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MANAGEMENT IN AMAZONIA
CHINESE FISHERIES
TRADITIONAL INDONESIAN SYSTEM
FISHING IN THE NETHERLANDS
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CEBU CONFERENCE STATEMENT
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A MODEL LAW FOR THAI FISHERIES
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Act responsibly

The fisheries world is today awash with talk of responsibility. Nothing exemplifies this better than the recent Technical Consultation on the FAO's Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing, on which we have a detailed report in this issue of SAMUDRA.

Since the contemporary world is not exactly happy home to such noble concepts, it might be worth pondering over the origins of such a notion. The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines 'responsible' as 'liable to be called to account', 'morally accountable for one's actions' and 'capable of rational conduct'.

To talk about the concept of 'responsible fishing', therefore, would be to presume an explicitly ethical undertone. If this were the case, the concept would immediately advance beyond conventional fisheries management regimes. Such an outcome would certainly be laudatory.

Unfortunately, in this case, nothing of the sort has happened to date. This is evident from a review of the Articles of the Code and its guidelines and from listening to the acerbic debate that took place in the FAQ conference room. There is thus no indication yet that the content of the Code has taken sufficient cognizance of the meaning of responsibility in all its connotations.

The Code, as it now stands, is a sad testimony to the fact that, as far as fisheries are concerned, biologists, lawyers and technologists still rule the roost. Unless economic, social and ethical goals are dragged on to the centre stage of fisheries management, the Code will remain inchoate. It may well have to struggle hard to retain the honorific tag 'responsible'.

That would surely be a pity, for the facts are compelling. Over 60 per cent of the fish used for direct human consumption still comes from the artisanal and small-scale sector. Around 100 million people worldwide, especially in the developing countries, are dependent on this sector for their life and livelihood. For this reason, as well as for the fact that they are among the poorest of the world's populations, it is important to recognize their right to social justice in manifold terms. Without doubt, they are the largest stakeholders in fisheries. They should therefore receive the greatest prominence in the Code.

The Technical Consultation in Rome brought together over 75 countries and several inter-government and non-governmental organizations. The FAO Secretariat made commendable efforts to ensure the participation of various user groups and to make the consultation a transparent process.

Yet, what transpired at Rome can be seen as, at best, the beginning of a process. Only overtime will the Code accumulate substance. Meanwhile, we must hope that the process acquires a greater sense of priority, especially with regard to the artisanal and small-scale fishing communities.

But ominous questions remain. Will the process continue to be hostage to the wrangling between coastal states and distant-water fishing nations? Will it be misused to nurse bruises and settle scores at the UN Conference on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks?

While the Code is not legally binding, its contents could fashion an effective tool for better fisheries management. It could actually help ameliorate the present crisis in world fisheries and prevent the displacement of hundreds of thousands of fishworkers and their dependents.

To be sure, the task is onerous. It demands collective responsibility as well as a dispassionate ability to come together to act above partisan considerations. But that is precisely what responsible people ought to do. It is not just enough to talk of a 'responsible' code of conduct.



Local management works

Amidst the great changes in the commercial fisheries of the Amazonian floodplains, the system of lake reserves offers hope

Even as global attention increasingly focuses on deforestation on terra firma, another great tropical frontier, the Amazon floodplain, is also undergoing major changes. Although it comprises only three per cent of the basin, the Amazonian floodplain extends over a total area of approximately 150,000 sq km.

Since pre-Columbian times, the fertile soils and abundant aquatic resources of the floodplain have supported some of the highest population densities in the basin. Throughout this period, the seemingly inexhaustible fisheries of the floodplain have played an important role in local subsistence and, to a more limited extent, regional trade.

Over the last three decades, however, Amazonian commercial fisheries have developed rapidly. As has happened elsewhere, development of the commercial fisheries is transforming the floodplain economy and environment. Simultaneously, conflicts between individual floodplain communities and commercial fishermen from other areas have proliferated throughout the basin.

This is an important time in the evolution of Amazonian commercial fisheries. If fisheries development follows the path taken in other areas, then present trends will lead to the eventual overexploitation of fish stocks and the progressive marginalization of much of the floodplain population (*ribeirinho*).

However, some *ribeirinho* communities are taking control of floodplain lakes and attempting to regulate local fisheries. These fragile efforts to manage local fisheries represent a potentially important alternative to the conventional government-based fisheries management, which has proven totally ineffective.

The Amazonian commercial fisheries have developed largely due to three sets of factors:

- technological innovations in fishing gear (synthetic fibre for gill-nets), transport (diesel engines) and storage (ice and styrofoam), which have made it possible to greatly increase fishing effort, capturing more fish and exploiting ever more distant areas
- a dramatic increase in demand for fish products in regional as well as export markets, which has driven the growth in production
- a massive shift of *ribeirinho* labour from fanning to fishing due to the decline of jute, the main cash crop on the floodplain

Today, the Amazonian commercial fisheries involve around 230,000 fishermen, most of whom are smallholders living on the floodplain. There are four major fisheries, each focused on a specific environment, namely, the estuary, river channel, lake and reservoir.

Estuary fishery

The estuary fishery includes both artisanal and industrial fishing operations using trawls, longlines and gill-nets to capture several species of large catfish.

The river fishery focuses on two main groups of migratory species. The first consists of large catfish, which undertake long-distance migrations of up to 3,500 km. They are caught with gill-nets and longlines as they travel upstream. The second group consists of species such as characins, which spend part of their life cycle in floodplain lakes and also

undertake reproductive and dispersal migrations. They are caught with seines and gill-nets in the river channel.

The lake fishery involves both this second group of migratory species as well as sedentary species which reproduce in the lakes. The gear employed is quite diverse and includes gill-nets, fishing poles, harpoons, and bows and arrows.

The reservoir fisheries have developed as a result of major hydroelectric projects. In this type of fishery, gill-nets are used to capture mostly species such as cichlids.

Despite the great diversity of Amazonian fisheries, estimated to contain up to 2,000 species, the commercial fisheries are based on a relatively small number of species. In major urban centres like Manaus, Santarem and Porto Velho, for instance, 10 species typically account for 70 to 90 per cent of the catch.

This emphasis on a limited number of species is reflected in the annual catch, estimated at 200,000 tonnes. This is well below the productive potential of 900,000 tonnes for the basin as a whole. Only three species show signs of overfishing.

The limiting factor for artisanal fishermen is catch per unit of effort, since they are less able to increase their fishing effort to compensate for the decline in catch, as

pressure on local fisheries intensifies. Thus, while the fisheries are not yet over exploited, increased pressure on regional fisheries has significantly reduced the productivity of *ribeirinho* fishing especially in areas surrounding urban centres.

As this productivity drops, conflict proliferated between *ribeirinho* communities and commercial fishermen outside the area. This has sometimes led to the destruction of boats and equipment and even caused deaths.

So far, the Brazilian Institute for Environment and Renewable Resources (IBAMA) the government agency responsible fisheries policy, has proved incapable of effectively monitoring and regulating regional fisheries or mediating conflicts.

Open access

As a result, apart from the industrial trawl fishery in the estuary, Amazon fisheries have open access. This encourages fishermen to exploit the fisheries with concern for maintaining long-term productivity.

The open-access approach to fisheries management clashes with community notions of territoriality. Communities throughout the Amazon are asserting control over local lake systems, excluding outsiders and establishing informal

community lake reserves. Typically, these lake reserves involve the members of one or more communities and are based on a formal document signed by the majority of local landowners and fishermen. They usually limit the lake access to local fishermen and may specify informal rules for controlling fishing effort. These rules are based on the traditional knowledge of fisheries ecology.

Preliminary comparative studies of lake management suggest that well-organized lake reserves can increase the productivity of fishing effort. However, more work needs to be done to obtain conclusive evidence.

Since virtually all *ribeirinhos* are directly involved in commercial fisheries, many attempts to regulate local fishing activity fail for lack of support from community members. For this reason, the lake reserve has functioned more to exclude outsiders than to regulate fishing effort.

The problem is exacerbated by the fact that Brazilian fisheries policy is based on free access to lake fisheries. Since lake reserves are technically illegal, they can receive little formal support from IBAMA.

In recent years, a variety of organizations have begun to address the technical and organizational problems of community-based fisheries management.

In many areas throughout the Brazilian Amazon, municipal fishermen's unions (Colonel des Pescadores), whose membership is often dominated by *ribeirinho* fishermen, are taking an increasingly active role in organizing communities to manage local fisheries.

At the same time, national fishermen's organizations like MONAPE (Movimento Nacional da Pesca) and church-related groups like the CPP (Comissado Pestival Pesca) and CPT (Comissado Pastoral da Terra) are working with the Colonias to co-ordinate and support these local efforts at the state and regional levels.

In the Santarem area, Project Ituqui is working with the Colonia and floodplain unities to develop effective management modules for community reserves and to strengthen the Colonia's ability to

support these efforts at the municipal level.

Also in Santarem, Project IARA of IBAMA involves both research on the biological and human dimensions of regional fisheries and an extensive programme of environmental education in floodplain communities. The project aims to strengthen IBAMA'S ability to work with communities and grass-roots organizations in co-management.

Project Mamirautá represents a third approach to the problem of integrating local populations into programmes for conserving floodplain resources. This combines research with community development to produce and implement a management plan for the Mamirautá Lake Ecological Station, where reserve communities have a substantial legal role in managing the fisheries.

Management model

Without doubt, the development of the Amazonian commercial fisheries and the resulting competition for resources is transforming the economy, ecology and society of the area. Lake reserves represent a management model which has the potential to address the problems of social justice and ecological sustainability that are central to fisheries development.

The direct involvement of the *ribeirinho* population ensures that traditional knowledge and resource use are incorporated into models of floodplain resource management, and that the resulting programmes address local interests.

This article is the joint effort of Fabio de Castro, Co-ordinator of the Socioeconomy Subproject of Project IARA/IBAMA and David G. McGrath, Visiting Professor, NAEA, Federal University of Para

Where the world is headed

First impressions of the booming Chinese economy and its fisheries sector do not foretell happy days ahead

China is changing and it is happening now. The economy is booming, expanding at a rate of 15 to 20 per cent a year. Beijing is developing fast, with demolition and earthwork everywhere, great ring roads being built to ease the snarl of congested traffic.

It is estimated that in the past three years, the number of cars has increased fivefold, while the number of cycles has halved. About half the traffic I saw in Beijing seemed to be little yellow taxis—a wonderfully cheap and flexible supplement to the public transport system of buses and subways.

That there is demand for fish is all too evident. In Beijing, in the middle of winter, small quantities of fish were being sold everywhere, from the backs of tricycle carts and small stalls in the street markets. The importance of fish in supplying necessary protein to the seething population of Beijing was obvious.

With ruts of ice on the roads and frost still banked up in the shadows of high walls, refrigeration seemed not a problem. There were a number of fish species on each stall but perhaps only a few fish of each—Some were clearly cultured: smaller fish in plastic bags of water, larger ones (some carp, barely alive) in pools made from a tarpaulin draped over a frame welded from reinforcing rods and filled by a hose. On other stalls were marine species, some of average size, some very small, some still in blocks of ice, possibly from the freezers of distant-water trawlers.

In a crowded market in Shanghai, I saw a vast array of marine and freshwater species as well as captured and cultured ones. I recognized fish that in New

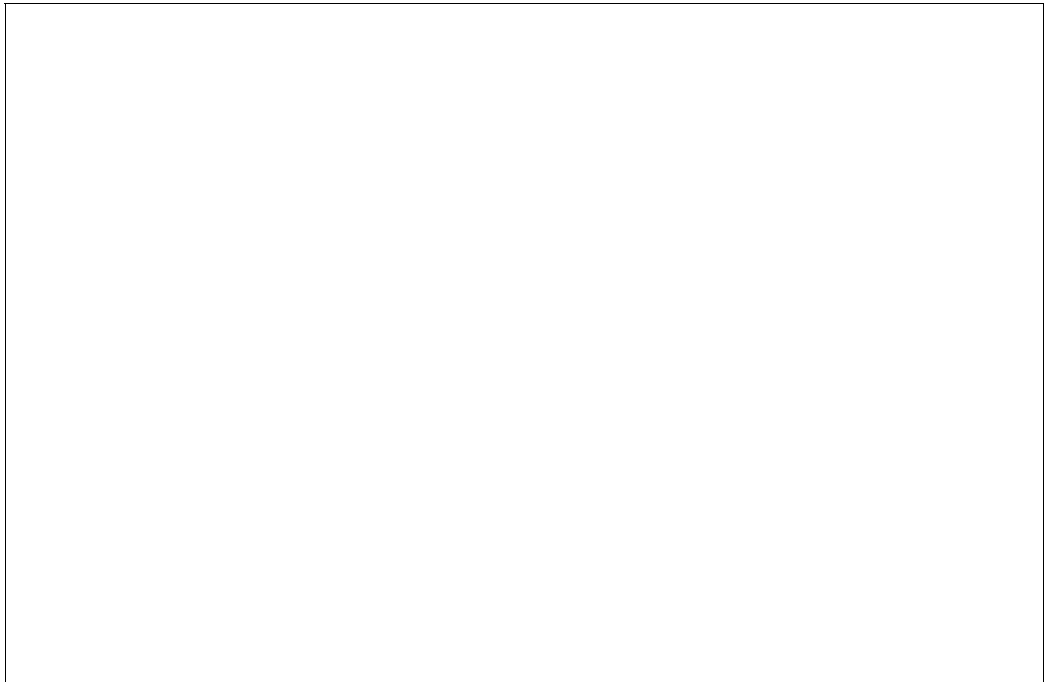
Zealand are discarded as unmarketable. But here they were highly valued, although their presentation and quality looked poor compared with the elegance I had seen in Japanese markets. There they were destined for luxury restaurants but in China they are food for the teeming masses of a rapidly urbanizing population.

With peasants moving in for their share of the good life, urbanization is taking over densely cultivated fields and rural villages. Beijing, a city smaller than Auckland, already has a population of 11 million, more than three times New Zealand's total. To cope with the population increase, hundreds of high-rise apartment blocks are being built.

China is very proud of its 7,000 years of fisheries management, especially its achievements since the formation of the Peoples' Republic and also its ranking as the world's largest fishery producer for the last three years. According to an official spokesman, the 15.58 million tonnes of fisheries output for 1992 is far more than that of other countries. Moreover, the average yearly increment of 8.6 per cent is over twice the world rate of 3.9 per cent increase in fisheries output for the same period.

Stages in development

The Chinese Bureau of Aquatic Products sees the recent stages of fisheries development as loosely corresponding to the last four decades. The fast development of the 1950s, during the recovery from the civil war, was followed, in the 1960s, by over exploitation and fluctuations. Then, in the 1970s, came serious overfishing and slower development. Though production still increased at four per cent each year, there were serious colts lapses of prime stocks



such as large and small yellow croaker. In response, during the 1980s, development was further quickened, but with a rapid reformation of fisheries management.

The Chinese government encouraged the people to protect their fisheries, cautioning them that otherwise their grandchildren would not be able to eat fish caught in Chinese waters.

This new fishery policy took effect in 1985, following trends in domestication: first the Green Revolution in agriculture, then the White Revolution in animal husbandry and now, the Blue Revolution in aquatic ecosystems.

By developing aquaculture production in both fresh and salt water, marine fisheries was sought to be protected. There was also decentralization to the extent that ‘each of the areas could follow its own geography and make its own policy on how to develop the fisheries’.

There was emphasis too on finding ways to keep fish fresh and to develop processing and production. As a result of the new policy, from the mid-1980s until 1990, China’s marine fisheries grew.

A system of surveillance has been developed. Anecdotal evidence suggests that penalties are severe. It was alleged, for example, that a distant-water skipper

was executed. But whether this was for poaching or for the international embarrassment of being caught by the Russians and losing catch and gear to them, is not clear.

Although the annual per capita consumption of fish in China is still less than the world average of 11 kg, it has doubled over the past decade to 10.9 kg. Many urban areas, including Beijing and Shanghai, report higher annual levels of almost 20 kg.

Since 1979, China’s fishing fleet has expanded six fold to 300,000 vessels. Distant-water operations began in 1985 with joint ventures in West Africa. By 1989, there were 16 enterprises employing 2000 people and operating more than 98 vessels in many parts of the globe. Since then, further expansions have taken place.

Fishery production had increased from 450,000 tonnes in 1949-50 to 17 million tonnes in 1993, a sixth of the total world production.

Different shares

Of this, 78 per cent came from salt water, capture fisheries provided 48 per cent or eight million tonnes of total production and aquaculture, 52 per cent or nine million ‘tonnes.

Salt-water fish accounted for 60 per cent or nine million tonnes and freshwater, 443

per cent or seven million tonnes. The National Fishing Company catches 80 per cent, while private companies take in 19 per cent.

According to one estimate, the continental shelf adjacent to China provides 1,500,000 sq km of shallow fishing grounds up to 200 miles. Comprising nearly a fourth of the world's total offshore fishing grounds, they range from temperate to tropical zones, north to south, and are some of the most productive in the world.

They have, however, suffered from offshore overfishing and depletion of fishery resources, particularly stocks of yellow croakers and hairtails. Hence, they provided only about a tenth of the world's marine catch.

Reports on depletion and production are contradictory. One report, for example,

suggests a six- fold increase since 1950 for the fishing grounds of Zhoushan and further suggests that there are abundant potential resources and development prospects. For the same grounds, however, another report states that the potential has dwindled by half lately. The Shanghai Star reported that 'fisheries output increased 10 per cent last year, despite pollution and depletion of some stocks. But there was a sudden drop in the black scrapers catch to 8,000 tonnes, compared with the usual annual average of 100,000 tonnes.

At the Shanghai Marine Fisheries Development Company, the wharf, which comprised 30 berths in a stretch of 1.2 km, was crowded mainly with pair trawlers. But, unlike the markets, they were almost deserted of people. This company is vertically integrated and well-situated with ice plants, shipbuilding and repair works, gear and net-making facilities, cold

How China structures fisheries administration...

China's existing system of administering fisheries and supervising ports was formed gradually since 1978. In 1982, the General Bureau of National Aquatic Products was brought under the purview of the Ministry of Fished Agriculture. Simultaneously, the Bureau of Fisheries Management and Fishing Port Superintendence (BFM) was established under the ministry.

BFM is the agency meant for enforcing fishery laws. It looks after matters relating to the reproduction and conservation of fisheries resources, protection of fishing waters and the environment, safety and quality of fishing vessels, and supervision and administration of fishing ports.

In 1984, the three regional fishery headquarter in the Yellow Sea, the Bohal Sea, the East China Sea and the South China Sea were grouped into the Regional Bureau of Fisheries Management. This came directly under the Ministry of Agriculture and was meant to manage the fisheries in the three marine regions.

At the same time, four frontier stations were set up in 'the provinces of Lioa Lin, Ji Ling and Hei Long Jiang. In 1987, to strengthen the management of the, fisheries resources of inland waters, the Resource Management

Committee of the Middle and Lower Reaches of the Yangtze River was set up.

Since 1979, local agencies have been at the provincial, municipal or county level. These have departments dealing with different aspects of fisheries management. BFM is in overall charge of administration throughout the country in tune with fisheries laws and regulations. 'The regional bureaus are responsible for their respective regions, as are the local agencies.

The basic operating principle is that of unified leadership and decentralized administration. However, in practice, this is not working well. For instance, fishing for marine migratory species and stocks in large river sand takes should be controlled and co-ordinated by the central 'government. However, 'the authority of the department of fisheries administration under the State Council is not sufficient to implement its orders' and regulations.

Also, the quality of the administrative staff is not good enough. There are long-standing problems of understaffing and shortage of modern equipment. Measures to overcome these problems include propaganda on resource conservation and steps to improve conservation and management schemes.

...and how China legislates fisheries

Chinese fisheries legislation comprises Laws, Ordinances and Rules and Regulations on fisheries. Fisheries Laws are promulgated by the Nations People's Congress or its Standing Committee. For instance, the Fisheries Law of the People's Republic of China was adopted at the Fourteenth Meeting of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress and promulgated by Order No. 34 of the President on 20 January1988. This is the first and basic law of fisheries in China.

There are similar and related laws, such as the Wildlife. Protection Law, Law on Marine Environment Protection and Law on Marine Traffic Safety.

Fisheries Ordinances are stipulated and promulgated by the State Council as, for instance, the Ordinance on Protection of Aquatic Resources. In addition to this, local ordinances are promulgated by the Provincial People's Congresses or their Standing Committees.

Fisheries Rules and Regulations are promulgated by the Department of Fishery Administration under the State Council. An example is the Regulation on Fishing Licence stipulated by the Ministry of Agriculture. Provincial regulations are usually made by the provincial governments.

The Fisheries Law accords top priority to aquaculture. In. China, water surfaces and tidal flats are owned by the state but are used by individuals and units under collective ownership.

To overcome the problems of ownership and rights of users, the state has established rights overuse and contracts out such areas.

Although Water surfaces and tidal flats belong to the state, the Fisheries Law permits governments at or above the county level to assign such state-owned areas that have been designated for aquaculture to individual units. Such licences are issued only after examining the qualifications of these individual Units or collectives. This 'right of contracting' is a special right of use supported by contractual terms.

Units which have obtained the licences may not fail to carry out aquaculture or stock below per cent of the average stocking quantity for similar water areas. Such units which, neglect state-owned water areas for 12 months at a stretch will be ordered to utilize and develop them. Failing this, their aquacultute licences may be revoked.

In the case of marine fisheries, emphasis is on developing offshore and distant-water fishing. Considering the high costs of investment in this sector, the Fisheries Law stipulates preferential treatment in the form of funds, materials technology as well as in taxes.

—This and the previous box, is excerpted from papers by Cui Xiaodong and Liu Zheng, presented at a workshop on fisheries management sponsored by the Chinese and Norwegian governments.

storages and fish markets. Yet, due to a lack of fish, the company is desperately seeking joint ventures overseas. It is also trying to diversify into marine transport. The company has borrowed heavily from the government to pay crew salaries. Perhaps up to a hundred vessels were rafted—two, three or occasionally four abreast.

Apart from a few small distant-water stem trawlers and a couple of crab potters, most were pair trawlers, as rusted and battered as the worst steel vessels I have seen still in service. A few years ago, there were 300 pairs operating in the Yellow and the East China Seas, but now six pairs are abroad and there are just 100 in these seas. Even

this number will be reduced to a mere 25 within the next few years.

While this company is struggling to find work for its vessels, elsewhere, China is rapidly modernizing its fleet. Neighbouring Fujian Province is using assistance from the European Union to improve the safety and equipment of vessels and for training crew to fish in deeper waters. With demersal and semi-pelagic resources depleted, hope now lies in smaller pelagics further offshore.

As far as aquaculture is concerned, China may well be showing where the world is headed. The policy changes of the mid-

1980s promoted the development of both freshwater and marine aquaculture. With some assistance from the World Bank, it led to an active policy to ‘make China’s fisheries industry get rid of the limitation of fishing from natural resources’.

As inland production increased, marine production decreased. Similarly, as aquaculture grew, marine capture fisheries declined. China has a coastline of over 32,000 km and 14 million hectares (ha) of shallow water within a 15 m isobath, as well as tidal wasteland good for aquaculture.

Already, about 20 to 25 per cent of the area has been developed. For instance, in the 100 km area of Rudong County in Jiangsu Province, 22,660 ha of the total 69,000 ha of shores and beaches are utilized to raise clams and other shellfish. In addition, a 1987 World Bank loan of US\$7.73 million and Y13 million in local funds (about US\$1.3 million) enabled an increase in *output*, by 1991, of 1,000 tonnes of cultivated prawns, 920 tonnes of eels and 200 million sheets of layer.

However, such production does have its problems. Aquaculture has seen badly hit by diseases. In Zhejiang Province, for instance, 97 per cent of the prawns produced are dying from diseases resulting from water pollution.

As it contemplates the ‘Blue Revolution China may be leading the world in a transition from capture to culture fisheries, from self-sustaining wild biodiversity to artificially cultured systems requiring huge inputs of feedstock, energy and antibiotics.

As first impressions go, reports, however, are contradictory. This is not surprising, more so in the case of a fishery as vast and complex as China’s.

Serious depletion

On the one hand, there are claims of huge increases in production. On the other, serious depletion of wild stocks or diseases in cultured species are reported.

The message I certainly got was that China is ardently seeking joint ventures to keep its fleets occupied and feed its people.



This article is written by fisheries environmentalist Leith Duncan of New Zealand, based on a first trip to China.

Managing the *sasi* way

Indonesia has a unique, ancient and traditional cultural system of managing natural resources, especially fisheries

Ever since 1979, when I became head of the *kewang* group charged with implementing and supervising the traditional laws of Mat of the island of Haruku in Maluku, I desired to write down the rules of the customary law in force in our village since olden times.

I began by writing about the *sasi* regulations or *adat* prohibitions which embody the main principles of law of the *adat* society of Haruku. For several years, I have used these writings to educate the people of Haruku, especially the younger generation, which now appears to be less aware of the traditional wisdom of their ancestors.

Growing pollution and environmental destruction in Haruku and its surroundings convinced me of the need to circulate these writings widely.

Our ancestors' tradition embodies a collection of principles for the management of natural resources, which has proved reliable in safeguarding the natural world around us and in protecting relationships both among people as well as between people and their environment.

Going by legends and folk tales, it is estimated that *sasi* became a part of the culture of Haruku village in the 1600s. *Sasi* can be described as a prohibition on the harvesting of certain natural resources in an effort to protect the quality and population of such biological resources—plant or animal.

Since the regulations for implementing this prohibition also touch upon human beings' relationship with nature and with other persons in the area affected by the prohibition, *sasi* is also an effort to maintain the patterns of social life by

equally distributing among all local inhabitants the benefits or income from the surrounding natural resources.

The rules of *sasi* are decided at a meeting of the council called the *Dewan Adat Seniri*, referred to in Haruku as *Sanir'a Lo'osi Aman I-laru-ikui* which means the 'Complete *Seniri* of the Village of Haruku'. The *kewang* is the *adat* institution charged with the supervision of the implementation of the rules of *sasi*.

Members of the *kewang* are chosen from every clan (*soa*) in Haruku. The heads of the land *kewang* and the sea *kewang* are both appointed according to inheritance or descent from the first officials who held these positions. So is the case of the assistant head.

As monitors of *sasi*, the *kewang* is charged with

- safeguarding the implementation of all *sasi* rules established by the *seniri* meeting
- punishing or disciplining those citizens who violate the rules
- establishing and checking the borders of the land, sea and river areas included in the *sasi* area
- putting up *sasi* signposts
- conducting meetings related to the implementation of *sasi*

Four types

There are four types of *sasi* in Haruku sea, river, forest and village. At a meeting of the *adat* council of Haruku on 10 June 1985, the detailed rules regarding the four types of *sasi* were adopted. These were signed by the *Raja* or king of Haruku and the

heads of the land and sea *kewangs*. The *sasi* rules demarcate the borders of the sea and the river, as well as the ‘free anchoring’ areas. The rules also specify the fishing gear which may be used. Furthermore, the river *sasi* forbids cleaning fish or washing dishes in the river. It also prohibits men and women from bathing together.

The forest *sasi* bans the plucking of young, under-ripe fruits as well as the cutting of fruit-bearing trees to make fences or cutting palm leaves for roofing. This can be done only with the permission of the owners and the *kewang*.

The village *sasi* forbids noisy weekend parties. Social events held in the evenings must have the sanction of the village council. Catching the *taba* fish is banned for two hours of the evening on Sundays. No one may enter the forest on Sundays, except in an emergency or during the clove season, with the permission of the *kewang*.

There are several more detailed rules as well as prescriptions of fines which range from 2,500 to 10,000 rupiah. These written rules only reiterate the *adat* rules which have been handed down from the ancestors of the village.

Nonetheless, a number of additional regulations have been formulated in tune with modern developments. An example is the prohibition in the river *sasi* of the operation of motor boats with their engines running. So is the ban on the use of a type of fine-mesh factory-made net called *karoro*, which has appeared only in recent years.

The prohibition in the village *sasi* on women climbing trees has been modified to permit them to do so, as long as they wear appropriate clothing such as pants, which are only now available.

Similarly, the rules regarding the amount of monetary fines for violations of *sasi* have also been adjusted to take into account current economic conditions.

The *sasi* relating to the *lompa* fish (*Trisina baelama*, a kind of small sardine) is of particular interest. Of all the fish in Haruku, the *lompa* is the most important and of all forms of *sasi* in the village, the

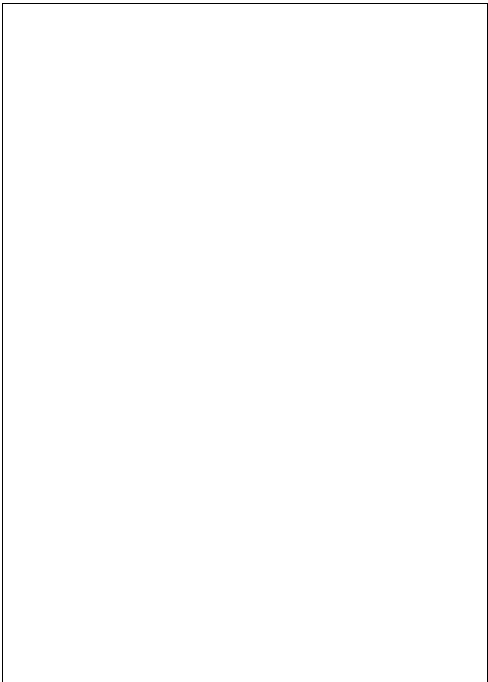
most significant and unique one is the *sasi* on *lompa*. This is specific to Haruku since it is not found anywhere else in Maluku. It is even more special because it represents an integration of the sea and river *sasi*. This is because *lompa* can live both in the sea and the river, like salmon and other anadromous species.

Each day, the *lompa* fish spend around two and a half hours of the afternoon in the Learisa Kayeli river, at least 1,500 m from its mouth. Studies have shown that the river has insufficient plankton, which is the fish’s main food. So, in the evening, they move out to the open sea in search of food, returning only in the early hours of the morning.

The *sasi* on *lompa* comes into effect when young *lompa* or fingerlings are first seen off the coast of Haruku, between April and May. These schools of young fish usually enter the river mouth after a month or two.

Ceremony
A ceremony called the *panas sasi* (heat of *sasi*) is held thrice a year to mark the start of *sasi*. It usually takes place in the late evening, around 8 p.m., when all members of the *kewang* assemble in the house of their head, bringing along dry coconut palm leaves for a bonfire.

After a prayer, the fire is lit and the *kewang* proceeds as a group to the centre of the *sasi* site. The ceremony takes place at the



crossroads where *tabaos* or decrees are announced to the villagers. There, the head of the *kewang* lights the bonfire to the accompaniment of drums in a melody which symbolizes the existence of five clans of the village. As the drum beats fade, all the members of the *kewang* shout in unison, 'Sirewei!' This is a statement of intent, a promise or an oath.

After this, the *kewang* head delivers a speech of advice in honour of the village and its leaders. This speech, called *kapata*, declares the beginning of *sasi*. The secretary of the *kewang* then reads out the regulations of *sasi* on *lompa* and the punishments for violations. The ceremony ends at 10 p.m. in front of the village halt where the remaining dry palm leaves which have not burnt, are taken and thrown into the ocean.

To indicate that the rules of *sasi* on *lompa* have gone into effect, the *kewang* puts up signs in the form of sticks with fresh, young coconut palm leaves tied around their tips. The signs comprise both the main *kayu bua sasi* as well as auxiliary signs. The *sasi* rules specify, among other stipulations, that as long as the *lompa* are in the area covered by *sasi*, they may not be caught or otherwise disturbed. There is also a ban on sea-going motor boats entering the river with their engines running. *Lompa* needed for bait may be caught only with a hook, but not from the river.

Those who violate the rules are fined. Even child culprits are punished with five strokes of the rattan cane, each stroke a reminder to obey the instructions of the five clans of Haruku.

The protected *lompa* fish grow large enough and ready to be harvested in about five to seven months after they were first sighted. The *kewang* then holds a routine Friday meeting to set the time to end the *sasi*, also referred to as opening the *sasi*. This decision is then passed on to the village head to be conveyed to all the villagers.

A second, similar *panas sasi* then takes place. After the ceremony, the head of the *kewang* lights a bonfire at the mouth of the Learisa Kayeli to draw the *lompa* into the

river, prior to the pull of the tide. Not long afterwards, schools of *lompa* crowd into the river. The villagers then stretch barriers across the mouth of the river so that the *lompa* does not escape into the sea when the tide ebbs.

The beating of drums signals to the villagers to get ready to go to the river. The third drumbeat indicates that the *Raja*, the *Seniri Negeri* and the pastor should reach the river, as the villagers take their place on its edge. The village head and his group throw out the first net. Then the pastor follows suit. After that, all the villagers are free to catch whatever *tampa* there are.

According to research done by the fisheries department of Pattimura University, during the lifting of *sasi* in 1984, *lompa* harvested that year totalled around 35 tonnes in gross weight. This is certainly not a small amount for a single harvest. More importantly, it is a source of not only nutrition but also additional income for the villagers of Haruku. Clearly, *sasi* is not a collection of rigid *adat* regulations. It will continue to be dynamic and responsive to the changing times, as long as its spirit, soul or life—the principle of conservation and a balance in the relationships among human beings and with their surrounding environment—is maintained and does not change.

How long?

But how long can this last? Illegal bombing by irresponsible persons continues to damage the coral reefs of the Haruku coast. The *kewang* has made various efforts to prevent the spread of the destruction of this habitat, including complaints to the police and the courts.

These, however, have not borne fruit, often because the simple and ordinary people of Haruku do not have access to the centres of power. **3**

This article is translated from the writings of Eliza Kissya, who is a fisherman, a farmer as well as the head of the Haruku village council. He was awarded the 1985 Kalpataru Prize by the Indonesian Ministry for Population and Environment.

Fisheries agreements

Trojan horses

In the name of a Common Fisheries Policy, the European Union is merely dumping its own problems on to countries like Senegal

As the largest source of hard-currency earnings, fish exports from Senegal play an important role in the local economy. Among the countries of the ACP (Africa, Caribbean and Pacific) region, Senegal is the largest supplier to the European Union (EU). It makes up 80 per cent of all fish imports from ACP. However, ACP fish imports represent only a very small proportion of the total value of imports of fish to the EU.

