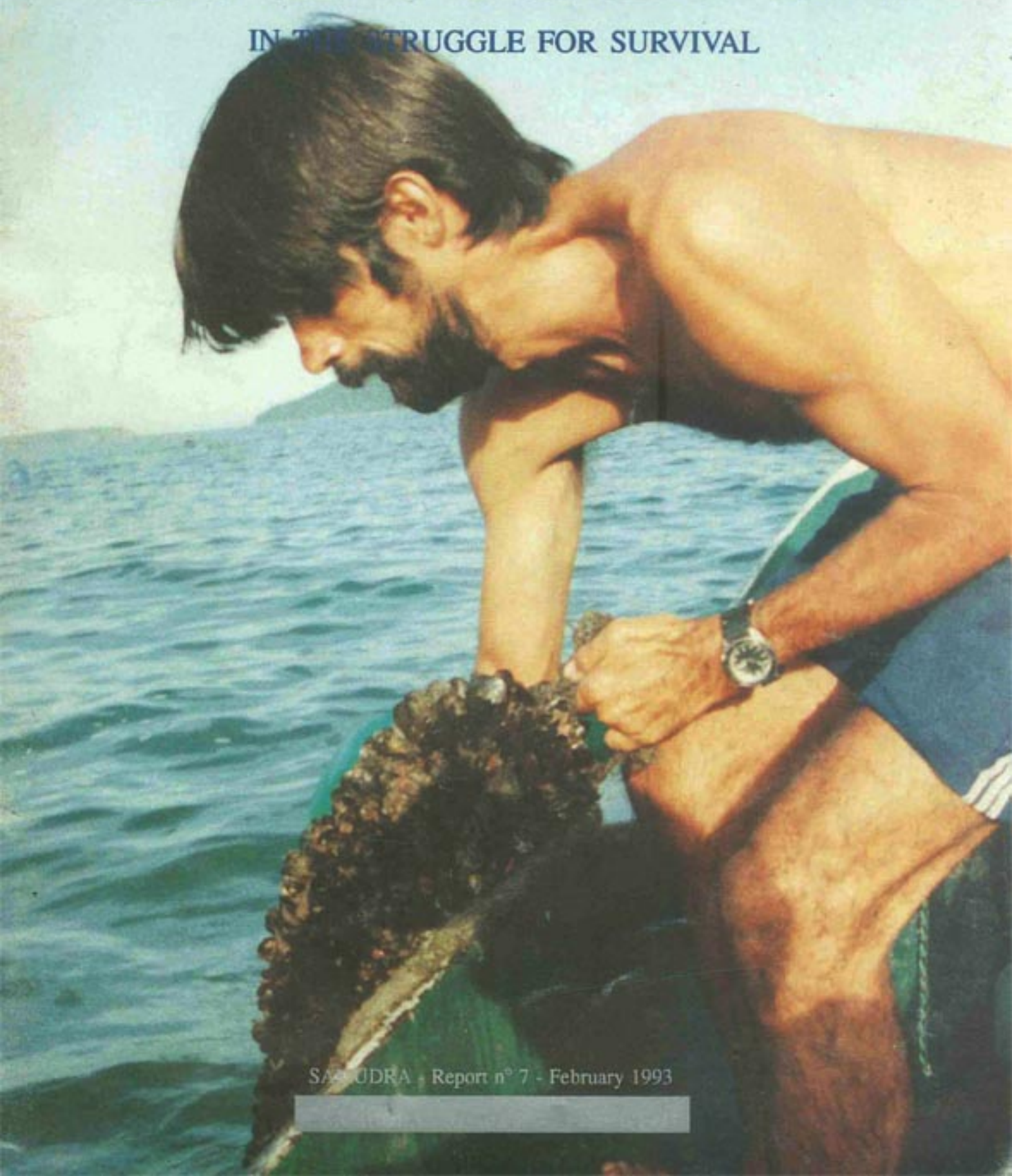


SAMUDRA

IN THE STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL



SAMUDRA - Report n° 7 - February 1993



SAMUDRA

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Editorial

The United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development ended with declarations and agreements which did not meet the expectations generated during the preparatory process. Political compromise was the mechanism most often used by participant diplomats, while the proposals put forward by academic centres and social movements were, for the most part, postponed for a more propitious occasion- That occasion will surely be found in those areas of struggle where action is still necessary, given that the poor continue to become ever poorer, oceans continue to be contaminated, gasses saturate the atmosphere, and species are led to extinction, while the future of humanity on this planet-ship Earth is uncertain.

The fishworkers of the world have, however, gained a degree of recognition in Chapter 17 of Agenda 21 and the door is open for the struggle of their organizations in each country to achieve the application of the agreements signed in the 1992 Rio Conference. Those accords require that fish workers be respected in terms of their own cultures, that there be exclusive fishing zones, special credit mechanisms and technology transfer, representation in decision-making organisms, respect for and participation of women in fishing activities and fishworker organizations.

ICSF continues its struggle for those rights in diverse areas of the world, specially in meetings of fishing crews in Latin America, in Task Force activities in defense of Philippine Distant Water Vessel crews in the Taiwanese fleets, in the search for the causes of the diseases which attack the fresh water fish cultivated in Asia, and in the creation of communication networks among French, Irish and British fish workers. The European Economic Community continues to open new fishing zones through so-called "second generation" treaties, notably that established with Argentina in 1992, which will have significant impact both in Europe and the countries of the South, specially in Latin America and Africa.

Both Peruvian and Mexican artisan fishworkers have made progress toward new forms of organization and are seeking ways to become truly independent in their decisions. A new artisan fish worker union has been formed in Madagascar, while their fellows in Senegal have made progress along similar lines.

Renee Conan, European Parliamentary Representative and Green militant, a friend of ours, has left us after a sudden illness and we will miss her clear and inspirational voice to guide the social fishworker movements. May she rest in peace and inspire us to transcend our own human shortcomings.

Hector Luis Morales
Editor-in-chief

In solidarity: FISHERIES TREATY AT THE GLOBAL FORUM

Even as the recent Earth Summit was being widely publicised, several of the world's NGOs gathered at a contemporaneous Global Forum in Rio de Janeiro from June 1 to 14, 1992, to discuss and debate issues that they felt would otherwise have been drowned in the loud rhetoric of the conventional agenda. Among them were NGOs connected with the fisheries sector who negotiated a Fisheries Treaty. ICSF was one of the 18 signatories to the Treaty. A summary of the treaty:

Fishery resources are not only a vital source of food, they are also an invaluable input to general economic development. Yet, those for whom these resources matter most - traditional fisher-folk - are among the poorest and most disadvantaged of society.

They are often denied access to these resources and, moreover, have to compete with industrial and distant water fleets. Pollution, overfishing and non-discriminatory fishing technology combine to destroy the resource ecosystem itself. The result is a net depletion of resources.

Recognising these problems, fisherfolk organisations and other NGOs at Rio's Global Forum pledged to work towards a twin objective:

- Support fishers and fishing communities, and
- Conserve and protect aquatic ecosystems.

Principles of the Fisheries Treaty

The basic rights of fisherfolk, which extend beyond mere human rights, are provided in laws, agreements and conventions which also deal with minimum standards of safe working conditions. Three important manifestations of such basic rights for fisherfolk are:

- formation of their own organizations which should be allowed to participate in the planning, management and development process in fisheries;
- reservation of marine and inland water zones exclusively for artisanal fishing; and

- access to credit and social services.

Apart from these basic rights, the Treaty addresses these concerns:

Artisanal Fisheries

This sector should get priority because it is important in several ways: as a source of food, income and employment; a means of ensuring community stability; a way of promoting resource conservation and environmental protection of marine, coastal and inland water areas.

Ecologically Sound Practices

Fisheries should be conducted in an ecologically sound manner to sustain the resource for the present and future generations. It should also be socially just, showing respect for cultural, biological and ecosystem diversity.

Equity

Access to fishery resources should not be based solely on political power and the availability of technology and capital. It should recognise the needs of fisheries communities and be based on equitable principles and respect for the environment.

Ecosystem Approach

Managing fisheries from an ecosystem perspective calls for integrated management principles which take into account human activities which degrade aquatic ecosystems and the environment. These include:

- inappropriate and destructive practices of agriculture, forestry, aquaculture and fishing.
- land-based and sea-based sources of pollution.
- urban, industrial and tourism development.

Participation

Only the full and meaningful participation of all interests, including fishers (especially those with traditional knowledge and experience), NGOs and scientists will ensure the successful management of fisheries and aquatic environments.

Women in Fisheries

The vital role of women in fisheries and integrated community development should be recognised and supported and in decisions affecting these matters they should participate at all levels.

Precautionary Approach and Environmental Impact Assessments

All decisions which affect fisheries and aquatic environments, including environmental impact assessments, should be taken with caution.

High Seas Fishing

Coastal states and fishing communities have special rights and needs with respect to straddling stocks and highly migratory species under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Recognising this, high seas fishing must be subject to a legally binding regime which takes into account the ecosystem effects on the high seas as well as the adjacent coastal waters. Environmental standards for high seas fishing should apply to fisheries for straddling stocks and highly migratory species in the EEZs.

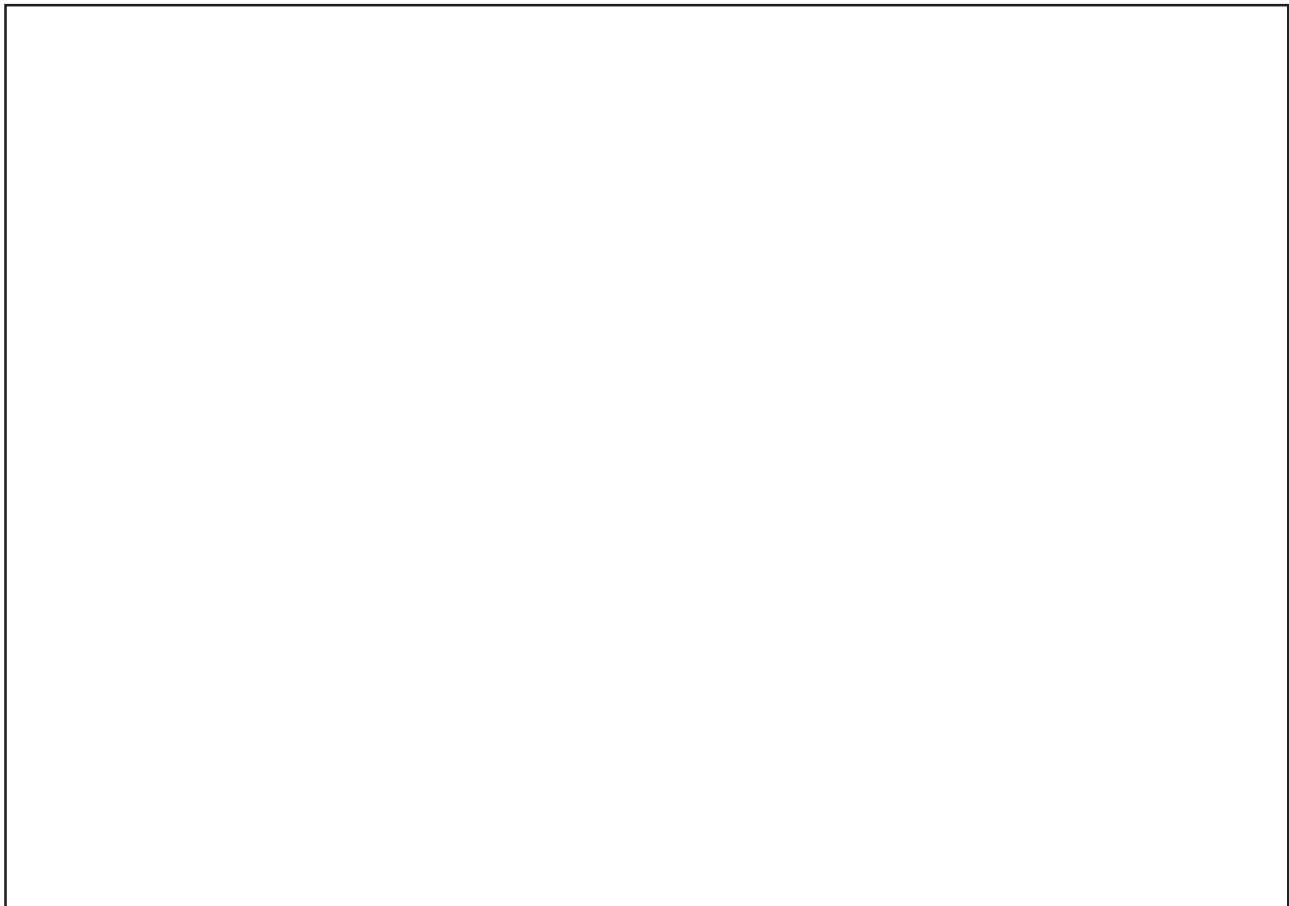
- implement and encourage development of technologies which reduce by-catch and protect aquatic ecosystems.
- restrict or eliminate technologies which are non-selective or otherwise harmful to the aquatic environment.
- incorporate enforcement mechanisms and effective monitoring programs into fisheries management.
- negotiate an internationally binding regime for high seas fisheries, including mechanisms to ensure compliance with the UN driftnet moratorium.

The Treaty also encourages research to increase understanding of the relationships between aquatic organisms and their environment, which determine ecologically appropriate fishery yields. Such programs should be broad-based and recognise traditional and indigenous knowledge.

Action plan

To improve the quality of life of fisherfolk and fishworkers, there is a need for common action based on these principles and using a comprehensive ecosystem approach. The following are specific recommendations:

The Treaty also calls for networking among fishers and NGOs through information exchange, visits and training, and also joint political action. The latest in order to organize a World Conference on Fisheries and Environment at Rome, 1994, ten years after the I International Conference of Fishworkers and Support-





Box signatories

ers held in Rome, 1984, simultaneously with the FAO Conference.

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SUSTAINABLE USE AND CONSERVATION OF MARINE LIVING RESOURCES UNDER NATIONAL JURISDICTION

Extracted from UNCED'S Agenda 21, Chapter 17

Negotiated at the Global Forum, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1-14 June 1992. □

systems are under stress or are threatened from a variety of sources, both human and natural.

Basis for action

Marine fisheries yield 80 to 90 million tons of fish and shellfish per year 95 per cent of which is taken from waters under national jurisdiction. Yields have increased nearly fivefold over the past four decades. The provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the sea on marine living resources of the exclusive economic zone and other areas under national jurisdiction set forth rights and obligations of States with respect to conservation and utilization of those resources.

Marine living resources provide an important source of protein in many countries and their use is often of major importance to local communities and indigenous people. Such resources provide food and livelihoods to millions of people and, if sustainably utilized, offer increased potential to meet nutritional and social needs, particularly in developing countries. To realize this potential requires improved knowledge and identification of marine living resource stocks, particularly of underutilized and unutilized stocks and species, use of new technologies, better handling and processing facilities to avoid wastage, and improved quality and training of skilled personnel to manage and conserve effectively the marine living resources of the exclusive economic zone and other areas under national jurisdiction. Emphasis should also be on multi-species management and other approaches that take into account the relationships among species.

Fisheries in many areas under national jurisdiction face mounting problems, including local over-fishing, unauthorized incursions by foreign fleets, ecosystem degradation, overcapitalization and excessive fleet sizes, undervaluation of catch, insufficiently selective gear, unreliable databases, and increasing competition between artisanal and large-scale fishing, and between fishing and other types of activities.

