

Yemaya

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From the Editor

Dear Friends,

Greetings! This issue of *Yemaya* brings together articles from Latin America, Asia and Europe.

We carry excerpts from an interesting study, *Food Insecurity and Gender Inequality in Property Rights: The Case of Market Access for Philippine Seaweeds* by Hazel Arandez-Tanchuling and Marina Durano, reported in *Lundayan*, a publication of the Tambuyog Development Centre. It carries information from a case study undertaken in Calatagan, a town located south of Metro Manila, where the Philippines government has been actively promoting seaweed production in coastal communities. The study throws up some very interesting issues, such as competition between seaweed farming and other uses of coastal spaces, such as fishing, tourism and shrimp aquaculture.

Another important, if disturbing, trend the study finds is that of men gaining property rights to what was earlier a common resource, accessible to everyone in the community—men and women. It is noted that: “The permit system imposed by the local government unit was meant to manage conflicts over the use of common community resources. Instead, the unintended consequence was to increase gender inequality in property rights.”

There is clearly much that can be learned from the experience of seaweed farming and its management in the Philippines—learning that needs to be applied in other contexts and

countries that are witnessing rapid expansion of seaweed farming and other mariculture activities in the coastal zone.

From Chile, Latin America, comes an article about the efforts of a group of women to make visible, through the medium of theatre, the important role of women fish baiters. “If men are to go to sea,” they point out, “thousands of anonymous women must prepare for the fishing trip at home, putting the baits on the hooks; a scene that is replicated in other spheres of economic activity, where, for men to work, women must take care of the domestic tasks and childcare, work that is not recognized by society”. Also relating to Latin America is a detailed report of the initiatives being taken by the Latin American Network of Women working in the fisheries sector (NETWIF), co-ordinated by the Centre for Marketing Information and Advisory Services for Fishery Products in Latin America and the Caribbean (INFOPECSA).

We also carry an interview with the President of the Local Fisheries Committee of Lorient-Etel, France. It traces her journey as the wife of a fisherman, unaware of the issues in the sector, to the presidentship of the local committee, having to grapple with all kinds of developments in the fisheries sector: the introduction of Total Allowable Catches (TACs), quotas, controls, high fuel costs, and so on.

And, finally, as this year comes to a close, we send all of you season's greetings and best wishes for a peaceful and productive 2007.



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Asia/Philippines

“It’s the same”

These excerpts are from a recent study “Food Insecurity and Gender Inequality in Property Rights: The Case of Market Access for Philippine Seaweeds” by Hazel Arandez-Tanchuling and Marina Fe B. Durano

The report was originally published in *Lundayan*, Vol.13, No.1, 2006, published by the Tambuyog Development Centre (http://www.tambuyog.org/news_details.asp?news_id=390)

Fish is a Filipino’s primary source of animal protein, and the Philippines reports an annual per capita consumption of 36 kg. This paper seeks to understand the linkages between food security and trade liberalization.

The 2003 Census of Agriculture and Fisheries of the Philippines’ National Statistics Office estimates the fisherfolk population at 1.8 mn, and fishing communities are found to be among the poorest in the country. Since the 1990s, however, several fishing communities have shifted from subsistence fishing and fishing for local consumption towards seaweed production. This growing trend has been encouraged by the aggressive promotion of seaweed farming by the Philippines’ Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) to exploit its export revenue potential. This trend is similar to the shift from subsistence crops to cash crops in agriculture. In the fisheries sector, seaweeds are considered cash commodities.

The paper takes a deeper look at this production shift, which forms part of the larger export-led development strategy of the Philippines. The first section introduces the seaweed industry in the Philippines and shows how active the Philippine government has been in promoting the shift from municipal fishing to seaweed production. The second section discusses poverty in fishing communities, which forces fishing households to explore the options offered by the government. The shift towards seaweed production is part of the government’s poverty alleviation programme and is consistent with export-oriented development. The third section, covering the Calatagan case

study, analyzes the impact of the shift from fishing to seaweed production and identifies some dilemmas. Trade liberalization, in combination with aggressive government promotion, is expected to increase the incentives to shift away from municipal fishing. The lessons that can be drawn from the early stages of the shift in production can be useful for future policymaking.