Senegal's fish exports comprise both frozen fish and fresh fish. The export of frozen fish is done by an industrial sector supported by foreign capital, while fresh-fish export is by relatively small merchants from the informal artisanal sector.

While exports of fresh fish have increased by 50 per cent during the period 1988-1992, exports of frozen fish have stagnated. The buoyancy of the fresh-fish export trade reflects the buoyancy and dynamism of the artisanal fishery. The crisis in the frozen-fish market reflects the crisis in the industrial sector.

Both these sectors are represented by two families of owners' organizations, with quite different demands. UPAMES represents the fresh-fish traders and supports the artisanal sector. GAIPES represents the frozen-fish sector, which demands exclusive export rights and greater access to fish products.

GAIPES exclusively exports cephalopods and shrimps as well as a few other species—all in the frozen form—to Japan and Europe. All the shrimps go to Europe, while half of the exports of cephalopods is to Europe, and the other half to Japan. UPAMES sends all its fresh fish, packed in ice, to Europe. Italy accounts for 38 per

cent of the market, while France takes up 35 per cent and Spain, 15 per cent.

Despite being the largest ACP exporter of fish to Europe, Senegal is ranked only fifteenth in the 'league table' of fish exporters to Europe, accounting for 3.6 per cent of the value of all European imports from third countries.

Fish exports to Europe from Senegal are unlikely to increase, but the export of fish from other countries in the region, particularly Mauritania and Guinea Conakry, is likely to have an impact on prices received in Senegal.

The artisanal fishing community—both producers and merchants—have benefited from the export of fish. However, it is also clear that exports have disturbed the fishery, putting pressure on many species such as grouper. The result has been a decline in catch.

Although it is difficult to prove so, with attention increasingly turning to export species which are mainly demersal, fewer pelagic species are available for local consumption.

Lower returns

Further, there is evidence that the costs of motorization and the impact on the environment through overfishing is leading to lower economic returns.

When the CFA franc was devalued, it was expected that this would lead to price increases for the fish producers. However, there has been an overall drop in prices.

From the perspective of French fishermen, the export of fish from Senegal has never been a direct target of criticism, since they make up just a small percentage of imports. Only a few species are meant for

a specific African market. These do not compete with local fish in the larger market. Competition from aquaculture products such as sea bream from the southern European countries of Greece, Italy and Spain is more significant than imports from Senegal.

In the current situation, French fishermen want to ban fish imports, while wishing to export their excess capacity. A minimum price structure or levies on imports can be used to help producers in Senegal through fiscal transfers. There is also a need to discourage export of excess capacity, particularly through the re-flagging of fishing boats with African flags.

Many French boats are no longer economically viable in Europe, and the devaluation of the CFA franc works against their economic redeployment in Senegal. EU subsidies encourage the export of older boats, while newer boats remain in Europe. This was evident in the case of the new EU agreement with Argentina, where transferred EU boats are replacing existing tonnage.

Fishworkers need to benefit more directly from the opportunities available through the 'easy-export' channels currently exploited by middlemen. Their capital investment in trucks, ice and cold storage facilities is minimal due to excellent road links to the beach and air freight passage to Europe.

Meanwhile, against the advice of the EU-funded Oceanographic Research Centre (ORC) in Dakar, the EU proposed that the quota of deep-water fish allocated to the EU fleet be increased by 57 per cent. The ORC has warned that fish stocks off Senegal are so seriously depleted that there needs to be quota reductions. Ironically, the EU provides a grant of 400,000 ECU (European currency unit) to the ORC, but chooses to ignore its advice.

Grave misgivings

Fortunately, the EU Fisheries Subcommittee, which gave advice on the 1993 Senegal Accord negotiations had grave misgivings and actually recommended the rejection of the proposed agreement. The National Fishworkers Union of Senegal (CNPS), which represents 8,500 fishermen and women, is against the current agreement, which concludes in December and involves US\$35 million over two years.

The much larger EU vessels often run through nets and fragile boats, mainly at night, killing many Senegalese fishermen and causing great economic loss. In 1991, twenty-four small-scale fishermen died in such collisions, six miles of the shore.

The EU fisheries agreements cost European taxpayers tens of millions every year, but come under no serious scrutiny and get virtually no media attention. The process of negotiation is both

<div>Senegal</div>	<div> <div>The new agreement</div> <div> <p>The just-concluded two-year agreement between EU and Dakar gives the European fleet the right to deploy 84 tuna boats and a certain number of trawlers for a total capacity of 13,000 GRT. The negotiation was particularly hard, especially on coastal fishing, thanks to the local lobby led by artisanal fishermen</p> <p>For the first time, the representatives of the artisanal sector were able to participate in the negotiations, even though they were invited at the last moment. . Through fishworkers organizations like CNPS, the position of the artisanal fishermen were taken into account. The government, provoked by the fishermen, wanted to practically cut off European access to the coastal fishing grounds, which the artisanal fishermen claimed as their means of livelihood.</p> <p>Another convincing gain from the participation of artisanal fishermen was that 200,000 ECUS will be directly allocated to the development of this sector. Although the Director of Maritime Fishing has affirmed that ‘an understanding will be reached wit all the professionals in the framework of general interest’, it is not certain give and how this amount will be distributed.</p> <p>Nevertheless, the financial compensation by the EU for fishing rights has been cut. The EU will transfer to Senegal 18 million ECUS in two years, against 32 million ECUS estimated in the previous agreement. This reduction is because the actual catch is less than estimated.</p> <p>The EU regards the financial compensation accorded in the last agreement more as a ‘right to explore’ than real compensation for the fish caught. The distribution of this kitty has been decided by the government itself—15.8 million ECUS will go to the treasury, but the rest will be devoted to the development of fisheries.</p> <p>Besides strengthening the Centre for Oceanographic Research and the Training Scholarships, Dakar has decided to reinforce surveillance.</p> <p>The quantity of tuna to be unloaded in Dakar for local canning factories has been maintained at 16,000 tonnes per year. The Senegalese authorities, wishing to encourage European boats to unload the fish in Senegal, demanded 25,000 tonnes, but the EU pointed out that the European catch in Senegalese waters ‘had not exceeded 10,000 tonnes in 1993’. Paradoxically, a document from the Ministry of Senegalese Fisheries Affairs says that ‘the unloadings have always been higher than the fixed tonnage’.</p> <p>The Senegalese government delegation wanted to ‘strike a balance between take, which assures profits, while safeguarding resources’.</p> <p>—This report is from Béatrice Goréz of ICSF’s Brussels office</p> </div> </div>
	<div> <p>undemocratic and covert. The first payment was made in December 1992, four months before the European Parliament had a chance to vote on it. In its own waters, EU fisheries policy has led to the devastation of fish stocks. Now it is threatening the stocks of other countries. The only real beneficiaries are the merchants and consumers. Their short-term gain is at the expense of Senegalese and EU fishermen.</p> <p>In Senegal, 40 per cent of the fish exported is caught by the small-scale sector. These fishermen receive a pittance for the high-value sea bream, grouper and sole which they catch. Although this sells in the EU for prices of up to twenty fold those paid in Senegal, it is still relatively cheap, compared to fish caught in the EU. CNPS</p> <p>and the group of European NGOs called the Coalition for Fair Fisheries Agreements (CEFA) would like the next hearing on the Senegal-EU fisheries agreement to discuss these issues.</p> <p>They are especially concerned about the potential impact of the accord on the live and livelihoods of Senegal’s 35,000 small scale fishermen.</p> <div> <p>This piece draws from the experiences of Marc Andre, a fisheries economist based in Guilvinec, south Brittany, who visited Senegal in November 1993 at the request of CNPS and the local fisheries committee in Guilvinec</p> </div> </div>

Putting up the barricades

By laying siege to foreign vessels and grabbing hostages, Spanish fishermen have declared war on the EU fishing policy

For Spanish fishermen, 16 July, the day of the feast of St. Carmen, their patron saint, was no occasion for festivities. Instead of celebrating, they declared war on European fishing policy, sending out a tidal wave of protest against tuna drift-nets.

On the high seas that day, they boarded and seized the French fishing vessel *La Gabrielle*, 700 km north of La Coruna, and escorted it back to the port of La Burela in Galicia in north-west Spain. Here it was held hostage by 300 Spanish tuna boats until 21 July, while officials from the European Union (EU) and the French and Spanish governments negotiated its release.

Five days later, the fishing guilds of Galicia, Cantabria, Asturias and the Basque Country laid siege to the key northern ports of Spain and Hendaye in France, trapping commercial shipping and thousands of tourists. The siege was lifted on 29 July, when the Spanish government promised to take action in the European Commission to see that 'illegal use of giant nets to catch tuna would be stopped'.

The northern coast of Spain has a very short continental shelf and for centuries, powerful Basque and Galician whale hunters have ventured as far as the Arctic sea and the Canadian Labrador coast. During the Franco regime, modernization of fleets took place.

Today Spanish fishworkers represent almost half of Europe's fishing force. To fish tuna, they operate huge 30-in boats equipped with pole-and-line. They move in large fleets, following fish shoals in their migration to the north. Each boat carries 25 to 30 fishworkers, who work from sunrise to sunset.

This type of operation yields very fresh fish which is carefully preserved. But it is limited to the daytime and, as scientists point out, young fish make up the bulk of the catch. With profitability low, these fishermen do not wish to be disturbed by any other gear in the same area, since they fear that the tuna shoals may get dislocated. Early this year, they had warned French and other European fishworkers to keep off their usual fishing grounds or face trouble.

French fishermen are far less numerous. In the 1970s, they abandoned pole-and-line fishing and, helped by technologists from the national institute for modernization of fisheries, IFREMER, they built smaller boats (12 to 20 m) and began to operate long drift-nets with only five fishworkers.

Soon the drift-nets earned a very bad reputation in the Pacific. Environmentalists campaigned actively against these 'curtains of death'. The call for a ban on drift-nets in the Pacific was echoed in the EU regulation of 1991 which limited the length to 2.5 km.

The French fishermen were temporarily exempted and could use 5-km nets for some time. But in 1994, they had to abide by the new rules. They protested saying that such short nets would never catch enough and that they would have to rely too much on the coastal demersal stocks of flat-fish already fully exploited. If they were no longer allowed to fish the Atlantic tuna, they would have to stop fishing altogether, they said.

French minister's support

The French minister of fisheries promised his support and induced fishing boats to take aboard a spare net in case the legal one was damaged. Such signals caused a swift reaction and Spanish fishermen

were soon convinced that every drift-net at sea was above the legal dimension.

Clashes forced the French navy to accompany its national fishing boats and eventually impose fines on some of them. British warships had to patrol around their own drift-netters, thousands of miles from their home ports.

Essentially, the tuna war is all about technology and access rights. Tuna fishing in Spain uses a variety of hook-and-line techniques, including pole-and-lining. These techniques are claimed to be selective and environmentally sound, whereas drift-nets are overefficient and dolphin-unfriendly.

The technology factor gives Spain an opportunity to claim exclusive access to the tuna resources of the North Atlantic, as it is the only nation in the zone specializing in fishing without drift-nets.

The North Atlantic tuna fishery is outside the EEZ of the EU. It is a high-seas fishery and therefore would not seem to be subject to EU regulations.

However, all EU fishing vessels which operate there are subject to EU regulations. In theory, non-EU fishing vessels could fish in that area with any gear they choose. It is surprising not to hear of 'flags of convenience' vessels operating there.

Three main species of tuna are targeted in the North Atlantic: *Thunnus thynnus* (giant blue-fin), *Thunnus albacares* (yellow-fin) and *Thunnus alalunga* (albacore, long-fin or white tuna). In 1992, five thousand tonnes of tuna—about 20 per cent of the total catch—were caught by nets, while pole-and-line accounted for 18,000 tonnes or about 80 per cent.

Most studies have shown that, in the case of the Atlantic tuna fishery, the catch of dolphins and other whales is relatively low, compared to the 50-km 'Wall of Death' drift-nets used in the Pacific.

However, catches of shark can be significant. Dolphins are but one of the by-catch of drift-nets. In 1991, French drift-nets reportedly caught 19,000 blue

sharks, while drift-nets of all nations put together caught 2,000 dolphins.

Other 'non-target' species include other mammals, sea birds, sharks, bream, marlin (sword fish) and other fish. The by-catch also includes thresher, porbeagle and blue sharks. These fish produce very few young, and therefore have very slow reproductive rates.

Intensive fishing effort on sharks can quickly decimate their populations. Unluckily for them, sharks do not have the same friendly image as dolphins! Unlike most of the other by-catch like the bream and sword fish, which are often as valuable as the tuna, shark is generally discarded or wasted.

The tuna drift-net fishery could therefore have a significant impact on shark populations in the North Atlantic. This is not only lamentable for the sharks, but could also mean the loss of a potentially valuable fishery resource.

Also of concern is the wastage of tuna and other species caught by the drift-nets. Once caught, tuna and other fish like marlin die quickly and begin to rot. After a couple of hours in the net, the fish may get quite badly damaged. They are therefore discarded.

In the case of fish caught with lines, the quality is much better, as they are landed alive. Line-caught fish therefore receive a much higher price than net-caught fish and is destined mainly for the fresh market. Tuna caught in nets is an inferior product and goes mainly for canning.

In Spain, the fishing industry, particularly in the north, is an important source of employment and wealth creation in a country where unemployment averages 25 per cent. Spain is a recent entrant to the EU and will become a full member in 1996.

European waters

The Spanish fishing fleet accounts for about 60 per cent of the total EU fleet. Though its access to EU waters is currently restricted, Spain is looking to European waters for new fishing opportunities. Only in 1996 will it have equal access to the seas of other EU states. In the tuna fishery of Biscay on the southwest Irish

coast, Spain caught about 80 per cent of the fish landed in 1990. It is estimated that today the Spanish use six times the number of boats and four times the manpower to get three and a half times the catch of the French tuna fleet of around 300 to 400 vessels. Catches have dropped from 28,000 tonnes in 1987 to 18,100 tonnes in 1992.

Past experience with Spanish fishing boats have made British fishermen bitter. The boats have been found fishing illegally, sometimes under flags of convenience. They were also found using hidden fish holds, catching and storing undersized fish, and exceeding quota limits. In July 1993, a film crew was badly beaten up while trying to film the landing of illegal fish.

British fishermen see the Spaniards as a threat to their resources and livelihoods, and are very suspicious of them. The EU recognizes that its fishing fleet has already developed well beyond capacity, and a programme to reduce fishing effort is being implemented. There is deep mistrust and fear that British fishing grounds will be sacrificed to appease Spain.

Suspicion has been further fuelled by Greenpeace's observations on Spanish fishing boats around the Straits of Gibraltar in August 1994. At least three of a group of 10 boats working about eight

miles off the Spanish coast were reportedly observed using nets larger than the regulation size of 2.5 km. Their sizes ranged from 3.4 km to 4.3 km.

Earlier, on 30 July, a Greenpeace ship arrived on the fishing ground and started measuring the drift-nets. The French navy protested and some gunshots narrowly missed the Greenpeace activists. The media gave wide coverage to these events. By 14 August, Greenpeace withdrew from the scene and started monitoring nets in the Mediterranean sea.

The policing action by Greenpeace dragged the conflict into the spotlight and demonstrated the weaknesses of the European control systems.

It became clear that, during periods of tension, national navies may not be the best instrument to check their own fishermen. The EU inspectors who are supposed to notify violations of the law have no power. The need for a European coastguard is obvious.

Dialogue with ecologists

A. week later, at the Summer University of the French Green Party, fishermen accepted a dialogue with the ecologists of Greenpeace. They spoke about tuna stocks and pointed out that some modem gear, specifically the 'pelagic trawl', was much worse than the drift-net. This is a mid-water trawl pulled by two powerful



Spain

vessels. The introduction of this new gear in the early 1980s was patronized by IFREMER but today small-scale fishermen have only harsh words to denounce the very technologists of this institute who brought into France this highly destructive gear.

The first ones were large enough, but the new ones feature openings of 30,000 sq m. It is said that a dozen Boeing 747s can enter the mouth of the latest trawl, the 'Gloria'. Tuna trawling is very successful and yields around 10 to 20 tonnes in one haul, but the fish is often smashed by the pressure inside the net.

On 17 August, 10 'pelagics' from Hendaye were attacked by the Basques because they started to trawl for tuna. One fish-worker was seriously wounded. Not surprisingly, a hot debate is now on to demand rules and regulations to control the existing units and stop the entry of new ones. The *pelagiques* are accused of destroying declining stocks traditionally fished by coastal boats.

Moreover, rocky bottoms which were unfit for bottom trawls and were the preserve of small-scale fishermen who could lay traps, longlines and bottom-set nets, are now exploited by the mid-water trawls. They have the advantage of being able to adjust the depth of the net with great accuracy. No stock seems out of their reach now!

There have also been other recent incidents of Spanish vessels with nets up to six km. long, being sent back to port. It is believed that Spain banned drift-nets in 1990. Cornish fishermen complain that, nonetheless, the Spanish authorities turn a blind eye to what is happening in its own waters, though they cry 'foul' when it comes to international waters. There is genuine concern amongst British fishermen that the Spanish government is doing nothing to enforce fishing regulations.

Spain's fish war is part of the current dispute in Europe over tuna fishing on the high seas. It also highlights the context in which they occur, namely, recent UN and EU fisheries regulations. Community ownership and management has been subsumed by state and regional

management. Through quota systems and joint venture agreements, commercial interests are able to buy up marine resources. This has grave implications for traditional livelihoods and food production systems which are sustained by marine resources.

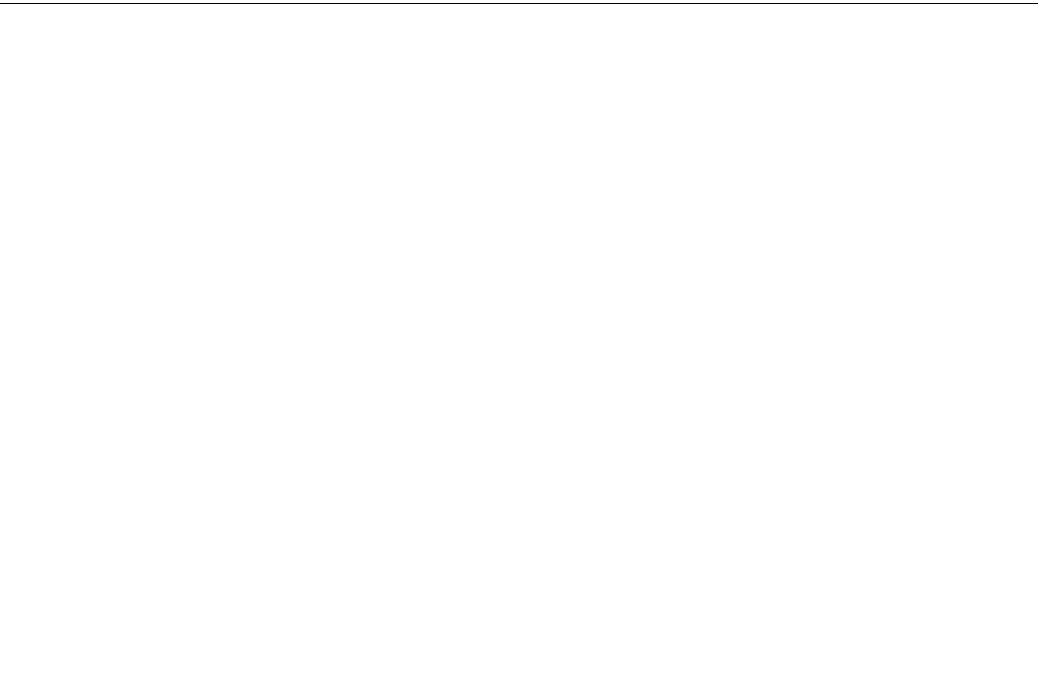
The UN General Assembly Resolution No. 44/225, adopted by consensus in December 1989, established the so-called 'driftnet ban'. It asked for an immediate halt to the expansion of large-scale pelagic drift-net fishing in all regions of the high seas, and a moratorium by 30 June 1992 on such fishing in all ocean regions, except where effective conservation and management measures have been implemented.

The recommendation contained in the resolution refers to a moratorium, that is, an agreed suspension of activity, on large-scale pelagic drift-nets (which can reach up to 30 miles or 48 km). However, it says this 'will not be imposed in a region or, if implemented, can be lifted, should effective conservation and management measures be taken ...'. Hence, the UN Resolution is not a ban. It only recommends a moratorium under certain conditions.

The International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tuna (ICCAT) supports this resolution but has not specifically demanded a drift-net ban. Despite the claims of environmental organizations, neither any UN body (including the FAO) nor the International Whaling Commission has called for a world-wide blanket ban on drift-net fishing. Hence, to call this resolution a ban is incorrect.

Legal length

The current EU regulations which seek to restrict the use of tuna drift-nets were formulated as a result of the UN Resolution No 44/225, to which all EU member states are signatories. The legal length for high-seas drift-nets, introduced in January 1994, is 2.5 km. This also means that any EU vessel found carrying more than 2.5 km of net is breaking the law. Many French boats have been carrying 5 km., claiming that the second 2.5 km is spare', and a precaution against losing the other 2.5 km. It is, however, an illegal



practice. It is being argued by British fishermen that the steps they have taken to introduce ‘dolphin doors’ into their nets represent effective conservation and management measures.

Regardless of all this, focus on the current EU limit of 2.5 km is a bit of a red herring. The EU plans to phase out, by 1997, ‘all drift-net fishing activities causing ecological difficulties, including nets of less than 2.5 km.’ However, ‘ecological difficulties’ are not defined. This leaves the door wide open to debate and conflict.

The EU is now proposing that a scientific study into drift-nets should be carried out by member states whose fishermen use them. It is likely that salmon drift-nets will also come under scrutiny, and possibly be banned. These nets are over 20 km long and are exempted from current high-seas drift-net regulations. These incidents seem to indicate that technology is at stake. The gill-net may be a good gear as a passive one, with big meshes which are selective and let small fish pass through. But there are also giant gill-nets drifting away without any control. For fishing enterprises, the alternative may well be to abandon the gill-nets and go for fine-mesh purse-seines or, worse, mid-water trawls.

The defence of the traditional way of life of the Spanish fishermen and their

labour-intensive technologies may be respectable, but how long can they hold out against the forces of economics and the global market? Their fight has so far been rather successful because of the close links in the community, as reflected by their *confradías*, where owners and workers are all members and knit by a very active nationalist spirit. Further, everyone seems to agree that the decision to label tuna caught by hook is a very good one. Yet, low salaries and poor productivity could still prove stumbling blocks. Some observers wonder whether the depiction of the French villain as a powerful foreign enemy is actually hiding the internal social contradictions of the Spanish fisheries sector.

The battle for fish will not be resolved by unilateral actions of fishermen, or by non consultative regulations formulated by bureaucrats in capital cities far from the sea. International conferences which (proclaim lofty ideals, but continue to exclude the participation of fisherfolk are also unlikely to alleviate the situation. 3

This article is based on reports for Brian O’Riordan in the UK and Pierre Gillet in Belgium

Life is the goal, not fishing

The marginalization of women and small-scale fishermen will not help solve resource conflicts in Norway

Norway is known for its well-regulated fishery based on scientific measures. Biologists have mainly provided the premises for fisheries management, while economists have influenced fisheries authorities only in the past 5 to 10 years.

In contrast to many artisanal fishing communities of the South, the small-scale fishing industry in Norway is not ruled by the rude violence of capital-intensive fishing vessels or by development projects favouring large-scale technologies.

Norway seems to show how it is possible to ensure the more sustainable part of the fishing industry through laws and regulations.

In 1974, the first regulatory law for the fishery was enforced, based on resource considerations. Since then, licences have been regulating large-scale fishing and fishing with active gears like trawls and purse-seines, thus limiting the number of vessels that had access to resources in Norway.

The open access that prevailed in the coastal zone for small-scale fishworkers using passive gears like hook-and-line and longlines was suddenly closed in 1989. This was due to the assessment of very low stocks of the most important Norwegian fish stock, the Arctic cod, and also due to the intensified role in fisheries management of science, including economics.

All fishworkers appeared concerned about the resource depletion, not least the small-scale fishworkers. But the sudden prohibition on coastal fishing for cod in the middle of the peak season, when the cod was coming to the coast to feed, was a shock to men, women and children in the

many scattered coastal communities. They felt they had been asked to foot the bill for the costs of overexploitation by distant-water trawlers.

Small-scale coastal fishing in Norway depends on highly mechanized boats, usually in the range of 4 to 12 m, most equipped with modern electronic technology. Many loans for vessels or equipment are secured against the collateral of family houses. Bankruptcy and forced sales of family homes and vessels swept through the coast, leaving the unfortunate shameful and apathetic, while those who somehow managed through the first crisis remained in fear of the future.

Fisherwomen in Norway have always been concerned with issues of social welfare. They have played an important role in putting these on the agenda of the national fishworkers' association, which is heavily male-dominated.

At the height of the economic, social and human crises striking the coastal fisheries, fisherwomen spontaneously formed coastal women's action groups. They raised their voices before the media and the prime minister, Gro Harlem Brundtland, herself a woman.

Right to livelihood

The fisherwomen claimed their right to a livelihood and they wanted their dignity restored by granting their husbands the opportunity to fish and fulfill their economic obligations. Coastal fishing could not be looked at merely from the perspective of economic efficiency and competition, they argued.

Their demands were aimed at rescuing a way of life, where people were woven into intimate relationships with their social

and natural surroundings. Coastal fishing, not distant-water fishing, maintained the coastal cultural heritage and the many small fishing communities. This was by giving several people opportunities for a meaningful life, not merely assuring prosperity for a few.

Women in Norwegian fishing communities have always been the strings that kept the weaving together. While men are away at seasonal fisheries, these women keep the family and the community going, socially, culturally and materially. They have been the providers of daily food through subsistence husbandry (some sheep and a cow) and of woollen clothing for use at home as well as at sea.

This domestic production suffered in the 1950s and the 1960s. In today's fishing households, due to modernization and specialization, women's inputs, along with their housework, are service tasks which supplement the income from fishing and wage-work.

As fishing opportunities decline, such supplementary income is becoming ever more important.

Norwegian women are also increasingly entering fisheries politics, voicing their concerns for a decent, dignified and just treatment of fishworkers. And among themselves, they discuss increases in wife-battering, family conflicts and divorces prompted by inactivated and frustrated husbands.

The political action by fisherwomen led to some subsidies to lessen the immediate economic burden imposed by the closure of the coastal cod fishery. But the questions of future access to resources and their distribution were settled by the authorities and the national fishworkers' association.

The solution to the resource crisis was the introduction of boat quotas. With that, the open access for coastal fishworkers became history. Limits to fishing efforts were reached by quotas to large-scale as well as small-scale vessels. But in coastal fishing not everyone got a boat quota. Those who had caught the smallest amounts of codfish in the previous three

years were excluded. For the large group of small boats which were excluded by this system, a small amount of the total permissible annual catch was set aside. Those without quotas can compete in fishing for this amount each being limited by a maximum quantity of catch.

Newcomers cannot enter coastal fisheries, except by buying a vessel with a quota. The closed access thus functions as a privatization of what was previously a common property resource. Almost all boatowners are male.

The introduction of boat quotas has thereby formalized fish resources as an all-male property. Although fishing is heavily male-dominated, women have always been fishing—when necessary. They have taken part in the seasonal herring and cod-, fish fishery, where many hands were needed. They have joined their brothers, fathers or husbands at sea, when there was a lack of crew.

They have taken part in subsistence fishing in the home fjord, in between the cooking, washing of clothes and tending animals. If widowed, they have had to fish to provide for their children. Now, however, access is closed and it is not needs but rights that guide the distribution of fish resources.

Ironically, the historical access of women to fish resources, based on needs, never led to any rights. The Norwegian example of exclusion of small-scale fishworkers, when resource considerations call for limited access, is not exceptional. All industrialized fisheries are facing recurrent resource crises and are imposing different limiting management systems in their, own waters.

Closure of the commons

Although it is evident that the general overexploitation results from heavy investments in crude horsepower and ever more efficient fishing technology, this development is not halted. What governments and those fishworkers who gain most from the closure of the commons can easily agree upon is to exclude the marginal groups.

This has happened in Denmark too, in the early 1980s, where part-time small-scale



fishworkers were suddenly defined as spare-time fishers and excluded as intruders. Since then, these fishworkers, who have combined fishing with other sorts of petty industrial or wage-work when available, have gradually lost all rights to fish commercially.

The logic in the management system favours the resource-intensive fisheries, instead of supporting the fisheries that have little impact on fish stocks and which spread the profit across many hands. Small-scale fishing may not be competitive when export revenue is regarded as the only value that counts.

But in small-scale fishing, many fish-workers can live off small quantities of resources. This way of life is dependent on women's management in all kinds of household and community resources, always economizing and doing both the visible and invisible tasks necessary for the production of daily life. In large-scale trawling, only a few fishworkers live off the huge quantities of resources. Yet the more sustainable way of life through small-scale fishing is not respected either by the authorities or the national association of fishworkers.

The agreement between the Norwegian state and the association included the 'trawl ladder'. As the stock of Arctic cod grows and quotas can be augmented, the relative distribution between trawlers and

the coastal fishing vessels can change in favour of the trawlers.

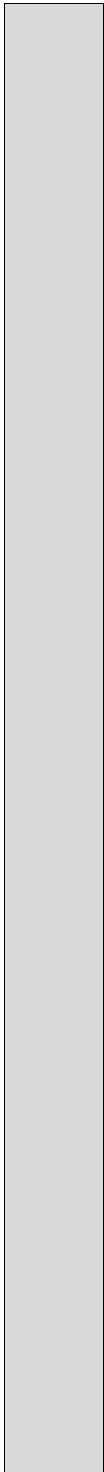
This means that the marginalization of those who took the least codfish is permanent. Even when resources get more plentiful, fishing is not going to be opened for all small-scale fishworkers, women, children or men.

When a vessel is withdrawn from fishing and the owner does not transfer the quota to a new boat, the quota is returned to the state. Newcomers or those who were excluded from the quota system can apply for this very limited number of boat quotas. The rules for redistribution of quotas prohibit any vessel under eight m. in length.

Over-Industrialization

The logic of the 'trawl ladder' and the permanent marginalization of small-scale vessels favour a production pattern that has proved to be unsustainable ecologically as well as socially. Over-Industrialization, not just in fisheries, leads to the marginalization of millions of people throughout Europe.

Fisheries authorities seek support among fisheries economists when they claim that the numbers of fishworkers have to be reduced to reach a sustainable fishing effort. But, in effect, the abolishment of open access works to marginalize women and small-scale fishworkers.



In the debate on fisheries development, Norwegian fisherwomen introduced a different line of argument. The importance of coastal fishing as a means for a livelihood for many small communities and for a socially and culturally meaningful and dignified life is now stressed by two organizations fighting the injustices in current fisheries policies.

The Norwegian Association of Coastal Fishworkers demands that coastal fish-workers get open access to use passive fishing gears responsibly and under municipal control. To be a full member, one still has to be on the official register of fishworkers, which is not open to everyone. But a member has to pay a fee to the competing National Association of Fishworkers. This fee is taken from the amount of the sale of catch. Due to heavy protests, over the past years, this fee has been reduced from one per cent to 0.4 per cent of the catch value.

The second association, the Open Fisheries Commons, which permits everyone living in Norway to be a full member, filed a case against the state, claiming that the historical common right could not be given to an exclusive group of fishworkers at the expense of others. Though the association lost the case in the City Court, it is now taking it up to the High Court.

The resistance to attacks on the more sustainable fishery is alive. The issue of resource depletion also gets support from groups in the environmental movement in Norway. But women’s voices are continuously needed in the debate to keep intact a wider perspective, including the social and cultural aspects of fishing.

Future directions

Women in Norway know that life is the goal, not fishing. The present conflict is more than a fight between interest groups. It concerns the direction of the development of the fisheries of industrialized countries—are they going to support socially and ecologically sustainable ways of life or not? 3

This article is by Eva Munk-Madsen, who is based in Tromsø, Norway, and researches issues relating to women in fisheries.

Challenging degradation

The small-scale fishermen at Brazil are no longer silent witnesses to the degeneration of their coastal and inland waters

The degradation of coastal and inland waters is not a mere academic issue for Brazil's small-scale fishermen. It is a living problem. The growing pollution of lakes, rivers and estuaries affects them directly, since they earn their very livelihood from these waters.

Such pollution has risen dramatically since the 1970s, when small-scale fisheries production represented about 60 per cent of Brazil's total catch and provided a large range of employment opportunities for the rural poor.

Overfishing by large trawlers is not the only factor responsible for the diminishing output of artisanal fisheries. The degradation of the coast, caused by urban and industrial expansion, has contributed too.

These processes began in the mid-1960s, first in the rich southern provinces and later, expanded to the north and northeast.

The Brazilian government's major programme to modernize fisheries through fiscal incentives, began in 1962, has marginalized most of the artisanal fishermen.

The new export-oriented fishing industry was out to maximize profits quickly. In the process, it overfished most of the commercial fish species, such as shrimp and lobster, in the south and north-east.

When catching these species was no longer profitable, the industry moved to the untapped resources of the Amazon basin, continuing the rapid destruction of fish species. In the process, it negatively affected the livelihood of hundreds of coastal and riverine human communities,

since fish is the main source of subsistence among the Amazonian populations.

Speculation in land is a main cause of the destruction of coastal habitats, particularly of mangroves, which is an important ecosystem for the reproduction of many fish species.

Brazil has the world's second largest mangrove area. Although legally protected, mangroves have been extensively cut in many parts of the coast for the construction of houses.

As a result, large areas of mangrove have been destroyed in Guanabara (Rio de Janeiro) and Todos os Santos Bay (Babla Bay). Sand barriers and islands are still being privatized to build marinas for rich people. This marginalizes the artisanal fishermen who live in those areas.