Problems extend beyond fisheries. Coral reefs and other marine and coastal habitats, such as mangroves and estuaries, are among the most highly diverse, integrated and productive of the Earth's ecosystems. They often serve important ecological functions, provide coastal protection, and are critical resources for food, energy, tourism, and other uses, such as marine and coastal

Objectives

Coastal States, particularly developing countries and States whose economies are overwhelmingly dependent on the exploitation of the marine living resources of their exclusive economic zones, should obtain the full social and economic benefits from sustainable utilization of marine living resources within their exclusive economic zones and other areas under national jurisdiction.

States commit themselves to the conservation and sustainable use of marine living resources under national jurisdiction. To this end, it is necessary to:

- Develop and increase the potential of marine living resources to meet human nutritional needs, as well as social, economic and development goals;
- Take into account traditional knowledge and interests of local communities, small-scale artisanal fisheries and indigenous people in development and management programmes;
- Maintain or restore populations of marine species at levels that can produce the maximum sustainable yield as qualified by relevant environmental and economic factors, taking into consideration relationships among species;
- Promote the development and use of selective fishing gear and practices that minimize waste in the catch of target species and minimize by-catch of non-target species;
- Protect and restore endangered marine species;
- Preserve rare or fragile ecosystems, as well as habitats and other ecologically sensitive areas.

Nothing in paragraphs above restricts the right of a coastal State or the competence of an international organization, as appropriate, to prohibit, limit or regulate the exploitation of marine mammals more strictly than provided for in that paragraph. States shall cooperate with a view to the conservation of marine mammals and in the case of cetaceans shall in particular work through the appropriate international organizations for their.

The ability of developing countries to fulfill the above objectives is dependent upon their capabilities, including the financial, scientific and technological means at their disposal. Adequate financial, scientific and technological cooperation should be provided to support acting by them to implement these objectives

Management-related activities

States should ensure that marine living resources of the exclusive economic zone and other areas under national jurisdiction are conserved and managed in accordance with the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Costal States, individually or through bilateral and/or multilateral cooperation and with the support, as appropriate of international organizations, whether sub-regional, regional or global, should inter alia:

- Assess the potential of marine living resources, including underutilized or unutilized stocks and species, by developing inventories, where necessary, for their conservation and sustainable use;
- Implement strategies for the sustainable use of marine living resources, taking into account the special needs and interests of small-scale artisanal fisheries, local communities and indigenous people to meet human nutritional and other development needs;
- Implement, particularly in developing countries, mechanisms to develop mariculture, aquaculture and small-scale deep-sea and oceanic fisheries within areas under national jurisdiction where assessments show that marine living resources are potentially available;
- Strengthen their legal and regulatory frameworks, where appropriate, including management, enforcement and surveillance capabilities, to regulate activities related to the above strategies;
- Take measures to increase the availability of marine living resources as human food by reducing wastage, post-harvest losses and discards, and improving techniques of processing, distribution and transportation;
- Develop and promote the use- of environmentally sound technology under criteria compatible with the sustainable use of marine living resources, including assessment of the environmental impact of major new fishery practices;
- Enhance the productivity and utilization of their marine living resources for food and income.

States, in implementing the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, should address the issues of straddling stocks and highly migratory species, and taking fully into account the objec-

tive set out above, access to the surplus of allowable catches.

Coastal States should explore the scope for expanding recreational and tourist activities based on marine living resources, including those for providing alternatives sources of income. Such activities should be compatible with conservation and sustainable development policies and plans.

Coastal States should support the sustainability of small-scale artisanal fisheries. To this end, they should, as appropriate:

- Integrate small-scale artisanal fisheries development in marine and costal planning, taking into account the interests and, where appropriate, encouraging representation of fishermen, small-scale fish workers, women, local communities and indigenous people;
- Recognize the rights of small-scale fish workers and the special situation of indigenous people and local communities, habitats on a sustainable basis;
- Develop systems for the acquisition and recording of traditional knowledge concerning marine living resources and environment and promote the incorporation of such knowledge into management systems.

Coastal States should ensure that, in the negotiation and implementation of international agreements on the development or conservation of marine living resources, the interests of local communities and indigenous people are taken into account, in particular their right to subsistence.

Coastal States, with the support, as appropriate, of international organizations should conduct analyses of the potential for aquaculture in marine and coastal areas under national jurisdiction and apply appropriate safeguards as to the introduction of new species.

States should prohibit dynamiting, poisoning and other comparable destructive fishing practices.

States should identify marine ecosystems exhibiting high levels of biodiversity and productivity and other critical habitat areas and provide necessary limitations on use in these areas, through **inter alia**, designation of protected areas. Priority should be accorded, as appropriate, to:

- coral reef ecosystems,
- estuaries,
- temperate and tropical wetlands, including mangroves,
- seagrass beds,
- other spawning and nursery areas.

AN ECOLOGIST LOOKS AT AQUACULTURE

Sebastian Mathew

- Less euphoria, more realism

O. Kinne, an ecologist at the Biologische Anstalt Helgoland, Hamburg, Germany, has written extensively on aquaculture and marine ecology. The following piece is paraphrased from his keynote lecture at the World Conference on Aquaculture in Venice in 1986, where he said that *‘the production of food for some 8 billion people is a nightmare for an ecologist’* Today, with the current global thrust on aquacultural practices, his views on the significance and future potential of aquaculture acquire a fresh relevance.

Man not only searches for food, he produces food. And to do so, he strives for conditions which favour the survival, growth and reproduction of a few, selected organisms, hoping to reduce his dependence on the vagaries of nature.

However, two fundamental ecological facts are often ignored:

- the flow patterns of energy and matter which are basic properties in the organization and functioning of ecosystems: and
- a bias in the flow pattern in favour of a single ecosystem component, viz, Homo sapiens.

Food is produced in three principal ways: agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries. Though the fisheries do manipulate marine ecosystems, they depend heavily and directly on natural ecological processes and fluctuations. The degree of man induced control is limited, in contrast to agriculture and aquaculture.

At present, there are more favourable prerequisites for food production on land, i.e. in agriculture, than in water, i.e. in aquaculture. Production of human food from aquatic plants is negligible due to man's nutritional habits and the infeasibility of economically harvesting the greatest living natural resource on earth, the marine phytoplanktons.

Reliable figures on annual rates of food production world-wide are difficult to come by, but most food production evidently comes from agriculture, followed by fisheries. In 1979 aquaculture accounted for only about 0.21% of global food production. Of course, there are

exceptions like Japan, Israel and China where aquacultures share is much higher.

Though food production by aquaculture has certainly increased over the years, *‘they remain much lower than most of the often euphoric predictions had claimed’*. Limitations of area, water quality, feed, energy and seedlings make it unlikely to grow much faster.

Aquaculture has two major social aspects: to make money and to combat hunger. In order to make money, the aquaculturist tends to produce high-quality, expensive seafood. To combat hunger, on the other hand, cannot very well be the primary responsibility of the private entrepreneur. Here government support for research and operating pilot plants is required.

Whether in field or culture, we cannot produce food in purely technical-industrial terms, without the activities of living cells. Food is always produced as a result of ecological processes. The food producer tries to control the flow of energy and matter through the living system concerned. The aim is to obtain a maximum of well-marketable food in return for investing a minimum of effort and cost. What is good or bad for the target organism is what matters most to the producer.

It must be remembered that we do not exploit single organisms or populations, but ecosystems. (The only exceptions are axenic cultures, i.e. those consisting of individuals of a single, known species.)

Just as there is this ecological basis of food production, there are ecological limitations to food production. Man affects ecosystems in four principal ways:

- by changing the flow patterns of energy and matter, as well as the structural properties of habitats;
- by addition of system-foreign materials (waste disposal, pollution);
- by mixing components of spatially separate ecosystems; and
- by removal of system components, i.e. by harvesting selected wild organisms (fisheries) and a variety of non-living materials.

Aqua-food production contributes to all four types of



ecosystem distortion. Large-scale aquaculture operations tend to deform natural ecosystem dynamics especially through construction and pollution.

Construction not only alters the landscape along the coast of a river, it modifies water-use and water-flow patterns. In the sea, for instance, artificial reefs change the density and composition of the local flora and fauna. While they normally increase the local productivity of the waters concerned, their consequences on the original ecological situation remain to be carefully investigated.

Pollution from aquaculture farms is caused by feed, metabolites, and therapeutic or prophylactic chemicals. Along a river, discharge of wastes and chemicals upstream may result in chain reactions.

There are other constraints that aquaculture operations have to face: the competitive activities of man for recreation, land-use etc.; the rising cost of energy; and the problem of feed. *“The conduct of feeding fish with fish and shrimp with shrimp in order to feed Homosapiens does not hold the right key for opening the door into the future.”*

We must attempt to produce food by increasingly employing principles of ecosystem dynamics. We must learn from nature. She produces, consumes and remineralizes gigantic amounts of organic materials - thousands of times larger than those produced and utilized by man- without accumulating dangerous wastes, without distorting ecosystem dynamics, and without running short of energy or feed. The solution is re-cycling and large-scale food production from low-

trophic-level organisms. There are two major levels of recycling:

- transformation of organic wastes into feed for cultured animals or into fertilizer for cultured plants; and,
- transformation of microorganism protein built from wastes directly into nutrients utilized as human food.

Agriculture is better suited to produce human food from larger-sized animals. But aquaculture is the method of choice for human nutrients produced from recycling. Some of these are simple, traditional and effective routes, e.g., the use of animal faeces and urine to fertilise fish ponds. With modern advances in sewage treatment, this could now become an aesthetically acceptable aquatic solution for synthesising a multitude of different nutritional components.

Man's nutritional traditions also serve as an obstacle to the ultimate success of recycling. The evolution of specific self-perpetuating habits of food consumption ('nutritional adaptation') largely determine the trends and ends of food production.

The necessary new role of man as partner and protector of nature-rather than her mere exploiter- requires a general, very substantial reorientation in our habits and behaviour. Within the next five decades or so, we must learn how to produce healthy foods from our organic wastes which now pollute our lands, rivers and seas—and we must learn to eat these foods with pleasure.

Deep seas, long hours

THE CONDITION OF FISHWORKERS ON DISTANT WATER VESSELS

If proof was needed that fishworkers on distant water vessels (DWVs) faced appalling conditions of work, the testimonies and papers presented at ICSF's international workshop on the subject in January 1991 (Manila-the Philippines) provided it.

Clearly, there was a need to analyse in greater depth the related issues of recruitment, remuneration and work conditions of fishworkers aboard DWVs. Accordingly, ICSF organised a follow-up workshop in Mauritius from 31 August to 5 September 1992. Specifically, it hoped to set up a task force, with scope and objectives defined, to go into these issues.

To broaden the scope of reference, the workshop decided to use the term industrial fishing vessels (IFVs), rather than distant water vessels. This would include all vessels employing foreign labour from developing countries and/or engaged in joint ventures in developing countries and/or fishing in the EEZs of their waters. Also included are vessels operating in national waters, employing at least five workers on board, and which are capable of fishing beyond the territorial waters.

As the workshop presentations made clear, no country could claim to be free of exploitation of fishworkers on industrial fishing vessels. The degree of hardship might differ, as did the amount of remuneration, but these did not substantially alter the common fact of difficult working conditions.

Filipino fishworkers employed in Taiwan, for instance, work at least 16 hours a day and are often cheated of their salaries which are paid through intermediary recruiting agents. In the Philippines itself, where there is a surplus of trained seafarers, there is no legislation to protect fishworkers. The government seems interested only in earning foreign exchange.

In Madagascar, recruitment is done directly by foreign fishing companies, often through tripartite negotiations involving the workers' organizations too. But salaries are poor, just as they are in Senegal too.

Reunion, which has adopted the French legislation system, provides for health insurance, social security and retirement benefits for fishworkers. However, there are instances of illegal recruitment from Madagascar and Mayotte, especially in longlining. The proposed fleet reduction in the EEC countries, local fishermen fear, would lead to the deployment of European vessels in the underexploited oceans of the world.

In Mauritius, the minority employed on foreign vessels are paid better than South African and Filipino fishworkers. But work conditions are deplorable, especially on Taiwanese longliners. One-sided contracts, old and derelict vessels, and the absence of protective legislation add to the hardship.

In India, where most of the IFVs are trawlers operating in the deep sea prawn fisheries, the workers are usually directly recruited (though of late, recruiting agencies have sprung up for the emerging joint ventures). In addition to a salary and a share of the total catch, the workers get a month's holiday. Though Indian conditions seem currently the best, what is worrying is whether these can be maintained in the situation of overfishing.

Apart from India and Reunion, where conditions appear slightly better, it is clear that IFVs of the industrialised countries tried to maximise profits by hiring cheap labour -sometimes through joint ventures and licensing arrangements.

In view of these oppressive and exploitative conditions, the workshop proposed the formation of an international task force to study and document these conditions as well as to suggest campaign programmes to redress these problems. It will be supported by regional task forces in Taiwan, the Philippines and Mauritius.

If this effort throws up studied responses to the problems of fishworkers in IFVs, their cause would have been well served. And, as concerned people hope, they can then look forward to a more rewarding livelihood. ■

Nothing pretty SOUTH PACIFIC FISHERY UNDER THREAT

To the world outside, mention of South Pacific conjures up visions of pristine beaches, placid seas and lazy fun-filled days. But for the approximately 5 million population of the 10,000 islands of the region, life is no pretty jaunt, particularly for the fisherfolk. And that means just about everyone, for fishing not only provides the principal means of subsistence, fish is also the most important part of the islanders' diet.

The history of the Pacific Islands has been said to be a one of conflict over natural resources. While the focus in the past was land-based, since the 70s it has shifted to the ocean resources of fish, seabed minerals and the vast marine space.

In this period, foreign vessels, particularly from Japan, Korea, Taiwan and the US, have obtained licences for the exploitation of the islands' vast tuna resources. Now licensing agreements are increasingly being replaced with joint ventures, with minimal benefits of revenue and employment. Foreign corporations now control most of the resources and the profits they generate.

Over a fourth of the world's tuna production is currently from the South Pacific region. Yet, its share of the total value of the catch is abysmally low. In 1989, for instance, when distant water fleets caught tuna worth US \$ 700 million, the local nations got as access fees only about four per cent of this value.

Unfortunately, small-scale fisheries, which could be a source of fish for domestic consumption, have not been able to develop. Poor management, neglect of local sea tenure practices, rising costs and weak government support are among the reasons for this.

On the other hand, the development of commercial fishery poses a threat to the islanders' subsistence fishing, depleting the inshore waters. Although reef and lagoon waters are not leased out to foreigners, tuna long-lining depends on traditional baitfishery in the inshore waters.

Commercialised baitfishing leads to oil pollution of inshore waters and other ecological consequences. Local fishermen fear that excessive harvesting of bait fish, which they believe form the food for the species they normally catch, would ultimately decrease the catch potential of their own subsistence fishery.

Further, as reported from the Solomon Islands, tuna boats that speed past the shore swamp canoes, erode shorelines and endanger children playing in the lagoons. To worsen matters, poaching and indiscriminate driftnetting have been on the rise since the 1970s.

The origin of these threats are not confined to the sea.

Land-based development activities have serious implications since the islands are small land masses in the midst of a vast ocean. Mangroves have been removed along the coconut plantations. Logging and prospecting for minerals (gold, copper, nickel, silver and manganese) causes sediment pollution, adversely affecting the sustainability of the traditional fishing grounds.