Some edited excerpts from the study follow:

Impact of the Introduction of Seaweed Farming to Coastal Communities (The Calatagan Case Study)

In this section, a case study of a shift from fishing to seaweed production is presented. Researchers visited a town located south of Metro Manila, where the government has been actively promoting seaweed production in coastal communities. Small seaweed cultivators, local government officials, a trader and officials of the local fisherfolk organization—the *Samahan ng Maliliit ng Mangingisda ng Calatagan* (SAMMACA or Organization of Small Fishers of Calatagan) were interviewed.

Common Resource Use Conflicts

Since coastal areas are common resources, competition in usage arises periodically. Seaweed farmers compete with fisherfolk, prawn hatcheries, and even shipping and boat transport companies for use of the coastline. The management of these conflicts becomes crucial not only for the success of seaweed production as part of a growth strategy but also for other productive activities involving the use of common resources in coastal areas. A rational zoning system that allocates the use of common resources becomes an important governance strategy for the local government units (LGUs).

One of the first instances of conflict along the shoreline is between the seaweed producers and the fisherfolk. Fishers find it difficult to manoeuvre their boats in the areas where there is a high concentration of seaweed. This was a major problem faced by the fisherfolk in Barangay Uno during the boom in seaweed cultivation in the area. Seaweed rafts and other infrastructure block the passage from the shoreline to the sea. The use of nets is limited because the fish habitats are inside the seaweed farms and using nets will destroy the seaweeds. Repeated water thumping with the *timbog*, a fishing implement

used to round up fish into the net, affects the seaweeds. Seaweed farms are safe places for fish, allowing stocks to regenerate. With seaweed farming becoming the priority, fishers have to wait for the seaweed harvest season to catch fish, and they thus become subject to the seasonal cycle of seaweed farming. There have been instances when irate fishers would set adrift seaweed rafts as a form of revenge against some seaweed farmers. Mang Junior of SAMMACA is urging the LGU to limit the space available for seaweed farming so that fishers are not marginalized. Indeed, the low cost of the permit (PHP220 or US\$4.4) for 20,000 sq m for seaweed farming is an indicator that the LGU does not want to regulate seaweed farming in its area.

The growth of seaweeds is sensitive to water quality, and pollution is a specific problem in Calatagan. Periodically, the residues from a prawn hatchery in Gulod have affected not only seaweed harvests but also all marine life in the area. Recently, seaweed farmers and fishers from Barangay Uno and Barangay Dos formed a coalition to raise their concerns to their LGUs about the pollution caused by the large prawn farms in their *barangays*.

Seaweed cultivators in Barangay Dos face eviction problems with the Foreshore Lease Agreements awarded by the LGU to tourist resorts. In addition, Barangay Dos is expanding the pier to accommodate roll-on, roll-off (RoRo) boats going to and from the island of Mindoro. Once the port becomes operational, seaweed cultivators in the area will have to find alternative cultivation sites. The pollution from increased boat traffic will be harmful to seaweed growth. Oil slicks from ships passing the South China Sea, which faces Calatagan, have occasionally caused problems in the seaweed farms.

Although, at this point, use-conflict of fisheries is still manageable, there is no guarantee that this will continue to be the case once seaweed areas increase after aggressive government promotion.

Production Shifts and Cultural Rigidities

Policywise, there are no impediments towards women participating in seaweed cultivation. User rights are given to both men and women as long as they reside in Calatagan. Yet no woman has applied for a seaweed production permit. This is very



interesting in itself. Studies on the impact of trade liberalization on women in agriculture indicate that women are unable to benefit from shifts towards cash cropping because they do not have rights to own land, as in several African countries. This cannot be the case for Calatagan. No prior private ownership by an individual of the coastal area, whether male or female, was established. With the implementation of the permit system, which gave the holder private usufruct rights for designated coastal areas, it was the men who claimed the rights since none of the women applied for a permit. Thus, the result is that women are not in a position to benefit from seaweed production, except through their relationships with their husbands who have the usufruct rights.

Women do not consider themselves engaged in productive activities when undertaking tasks required of seaweed production. Rather, women consider their labour in the trade as extensions of their household work. They only provide supplemental labour. Since women's work is seen as tied to household work, it is not surprising that women have not applied for a seaweed production permit. These women think that permits for seaweed production are in a realm outside of their socially designated authority.

All the women interviewed in Barangay Dos do not see seaweed cultivation as an added burden, although they admit that seaweed cultivation takes time away from household duties and child rearing. The women

are involved in practically all areas of seaweed production, particularly when their farm is close to the shore. They are involved in the preparation of materials, planting, especially during low tide, and harvesting. In one day, they can prepare up to 25 kg of seedlings for planting, which can fill up half a raft. One respondent, Aling Tinding, said that she usually sets aside all her Saturdays to attend to her seaweed farm, alongside her family.