Further, most of Brazil's chemical and petrochemical industries have been built in biologically rich ecosystems, as in Mundau and Manguaba lagoons in Alagoas Province, in Suape (Pernambuco), Cubatao estuary (Sao Paulo) and a lagoon in Rio Grande do Sul.

Toxic waste

In the north-east region, where over 35 per cent of the small-scale fishermen live, the main source of pollution is the *vinhotoa* toxic waste produced by the large sugar-cane mills and illegally dumped into the rivers and estuaries, leading to high fish mortality.

A recent source of pollution is the use of mercury for extraction of gold in most of the rivers of the Amazonian basin, particularly in Madeira-Mamore and Guapore rivers. The situation is alarming, for many communities. Paradoxically, the establishment of protected areas has also



badly affected small-scale fishermen. Many national parks and ecological reserves are being set up in the remaining forest areas of the coast where fishermen live. Their lifestyle and the respect they have for nature, on which they have traditionally based their livelihood, have made them protect important ecosystems like mangroves, forests and estuaries.

However, according to the existing law, whenever a protected area is set up, these coastal fisherfolk have to be expelled. As a result, their traditional activities are severely limited and the fishermen are forced to move into the slum areas of the coastal cities.

Although the social organization of the artisanal fishermen in Brazil is still weak, they have formulated the first reactions against pollution and coastal degradation in the country. By the end of the 1970s, when the military regime was still in force, small-scale fishermen organized protests against the pollution caused by sugar-cane waste in the Goiana river, close to Recife.

In 1984, by the time the military regime ended, this fight against pollution was the initial step for a national mobilization to reorganize the existing structure of fishermen's social representation—the fishermen's guilds (Colonias de Pescadores). These guilds were frequently controlled by local non-fishermen leaders

in a very autocratic way. The first guilds and federations were finally taken over by fishermen leaders in 1984 and 1987 in Pernambuco and Alagoas States.

Between 1986 and 1988, regional and national meetings were organized by small-scale fishermen to present suggestions to the Constitutional Assembly that approved the new constitution.

Own organizations

According to the 1988 constitution, fishermen are free to establish their own organizations. After 1988, the organized fishermen decided to create Monape—the National Organization of Fishermen. It brought these issues to the UN Eco 92 meeting held in Rio de Janeiro.

It is becoming increasingly clear that biological diversity can only be achieved in Brazil when the cultural diversity of fishermen's communities is respected. 3

This article is written by Antonio Cados Diegues, director of the Center of Maritime Cultures (CEMAR), Sao Paulo, Brazil

A new fishery law may help

A proposed law for Thailand could prevent conflicts between industrial and small-scale fisheries, as well as help conserve resources

Until the 1950s, inland water fishery was the mainstay of Thai fisheries. During this period, the marine fishery was confined to coastal waters with the use, mainly, of non-powered sail boats. Trawl fishery was introduced in 1960. Subsequently, other industrial fisheries like purse-seining helped the Thai marine fishery to grow. The total marine fishery production rose from 30,000 tonnes in 1960 to 2.8 million tonnes in 1991.

Thai marine fishery has a dual structure comprising coastal fishery, and offshore and distant-water fishery. The former is operated by fisherfolk households and is the small-scale fishery, while the latter, operated by enterprises using hired fishermen, is the industrial fishery. This dual structure exists in almost all Asian countries, including Japan.

By 1990, there were 47,836 fishery establishments throughout Thailand. Of this, 89 per cent or 42,422 were fishery households engaged in coastal fishery. The remainder were enterprises engaged in offshore and distant-water fisheries.

Since its inception, the Thai trawl fishery has come into conflict with coastal fishery, as it tends to operate in the coastal waters. In the absence of a restricted fishing licence system in industrial fisheries, the number of trawlers increased tremendously. The 1990 marine fishery inter-census survey put the total number of trawlers at 7,100. Although the figures show a declining trend since 1985, this growth led to the overexploitation of demersal resources in Thai waters. Some trawlers operate without permits.

In contrast to the industrial fishery, the small-scale fishery in Thailand has many other problems: industrial fishing's

encroachment into coastal waters, depletion of coastal resources by coastal fishermen themselves, conflicts between different groups of small-scale fishermen, and declining income leading to lower standards of living.

The present Fisheries Act was enacted in 1953, when Thai marine fisheries were still at an infant state and the management of fisheries was not required. Hence, the current Act has no provision for fishing rights and licences which could help establish a fisheries management programme.

A fishing right is normally granted to a fishermen's organization established at the level of a fishing village or a larger area. In Thailand, fishermen's organizations are hardly developed. There is also the question of the extent of the administrative area within which the organization should be established.

There is a close link between the sea area granted by a fishing right and the length of the sea coast where the fishermen's organization is based. Thus, when the length of the coast is short, the actual sea area for fishing will be small.

Unit areas

In terms of the number of fishing households, a village would be too small but a district would be just right in size. However, where two distinct fishing communities exist, the district could not always be used as the area for the establishment of a fishermen's organization. Where fishing households are plentiful for a district, like the provincial capital, a subdistrict could be the unit area.

Surveys among fishermen in several villages in Trang and Surat Thani



provinces revealed their acceptance of the concept.

In Pattani, a Muslim province in predominantly Buddhist Thailand, the village chief and his colleagues expressed full agreement with the concept. This is especially noteworthy since Thai government officials have reported difficulties in dealing with religious minorities.

In Surat Thani province is a fishing village where an NGO has already worked to establish fishing rights and build an artificial reef. To do this, the NGO helped the villagers set up their own fishermen's organization.

According to Pisit Charnsnoh, president of the Yadfon Association of Trang province, the association has been working with 17 small fishing villages in Sikao and Kantang districts of the province for the conservation of coastal fishery resources, in close collaboration with local fishermen.

Coastal fishery management by means of the fishing right will greatly ease the problems encountered by the small-scale fishery. However, a harmonious development of Thai fishery as a whole can not be achieved through the fishing rights system alone. A single law covering every aspect of fishery is needed.

This Fishery Development and Management Law will stipulate the basic fishery policy to be followed by the government. Regulation through ministerial decrees will give the government flexibility to in corporate revisions according to change in the fisheries sector or the nations economy.

The most important component of the new fishery law should be the twin system of fishing rights and fishing licences. In the case of coastal fisheries, the provincial governor will be responsible for the fisheries management by granting fishing rights. At the same time, the governor should encourage fishermen's organizations to initiate their own fishery management schemes.

For fisheries not covered by any fishing rights, such as baby trawl and push-net fisheries, the governor should establish a restricted fishing licence system by limiting the number of licences, the size of boats, the number and size of gear, and so on. In the case of offshore fisheries, which operate beyond the coastal waters but within Thai waters, the Director General (DG) of the Department of Fisheries (DOF) will be responsible for the management through restricted fishing licences. To prevent a further increase in the number of trawlers, a pre-permit system for the construction of new inboard-powered fishing boats should be introduced as early as possible.

Measures needed

Further, to discourage the continued operation of trawl fishery, measures like the imposition of a resource rent should be considered, in addition to the payment of the normal licence fee. For the distant-water fishery beyond Thai waters, the DG of the DOF should issue fishing licence, on the condition that the operator of the boat has a fishing permit from the respective foreign country.

This article, written by Tadashi Yarnamoto, Professor Emeritus of Nihon University, Tokyo, is based on his report for a proposed fishery law for Thailand

Growing pressure

Although not a fish-eating nation itself, the Netherlands' fisheries are experiencing strains, particularly on the export-oriented sector

The Netherlands has a legal 20-km exclusive zone for the small-scale fishery sector, comprising trawlers of less than 300 hp and averaging 150 hp. In the north of the country, this zone falls within the borders of the Waddenzee.

This, on the one hand, is partly a bird and flora sanctuary and, on the other, one of the most polluted seas of northern Europe, thanks primarily to industrial waste from Germany.

At the bottom of the Waddenzee, near the coast, there is a large stock of natural gas. This is one of the major items of export from the Netherlands, especially to countries of the former Soviet Union.

For many years, there had been a slowdown in the growth of gas exploitation due to environmental reasons like the sinking of the sea bottom.

Now, however, there is growing pressure on the government from oil companies like Shell to lift the ban on further exploitation for gas.

In view of the usual financial crisis of the government and the shortsightedness of politicians, it seems that these oil companies will win rights of exploitation.

Greenpeace and other environmental action groups have organized a protest campaign against this selfish business of companies like Shell and others. The campaign is supported by fishermen's organizations and has drawn good response from the public.

While the government has still not decided on the matter, it is visibly alerted by public opinion. This is because the general elections are nearing and the environmental issue is at present one of

the most sensitive political issues in the Netherlands.

After a campaign by small-scale fishermen, marine biologists and environmental activists, the EEC Council for Fisheries had, in 1989, founded a sanctuary in the North Sea, close to the Netherlands, for plaice, one of the victims of overfishing.

This sanctuary, called the 'Plaice Box', was not initially very successful, since the big trawlers continued their overfishing practices in the surrounding areas.

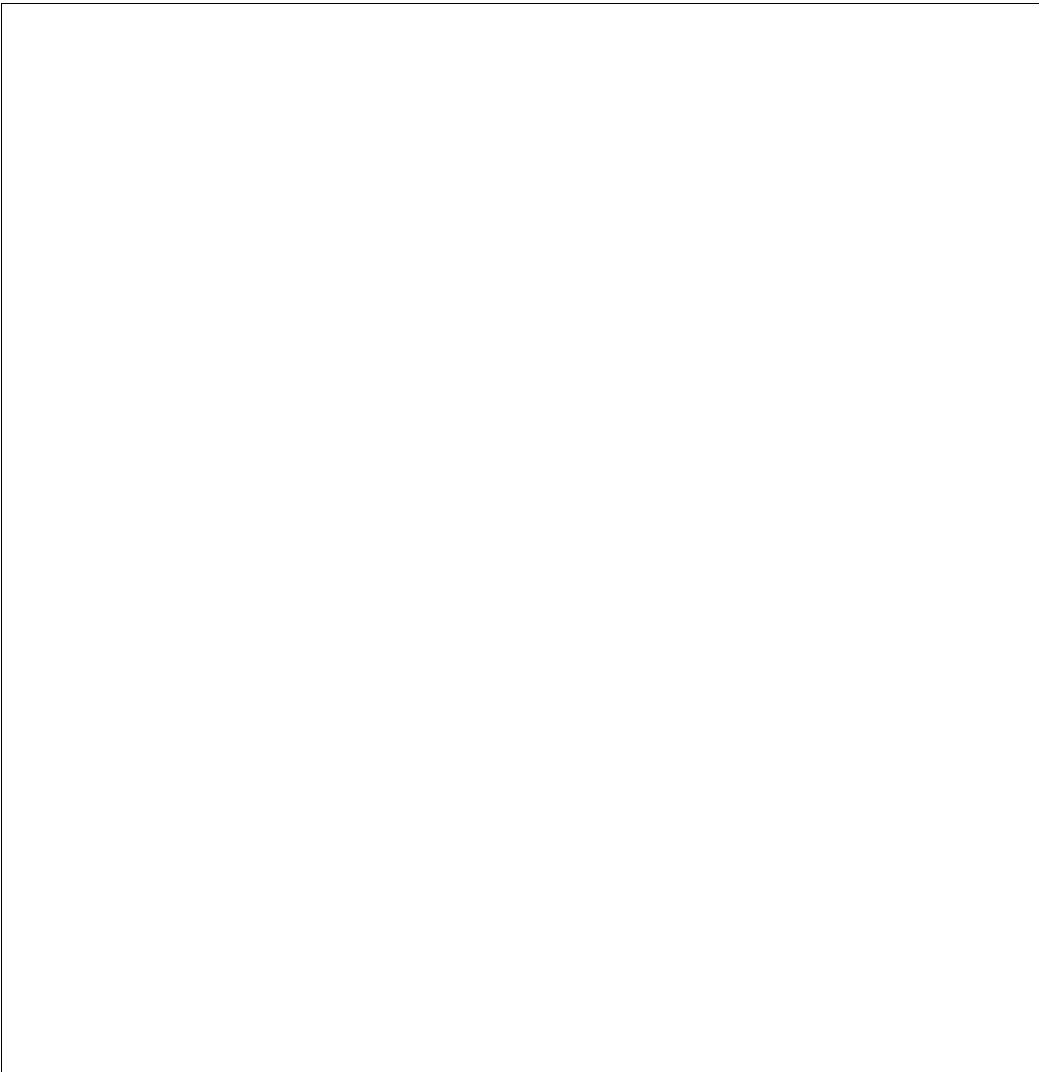
Furthermore, the Plaice Box was closed for only a few months in the year, during the prawn season, and as soon as it was opened, all the huge trawlers rushed in and 'cleaned up' the place within a few days, leaving nothing for the small-scale fishermen.

The small-scale fishermen's organizations and Greenpeace are now campaigning for a closure of the Plaice Box for the whole year and for allowing only the small-scale sector to fish in the Box during a few months of the year.

At present, fish prices in the Netherlands are among the highest in Europe. This is in contrast to France, where cheap fish from eastern Europe is dumped. One reason for the high price is the strict control on the quotas of the Dutch fishermen.

Plenty of imports

This has resulted in a decline in supply of fish in the Dutch market. As there is a great demand for fish, the Netherlands now has to import plenty of it. Otherwise the price of fish would rise further. Most of the fish is bought by the processing industries which re-export them mainly to Spain and



France, where the large, particularly for high-quality fish.

The largest shrimp processing industry in Europe is situated in Groningen, in the north of the Netherlands.

The industry here too imports prawns from Malaysia and Sri Lanka in Asia and then takes them, along with the prawns from the Netherlands, to Poland and the Baltic states to be peeled.

This is for two reasons. The first is because the labour costs of women workers in these countries are much lower. The second reason has to do with laws on hygiene and the environment, which are supposedly more lax than in the Netherlands.

So, even though the Netherlands is not a fish-eating nation, it is a 'good' trading nation.



This piece is by Netherlands-based Cornelia Quist formerly a co-ordinator of ICSF's Women in Fisheries programme

Be precise and neutral, please

The article on Japanese fisheries in the February 1994 issue of SAMUDRA has elicited the following critical reaction

The article 'Not by fish alone', which appeared in Issue No. 9 of SAMUDRA, does not explain precisely why the price of fish imported into Japan is double that prevailing in other countries. Japan imports high-quality fish such as shrimp, tuna and salmon, and hence the price is high.

Many other countries import different species of basically low-price fish. The article, however, gives the impression that in Japan, the price of every species of fish is much higher than in other countries.

The figure of 12,202,000 tonnes mentioned as the Japanese consumption refers to the weight of fish in the fresh form. However, the 2,850,000 tonnes of fish imported is the weight of value-added products like headed, gutted, salted or canned fish, fish-meal, and soon. Taking into consideration the weight in the fresh form, the latter figure should be 3,823,000 tonnes.

If the figure of 1,570,000 tonnes for fish production in the Meiji era is correct, then the production in recent years represents a sevenfold, not fourfold, increase.

The annual per capita fish consumption in 1975 was 76.4 kg, not 38.9 kg. The claim that 'by 1989 this had almost doubled to 72.1kg' is completely incorrect.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the annual per capita fish consumption in Japan remained at the level of around 70 kg.

The issue of 'oversupply' to the domestic market is not explained clearly and the term appears suddenly, with no linkage to what had been written earlier. The meaning of terms like 'ambit farming', 'nurturing' and 'round haul nets' are not

clear. We have no such technical terms nor do we use them.

The opinion that 'how we eat fish affects the world's ecosystem' is one-sided. Contrary to the statement that 'anxieties about managing and restructuring the fisheries are not widespread'; many Japanese are aware of the structural changes in Japanese fisheries.

The paragraph on the first phase of growth in Japanese fisheries is not precise. During the first phase of growth, the production of fish peaked in 1936 at 4.3 million tonnes and declined towards the end of the Second World War to only 1.8 million tonnes. The total catch of all types of purse-seine fisheries in 1986 was 4.4 million tonnes, not 5.4 million tonnes. Of the total catch of pilchard, only about 10 per cent is eaten by consumers.

As for the remaining 90 per cent, half is used for fish-meal and the other half is used as feed for coastal aquaculture. Fish-meal is never used as fertilizer. The assertion that the domestic market expanded 'bringing into its grip even remote rural areas' is beautiful English, but the reader may not understand its meaning.

The sentence about discarded whale and tuna meat will lead to great misunderstanding among foreign readers. Japanese fishery has never discarded whale and tuna meat. Since its inception, Japanese whaling has never discarded whale meat.

Two types of joint ventures

There are two types of joint ventures in Japanese fisheries. One is established with investments from both a Japanese and a foreign company. This is what should be called a real joint venture.

<div>Reponse</div>	
	<p>However, after the declaration of the 200-mile fisheries conservation zone, American companies proposed that Japanese companies buy fish on the high seas from us fishing boats. The US calls this sale a 'Joint venture' but it is not a real joint venture. Since this fact is not mentioned, the reader may get confused.</p> <p>The declaration that 'Japan's coastal environment remains destroyed and unfit for the survival of shellfish' may be true for part of the coast, not for its entirety. The 1988 fishery census in Japan identified 1,339 cases of fishermen's own fisheries management organizations throughout the country. These were actually created by the initiative of fishermen themselves. In many instances, these are supported by government marine ranching schemes.</p> <p>Community-based management Typically, Japan is a country where a community-based coastal fisheries management system has been most well-developed.</p> <p>Japanese fisheries are not trying to cope with the challenge of increasing production. Due to economic constraints, it is no use for Japan to increase its volume of fish production. What Japan is now trying to do is to increase the production of quality fish so that fishermen's income will rise, resulting in the betterment of their living conditions. 3</p> <div> <p>This response comes from Tadashi Yamamoto, president of the Japan International Fisheries Research Society, Tokyo and also Professor Emeritus of Nihon University.</p> </div>

Join with the likes of Greenpeace?

There is a need to debate the pros and cons of co-operating and working together with environmental groups like Greenpeace

Now is the appropriate time to debate a proposed 'code of collaboration' with environmentalists—not only Greenpeace—since it coincides with the so-called 'tuna war' between mainly French and Spanish fishermen in the Bay of Biscay in the summer of 1994.

As a friend of a number of French fishermen, my reactions reflect my own 'involved' point of view. But I do not claim to speak for the fishermen themselves.

We do need to find ways of working with environmentalists, even if it proves difficult to do so in some regions. I feel that such regional difficulties need to be carefully considered by both ICSF and Greenpeace, in order for a credible *global* strategy on management of fisheries resources.

At the same time, we are also obliged to address the regional difficulties 'on their own merits', as separate issues, since it is often a question of life or death for fish-workers affected both by environmentalist prohibitions and administrative regulations.

In Europe, since fishermen in many places are fighting for their survival, ICSF needs to address the drift-net issue as the tip of the iceberg of a deep-seated resource management problem. Only then can we progress with any promotion of sustainable fisheries in Europe.

In the South, too, the environmentalist approach often tends to ignore the constraints of fishworkers' efforts to survive and confront change imposed from outside their community.

In the long term, however, it is surely counter-productive for fishworkers and

environmentalists to be on opposing sides. After all the protection of the resource must be the ultimate guarantee of fishworkers' survival and development.

That there should be confrontation is hardly surprising when the environmentalist passion is based solely on the need to protect fauna and flora. Generally speaking, there is a need for reciprocal analysis, education and negotiation.

Can ICSF play a role, considering its interaction with both sides involved? I believe it would be very worthwhile to try. On the 'tuna war' issue, ICSF could help to pour the proverbial oil on troubled waters.

Be that as it may, the fact remains that Greenpeace is presently training the 'ecological weapon' on fishworkers in Europe, and no distinction is made between long-distance fleets and local fish-workers. This reflects the position which seemed to be taken for granted—by both Greenpeace and the EU at the New York United Nations Conference on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks. The EU was actually upholding the interests of the long-distance fleets.

Clarify distinction

The distinction needs to be clarified both by Greenpeace and by fishworkers themselves. This is important in order to advance the principle that international fisheries agreements do *not* resolve fisheries management problems in Community waters.

Greenpeace appears to limit its defence of fishworkers' participation in resource management to indigenous peoples, like



Eskimos and some other traditional fishermen in the South. This kind of reduction does not properly address the essential problem of how fishworkers' participation in the management of resources on a global basis can be compatible with national sovereignty over access to resources.

Moreover, there needs to be a greater focus on the weaknesses of national sovereignty. This is ultimately responsible for resource depletion. Both regional management schemes and fishworker involvement surely require that national sovereignty be more flexible enough to recognize the potential of fishworkers to *organize* in an autonomous fashion, world-wide.

In Europe, banning drift-nets is of questionable justification, with regard to the long-term protection of natural resources. Some happenings induce cynicism: 2.5-km drift-nets are *de facto* equated with 100-km ones in the Pacific before the ban; pictures of captured dolphins (are they even of European waters?) are used over and over again on TV; Greenpeace's campaign dates back to the call for a UN ban on drift-nets in the Pacific, meaning that Greenpeace wanted to scare off the EC from backing Japan; and now the drift-net campaign is closely tied to Greenpeace's fund-raising strategy. Pitching fishworkers against dolphins in the public mind is a lousy trick, especially in the context of the suffering caused by the present fisheries

crisis in Europe. It reinforces the idea that fishworkers are basically red-necked hunters, incapable responsible organization.

The environmentalists' campaigns also tend to project amalgamated stereotypes in the press. For instance, a recent article in the Swiss magazine **24 heures**, dated 4 August 1994, refers to '40 to 45 small fishermen from Senegal dying each year caught up in the meshes of large seiners'!

Unfortunately, by enhancing anti-fish-worker sentiment, Greenpeace effectively prevents fishworkers from taking on board positive ecological options on resource management. The fact that fishworkers' organizations have taken some initiative in denouncing the loss of toxic wastes from merchant vessels has not been taken up seriously by Greenpeace.

Greenpeace's focus on the alleged ecological drawbacks of drift-nets in the Franco-Spanish cod war may unfortunately be clouding the issue of resource management in Community waters, since the main problem is that of the much too large Spanish fleet. This is a very thorny social problem.

Nonetheless, the Spanish are using the 'ecological weapon' against the French fishermen, while being the principal beneficiaries of the EU's policy on fisheries agreements with ACP (African, Caribbean and Pacific) states. It should be considered that the European decommissioning scheme is probably hurting mainly the unorganized local fishermen of Europe, who are the least likely to go off fishing in ACP waters.

Diverting public attention

I am not sure whether Greenpeace itself is supporting the Spanish fishermen on the grounds that rod-and-line fishing is more ecological than drift-netting. It would appear, though, that the Greenpeace campaign is diverting public attention from the fact that no amount of international fisheries agreements will be sufficient to improve resource management in Community waters. For the time being, at any rate, it is just causing much bad blood among fishermen in Europe.

It ought to be in the interests of the vast majority of European fishworkers to take a stand, on the amounts being spent by the EU on monetary compensations for access rights—941m ECU out of total payment appropriations of the European Common Fisheries Policy of 1,743m ECU between 1987 and 1992. But the media is a lot more interested in the fighting at sea.

I also regard the French government's attitude as quite cynical. Greenpeace is so badly regarded in France that it gives further justification for the government to send gun-boats to the fishing area in the Bay of Biscay. This helps the government tell the fishworkers, 'Look what we're doing for you!', while, in fact, it is simply exercising control over the fishermen without offering them greater responsibility in the management of their affairs, and especially without itself taking more blame for the overall fisheries crisis. The French government is more ambiguous than the British over this, even if it appears to be doing much more at the Brussels level.

It should also be borne in mind that the Senegalese government is using the ecologists to discredit the CNPS's campaign on fisheries agreements, by spreading the message: 'the campaign is basically ecologist (that is, uninformed and emotional), and the CNPS is just being used and has no valid demands of its own'. This follows the pattern of previous official opposition to the CNPS, through political or religious considerations, to discredit the CNPS's efforts to be recognized as serious actors in the fishery sector, both nationally and internationally. While the CM's is refuting this strongly, it is all the more wary of the ecologist drive because of the friendly relations that have been built up with the Breton fishermen over the years, which helped gain international recognition for the CNPS.

There is a real risk that the Greenpeace drift-net campaign (or any other blanket condemnation of European fishermen) could discredit ICSF's campaign on fisheries agreements in Europe (which is also backed by Greenpeace), especially in France. The CNPS needs to maintain its support in Europe, rather than see it

divided. This is why, at the press conference on the renegotiation of the EU-Senegal agreement, which was held in Brussels on 12 July, it was necessary to insist that the conference got a Coalition for Fair Fisheries Agreements (CFFA) stamp, rather than a solely Greenpeace billing.

How can Greenpeace, and other ecologist organizations, best serve the fishworker's cause? If Greenpeace is seeking ICSF endorsement as a South-based organization, there should surely be many clarifications. But a lot will depend on how fishworkers' organizations can represent their own views on ecological issues.

As far as Europe is concerned, the present anger with Greenpeace could, paradoxically, bring some fishworkers' organizations closer together to define a common position, at least on drift-nets, resource management and perhaps even on fisheries agreements. It should be discussed with Greenpeace how the 'ecological weapon' can be used in favour of the participation of fishworkers' organizations in resource management and more autonomous organization among fishworkers. Although the Spanish and Greenpeace are calling for a complete ban on drift-nets, it is not a foregone conclusion.

Co-existence

A recent report by Pierre Gillet of ICSF states that 'it should be clearly said once again that the drift-nets (involved in the Bay of Biscay tuna war) are passive and selective and that the accusations regarding their anti-ecological nature are false. To enable co-existence between different fishing techniques in the same fishing areas, there must be discussion among fishermen, *and a desire not to be provocative. Moreover, it would seem that we will have no peace until there is a proper European coastguard service*'. **3**

These views have been articulated by James Smith a member of ICSF and the Manager, Programme Mer, CCFD, Paris

Greenpeace

Disagree, but let's still collaborate

Though it has some differences with fishworkers' organizations, Greenpeace feels there is much to gain from working together

We agree with much of what James Smith says, particularly concerning the need for fish-workers and environmentalists to work together wherever possible. There are, however, several points which require clarification.

To begin with, Greenpeace is an international organization dedicated to the protection of the environment. It works on a wide range of issues, apart from the issue of large-scale drift-net fishing. Greenpeace campaigns on such issues as the elimination of toxic substances and hazardous waste, nuclear disarmament, deforestation, global climate change, fisheries and the protection of the oceans.

Ocean issues, in particular, is an area of work in which Greenpeace has been involved for many years. One of the more recent and important successes has been the effort to halt the dumping of radioactive and industrial waste at sea.

Greenpeace has campaigned long and hard on these issues through a combination of research, documentation, public awareness and confrontations at sea to draw attention to the harmful effects of such dumping and to pressure governments to prohibit the disposal of these wastes at sea.

As we began the campaign in earnest, in the early 1980s, we felt that it was possible to eventually bring a halt to the disposal of radioactive waste, in part because of the active support, collaboration and involvement of fishermen in the North-east Atlantic and Gulf of Biscay (in particular, those from Galicia, France and Ireland). In November 1993, the London Convention, an international treaty organization governing the disposal of

wastes at sea, agreed to a permanent ban on the disposal of radioactive and industrial wastes in the oceans.

Though Greenpeace was by no means the only organization working on this issue, we were instrumental in pressuring key governments to agree to the ban. A treaty agreement alone, however, without effective compliance and enforcement, will not necessarily mean the end of the dumping of these wastes at sea. We intend to remain vigilant on this issue and expose and confront companies, vessels and nations which violate the ban.

Greenpeace is also engaged in a campaign against large-scale drift-net fishing. We initially began working on this issue in the North Pacific, over ten years ago, together with organizations representing thousands of coastal fishermen along the west coast of North America.

Throughout the 1980s a fleet of some 1000 vessels fished on the high seas of the North Pacific for such species as tuna, salmon, swordfish and squid.

Working together

As this practice spread to other regions of the world's oceans, we began working with organizations as well as governments in many different parts of the world. For example, in the South Pacific we worked with the New Zealand Federation of Commercial Fishermen and the South Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency, amongst others. The culmination of these efforts on the part of Greenpeace and many other organizations, including coastal fish-workers' organizations, was a unanimous resolution, adopted by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in 1991, calling for a global moratorium on drift-net fishing on the high seas starting in 1993.

Based on the recent report of the Secretary-General of the UN, it is clear that European Union (EU) countries, particularly France and Italy, are alone, amongst nations of the world, in violating the UN moratorium.

And both the French and Italian governments have heavily lobbied the EU to allow their fleets to continue the practice. This poses a direct threat to the global effort to ensure the cessation of high-seas drift-net fishing in all regions of the world's oceans.

Apart from this, the fact is that large-scale drift-net fishing is an indiscriminate and wasteful method of fishing and there are alternatives. Greenpeace is not alone in recognizing the threat posed by the French and Italian drift-net fisheries.

Coastal fishers from the Basque country of the north of Spain have been fighting against the French drift-net fishery in the North-east Atlantic out of legitimate concern over the sustainability of the fish stocks and the threat this new technology poses to their more traditional methods of fishing and their livelihoods. Likewise, coastal fishworkers in the Mediterranean have expressed vehement opposition to the Italian drift-net fishery in the Mediterranean Sea. It is worth mentioning that the French drift-net fishery is not a traditional fishery but, rather, largely a creation of the state.

Since the mid-1980s, France has devoted substantial technical and financial resources to reviving the albacore fishery in France, after a 20-year decline (during which time France directed significant investments toward developing tuna fishing in tropical waters). This has been done through promoting and providing incentives to French fishermen for the use of large-scale drift-nets to fish for tuna in the North-east Atlantic.

The government's effort is comparable, in many ways, to the classic pattern of fisheries aid to developing countries. The government programme was designed, in our view, to provide quick returns, economic as well as political, without taking into consideration the longer term social or environmental consequences of developing a drift-net fishery in the region.

If the French government were to devote as much effort and resources to seeking alternatives as it has to promoting and defending drift-net fishing, we believe the fishworkers and the environment would be much better served.

Mutual understanding

We have worked closely with organizations of fishworkers in both Spain and Greece opposing the French and Italian drift-net fishing, based on a mutual interest in sustainable fishing. In addition, we are concerned over the

impact of this method of fishing on other species in the marine environment, not solely the impact on fish of commercial value.

In this regard, James Smith's reference to Greenpeace training the 'ecological weapon' on European fishworkers, enhancing anti-fishworker sentiment in Europe and engaging in blanket condemnation of European fishworkers is somewhat perplexing. We have worked with fishworkers' organizations in Europe (and in other areas of the world) on drift-net fishing, as well as a range of other issues of mutual concern.

Recently, for example, we have been working with the largest union in Denmark, SID, as well as coastal fishworkers' organizations in Belgium, on marine pollution issues, in preparation for the North Sea Ministers Conference in 1995.

James Smith also contends that Greenpeace's support for the participation of fishworkers' organizations in resource management is limited to indigenous peoples and some other traditional fishermen from the South.

Greenpeace has, at the UN and elsewhere, consistently advocated for the right of fishworkers and other interested NGOs, both in the North and the South, to participate in decision-making with respect to fisheries management and development.

However, this should not imply that we will always be in agreement with the positions taken by fishworkers' or other organizations involved in fisheries management decisions.

But, to the extent the process can be made participatory; we have much to gain from working together on areas of common interest. As regards CNPS, we hope that our work in helping publicize CNPS' concerns and demands internationally, both individually and as a member of the CFFA, has proved beneficial to CNPS.

Certainly, the recent involvement of CNPS in the final negotiations over the new agreement between the EU and Senegal appears to be an important step toward recognizing the right of artisanal fishworkers to participate in these negotiations. Although we believe that Greenpeace support has been of assistance to CNPS, the extent to which Greenpeace's support is useful is ultimately a matter for CNPS to decide.

James Smith does raise a number of significant points. We agree with his statements that it is important for fishworkers and environmentalists to find ways of working together.

*To the extent the process
can be made participatory;
we have much to gain from
working together on areas
of common interest*

Certainly, there are many areas where the interests of fishworkers' and environmental organizations coincide. This clearly emerged from the discussions at the ICSF Cebu Conference, as reflected in the Final Conference Statement.

At the same time, it is important to recognize that the interests of fishworkers and environmentalists may or will not always be the same. This is all the more obvious when one considers the fact that, just as fishworker's organizations do not agree with each other and, in fact, may take opposing views on some issues, the same holds true of environmental organizations.

Greenpeace's framework

What is needed is a clear understanding of the various positions advocated by organizations of fishworkers, environmentalists and others. The framework for Greenpeace's approach to fisheries, as outlined in the positions we have put forward at the UN Conference on Straddling Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, contains the following elements:

- stringent conservation standards and measures must be applied to fisheries to ensure sustainability;
- significant reductions in large-scale fishing capacity;

SAMUDRA

FOR CEBU

INTERNATIONAL COLLECTIVE IN SUPPORT OF FISHWORKERS

Today

- Opening Session
Chapel, 9:00
- Plenary Session
St. Alphonsus, 11:30
- Lunch
Dining Hall, 13:00
- Plenary (contd.)
St. Alphonsus, 16:00
- Dinner, Cultural Show
Lobby/Lawn, 19:30

Mabuhay !

Welcome to Cebu, the Queen City of the South of the Philippines. And welcome to the Tenth Anniversary of the Rome Conference and the triennial conference of ICSF.

Mabuhay, the traditional Filipino greeting of welcome, derives from the Tagalog word for 'life'. Today, as 110 persons from 34 countries gather in Cebu to ponder and resolve, that nuance seems singularly fitting—these participants from diverse national and cultural backgrounds are here to address issues which affect the livelihood of thousands of fisherfolk around the world.

Yes, welcome to a period of deliberation which pivots around the issue of livelihood itself.

Conceived as a body responsive to grass roots reality, ICSF draws its mandate from the express demands of fishworkers and their organizations. It is this guiding principle which forms the backbone for the structure of this 6-day conference.

The opening plenary session will see presentations by fishworkers from several countries. These will hopefully reflect a diversity

of experiences, sometimes contrasting, sometimes comparable. It will set the tone for the remainder of the conference.