Tourism, especially of the resort variety financed by international capital, often shows scant respect for traditional cultural values and also leads to the theft of rare shells and precious corals from the seabed.

Increasing urbanization is another related problem, especially in countries like Kiribati, Marshall Islands and Tuvalu.

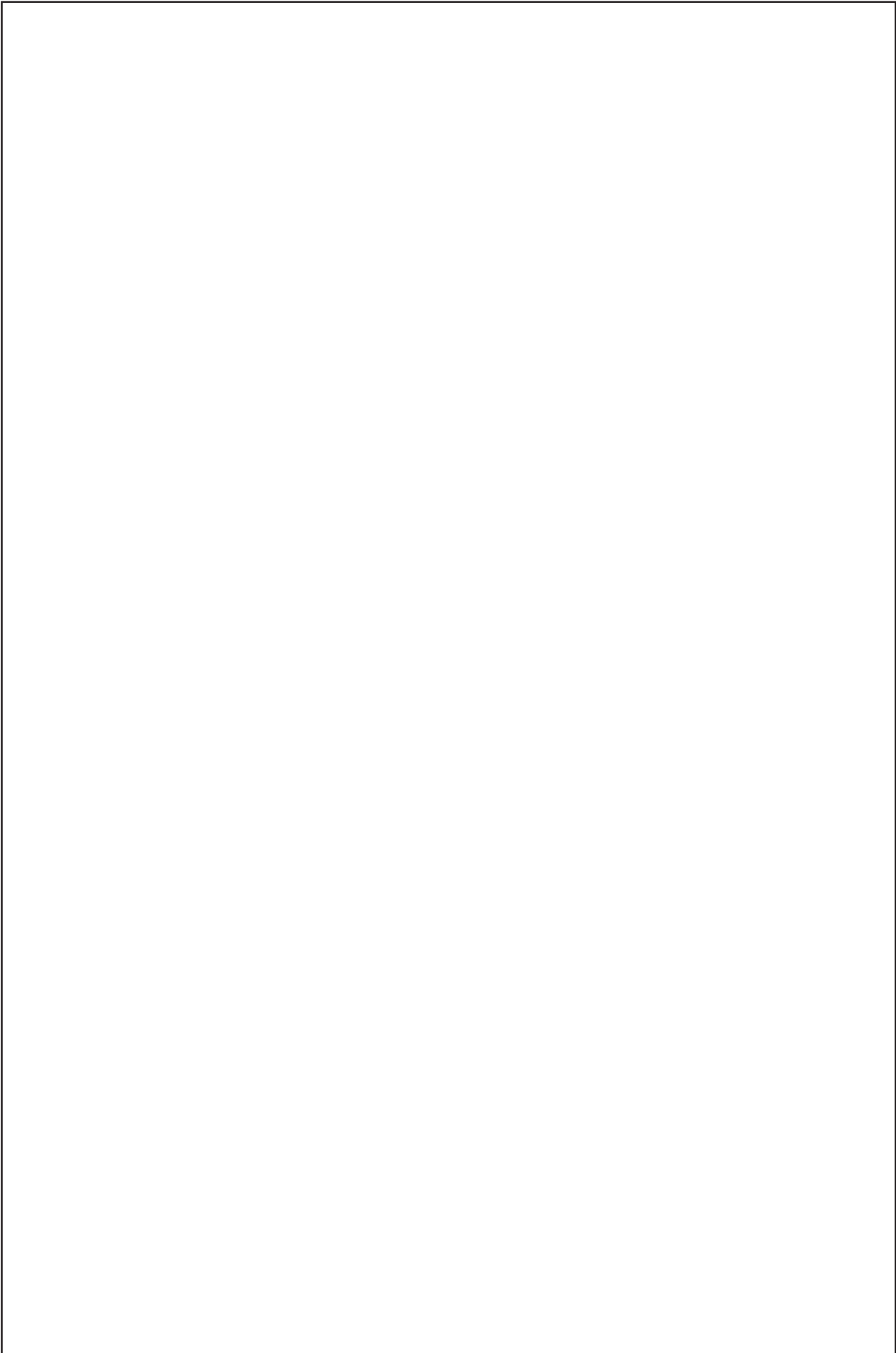
Sadly, the Pacific has long been an arena for military abuse. The establishment of military bases and half a century of missile and nuclear testing must surely have permanently contaminated the area and made much of its waters radioactive. There have also been attempts to dump nuclear wastes into the Pacific waters. Though there already is evidence of food-chain contamination in this area, other effects could be concealed or underreported.

The South Pacific region is set to become a major hive of industrial activity, with foreign companies scrambling for mining rights, ocean leasing, and oil-gas prospecting licences. The implications for the region and its people are frightening.

As one observer asks, "*The Japanese, the Americans, the South Koreans, the Chinese, the Canadians, some Latin Americans, the West Germans, the French and a number of ASEAN nations now talk with monotonous regularity about the Pacific century. When the Pacific century is over, will it be said that islanders slept through it all while those who controlled the mechanisms of power in island states, with few exceptions, danced late into a weary night, celebrating plunder disguised as development?*"

In view of the continuing exploitation of small fishworkers in the South Pacific, ICSF has decided to try and create a network, among them, after identifying local fishworkers' organizations as well as NGOs working with fishing communities. This initiative will also attempt to document the problems of the region.

Towards this end, a three-member ICSF team will visit countries from Micronesia, Melanesia and Polynesia, in addition to New Zealand during January –March 1993. This will hopefully be the first step in a long-term effort to further contacts in the Pacific region. ■



WILL EUROPEAN FISHERIES SURVIVE?

James Smith

It's now almost a month since the French fishermen's Survival Committee decided to tour Europe to make contact with their European counterparts and attempt to establish the basis for common action in the face of the present crisis brought on by an unexpectedly steep fall in fish prices in Europe towards the end of January.

England and Ireland were to be the first ports of call, followed by Spain and Portugal, and then the rest of Northern Europe. Needing an interpreter and consultant for organizing the first leg of the trip, they called on the author of this article at CCFD (The French Catholic Committee against Hunger and for Development). There had been frequent interaction between the COFO Maritime Programme and the local fisheries committee at LE GUILVINEC since the 'Bateau pour Madagascar' campaign in 1988 and the ICSF/CCFD symposium in Lisbon in 1989. Rene-Pierre CHEVER was also a participant at the ICSF conference at Bangkok in 1990, and has played an important role in building up a relationship between the French and Senegalese fishworkers. There are few ICSF members or fishworkers from other countries who have not found their way to LE GUILVINEC at some stage, and enjoyed fulsome hospitality there. Of the rest of the Breton delegation, Andre LE BERRE had been several times to Senegal (including to first congress of the National Collective of Senegalese Fishermen in 1991), and Camille GOUZIEN was captain of the old trawler that afforded us such welcome recreation, with wives and children aboard, at the 1992 BREST gathering of tall ships. Together with a young fisherman horn DOUARNENEZ, Georges GUILCHER, it would be fair to say that the conditions were set for the trip to take place in the best possible spirits.

Be that as it may, the afore-mentioned are in the forefront of a last-ditch movement of French fish-workers to make an impression on the European Commission and obtain redress for a fisheries policy which has done little to favour your ordinary local fishworker, but rather the large merchants, processors, and conglomerate fishing operators. In fact, a meeting of 600 fishworkers and their wives just outside LE GUILVINEC the Saturday before the cross-channel trip brought home clearly that the profession is in a state of shock, with as many as 50% bankruptcies in the offing, with concomittent human distress. The anguish and desperation expressed by the women, especially, was very striking. At the same time there was an overall determination

not to allow the meeting to degenerate into personal recriminations against the representatives of the Credit Maritime and other Producers' Organizations present. This hardly masked the general accusation that the traditional bodies mandated to manage the fisheries sector had failed to anticipate the present crisis and were incompetent to provide the kind of political muscle required to make a dent on the awesome behemoth in Brussels.

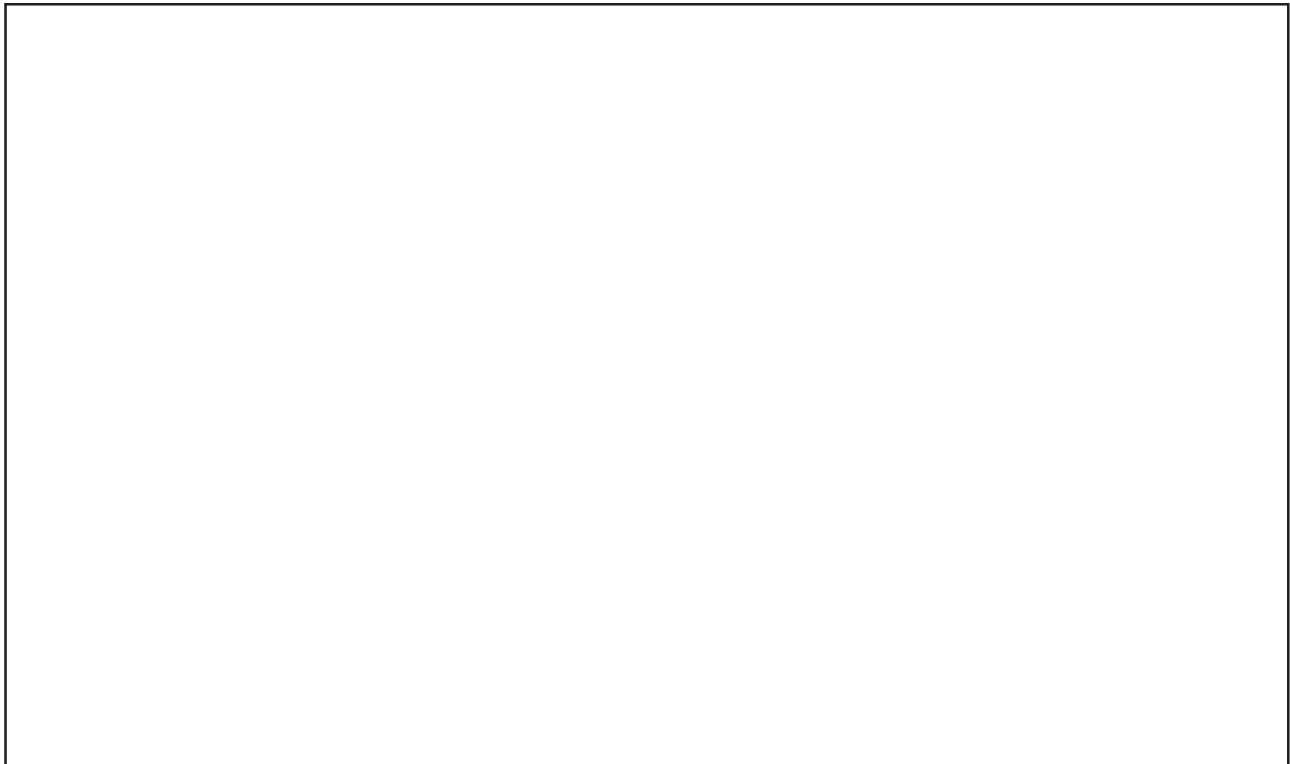
So the sense of mission was a serious one as we set off on the first stage of what could conceivably have been a series of confrontations, the ingredients being complaints over the destruction of British and Irish fish by rampaging French fishermen, liberally doused with the kind of jingoistic anti-French feeling which the British tabloid papers—and even the British government, on occasion—take a delight in stirring up. After all, hadn't a British naval vessel been boarded just two days before off the Channel Islands (Iles Anglo-Normandes), Her Majesty's officers sequestered, and—horror of horrors—the White Ensign burned? By George, there was a time when this sort of thing would have meant at least a good keel-hauling, or being thrashed to within an inch of the wretch's life before being handed back to a shame-faced French admiral with a stern warning. Or worse, perhaps, Alas, we would have to be content with the British fisheries minister stating in a televised parliamentary address that, if he had his way, he would send in the SAS (Special Air Service), "and it wouldn't be against British fishermen" (hear, hear! hear, hear!).

The first port of call was a popular 680 television programme called 'Kilroy'. There were about 60 people on the set which had been carefully organized so that potential antagonists could have a good old go at each other. And so it started "Are the British fishermen your enemies?", Camille was asked. "Not at all", said he, with a refrain that we were to hear often over the next 4 days the destruction of British fish was generally accidental, or the result of disputes being settled between French merchants and French fishermen there was no desire to hurt European Community fish, but rather to obtain regulation of extra-community cheap imports. After all, when 2000 French fishermen had descended on the Rungis central market outside Paris on a night that will remain engraved in peoples minds for many a year, not so say in a song or two, between 80 and 90% of the fish encountered was from outside the Community.

There were a few well-placed remarks about how the Common Fisheries Policy quota system allows the French to take 3 or 4 times as much fish off Cornwall than the Cornishmen themselves, but generally speaking, one had the impression that the large majority of the audience had not come to add fuel on to a mostly contrived Anglo-French fish war. After about 5 minutes, Robert Kilroy went upstage and asked a fisherman's wife what she thought of the French fishermen's behaviour. In answer, she turned the guns inward, so to speak, pointing straight at the British Conservative M.P. present, Mr Gary Streeter. In substance, she said "The French did what was required to attract attention to the plight that we all share, and

- the British government was about to implement a Fish Conservation Act which would unilaterally reduce fishing effort by British fishermen, without compensation, while the French and others could safely continue fishing the same stocks...

Poor brave Mr. Streeter, there was not much that his one year's experience in the Commons as a well-groomed young Conservative back-bencher could do for him, when a fisherman's wife had actually seen him support the Fish Conservation Act in a public meeting Gone was all hope of deniability' here I Such that the British lion in him could let out no more than a petulant whine. He said, yes, he thought the govern-



which the British government has done nothing to relieve".

From then on, it was all a Britannico-British affair, as the French would say- At the end of the programme, Kilroy encouraged the audience to congratulate Mr. Streeter on his courage in attending it, as he did indeed come in for a lot of hometruths. At times, all hell was let loose, with cries of 'rubbish' reverberating around the set, Kilroy having some trouble in keeping the epithets just on the decent side of 'imbecile'. It all came out, one might say:

- the British government had sold the British fishing profession down the river at the time of the Icelandic Cod War, and were now allowing cut-rate imports from Iceland which corresponded to the quotas that could have been fished by British fishermen who had traditionally been fishing them before the Cod War

ment should consider arming British patrol vessels. And you know, you people - (from the lower-decks that should know your place) - have done your cause a lot of harm with the British public by blocking the port of Plymouth. The trouble is, there are too many fishermen chasing too few fish, etc, etc.

And what about the flagships, Mr. Streeter? (60 Spanish vessels are allowed, with approval from the International Court at the Hague. to fly the British Red Ensign and fish British quotas). How did the British government limply allow that to come about? Where was the indignation which we have come to expect when it comes to contempt for the sacrosanct Union Jack?

The trouble is, we're just not in the nineteenth century any more. Attempts to deny the ordinary fisherman a responsible role in fisheries resource management are nothing but inglorious. The praise of 'rigid discipline' in

the British maritime tradition that we were taught at school surely has to be tempered with the fact that management of a finite resource requires a participative approach.

All in all, this television programme was useful, because it set the scene for what was to come during the next three hectic days. Our private plane, piloted by a meticulous Biggles-type character, took us to Grimsby, Castletownbere (Co. Cork, Ireland), Dublin, Haverfordwest (near Milford Haven), and finally Plymouth, before returning to Quimper. On each of our stops, the importance of the French market for British and Irish fish was always stressed, and more disciplined demanded of the French comrades. But the desire to find common ground for a joint European fishermen's platform in their struggle with Brussels was sincerely shared.