The women do not see any difference in work hours with the change from fishing to seaweed cultivation. They all said, '*Pareho lang*' ('It's the same.'). Thus, in terms of work hours, the women do not see any improvement. They were also involved in the capture and marketing of the harvests. The same tasks remain today as the women continue to gather seashells and other marine products along the shoreline for household consumption and sales.

All the women are grateful to the seaweed industry. They say that if not for the seaweeds, they would not have been able to build concrete houses, send their children to school and eat meat. The increase in their family income has provided more room for managing the household budget, but only during the harvest season.

The management of the household budget is, however, limited to those areas dealing with household consumption. Decisions over seaweed production remain with the men. How much of household income is to be allocated for seaweed production is decided by the men. Mang Nilo, for instance, secures an amount sufficient to buy gin, and leaves the rest of the earnings to his wife. More importantly, he also decides how much money should be set aside for the seaweed farm.

This division of labour indicates that women are tasked with socially reproductive activities, such as food security for the household. Although incomes may have risen, the rise is not sufficient to ease the women's burden of providing for the family. Women act as default providers of food when the lean season arrives. Although the well-being of the women has improved because of higher incomes, their work responsibilities remain the same. Women continue to have to perform the roles expected of, and imposed on, them by society.

Concluding Remarks

Perhaps the most important lesson from the case study is how the shift from fishing in a common resource area, such as the coastal area, towards seaweed farming allowed men to gain property rights, while the women did not. Before the shift, both shared the property rights of the common areas with the rest of the community. The permit system imposed by the local government unit was meant to manage conflicts over the use of common community resources. Instead, the unintended consequence was to increase gender inequality in property rights.

The shift towards seaweed farming has not been complete in the coastal communities in Calatagan. The main barrier to entry is the size of capital needed to start the business. In order to pursue this activity, many seaweed producing households enter into sharecropping or contract-growing arrangements that leave them tied to their financiers in a cycle of debt. Seaweed cultivation is also very labour-intensive because the seaweed is sensitive to its environment, whether it is pollution from competing activities, an increase in seawater temperature during summer months, or the monsoon season. It is probably more time-intensive than fishing, requiring the construction of temporary shelters over the farm areas in order to undertake 24-hour surveillance, especially when there are weather changes.

Although the rise in incomes has been recognized by seaweed farming households, its variability needs to be highlighted. The seasonality in income forces these households to borrow money during lean months. The quality of food also follows this seasonality, with fresh meat and luxury food items available just after the harvest, while processed and canned foods become the main food source during the latter part of the gestation period as well as the monsoon season. As those responsible for food security, women ensure that food is available through careful budgeting, gathering of marine products from the shore, and cultivation of fruits and vegetables in their backyards. Occasionally, the men will catch fish from the seaweed farm. Overall, food security is not consistently assured, despite the higher incomes; at the same time, the work burden of women has not been relieved.

Increased market access for seaweed products raises the incentives for export producers to urge

BFAR and the LGU partners to support the increase in supply of seaweeds. It can be expected that export promotion programmes will coincide with increased seaweed seedling distribution and seaweed production technical assistance, and support to convince fishing households and communities to change their production activities. The distribution of gains is disproportionate, as the experience of Calatagan shows. The production shift does not guarantee food security and has increased gender inequality in property rights.

[This project was jointly implemented by the International Gender and Trade Network-Asia, and Tambuyog, a non-governmental organization in the Philippines doing community-based coastal resource management, research and advocacy of coastal/fishery issues and community property rights.]

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Latin America/Chile

Sea Martyrs of San Antonio

Out-of-work women encarnadoras (hook baiters) in Chile take up acting and win wide acclaim

This article has been compiled by Brian O’Riordan from various sources, including the Conapach website (<http://www.conapach.cl/>)

A play written and performed by 11 artisanal fisherwomen from San Antonio and Valparaiso, first staged in 2004, has recently made a comeback in Chile’s Vth Region, thanks to the support from the Regional Government of Valparaiso.

The play, *Women, the Embodiment of Abundance*, depicts the story of San Antonio over the last 40 years, from times of abundance to the current harsh realities faced by the artisanal fishing sector. The women have gathered together anecdotes, legends, and life experiences, and show how the catch quotas now set under the fisheries law have deprived women of their work.