Subsequently, theme papers will concentrate on the five key areas identified for the conference. These are:

- * coastal environment and fishworkers
- * fishworkers' organizations
- * working conditions and social security
- * technology and energy use
- * transnational linkages in fisheries

In the separate and parallel sessions that follow, working groups will enlarge on the issues thrown up by the theme papers. These discussions will be underpinned by the expectations raised by fishworkers at the start of the conference.

On 7 June, at the concluding plenary session, the

working groups will present their reports. These, along with the deliberations of the preceding days, will form the basis for the preparation of the final conference statement.

The organisers of the conference are hopeful of earnest participation in the days to come. They expect to see a high level of informed reflection on the current status of fisheries.

And, on the practical side, they anticipate several concrete suggestions on how to transcend some of the problems that currently confront fishworkers and their living environment. ☺

Briefly

Samudra for Cebu is a bulletin which will report on the proceedings of this 6-day conference as well as act as a forum for participants to express opinions and viewpoints. These, needless to add, do not necessarily represent the official positions of ICSF.

The venue of the conference, the Holy Family Retreat House, is a large and spacious place, which commands an arresting view of Cebu City. To help you find your way around, a layout plan of the House is displayed on the Notice Board. The rooms where the sessions are to be held have names like St. Alphonsus, St. Gerard etc. The programme schedule lists the sessions and venues.

Don't worry, it's not going to be all work and no fun. Cultural programmes, dinners and a field trip will liven things up.

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From Rome to Cebu...

Today, the 2nd of June 1994, in Cebu is a great day for fishworkers and their supporters worldwide. A decade ago in Rome, on 4 July 1984, there was an air of tentativeness and uncertainty about what we could achieve together.

At Rome our purpose was limited. We came together as a diverse group of fishworkers and their supporters from across the globe to highlight to the fisheries ministers of the world, brought together by the FAO, that fishworkers, not fish alone, should be central to any agenda for fisheries management and development.

Our coming together in Rome, given the constraints of finance, time and the fact that we did not know each other earlier, was our greatest assertion of this principle.

The five-day Roman encounter however achieved more than that. While it brought to the fore our diversity, it focused more sharply on the threats which bind together the common future of fishworkers. The fishworkers stressed the need for them to be more involved in national and regional level struggles which could be bolstered with international solidarity by supporters. The Rome conference called for a "just, participatory and sustainable fisheries development and management process."

Looking back over the decade, this seems to be the unmistakable direction taken by the various strands of local action—be it in Chile, Canada, Brasil, Senegal, India or the Philippines, to name a few countries. It also provided the basis for the formalisation of the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF) in 1986.

In Cebu today we meet again—fishworkers and their supporters—with a firm sense of togetherness, purpose and resolve. Our assertions of the last decade have finally been accepted at various international forums—FAO, UNCED, ILO.

We now have the onus of proposing an agenda for concrete action to ensure that these hopes and aspirations can translate into live realities. Although today we are better equipped nationally, regionally and internationally to undertake this calling, it will be no easy task. This is particularly true if we are committed to creating our priorities out of the concerns emerging from the struggles of the fishworkers. We must avoid the trap of reducing the struggles of live local reality into mere slogans for global action.

We need to ask ourselves two questions: How do we continue to be sensitive and responsive to the numerous issues that impinge harshly on fishworker families and communities and simultaneously tackle the global forces which are often responsible for them? Can we aggregate the numerous ripples of hope that emanate at the local level to produce waves of change at the international realm?

Surely, only a strategy of continued local involvement with fishworkers alongside our global actions can assure this. It is this approach which has distinguished the ICSF network since its formation in 1986: our ability to think and act both locally and globally. This alone has given us our credibility and is our *raison d'être*.

There were no paved roads from Rome to Cebu. But through the uniting force of the currents of the "samudra" (the expanse of ocean) our hopes and aspirations from around the globe have brought us together once again. This time we decide on our voyage into the 21st century. We must hope that the time we spend together will provide for committed interaction; openness to new thoughts and ideas; careful consideration of options; and the pledge to be in solidarity with one another.

Long live the fishworkers movements! And life to ICSF for as long as it is relevant to the movements!

John Kurien

John Kurien is a social scientist who works at the Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum, India. He is also a member of the Animation Team of ICSF and was instrumental in organising the Rome Conference.

“

Fishworkers must move from the periphery to the centre of the sights of fisheries development and management

— Brochure announcing the International Conference of Fishworkers and their Supporters, Rome, 1984

Fishermen are the centre of the concern for sustainable fisheries development and they are entitled to a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature

— UNCED and its Implications for Fisheries
FAO Document, 1993

”

VOICES

VOICES

'Cebu is special'

in

CONVERSATION

Nenita Cura, director, Family Center, Asian Social Institute, Manila is the Conference Co-ordinator in the Philippines. She talks about what went into the making of this conference

Is this the first time a conference of this size is being organised by ICSF in this part of the world?

Yes, in terms of scale or magnitude, this is a first.

How did you go about organising this conference?

At the ICSF Animation Team meeting last year, we decided on three strategic levels of planning. We discussed broadly the themes and subthemes and what we expected of the conference. Being the tenth anniversary of the Rome Conference, we felt this would be very special and therefore we had to prepare well.

The Madras office did the bulk of the administrative and monitoring work. We created the Manila steering committee which discussed the venue and programme in co-ordination with Madras. We set up a local committee in Cebu for orientation of the local fishermen on the conference and its implication for their struggle. We also called all the national fishermen's organisations in the Philippines for a meeting to invite them to participate in the Cebu meeting. I found this challenging because it needed levelling off. This should be an occasion which should unite, not divide, us.

Who knows, the preparation for this conference may yet be the medium by which all these differences could be resolved. This is very important because one reason we chose Cebu as the venue is the strong fishermen support base we have here.

What's so special about Cebu?

Cebu is the second most developed city in the Philippines. It is developing so fast that we sometimes call it Ce-boom! It has a strong fishworkers' base with 26



local organisations and 1333 active fishworker members. Cebu also imparts a sense of history. Magellan landed here in 1521 and was killed by the chieftain of Mactan Island who was called Lapu-lapu, now immortalised in

the name of a city as well as a popular fish!

And why was the Holy Family Retreat House chosen?

First, because of its central facilities and the breezy building which lets in lots of light and is less dependent on energy. Also, the diocese here is supporting us with all its facilities. This is about the best conference venue in Cebu. The next best would have been a hotel and we didn't want to do that.

What kind of staff support have you been able to mobilise?

The whole staff of the Family Center of the Asian Social Institute is working on the conference. The Cebu local committee is headed by no less than Cardinal Ricardo Vidal himself, which helps us get things done. We also have media support through press conferences and interactions with the local press.

Are you nervous about the conference?

Honestly not, because I think we are prepared. It took us one year to do our homework. As I always say, we do our best and leave the rest to God!

THE final tally has yet to come in, but it looks like a record haul -- 110 men and women from 34 countries representing five continents (save Antarctica and Australia) are now here at Cebu.

£

IT is for the first time that an international ICSF meet is bringing together fishworkers from the South Pacific countries of Fiji and Solomon Islands as well as Namibia, Gambia, Vietnam, Indonesia, Maldives, Ecuador, Peru and Brasil.

THERE are also supporters from Papua New Guinea and New Zealand and a ministry of fisheries official from the government of Vietnam.

CONFERENCE NEWS

SEVERAL groups have come with audiovisual presentations on their fisheries and the problems they face. These will be screened during the lunch breaks.

ARRANGEMENTS have been made for simultaneous translations of the plenary sessions of the conference from English to Spanish and French.

£

WHILE several discussions have been held in different forums, there is still very little baseline data on the destruction of marine habitats. The subject of coastal resource management, therefore, finds an important place in the conference agenda.

A Roman Flashback

In July 1984, Rome was witness to the International Conference of Fishworkers and their Supporters. That epochal meet came up with these recommendations

We fishworkers and their supporters from 34 countries of the world who struggle for survival and sometimes die for their cause, urge governments to be responsive to the demands of the local fishworkers' organizations to:

- * Reserve and protect for small-scale fishing all near-shore waters and fishing grounds accessible to it
- * Ban all technologies that disturb the balance of the ecosystem either through overfishing or pollution and prevent the use of chemicals that are forbidden in the industrialized countries
- * Associate local fishermen's organizations or fishermen communities in devising and implementing regulatory measures (with concrete possibilities of control)
- * Respect and guarantee the fundamental rights of fishworkers to free association; withdraw all measures that penalize the workers

We recommend that governments of the Third World co-operate on a regional basis to ensure effective management of their fish resources in the long term. We stress the essential role of women in fishing communi-

ties considering their sensitivity to the deteriorating quality of life.

We support them in getting organised to:

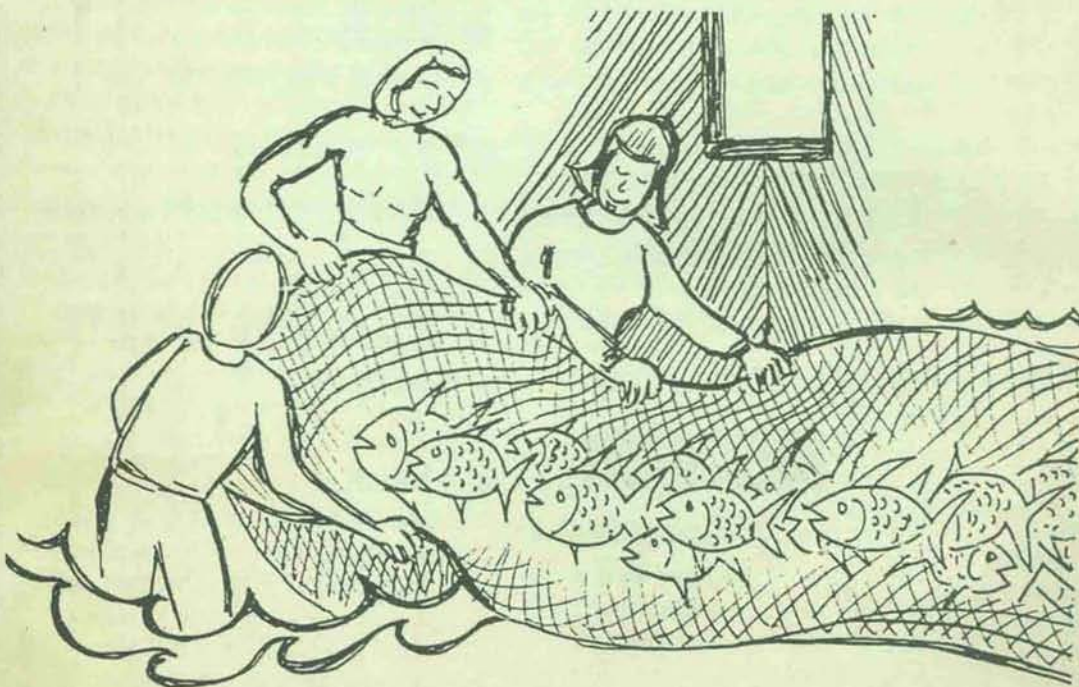
- * protect their activities in the production process
- * improve their working conditions
- * alleviate the burden of their work
- * actively reduce pollution and protect the environment

We call for a collective effort in changing attitudes and values towards women in order to get their full participation in decision making at all levels.

We emphasize the positive contribution of non-governmental organizations in the development of technology and forms of participatory management that ensure the future of small-scale fisheries. Priority should be given to lessening dependency on foreign capital, equipment and know-how.

We ask that all scientists who recognize the importance of conserving and enhancing the person-nature relationship take a strong stand on behalf of the small-scale fishermen.

We urge them to work in collaboration with local fishermen's organizations to complement their knowledge of the sea and to enable them to regain their rights over the sea.



Help Line

The Conference Secretariat will function round the clock (well, almost!) from the ground floor of this building. Services include:

Documentation

☞ Patricia Emmanuel

Travel/Tickets

☞ Betty Solleza

Accommodation

☞ Nenita Cura

Special Diet

☞ Mary Cuizon

First Aid

☞ Cebu Emergency
Rescue Foundation
☎ 95676

Laundry

☞ Mercy Vergara

Telephone Calls

☞ Malou Valencia /
Ingrid Medalle

Odd Jobs

☞ Niobe Espinosa

Samudra for Cebu

☞ KG Kumar/Satish Babu

Tomorrow

Theme Papers I-III

St. Alphonsus, 8:00

Theme Papers IV-V

St. Alphonsus, 11:00

Lunch

Dining Hall, 13:00

Working Groups

St. Alphonsus (Lecture Hall)/
St. Clement (I Floor)/
St. John Neumann (II Floor)
16:00 onwards

Dinner

Dining Hall, 19:30

SAMUDRA FOR CEBU is specially
published by ICSF for the Cebu
Conference

SAMUDRA

FOR CEBU

INTERNATIONAL COLLECTIVE IN SUPPORT OF FISHWORKERS

Today

- Theme Papers
St. Alphonsus, 8:00
- Lunch
Dining Hall, 12:30
- Working Groups
Parallel Sessions, 15:30
- Report Preparation
Working Groups
- Dinner
Dining Hall, 19:00

Briefly

All those beautiful large paintings you see all over the place spring from the brush and pen of Virgilio Cristobal, National Co-ordinator of the Asian Social Institute, Manila. With more than a little help from friends, Vir began conceptualising the visuals for the different themes as early as September of last year.

If you have views you would like to convey to other delegates, here's the perfect forum for you. Write up your comments briefly and drop them off at the Secretariat. We will try to carry them in these columns. Poem, illustrations, cartoons—most welcome.

SAMUDRA FOR CEBU is specially published by ICSF for the Cebu Conference

DRAMATIC OPENING TO CEBU CONFERENCE

A Day of Listening

The Cebu Conference got off to a dramatic start with the Filipino hosts putting up a spectacular show at the opening ceremony

True to the Filipino reputation for theatrical extravaganzas and dramatic flourish, the hosts put up a show to remember at the opening ceremony of the Cebu Conference: garlands of shells to welcome the delegates, the Philippines flag carried centre-stage in an 'entrance of colours' to precede the rousing melody of the national anthem, an equally colourful speech by the wizened 'old man of the sea', Sofronio Belagtas, on the significance of Cebu ten years after the Rome Conference.

To top it all was a mellow song from 26-year old Jenkin Cabanit, recently elected Councillor of Duljo-Fatima and a faculty member at the Cebu Institute of Technology.

In the general mood of elation, Mina Ramirez, president of the Asian Social Institute, who was compering the opening ceremony, had only to begin to announce the countries of the

participants before boisterous applause took over. Youth, politics, engineering, song—those who thought there would be no more surprises in store were in for a pleasant shock after dinner when hosts Della Villacastin and the Archdiocese came up with a spectacular cultural show featuring some of Cebu's best young talent.

But that delectable feast was to come only after a period of patient and eager listening, when the delegates sat through the first plenary session. This was the start of the serious deliberations of the conference.

As the chairperson, John Kurien from India, pointed out, its importance lay in the fact that the delegates would be listening to what fishworkers themselves expected from the collective entity of the ICSF. Said John Kurien, "This is not an international meeting of experts but a gathering of committed people."

That commitment led to presentations from the Philippines (yes, again colourful and interspersed with song), Fiji, Canada, India, Solomon Is., Japan, Vietnam and Indonesia. In the afternoon, the session continued with talks from fishworkers from Latin American, Senegal and Madagascar as well as France.

Notwithstanding the initial problems with simultaneous translations, those whose attention tended to stray were drawn back fast since some of the presentations were far from routine. Sample this gem from Edylyn Tohikeni of the Solomon Islands. "Husbands are frequent problems," she declared. The

⇒ P. 4

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Maximo's Maxim—and Other Not-so-happy Thoughts

I am writing this after my first day in Cebu when I found myself at the Midtown Hotel in a forum on coastal fisheries. Seated at coffee tables in a room designed for Tony Bennett were Maximo, president of an agribusiness company, an environmental journalist, two fishworker representatives, the Department of Agriculture officials, the municipal authorities and others.

Even as the international guests Nenita Cura, Sebastian Mathew, James Smith and myself, opened with comments, I was struck by the character roles. Maximo saw the coastal area as one of opportunity (for his business) and said what was good for him and his company was good for the nation. Sebastian reminded everyone that the individual's gain was often the community's loss (Maximo notwithstanding). A spunky researcher on community management of coastal zones was particularly concerned about mangrove silviculture. A woman consultant made comments on community development. But, in general, the links with the fishing population seemed tenuous, at best.

At one point in the conference, I interjected. Much of what was being expressed seemed a video replay of sessions at home. I expressed my scepticism that the fishworkers' perspective, which everybody said was important, would ultimately not be heard, if my Canadian experience was much to go by.

Then I sat back and regretted my comments. Who was I to be so negative? This kind of forum can quickly become depressing. Look, I said to myself, even in Canada where we have a cod disaster, the ocean hasn't exactly collapsed; plankton production is still going on. Herring is repopulating the banks that had long since been fished out; the lobsters continue to sustain high catch rates and, most of all, the fishers are still at it. This is not to say all is well but a simple reminder that the ocean resources and the fisher populations are the source of hope in all our work.

I was told that even magazines like *Newsweek* and *The Economist* are now paying attention to fishery issues. More attention by the international media is probably welcome but it could also make a person nervous. I think of our lobster fishery back home. With the groundfish in collapse, more attention is turning to lobster. We are even getting more scientific interest. More attention to lobsters by the scientists is, of course, welcome but it makes me nervous, given what happened to the cod.

Again, I think back to Canada where the media, even in the coastal zones, are 'fishing illiterates' and where the term fisherman is often used in a 'global' sense to refer not only to fishers but to fish companies and fishworkers. Such unwillingness or incapability to make distinctions is similar to Maximo's maxim that what's good for his company is probably good for the fishery.

If the media could build some historical consciousness among the fishery planners, that would be a help. But if the media glosses over the 'inshore' fishers and inshore fishing practices in favour of the industrial and semi-industrial view of the fishery, then their new-found attention to the fishery will probably mean further losses for the inshore (or 'traditional' or 'artisanal') fishing populations.

There are no short cuts in fisheries organization work. Putting the media spotlight on the fishery might sometimes be helpful but the difficult business of building and sustaining fishworker organizations remains.

Every so often, when all seems to be lost, great reversals occur and the fishworkers are thrust on to centre stage and are heard. That is the moment when effective organizational work pays off.

Mike Belliveau

Michael Belliveau is Executive Secretary, Maritime Fishermen's Union, New Brunswick, Canada.

“

This conference is important since it lets us know the situation in totality, how problems are interconnected. If you know what problems are all over the world, there could be a perspective for local action, regional action, national action and international action.

— Mina Ramirez
President
Asian Social
Institute, Manila

More and more women's groups are getting concerned about fishing conditions

— J. Kittitornkool
Network for
Women in
Fisheries,
Thailand

Our list of problems could go on and on, but it would be best to look for solutions

— Abdoulaye Diop
Gen. Secretary
Kayar Local
Committee,
Senegal

”

VOICES

VOICES

'Costs are too high'

in

CONVERSATION

Fisherfolk around the world continue to organize. One recent example is the two-year old Federation Chretienne des Pecheurs Artisanaux de Madagascar (FECPAMA), which has a membership of 7500 in a fisherfolk population of 40,000. Christian Nestor Velo, who is general secretary of FECPAMA, talks about the organization and the issues that face fisherfolk in Madagascar

What is the most important problem faced by Madagascar fishermen?

The most important problem is the cost of fishing gear. While it was alright about ten years ago, costs have become prohibitive since then. This is mainly due to the devaluation of the country's currency. Now one French franc is worth 500 Madagascar francs but about one month ago, it was only 350 francs.

What is FECPAMA doing to help fishermen overcome this problem?

We collaborate with the National Direction of Fisheries which gave us some material for our fishermen and some other organizations have helped us with programmes for the development of fishermen. I think after one or two years these will bear fruit.

Are there other issues which bother Madagascar fishermen?

Yes, the other big problem is industrial fishing which now takes place as close as one mile off the Madagascar coast. These are the big trawlers that belong to Japanese and Taiwanese as well as Madagascar companies. The smaller fishermen of Madagascar with their row boats can not compete with these industrial boats. The situation

has also led to fights and clashes at sea between these two types of fishermen. This is a big problem. The industrial fishing vessels also throw their bycatch and discard waste fish products all along the coast. This not only creates a bad smell but also pollutes the beaches.



Yes, there are about ten Madagascar companies in industrial fishing.

Are there fish processing plants in Madagascar?

No, the industrial fishing fleets catch their fish here but export them beyond Madagascar's shores. Only some small

industrial fleets supply their catch for local customers here.

What is technique of fishing used by the traditional sector?

Mainly hook-and-line and bottom-set nets and small traditional boats which are not motorised but are rowed or use sails and can carry four or five persons.

Has the quantity of fish caught by the traditional sector gone down?

Yes, the traditional fishermen now get less fish because the industrial fishing fleets do not respect limits to fishing and after their operations, there is no possibility for the traditional fishermen to catch enough.

What is the government of Madagascar doing about this?

The government favours the industrial fishery so as to get dollars. Though other governments like the Japanese give the Madagascar government fishing materials meant for the traditional fishermen, the Madagascar government does not distribute these to the traditional fishermen in time. They do so only for electoral or political gains.



La vida del pescador
no es una vida cualquiera
él pasa la noche entera
pensando en lo que le espera

Se acerca la madrugada
se tiene que levantar
a las dos de la mañana
está listo para zarpar

Su amor está muy lejano
su bella mujer morena
cual dulce y cariñosa
en su lindo Puerto espera

Buena vida del pescador
que sale solo al mar
va tirando sus redes
por si un pez puede pescar

El horizonte está calmado
se divisa en lotananza
su bonita embarcación
toda llena de esperanza

Hoy los vientos ya no soplan
como aquellos de ayer
él se encuentra muy contento
porque viene un nuevo ser

Si hay pesca o hay veda
eso no le importa
porque para todo el Pescador
siempre sale adelante

Hoy su Puerti está de fiesta
hay que irse a divertir
porque haciendo amistad
siempre sabe compartir

Se ha tomado unos tragos
ya se siente embriagado
pero eso no importa
porque ya está acostumbrado

La noche ya se acerca
hay que irse a descansar
porque a la madrugada siguiente
hay que volver ha empezar

—Gregorio Chunga Pazos

What a life fishermen have
but it's not everyone's way
the whole night anticipating
What tomorrow might bring

The early dawn approaches
and he has to rise and shine
by two in the morning
he's ready to up and off

Far away lies his love
dark complexioned beauty
so sweet and so tender
awaits him at home

Good life of the fisherman
taking him alone to the sea
to pull in his nets
to catch whatever comes

The winds of today don't blow
like those of yesterday
but he feels quite happy
because his soul is reborn

It really doesn't matter
if there's fishing or a ban
come what may the fisherman
always come off best

Today its the Port Fiesta
one must enjoy
making friends is easy
when you know how to share

He's had a few drinks
and feels quite sloshed
but that doesn't matter
he's quite used to that

The night is drawing nigh
he must have some rest
because early next morning
he's got to start again

Translation:

—Brian O'Riordan

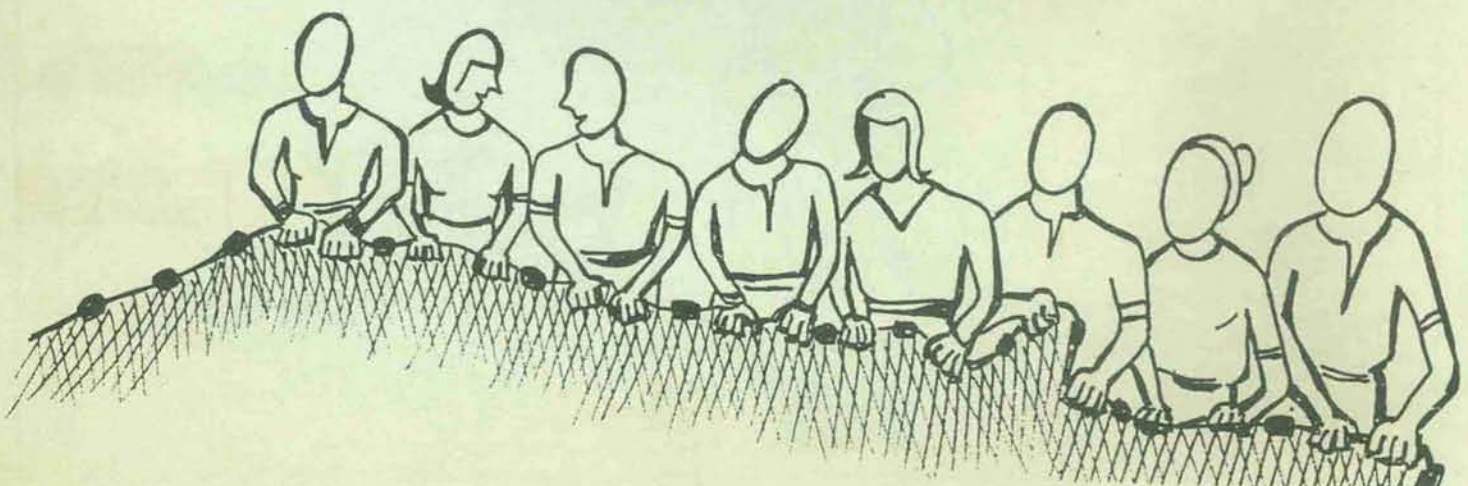
translator went a step further and proclaimed that husbands 'have' frequent problems. Before the laughter could die down, Edylyn continued about how women toiling in the fisheries plopped off for a good night's rest at the end of a hard day—only to have their husbands think their wives were no longer interested in them!

Not so disinterested were the delegates who sat down to the cultural show after the first 'official' dinner of the conference. They were treated to a heady mix of Cebuano songs and dances which portrayed the beliefs, tradition and lifestyles of the Filipino people.

The boys and girls of the San Nicolas Paris Choir put up a particularly splendid performance. Repeated applause for the colourful costumes of the lithe young dancers filled the air. One version of 'ethnic jazz' featured a strange but appealing combination of graceful traditional dance movements and the jerky frenzy of modern Western dance, all performed by girls in costumes from the Muslim regions of Mindanao. Flashguns popped in quick succession.

As singer and artist Vir Cristobal, already familiar to most of the guests as the Filipino fishworker forever hunched over large paintings of murals, took the floor for a session of karaoke, many of the guests joined in and the lobby was soon filled with the sounds of different tongues.

And as the last ones drifted off to their rooms at night, few heard the sound of the lashing rain that heralded the end of the first day of the Cebu Conference. ☛



SAMUDRA FOR CEBU

SAMUDRA

FOR CEBU

INTERNATIONAL COLLECTIVE IN SUPPORT OF FISHWORKERS

Today

- Working Group IV, V
Main Hall/Lobby, 8:00
- Presentations
M. Lizzarraga, FAO
Matthew Gianni
Greenpeace, 12:30
- Informal Meeting
of Fishworkers 16:00
- Video Shows
(See page 4)

Briefly

This conference would not have materialised without the unstinting support of the Cebu archbishop Ricardo J. Cardinal Vidal. Not only is he the chairman of the local organising committee, he also mobilised three commissions of the archdiocese to provide support services for the Conference.

The Cardinal's patronage to the cause of small-scale fisherfolk goes beyond mere lip service. In an interview, he expressed concern about the effects of industrial fishing and the need to protect small-scale fishworkers. The organisers of the conference have found the Cardinal to be accessible and down-to-earth, a far cry from the ceremonial image that normally accompanies such a figure.

Accepting the gift of a globe after the first official dinner, he said that looking at it would always remind him of how all fishworkers of the world are linked, just as the waters of the oceans link the land masses of the world.

THEMES PRESENTED, WORKING GROUPS START MEETING

Getting Down to Work

After an elaboration of the key themes, delegates separated into three working groups for follow-up discussions

On the second day of the Cebu Conference, the really serious bit began. The morning session saw presentations of the five key topics by the authors of the theme papers. As the chairperson explained, the idea was not to invite immediate reactions or debate but to throw up issues which could be followed up by the working groups.

Considering that quite a few hands went up to signal for an opportunity to interject, this was something of a let-down for some participants. But, pressed for time, the chair had no option but to insist on some cut-off point.

Soon after lunch, the delegates split up into working groups to deliberate on three of the themes discussed in the morning session. These were 'coastal environment and fishworkers'; 'technology and energy use'; and 'transnational linkages in fisheries'. And predictably enough, most sessions over-shot their allocated time

slots. In fact, the one on technology broke off for a quick dinner and came back to contend and concede on issues until well past 9 pm.

Not that anyone was grumbling, not even the rapporteurs who had to stay up late to put together their reports. Remarkably, despite the language barriers—displaced only partially by the make-do arrangements for translation—delegates remained engrossed in the debate. As Aliou Sall of Senegal had earlier stated, not quite in jest, 'In the ICSF network any kind of English is permitted'.

Not surprisingly for the age of GATT, the working group on transnational linkages saw the most fervent debate. Consider the questions that flew back and forth:

Opening up of global markets and the breakdown of trade barriers would not affect the fisheries sector as seriously as it would in-

dustrial sectors. So what's the big fuss? At a time when all over the world, governments are doing away with subsidies, how could fishworkers clamour for such protection against falling prices? Theoretically, the system of free trade and unrestricted access to markets is fine, but shouldn't one recognise the inherent inequities that it perpetrates for the marginalised classes?

The working group on technology discussed how technology is not neutral, how it has links with resource depletion and job loss and how women are more affected. Small-scale fishworkers have little say in

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- Video Shows Listing 4

On resource management

Today, in all sectors and especially in fisheries, the need to manage or regulate the resource is amply recognised. Yet, it is not always clear what is meant by the concept of resource management or regulation. More precisely, the static and the dynamic aspects of the issue are not properly separated. The static problem arises as soon as fish is sufficiently scarce that an additional entrant into the fishery causes the catches of existing participants to decline. The dynamic problem, on the other hand, has to do with the conservation of the resource for future generations. Here the concern is that by catching too many fish today, fishermen create a situation where there may not be enough fish left for future generations.

Note carefully that the first problem may arise in the absence of the second. This is most evident in the case of fisheries which operate from well delimited fishing spots as, for instance, in beachseine fisheries. In many cases, however, the two problems tend to arise simultaneously, hence the aforementioned confusion.

To solve the first problem, co-ordination is needed lest population pressure on a fishing ground should create serious opportunities for violent conflicts and/or lead to significant income decline. Experience shows that fishing communities are quite good when it comes to regulate access to a fishing ground that is well delineated and rather easy to monitor.

When there are too many fishermen compared to the number of fishing spots available, a variety of rules are usually applied. One of them ensures that, on a given day, a fishing spot is assigned to the first entrant, provided that he belongs to a given fishing community. Another widespread allocation system consists of rotation rules which provide for random assignment of fishing spots to rightsholders.

When the fishing ground is not well delimited, things are much more complicated, especially so if new entrants are highly mobile because they possess a more sophisticated technology than the traditional fishermen. The well publicised competition between artisanal fishermen and industrial operators has to be seen in that light. Due to the difficulty of preventing them from entering coastal fishing grounds, an open access situation is de facto being created and there is a risk that the incomes of traditional fishermen suffer as a result.

It is clear from many events that have occurred in developing countries during the last decades that traditional fishing communities need to be protected by the state if they want to avoid such an adverse outcome. Yet, given the difficult enforcement problems which such a protection entails, they have to participate in the regulation process themselves (for instance, by performing surveillance and monitoring activities over their fishing grounds). This approach is known as co-management. The dynamic issue of conservation appears to be trickier still. This is particularly obvious in the case of industrial companies which have no reason to be concerned about maintaining the fish stock because they have alternative income-earning or investment opportunities.

Conservation may prove problematic even among artisanal fishermen. This may be for two main reasons. First, they may not be fully aware of how their fishing behaviour affects the resource stock. Or, they may rightly believe that it is external factors (such as climatic changes) which lie beyond man's control that have the most significant influence on the state of the resource at a given point in time. Second, they may be hard-pressed by subsistence constraints that actually prevent them from thinking about the future. Their main concern is then to ensure their livelihood in a day-to-day time perspective.

The strategies which are needed to make conservation possible will differ depending on which of the above factors is more important. If the problem arises mainly from the operation of industrial fleets, strict state regulation is absolutely required. If it comes from artisanal fishermen who do not see the need for conservation, a crucial role must be played by fishermen's organizations to create awareness about the conservation issue. If, on the other hand, the difficulty arises from subsistence constraints, education efforts will not be sufficient. In order to work, it is important that the pressure of subsistence constraints on the fishermen's behaviour be alleviated. This clearly requires that new income-earning opportunities be created for them outside the fishing sector. That the state has a role to play here is evident but this should not cause fishermen's organizations to dispense with working towards that purpose. There is no escape from this basic truth that, when a resource is stressed, alternative job opportunities ought to be created.

Jean-Philippe Platteau

Jean-Philippe Platteau is Professor of Economics at the University of Namur, Belgium

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The Supreme Court of India, in a recent judgement, declared that fishing for subsistence is different from fishing for profit, and that subsistence ought to be given greater weightage than profit.

— Aleyamma
Vijayan
Social Activist
Kerala, India

Education is one of the many pressing problems of women fishworkers in Solomon Islands. Most, if not all, have little or no education at all. This problem, however, is addressed through fisheries workshops given by organised fisherfolk.

— Edylyn Tohikeni
Fishworker
Solomon Taiyo
Solomon Islands

I would say fisheries need to be more social and less economic.

— Brian O'Riordan
Fisheries Adviser
Intermediate
Technology
Development
Group
Rugby, UK

”

VOICES

VOICES

'Be strong by being together'

Improving work conditions can not happen overnight, says Jean Vacher, director of Apostalate de la Mer, Mauritius who is also co-ordinator of the ICSF's Task Force on Conditions of Work on Industrial Fishing Vessels

Can you tell us about the ICSF's Task Force on Industrial Fishing Vessels?

Set up in Manila in 1992, the Task Force is meant to look into the conditions of work of fishermen on distant water vessels, including questions of prevailing laws. First we considered the Philippines, Mauritius and Taiwan, then we included Madagascar and Senegal. Later we brought into the scope of our study India, Seychelles, Kenya and South Africa and so made a network around the world.