On the market issue, there was consensus on the need for its regulation as a sine qua non of resource management, a problem which fishermen could seriously address at a later stage. The French feel that there needs to be firm action to regulate the entry of fresh fish into the EEC, which represents only about 10% of total imports and is the crucial item if local fishermen are to survive. A reference price should be fixed at a higher level than the price at which locally-produced fish are withdrawn from the market. The British, represented by Richard Banks of the National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations in Grimsby, would also want to impose import quotas of frozen fish for each country, in an attempt to stop illegal imports arriving in the EEC via member states. Actually, the British would want market regulation to include quantity restrictions, strict quality standards, and reasonable tariff barriers of 15% (which compares to the 5% allowed in a current joint venture fishing agreement between the EEC and Argentina).

Despite the undoubted goodwill, there is obviously difficulty in achieving consensus within the European fishing profession on the proposals to be made to the Council of Ministers in Brussels, which was felt to be the crucial channel for possible change. The Spanish, Italians and Greeks, in particular, are vociferous in their claims for favourable import quotas, since it is largely their firms that are responsible for fishing them in foreign waters. On the other hand, the Irish and British, at least, have little chance of taking up access rights negotiated by the EEC in third country waters, as their boats are too old. Besides, processors and merchants throughout the EEC require the imports in order to provide the 50% of the total European consumption of 12 million tons that are not covered by production in European Community waters. Low prices for imports, it is often felt by European producers, override the need to maintain quality standards.

One can also get quickly bogged down in technocratic

considerations and end up trapped in a 'catch-22' situation the European Commission has instituted rules that it is loath to change, such as 'autonomous import quotas without reciprocal rights'. After all, the EEC agreement with the Argentine was only signed last November.. .so how can one now go back on what was decided regarding the 5% barrier allowed on a quota of 120,000t of hake? The Commission is equally loath to institute serious import controls, which means that up to a third of fish imports enter the Community illegally in one way or another. When challenged, the Commission can always say that it has not been provided with the kind of up-to-date data by member states which could justify controls, especially as the GATT acts as a discouragement of market regulation.

The Commission is both rigorous and academic in its management of procedures, while being lax and unscrupulous and open to all sorts of political pressure when it comes to formulating policy. For instance, the EEC-Senegal fisheries agreement which was being debated in the European parliament at the time this article was written had already been sealed with a 16 million ECU payment to the Senegalese government, just before the presidential elections in Senegal got under way..

As long as the European market is provided with fish, while safeguarding European deep-sea fishing capacity, it appears that fish stocks control in Third country waters and defense of European fishing communities are secondary considerations.. When it comes to the crunch, what does the European housewife care about the predicament of European fishermen, as long as she is getting food at the lowest possible price (which means that fish could be competing with substitutes such as chicken, minced meat, pork, etc)?

Nevertheless, aided by the present recession, the fact remains that we are witnessing the worst crisis in the European fishing sector since the European Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) was first drafted. While mass bankruptcies loom as an inevitable occurrence within the next few months among European fishermen, their indictment of the CEP is a scathing one:

- ruin for the European producers, for the sake of a free market
- failure in regulating fish-stocks, especially as the present crisis is forcing European fishermen to fish more to compensate for lower prices
- a distorted 'foreign policy', since not only has the encouragement of fishing in third country waters (at vast expense to the European taxpayer) done little to reduce fishing effort in European waters, but it is encouraging the influx of cheap imports from abroad without doing much that is positive for the development of fishing capacity by Third World



operators. Nor is it really providing inexpensive fish to the European housewife.

Which brings us back to the purpose of the European tour by the French fisherman's Survival Committee, as well as to the 'raison detre of such a committee. It was frequently said during the tour that the existing professional organizations, such as EUROPECHE or the Association of European Producers' Organizations, seem to be too biased towards industrial fisheries, too divided, or too lacking in mandate, to come up with common solutions.

The official producers' organizations, set up by Brussels in the first place, don't seem to be much more than instruments of management, and it is no wonder that fishermen all over Europe are convinced that their interests are not being properly represented. In France the unions are politicized and have little more than 5% representation among the fishing profession skippers and crew appear as members of the same unions... There was a concensus that solutions to the present crisis could only come if efforts were made by European producers to apply pressure on their respective governments to defend common positions at Council of Ministers level on market issues, and, in cases connected with resource management, to achieve recognition of solutions negotiated by the producers themselves.

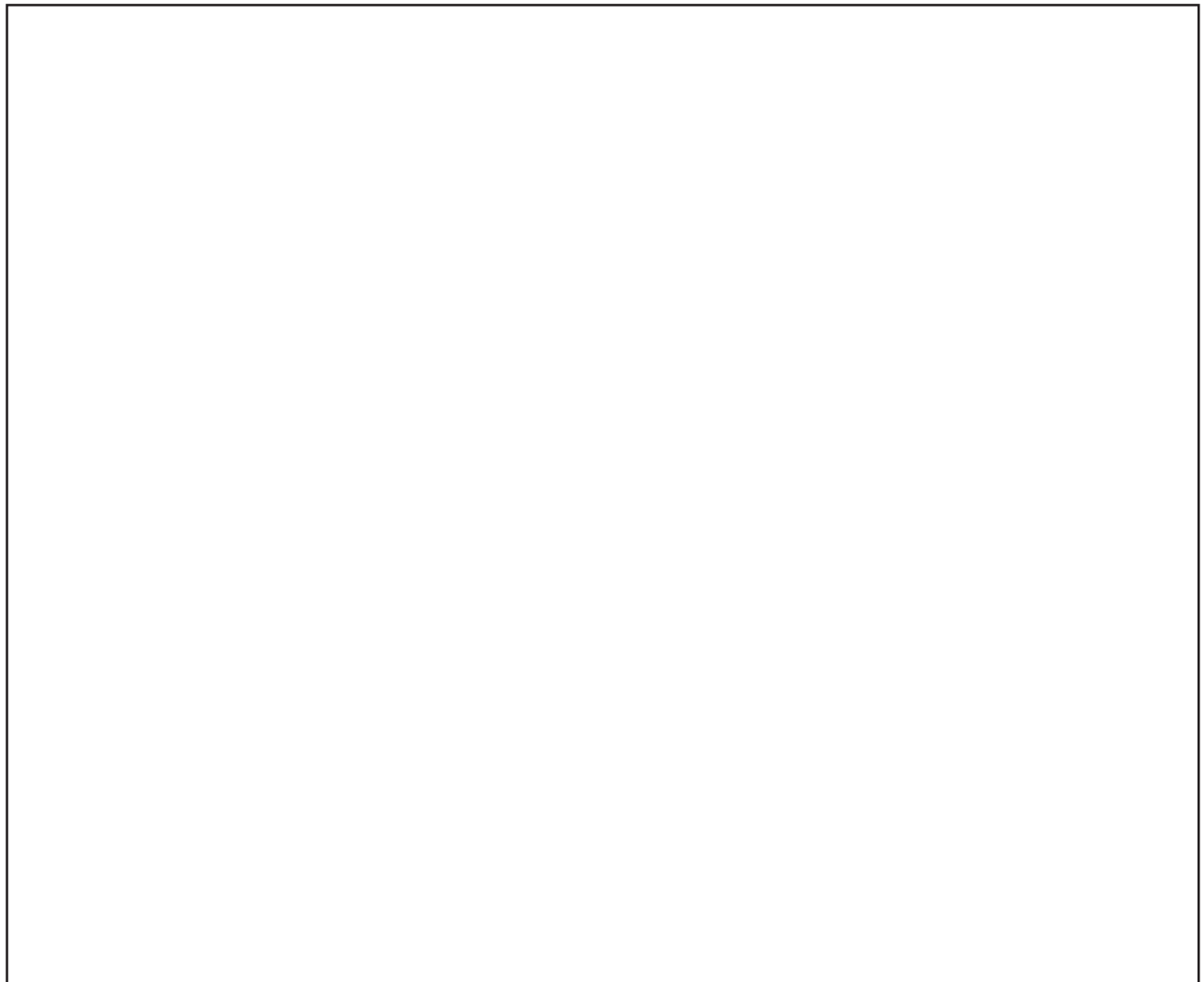
Hence the need for more spectacular action by European fishworkers, and the possibility of extending the Survival Committee to the whole of Europe was mooted... We have surely not seen the last of port blockages and other mass demonstrations, organized on a national or international basis. Clearly, this is not quite the British or Irish cup of tea, but they appeared to be prepared to go along with it. There was some call for advice from the French on mobilization techniques for instance, the British and Irish were interested to learn that the French had made every effort to keep fishing, while at the same time instituting a system, which enabled fishermen to be active in the Survival Committee during the periods spent on land between fishing campaigns.

The fleeting visit to South-West Ireland provided one very visual example of what artisanal fishing communities are having to face on a world-wide basis. This was the awesome sight of the 'klondikers' anchored in Bantry Bay upwards of 30 Russian and perhaps Polish factory ships, each with about 120 workers on board, processing pelagic fish fished by European fishermen for sale in the Third World. These 'klondikers' were apparently hired by 3 British companies. The Irish fishermen were resigned to their presence, in the hope that they brought temporary stimulus to the local economy, but there was a sneaking feeling, freely ad-

mitted but scarcely fathomed, that somehow the 'klondikers' were undermining their survival in a round-about way. On this score, could the recent Chilean fisheries law, which bans foreign factory ships from coming within 120 miles of the coast, perhaps provide a pointer or two?

There was a fitting end to our journey as Biggies treated

us to a nostalgic sight by swooping down low over the brightly-lit Cinq Ports of Penmarch, St Guenole, Lesconil, Loctudy, and Le Guilvinec. Arguably the best-run and most prosperous ports in Europe, with not a little help from the government and even from Brussels. All the result of 50 years of fighting spirit, the stubble-chinned and ragged-clothed fisherman but a memory on a faded postcard. And what now? ■



LEGISLATION ON AQUACULTURE: A PRELIMINARY REVIEW

Sebastian Mathew

While the legal regime of marine fisheries has been studied in great depth that of aquaculture has been comparatively neglected. To partly overcome this lacuna, the FAQ undertook a study three years ago to examine the legal regime governing aquaculture.

The study focused on these key legal issues:

- the general place of aquaculture in the legal system
- access to and use of water and land
- environmental aspects, including fish disease, import of live fish and the introduction of non-indigenous species

Given the vastness of the subject, the comparative study was necessarily limited to particular countries. Nonetheless, it attempted to capture the differences between common law and civil law systems, developed and developing countries, and centrally planned and capitalist countries.

The Aquaculture Steering Committee of the Fisheries Department of FAO defined aquaculture thus:

Aquaculture is the farming of aquatic organisms, including fish, molluscs, crustaceans and aquatic plants. Farming implies some form of intervention in the rearing process to enhance production, such as regular stocking, feeding, protection from predators. etc. Farming also implies individual or corporate ownership of the stock being cultivated For statistical purposes, aquatic organisms which are harvested by an individual or corporate body which has owned them throughout their rearing period contribute to aquaculture, while aquatic organisms which are exploitable by the public as a common property resource, with or without appropriate licences, are the harvest of fisheries.

Aquaculture is by nature a multidisciplinary and multi-form activity. There are thus a varying number of ways in which a state and its legal system could deal with it. *“Aquaculture lacks a firm legal status of its own, it being classified neither as agriculture, nor animal husbandry, nor truly fishing* states the African Regional Aquaculture Centre.

There is also a mistaken view that aquaculture is a

new activity and therefore, it is hardly surprising that countries have yet to elaborate legal frameworks for it. The fact, however, is that the technique of aquaculture has been known and used for centuries. Moreover, there is evidence that its legal implications were at least examined a century ago.

In studying the countries, FAO categorised them into three, viz, those with a specific set of rules on aquaculture; those with some specific aquaculture legislation; and those with an enabling law.

The last category includes most of the countries reviewed, particularly the developing ones. It covers all the countries with a basic law (usually the Fisheries Act) for

- setting up some principles on aquaculture, or
- investing the legitimate authority with the power to regulate aquaculture.

Based on this preliminary analysis of selected legislation on aquaculture, the study arrives at the following observations:

- Few regulations exist which are purposely designed to protect or allow aquaculture. Provisions for aquaculture are usually incorporated into existing legislation. The aquaculturist must often cope with a complex network of laws and regulations dealing with land tenure, water use, environment protection, pollution prevention, public health, and fisheries in general. This leads to confusion, conflicts and overlappings.

Such confusion springs from the difficulty in resolving the problem of conflicting uses of natural resources. Many aquaculture activities involve resources which other members of society can or already do utilise. Moreover, there are social and cultural factors which may impede an effective implementation of legislation.

- There is a great global diversity of legal frameworks governing aquaculture operations. This is because the individual needs of countries vary considerably. Therefore, legislation should consider:

- the purposes of the industry (e.g. market - local or

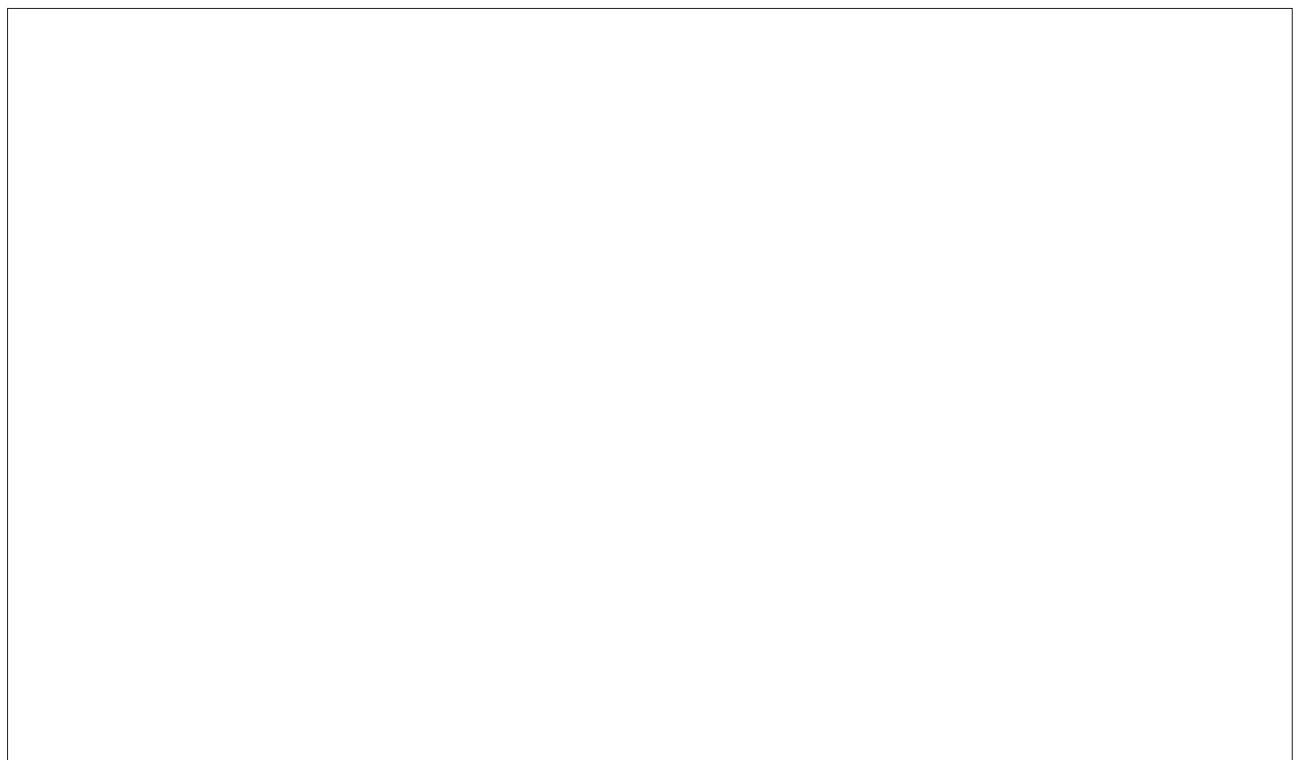
- export; employment; sport; recreation);
- the resources or species used;
- the system for production (e.g. pond, peal cage, open water etc); and
- the environment in which production is done (low-lying inland plains; coastal swamplands, lakes/reservoirs, along rivers and streams, in the sea (bays and inlets), along irrigation systems.
- However, aquaculture laws are subject to ancillary changes in the law with regard to water and land, as well as the environment and fiscal matters. (This is in contrast to marine fisheries whose laws are not as affected by these collateral changes.) Hence, it is not realistic to recommend a model aquaculture law to cover all circumstances.
- Freshwater farming is less closely regulated (than that in marine waters) since it is usually conducted on privately owned land, in legally controlled wa-

ter, and without the need for capturing wild broodstock or seed.