According to Maria Teresa Olivera, the play’s director, “We want to tell people about the work that we used

to do, to make women’s work in the sector—not previously known in this country—visible. The play is based on real-life stories taken from the book *Women in Artisanal Fisheries* by Michele Alarcón. It looks at the process of artisanal fishing from a woman’s perspective: male work has always been recognized, but the thankless women’s tasks of baiting the hooks, essential for catching the sea’s bounty, have been ignored.”

The play is currently (October/November 2006) touring theatres in Chile’s Vth Region, but its producers have put forward a much more ambitious proposal: to develop a nationwide tour. They have applied for support from the National Culture and Arts Council, the Fisheries Subsecretariat, and various fishermen’s organizations countrywide, in order to realize their project ‘Women forging networks...from San Antonio throughout Chile’. They hope to initiate this before the year-end and to continue through the whole of 2007. Maria Teresa Olivera asserts: “The project has been successful in demonstrating the important cultural rescue work that is being done to get such unique and unknown practices as hook-baiting recognized”.

It was in 2004 that 11 women from the Encarnadoras Union Mártires del Mar de San Antonio (Sea Martyrs of San Antonio), with no previous acting experience, won a National Culture and Arts Council (Fondart) award. This enabled them to participate in the “Theatre of the Sea and Fishing Theatre Workshops with Artisanal Fisherwomen”. It involved five months



of hard work, including acting and theory classes, which inspired them to create the play.

When people talk about artisanal fishing, they only tend to think about the fishermen who put out to sea every day, risking their lives in order to feed their families. However, if men are to go to sea, thousands of anonymous women must prepare the fishing trip at home, putting the bait on the hooks; a scene that is replicated in other spheres of economic activity: for men to work, women must take care of the domestic tasks and childcare, work that is not recognized by society.

“To begin with, we were very scared of failing, but, with hard work, we achieved our objectives of making the situation of women in artisanal fishing known, which had been invisible for so long,” recalls Viviana Cornejo, one of the actresses in the play, a representative of the Sea Martyrs Encarnadoras Union of San Antonio, and a member of Conapach’s Women’s Union Committee.

Another of the actresses and former *encarnadora* is Miriam Almonacid. Several years ago, when the resources depleted, she had to leave her work of baiting hooks. Since then, she has been working in the Valparaiso municipal programme for employment generation. Miriam says that acting in the play “is like stepping back in time, reminding me of when I learned hook-baiting, and how difficult it was at first. I did not like it because it pricked my fingers and everything stank, but, over time, I realized that this work allowed me to meet people and to earn good money. As far as supporting the struggles of the sector is concerned, this play provides some useful ammunition that allows us to say things that we could not otherwise say, that is, that artisanal fishermen’s continued existence depends entirely on hook-baiters continuing their work of preparing the trip so that the men can continue putting out to sea.”

In San Antonio alone there are at least 800 *encarnadoras*, and it is estimated that in Chile around 10,000 women live, or rather used to live, from this work; all belong to the informal sector, so they do not even have the basic rights historically gained by women, like maternity leave, social security, healthcare, etc.

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Latin America

Networking to support

This is a report of the Latin American Network of Women working in the fisheries sector (NETWIF), which has been active for five years

This article by Helga Josupeit, Fishery Industry Officer, Fish Utilization and Marketing Service FAO, is based on various reports of NETWIF (<http://mujeres.infopesca.org/>)

For the last five years, the Centre for Marketing Information and Advisory Services for Fishery Products in Latin America and the Caribbean (INFOPECSA) has been co-ordinating the Latin American Network of Women working in the fisheries sector (NETWIF).

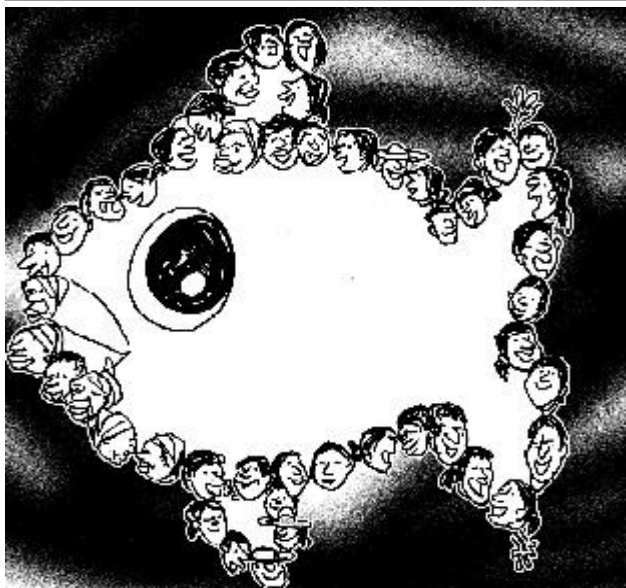
The network now has some 400 members from all the countries of the region. It is open to all women working in the fisheries sector—from those in production, processing and marketing, to those in the university or government.