Why is Mauritius so important for distant water vessels?

Mauritius, though it is a small island, is at a strategic point on the Indian Ocean. And because of the small islands it has, its 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zone is large. Some Taiwanese fishing vessels that go to the Gulf of Kutch in India later come to Mauritius to land their fish catch. We have a good fishing port and we have good airline links with all countries. It is also a fuelling point for ships. I am not sure, but I think Mauritius is a cheap place for fuel. Also, with the establishment of the Free Trade Zone, many companies have opened up to avail of facilities like fast currency transactions.

How do conditions vary in the countries you have studied? Are working conditions on industrial fishing vessels in some countries better?

I can't tell you about better conditions, though there are some countries that have better laws, even if they are not implemented, like Madagascar, which has just copied French laws. But it's up to the maritime officers to make sure these laws are applied. We have been able to achieve a bit with Madagascar. We have forced the government in Mauritius to adopt laws for ships passing the country that if they take a fisherman from Madagascar to

work on a Mauritian boat, he must be paid the same salary as the Mauritian. That will soon become law.

Did this come about because of pressure from your union?

Yes, ICSF also. Along with the union representatives, I sat on the government committee as representative of the Apostalate de la Mer and ICSF. In my own opinion, I think ICSF must put up not just a task force but must help the



unions of these countries. A task force only examines what must be done. In Mauritius I can do something mainly because I am also working with seamen's and seafarers unions. Otherwise, in most countries we can only say we must do something, but who will actually implement it? Of course, ICSF can't take the place of the unions but could form a sort of federation of the unions of all these countries.

The condition of Filipino workers aboard Taiwanese vessels is particularly bad. Why is that so and what has been done about it?

Not all Taiwanese ships are bad and nowadays it is not only Filipinos. We now have plenty of other nationalities aboard these vessels like those from Sri Lanka, Madagascar. The first problem is of language. Also, these guys need to

work and, it's very sad to say, but sometimes I think if I just send a guy back to his country, he will have nothing there, not a cent.

But when a ship is fishing in the vicinity of Mauritius, they know that here is a strong organisation and that if someone is treated badly, they will have problems. In April we had a case in Mauritius where two Taiwanese killed the captain and the chief engineer and the Filipino workers, seeing this, became quite afraid to return to the ship. So they stayed at our centre and afterwards two Taiwanese crew members also came to seek shelter there. Later all of them were able to return to their countries.

I can't say things have changed one hundred per cent. But now some recruiting agents at least know that behind me is not only the Apostalate de la Mer but also ICSF.

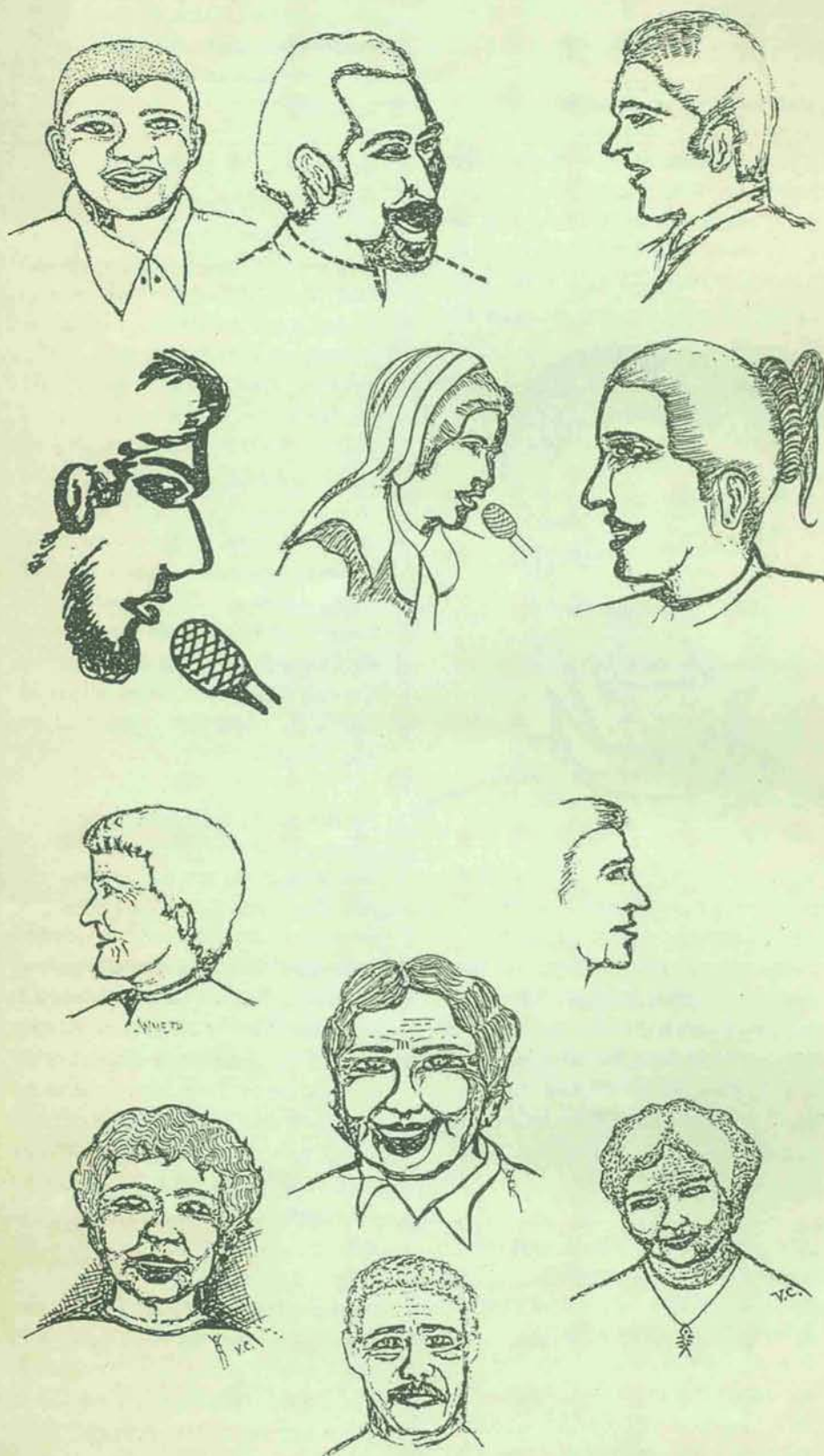
On the whole, have conditions aboard industrial fishing vessels improved in the last two or three years?

Sometimes, on some boats, with some agents and some owners, things have improved. But now there is using another tactic being used. Let's take the case of the Philippines. Instead of recruiting people from Manila, as in the past, now they recruit from all over the country. So the problem really has to be tackled at the level of the recruiter who takes money in advance from the workers.

So you have a long way to go...

Our success will not be an easy job. I can not do anything alone but together we can do something. As we say in Mauritius, you can break a single piece of wood but if you put plenty of them together you can not break the bunch.

Vir's Sketchbook



Sketches by Virgilio Cristobal

To Work... (from P. 1)

choosing technology and so, the group felt, consciousness must be raised about the implications of such choice, including how legal constraints can limit technology choice.

Where the group nudged—without quite crossing—the radical edge of counsel was on the issue of banning destructive technologies like trawling and intensive forms of aquaculture.

The far-reaching implications of these propositions attracted several notes of caution, including a call for an awareness-building campaign in the North where trawling is often regarded a 'traditional' technology. As for aquaculture, the group felt that there should be a clear definition on the type of aquaculture sought to be banned.

Clearly, several of the issues tossed up by the working groups had a potentially decisive tinge to them. Understandably, therefore, only further reflection and review can lead to a semblance of a consensus. This is what the remaining days of the Cebu Conference will seek to do.

Video Shows

Skipjack Trolling (11 min) 13:45
Kubo Sae, Japan

Traditional Sustainable Resource Management (20 min) 14:00
Jakarta Bay Fisherfolk (30 min) 14:20
Boat Tribal Group (15 min) 14:35
Don Marut, Indonesia

Artisanal Fishermen (70 min) 18:00
in Brasil (video + slides)

More video and slide shows are scheduled for the coming days. Please check here for listings. Also, don't forget the photo exhibits.

SAMUDRA FOR CEBU is specially published by ICSF for the Cebu Conference

SAMUDRA

FOR CEBU

INTERNATIONAL COLLECTIVE IN SUPPORT OF FISHWORKERS

Today

- **Plenary Session**
Report presentations
by Working Groups
Main Hall, 10:30
- **Plenary (contd.)**
Discussions
Main Hall, 14:00
- **Fishworkers Meet**
Main Hall, 17:00

Briefly

Several observers used to international conferences, including a couple of invited speakers, are surprised to see how seriously the delegates are taking their participation at Cebu. Delegates sit (and sometimes, squabble) through sessions, rapporteurs take notes and reports are written up, often in three languages. Whoever said conferences were meant to be some talk and all fun?

Given the amount of writing that needs to be done here, almost everyone is on the look-out for a computer terminal. Unfortunately, the conference secretariat has just two systems and someone or the other is always pecking away at the keyboards of these. Luckily, though, more than a couple of delegates towed along their laptops—these have become as much in demand as lapu-lapu! And if, after so many days in the Philippines, you don't yet know what that is, you've been working far too hard!

GUESTS MAKE PRESENTATIONS AND FISHWORKERS MEET INFORMALLY

Aiming for Common Ground

Prior to the presentation of the reports of the working groups, two more themes are discussed and delegates listen to invited presentations on international issues

As the working groups split up into smaller gatherings on the third day to discuss the two remaining themes of fishworkers' organizations and working conditions in fisheries, the Conference was only half-way to common ground. So large was the group on the first theme that it had to break up into four—two conferring in English, one in French and another in Spanish.

But before that was a talk by Margarita Lizarraga, FAO's Senior Liaison Officer on International Fisheries. Said Lizarraga, "FAO attaches great importance to the work and the relationship with the non-governmental sector." She explained the background to the proposed International Code of Conduct on Responsible Fishing and how NGOs could play a significant role in drawing up the Code.

This point was taken up again in the afternoon in another guest talk by Mat-

thew Gianni, representing Greenpeace International. He pointed out that the Code 'will be a central focus of the FAO's political work on fisheries over the next two years'. As such, he said, fishworker organizations should try to influence the processes and negotiations which would lead to the Code.

The third presentation was by Leith Duncan, a Fisheries Environmental Consultant from New Zealand. He elaborated on his country's system of managing fisheries resources through Individual Transferable Quotas (ITQs).

This system, as it currently operates, is not proven to be efficient for conservation. On the other hand, it seems to have helped corporate interests enlarge control over New Zealand's fisheries, Duncan argued.

This drew forth some interesting and contesting views. Hernan Peralta

Bouroncle of Peru claimed that the World Bank wanted his country to adopt the ITQ system. This was fraught with problems, he said, since about 50 boats will be needed to police around 600 fishing vessels in Peru's waters, where 20 per cent of vessels account for 80 per cent of the total catch.

While agreeing that in operational terms the ITQ system might run into problems, economist Jean-Philippe Platteau disagreed that it could be dismissed on the grounds of encouraging conservation through the profit motive. It could be a way of internalising the externalities of

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Samudra for Cebu is specially published by ICSF for the Cebu Conference

Caught in a watery trap

Hatiya is a small island situated in the southern part of Bangladesh, at the mouth of three of the mightiest rivers in the world. It touches the Bay of Bengal, and is in the district of Noakhali. With an area of 500 sq. miles, including several small islands, it has a large population of about 300,000 people. Seventy per cent are farmers and 30 per cent, fishermen. Around 40 per cent of the farmers are also involved in pond aquaculture.

Powerful currents cause severe erosion in the north and east of the island. Every year homes of many families are lost to the river. In the last 20 years some 20,000 fishing families have seen their lives literally washed away. They are forced to re-re-settle on the only available land—generally the thin strip next to the surging river, vulnerable to storm and tidal surge. Cyclones have killed hundreds of thousands of fishermen; their families, houses and other assets smashed and destroyed. Very few initiatives have been taken to rehabilitate these fisherfolk.

Since there is no registration of fisherfolk, nobody knows how many die in the regular cyclones in the Bay of Bengal. Often their families are also washed away, and those who remain do so in very open areas prone to the risk of further cyclone and storm damage.

In recent years agriculture has become less profitable for land owners, as prices have dropped due to increased production. The rise in prices of fish (due to high demand in the capital cities), has made fish marketing an attractive alternative for moneylenders and landlords (*Zamindars*). They began to invest in the fisheries sector by purchasing boats and nets, and taking over important fishing grounds in and around our islands.

Due to their sad plight, many fishermen have become 'water slaves', cruelly exploited by these unauthorised riverine *Zamindars*. They are trapped in a vicious cycle of landlessness, debt and few alternative options. NGOs are trying to address the rights of the fisherfolk on land, but on

water the fisherfolk have to pay for their 'river rights'—the right to navigate and to fish. This is due to an iniquitable system, where local *Zamindars* are able to purchase river leases from the government. They then extract payment from the already overtaxed fisherfolk, which is 10 to 15 per cent of their catch.

To improve the situation, *Dwip Unnayan Songstha* (DUS - or the Association for Inland Development) was set up in 1981 by former 'freedom fighters', teachers and social workers to organize fishworkers and other underprivileged classes. DUS now has 600 organized fishermen's groups with a total membership (both genders) of 9000. It addresses socio-economic, development and health needs, and supports awareness building. Along with other fisherfolk, groups organized by DUS have entered collective fishing in the Bay of Bengal. DUS also helps in marketing the catch in city markets like Dhaka, Chandpur, Barishal and Chittagong. While a kilo of *hilsa*, a popular local fish, costs 50 cents in the local market, it would fetch up to US \$3 in Dhaka markets.

Due to severe river erosion around Hatiya (and other islands), many fishing families are homeless. Cyclones, which are more prevalent these days, have also taken their toll. The tragedy is that even if these fishermen are killed by such natural disasters, the fact that they are not registered or that often their boats capsize in far-off waters, denies their families the benefits of compensation from the government. Only if a dead body is physically recovered does the state government consider the grant of monetary relief to the fisherman's dependents.

On land and on the water our fisherfolk are locked in a struggle with Nature as well as their fellow man. There seems little hope of breaking this harsh condition under current circumstances.

Rafiqul Alam

Rafiqul Alam is Executive Director, *Dwip Unnayan Songstha*, Bangladesh

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It is not only the persons who are directly involved in the catching of fish who should benefit from it. The vendors and the cannery workers should equally deserve the same benefits as the fishermen do.

— Maureen Larkin
Maritime
Fishermen's
Union
Canada

Our government doesn't believe in pressure politics. What we need now is a solid, politically mature organization of fishworkers.

— Rudolfo
Sambajon
PAMALAKAYA-
Pilipinas
Quezon City
Philippines

Traditional fishworkers have no access to banks. Only the 'illegal' banks' offer loans to these fishworkers. Sixty per cent of Indonesian fishworkers are indebted to these 'illegal banks'.

— Don Marut
Oxfam
Indonesia

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VOICES

VOICES

'We came to look, listen, learn'

in

CONVERSATION

Sorna Aminata Wade is Animator and Thérèse Senghor is Secretary of the Women's Committee of the Collectif National des Pecheurs Artisans du Senegal (CNPS). They focus on the difficulties faced by women in Senegalese fisheries

Do women confront specific problems in Senegal?

The general problem in our fisheries is the difficulty in getting fuel due to the price increase following the devaluation of the African franc to almost half its former value. This has doubled the cost of fuel not to mention engines and machinery. Since a number of big boats come to fish in the coastal area, our resources are depleted and so our fishermen have to go farther to get a better and bigger catch.

As for women, we have to deal with a lot of competition, especially in dealing with local middlemen. They deal directly with transnational corporations, buying the catch at low prices and selling it at a higher price. The problem is that we lack proper training as well as materials and equipment and so our standards are poor. We have particular problems in marketing as we do not have the skills to export our processed goods

What is being done about this?

To produce better quality, we have to teach the women novel techniques to enhance their skills and make sure their products are sold. We need freezers, trucks and a larger area to dry the fish. We also need to educate our women about economic and environmental issues. Above all, we need financial assistance.

have had relatively unhampered access to credit. NGOs have extended financing to labour organizations which benefit fishworkers in the form of better training, more materials and technical necessities.

What has your government done to address these problems?

The government talks a lot and makes a lot of promises but shows no results.

Do you think they will heed the suggestions or recommendations of a conference like this one?

They would probably listen but since our country is poor and can not finance any legitimate steps to alleviate the plight of the Senegalese fishworkers,

the Government can't probably do much.

Why did you decide to come to this conference? What do you think could possibly result from such meetings?

We came here to look, listen and learn from this conference. We want to meet other women and learn how they work.

We would also like to know what their techniques are and how we could use these in our processing work.

We also came here to meet our partners and financing bodies to seek more financial help for the Senegalese fishworkers.



How have organizations like CNPS affected the plight of women?

Well, before such organizations came on the scene, there was great trouble in terms of financial support, especially in the context of the rigorous competition confronting fishworkers. But with the formation of these organizations, they

Common Ground... (from P. 1)

exploiting the fishery resource, he said.

In the afternoon there was an informal meeting of fishworkers who shared experiences and anecdotes on conditions of work and living in the fisheries of their countries.

One such elaboration came from Mercy Alexander, a woman fishworker from Kerala, India, who explained how, in her highly politicised state, women fishworkers were in the forefront of the struggle to wrest gains from the state. In the process, they have come to acknowledge and even demand the imperative to conserve the fisheries resource.

Struggles in the Time of Cholera

During the cholera epidemic of 1991, a few brave fishermen who set up the National Defence League for Artisanal Fishworkers, struggled to create the Federation for Unification and Integration of Peruvian Fishworkers (FIUPAP). Their efforts led to 26 artisanal fishworkers' trade unions coming together to establish the FIUPAP to defend their common interests.

One incident in particular serves to illustrate just how hard and difficult this process has been. During a formal visit to a fishing hamlet, a delegation was beaten up and robbed of all their documents, equipment and money. They were unable to draw money from the bank, as the guards refused them entry, taking them for bandits. So until help arrived from Lima, they had no funds for food or lodging.

Despite these difficult beginnings, a great deal has been achieved by FIUPAP in a relatively short time. At its Second National Congress held in October 1993, 110 fully affiliated delegates and 28 fraternal delegates representing 50,000 riverine, lake, and coastal fishworkers from 98 of the 146 base organizations met to elect a National Executive Committee. The meeting also reflected on FIUPAP's achievements. This a summary of those reflections, in FIUPAP's words:

- * We have consolidated our activities and reached a position where FIUPAP is now the only genuine trade union organization of artisanal fishworkers of national character.
- * The demands that were presented to the government in July 1991 to create an exclusive artisanal fishing zone within 5 miles of the shore, were ratified on the 18 September 1992. The government has now defined a conservation zone for flora and fauna within this limit, where fishing by industrial and commercial fishing boats is banned.
- * Following a petition to the government in December 1991, the Ministries of Fisheries and Health organized and imple-

mented a national information campaign against cholera. The campaign included exhibitions, meetings and information bulletins.

- * On 29 June 1991, President Fujimori handed over a first assignment of 26 lorries to FIUPAP, from a batch of 110 promised to our fishworkers' trade union organizations, whether or not they are affiliated to FIUPAP.
- * The Ministry of Fisheries has welcomed the participation of artisanal fishworkers in a national census of seals and sea lions.
- * The Ministry of Fisheries has transferred the use of 36 regional infrastructural artisanal fisheries installations to fishworkers' unions. The respective unions are now administering these installations.
- * FIUPAP has asked the government to donate 36 insulated and refrigerated lorries to fishworker unions to enable them to by-pass middlemen. In the mean time, some organizations have been able to hire a few lorries and are already demonstrating their ability to meet their obligations.
- * Following their representations, the government has transferred responsibility for running the state fish auction centres and centralised markets to FIUPAP.
- * FIUPAP has requested special arrangements for credit to purchase boats, gear and spare parts from FONDEPES. In response, the Minister has ordered FONDEPES to make special provision for artisanal fishworkers.
- * The government has agreed to a new programme to construct 200 artisanal fishing craft, of up to 4 tonnes. These will be made available exclusively to fishermen recommended by their organizations and approved by FIUPAP.
- * Through their National Executive Committee, FIUPAP has succeeded in persuading the government to have a fisherman as a Director of FONDEPES. This gives real hope that FONDEPES will provide necessary support to the fishworkers.

A full account (in Spanish) of the deliberations of the Second Congress of FIUPAP is available to delegates from the Conference Secretariat. The report contains a great deal of very interesting and useful information about fishworkers' struggles in Peru, and about the fishery in general.



Contributed by Brian O'Riordan, Fisheries Advisor, Intermediate Technology Development Group, UK

SAMUDRA

FOR CEBU

INTERNATIONAL COLLECTIVE IN SUPPORT OF FISHWORKERS

Briefly

The work's a strain, the climate's different, the food's strange, even making small talk via an interpreter can become a pain—but happily, no one has had any major health problems. So far, out of over 100 persons from different parts of the world, only ten have complained of various minor ailments—and most of them are locals!

But who cares about minor hiccups when there is a chance for an exciting night out? Delegates crowded into three buses last night and headed for the grand home of Marilou Briones Chiongbian who hosted two types of sumptuous feasts—one for the taste buds, the other for the delight of the eyes, ears and mind. This came in the form of a cultural show of traditional ethnic dances in a programme co-ordinated by Della Villacastin. The effect seemed to linger long after the guests left—some were seen dancing away back at the Holy Family Retreat House! Marilou Briones Chiongbian, the hostess, is Chairperson of the Citizen's Movement for Peaceful Elections (CIMPEL), which is an NGO and a new sub-commission on the Commission on Service. According to her, the predominant issue in Cebu fisheries today is that of trawling and purse seining.

WORKING GROUP REPORTS DISCUSSED

Yes, no, wait, maybe

Words flew back and forth as delegates came to grips with the recommendations of the working groups which will form the basis of the final Conference Statement

It was only to be expected. After three days of ardent discussion and impassioned debate, no one was going to give up positions so easily—not that there ever was any hint of animosity in the contemplations. Only a couple of the five working groups got away with something approaching unanimous acceptance when they presented their recommendations to the delegates.

The most vehement discussions were generated by the issue of trawling and whether a ban on trawlers was needed or justified. The group on technology felt that there was a strong case to initiate 'some steps' towards a ban. Yet, in the face of dissenting voices, especially from the North where trawling is not seen as an alien technology, the group stopped short of going all out to actually advocate a total ban.

The group on working conditions and social security waded in similar waters when it called on ICSF to take a 'clear stand against deep-sea fishing because it is uneconomical, energy consuming and socially uncontrollable'. The chairperson explained that the group had reached that conclusion based on the various experiences reported by its different country representatives.

But that was hardly convincing enough for several of the listeners. In fact, that statement seemed to set the place on fire. It was immediately labelled as being precisely the kind of ill-conceived and unrigorous declaration of fact, not based on any hard data which would stand the expert scrutiny of international forums of negotiation.

Instead, it was based on emotion and feeling. This went against the call for a 'holistic' approach to the management of resources.

The problem of defining what constitutes 'deep-sea' fisheries was also pointed out. V. Vivekanandan of the South Indian Federation of Fishermen Societies said there could be several criteria, ranging from type of gear and size of craft to distance of operation from the shore.

But several delegates from Asia were assertive in highlighting the dangers of trawling, based on the impact it has had on the catch levels and, consequently, the livelihoods of their artisanal fisherfolk. Trawling was a specific case of 'ecosystem overfishing' which could not be controlled or mitigated; only a total ban would work. Earlier, it was pointed out how the UN ban on drift nets

⇒ P. 4

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What Cebu means for Latin American groups

Fishworker organizations and support groups from Latin America who are attending the Cebu Conference had an opportunity to meet and discuss the common problems existing in their region, such as coastal degradation, increasing demand on natural resources, lack of power in the decision-making process, insufficient education of fisherfolk, limited access to credit, and marketing problems.

In some countries, official fishermen's organizations were created from above by the government, without social participation. In recent years, social movements of fisherfolk have appeared in Latin America in order to change existing paternalistic practices, to introduce a more democratic and grass roots participation.

Some of these organizations have succeeded in obtaining basic social rights and exclusive access to natural resources, as in the case of reserving five miles for artisanal fishermen in Chile. Peruvian artisanal fishermen's organizations have also obtained government investments in infrastructure so as to make their activity more competitive. Brazilian fishermen organizations are now called by official institutions to propose "fishing reserves" in Amazonia in order to protect fish resources against industrial fishing.

Some of the Latin American fishermen's organizations have succeeded in creating their own communication system such as magazines and newsletters and have been able to disseminate information about their activities through the mass media.

The active participation of fishermen's organizations has given a higher social visibility at national and international levels. Fishermen representatives have participated in important international forums such as the UNCED in Rio de Janeiro and in the UN Conference on Straddling Stocks and Highly Migratory Stocks in New York.

We feel that the meetings taking place in Cebu are crucial for the exchange of experiences in the present time, as some of the Latin American fishermen's organizations are quite recent in origin and they can take advantage of the successes and failures of the older ones. So far, through ICSF there has been intensive exchange of experiences among some Latin American fishworkers' organizations through regional seminars and workshops.

The new fishermen's organizations in Brazil and Peru have benefited from the vast experience of the Chilean CONAPACH through visits of leaders and participation in seminars. At the same time, we are learning from the example of the arduous struggle of our Mexican friends how to mobilise fishermen and larger social groups for coastal environment conservation and protection of the communities' livelihoods.

In Cebu, our organizations have broadened their views considerably through discussions of problems and perspectives with sister organizations of other continents. In spite of language constraints, we feel that co-operative experiences in boat building and marketing mechanism in Kerala, India, trawler bans in Indonesia and technological innovations in Senegal are relevant to our countries.

Although there is a great variety of cultural and social contexts and situations, the continuous dialogue of the past few days emphasised the importance of strengthening the role of fishworkers' organizations in finding solutions to existing problems. It is increasingly clear that the strength of ICSF is derived from the strength, commitment and cooperation of its members.

Antonio Carlos Diegues

Héctor-Luis Morales

Antonio Carlos Diegues is Director of Cemar (Center for Maritime Cultures in Brazil), University of Sao Paulo, Brasil and Héctor-Luis Morales is at the Universidad Tecnica Federico Santa Maria, Chile

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It is quite difficult to organize in Papua New Guinea because of cultural differences and languages. We have about 800 different languages from various cultural backgrounds.

— J. Soranzie
Fisheries
Co-ordinator
Lutheran
Development
Service
Papua New
Guinea

Technology is not the problem, technology development is.

— Rolf Willmann
Economist
Germany

My father was a fisherman but he didn't want me to become one, because he didn't see a future in fisheries. Perhaps that was why I became a fisherman.

— Guy Cormier
President
Maritime
Fishermen's
Union
Canada

”

VOICES

VOICES

'Yes, the FAO has changed'

Representing the FAO at Cebu is Margarita Lizarraga, Senior Liaison Officer of its Fisheries Department. She explains the proposed International Code of Conduct on Responsible Fishing.

We are meeting here ten years after 1984 when, in Rome, the FAO was seen as some kind of enemy by fishworkers and their supporters. But today you are here as a representative of FAO. Does that itself indicate a change in the thinking of the FAO?

Well, I think this is clear. The FAO secretariat is just a little part of the organization which consists of country members and we, as the secretariat, receive directions from them. They are the ones who take the decisions. Of course, there is now a better understanding and relationship between NGOs and government itself.

The strategy determined at the Rome conference in 1984 is now under revision, taking into account aspects of the environment and the new socioeconomic framework and order which has to deal with open markets. Therefore, there is a full revision of our activities. So, yes, there is a change and I think it's a healthy change.

Has the initiative for the proposed International Code of Conduct on Responsible Fishing come from within FAO itself or has it been a demand of NGOs?

It has been a demand of countries. It was first raised in March 1991 at the FAO Committee on Fisheries. It was raised by developing countries and also agreed to by industrialised countries, considering the importance of the whole fisheries sector.

Do you think that, just as happened at the UNCED Earth Summit at Rio, there will be a clear North-South divide on the proposed Code of Conduct? Will the Northern industrialised countries take a stand against the interests of the South?

Well, I think in this case, it is a world commitment for the sustainability of

fisheries. In the case of fisheries, most of the depleted resources are from the North, from industrialised countries. The current situation in the Northern Atlantic areas as well as the Northern Pacific has proved the need to end the indiscriminate increase in fishing efforts. I think it is now the right moment to come to a very good understanding between North and South. But I think that the South has to be prepared for this.

Do you foresee a clash of interests within the South itself since, for example, some developing countries have a greater stake in industrial fishing than others who are traditionally artisanal?

I think it has to be made clear that the situation in the fisheries sector differs not only according to the level of development of the country but also with climatic situation, the type of resources and the environment. The concept of transfer of technology has to be approached very cautiously because conditions are different and you can't just transfer from one to the other.

Many of the developing countries are on the list of the main fishing nations and they are very different, so the approach can't be the same. Some of them have a real problem with long-distance fleets while there is also great competition at the national level between artisanal and industrial fleets for the same share of resources.

How will the Code be drafted?

We are simultaneously preparing each of the many chapters of the Code. We are putting together a first raw draft and we consider it more important to send it to all countries and parties in order to have reactions on how to finalise the preparation of the Code.

We are drafting and putting together the thematic chapters and we are going to

have technical consultations from the 26th of September to the 5th of October. But we want to distribute the documents to the countries or parties involved, including international NGOs, and get the feedback immediately so that we can prepare for the session of the COFI (Committee on Fisheries).

When do you think we can hope to see the final draft of the Code?

Our expectation is to send the papers hopefully by the middle of August. We will then bring the paper with us to the informal consultation that we are willing to have with NGOs in New York. We are also taking care to ensure a balance among NGOs because some NGOs have different approaches and we also want a good balance between North and South, fishworkers and environmental groups, consumers and trade. We hope the governments will take care of having a dialogue at the national level and also bring in some representatives along with their delegations.

As a common property resource, fisheries is particularly difficult to manage. In this context, what will be the regulatory mechanism for the Code of Conduct? How will FAO ensure that countries which agree to this Code will abide by it?

A code of conduct, by definition, is voluntary. It involves ethics and moral values. The mechanism proposed is for FAO to have statistics and information on how fishing fleets move, and when there are problems of encroachment, recognition of the boats involved will be possible from the registers that will be maintained. We hope that regional organizations will have a very strong role to play in assisting countries in the implementation of the measures. The role of FAO is in assisting countries to implement things.

Cree en ti

Mujer, sangran tus manos
al careo de espineles
tu trabajo cotidiano
va blanqueando tus sienas

En tus ojos danza la pena
faz de serena humildad
de pobreza estás llena
si nadie te ha dado más.

De oportunidades te hablan
los generosos de siempre
te entregan sólo palabras
que te confunden la mente

Cree en ti y en tu fuerza
haz de ti fortaleza
no claudiques, tu voz por nada
la patria, tiene, contigo, deuda.

Have Faith

Woman, your hands bleed
clenching handlines
your daily chores
furrow your brow

Pain flickers in your eyes
face humble and serene
of poverty you have plenty
nothing else you received.

They talk of opportunities
the usual generous providers
words only they procure
phrases which cloud the mind

Have faith in yourself and your strength
be a tower
don't let your voice quiver
the country is in your debt.

Crois en toi

Femme, tes mains saignent
au bout des lignes de fond
ton travail quotidien
va sillonnant ton front

Dans tes yeux danse la peine
face d'une humble sérénité
de pauvreté tu es pleine
rien d'autre ne te fut donné.

Ils te parlent d'opportunités
le généreux de toujours
ils n'ont que des mots à distribuer
des phrases qui te troublent l'esprit

Crois en toi en ta force
fais de toi une forteresse
que ta voix jamais ne vacille
la patrie a une dette envers toi.

*Humberto Mella Ahumada
a fisherman from Antofagasta, Chile*

Yes, No... *(from P. 1)*

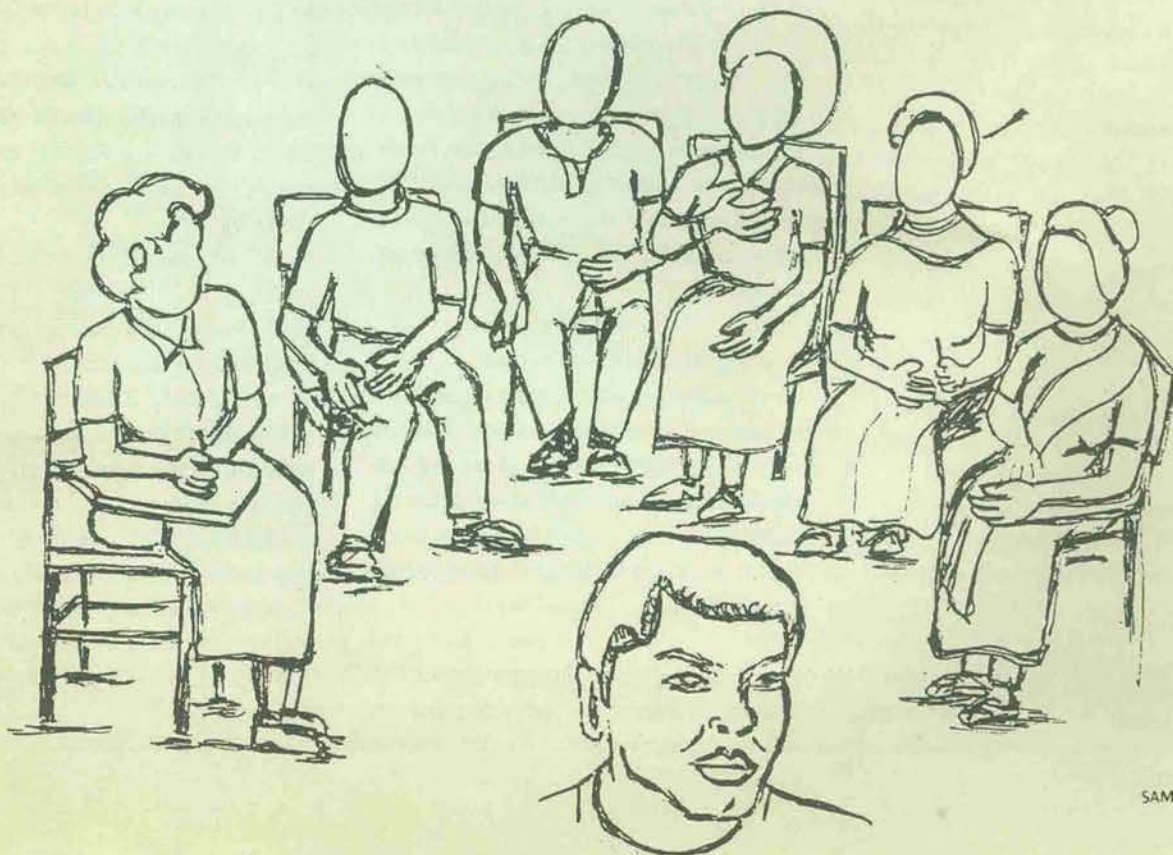
was a political act not born of technological or biological imperatives.

