government authorities.

The Chilean salmon industry employs more than 24,800 people and generates more than 12,000 indirect jobs.

Most of the sector's problems affect the salmon farming centres and processing plants. Following its spectacular growth, the salmon industry accounts for half of the Chilean fishing sector's exports and

five per cent of the country's total exports.

No to WTO

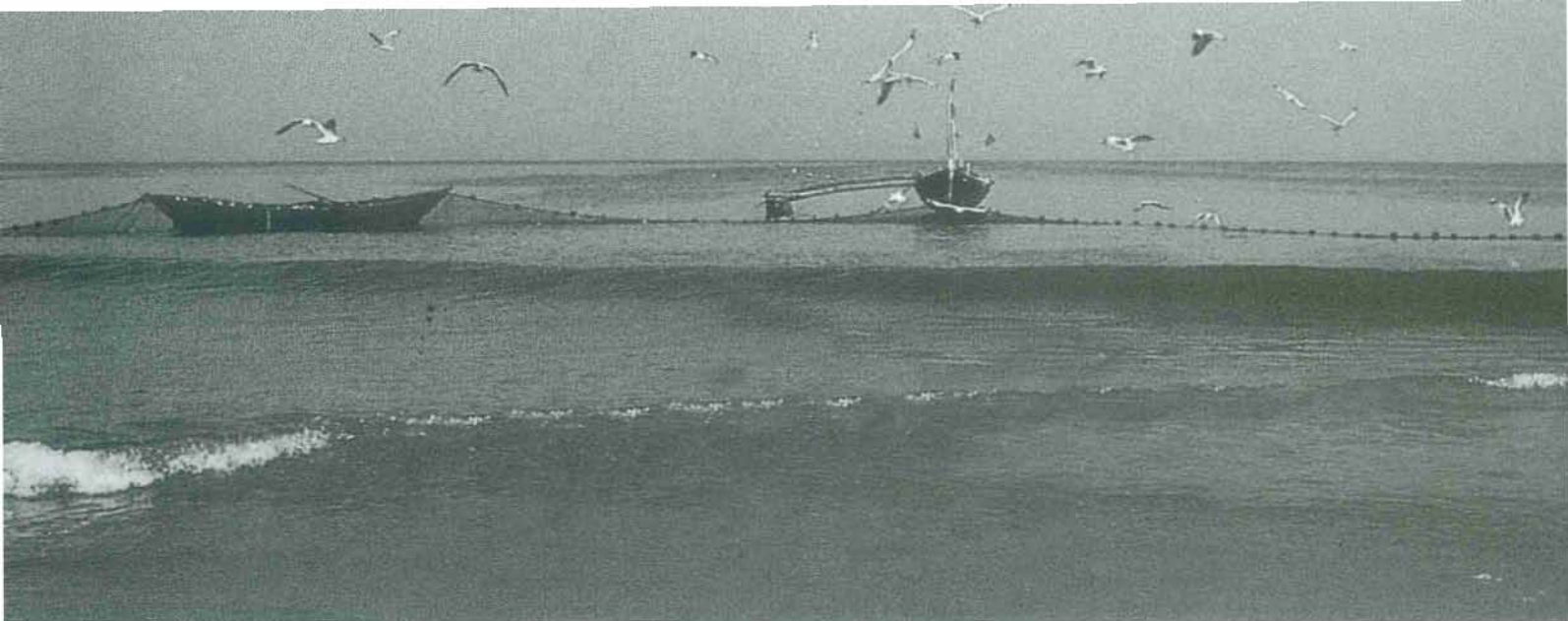
The World Forum of Fisher Peoples (WFFP) Co-ordination Committee met in Mumbai, **India** from 6 to 10 March 2001 and decided to go for an international fisheries strike on 21 November 2001. It also decided to support the anti-WTO action in Qatar from 5-13 November 2001.

The Coordination Committee decided to reject any kind of factory fishing and also joint ventures in the name of technology transfer. It also decided to

reject industrial monoculture aquaculture and genetic manipulation. WFFP says it will not tolerate any dumping of atomic and industrial wastes in oceans and water bodies. WFFP accepts tourism only to the extent that it is decided upon together with the local fishing community and only when it is in consonance with the needs and livelihood of the local fishing community.

*Through a mutual and private arrangement,
You agreed to sell to me on credit.
There was no witness.
Through a mutual and private arrangement,
You provided me a loan.
There were no indiscreet ears.
Today, in the middle of the market,
You yell in a high and loud voice
That I'm an insolvent debtor.
You yell high and loud
That Chérie is in debt.
But debt is not theft,
I will pay you.
Owing you is not stealing from you.
I will pay you,
I will pay you one day.*

— Song sung by women fish
wholesalers from Benin



ICSF is an international NGO working on issues that concern fishworkers the world over. It is in status with the Economic and Social Council of the UN and is on ILO's Special List of Non-Governmental International Organizations. It also has Liaison Status with FAO. Registered in Geneva, ICSF has offices in Chennai, India and Brussels, Belgium. As a global network of community organizers, teachers, technicians, researchers and scientists, ICSF's activities encompass monitoring and research, exchange and training, campaigns and action, as well as communications. SAMUDRA REPORT invites contributions and responses. Correspondence should be addressed to the Chennai office.

The opinions and positions expressed in the articles are those of the authors concerned and do not necessarily represent the official views of ICSF.

SAMUDRA REPORT can now be accessed on ICSF's home page on the World Wide Web at <http://www.icsf.net>

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Sebastian Mathew for
International Collective in Support of Fishworkers
27 College Road, Chennai 600 006, India
Telephone (91) 44-827 5303 Facsimile (91) 44-825 4457
E-mail: icsf@vsnl.com

ICSF Brussels Office:
Rue du Midi 165, B-1000 Brussels, Belgium
Telephone (32) 2 - 513 1565 Facsimile (32) 2-513 7343
E-mail: icsfbrussels@yucum.be

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SAMUDRA Editorial

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Sathish Babu

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