- There is a tendency to over-regulate. By creating legal uncertainties, some regulations can hamper the establishment of an aquaculture enterprise or its continued operation.

Lately, the importance of aquaculture has in-creased in many countries, in terms of both volume of production and diversity of aquacultural practices. Furthermore, for several countries aquaculture is also an important means to raise food production.

However, this importance is not reflected in the legal regimes governing aquaculture. In view of this, it is necessary to analyse a country's individual needs and its policy towards the role of aquaculture in its society. Such an analysis would facilitate an examination of the existing legal regime. From this could follow changes to the law, and removal of obstacles to development. ■



Prevention or regulation

THE LONDON DUMPING CONVENTION REVIEWS ITS STRATEGY

The Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping Wastes and other Matter, known as the London Dumping Convention (LDC), is a major global instrument that seeks to address the problem of marine pollution, by regulating the disposal of waste at sea from ships, aircrafts and other man-made structures. The LDC was opened for signature in November 1972 and has at present 69 countries as contracting parties. The fifteenth annual consultative meeting of the LDC (LDC15) is being held in London from 9 to 13 November 1992. Taking place in the aftermath of Earth Summit convened by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro, LDC15 is expected to make an effective response to the problems of marine environment.

What makes this meeting potentially significant is its decision to review LDC's long-term strategy and to make necessary amendments in the convention and its annexes so as to make it a more forceful instrument in addressing the issue of dumping. It has been argued by some that the regulatory approach that the LDC has followed so far has been a major obstacle to being effective enough, and that this approach has even resulted in facilitating rather than combating dumping. There have been demands for a preventive or precautionary approach instead of a regulative one.

The meeting will consider an important proposal of far-reaching implications made by Denmark and supported by other Nordic countries. The proposal advocates a series of amendments to be adopted 'in principle' at LDC15 and to be formally adopted in 1993. If accepted, this would result in, among other things, the banning of:

- dumping at sea of radioactive as well as industrial wastes,
- ocean incineration of liquid noxious gases,
- seabed burial at sea of banned wastes, and
- the export of wastes destined for dumping to states that are not party to LDC.

Many of these issues debate in LDC over the convention adopted the first moratorium on marine dumping of low and intermediate level radioactive waste. In 1986, a second moratorium resolution stipulated that the moratorium will continue pending the completion of studies and assessments. The intergovernmental panel of experts investigating this issue is expected to complete its study by the end of next year. This means that if LDC15 does not take new decisions, the dumping of radioactive waste may resume once the panel submits its report. This is particularly worrisome in the light of the interest expressed in the prospect of dumping by Japan, Taiwan, France, United Kingdom and the United States.

LDC's scientific group has submitted a report on issues raised in earlier consultative meetings, and this has raised issues for deliberation at LDC15. These include the adoption of a waste assessment framework—a decision-making framework for determining the suitability of specific wastes proposed for ocean disposal.

Green peace has suggested that in tune with the preventive approach', a stricter reverse listing strategy needs to be adopted here, which would prohibit all dumping except those wastes listed as suitable for ocean disposal. They have also argued that the meeting should take adequate measures to prevent the use of hazardous wastes in the construction of artificial reefs and islands.

In the light of the UNCED recommendations, LDC15 will consider furthering its efforts to terminate the practice of sea incineration and the sea disposal of industrial wastes. In the case of sea incineration, LDC13 had targeted its termination by the end of 1994. Recently, an immediate ban has been demanded by some. In addition to the Danish proposal, the meeting will address other UNCED issues as well, related to North-South financial assistance and technology transfer. There have been demands for strengthened commitments by industrialized countries to assist developing countries in achieving ecologically sound and socially equitable development. ■

EUS: MYSTERIOUS FISH DISEASE STALKS INLAND WATERS

In the last two decades a serious and severely damaging fish disease has been spreading through countries of the Asia-Pacific region with dangerous consequences to the fish resources and livelihood of inland fisherfolk. For a disease which is twenty years old, it is strange and baffling that the scientific community has not been able to pinpoint its causative agent.

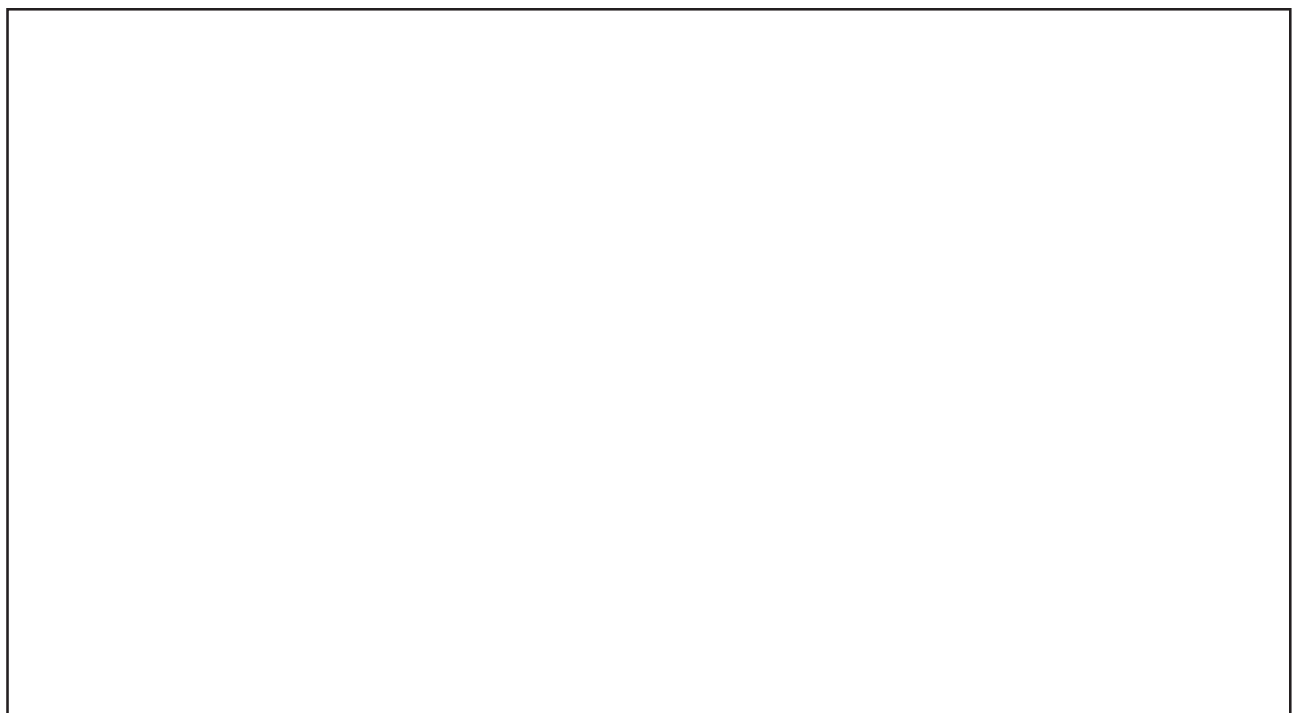
Not only is this disease -now officially termed Epizootic Ulcerative Syndrome (EUS) - a scientific puzzle or, optimistically speaking, a scientific challenge, it is also a worrisome social problem. Hundreds of inland fishermen, often the more marginalised amongst the fishworker communities in the affected countries, have been overnight deprived of their incomes, as consumers began to totally reject the disfigured, disease-stricken fish. There are no signs of an immediate abatement of EUS and, worse, there are all indications of a possible spread of the disease.

Though cutaneous ulcerative diseases are common amongst wild and cultured fish, for the last two de-

cadecades, regions in Australia and Asia-Pacific have been witness to a group of epizootic syndromes, all involving a severe ulcerative mycosis.

As Kamonporn Tonguthai of the Aquatic Animal Health Research Institute, Kasetsart University, Bangkok, points out, there have been several reports of ulcerative disease conditions amongst wild and cultured fish in this region. While FUS refers specifically to the Asian condition, there are great similarities with other fish conditions. However, Tonguthai cautions, only further research can confirm whether these are indeed the same disease.

EUS was first reported in March 1972 from central Queensland, Australia, where several species of estuarine fish had developed large shallow circular or irregular skin lesions. Initially named 'Bundaberg fish disease', it displayed a pronounced seasonality and was soon associated with prolonged periods of rain which was thought to alter the quality of water and make it prone to infection by bacteria. As it spread to



several species of freshwater fish in the river systems of Papua New Guinea and Western Australia, the disease soon came to be called "red spot".

In 1980 a similar haemorrhagic condition was seen among fish, including rice-field fish, in Java, Indonesia. But pathological and epidemiological differences seemed to set this apart from the Australian condition. However, subsequent outbreaks of EUS in brackish water fish in the Philippines and typically ulcerated snakeheads and catfish in other states of Indonesia have confirmed the link with the Australian red spot.

In 1986 the FAO's Consultation of Experts on Ulcerative Fish Diseases adopted the name "Epizootic Ulcerative Syndrome" (EUS) to specifically refer to the Asian condition. The disease is characterised by large cutaneous ulcerative lesions which periodically cause the death of many species of wild and cultured freshwater fish.

The first reports of classic EUS came from peninsular South-East Asia, in 1979-80 from Malaysia's Bekok River system and the next year, from its northern rice growing states, where freshwater rice-field species of fish succumbed to serious ulceration. In the course of the decade since then, the disease spread to almost all parts of South and South-East Asia, specifically Thailand, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam, Cambodia, Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka. In its westward spread from Australia, EUS' latest occurrences have been reported from Kerala, Gujarat and Rajasthan in India.

The spread of EUS shows a certain pattern. Outbreaks are typically cyclical, with the first occurrence being particularly severe and recurrences over the next two to three years, less so. There is, however, no uniformity to this pattern. While the disease spread rapidly in some areas like Malaysia and Thailand, in other areas like Indonesia, its progression was slow. Moreover, in Malaysia there was a one year gap between outbreaks.

The mechanism of spread is also not clear. The disease has spread rapidly northwards where the rivers flow from east to west, and equally rapidly westwards in areas where the rivers are oriented from north to south. It would thus not be possible to attribute the transport of the pathogens to, say, monsoonal flood plains alone. Also mysterious is the spread of EUS to areas like Sri Lanka and some islands of the Philippines. (The unrestricted trade in live fish could be a mode of transmission.)

Investigations into the potential causative factors have focused on viral, fungal and bacterial agents. Environmental parameters have also been studied. These abiotic factors are believed to cause sublethal stress to the fish, initiating disease outbreaks. Potential causes of stressful environmental conditions include

temperature, eutrophication, sewage, metabolic products of fishes, industrial pollution and pesticides.

The quality of water also appears to be significant from an aetiological point of view. Parameters like salinity, alkalinity, temperature, hardness and chloride concentration (many of which are seasonally variable) are known to predispose fish to attacks of EUS. Infected fish showed signs of improvement when transferred to clean freshwater ponds.

Also, in much of Asia's paddy field systems, EUS occurred towards the end of the paddy cultivation period when the water level is low, decomposition of organic matter like grass and water weeds is common, and certain types of fertilisers accumulate.

Yet, as Tonguthai points out, ultimately no definite conclusions about the cause of the disease can be drawn since 'outbreaks are considered to be a complication of several factors'.

Correct diagnosis of EUS, focusing on symptoms of behaviour, external signs and histopathology, is the prelude to treatment. Both prophylactic and therapeutic treatment, usually involving the addition of quicklime, have reported satisfactory results. Yet, without large-scale comparative assessments across a variety of affected species, liming cannot be unequivocally advocated. In fact, lakes in Kerala, India, with high levels of natural deposits of lime, have also been the site for EUS outbreaks.

Prophylaxis revolves around good general husbandry practices including disinfection, opting for water from tube wells rather than irrigation canals or paddy fields, and ensuring disease-free stock and healthy fry. Apart from not overstocking ponds, other preventive measures include the use of antibiotics and chemicals.

Successful prophylactic and therapeutic treatments have generally involved the addition of quicklime (CaO), a relatively simple and inexpensive way of enhancing water quality. This fact only reinforces the need to overcome the environmentally degrading conditions which may predispose fish to disease.

Salt, potassium permanganate, bleaching powder and malachite green can also be recommended as alternative, or additional, prophylactic measures. Others include formalin, iodine and the peroxide disinfectant **Virkon S**. Claims of success have also come from 'traditional' home-spun remedies like the application of crushed tamarind or banana leaves or turmeric powder to the infected ponds. These methods, however, have not been scientifically tested. Antibiotics have been found useful in controlling secondary bacterial infections.

The aetiology of EUS is still shrouded in mystery. Clearly, more studies are needed, with particular emphasis on investigating the role of Oomycete fungi and

viruses in the pathogenesis of the disease. Also required are more detailed descriptions of the histopathological characteristics of EUS and similar ulcerative conditions.

Experience points to the need for an integrated approach to fish health, particularly general husbandry and management techniques. This, however, calls for more detailed studies quantifying preventive and curative treatments. Only such studies will produce workable techniques to control EUS in cultured fish populations, and perhaps in wild fish populations in enclosed and semi-enclosed waters.

Environmental factors like temperature, alkalinity, hardness and pH, are important in initiating EUS. But again, only further, more rigorous, experimental work can determine which ones are really relevant.

The absence of adequate data on the relationship between EUS and the environment. In this context, continuous and region-wide monitoring programme of selected environmental parameters, ought to help in elucidating these variables.

As a devastatingly chronic syndrome, EUS has few parallels in the history of fish diseases in inland water bodies in the Asia-Pacific region. Its seemingly relentless spread has only fuelled panic and despair amongst inland fisherfolk and aquaculturists.

While scientists are yet to come to firm grips with the

aetiology of EUS, experiences from the affected regions suggest simple and invariably effective measures for treatment and prophylaxis.

Evidently, however, much more scientific research remains to be done on the aetiology and histopathology of EUS. Equally important would be further socio-economic analyses of its impact on the livelihood and working conditions of affected fisherfolk.

Significantly, the experience of affected countries reveal certain institutional and organizational lacunae. Few governments have any ready-made, adequately responsive institutional arrangements in the fisheries sector to tackle as major a crisis situation as that created by EUS. Not strangely therefore, action is often contradictory—at times slow and at other times, hasty and misdirected.