This argument did not find much favour with delegates from the North save, perhaps, for some from Canada, where the memory of the collapse of the cod fishery is still fresh. As Guy Cormier, President of the Maritime Fishermen's Union said, ultimately it was up to individual nations—should a country choose to stick with trawling, it must also live with the responsibility that entails.

For others, taking a stand was not easy. As Alain Le Sann pointed out, to criticise trawling in his French home town of Brittany would be to invite certain trouble. A call for a trawl ban must come from fisherfolk themselves, he said.

As for ICSF, so many calls were made on it during the discussion session that, as one informed listener joked, if it were to incorporate all those wishes it would have the mandate to do just about anything in fisheries! ☺

Samudra for Cebu is specially published
by ICSF for the Cebu Conference



SAMUDRA

FOR CEBU

INTERNATIONAL COLLECTIVE IN SUPPORT OF FISHWORKERS

Briefly

The first issue described *Samudra* for Cebu as just a bulletin on the Conference. We had initially called it a daily bulletin—which was what it was always meant to be—but we chickened out at the last minute and dropped the 'daily' from the announcement. Quite simply, given the skeletal staff and the bare minimum of infrastructure, we were worried if we could pull it off. But yes, we did it. Computers broke down, printers grew finicky, paper became brittle, diskettes got swapped, nerves snapped but yes, *Samudra* for Cebu came out on each day of the Conference. And that was possible only because so much happened during these six days. It was a reporter's dream beat—all the fishy news you ever wanted and all under one roof!

Thanks to all of you who gave interviews and wrote for us, despite your cramped time schedules. And thank you for reading the issues. We hope you found them interesting. Many thanks to our hosts in the Philippines and a special word to those who helped us out, particularly Kristina Godinez, Olivia Salajog Jr., Rhoel Orillaneda, Denver and En-en.

And now, goodbye, chao, ciao, adios, adieu, au revoir, paalam...

CONFERENCE STATEMENT PREPARED, PRESENTED TODAY

And now on to the next decade

As the Cebu Conference closes with a Statement, expectations about the future role of ICSF grow, even as areas of difference remain

Six days of meetings, six days of talk, six days of sharing—but at the end of it all, what remains, what is left that is solid and which will not melt into air? Plenty or very little—depending on what you choose to see and what you hope to do once you leave Cebu.

But looked at from the point of view of expectations, the Cebu Conference will be regarded a success not just for meeting many of them but also for raising new ones.

Above all, the Cebu Conference affirmed the fact that, after a decade, ICSF can confidently claim to be a network in the true sense of the word, linking people and organizations with the threads of shared experiences.

But whether that is enough is debatable, as made clear by some of the demands, especially from a few of the Asian developing countries. The problems

that face the fisheries of the world are complex and offer no pat solutions. But meanwhile, the problems that these create for human beings—the fishworkers and their families, particularly in the less developed countries—can not be wished away nor can they wait eternally for solutions.

In that dilemma lies the call for a greater, more publicly active role for ICSF. Such an urging is not new nor is it unexpected. Yet the fact that it is still expressed demonstrates that ICSF continues to be seen as an appropriate forum.

Thus the recommendations on the five key topics emphasise networking and collaboration with like-minded persons and organizations. They suggest a role of 'advocacy' and lobbying, especially in international forums.

They further propose a guardianship role on matters of development projects, resource manage-

ment, social and work conditions of fishworkers. And they also suggest the empowerment of fishworkers' organizations through education and information.

Clearly, the agenda and direction for the future work of ICSF has been set by the Cebu Conference.

This is what Cebu will be remembered for. Gone are the days of tentativeness and diffidence.

For ICSF the future is one of work, more work—and then some more. ☛

Samudra for Cebu is specially published by ICSF for the Cebu Conference

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Women must not be forgotten

Mexico is a country with a long coastline, rivers, lakes and estuaries. Alongside them lie a community of fishermen who are very important in the production of food for the entire nation even though they are in a critical situation of poverty and marginalisation. Almost fifty per cent of Mexican fishermen receive an income less than the minimum daily wage of a worker elsewhere in Mexico and 80 per cent receive less than one-and-a-half times this wage level.

In Mexico women are the nuclei for the stabilisation of the community. Largely on their shoulders lie the weight of poverty and marginalisation. Fishermen communities are generally isolated which means that they have no access to basic needs like health, education, communication, sanitation facilities etc.

Wives, mothers and sisters have the traditional roles of looking after the welfare of their families. But they have to cope with empty tables and the illnesses of their children. They are economically unable to satisfy the basic needs of their families.

In the first instance, she has the responsibility of giving attention to the fisherman husband when he returns from the sea. The duration of her work is as long as the hours of the day because the woman always has to prepare food before the husband goes to fish and the children go to school.

Moreover, she has to be ready to serve them when they return. She has no right to be tired and she always gets up before everyone else and goes to bed after everyone. Women also face poverty in parallel commercial activities.

Usually, a woman of the coast gets married very young and because she has neither information on, nor access to, good medical services of family planning, she ends up having many children (on an average, no less than five). Such a situation makes her always either pregnant or in

a stage of early motherhood or caring for her babies. Moreover, this is a good arrangement for the men by which they ensure that their women stay at home on shore and under their control.

Previously, the situation of the community was sustainable because it lived in harmony with nature. But now it is in extreme crisis due to the entry of big industrial or tourist projects. These have led to the deterioration of life in the community and reduced sources of work. Not only does this make the people much poorer than before but it also affects the social health of the community. With the entry of these new inhabitants come some social evils like drugs and prostitution.

Confronted by such situations, women have reacted by supporting the struggles of the fishermen for their rights. They derive strength and determination from the feeling they have for their children, even though they often have to face the incomprehension of their husbands.

One night I was with some women who stayed up late cooking supper for their husbands who were agitating at strike outside an industrial factory. One of them told me in a sad and weary voice, "I am thinking, Adriana, that perhaps if the strike is successful and my husband wins some compensation, he will just go off with another woman." And this, even though she was doing all she could to support her husband in the strike.

In such a situation, we have a great deal to do to raise the consciousness of both men and women in the fishing communities of Mexico, especially in respecting and defending the rights of women. In the above example, we were able to force some of the fishermen to use their compensation money as well as the new houses that they are due to get, to ensure the security of their own families.

Adriana Luna Para

Adriana Luna Para is founder of Grupo de Apoyo de la Red de Pescadores Riberenos, the Riverine Fishermen's Support Network in Mexico

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I am highly impressed by the capacity of the ICSF to bring together groups from so many countries. And, as a female, I was particularly motivated to see the participation of women in this conference and how they have grown in their ability to express points of view.

— Margarita Lizzaraga
Senior Liaison Officer
Fisheries Department
FAO, Rome

The fists emphasise the centrality of the fishworker in producing wealth from the sea. That they are clenched and that they do not touch, highlights the need to forge new links.

— From a 1984 note explaining the design which subsequently became the logo of ICSF

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VOICES

VOICES

'Life on earth being gambled with'

Two fishermen—Melecio Perez Chan from Mexico and Juan Torres Crespin from Peru—were both at the Rome Conference in 1984. Here they look back at Rome—and forwards beyond Cebu

What are your impressions of Rome 1984 and Cebu 1994?

JUAN: For fishermen like me, participating in Rome was like a dream. That invitation to fishworkers and support groups marked an important point of time in history. What prompted that invitation was a desire to protect water resources, knowing that these resources are the very source of food and work. For fishermen it has been of great importance to have beside us a movement of professional people who are organized at a scientific and professional level to defend these resources. After ten years of the historical Rome Conference, we are again in a meeting sponsored by ICSF. But now it is no longer a meeting of mere individuals but of representatives of already existing organizations in the small-scale fisheries sector. With the professional support of ICSF and other groups from different countries, we clearly see that there is a definite advancement in organizational and scientific analysis which has been well received by some governments.

MELECIO: I feel that the Rome Conference was like a worldwide awakening or recognition of global fisheries prob-

lems. Moreover, it contributed a great value which I would wish for many fishermen of the world to have. When the first exploratory meetings of the Network of Riverine Fishermen of Mexico took place, I realised the importance and the necessity of creating a new organization.

At that moment, I was clear in my mind of the kind of basis we needed to strengthen the national movement of Mexican fishworkers. Moreover, I knew how to make the most of the relationships and contacts with fishworker organizations as well as support groups.

What are the problems of small-scale fisheries in your country?

JUAN: The biggest problem is the indiscriminate fishing by industrial fisheries of sardines, anchovies and mackerels. In 1993 they caught ten million tonnes of fish.

MELECIO: The main problem is pollution and depletion of natural resources and degradation of the environment.

How do you face this problem?

JUAN: We do not have the possibility of facing it because the present govern-

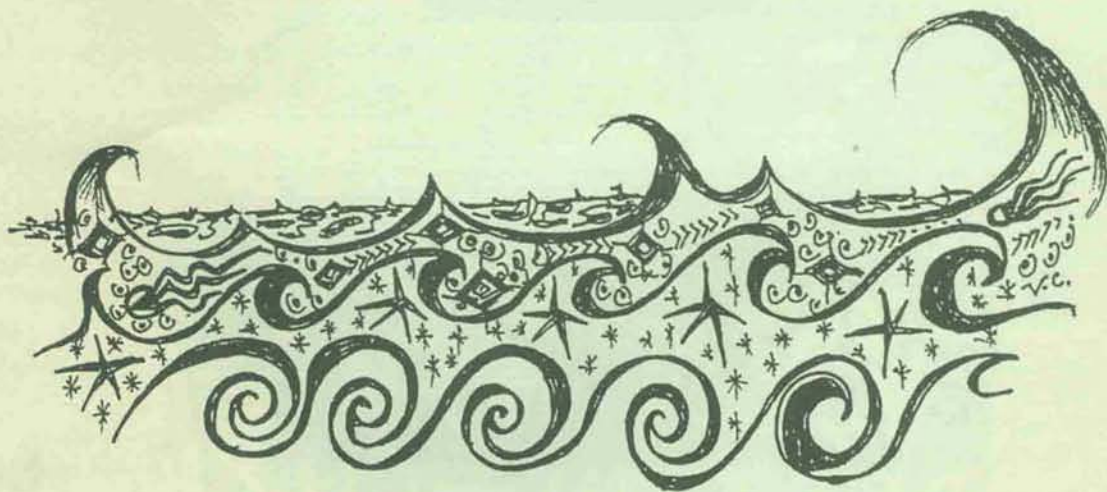
ment's policies have caused a decline in trade union organizations and this has affected small-scale fisherfolk.

MELECIO: We see as urgent the need to have technical support in the area of litigation to make our demands more legally sustainable. In Mexico, there is little human resource with this skill.

What message would you like to convey as the Cebu Conference ends?

JUAN: We call on all the professionals in this noble work to continue strengthening it and to continue contributing with their knowledge for the benefit of small-scale fishworkers the world over. I also call on all the leaders who are participating in this Conference to assume roles that will help conserve resources and to put to practice the conclusions and lessons learnt at this Conference.

MELECIO: I would like to ask workers and professionals in fisheries to work together for a joint effort for the preservation of our marine resources because it is really life on earth that is being gambled with.



Are fishworkers to blame?

by Rodolfo C. Sambajon, President, PAMALAKAYA, Philippines

Our small country was once called the 'Pearl of the Orient', rich in all natural resources, from forests to rivers and seas. But now our forests are denuded and most of our people are homeless. Our mountains are destroyed and our gold has gone. What is left to us are the mine tailings that pollute our marine habitat. The birds and the bees in the green fields are now replaced by buildings and factories that pollute the air and water.

Our rice fields are gone and what is left to us are bridges, pavements and mountains of garbage. And on the pavements, you will find squatters in our own land. Inside the buildings are men and women who work for the rich, making them richer at the expense of the poor labourers. At night you will see beautiful lights but behind the neon lights are sons and daughters of farmers and fisherfolk who have long been neglected and exploited.

This is not the end. Exploitation will continue. In fact, we are now facing a bigger problem which needs to be addressed. Our coastal lands and mangrove forests and even our fishing grounds are subject to massive conversion, also for the interest of the powerful. Some say this is for our development and for the future. But

our question is, for whose development? Are we sure of a development imposed by the IMF-World Bank and being implemented by their local collaborators who for a long time exploited our people?

We must now learn from our experiences. Who benefited from our resources? Who destroyed our environment? Is it really the fisherfolk whose only means of livelihood depends upon the marine resources or those who have the capacity and capability? Sometimes the fisherfolk are blamed for the destruction of the environment and marine life. Are they really the culprits or are the culprits those who pretend to be environment-friendly and protective by offering

grants and aid to protect the environment?

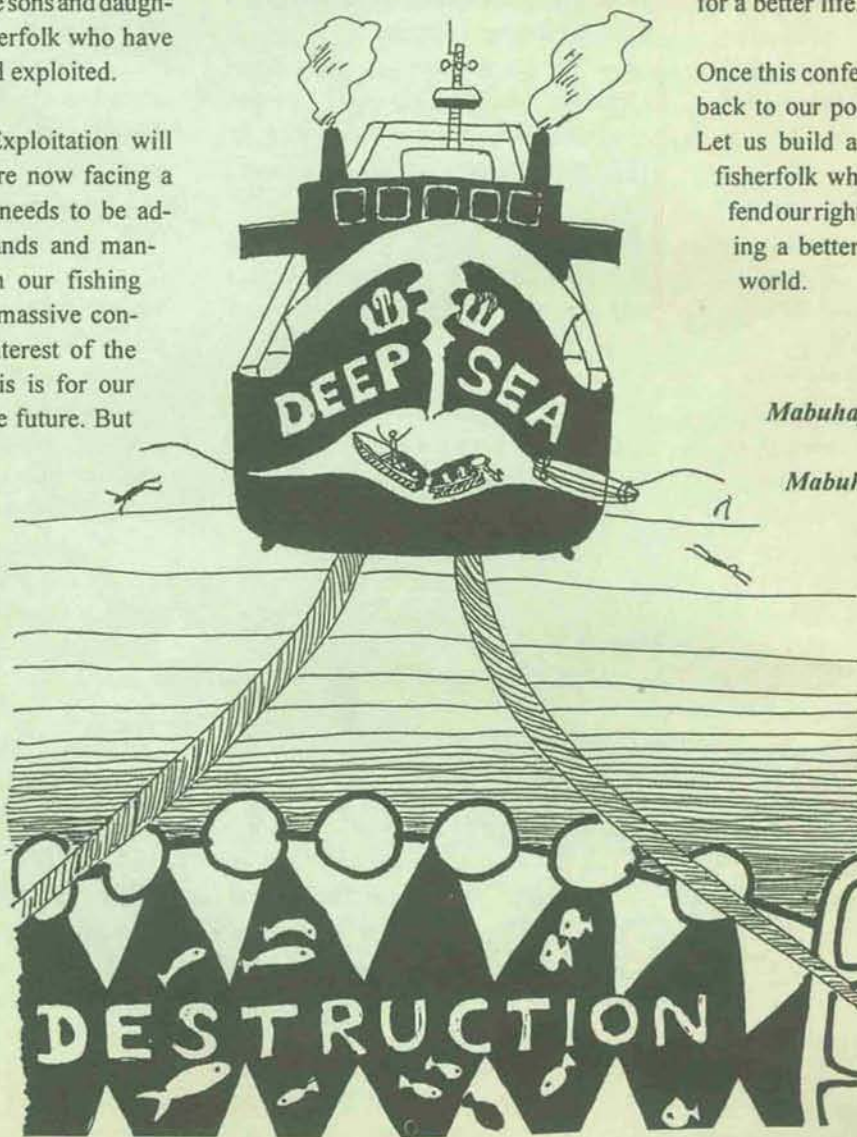
This is not only a question of environmental protection. The problem and struggle still remains between the oppressor and the oppressed. And the oppressor will never place gold on a silver plate and offer it to us. We need to struggle to get it.

Maybe we have differences but I believe we have our commonalities too. From our common grounds we should unite and fight for our rights and for our future. In this struggle, we may even give up our life but never the lives and destiny of our children whom we love most. We will not allow our loved ones to die of hunger and homelessness. They need to survive for a better life.

Once this conference is over, we will go back to our poor fishing communities. Let us build a strong organization of fisherfolk who are determined to defend our rights and committed to building a better society and a peaceful world.

Mabuhay ang ICSF!

Mabuhay ang mangingisda!



Making a meal of Peru's fisheries

by *Héran Peralta Bouroncle, Fisheries Adviser to the Government of Peru*

Incredible but true! I think you would be amazed to learn that in Peru in 1993 effluent from industrial fishmeal plants processing sardines and anchovy leaked 5 million tonnes of fish worth US \$175 million into the sea.

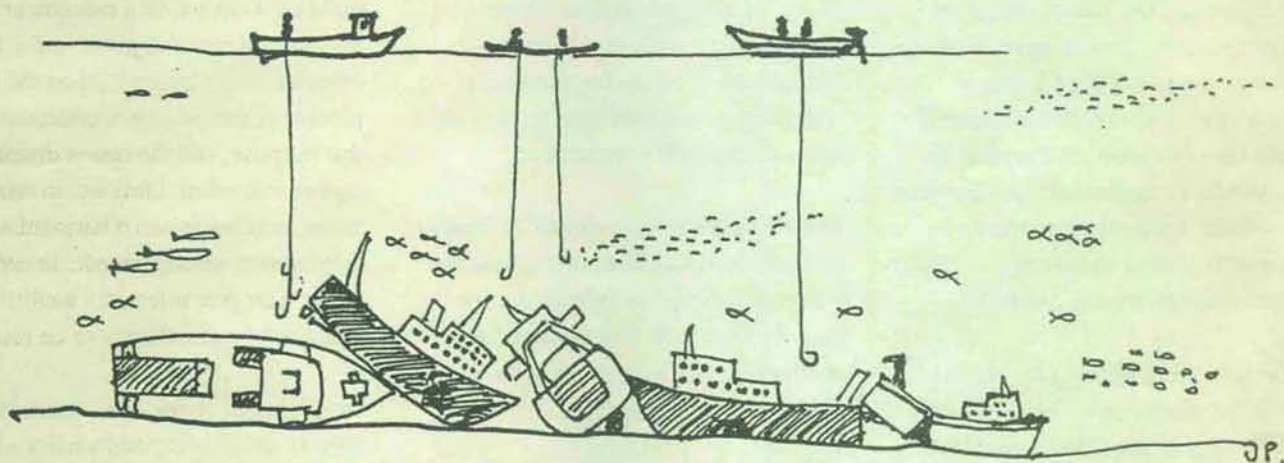
According to the official statistics of the Peruvian Ministry of Fisheries, 8 million tonnes of sardines and anchovy were landed by the industrial fishing fleet in 1993. However, the industrial fishworkers only declare 80% of their catch. According to the fishermen and independent boat owners, the actual amount received by the processing plants in 1993 was 9,600,000 tonnes.

As part of his government's commitments, President Fujimori must transfer the ownership of this state enterprise to the private sector—national or foreign. This momentous event has opened up the debate as to what privatisation really means.

The fishermen and independent boat owners feel that privatisation is a means by which the government would transfer its facilities into the hands of national industrialists and merchants. This would neither guarantee a monopoly nor protect the small and medium scale businesses.

age the industrial sardine and anchovy fisheries. In June 1992 the Ministry of Fisheries, financed by the World Bank, organised an International Seminar on Resource Management, in which experts from countries which had developed this system participated.

Despite concluding that ITQs were not an appropriate means for the fishmeal industry, the World Bank has continued to put pressure on the government saying that it is the only alternative, for reasons of profitability, transparency and balance with market forces. Whatever the World Bank says, the experience in New Zealand has shown it to be an unmiti-



Since both private and national processing plants use technology from the 1960s, for every tonne of meal produced, 2.3 tonnes are washed into the sea as effluent. That is to say, 51% of the raw material is dumped back into the sea. This means that in 1993 alone fish factories discharged effluent into the sea containing 5 million tonnes of fish products. As raw material, this effluent would have a value of US \$175 million, lost to the fishermen and boat owners, which could realise US \$250 million if transformed into meal and oil.

PESCAPERU is the world's largest producer of fishmeal and oil. It is a state-owned corporation of 20 plants spread over 1,700 kilometres, which alone controls 20% of the world trade in fishmeal. In 1993 PESCAPERU exported 600,000 tonnes of meal worth US \$210 million.

The union of private industrial fishmeal producers said that privatisation would only be allowed for national capital, as a measure to prevent the industry being controlled by international capital. Chilean and Chinese investors thought that the package of new rules, legal guarantees and tax concessions would allow them to purchase the entire industry.

The Peruvian fishworkers rejected this last measure because it would allow the Chinese and Chilean capitalists to control price as well as the future of this industry. Also, they suspected that ownership by large national investors would mean the collapse of 80% of the industry and the independent fishing fleet. There is an agreement between the Peruvian government and the World Bank about the introduction of Individual Transferable Quotas (ITQs) as the means to man-

aged disaster for sustainable development. The Scandinavian experience shows that it is only feasible with huge state subsidies for boat owners. Nor, according to the outcome of our conference, is it certain that ITQs would be good on matters of transparency, control or monitoring.

Moreover, the use of ITQs in the Peruvian industrial fishery would be extremely complex and costly.

There is also the danger that the privatisation of quotas, that is to say our available marine resources, would allow a great concentration and centralisation of transnational capital, resulting in the control of the entire Peruvian industrial fishery, with the disintegration of the industrial fleet, and the Peruvian fishmeal and oil industry.

Protecting nature means protecting ourselves

by Don K. Marut, Programme Officer, OXFAM, Indonesia

Sustainable resources management might be a concept debatable worldwide, but not for most of the people in Moluccas islands, a province consisting of 1007 islands in the eastern part of Indonesia. The people in Moluccas have inherited a traditional system of wisdom and knowledge which supports the sustainability of their livelihoods and the environment. This traditional indigenous wisdom is called *sasi*.

Sasi literally means 'prohibition'. It is a traditional law that regulates the people from exploiting the natural resources, according to a communal agreement. As the people believe that all kinds of creatures in the world are interdependent, the law also arranges the relationships among human beings and between human beings and other creatures. In principle, *sasi* aims to maintain harmonious relationships among creatures.

As for natural resources, *sasi* applies both on the mainland as well as at sea and in coastal areas. On the mainland, *sasi* manages the harvest of cash crops and timber, and regulates the protection of forests which have direct or indirect relations with other resources such as water sources in uphill areas, mangrove

forests on the coastlines and estuaries. Sago plants—the staple food—are also protected by *sasi*. As sea, *sasi* arranges the harvest of certain kinds of marine resources such as sea cucumber, pearl shells in Aru islands, a kind of sardines in Haruku islands and other kinds of fishes in other islands in the province of Moluccas.

'Closing' *sasi* means that for a certain period people are prohibited from taking out certain natural resources. The period is determined by communal agreement which, in turn, is based on the time needed for the resources to multiply enough and be ready for harvesting. 'Opening' *sasi* means that the people are allowed to take the resources.

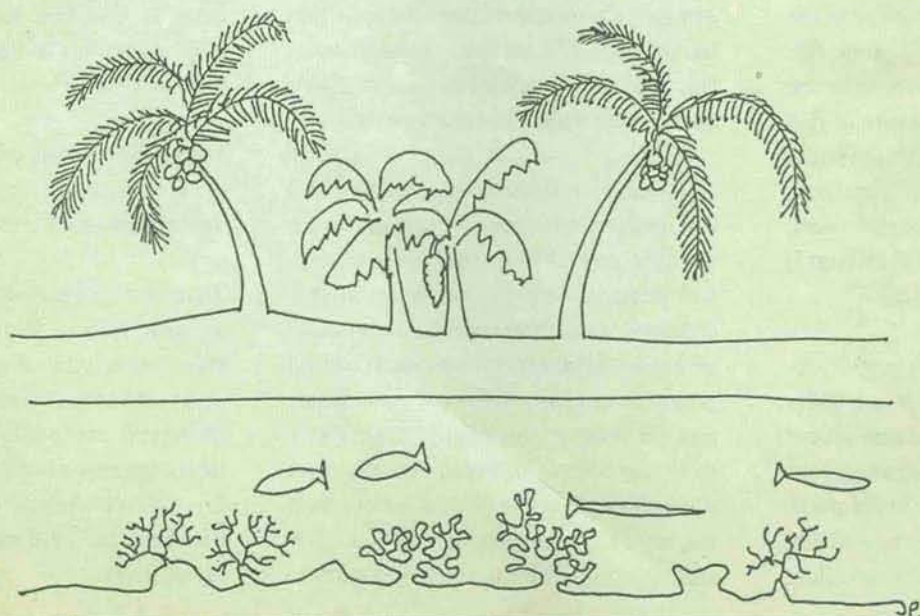
The community has a council of leaders or representatives of extended families which is assigned to enforce the law. They are not paid. The position of chairperson has been given to certain families by inheritance.

Traditionally, all the members are men but in certain communities women have been involved. Anyone breaking the law is punished and the forms of punishment are decided by the community. The

people obey the law not only because they want to uphold the dignity of their families (as a single person's faults are regarded as the faults of the family) but because they are really aware of the advantages of the regulation. The people in Moluccas believe that 'we live from nature and we are part of nature', so protecting nature also means protecting ourselves.

The harvests are divided in accordance with the main purpose of the *sasi*. If it was initially decided that it is for building a church or a mosque or a community meeting place or for some other community needs, then the largest portion of the harvest is collected for that purpose, and the rest is divided among individual families. In social terms, *sasi* maintains a harmonious relationship among people. In economic terms, *sasi* guarantees the quality and quantity of natural high-value resources.

In ecological terms, *sasi* ensures the quality, availability and variety of natural resources. And in institutional terms, *sasi* maintains a participatory process in the community which contributes to the making of a solid and integrated community.



- major reductions in by-catch, waste and discards and the promotion of selective fishing gear and practices;
- the protection of the marine environment from the adverse impacts of non-fishing activities (for example, marine pollution, habitat degradation) as integral to fisheries conservation;
- a precautionary and ecosystem approach to fisheries management, involving consideration of the impact of fishing on other species in the marine environment, not solely those targeted for commercial exploitation;
- effective mechanisms for the monitoring, control and surveillance of the vessels fishing on the high seas and distant-water fishing within EEZs;
- commitments by all states to adopt and implement strengthened conservation standards within the EEZs;
- effective mechanisms for transparency and public participation, including the participation of fishworkers' organizations, in fisheries management and decision-making processes at the national and international levels;
- respect for the rights and special interests of small-scale, artisanal, indigenous and women fish-workers and communities dependent on fisheries for food and livelihood.

From Greenpeace's perspective, the increasingly large-scale and industrial nature of fishing and fisheries development and the relentless advances in the sophistication of fishing technology, as well as the absence of any real effort to assess the ecological or social impacts, are amongst the major problems facing fisheries today. The issue of large-scale drift-net fishing is central to the issue of technology in fisheries and particularly

relevant to ICSF members in the light of the discussions at Cebu and the ICSF call for a ban on bottom trawling in tropical waters. This and many other issues related to technology, the environment and transnational linkages in fisheries were subjects of discussion at Cebu and we look forward to ongoing consideration of these issues by ICSF as outlined in the Cebu Conference Statement.

We welcome dialogue with fishworkers' organizations. We recognize that, in many areas of the world, coastal fishworkers are at the forefront of the struggle against pollution and degradation of marine and coastal areas and are working to secure fisheries conservation and the future of their livelihoods.

We have much in common on these issues and look forward to working together, as much as we are able, on issues of mutual concern. We have much to learn from consultation and dialogue with fishworkers.

At the same time, we hope that fish-workers are willing to recognize the concerns of Greenpeace and other environmental organizations regarding fisheries and the health of the oceans.

Greenpeace places enormous value on the words of John Kurien, 'collaboration' with ICSF. We have great respect for ICSF and look forward to continuing to work together in the future. Likewise, we respect the work of CCFD and look forward to ongoing discussions with James Smith and other members of ICSF.

This statement has been prepared by Matthew Gianni, Mike Hagler, Helene Bours, Cliff Curtis, Assumpta Gual, Juan Gatos Cardenas and Traci Romine on behalf of the Greenpeace International Fisheries Campaign

Editors Note: SAMUDRA would like to take this debate forward. Readers are requested to send in their views to ICSF's Madras office.

Fisherfolk

Don't be hunters, start harvesting

Unless the present orientation shifts from hunting to harvesting, the world's fisheries may well have created a new endangered species

Where on earth are our precious fish resources going? This is no idle thought. Just look at recent happenings:

- dramatic conflicts on the high seas between Spanish, French and British fishermen
- news of 'fish wars' erupting all over the world
- doom-and-gloom reports about the state of the world's fisheries

Can one help but wonder whether fishing is going the way of other hunting cultures? Will fishermen be condemned to the role of native Americans, that is, North American Indians, when their plains lost their buffaloes?

It would seem that fisherfolk, like the native Americans, managed to sustain themselves on fisheries quite well enough—until the arrival of modern technology.

In the same way that hunters with rifles and machine-guns decimated the herds of buffalo roaming the prairies, the application of super-efficient modern technology is simply hoovering up all marine life and hunting the fish down to the last shoal.

For millions of people around the world, fishing and fishing traditions have been a way of life that has sustained them over centuries. But, like the fish stocks which support them, fishing communities are rapidly becoming an endangered species.

What can we learn from past experience of how to manage out fisheries in ways which do not lead to their destruction? How can we match the production of fish

to the demands of a growing world population and still ensure livelihoods for fisherfolk?

There are many examples the world over of fisherfolk employing 'nurture fisheries' management strategies. These are based on the view of fishing as a harvesting activity, recognizing the time needed for stocks to replenish themselves and the need to conserve species diversity.

Traditional nurture fisheries strategies applied by fisherfolk involve using a range of selective, low-energy and passive techniques to take a seasonally diverse catch. Such practices are aimed at the sustainable use of fish resources.

They ensure an optimum use to produce current benefits, without jeopardizing the potential for similar benefits in the future. They are geared towards safeguarding traditional livelihoods and local food security. The fishery is managed as a coastal commons through community institutions.

Examples of traditional technologies for nurture fisheries include hook-and-line and simple nets. Efficiency in nurture fisheries means ecological efficiency. Technology is used to optimally exploit the environment. The economic cost-benefit analysis includes the environmental costs of overexploitation and resource degradation.

Capture fisheries

On the other hand, 'capture fisheries' strategies view fishing as a hunting activity, where the range is open-access and the fish stocks are common property. Such a view leads to a free-for-all situation where responsibility for managing the resource is ill-defined. This leads to the classic 'tragedy of the commons' situation

where what is left by one user is taken by another. The transfer of technology and capital from outside brings with it interests that do not understand or care about the fishery ecosystem.

Capture fisheries, therefore, tend to be capital- and energy-intensive as well as non-selective. While leading to short-term economic gains, they rapidly deplete the fishery. Examples of 'catch-all' techniques include trawling and 'walls of death' drift-nets.

In capture fisheries, efficiency means technical efficiency, that is, in terms of the amount of fish that can be caught per haul or per unit of effort. Economic efficiency means maximizing returns to capital in the short term. This encourages intensive capital investment. It also externalizes the environmental and social costs.

If the full environmental and social costs of fishing had to be paid by the fishing companies, most modem fishing practices would be uneconomic.

From a purely economical perspective, it makes much more sense to 'clear cut' the fishery, fully extract the resource now, invest the profits elsewhere and move on.

'Nurturing' the resource only makes sense if your livelihood depends on it and you want to pass something on to your children.

The well-meaning scientists and politicians back on land are clearly doing the best job they can. Yet their simplified 'scientific' management systems and fisheries models, based on single stocks and allocated quota systems—although incredibly complex—just do not work.

Why? Simply because they can not take into account the complex interplay of biological, climatic, meteorological and other physical factors that make up a fishery. Reduced to the absurd in the proposition to privatize or sell off stretches of the sea, the simplified assumptions of classic fisheries management have been unable to predict the complex behaviour of fish.

For one thing, the ocean is not one long fishy continuum of predictable variability.

Fisheries management needs to be put back into the hands of people who understand fisheries, and whose livelihoods depend on them—the fisher people themselves.

In times past, Basque fishermen owned their boats in common. The captains would meet whenever the weather was uncertain to decide whether it was safe for the town to fish. That way, no individual could risk the lives of the crew or anyone who followed them out to sea. It was a community decision whether to fish or not.

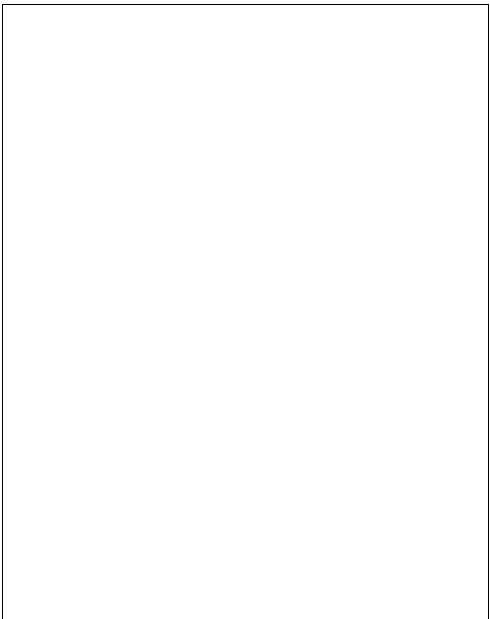
In the UK, many of the inshore fisheries are managed through Sea Fisheries Commissions (SFCs).