Two meetings of the Focal Points of NETWIF have been held, in October 2000 and March 2002. In the first meeting held during 5-6 October 2000 in Montevideo, Uruguay, 28 persons from 10 countries of the region—Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Peru, Dominican Republic, Uruguay and Venezuela—participated. The delegates presented studies on various topics related to women in fisheries and aquaculture.

The meeting observed that women in fisheries were mainly working in the following areas:

Fish factory workers: Main activities of women working in fish factories are: filleting, selection of raw material, classification of species, gutting, heading, labelling, packing and cleaning in general. These are all activities that require meticulous work. In some cases, companies that do not work the year round, maintain the most efficient women in the tasks of cleaning and maintenance. When the season restarts, these women are tasked with supervision and training of new workers.

Self-employed workers: Self-employed workers include wives/ daughters/sisters of fishermen engaged in preparing and selling preserves, fish paste



and cakes, dried, salted and smoked fish, etc. This sector is growing due to the high unemployment in many countries.

Artisanal fisherwomen: These are usually the wives of small-scale fishermen, engaged in skilled and time-consuming jobs onshore, such as net-making and mending, and processing and marketing of catch. Frequently, women and children wade and collect bivalves and seaweed. In general, levels of education and income tend to be low.

Aquaculture: Women in small-scale aquaculture tend to work in feeding and harvesting fish, as well as in processing and selling fish and fish products.

Fishing: It is rare for women to go fishing at sea. It is, however, common to see them engaged in inland fishing in lagoons and rivers, where they use small boats and canoes.

Marketing of fish and fishery products: Women selling their husband's catches is a common sight at landing sites. It is also common to see women selling fish in markets and supermarkets.

Quality assurance and fish and fishery products inspection: Approximately 75 per cent of the professionals carrying out this activity in Latin America are women. Professionally, they are veterinarians, biologists, chemists and food engineers. Moreover, 20 per cent of fish inspectors are women, in general, veterinarians.

Research and development of new products: Women constitute 55 per cent of researchers working

on fisheries in universities. They are generally biologists, veterinarians, chemists, engineers and economists.

Management and administrative activities: There are many women who work as managers, executives, and directors in fishing and fish-processing companies, often in family-owned companies. Women are also found in public administration, working as professionals and secretaries. In some Latin American countries, maybe due to the low salaries, the public fisheries administration is in the hands of women, up to the highest levels. Only the posts of directors are in the hands of men.

The meeting recognized women's important roles in the fishery, as well as the skills they possessed. It also recognized, however, the following problems:

- discrimination in some Latin American countries against indigenous and Afro-American women, particularly in the context of the patriarchal structures in such communities;
- poor diffusion of the laws that have been promulgated in favour of women;
- low self-esteem, and weak and unstable unionization of women workers, as well as little information about family planning;
- occupational health problems faced by women workers in fish plants, linked to high levels of humidity, low temperatures, repetitive movements over a long period of time, and standing for long periods; and
- lack of remuneration of women's work in the artisanal sector, lack of social security coverage, etc.

The meeting stressed the importance of training for Latin American women in fisheries, including on technical topics (technology, handling, preservation, quality control and marketing), social topics (legislation, family planning), and on micro-enterprise development (creation and management of small companies and co-operatives). It was noted that women workers also need childcare support when they are away at work.

The meeting concluded that Latin American governments are not sufficiently aware of the problems of women in fisheries and aquaculture, and

that, as a consequence, they have not invested enough human or financial resources to assist them. Even where investments have been made, they are insufficient. The meeting also noted that, with few exceptions, most Latin American countries do not have statistics or information about the situation of the women in fisheries and aquaculture. Information is particularly lacking on women's participation, needs and expectations. In most countries, moreover, there are few women's organizations, and fishery and aquaculture communities lack good access to credit and co-financing.