However, the experience of Kerala, India demonstrates the power of mass-based campaigns and agitation programmes by fishworkers organizations. Such grassroots action forcibly elicited responses from the state. These may not have been as effective as many fishworkers would have desired. However, they certainly represented some form of redressal.

In this perhaps lies a pointer to the future of collective action. As the tides of confusion and ignorance continue to retard scientific progress in unraveling the mystery of EUS, only such campaigns can hope to bring succour to the affected fisherfolk. ■

Burma

FISHING IN THE TIME OF THE MILITARY JUNTA

Sebastian Mathew

As the civil war rages on in Burma, the ruling military junta (SLORC) is locked in a struggle with ethnic minority groups and other opposition parties which make up the Democratic Alliance of Burma. Frightening stories of human rights violations are now regularly pouring out of the country. Meanwhile, following the September 1988 military coup, Burma's doors have been flung open to foreign companies. The one area which is attracting global capital is fisheries. Leases for offshore fishing are now offered to foreign vessels. Foreign aid and loans have increased Burma's catching, storage and processing facilities.

According to The Economist Intelligence Unit, the state Pearl and Fishery Corporation has acquired new trawlers, taking its fleet size to 68. In 1989-90 the corporation produced about 13,438 tons of fish. Burma's principal fishing areas are in the delta region, the southern coastal regions and the Bengal Gulf.

Today the most important player in the Burmese fishing industry is Thailand. Though co-operation between the two countries began over 20 years ago, when Thai companies were allowed to fish in Burmese waters in 1968, the inexperience of both countries led to the abolition of this co-operation. However, in 1988 SLORC began to revive that policy, eager to earn foreign exchange to fund purchase of weapons from China, as alleged by human rights activists. Initially, only three Thai companies were allowed to send their trawlers into Burmese waters. But by mid-1989, there were 241 Thai trawlers legally fishing there.

Since 1990 Thai fishing companies have been rampantly exploiting Burmese marine waters. Thailand's largest supply of shrimp comes from Burma, to be exported to the US and Japan. According to the Burma Rights Movement for Action (B.U.R.M.A.), many Thai boats get illegal entry into restricted coastal waters by bribing the Burmese navy. The Thai companies are said to earn thrice as much profits from illegal fishing boats as from those legally permitted inside.

All this activity has depleted fish stocks for local traditional fishermen, impoverishing many, especially in areas of the Tenneserin coast, forcing them to cross the border to enter Thailand illegally in search of jobs. Each day an average of 30 people from Mon State and Karen State leave for Thailand illegally. Most end up working as cheap labourers in building construction sites. According to one

estimate, each month around 700 Burmese (not all fishermen) legally leave the country.

The poor traditional fishermen are also forced to pay the Burmese army the 'porter tee to avoid having to serve as porters and human mine sweepers. The first fishing agreement between Thailand and SLORC, signed on April 13, 1990, was a joint investment project for one year (of a potentially ten-year contract). This led to the creation of a new joint venture company, the Thai Myanmar Fisheries Co., comprising members of the Thai Fisheries Association and the Myanmar Fishing Enterprise. With a total investment of about US\$ 24 million, the project allowed 165 Thai vessels to operate legally in Thai waters.

SLORC favoured Thai investment because of the need for foreign currency, Thai expertise in fishing technology, and the hope of new jobs from these joint ventures. After the agreement, however, twice as many illegal Thai vessels began to fish in Burmese waters too. Subsequently, the joint venture was extended both in time and scope to include fish-meal and canned tuna factories, as well as ice and cold storage facilities. The ownership pattern was changed to 50/50 from the previous 51/49 in favour of SLORC.

Foreign investment is not confined to Thailand. Countries like Singapore, Japan, China, South Korea and even the US (with one fishing company, MMA Finance Inc.) have a presence in Burma. Such investments have led to strong and demonstrative reactions, particularly by those who view them as an interference in Burma's struggle for freedom and democracy. In one instance, Burmese student activists captured and later destroyed one large Thai trawler which was fishing well within the area declared off-limits to foreign boats.

Activists are also appealing for international protests. Since August 1991, US Senator Patrick Moynihan has asked for sanctions against shrimp imports to the US from Thailand. Explaining the rationale for sanctions, one Burmese dissident said, "By importing sea foods from Thailand which are harvested in Burmese waters, the US, Japan and other marine food importers are indirectly placing money in the hands of SLORC, and are also supporting the severe exploitation of small local Burmese fishermen who can no longer make their living and must become refugees and illegal immigrants". ■

From South India to Senegal **TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER WITH A DIFFERENCE**

When Malick Gueye, a master fisherman from Guet N'Dar (St Louis), Senegal, dropped in at Manakkudi, a fishing village of South India, to renew acquaintance with Mariadas, a fishworker he had met at an ICSF conference in Thailand, little did either one realise that that was the beginning of a surprising and fruitful relationship.

The only language they shared was that of fishing. Malick was intrigued by the trammel net at Mariadas' home. He had never seen one before. Made of three layers of nylon mesh - the middle one loose, with small, 50 mm meshes and two narrower ones with bigger mesh size of 240 mm-these are locally called 'disco' nets, after the music style then popular in India when the trammel net was introduced.

Used mainly to catch prawns during the July-August season, the South Indian fishermen fabricate these nets at home. Malick soon wanted to know everything

about this net, which he felt would be very useful back home in Senegal, where prawns were plenty but exploited only by the industrial trawlers. Only river fishermen caught prawns, of the smallest variety, in shallow areas of the river at night with a dragnet. If only 2 the local fishworkers could learn to catch prawns at sea and compete with the trawlers!

ICSF agreed to Malick's request for a demonstration of the trammel net in Senegal, in collaboration with Aliou Sall and his centre CREDETIP. Who better to demonstrate the net than Mariadas? Mariadas was keen to go, provided a Tamil interpreter could be taken along. ICSF arranged for FMT Raj (Raju), technical manager, Boat Building Centre, Muttom, Tamil Nadu, India and Pierre Gillet, Secretary, ICSF Brussels Office to be part of the team.

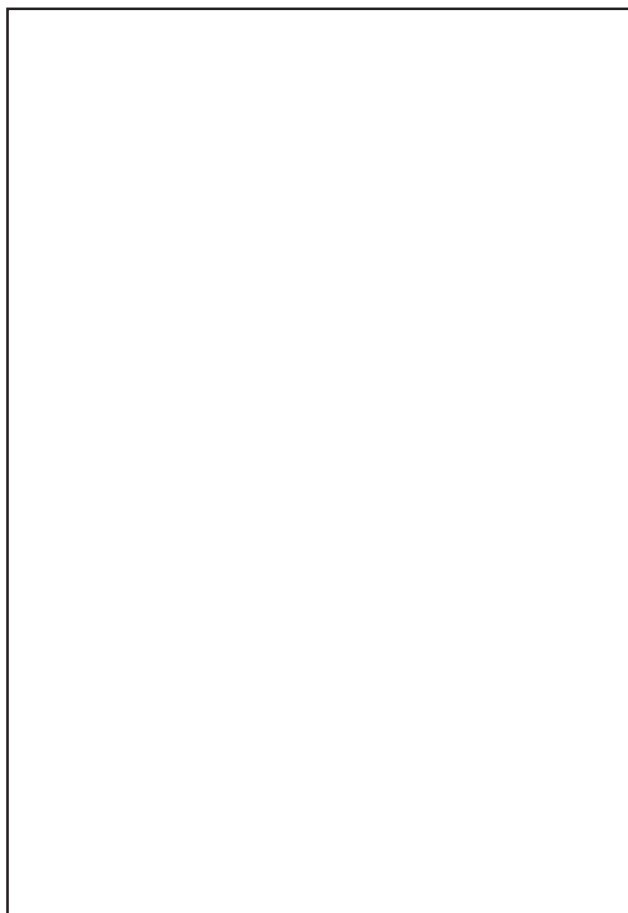
Mariadas and Raju first sent CREDETIP samples of the materials required to ascertain that they were available in Senegal. They then prepared four sets of trammel nets without the lead weights, to facilitate air transport. They also took along material for a fifth net as well as enough floats.

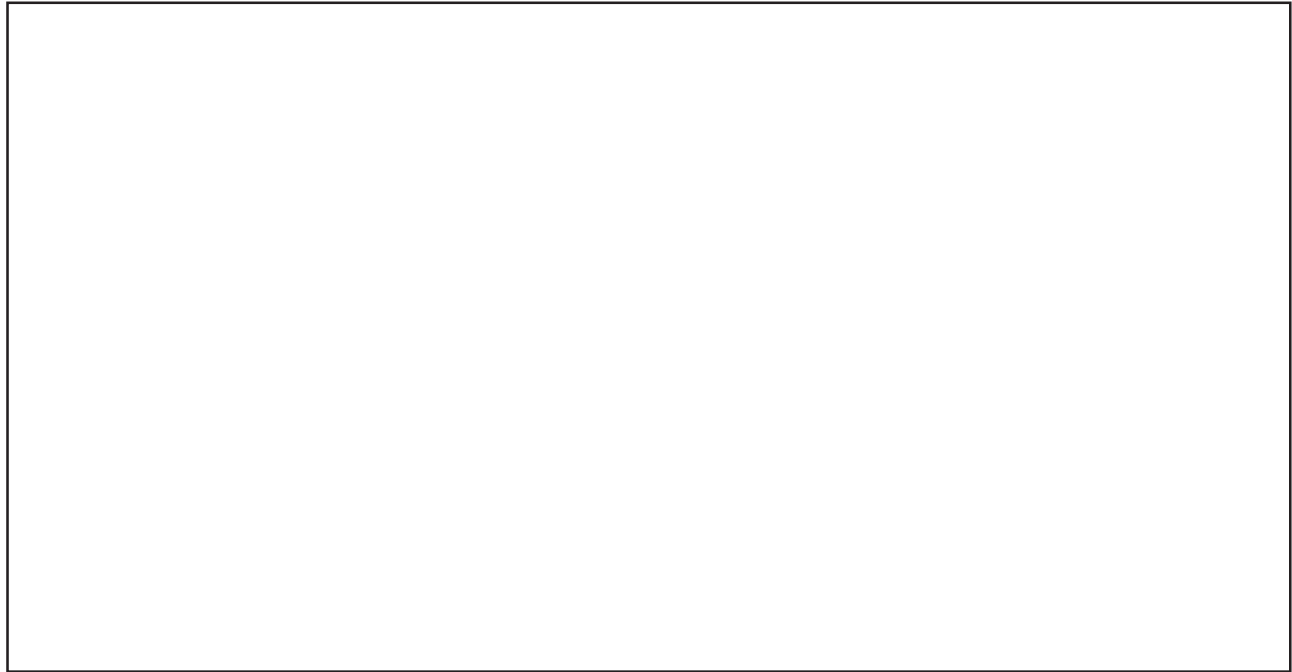
Meanwhile, in Senegal, Malick and the National Collective of Senegalese Fishworkers were preparing to receive the team from India. When they finally arrived in Dakar, Senegal on 12 May, problems arose. They could not procure the necessary materials which were out of stock and would have to be imported, meaning a wait of two months. Making the lead locally would take at least a fortnight.

Raju suggested a solution the use of nuts of equivalent weight. Mariadas agreed, rather grudgingly, for he was worried not just about the cost of the nuts but also of his 'image' before the Senegalese fishworkers!

On 15 May the team, along with Malick, met the local leaders of St Louis to show them the nets. The responses were incredulous: "Big meshes for big fish, and small meshes for small fish?" Some doubted if it was not actually a gill-net. But everyone was now waiting for the sea trials.

The next day the Indians prepared two sets of nets. While fixing the weights along the bottom-line, they





clarified to the crowd of curious Senegalese fishermen that Indian fishworkers do not work with 'nuts and bolts', but that they could not get the proper lead weights in Dakar! Used to much heavier weights, the Senegalese fishermen expressed reservations about the distribution of the total weight among so many nuts.

Mariadas demonstrated how to fix the nuts. Soon, Massen, the vice-president of the Senegalese fishworkers' organization, followed suit. A couple of river fishermen joined, insisting they should get priority to test the net in the river.

On Sunday, the next day, the team went on a fishing trip in the river with a country-boat and the two trammel nets totalling 108 m in length. After two hours, they reached the estuary where they set the net in a very strong tidal current at 7 fathoms. After an hour, they lifted the net to find some fish, a lot of crabs, but no prawns. The presence of crabs indicated that the setting of the nets was correct and their bottom lines well positioned.

Not having caught prawns depressed the morale of the Indians. Mariadas sensed that only Massen could make a success of a demonstration at sea. The two got along famously and Massen suggested a trial in a couple of days. Meanwhile, in a public demonstration, Mariadas patiently taught the Senegalese fishermen how to set and mend the nets. He also made two additional sets.

On 20 May Massen brought a pirogue, which he commanded, with his son handling the engine and a small

boy as helper. When the net was being loaded, Massen doubted aloud whether such a light net would ever reach the bottom of the sea.

After a difficult and uncomfortable navigation across breakers and surf, with waves about 3 metres high, the net was set. Mariadas showed how to attach the buoys and the anchors.

When it was lifted after 45 minutes, Massen appeared happy, for the net had apparently set properly at a depth of 24 fathoms, catching some commercially valuable fish like ribbon fish, which pointed to the likely presence of prawns. The Senegalese were impressed with the reliability of the net and the performance of the Indian team which withstood the rough sea conditions.

During the post-trial evaluation, the Senegalese commented on the absence of prawns. The Indians, however, felt that the trammel net had demonstrated how it was possible to catch a large quantity of fish in a shod time. The team was confident about its successful adaptation by the Senegalese fishworkers. They further felt that the pace of adaptation could be enhanced through adequate post-harvest facilities like the supply of deep freezers and ice.

Ultimately, despite the four-fold translation barrier—Tamil, English, French and Wolof—the exchange programme was useful. It was a good example of ICSFs commitment to a South-South interface, which facilitates dialogue among traditional fisherfolk of different nations who share a means of livelihood and a common concern for fisheries. ■

COALITION FOR FAIR FISHERIES AGREEMENTS - CFFA

Overall objectives/mission

The Consortium for Fair Fisheries Agreements (CFFA) is working for fundamental change in the EC's policy towards fisheries agreements with countries in the South (ACP states and others). In particular CFFA is concerned that agreements between the EC and countries of the South should:

- Be based on principals of equity and social justice.
- Prioritise the use of fisheries resources to sustain and develop fishing communities (both in the North and the South).
- Maximise the contribution of the fisheries sector to the broader social and economic development in the countries concerned.
- Ensure the sustainable exploitation of fisheries resources, with fishing effort and catch levels regulated within sustainable limits.
- Safeguard the rights of workers in the fishing and fish processing industries to reasonable wages, and safe and adequate working conditions.
- Ensure that adequate prices are paid for fish procured in the South, so that a decent return is provided to local fishworkers and the livelihoods of European fishworkers are not undermined by the supply of cheap foreign fish.

The narrow perspective of current EC Fisheries Agreements, based principally on obtaining access in exchange for financial remuneration, contradicts and undermines the ECs stated development and resource management policies. It is the ECs stated policy to reduce the capacity of its fishing fleet in line with the volume of authorised catch limits, and although development, conservation and sustainable exportation of stocks form part of this policy, they do not yet form part of the EC's fisheries agreement negotiating agenda. Unless these issues are incorporated into fisheries agreements, the process of stock depletion, which is now well advanced in the EC's own waters, will rapidly overwhelm the fishing zones of countries in the South.