Their jurisdiction currently extends to six miles. This is likely to be extended and the powers of the SFCs increased through the European Union's (EU) Habitat Directive.

Regulations will designate special areas of conservation, designed to protect important habitats on land and in coastal areas, both tidal areas as well as those out to sea.

Local knowledge

The SFCs' role will ensure a balance between local marine environmental policy and the needs of inshore fishermen. As UK Fisheries Minister Michael Jack points out, "Their local knowledge will be invaluable to drawing up management plans."



In many countries of the world, local knowledge and traditional livelihoods are beginning to receive the respect they deserve. Indeed, the Oceans Chapter of Agenda 21 of the 1992 UNCED Conference in Rio makes 'a commitment to take into account traditional knowledge and the interests of local small-scale fisheries and indigenous people'.

An analysis by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the UN concluded that in 1989 it cost the world US\$92 million to earn US\$70 million from fishing on the high seas, thereby generating a US\$22 million operating loss. The real costs of fishing on the high seas are either subsidized or externalized on the crew and the environment.

What then are the alternatives to the gloomy prospects currently confronting us? Clearly, there is no simple prescriptive solution. But one avenue must be to try and build on the extensive knowledge and self-interest of fishing communities to manage coastal fisheries on the basis of community management, enshrined in the constitution and backed by the full force of the law.

Increasingly, the concept and practice of 'co-management' is receiving international attention. Unrestricted privatization is clearly not the answer. Selling off chunks of the sea to commercial interests is a bit like selling off timber concessions to logging companies.

The results are predictable. You only need to look at the example of Canada and the collapse of the Newfoundland cod fishery to realise what a catastrophe this sort of privatization would be. The Canadian offshore fleet, controlled by two large corporations, was allocated half the groundfish resource when the fishery was operating.

Ownership of fisheries by big business has led to one of the world's worst fishing disasters and has laid waste one of the most productive fisheries the world has ever known. The collapse of the cod stocks of the Western Atlantic has put at least 40,000 people out of work. It has destroyed a fishery resource that has sustained local communities since time

immemorial and European communities for over 400 years. Due to the collapse of stocks a moratorium on fishing for Northern cod was announced in 1992. This was meant as a temporary measure, but may remain in place until the year 2000.

Clearly, therefore, if fisheries are to survive, it must be back to the future. There is no reason why this need mean becoming Luddites or restricting ourselves to using primitive technology and methods. It is merely a question of establishing priorities and developing strategies.

By selectively making an optimum catch today, we can ensure the flow of similar fishery benefits in the future. The challenges are to develop technologies which are efficient from the environmental as well as economic and technical perspective, to develop economic tools which can analyze social and environmental costs and to develop management systems which allocate property rights to specific community producer groups.

The choices are simple and stark. We can 'clear cut' our fisheries, using the latest and technically most sophisticated, cost-efficient weapons in our armoury, leaving nothing for the future. Or we can turn from hunters into harvesters by developing ecologically efficient technologies.

Tomorrow's buffaloes?

Remember, the buffalo only became an endangered species once traditional institutions broke down and distant market forces determined the fate of the resource. The same can be said for today's fisheries.

Isn't it time we turned from being hunters to harvesters? **3**

This piece is written by Brian O'Riordan, Fisheries Adviser, ITDG, Rugby, UK

Books

A WORD TO SAY: THE STORY OF THE MARITIME FISHERMEN'S UNION.

By Sue Calhoun. Nimbus Publishing Ltd. Halifax, Nova Scotia. 1991. Pages 274.

From protest to compromise

The complex history of the struggle of the fishermen of the Maritime provinces of Canada is narrated in a thought-provoking style

For those of us who struggle through the process of sustaining a movement of coastal fishworkers in these times of rapid depletion of fish resources, this book on the Maritime Fishermen's Union (MFU) of Canada, written by Sue Calhoun and titled **A Word to Say**, is both thought-provoking and enlightening.

This is the story of the struggle of the fishermen of the Maritime Provinces to organize to protect the source of their livelihood, while retaining their autonomy. This struggle is situated in the context of the 'development' of fisheries in Canada and the struggle of these communities to retain their Acadian roots.

In this attempt, the author has tried to communicate the complexities of a mobilization process in a community that is geographically scattered and emotionally volatile.

The story focuses on the struggle of in-shore fishermen against the growing control of government over the fishery, on the one hand, and the domination of the fish processing industry, on the other—both of which seemed to want to wipe out the inshore fishery in favour of the growing offshore fleet. Over the years, the inshore fishermen had started co-operatives and joined associations. Neither had given them much strength. In 1973, these fishermen began talking about a union, but the existing labour legislation had to change first.

Only that would legally allow small owners like them to unionize and to have the right to collectively negotiate fish

prices. As in all artisanal fisheries, the Canadian-Acadian fishermen have a long history of being exploited by market forces as well as merchants, mainly the French who, in the early 17th century, were trading in dry cod. In the early 19th century, the lobster fishery developed because of demand from the United States (US).

Being bonded to the mercy of the merchants, the east coast fishermen lived from season to season, always in dread of a poor catch that might put them even further in debt. As early as 1854, there were free-trade agreements between the US and Britain which broke the monopoly of merchants but which gave other companies the right to dictate prices.

The first initiatives to free the inshore fishermen were made by Fr. Moses Coady around 1927. He tried to help them create local co-operatives and founded an umbrella organization called the United Maritime Fishermen (UMF). They started with local marketing and later went into processing canneries, mainly of lobster. But their main focus was education.

Decrease in lobster catch

However, by the late 1950s, the UMF was forced to buy its own trawlers to keep its canneries functioning. By the early 1980s, with a decrease in lobster catch, the UMF went bankrupt.

There were various reasons for this collapse. By the mid-1950s, encouraged by government subsidies, a mid-shore fleet developed. It comprised mainly trawlers—vessels between 50 to 100 feet long. In the 1960s, Canada subsidized an offshore fleet to compete with foreign vessels in the North Atlantic. By the early

1970s, one fishery after another began to collapse—first ground fish, then herring and later, salmon.

Prompted by this, the government began to introduce regulations—issuing licences and limiting entry. The co-operatives could not fight these processes. Angry fishermen, therefore, decided to create a union.

None of them, however, knew how a union was organized. A group of them set out for the west coast, at the other end of the country, to find out.

They were disillusioned by what they found none of the unions there comprised exclusively of inshore fishermen, and many received government grants.

The entire history of the MFU is a struggle to remain autonomous and represent only the demands of the inshore workers. It paid a big price for this but, importantly, it retained credibility in the eyes of the fishermen.

On the other hand, they were also very suspicious of leadership that came from outside. As they were all full-time fishermen and many were semi-literate, they were forced to seek the help of outsiders. But, until someone proved himself, it was always a constant struggle.

Despite all their efforts to pressure legislators, they were constantly let down because the bureaucrats could not accept the fact that small-scale boatowners could unionize.

The government instituted one commission after another to look into the matter. Even though some reports were in favour of granting fishermen the right to unionize, there was always some opposition. The only course left then was to act. The fishermen undertook many

collective actions like burning trawlers that came to offload their catch, picketing officials and holding large street demonstrations. Many of these campaigns actively involved women who did most of the organizing work.

It was only in 1975, when the fisheries crisis intensified, that the newly elected fisheries minister, Romeo LeBlanc, began to seriously heed the demands of the fishermen. There was also the question of the 200-mile zone and the ministry was eager to safeguard this right for Canadians.

The entire history of the MFU is a struggle to remain autonomous and represent only the demands of the inshore workers. It paid a big price for this but, importantly, it retained credibility in the eyes of the fishermen.

So it pushed for the organization of a fishermen's association called the Nova Scotia Fishermen's Association (NSFA). This was seen as a kind of 'yellow' union, so by 1977, the militant fishermen went on to organize their own union, the MFU.

Since it took an unambiguous stand on behalf of the workers, the MFU began to be associated with the Left.

Some of its full-timers like Gilles Theriault were indeed inspired by Marxism, and the nature of their commitment to the cause of the fishermen and the manner in which they tackled the authorities gave reason for suspicion and distrust.

Turned out

Sue Calhoun tells us how the MW was once turned out of a worker's meeting hall where it was to hold one of its very strategic meetings—just because word spread that its full-timers were 'communists'. This image derived from its unconventional mass actions and also because the MFU actually represented a new hope as well as a new approach to dealing with problems of the industry. Throughout, the MW adopted a policy of non-alignment with political parties.

Fishermen realised that there was nothing to be gained by publicly supporting any

political party. One big problem the MFU faced was to prove that it had the support of the majority of the inshore fishermen.

In reality, although it did have such support, it was difficult to collect dues from fishermen. Many methods were tried with little success until 1988, when Michael Belliveau made a forceful demand for an *enabling* legislation making dues mandatory.

This clever move finally saved a dying union. Today, the MFU has over 1,500 active members, each paying around US\$151 a year.

The occasional successes that the MFU did achieve were not only a result of perseverance and single-mindedness but also due to the entry into the fisheries ministry of committed people, who displayed concern for the working fishermen. In fact, the fisheries minister, Jean Gauvin, was the driving force behind the collective bargaining legislation for inshore fishermen.

It is also interesting to see how the MFU is locked in battle with the state over legislation to protect its rights. Moved by the demands of the MFU, the state formulated bills which really did not answer the demands of the fishermen.

Bill 94 was one such bill which was challenged free of charge on the fishermen's behalf by a labour lawyer called Raymond Larkin. The state found

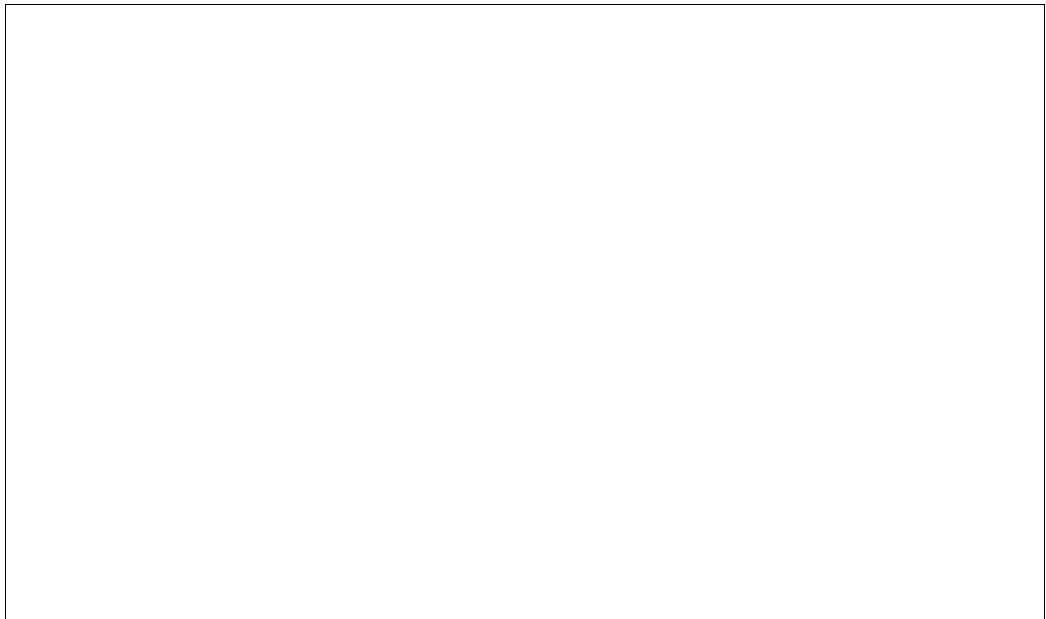
various ways to wriggle around the actual demands of the fishermen. But they did not give in. With the passing of Bill 25, which was in their favour, the fishermen finally won.

The MFU was also involved in issues of resource management which many fishermen considered equally, if not more, important. They felt there was no point in getting a good price if there was no fish to catch. In this case, too, the government played dirty. In restricting access, the licensing system applied to the vessels and not to the fishermen. A fisherman may have had licences for herring, mackerel, groundfish and lobster, but if he wanted to sell one, he had to sell all—along with his boat. There was no flexibility.

The MFU fought this too by defining who a 'bona fide' fisherman was. Any bona fide fisherman could then transfer any licences. This was a major contribution of the MFU to establishing a licensing policy in favour of genuine fishermen.

Problems of poaching were also handled by the MFU, which received government funding to patrol the waters. As a result, the stocks of lobster were gradually regenerated.

Although the union was involved in militancy, it also began to be drawn into the government's consultative process. By the early 1980s, more than 25 Fisheries Advisory Committees had been



established around the region and the MFU had representatives on all of them. In this way, they were often able to negotiate quota increases or season extensions for the inshore sector.

On such occasions, there would be a spurt in the payment of union dues, but they would fall again, as soon as the fishermen had forgotten what the union had done for them. It was a constant up-and-down, with fishermen everywhere asking, 'What has the union done for us?' or 'Why should we continue to fight?

By the early 1980s, the fishermen began to realize they were being listened to. They had started as a protest movement to save the inshore fishery, which seemed to be disappearing. By the mid-1980s, they could claim that they had succeeded.

Gradually, the union had moved away from protest to compromise but it was clear to all that the fishery could not have been managed without the help of the MFU. It is the only union of inshore fishermen separated geographically and ethnically and always with very little money.

In fact, except for three full-timers who remained with the union through thick and thin, a large number left because of insecurity from a lack of funds.

In 1986, for the first time in its history, the MFD negotiated contracts with major companies on behalf of fishermen in New Brunswick.

But collective bargaining has had limited success. The large monopoly houses left the processing industry and only the small ones survived.

The MFU always put principles and ideology ahead of strategy. It was for this reason that it did not affiliate with any international union. It also paid a price for this.

As it stands today, with the fishery again in a major crisis, the MFU can proudly claim to have won all kinds of victories for its fishermen and, more importantly, that it prevented the destruction of its industry—or at least slowed it down.

Many of these issues sound familiar to those of us in developing countries like India. This confirms the fact that resources and inshore fishworkers face the same problems the world over. Moreover, the conviction that it is only the inshore fishermen who can actually manage the resources is a conviction of coastal people at a global level.

As an activist, I enjoyed reading this book. Moreover, I could draw many parallels with our ongoing work in India. However, I regret that Sue Calhoun mentions only in passing the role that women played in the creation of the MFU.

Women's role

I am sure that women did indeed play a very active role and, for various reasons, got left out in the institutionalizing process. Once women lose their spaces in public activity, it is almost sure that subsistence economies also get eroded. Despite the fact that the MFU did continue to put up a fight for the coastal fishers, it probably finds it extremely difficult to offset the increasing capitalization of the sector.

Sue Calhoun has made this complex story come alive by her apparent close contacts with the personalities and main actors in the struggle. Many of us have met some of them too and we can now appreciate them all the more. Bravo, MFU!



This review is by Nailni Nayak,
Co-ordinator of the Women in
Fisheries programme of ICSF

Reconciling the unreconcilable

The FAO's proposed Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing will have to balance responsible fisheries with national self-interests

What was meant to be a Technical Consultation turned out, instead, to be a round of intractable negotiations and horse-trading between two apparently irreconcilable interest groups: distant-water and coastal fishing nations.

Thanks to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the latter countries now have jurisdiction over 80 to 90 per cent of global fish stocks, while the former are increasingly being squeezed out of fishing altogether.

Conceived in Rome in 1991 at the meeting of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI), a Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing was given the official seal of approval by the Declaration of Cancun in May 1992. Following the International Conference on Responsible Fishing, co-hosted by the Mexican Government and the FAO, 66 countries endorsed this declaration and proposed that FAO take the lead in developing a Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing.

The Cancun Declaration defines responsible fishing as: *'the sustainable utilization of fisheries resources in harmony with the environment; the use of capture and aquaculture practices which are not harmful to ecosystems, resources or their quality; the incorporation of added value to such products through the transformation processes meeting the required sanitary standards; the conduct of commercial practices so as to provide consumers access to good quality products.'*

From 26 September to 5 October 1994, the FAO played host to a Technical Consultation to review a preliminary draft of the Code of Conduct, prior to its submission to the 21st Session of con, due to meet in March 1995. The draft consists of 11 Articles, which outline the context,

set out the General Principles and detail six main areas: fisheries management; fishing operations; aquaculture development; integration of fisheries into coastal management; post-harvest practices and trade; and fisheries research.

In terms of marine fisheries, about 80 to 90 per cent of the world's commercial fish stocks fall within the 200-mile EEZs recognized by UNCLOS. The remaining marine fish stocks comprise high-seas fisheries in international waters.

Although UNCLOS includes provisions for these, issues of access rights and management are far from resolved. Like many international boundaries, EEZs confer resource riches to some and poverty to others.

UNCLOS has not been able to resolve many of the conflicts arising from this unequal distribution of resources, or to deal with the aggrieved interests who now find previously open-access resources closed to them.

Unresolved issues pertain to distant-water and high-seas fisheries, the management of fish stocks which migrate between EEZs, and resource-use conflicts within EEZs (such as traditional rights vs. commercial interests).

Flags of convenience

There are also problems caused by interest groups who are not party to UNCLOS or other internationally agreed fisheries conservation and management arrangements. Of particular concern is the use of 'flags of convenience to circumvent international agreements and regulations.

While one process of concern is the development of a Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing, the second process

<div>Analysis</div>	
	<p>originates from UNCED, which acknowledges the failure of the international community to manage global fish resources.</p> <p>This concerns the development and implementation of Chapter 17 (the Oceans Chapter) of Agenda 21, and includes the United Nations Conference on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks.</p> <p>At stake is a lot more than just the health and viability of global fish stocks, most of which are overexploited. Of particular concern is the right of fishing communities to livelihood and food security.</p> <p>This is a concern which seems to have become subordinated to the wrangling of lawyers and bureaucrats over boundaries, access and ownership rights, national sovereignty, and so on.</p> <p>The focus of the Draft Code of Conduct would seem to be on the responsibilities of states as regards the sustainable use of fish resources, technical management measures, conservation and environmental concerns and the rights of consumers to quality and value-added fish products.</p> <p>Issues such as the rights of fishing communities to livelihood and food security, the importance of traditional knowledge and management systems, fishworkers' rights to decent working conditions at sea and on land and the important contribution of women, seem to be subsumed under the more technical and biological management objectives.</p> <p>For instance, Article 6 on Fisheries Management states <i>that sustainability of the fisheries resources is the overriding long-term objective</i>. The assumption being that so long as there are fish, there will be fishermen, <i>ergo</i>, fisheries management objectives only need to be technical—and not socio-economic.</p> <p>In terms of moving forward with how the draft Code of Conduct should be worded, the Technical Consultation soon became bogged down in an intractable wrangle between the two main interest groups: the member states with high-seas and distant-water fishing interests and those with jurisdiction over coastal fisheries within EEZs.</p> <p>Keen on agreement</p> <p>The former seemed to be keen on establishing an agreement at this meeting which they could take to the next round of discussions at the UN in New York on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks. The latter seemed to be in no hurry to get such an agreement, and appeared to prefer wrecking tactics to delay a conclusion.</p> <p>It was finally decided not to discuss the sections which dealt with high-seas fisheries until the UN Conference on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly</p>

Migratory Fish Stocks had reached a conclusion. Also at issue was the status of this meeting *vis-à-vis* the UN Conference on Straddling-Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks and the COFI meeting scheduled for March 1995.

The outcome of this Technical Consultation suggested that it is subordinate to both and that the role of the FAO Secretariat in redrafting the documentation and providing recommendations will be crucial.

In many ways, this technical consultationcum-negotiation seemed to be about getting some rubber stamping to the Code. It suggested that the real work will be done at the COFI meeting in March.

However, to write off the meeting as inconclusive would be a mistake. There were some invaluable contributions from island and developing nations. In particular, Peru, Fiji, Samoa, Cook Islands and Malaysia were very strong on issues. Malaysia proposed that an extra Article on Development Co-operation be added.

The invitation to NGOs to participate as observers in this consultation also gives cause for optimism. There seems to be a much more enlightened attitude towards NGOs at FAO. At its last session in November 1993, the FAO Conference affirmed that 'NGOs should be treated as development agents in their own right, not as alternative deliverers of aid programmes', and that co-operation with NGOs should extend throughout the range of the organizations' technical activities'.

As far as fishworkers are concerned, the presentation made by Ms Margarita Lizarraga, Senior Fishery Liaison Officer, FAO, at the 1994 Cebu Conference organized by ICSF was particularly welcome.

In 1984, fishworkers and their representatives were barred from participating in the FAO World Conference on Fisheries Management and Development.

Ten years later, FAO requested an audience at the ICSF Cebu Conference, and are now inviting the participation of ICSF and other NGOs in the development of a new global

regime for fisheries. In addition to ICSF, a variety of other NGOs and interest groups participated in this Technical Consultation. As far as NGOs were concerned, the other main actors were Greenpeace and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

Although representing quite different constituencies, there is a lot of mutual support and shared interests between these organizations. In fairly simplistic terms, ICSF is interested in promoting the rights of fishworkers, while Greenpeace seems to take a broader view of fisheries in the context of the global environment and human society. WWF's interests seem to be focused mainly on conservation, with specific objectives for biological and technical management measures and research.

ICSF's participation in this Technical Consultation enabled the concerns of fish-workers, particularly in the artisanal and small-scale sectors, and their representative organizations to get on to the official agenda. It is noteworthy that ICSF was invited to contribute a special paragraph to Article 5 (General Principles) on small-scale and artisanal fisheries, and that its proposals for regulating fishing effort through promoting ecological efficiency (rather than technical efficiency) were given widespread approval.

Interventions

Throughout the Consultation, ICSF intervened to promote the rights of fish-workers to livelihood and food security, to safe and fair working conditions, to participate in fisheries management and policy determination, and to rights of access to resources and to land tenure ashore. Undoubtedly, ICSF's participation was well received. **3**

This analysis is based on reporting by the ICSF delegation to the Technical Consultation held by FAO on the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing.

Selling the agenda for the future

At Cebu, delegates to ICSF’s triennial conference, which also marked the 10th Anniversary of the International Conference of Fishworkers and their Supporters, produced a statement of concerns and recommendations

The Tenth Anniversary of the International Conference of Fish-workers and their Supporters (Rome Conference) and the Triennial Conference of the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF) took place in Cebu, the Philippines, from 2 to 7 June 1994. It was attended by about 100 participants from 31 countries spread across Asia, Africa, the Pacific, Europe and the Americas.

The participants included fishworkers representing important fishworkers’ organizations from different countries, social and physical scientists, community organizers and NGO workers.

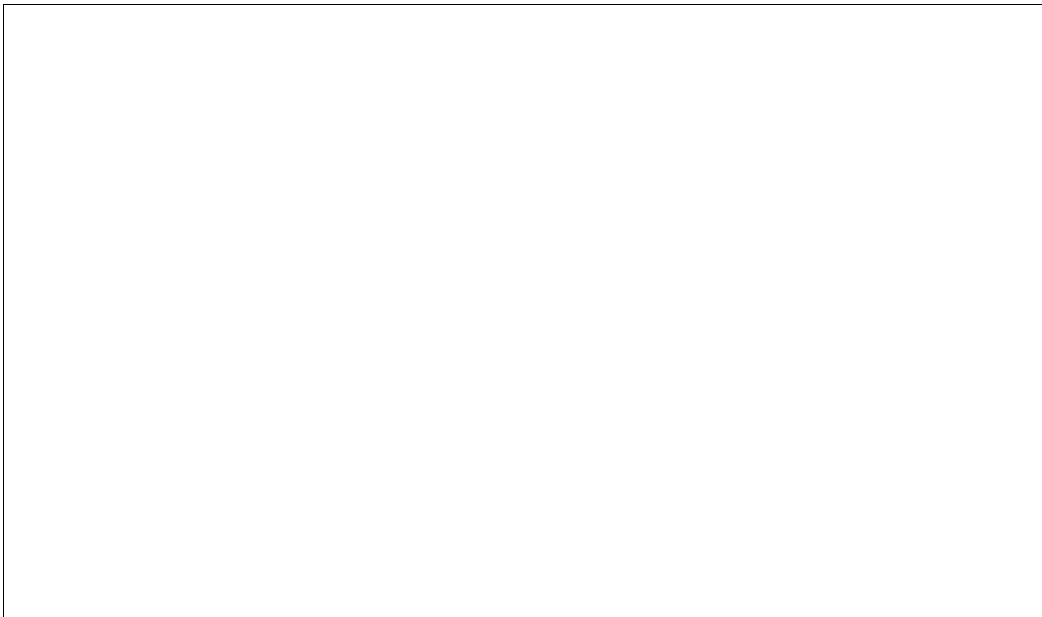
Almost a decade has gone by since the Rome Conference. This period has seen a rise in clashes at sea and on land between conflicting groups, while the growth of the world’s fishing fleets has outpaced the regenerative capacity of the seas.

Moreover, fishworkers, particularly in the artisanal and small-scale sectors, have

yet no guarantee to either resources or their traditional means of livelihood. Undoubtedly, these are disturbing trends which have to be immediately addressed if they are to be reversed.

The theme of the Cebu Conference, ‘The Struggle of Fishworkers: New Concerns for Support’, ought to be located within this perspective. By providing a forum where people directly concerned with these problems could interact and exchange ideas and experiences, ICSF hoped to promote fresh solutions and support mechanisms.

The Conference addressed five different but related topics, namely, coastal environment and fishworkers, fisheries and fishworkers’ organizations, technology and energy use in fisheries, transnational linkages in fisheries, and work and social security conditions in fisheries. The Conference adopted the following statement of concerns and recommendations.



Coastal Environment and Fishworkers

The Cebu Conference recommends that:

- » ICSF should promote and facilitate greater awareness on coastal environment issues affecting fishworker communities as well as help to develop nurture strategies for a sustainable future;
- » ICSF should facilitate greater networking among fishworkers organizations involved in such struggles and also between them and other movements sharing the same concerns.
- » ICSF should provide international advocacy for appropriate action against coastal degradation and should document and publicize examples of successful coastal environment management; and
- » ICSF should monitor relevant developments concerning negotiation and treaties for the protection of the environment at the level and inform fishworkers' organizations of these developments.

Numerous threats to the coastal and marine environment affect the lives and working conditions of fishworkers' communities.

These include natural calamities, destruction of mangroves, water pollution, irresponsible tourism, development of coastal infrastructure, destructive fishing techniques, privatization of fisheries resources and deforestation. All of these, in one way or another, may displace fishing communities, affect fishworkers' access to resources and/or damage the resources themselves. They also eliminate jobs, security, income and livelihood. The protection of coastal environments and active mobilization to ensure this are priorities for a sustainable future for small-scale fishworker communities.

Importantly fishworkers' organizations around the world have acted to safeguard their coastal environment. In Chile, the National Confederation of Artisanal Fish-workers of Chile (CONAPACH)

succeeded in having the state Congress declare the Bay of Talcahuano a zone of ecological catastrophe.

In **Brazil**, the National Movement of Fish-workers (MONAPE) has launched campaigns against the destruction of extensive zones of the Amazon and the emission of waste waters in the bays which have destroyed the zones of traditional fishing by artisanal fisherfolk. **Peruvian** fishermen have accused the fish-meal and fish-oil industry of polluting the sea.

The National Network of Riverine Fishermen of **Mexico** has mobilized opinion against the tourism project of Punta Diamante which has destroyed the bivalve fisheries.

In **India**, the National Fishworkers' Forum and environmental groups organized an all-India campaign around the slogan "Protect Waters-Protect Life" to raise awareness about the value of both inland and marine water resources. In **Bangladesh**, fishworkers have been experimenting with a simpler, three-symbol code for better cyclone warning.

In **Papua New Guinea**, fishworkers and landowners have got together to force a mining company to build a tailings dam to control the pollutants flowing downstream. In the **Philippines**, fishworkers campaigned for pollution control measures in a geothermal power plant that was causing land, sea and air pollution. In **Indonesia**, fishing communities have fought to prevent the destruction of coral reefs and mangroves.

These examples highlight the potential of organized actions by fishworkers and other resource users for corrective measures in the coastal zones. To be effective, their efforts often need to be supported by technical and legal expertise as well as by social and environmental groups at the national and international levels.

Fishworkers' Organizations

Fishworkers' organizations refer primarily to the trade unions and co-operatives working in all departments of the fisheries sector. They reflect the

Fishworkers' Organizations

The Cebu Conference recommends that:

- » Should an international network of fishworkers' organizations emerge, ICSF must support such an initiative through exchanges, strategic information and expertise on fisheries management and technological improvements;
- » ICSF should lobby for the interests of fish-workers in international forums like the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations and its organs like the Food and Agriculture Organization;
- » ICSF should determine whether aid and development projects jeopardize the livelihood of fishing communities and should forewarn all concerned if these projects interfere with the autonomy of fishworkers' organizations;
- » ICSF should facilitate regional meetings among fishworkers organizations to address problems related to the exploitation at shared fishery resources, and other issues of common interest;
- » ICSF should help to conduct raining programmes for capacity-building of leaders;
- » ICSF should continue to support and strengthen the participation of women in fishworkers' organizations, particularly at the decision-making level; and
- » ICSF should undertake a programme to consider the viability of various measures (state control, community management co-management, individual transferable quotas, and so on) that are being suggested to ensure better management of fishery resources.

diversity of their country's historical experience in terms of social movements and the links with political organizations, aid agencies, religious institutions, as well as government agencies. Such organizations are often confronted with difficult problems.

In some countries, they operate in harsh political contexts where authoritarian rule prevails. In others, a long tradition of

narrow dependence on state patronage make it difficult for fishing communities to develop and operate in an autonomous manner.

Although constantly swimming against the tide, several fishworkers' organizations can boast a few significant milestones in their struggle for equity and conservation.

In **India**, the fishworkers' movement could wrest from the government a seasonal ban on bottom trawling in the near-shore waters.

The South Indian Federation of Fishermen Societies, an apex body of a network of fishermen's co-operatives, has been successfully undertaking credit and fish-marketing, boat-building, development of new technology and servicing of outboard motors.

In **Senegal**, fishworkers have forced the government to establish minimum prices for their disposable catch and for purchase of fishing inputs.

In **Canada**, the Maritime fishermen's Union (MFU) was able to pressure the government to include inshore fishermen under the legislation for collective bargaining rights. Co-management initiatives between the MFU and the government have resulted in the better management of the lobster fishery.

In the **Philippines**, several fishworkers' organizations have lobbied the government to legislate a new fisheries code that protects the interests of artisanal and small-scale fishermen.

The National Federation of Fishworkers' Cooperatives of **Ecuador** (FENACOPEC) is active in lobbying their government to implement programmes for sustainable management of fisheries resources and for the well-being of fishworkers.

In **Chile**, CONAPACH has been able to force changes in government regulations in coastal fisheries. As a result, a five-mile zone has been reserved for small-scale fishermen for cultivation of seaweeds.

One problem that, over time, threatens all organizations is bureaucracy which

brings a division between leadership and the members. This may be due to an administrative structure where the role of the members is limited. It may be reinforced by the nature of fishing, which keeps fishworkers away from home for relatively long periods of time.

One way to limit this problem could be to strengthen the role of women in fishworkers' organizations. They can play an important role in the mobilization and accountability of the leadership.

Fishworkers' organizations often face financial problems due to the poverty of their members, to dependency vis-à-vis external donors, and to a lack of understanding of, or interest in, the objectives of these organizations.

As the experience of some fishworkers' organizations reveals, they could overcome this difficulty by undertaking direct sale of fish, supply of inputs into the fishery and by doing consultancy work for government, taking advantage of their basic knowledge of fishing communities and fisheries resources.

Given the rapid resource depletion and degradation in many coastal fisheries, the fishing communities dependent on these resources for their livelihood have an important role to play in the designing, monitoring and enforcement of management strategies. But they are usually unable to do so for lack of

knowledge and effective organizations. The granting of stewardship over the resources is necessary to stimulate greater interest in fishworkers' organizations to undertake resource management.

In an increasing number of countries, fishworkers' organizations have adopted a variety of forms of struggle, ranging from massive public demonstrations, litigation, lobbying and advocacy, to more militant methods. These have often led to concrete achievements such as bans on trawling and the establishment of exclusive zones for artisanal fishing.

While these are significant gains, they should be seen only as first steps towards community control over fishery resources which would also allow, in certain instances, for effective co-management with the state. Whether such control requires that specific quotas be granted to fishermen's organizations and whether these quotas ought to be made transferable are complex questions that deserve to be carefully studied.

Technology And Energy Use In Fisheries

The development of fishing technology has been influenced by many different factors, such as the kind of fishing ground (inshore, offshore, high seas, rivers, lakes, and so on), physical aspects of the sea, availability of resources, and different levels of demographic pressure.

While certain types of technology have been destructive, others have contributed

Technology and Energy Use in Fisheries

The Cebu Conference recommends that:

- » ICSF should promote awareness about the economic and social consequences of inappropriate technology choice and inadequate fisheries management. It should assist to set up guidelines for R&D and adoption of suitable technologies.
- » ICSF should launch an international campaign to achieve a complete ban on bottom trawling in tropical waters. This requires seeking widespread support from national fishworkers' organizations, environmental movements, and consumer groups, especially in developed countries;
- » ICSF should strengthen its present programme to monitor the impact of intensive coastal aquaculture on small-scale fishworkers and the environment and extend it to the Asian region;
- » ICSF should assist interested fishworkers' organizations to access appropriate technology through exchange of information and should raise awareness about the displacement of women as a result of unfair technological developments; and
- » ICSF should facilitate continued discussion amongst fishworkers' organizations and help draft and elaborate a general set of agreed criteria against which to measure the social and ecological impacts of fishing technology to determine the acceptability of various technologies.

to improve people's lives. Any evaluation of technology, therefore, has to take into consideration these factors.