Some of the recommendations from the meeting:

- Prepare a study on technical, socioeconomic and micro-enterprise-related aspects of women's needs in fisheries and aquaculture. This study should include qualitative and quantitative information, with the purpose of defining the priorities for action in the countries.
- Formulate an action plan for the medium term, directed towards improving the working conditions, diversification possibilities and the conditions of women in the fishery and aquaculture sector.
- Undertake training activities on specific topics towards capacity building of small-scale 'fisherwomen', aquaculturists, plant workers and wives of fishermen.
- Identify and promote credit lines and other loan systems accessible to women.

The participants committed to:

- consolidate local networks co-ordinated by the focal point of reference in each country;
- disseminate the activities and work already prepared for this First Latin American Meeting of Focal Points, as well as others, useful for the network;
- establish a permanent communication system among the members of the network through e-mail, and to encourage the active participation of all members;
- promote the interest and commitment of the national governments of the region to provide

active support to women in the fishery and aquaculture sector; and

- collect publications, existing legislation, photos and any other document regarding Latin American women, in general, and women of the fishery and aquaculture sector, in particular, in order to build an information centre for the network.

NETWIF's second meeting was organized by INFOPECA from 18-20 March 2002. It was attended by 41 participants from 13 countries of the region. In addition to the country's focal points, workers from the artisanal sector also participated, voicing their specific needs and concerns. Since the first meeting in 2000, several activities had been initiated, especially in the field of data collection. Participants from Argentina and Uruguay presented studies on the role of women in their fisheries, showing the huge participation of women in the fish-processing industry in both countries.

The second meeting recommended, among other things, surveys to complete the analysis of the situation with regard to women working in fisheries and aquaculture. It also recommended that training activities be undertaken. A holistic approach to training was proposed, to include training aimed at improving fishing methods, processing, marketing, bookkeeping, and credit management.

Some of the following activities that have since been carried out by NETWIF include:

Surveys: The Directorate of Fisheries in Cuba (focal point of NETWIF) carried out a survey on the role of women in fisheries and aquaculture during 2003. The Directorate of Fisheries of Nicaragua (focal point of NETWIF), assisted by INFOPECA and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Netherlands Partnership Programme, carried out an analysis of the role of women in fisheries and recommended specific training needs.

Training: The 'Livelihood Diversification and Enterprise Development project' of FAO (LDED) carried out three training activities in Colombia (2004-2006), Honduras (2005) and Mexico (2005)

for fisherfolk (mainly women) communities. Training focused on fish processing, distribution, quality problems, marketing, bookkeeping, and small enterprise organization. The focal points of NETWIF in Colombia, Honduras and Mexico were instrumental in organizing and lecturing during the training events, while INFOPECSA and FAO were involved in the preparation of training material and carrying out the courses. These activities resulted in the creation of new enterprises (in Colombia and Honduras) or in the strengthening of already existing associations.

Studies: NETWIF carried out studies on women working in the fisheries industry in the Patagonian region of Argentina, Uruguay and southern Brazil. The studies were carried out in early 2002. The financing of the studies came from small grants of FAO. In 2004, the FAO Fisheries Circular No.992 summarized the main findings of the three studies in English, to more widely disseminate the outcomes of the studies. It was found that in the processing industry, women outnumber men. It was also found that the number of women increased in proportion to the degree of complexity of the processing function. The plant owners consider women as better capable of carrying out more precise tasks. It was generally noted in the studies that a high share of women's salaries is used for the purchase of food for the family and for higher education of the children. Therefore, the creation of jobs in the fish-processing industry could improve food security.

Enterprise development: A women's co-operative in Betume (Brazil) was equipped and trained under the project, "Development of Processing and Marketing of Tilapia Produced in Big Latin American River Basins". One ice machine was installed, the filleting plant was refurbished and the members of the women's co-operative were put into contact with potential buyers in the area. The project resulted in higher incomes for the members of the co-operative, and better infrastructure for the village.

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Europe/France

Wedded to the sea

This is an interview with Lilianne Carriou, President of the Local Fisheries Committee of Lorient-Etel, France

This interview by Fanny Brun of Pêche et Développement has been translated by Brian O'Riordan of ICSF's Brussels office

"I don't originally come from a fishing community", says Lilianne. "I married a fisherman, and, in so doing, I became wedded to the sea. Getting used to the world of sailors has been far from easy, filled as it is with such uncertainty. To start with, as I worked outside the sector, it seemed quite archaic to me. I did not understand much about it, and it was difficult to adapt to it. But there was no alternative: either I had to adapt or spend every day in tears. So, I adapted.