Immediate/medium term objectives

- To develop a strategy which will enable CFFA to influence the formulation of fisheries agreements

in line with its long term objectives. This strategy will enable the CFFA to interphase effectively with decision takers in the European Parliament, in the European Commission, in the Governments for individual countries (member nations of the EEC and partner fishing nations), the fishing industry and development organisations. The strategy will involve undertaking a variety of activities and targeting published material at a variety of audiences through various media, such as:

- Deriving information from scientists and informed persons which can be used to promote changes in current policy.
- Producing well informed and articulated papers for specific decision takers (in the European Parliament, EC, etc.).
- Publishing articles in various media to influence public opinion, and stimulate debate.
- Organising international meetings between policy makers, industry representatives, and fishing community representatives to increase mutual understanding and respect.
- To monitor and to try and influence the outcome of at least 3 Fisheries Agreements over the next (2-5?) years. These will include Senegal, Namibia and another state (possibly Mozambique).
- To expand the number of organisations participating in CFFA, so as to include organisations throughout EEC Member States.

I know this runs to a few more sentences than 3, but I got carried away! However a Mission Statement might be worded something like:

The Consortium for Fair Fisheries Agreements (CFFA) is working towards influencing fundamental changes in the EC's policy towards fisheries agreements with countries in the South (ACP States and others). Their particular concern is the sustainable use of fish resources for the benefit of fishing communities who depend on them for their livelihoods and subsistence. Fisheries Agreements have the potential to undermine or to support this objective! ■

ENCOUNTER OF FISHING CREWS OF THE SOUTHERN CONE OF LATIN AMERICA

Héctor-Luis Morales

The situation of Latin American fishing crews is critical in many aspects, due mainly to the tremendous pressure exercised by industrial fleets on resources. The fleets, as well, operating under flags of convenience, hire crew from third nations at very low wages, infringing the agreements established between labour organizations and national companies. On-board living and work conditions continue to be very arduous and work shifts are regularly more than eight hours.

Serious communications problems subsist among crew members, arising from the diversity of ethnic origin, language and cultural habits, at times causing accidents and serious conflicts.

Greenpeace is performing follow-up activities on the implementation of the Rio de Janeiro, Accords, specially Chapter 17 of Agenda 21, on Oceans and Marine Life. One activity is focused on distant water vessels in the Pacific, with a view to generating consensus among States, fishery agencies and citizen organizations with regard to the control of these fisheries, which have been subject to intense pressure. The vessels in question are based in U.S, Mexican, European or Japanese companies and process tropical tuna for the international market, satisfying demand in high income and high consumption countries. It is necessary to arrive at agreements which will make those fisheries a sustainable resource for the countries of the Pacific and for the fleets which depend on that resource.

Note was taken of the agreements between the European Communities and Argentina and other countries of Latin America, as well as the high rate of idle capacity in the European fleet, specially that of Spain. Panelists commented on the problems or advantages inherent in citizen participation, specially that of environmentalists and consumers, in decisions related to fishery regulation.

The company practice of unlimited resource extraction in order to obtain maximum return in the short run was also noted, with the exception of some companies with long term strategies, which seemingly involve the protection of resources. Fishing crews, for their part, are clearly in favour of depending resources, even though catch prohibitions may affect their income in the short term.

Eleuterio Yañez, Professor of the Catholic University of Valparaiso, prepared a summary of the issues dealt with on the Plenary Session:

- There is a common feeling, shared by scientists and workers, that is necessary to coordinate policy for the management of marine resources and present a more united front to the foreign fleets. Those concerns are not evident in policy decisions and it is necessary to generate decisions which will resolve those problems.
- With respect to the fishing industry, he is of the opinion that the common approach is wrong insofar as it is thought that the Fishing Law has solved all problems, while no one recognizes that increased extraction implies the exhaustion implies the exhaustion of resources. There is no law to promote the industry. Moreover, the industry has been oriented toward increased earnings which has not necessarily meant improved living conditions for fishery workers and fishermen.
- With regard to work conditions and employment protection, he is of the opinion that worker participation must be extended at all levels, by sending the best representatives to fishing councils at the national, zonal and regional levels. It is important that those representatives receive support so that they will transmit the concerns of those they represent with the best arguments possible. It is important to take advantage of the opportunities available under this government, which is more ours than was the dictatorship.
- Scientific research has addressed only biological issues, with little being done in the area of technological research and none at all in the economic and social areas. Projects will be presented for research into the work reality and the quality of life of fishing workers.
- Fishing cannot be analysed in isolation from transportation and port activities and must be undertaken with a view to the Pacific. In that same regard, it must be recognized that we have a "daddy" who protects that activity and that it is necessary to seek means of administration more in accordance with civilized customs.
- The basis for rational exploitation is the study of the biomass, which is a difficult undertaking.

Findings do not exist which could serve as the basis for establishing a figure for the permissible capture of mackerel, for example. It is irresponsible to affirm that there is a biomass of 24 million tons. Large ships are less efficient, while a mid-sized ship is often more efficient than a larger vessel. Extensive research is necessary in order to determine the proper size of the fleet. The Fishing Law has not stipulated the size and methods of prohibitions. The Public administration is unequipped to implement those dispositions. The number of vessels in the fleet was frozen in the North and the Eighth region, but was left open in the Fifth region for new fisheries. We need not concern ourselves with the 5 mile protection zone and artisan fishing because there are many zones vulnerable to perforations. The Fishing Law needs to be modified in many aspects.

Guillermo Risco, as President of the Organization which convoked the Encounter, addressed the assembly at the close of the event.

This Encounter has allowed us to appreciate our fishworker organizations. FETRINECH is a federation of a very few leaders but represents large and solid organizations. It involves strong and significant cross-industry labour unions.

Our basic concern has been to protect resources and employment. Even during the dictatorship, we struggled to protect resources and, in 1986, measures were implemented to that end. We representatives are proud of our organizations. We know that those protective measures go against the interests of our pocketbooks. We wish to work in the long term so as to preserve the source of our work. A large number of companies do not wish to protect resources and we have been

witnesses to the disappearance of numerous commercial species: prawn, whales, sawfish.

The environmental impact is massive, as can be observed in the garbage collected by many trollers. A coordinated struggle to establish and monitor prohibitions must be undertaken by all countries. We workers are in favour of that struggle, as for example in Chile and Peru.

Serious efforts to undertake research into the state of marine resources and the living conditions of fishworkers are necessary. The finding of that research must be communicated and utilized by our organizations in the development of strategies and plans.

We must renew concern for the serious scourge of unemployment and premature ageing among fishworkers, resulting from over-exploitation on board. Peruvian fishermen live in subhuman conditions and their ships are true floating coffins. Environmental organizations should denounce those situations and should also defend the human species, and not only marine species such as seawolves, dolphins, seals and whales.

We need to support of scientists and technicians as we undertake a common task: **to humanize our work and promote the rights of fishing crews.**

A common element is our thirst for social justice. That we feel united and are not alone, that we will make progress with strength and unity. We must establish a commitment for permanent coordination. We must have an evaluation of the conclusions as soon as possible and make this process snowball until we are heard. ■

UNITED STATES: World Congress of the Apostolate of the Sea

The World Congress of the Apostolate of the Sea brought together, in Houston, Texas, U.S.A., October 8- 13, 1992, more than 230 delegates from 41 countries, who work mainly as Chaplains for sailors and fishermen and as hosts in Stella Maris houses in ports. A strong ecumenical spirit united this mainly Catholic Congress with representatives of the Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian and other Churches, together with observers from fishermen's organizations, merchant marine officers and support organizations.

ICSF was officially invited to participate in the debates and to present its organizational bases in a Plenary Session. Also present were Marcos do Rosario Pereira and his wife Mathilde, of the Brazilian National Fishermen's Organization, and James Smith of CCFD of France and Jean Vacher, of Mauritius Island, both members of ICSF.

In the final recommendations, attention was called to "the importance of complying with the Maritime Conventions of the International Labour Office, which guarantee the minimum rights and safety of fishermen and sailors. The lack of responsibility for the human person on the part of some shipowners, governmental offices and other persons concerned with maritime affairs, leads to the exploitation of sailors. Unacceptable contracts are still being required and cases of double accounting are still coming to light. Often, the necessary measures are not taken to provide indemnity for unemployment, illness, accidents and even work related incapacity. Life and work on board often take place in deficient housing and nutritional conditions. Some wages are insufficient to sustain a family. All this can be observed specially in industrial fishing which, in many countries, is the profession with the highest rates of accidents and deaths".

With respect to artisan fishing, the document states that 'they are the

poorest and most marginated, politically, socially and economically, of all fishermen. They are frequently left to their own resources in the face of enormous difficulties: the depletion of fish resources; the destruction of fishing zones by national and foreign ships; industrial and urban contamination; over-exploitation due to the use of non-selective fishing gear. Those same artisan fishermen provide food for the costal populations who suffer hunger and have the greatest interest in the protection of marine resources and the costal environment. They need strong support if they are to organize, achieve improved safety conditions and acquire better equipment". ■

PERU: Organization of fishworkers

The artisan fishworkers of Peru have organized in FIUPAP, the *Federation of Integration and Unity of Artisan Fish workers of Peru*. The first national Congress was held in Caleta Chorrillos, Lima, from June 24 to 29, 1991, with 70 delegates from 25 local organizations throughout the country. Work was organized in 7 Commissions for the study of the main problems affecting fish-workers: marine resources, infrastructure, finance, fishing legislation, commercialization, social security and illness, specially cholera. In 1992, FIUPAP organized 2 National Assemblies, extending its network to nearly all of Peru's small ports and artisan fishing communities, including those of Lake Titicaca and the Amazon region.

The artisan fishworkers of Peru were associated with the federations of industrial fishworkers, who are integrated into the fishing industry, one of the largest in the world in terms of tonnage taken for fish meal production. Those federations are the FPP, Federation of Peruvian Fishworkers, and, subsequently, the FETCHAP, Federation of Crews for Fishing for Hu-

man Consumption. With the creation of their own organization, Peruvians may be more autonomous in their decisions and the acquisition of services, specially credit, consultations and social security, without being subject to political or governmental conditioning factors.

Hernan, member of ICSF, is one of their advisors and has helped with the legal and social configuration and development of the organization. Peruvian fisheries are passing through a severe crisis at this time, which affects all fishworkers. The Fujimori Government, which is strongly authoritarian, is privatizing the fishing industry and foreign enterprises are gaining control of the companies. However, the Government is lending strong support to artisan fishworkers by way of boats, port improvements, means of commercialization and technical advice. For this reason, Peruvian fishworkers will have to strengthen their organization in order to maintain their autonomy and the defense of their rights. ■

MEXICO The network of costal fishworkers

Mexico has more than 10,000 kms of coastline on both oceans, the Atlantic and the Pacific. Some 330,000 fishworkers use a total of 73,000 boats to catch approximately 1.5 million tons, with a commercial value of around 1 billion dollars. In 1989, there were 94,000 persons organized in cooperatives, 25,000 artisan fishworkers organized in fishing unions or "ejidales", 5,000 workers in private fishing companies and 4,000, in semi-State companies. Most fishworkers live and work in the states of Veracruz, Sonora, Sinaloa, Tabasco, Baja California, Campeche, and Guerrero.

Since 1935, fishworker organizations have been dominated by the cooperatives, controlled by the vertical structures dominant in that country. However, those cooperatives benefited from the law which gave them exclusive rights to exploit numerous species, including prawns, oysters and the fish species with the highest commercial value.

A new organization emerged in 1993, generated by a coordinating instance for support organisms and a significant group of 58 cooperatives and associations in 9 states of the Republic. The constitutional meeting

for the *National Network of Coastal Fishworkers of Mexico* was held on January 30 - 31, 1993, in Lazaro Cardenas, Michoacan and in Petacalco, Guerrero, neighboring cities on the Pacific coast of Mexico. The organization bears the name of Jose Luis Valdovinos, a regional leader who promoted the organization and was assassinated by persons unknown in 1992

In their conclusions, the fishworkers denounce the arbitrary treatment of poor fishworkers handed out by functionaries and politicians and call for renewed defense of their rights, principally more speedy processing for the legal constitution of their organizations, greater control of the sources of contamination, access to social security services, the elimination of the interference of political parties in the internal life of their organizations, participation in the debate about laws and regulations related to fishing, and greater coordination with Universities and research and development centres:

The organization has a national coordinating committee, made up of representatives of the diverse states. Melecio Perez Chan, of the fishing cooperative of San

Pedro, Tabasco, who participated in the International Conference in Rome, in 1984, and in Bangkok, in 1990, represents the fishworkers of Tabasco and has shown interest in maintaining fraternal contact with the

fishworker and support organizations of other countries which support the struggles of the fishworkers of Mexico. ■

PHILIPPINES:

Visit of Chilean and Peruvian fishworkers

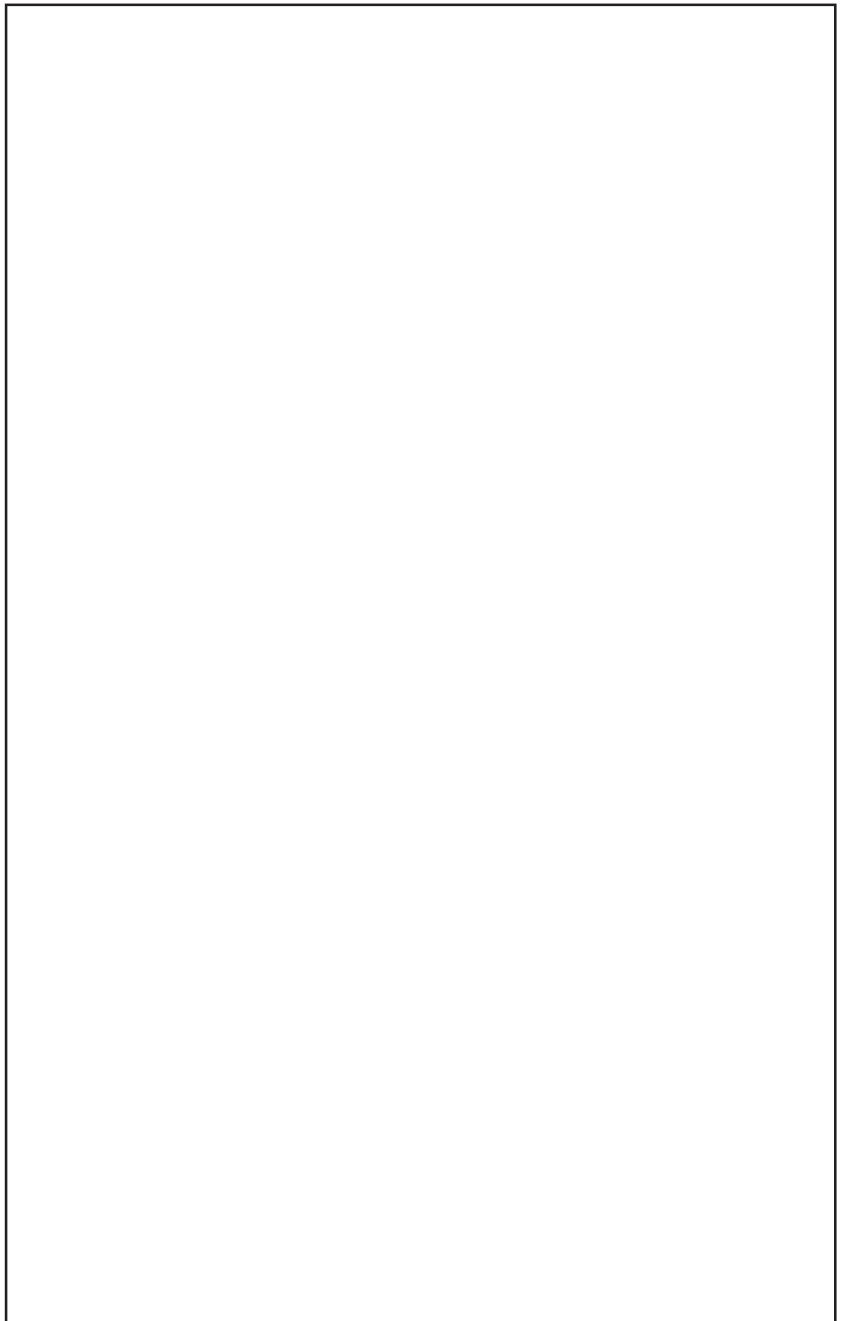
In June, 1992, a delegation of union leaders from Chilean and Peruvian fishworker organizations were invited by OXFAM-ENGLAND to participate in an interchange experience with fishworker organizations in the Philippines, specially those linked to NACFAR, NATIONAL COALITION FOR AQUATIC REFORM. The central focus of this interchange was to learn about environmental, technological and organizational conditions in that country and to learn the bases for presenting projects to the United Nations and other development agencies. The delegates visited numerous communities and visited organization leaders on more than 8 islands of that island country.