My husband started out as a small-scale fisher with a small boat of 10 m. After some years, he acquired a 16-m boat, then a 17.5-m one. Today, he operates a 20.6-m vessel. But he has never changed from being a net fisherman. He has remained true to his convictions, and never changed his profession.

The great crisis in the 1990s

It was thanks to the great fishing crisis of the 1990s that I really discovered my husband's profession. That way of life, along with the whole sector, was in jeopardy. It was then that I became painfully aware



that the profession was in the process of disappearing. It was really a major concern. I learned that the families from the port of Lorient, whether in small boats or others, were facing great difficulties. None of us saw the crisis coming; all of us were caught by surprise. I took part in agitations with men and women from the Lorient district, and later in neighbouring areas, as the movement snowballed. There was quite an outburst.

I have always been a social activist

When your children are young, you get involved as a parent in school and sporting associations. So my involvement with organizations goes back a long way. To start with, I did not get involved with the fisheries sector because I did not understand it.

Later, quite rightly, I wanted to learn about it. My husband had explained to me at great length about fisheries issues, and I wanted to deepen my discussions with him. And it's a fact that, as a couple, it was a very difficult discussion, because we were not at all on the same wavelength. But it helped us to grow and to develop together. We have both always respected our commitments to each other as well as our differences, and that helped us to be open about a dialogue. When the fishery crisis hit, I decided to join up with the women, and joined a course on how to manage a fishing enterprises.

I continued with this struggle because I was convinced that women had a role to play in the fisheries sector. It was really far too much of a man's world. So I joined the regional women's association, where I was the President for a number of years. Thanks to that women's association, we were able to develop, gain official recognition for our status, address issues of safety and psychological counselling, and other matters that men had never really given much thought to.

I feel that a major change has come about in recent years. While it's true that the fisheries sector has always presented difficulties, I feel that we have progressed well. And I think it must be said that this is thanks to women. Today, amongst the new generation, shipowners and crew are well aware that women contribute significantly to the business.

President of the Local Fisheries Committee

Even today, I sometimes ask myself how I came to

be in the Local Fisheries Committee. One of the demands made by the women was the right to join professional organizations. We had demanded to be eligible as collaborating spouses for membership, and to hold office in professional organizations for the 2002 elections. That was not an easy process, and doors were shut in our faces all along the way. Finally, there was a glimmer of hope, as a small opening appeared for collaborating spouses and even, at last, for other women too. But then, again, why not? One must act quickly, as events take place. Not many women ultimately made it to the organizations, but the way was open to us. That was something really important.

Nevertheless, we had to ask our husbands about standing in for them. Personally, that made me very embarrassed. Undoubtedly, my husband was the professional. But I would have preferred us to be referred to as "Mr and Mrs", rather than me as a wife standing in for a certain mister, because he was not there. In the end, that was not possible; it had to be either, or. So I asked my husband whether he wanted to hold office in the organization. He said it was not possible for him; that he could not do everything, and be everywhere. There was the boat and the business to look after, they had to function. So I asked him if I could take his place. He said that I should do as I please.

This was how I gained entry, and was able to vote. In the end, it must be admitted that the men did open the doors for me. I was not there by chance. When they proposed various posts to me, I took all of them up. Following the recent retirement of the President of the Local Committee, I was elected President. I was very surprised indeed. I felt that a proper fisherman would make a better representative. But they all said they were struggling to manage their affairs and that they needed to be represented in this sector, so they elected me.

I am living through a great adventure. Like in a pregnancy, I have been in this job for nine months now... I could not have imagined what was going to happen. I have been caught with my back to the wall, because no sooner had I arrived, everything started to happen, what with Total Allowable Catches (TACs), quotas, controls, fuel costs... It's not possible that more things could have happened to us at the same time, it's a very difficult year.

All of us are in the same mess, whether as fishermen, fish merchants, fishmongers, processors, we are all links in the same chain today, and I believe that we must really stick together, if we are to progress in this sector. There is no other way—if a link in the chain breaks, we will all be set adrift.

I am here because I have faith. I want to believe that this sector is going to pull through. That will not be without pain, but there is every chance of succeeding if we keep united. I have been astounded to see how well the professionals have responded. I think that they have adapted to the changing situation, with each passing day. I have rarely witnessed a situation where people have adapted so quickly to what is happening. In today's fishery, there are more constraints than opportunities, but I am very impressed with their behaviour. What's more, in Lorient, many young people still want to invest despite the worrying situation. As for us, we must back them up; it's our duty.

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Film

A Fish Story

This is a press release about a film on two women activists from fishing communities in Massachusetts, US (<http://www.itvs.org/pressroom/pressRelease.htm?pressId=341>)

A Fish Story is the tale of two women who lead their communities in a battle for control of the ocean. Angela Sanfilippo of Gloucester, Massachusetts, and Shareen Davis of Chatham, Massachusetts were born into fishing families and married men who continue to make a living from the sea. Fishing defines who they are and has sustained their communities for generations. But their way of life is threatened when a powerful coalition of national environmental groups file a lawsuit that could put hundreds of fishermen out of business. Three hundred years of fishing tradition and the health of the ocean hangs in the balance. *A Fish Story* will have its television premiere on the Emmy Award-winning PBS series



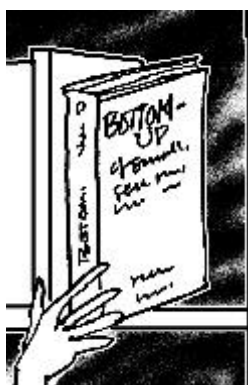
Independent Lens, hosted by Terrence Howard, on Tuesday, January 2, 2007 at 10PM.

In the 1970s, enormous international fishing fleets decimated the waters off New England leaving local fishermen struggling to survive in the wake of this environmental disaster. Decades later, New England fishermen and environmentalist remain locked in an intense battle over the current health and future management of the ocean. And with the success of a broad sweeping lawsuit filed in 2000, environmentalists are demanding radical new conservation measures that could spell disaster for New England fishermen and their communities. Angela and Shareen find themselves at the center of this political storm as they struggle to save both fish and fishermen. Delving into the behind-the-scenes world of politicians, environmentalists, journalists, and fishermen, *A Fish Story* confronts the hard choices we face when human needs and those of the environment collide.

The interactive companion website for *A Fish Story* (www.pbs.org/independentlens/fishstory) features detailed information on the film, including an interview with the filmmakers and links and resources pertaining to the film's subject matter. The site also features a Talkback section for viewers to share their ideas and opinions, preview clips of the film and more.

For further information contact: Mary Lugo: lugo@negia.net; Cara White: cara.white@mac.com

Publications



Bottom-up, Global Estimates of Small-scale Marine Fisheries Catches, by Ratana Chuenpagdee, Lisa Liguori, Maria L.D. Palomares and Daniel Pauly. Fisheries Centre Research Reports

14(8). The Fisheries Centre, University of British Columbia, 2006. (<http://www.fisheries.ubc.ca/publications/reports/fcrr.php>)

This recently released report attempts to estimate, for the first time, the catches and related contribution of small-scale fisheries (SSF). It recognizes that the "social, cultural, economic and livelihood importance of SSF to the majority of fishers are rarely reflected in national fisheries development policies, which tend to emphasize large-scale, industrial fisheries". The report "aims to provide bottom-up (national) estimates of SSF catches and related statistics for each maritime country, and then aggregate them at the global level". It provides, besides catch data, national definition of small-scale fisheries (SSF), gears used, catch composition, number of fishers, number of boats and involvement of women and children, drawing on various sources of data and information. Significantly, in recognition of the important roles that women and children play in SSF, the report includes a discussion about gender issues. The effort, according to the authors, is to put "SSF at the center stage of fisheries research". The data in the report is to be made online from January 2007 through the website of the *Sea Around Us* Project (www.seaaroundus.org). The database contains information about SSF in 140 coastal countries. The authors estimate that in 2000, nearly 12 million small-scale fishers caught 21 million tonnes per year. Pointing to the important contribution of SSF to total marine catches, they recommend adoption of policies directed at sustaining SSF.

YEMAYA

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Please do send us comments and suggestions to make the newsletter more relevant. We would also like names of other people who could be interested in being part of this initiative. We look forward to hearing from you and to receiving regular write-ups for the newsletter.

Writers and potential contributors to YEMAYA, please note that write-ups should be brief, about 500 words. They could deal with issues that are of direct relevance to women and men of fishing communities. They could also focus on recent research or on meetings and workshops that have raised gender issues in fisheries. Also welcome are life stories of women and men of fishing communities working towards a sustainable fishery or for a recognition of their work within the fishery. Please also include a one-line biographical note on the writer.