Oscar Vergara, of Arica, Chile, who was then a leader in CONAPACH, commented on that trip:

“Philippine fishworkers have family based organizations, do not participate in the government and do not obtain concrete results. They face serious difficulties. From the technical point of view, their vessels are very traditional with little navigational or catch capacity. The country is very poor in fishing resources. If someone catches 10 kilos, he is considered rich. It’s a night’s work, with 12 sets of nets, to catch 3 kilos. Fishworkers there say that the Japanese have depleted fish populations which, together with severe water contamination, has damaged fishing. The Government supports trolling enterprises. There is an extensive campaign under way to combat contamination, to defend against the cutting of the mangroves and the occupation of the coast by prawn farms. They want 7 kms of coast as an exclusive zone for artisan fishing.

‘I came back concerned because in Chile and Peru we may arrive at the same state if we do not protect our resources- We decided to maintain permanent contact with them so as

to help them in their struggle against contamination. From the technical point of view, we could help them in the ways of managing resources so as to improve their catches and living conditions. Philippine fish workers live as foreigners in their own country, on their own coasts, reduced to seeing resources carried off by other companies.” ■



CORRESPONDENCE:

Dear Editor:

Thank you for sending me a copy of your magazine SAMUDRA. I enjoyed your editorial very much.

I was very pleased to note that Chile has passed a law which reserves a 5 mile zone for artisan fishing. That is an important advance.

I was also pleased to note that the artisan fishworkers of Lamon Bay, of the Philippines, successful in obliging their Municipality to that Bay to industrial fishing.

Already in July, 1984, in Rime, during the international conference of artisan fishworkers, I had suggested the creation of a 20 mile reserve zone for traditional artisan fishworkers. I was supported by the fishworkers but the so-called "intellectuals" rejected my proposition of 20 miles, which was already a compromise given that 180 miles would still be left to the industrial ships, together with the open seas beyond the 200 mile limit. This last problem is being considered by the FAO today, although unfortunately, not the 20 mile zone!

Why 20 miles? I requested the Brussels Commission to not authorize European Community ships to operate within the 200 mile Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of the countries of the South. The following suggestion was made: **with regard to small costal, or traditional, fishing, it would be better to reserve**

that zone to which those fishworkers have access. Given that the craft of artisan fishworkers can reach 20 or 21 miles in three hours, that suggestion seemed wise to me. Since then, I have proposed it consistently, to FAO, in Brussels, to the European Parliament, to the Government in Paris, etc.

On reading the document you sent me, titled "How to feed the Third World", I see that the Brussels Commission could easily include this clause in its treaties with developing countries. The Governments of the South, which would have the right to decide with respect to that zone, will not be decisive for fear of losing the monies to be gained through the treaties already established.

And the small artisan fishworkers, who are not consulted when those treaties are signed, have only one means to exert pressure, violence, to defend their interests and those of costal populations.

Therefore, I would appreciate seeing my suggestion with respect to a 20 mile costal reserve as EEZ, printed in capital letters in SAMUDRA, without necessarily mentioning my name.

H.C. – Honorary Senator

BELGIUM:

“Battle for Fish” International Seminar

In November, 1992, eight European NGOs met with the European Community (EC) to establish a framework for fisheries agreements between EC fishing companies and less developed countries, which would lead to broader perspectives for development. As a result of that meeting, the Coalition for Fair Fisheries Agreements (CFFA) was created.

On December 1, 1992, CFFA held an International Seminar, in Brussels (Belgium), called The Battle for Fish Conference. Sixty nine countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP) participated, all interested in reviewing fishing treaties with Europe. Diplomats of diverse countries, Representatives to the European Parliament, specialist news reporters, representatives of European fishworkers and delegates from a large number of governmental organizations attended the Conference.

The objective of the Conference was to discover the best way to design equitable fishing treaties and to find the way to revise existing agreements.

The arguments put forward by the participants were: respect for marine ecosystems; the conservation of fish resources; sustenance of coastal populations; technological progress for those populations through the development of artisan and industrial fishing, etc. Emphasis was given to the need for financial compensation, adequate to the exploitation of national waters, with mention being made of the threat to European fishworkers and their jobs, arising from the supply of high quality fish by Third World fishworkers.

The delegation from Namibia raised its voice: “We are a country which has recently gained its independence at the cost of sufferings known to all. We wish to end the exploitation of our seas. We, today, and our children tomorrow, have a right to eat. We seek development for our country, specially in terms of fishing rights. What will be left, when everything has been stolen, even our hopes for the future?”

ARGENTINA:

Treaty with the European Economic Community

European experience, specially that of some of the new members of the Community, has been difficult in terms of relations with African countries, for example. The impact of new treaties has been initially negative for fishworkers and for those countries, in general. Although significant financial resources have been in-

The National Collective of Fishworkers of Senegal (CNPS) also spoke: “Artisan fishworkers take 75% of the catch, 15% is taken by the local fishing industry, and only 10% goes to foreign ships. We call for recognition of artisan fishing and seek a portion of the benefits provided for in the ACP agreements, so that artisan fishing can develop as a profession and continue to organize”.

Are European fishworkers and their families really informed with respect to the continued deterioration of their profession, and with respect to the inequality in the precedents set between Europe and ACP countries? Do the people of Korea and Taiwan know that their well-being is often based on the exploitation of the Philippine people? Do Polish families imagine the harsh conditions to which Polish fishing crews are subjected, as they exploit the waters of Latin America? The diversity of perspectives reveals the complexity of the problem.

Among the Conference results was the agreement to review Common Fishing Policy (CFP), which will shape EC management of this issue during the coming 10 years. With considerable reductions in the CE fleet foreseen, significant impact in ACP coastal fisheries is expected. The process of renegotiation (together with the end of term in established treaties) creates an opportunity for improving and implementing more just fishing agreements, with a view to providing more equitable benefits for all parties. Of particular concern to many ACP nations is that their fish stocks will be harvested in a sustainable and productive way, ensuring the full mobilization of their potential to serve as an engine for much needed social and economic development.

The Report of the Conference, produced by CFFA, as well as the expositions and studies presented, are available from the Office of the ICSF Secretariat, in Brussels. ■

involved, CEE ships have taken over artisan fishing grounds in Senegal, for example, destroying fishing skills and triggering social conflict. The treaties have given priority to companies connected with local governing groups and have generated profits at the cost of artisan fishworkers and the countries, as a whole.

Serious conflicts arose in Namibia over the presence of Spanish trolling fleets taking herring. That new country expelled those fleets from its jurisdictional waters, while a new treaty with the CEE has not yet been signed, given that Namibia is seeking to impose severe restrictions.

Europeans claim to be aware of those difficulties and, for that reason, have created so-called "second generation treaties", such as that signed with Argentina at the end of 1992.

The main points of that treaty should be considered by fishworkers throughout the world because it may affect them eventually:

- The treaty will be in effect for 5 years and grants Community access to new fishing opportunities, of great commercial value, and will reduce the idle capacity of the European fleet considerably.
- It allows for catches of up to 250 tons annually of species which are very valuable commercially (including 120 thousand tons of hubbsi herring), conger and other resources.
- Access is given to foreign ships, many of which will fly the flags of member countries, while others will operate in temporary associations, through which they will have access to a third of the total catch quotas for the species mentioned in the treaty.

INDIA: SIFFS ship yards

In India, a group of ship building workshops associated with the South Indian Federation of Fishworker Societies (SIFFS) has generated an interesting experience. That federation operates in the states of Kerala and Tamil Nadu, with 1070 Kms. of coastline, on which live around 100 thousand fishworkers. Of those, 6,500 are members of SIFFS, in 3 districts, 2 of which are in Kerala (Quilon, Trivandrum), while the other, Kanya Kumari, is in Tamil Nadu. 99% of the fishworkers are Christian, with the remaining 1%, Muslim, which implies great cultural homogeneity, specially in Kerala. The State-organized cooperatives are for owners only and do not function adequately. SIFFS grass-roots communities are registered as 'Village development societies', providing commercialization, savings and credit facilities.

Fish commercialization is carried out through auctions in each grass-roots community of between approximately 50 - 60 persons. One employee holds the auction, under the supervision of a committee. Fishworkers receive an advance on the sale and a receipt. During the day, they go to the office to receive the balance.

- The treaty allows for the permanent transfer of a significant number of Community ships through the creation of joint companies, in which Europeans may hold up to 100% of the capital. That part of the fleet, under the Argentinean flag, will have access to two thirds of total catch quotas.
- In exchange, the European Community will offer commercial concessions in favour of sales in the European market, by way of tariff reductions for fish product imports from Argentina.
- During the five year term of the treaty, the European Community will invest 162.5 million ECUs, European Monetary Units, of which 95.4 million will subsidize the joint ventures, 39.1 will be investments in those companies, and 28 million will go to a scientific programme and specific measures.
- The parties will seek to establish scientific and technological cooperation projects in order to promote the conservation and rational exploitation of resources and balanced development of the industry. Port facilities will be improved and professional and technical formation in the fishing sector will be promoted.

Only the future will demonstrate the impact of these treaties on the fishing economies of countries both in Asia and in Latin America. ■

To generate savings, between 5% and 10% of each member's daily catch is retained in a savings pass book. The money belongs to the fishworkers but is deposited in a bank and does not earn interest. Fishworkers may obtain loans. In each community, there is a 3% commission, a 2% compulsory savings rate and a 10% loan 'repayment rate.

They may apply for loans when fish are scarce, as occurs between January and April. Social security is limited, given that there is no illness insurance and pensions are paid by the Government. In case of accidents at sea, the Government pays 10,000 Rupees.

Each community pays interest to the district federation. SIFFS does not receive donations and is financed by boat construction activities and sales of motors. The SIFFS Boat Research and Production Center has undertaken research into new kinds of vessels constructed of marine plywood, protected by resin applications and fiber glass. 1,500 boats have been built since 1982. Some private concerns have copied the SIFFS model but have not been able to compete with



SIFFS prices. The communities have received the support of Intermediate Technology, of Oxford, Great Britain, under the direct supervision of Brian Riordan. One of the pioneers in applied research has been the Belgian engineer, Pierre Gillet. The original technology of the catamaran, built of coconut tree trunks has been studied and significant progress has been made toward the development of appropriate technology for sailing, with greater security, mobility and fishing capacity. The models produced are:

QUILON: 26 foot water line and Price: 31,800 Rupees.

ANJENGO: 26 foot water line beam. Price: 33,500 Rupees. 5 foot beam and 67 inch

POZHIYOOR: 28 foot water line and 71 inch beam.

All these boats have a tare weight between 500 and 600 Kilos. Fishworkers obtain bank loans to finance boat purchases.

This experience should be communicated to other fishworkers organizations throughout the world, in order to learn mechanisms for economic and productive association, based on internal savings and the appropriation of technologies according to their needs, possibilities and traditions. ■

CHILE: XIII CONAPACH Congress

Chilean fishworkers have made progress toward the consolidation of their organization and maturity in their growth strategies. The XIII National Congress, held in Costa Azul, Fifth Region (Chile), in November, 1992, was characterized by autonomy in the decisions taken and by the active participation of the representatives of each Commission.

Fishworker representatives now participate in the Fishing Councils and the Fund for the Development of Artisan Fishing, following close elections, in which short-lived "ad hoc" organizations made an appearance.

CONAPACH participates in an extensive network of national and international contacts, within which the

need for a united front, both domestically and with the fishworkers of the world, in order to defend resources and improve the quality of life in our communities, is clear.

The Blue Europe is now present on the coasts of Latin

America, through a fishing treaty signed with Argentina, making it necessary to be alert to its possible repercussions in Chile. The huge demand for fish products generated by a population of 300 million persons and the economic and political power of the European Block may overcome our dependent structures. ■

Book Review

Paul Chapman was in Houston, Texas, for the World Congress of the Apostolate of the Sea. Since retiring as Director of the Center for Seafarers' Rights, in New York, .he has dedicated himself to working as Chaplain and writer, gathering the harsh testimony of the new sea going slaves of this world, those that sail in the super tankers and refrigerated container carriers, who are often jailed and abandoned in distant lands, far from their families and totally defenseless. Merchant marine organizations have yielded their role as defenders of seafarers to the vested interests of their leaders and those sailors have no organizations of their own.

The cause of justice is also a task for the churches and, in its pursuit, church ministers are persecuted.

Flags of convenience have created a situation of great injustice and abuse of crews throughout the world. Everyone must denounce those abuses and seek to generate international maritime law which will protect the rights of seafarers. Sailors are obliged to obey their mates and captains as though they were slaves. There are no fixed work shifts, nor are the cultural identities of the sailors respected, producing breakdowns in communication which lead

to conflict and tragedy.

Some suggestions and tasks:

- 1. Organization is essential and every sailor should belong to a legitimate organization.*
- 2. Maritime workers should have permanent labour contracts which cover health risks and unemployment.*
- 3. Tours of duty should be no longer than 2 months so that sailors may live with and participate in their families and communities.*
- 4. The policy of fixed overtime should be eliminated and a man-mum of hours to be worked should be established.*
- 5. Ship owners should allow for worker participation in the taking of decisions which affect them.*
- 6. Workers should participate in discussions about the corporate policy of their employers: profit sharing, stock options, cooperative property.*
- 7. Countries which serve as flags of convenience should not hide the identity of the phantom owners, who should be clearly identified as responsible agents, specially in case of injustice.*

TROUBLE ON BOARD
THE PLIGHT
OF INTERNATIONAL
SEAFARERS

Paul Chapman

ILR Press ITHACA, 1992



MANTENHA A PROMESSA...



DE UM MUNDO MELHOR
PARA
TODAS AS CRIANÇAS



ROOTS

I have walked through deserts,
frost and rain
in search for my roots,
my dreams, my people.

I went to the ends of the rain,
the winds, the thunder,
to the South, green and beautiful,
but it was not my kingdom.

My search ran to the desert,
on the plains and their towns,
without finding in their sun
neither my roots nor my kingdom.

I have made my discovery
without going in search.
My roots and my kingdom
were found in the sea.

Humberto Mella