Small-scale fishworkers have little choice in adopting modern technologies because of factors and interests beyond their control. The case of Canada is an example where bottom-trawling technology has been largely responsible for almost completely destroying one of the largest fish biomass of the world—the cod stocks of the Atlantic coast. This is of specific concern in fisheries because sharp

competition under open-access conditions compels fishermen to adopt the most effective technology in use, in order to maintain their relative catching capacity.

This technological race not only causes a tremendous waste of energy and capital assets but it is also likely to deplete fishery resources.

Capital-intensive harvesting technologies reduce labour requirements at sea and on shore. They tend to marginalize small-scale fish marketers and women fish processors, since the landed quantities are beyond their handling capacity due to limited access to technology, information and credit.

There is increasing international awareness and recognition of the highly destructive capacity of bottom trawling. There is also firm evidence of the negative social and economic impacts of this technique on millions of small-scale fishworkers worldwide, particularly in tropical multi-species fisheries of developing countries.

Equally worrisome is the rapid spread of intensive aquaculture, especially of shrimp, in coastal areas. The negative environmental and socio-economic effects of this monoculture practice are becoming increasingly evident

Transnational Linkages In Fisheries

Two important recent events which are liable to affect the fisheries sector are the new rules of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) on liberalization of international trade, on the one hand, and economic liberalization (including adjustments in the exchange rate and the cost of capital) under the aegis of structural adjustment programmes, on the other hand.

The Cebu Conference expressed concern about the possible effects of these on the fishworkers, including women in fish processing plants. It is a priori difficult to determine what is the net impact of these changes. Increasingly, fishing agreements provide a means to maintain access to fishing grounds which were historically exploited by long-distance fleets off the coasts of developing countries.

Transnational Linkages

The Cebu Conference recommends that:

- » ICSF should continue to monitor fisheries agreements and assess their impact on fishworkers, lobby for just, fair and transparent agreement conditions, and, if requested, support local movements of fishworkers in their struggle against agreements which negatively affect their lives;
- » ICSF should monitor the evolving situation of the fishworkers with regard to the impacts of international trade, structural adjustments and other aspects of international economic policies (especially as they affect food security in certain countries) and promote the exchange of information on these questions among fishworkers' organizations of different countries;
- » ICSF should disseminate information on international fisheries issues, especially those of concern to local fishing communities to development NGOs, the media and other networks, as well as to established organizations of all types in the maritime sector; and
- » ICSF should actively participate in relevant development and environment NGO networks and regularly inform fishworkers' organizations of the activities of these networks.

These agreements often have undesirable features such as capacity limits but no catch quotas, highly unsatisfactory catch reporting practices by the participating fishing companies, violations of local fisheries regulations, and interference with local artisanal fisheries. There is a need for better international co-operation and strengthening of support networks, particularly with development NGOs which often have little awareness and knowledge of the specific problems of the fisheries sector.

Work And Social Security Conditions In Fisheries

The working conditions on board industrial fishing vessels are often poor due to inadequate facilities and lack of

physical safety and social security. There have also been several instances reported where crews on high-seas vessels were subjected to severe physical and other human rights abuses. Flags of convenience are often used to circumvent national and international labour laws. This is particularly the case with regard to vessels involved in high-seas fishing.

In fish processing factories where most of the workforce are usually women, working conditions are often unsatisfactory and job security is low. Women are known to suffer from work-related health problems.

In artisanal fisheries, drudgery of manual labour, poor navigational and emergency life-support aids, bondage to middlemen, and payment of wages / shares at levels below subsistence, dispossession of fishing rights and displacement from

Work and Social Security in Fisheries

The Cebu Conference recommends tat:

- » ICSF should request the creation of adequate national tripartite structures in which boat-owners, fishworkers and governments can meet to decide on appropriate measures to improve the situation described above;
- » ICSF should campaign against the practice of using flags of convenience and for the, adherence of all countries to relevant international conventions
- » ICSF should continue to study and raise awareness about women's work conditions in industrial and informal fish processing activities;
- » ICSF should lobby ILO to work towards international legislation in support of the working and living conditions of fish-workers, including women in fish processing plants; and
- » ICSF should assist national fish-workers' organizations in education campaigns on fishworkers tights, work and employment conditions, and problems of social security and safety at sea.

<div>Document</div>	
	<p>traditional fishing sites persist in several countries. In many developing countries, artisanal fishworkers are not entitled to old age pension and accident benefits.</p> <p>Conclusion</p> <p>In the course of the decade since the Rome Conference, fishworkers have voyaged a considerable distance. The fishworkers' organizations that were formed or strengthened during this period have taken several bold steps to enhance the participation of fishworkers in decision-making processes.</p> <p>They have also undertaken measures for better protection of the coastal environment as well as for improved resource management. Many of the problems, however, are far from being resolved. Clearly, efforts must continue in this direction to further understand the dynamics of environmental degradation of coastal waters and the inequity of inappropriate technologies.</p> <p>It is imperative to take better cognizance of the implications of new trade regimes, structural adjustment policies and the increasing globalization of fisheries. Viable alternatives have to be explored and adopted. To enable fishworkers to enter the new millennium with greater hopes of a just and improved livelihood, resulting from better and equitable management of coastal fisheries resources, all the above recommendations of the Cebu Conference need immediate attention. 3</p> <div> This Conference Statement was adopted by the delegates to ICSF's Cebu Conference, on 7 June 1994, at Cebu, the Philippines </div>

Women must recover their spaces

Despite a long period of debate, the important issue of a gender perspective in fisheries has not received enough attention, says Nalini Nayak

How was the Women in Fisheries programme conceived? What was the need for a separate programme for women?

The reason we felt we needed a special programme for women in fisheries was because, although in the ICSF we always stressed the role of women in fisheries, we realized that the member unions that participate in the network did not really have a gender perspective. Neither did they see the seriousness of protecting women's spaces in fisheries.

Initially, when the Animation Team decided to also have this as a funded programme of ICSF, the members were not very clear about how it should evolve. But we thought that we should particularly develop a consciousness on gender issues within the unions that related to the network.

So, that is why this is a very specific action programme. It is not a research programme but basically an action-oriented programme. We are studying what women are doing, particularly in the unions that were interested in developing this perspective. We included the specific countries where unions were participating in the network.

Further, we wanted to have a fair share between the North and South because we knew that fisheries are affected by North-South relations and the development of fisheries is part of this whole North-South relation. There was also the whole context of the globalization of the labour market and the fact that women are the main reserve in the international labour market.

These factors affect the role of women as workers and in whatever spaces they

otherwise had in the post-harvest activities. So, that is the reason why we also saw it important to include countries of the North.

The first intensive year saw a kind of international co-ordination of the programme. This year was basically to initiate thinking on these issues, to visit the countries that were participating and then to raise the debate in those countries. Launching the programme was achieved in the first year.

At the workshop which we finally had in Cebu, the ideological thrust and the framework of the programme was discussed with all the members of the participating countries. That was a very exciting workshop because we realized that many issues as well as the whole perspective of gender was very new. Although people had talked about women and women's participation, talking from an evolving perspective of gender relations was something new.

At the major Cebu Conference, we had initially thought of having one workshop on Women in Fisheries, the gender perspective, along with the five other workshops. But then we dropped this workshop mainly because we thought that gender issues had to be discussed in all the workshops and should not be something which is sidetracked or which only one group of people talked about. The gender question had to be integrated into all the discussions related to fisheries. So, it was with that perspective that we dropped the specific workshop on gender.

We had a small preparatory meeting with all the women who came to participate in the conference, explaining why we had dropped the workshop and what would be our role in each of the other workshops.

So I think it was quite clear when we started off, what the role of the women participants would be in the different workshops.

And I think that women really took this role consciously in each of the workshop. In all the reports from the workshops, there were very specific mentions made on issues related to women.

But what I think was very distressing was that these things were not picked up. You know, we are not people who are talking about women's issues just for the sake of talking about women's issues. All of us are very committed to the broader perspective of women and unions and the issues of the fishworkers at large.

I feel that some of these very sensitive things were overlooked in the final writing of the Cebu Conference document. Therefore, we have lost quite a bit of the specific contributions made by those women in those specific workshops.

As a result of this, we were then disappointed that we had dropped the specific workshop on women. I particularly felt that—and this was what most women felt—we should not have dropped it if there was no real sensitivity in the larger group. But maybe we should have been much more forceful in the final document. Maybe we can achieve that at another step. But this was a pity, a real

pity, because after the workshop, people realized why it was important.

So, we finally concluded that if at all we have another such conference in the future, there should be a specific workshop on gender questions which should be made compulsory for everybody to participate in. In this way, we will really be able to emphasize and discuss why this perspective is important. This is what we would like to tell the organizers of the next conference.

But why were these objections not raised at Cebu—after all, there was a stage between the preparation of the draft and final conference statement?

True, there was time, many efforts were made and people did write down their objections, but I have a feeling it all depends on the extent to which we are conscious of these issues, only then can we build it up into the final document.

Was it because no woman was involved in the final drafting of the conference statement?

Finally, we thought so too. You know, we don't distrust our men who write but it probably just gets passed off like that. Though they had worked hard on it and there were one or two mentions of the women's issues, what was disappointing was the lost opportunity, the way in which the whole thing could have been well worked out.

Particularly in the workshops on transnational linkages, technology and the environment, where the labour force is being exploited, not sufficient mention has been made of the impact on women. It is mentioned only in passing. There could have been a specific paragraph on the issue because we also recommended that ICSF take up a special study on this question.

We had women from the processing industries of Fiji, Solomon Islands and France, from countries where women were losing their work, as well as from countries where they were gaining work. Specific mentions could have been made of these to give more flesh to the Cebu Conference statement. This did not happen. It was all just mentioned in passing.

We are so disappointed, we expected much more understanding from the people who wrote the final statement. Many of them are, after all, very conscious of our perspective. They could have done something. But they just got carried away.

What about the separate workshop on Women in Fisheries which you held later? Did that result in any sort of statement?

The second meeting was a workshop, not a conference. It was mainly meant to discuss the framework and the perspective. While we could really further our understanding, the workshop revealed to me that most of us are so unconscious of these questions that we were only starting. It was only a beginning.

At an international level, one would have expected to further the debate and analysis. But we could not do this at all. I expected we could go ahead but no, we were only starting.

Those of us who had worked longer on the question realized you had to go slow; people were just beginning to understand.

But since people were so interested and committed, it was very fruitful because they felt they had learned something and could go back and work on it.

The participation of Senegal in our women's workshop was superb because we had held a big seminar in Senegal, where we highlighted the issues that relate specifically to women. These issues, in turn, got discussed at their national conference. So, those participants came and spoke very enthusiastically at the workshop. Everybody was surprised that Senegal had come with some issues and the participants knew what they were talking about. For some countries like Fiji, we had sent outlines on what should be written. That's why so many women presented so many papers on the first day. Those papers were those prepared for our women's workshop.

This issue of gender is today a major point of discussion in all sectors, whether social, cultural or economic. But is there something in the fisheries sector which makes the question much more stark and specific? How would you articulate that? Put simply, what is so special about the issue of women in fisheries?

This is my personal point of view and it is what we tried to emphasize in Cebu. We had related the whole question of production—the production of commodities and the production of life. This is what all life is about—either you are producing something to consume or you are producing another generation.

The production of the next generation is something that is just left to women, while the production of commodities is something that is everybody's business. It is only that calculation that goes into GNP and all that. So, we tried to highlight why the production of life is very important and that is where all the exploitation of women takes place. Gender awareness is really built on this whole basis that producing the next generation is not the sole biological responsibility of women, it is the social responsibility of all human beings to care, whether you are male or female.

But this fact of the production of life has to do also, specifically in fisheries, with a live resource that we are relating to, which is fish. And fish has its own reproductive time, it has its own cycle, it has its own nurturing necessities. If you destroy the

environment, you are not going to get any more fish.

So, you see, these relations of nurture, of production time, of reproduction time, are all very much related to this whole reproduction of life. And in today's society, the burden of reproduction of life is something which is not paid for. In our society we don't have a calculation for unpaid labour, for nurture activity. We only have calculations for production activity.

This nurturing and the time factor that is necessary to reproduce a resource has to do with life. I feel this sensitivity of a respect for the environment and for nature has also to do with the respect for life.

In fisheries, if we are really conscious of gender, we would really be conscious also of this resource we are interacting with.

We can't exploit it at the rate we are exploiting today; we can't use the technologies we are using today. Whatever we use has to be in relation to the kind of living resource we are dealing with.

All this has to do with the Way we have exploited a sex in our society. The way modern society is evolving, it is very competitive, it gives value only to the productive ages in life, while everything else doesn't matter.

Imbalances exist and because of these imbalances and our disrespect for the sustaining of life, I feel the whole perspective in thinking of a sustainable fishery has to be in terms of a nurture fishery which respects life, which respects spaces for people. This, then, is definitely a very feminist perspective.

At Cebu, we didn't start off with the women's question, we started off with production, what production is all about, where does fisheries production lie in all this. Then we went into the production of commodities and life.

We put it only in that perspective, not in the way some others would merely rant that women are exploited, and so on. No, instead, we looked at fisheries and what is the sexual division of labour and how to analyse that.

Only by looking at it from this point of view can we see it more globally. Otherwise, we come off just being defensive.

But several women themselves do not seem to recognize this parallel between the nurture aspect of fisheries and their own lives.

Because we have been driven to this. It is a survival strategy now that you exploit a resource in order to survive. No traditional community is exploitative. Traditional communities had very strict norms of their relations with nature.

When you used certain kinds of nets, you knew what sizes of fish you would catch. There were very strict norms. Now, as social controls and norms have deteriorated because technology has turned superior, the disrespect for nature has also crept in.

Does the Women in Fisheries programme have a component to raise the consciousness of women about these issues?

This is what we have been talking about and what we think movements should integrate into their whole awareness programmes. Take, for instance, coastal zone management. The experience in the Philippines, for example, is quite ridiculous. There, women are the actual sea wardens.

These poor women, who are not paid, protect the sea for their traditional fishermen so that the trawlers don't come and take their catch.

Yet these women have no right to the fish once it is landed on the shore. It's all in the hands of the merchants.

What's the point of protecting fish when you have no right to it afterwards? So, part of coastal zone management is also to protect the space of women in post-harvest activity, not only to protect the resource.

This is why we are saying that we must be conscious, even men must be conscious of the need to protect the spaces in the economy that women once held. You have to still continue to protect them.

Was this perspective shared by everybody at the workshop?

It was so new for everybody. Some of them, even long-standing activists, came up and said, only now do we realize what gender actually means.

Or take the question of technology. The North has never questioned technology. They have never even seen it like that, related to the environment, while in the women's movements in India, we are all the time talking about these questions.

And are there distinctions within the women's movements?

First of all, there is a big distinction between the women in the movement who belong to autonomous groups and women like us who work with women in the movement. That is a big dividing line.

Women working with this autonomous women's perspective take up very different issues from those we take up in movements. And within movements, you also have those who work in sectors based on natural resources and those who work on, for instance, dams or construction workers, where the issues are not related to a basic resource.

Our perspective has evolved from those of us who work in a sector which relates to a common property natural resource. We have very consciously not gone off alone. We have worked within the movement to develop this consciousness.

I think the fishworkers' movement is very special. Those of us working in the sector have tried to understand fisheries, therefore we can relate the perspective to fisheries. People working with agricultural workers, for instance, only take up wage issues. Nobody looks at the production of food or cash crops and how women are marginalized and why we should therefore fight. If you don't analyse your sector and see what spaces exist and why, you can not do much.

We thought that, through these Women in Fisheries programme, we could develop this perspective. The idea was first presented as a paper in Bangkok. We felt that, through the programme, this paper could get some flesh and a more global perspective and, over two or three years, we could come out with an official document of ICSF.

So, the process started but we didn't make the progress I thought we could make-You know, you have to interact with people who are thinking on these issues, it may happen over time. But the fact that people in ICSF are speaking about nurture and sustainable fisheries has also to do with this. It will slowly come.

At what stage is the programme?

The country programmes are independent. Each country has made its own programme. These will go on. Then ICSF should commission the study on women in the international market in fisheries. Exchange programmes have been organized between a number of countries. Further, Latin America has decided to join the programme. It was not in earlier. Eventually, maybe in two years or so, after people have done some work and experimentation, we can have one more workshop.

Is this marginalization of women universally true in all the world's fisheries?

I think so.

But don't women in the South East Asian countries still have access to the spaces they once held traditionally?

That depends. We haven't really analysed this. Women do play a role in the marketing chains in the Bangkok and Manila fish markets, like the big markets of Navota, where thousands of women are present at the landing centres, some of whom are big merchants and some, agents for merchants.

Of course, that is another class of women, not women who have traditionally done fish vending. These are women who have money to invest and so enter the merchant field.

In Ghana, for instance, women also invest in the purchase of craft. I haven't seen this happen in the other countries I have visited. In Vishakapatnam in India, for instance, women advance money to the trawlers so that they have a right to their catch. So, these kinds of activities exist and women have got into those niches. But whether the old spaces have been retained, that's a million dollar question. They have been for the most part, commercialised.

With the way the global economy is now getting integrated, do you ever foresee a situation where women will be able to carve out a niche for themselves? Or will they necessarily be subsumed under the larger process and then have to work within those constraints? Are you trying to glorify a lost era?

(Long pause) But then, in that case, there is no need to fight. We may as well close down our unions, if we think that the cause is lost. The reason why we are carrying on in this sector is because the sector doesn't lend itself to this kind of development. If the sector lent itself so, then there is no cause to fight. But this sector does not do this. So, one has to fight and see what role women are going to play.

That may be true, but within the sector, is there ever going to be a separate space for women?

Oh, yes, I am positive about that because, if at all the fishery has to be sustained, it has to be decentralized. You can not go on with this kind of centralization that we think is modern development. We are basically fighting for a decentralized fishery. 3

Nalini Nayak. Co-ordinator of ICSF's Women in Fisheries programme, is a social activist who has worked in the women's movement, particularly in India. SAMUDRA interviewed her in Trivandrum, where she is largely based

No more conferences?

Sandwiched between Rome and Cebu is a decade of conferences which helped establish the two faces of ICSF as network and as entity

On the penultimate day of the Cebu Conference, seeing me sitting peacefully on the lawns of the

beautiful venue, Pierre Gillet, Secretary of ICSF's Brussels office, came up to me and asked, "John, this time you were kept away from the burden of organizing work. So have you had a chance to complete your book on 'How to Organize a Multinational, Multilingual, Multidisciplinary, Multi-everything Conference'?"

This has been a long-standing joke between us, starting from the hectic Roman encounter in 1984, where Pierre was my 'right-hand man'. He had asked me the same question after the Trivandrum, Lisbon and Bangkok Conferences too.

The book still hasn't been written—mainly because, on the penultimate days of all these conferences, we have often said to ourselves, sometimes publicly, 'No more conferences.' Never was this an expression of frustration.

It was just another way of pondering over the usefulness of such mega-meets (mega only by our modest ICSF standards and not by international standards, of course) where, normally over 100 persons from all over the world, with various cultural backgrounds and talking a plethora of languages, fly across oceans into an alien land to interact intensively for five days.

Yet, pausing to think about it, the journey to Cebu was made precisely through a series of such mega-meets. And Pierre's question only made me reflect on the course of a decade of conferences. Was it really meaningful? Have fishworkers gained from these efforts? Have we

achieved our goals? Are our visions becoming reality? My mind surfed through the years of involvement

July 1983

While I was on a work assignment in Hong Kong that month, it was the contents of a personal letter from Roll Wilmann of FAO which prompted me to take the initiative to organize the first International Conference of Fishworkers and their Supporters, now better known in our circles as the Rome Conference.

My first impulse was to write a common letter to a wide circle of friends—mainly activists working closely with fishing communities, academics who had examined issues relating to fisheries development, and persons in aid agencies who had supported development projects among fishing communities asking for their reaction to the idea of organizing an international meet of fishworkers and their supporters parallel to the FAO's World Conference on Fisheries, scheduled to be held in Rome in July 1984.

In my letter, I clearly stated the reason for wanting to do this. Our meet would highlight to the world's fisheries policy-makers the fact that discussions on fisheries had focused for too long on fish and technology, to the gross exclusion of concerns about those who laboured at sea and on land to convert this resource into wealth. In particular, the idea was to highlight the plight of the millions of small-scale fishermen and their families in the developing countries.

Overwhelming response

The response I got was quick and overwhelming. I had sent about 60 letters and received around 50 replies in six weeks. This provided good motivation. I held some very thorough discussions with

my colleagues in DAGA, Hong Kong, where I was about to complete a year's assignment. Their wholehearted agreement to provide organizational support to the idea was crucial in finally deciding to take up the challenge of such a meet at such short notice.

I returned to Trivandrum in August 1983. Between September and December, some more groundwork for the planning was done. In January 1984, a planning meeting was held in Hong Kong which was attended by about 20 persons, most of whom I knew only through correspondence. The final decision to conduct the conference was taken there.

We would call it an 'international' conference and not a 'world' conference. It would be a conference on its own right and not just a parallel meet. The word 'fishworkers' was also coined at this meeting. The brochure for the conference was worked out and the broad themes for discussion agreed upon.

The fund-raising would be done by DAGA, Hong Kong; the contacts in Africa and Latin America would be organized by ENDA in Dakar, Senegal; a local organization secretariat would be set up in Rome with the assistance of IDOC and the overall co-ordination would be out of Trivandrum. Perhaps this was for the first time that such a meet to be held in the First World, was being fully controlled from Third World countries.

Between January and June, as many meetings as possible of fishworkers and their supporters were planned to be held at the national or regional level to discuss the idea and content of the Rome Conference as well as select participants to attend it. Such meetings took place in Philippines, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, India, Thailand, Dakar and Columbia.

The Rome Conference was special. Certainly, it was a first. Since it was so quickly planned, it provided great scope for spontaneity in the nature and level of participation. The grand exhibition at the conference foyer, made up exclusively of exhibits brought by the participants and titled 'On the Life and Struggles of the Fishworkers', was a hit with the world press which had gathered in Rome to

cover the FAO meet. We had the 'sponsorship' of the communists-dominated civic authorities of Rome and so obtained permission to stage a cultural show at the famous Piazza Novona. This was witnessed by hundreds of tourists as well as citizens of Rome.

There was an almost palpable sense of euphoria among the participants. This sprung from the immense realization among the fishworkers that, despite the numerous differences of race, language, religion, ideology, technology and standards of living, their basic problems were the same. Little wonder that the saying 'The land divides but the sea unites' was coined there.

Interestingly, the decision of the fish-workers was that, to be true to the spirit of Rome, they should go back to start and strengthen their national and regional contacts. The global networking and international linkages were entrusted to the supporters.

The follow-up on this was again assigned to me; responsibility I wavered upon greatly. But gentle pressure from many who were at Rome pulled me back on course to write the next common letter!

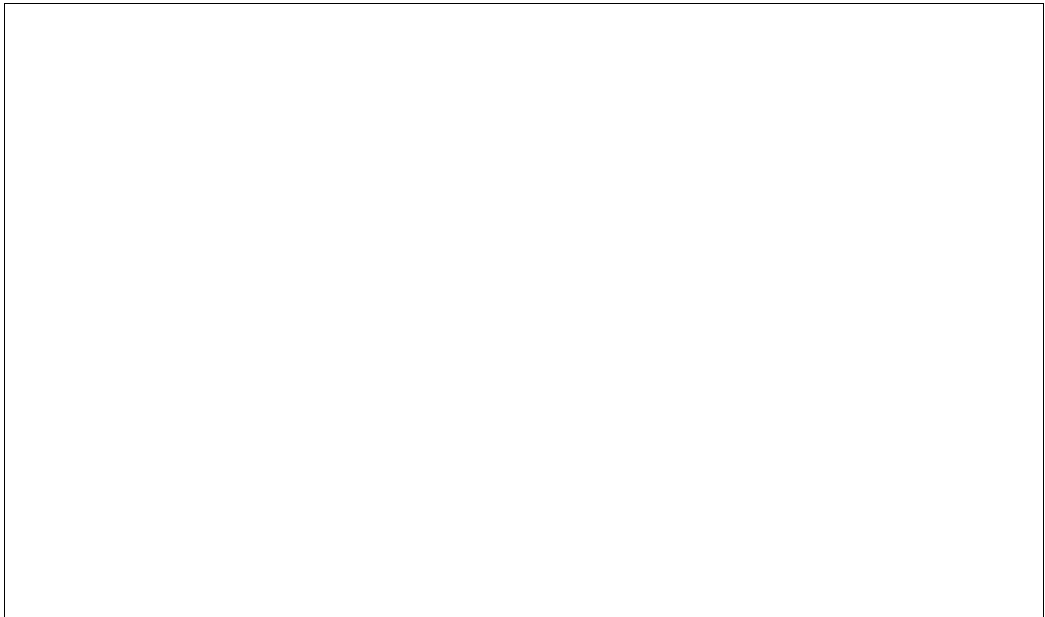
June 1986

This second letter, three years later, detailed what had happened to fish-workers after the Rome Conference, and called for reactions to the idea of forming a network to link the supporters. Around 35 persons—mostly the supporters who were at Rome—came for a 'workshop' held at Trivandrum in November 1986 to discuss the idea and give it substance and form. The result: the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF) was formed.

Despite persuasion, I decided against taking any major role in active co-ordination in the future. But I had a hope then, a dream—that ICSF should come to have two faces to it: as 'network' and as 'entity'.

ICSF as network

As network, it should become relevant and meaningful to fishworkers' organizations by taking up local issues which have global ramifications, and



global questions which have local impact. If three years of such action provided meaningful linkages, and if these, in turn, won the endorsement of fishworkers' organizations, then the face of ICSF as entity could also slowly emerge. As entity, it should become a force to reckon with in the appropriate forums of world fisheries.

June 1989

The Lisbon meet in 1989 extended the network dimension of ICSF further into the North. For the first time, many fishworkers' organizations in Europe and Scandinavia met together. The major post-Rome and post-Trivandrum initiatives had taken place among fishworkers in Chile, Philippines and Senegal. Their representatives were now present at Lisbon. This provided proof of the meaning and significance of these events. It also reflected the quality of the sustained follow-up which was undertaken after Rome.

At the invitation of NORAD, a small delegation of representatives of fishworkers and supporters then travelled extensively in Norway. On 29 June 1989, as we crossed the Arctic Circle on a coastal liner, the planning for the ICSF evaluation meet-cum-conference scheduled for Bangkok was in progress on board.

January 1990

The Bangkok Conference in 1990 was basically meant for an honest soul-searching about the three-year testing period of our 'network'. The

network aspect was wholeheartedly endorsed by the fish-workers- Among the supporters, however, there were some differences. There were questions on the nature as well as linkages between the North and the South; the degree of flexibility for facilitating in-dependent networks in the North; and the nature of the links which supporters in the North should have with fishworkers' organizations in the North and the South.

If we were to continue ICSF, the question of qualifications for membership would have to be raised, particularly in the light of the fact that only a fourth of the members could be from the North. Given the signs of relationships coming under some strain, I was included in the new Animation Team, which co-ordinates ICSF. This time I willingly accepted. The new Animation Team had the mandate to develop the 'entity' aspect of ICSF.

1990-1994

In the four years between the Bangkok and Cebu meets, ICSF attained a rather high international profile. Establishing contacts with distant-water vessel fishworkers generated new concerns.

The search for a convenient Third World location to base our future work explored the possibilities of Bangkok, Hong Kong and Manila, but finally settled on Madras.

Relocating the programme co-ordination centre there, employing a full-time Executive Secretary in the person of

Interview

Sebastian Mathew, leaving the Brussels office with only the liaison and financial operations all these gave a new thrust to the work.

With hindsight I think we embarked upon the 'entity' phase a bit too fast. Our committed involvement in the UNCED process and the UN Conference on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks provided its own logic and dynamics. Our public profile became far too inflated. We would not have been able to contain this were it not for the Cebu meet.

June 1994

The Cebu Conference was certainly the greatest of the lot. Apart from the contents of the conference as such, the most important dimension—to me, at least was that, for ICSF, it served to restore the balance between the 'network' and the 'entity' aspects.

At Cebu, the network linkages expanded both geographically and into sectors of fishworkers other than the small-scale fishermen. On the 'entity' side, we could get a clearer perception on how we present ourselves and the limits to our involvements.

On the penultimate day of the Cebu Conference, I did not hear anyone say, 'No more conferences'—not even those who were at the forefront of the organizing work, who had, on average, less than three hours of sleep a day! Looking back, it would be reasonable to conclude that the 'fall-out' of benefits from the conferences of the decade was greater than the 'costs' incurred—the money, the sleepless nights and the opportunities lost for fishing. More than the specific preparations for the conferences, it is the quality of networking and the intensity of the local involvement which give meaning to such mega-meets. As long as the mega-meets do not become ends in themselves, but, like waves, continue to be integral parts of the ocean-like movement which began in Rome, we will continue to be on course.

Should I re-consider writing the book? Ah, perhaps, but surely it will have a very limited circulation, since there are few who see conferences in this light! 3

This article is written by John Kurien, who is a social scientist, currently Associate Fellow at the Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum, India

News Round-up

Top of the class

Marching to the top of the class of global seafood exporters is **Thailand**. With total sales last year of 86bn baht (us\$3.44bn), it displaced the US as the world's top seafood exporter. US seafood exports dropped from \$3.45bn in 1992 to \$3.07bn last year. On the other hand, predicts INFOFISH, in the next three years, Thai

seafood exports will touch \$4bn. Today, Thai shrimps have carved out a 40 percent share in the international market. But pollution has taken a heavy toll on the black tiger shrimp farms on the eastern seaboard of Thailand. Too much feed, medicine and chemicals have polluted the ponds and led to mass deaths of shrimps. The destruction of vast areas of mangroves has left the area with precious little ideal grounds for shrimp cultivation.

How passive is passive?

Precious passive gear like gill-nets, trammel nets, hoop nets and fixed hooks are often regarded less damaging, right? Not necessarily so, says the European Commission. In a recent communication, it points

out that such gear may aggravate the already heavy exploitation of fish stocks like cod, hake and haddock.

Within the **European Union** (EU), different regions use these devices differently. For example, Denmark uses more of fixed-mesh gear to catch cod and turbot, not so Scotland. Spain catches more of hake with fixed gear than Portugal. But almost all the shellfish in the EU are caught with fixed gear.

True, fixed gear can offer selectivity in catch, but the Commission feels that new guidelines should be issued for the regulation of fixed fishing gear too.

Keep off!

Another sort of regulation is taking place far away. Japanese authorities in the island of **Hokkaido** have asked local fishing co-operatives not to violate the border of the Russian zone off the Kurile islands.

The recent past has seen a number of incidents

involving local crab fishermen and Russian border guards. These Japanese fishermen have now been told to stick to the fishing areas assigned

to them and not to stray into the Russian zone.

Dirty waters

Straying into the waters around **Barbados** are nitrates from fertilizers and sewage, which run off the island into its coastal water. Heavy nitrate pollution of the marine environment is believed to be the cause of the deaths of thousands of reef fish around Barbados. Analyses by laboratories

in Barbados, Canada and Puerto Rico have confirmed that the deaths are due to disease caused by bacteria, most probably *Flexibacter maritimus*, which thrives on nitrates.

Crackdown

Unlikely to thrive are the many illegal floating hostels run by hostels run by Taiwanese people who offer accommodation for mainland Chinese fishermen waiting for jobs from Taiwan fishing companies.

The Mainland Affairs Council has begun to crack down on such activities. Taiwanese shipowners have been ordered to send back Chinese mainlanders. Around, 1,000 have been camping in the dozen or so 'floating hostels'

anchored off southern and north-eastern Taiwan.

Taiwan fishing companies prefer mainland Chinese as crew, since they share the language and cultural habits. But such hiring is regarded illegal, since Taiwan does not permit the mainlanders to work for Taiwan companies. The crackdown was also prompted by the death of 14 of these mainland fishermen, drowned when Typhoon Tim attacked Taiwan in July.

Russian Passion

Certainly not under attack is **Russia-United States**(US) co-operation in the field of fisheries. Recently the Russian Federal Committee for Fisheries sent a delegation to the US to meet officials of the State Department, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Department for Fish and Wildlife.

The Russians hope to familiarize themselves with the structure of American fisheries. The Americans will probably help in building a fish processing and refrigerating facility in Vladivostok.

Angling for foreign seas

Building up links with the EU in **Angola** whose two-year fisheries agreement with the EU is now in force. In exchange for fishing rights off the Angolan coast, the EU will give ECU13.9m as financial compensation. It will also give an extra ECU2.8m for various scientific and technical programmes in Angola. The agreement lapses in May 1996. Until then, a fixed number of

EU shrimp vessels, demersal trawlers and bottom-set longliners, freezer tuna seiner vessels and surface longliners can operate in Angola's waters.

Enough, no more

No such easy passage is likely in **Morocco** whose prime minister has called on the EU to revise its four-year fishing accord with his country. The accord, signed in May 1992, fetches Morocco US\$

130m a year. But Morocco is now worried that fishing by boats based in southern Spain, the Canary Islands and Portugal is likely to dwindle its resources, among the world's richest for sardines, tuna and squid.

Sign on...

On the other hand, **Argentina** has become the first Latin American country to sign a bilateral fisheries agreement with the EU.

The agreement, signed in May and valid for five years, has the usual provisions for catch and financial compensation. It also lets EU fishing vessels operate through temporary associations with Argentine companies.

Around 70 EU trawlers will be able to fish in Argentine waters for an annual total catch of 250,000 tonnes. These include 120,000 tonnes of Argentine hake.

Of the remainder, Patagonian grenadiers, and Argentine cod and squid will be the main species.

The EU will spend around ECU162.5m to help set up the five-year agreement.

...but we sign off

Starting this year, **Vietnam** has suspended all categories of fishing concessions for Tai trawlers. While ordering a review of its fishery sector, it gave a month's reprieve for three existing Thai joint ventures authorized under the foreign investment law.

Meanwhile, a joint ministerial-level task force has been set up to resolve the problem of fishing rights in the Gulf of Thailand. The fisheries question is proving to be a major thorn in bilateral relations between the two countries.

Trouble broiling

Thorny problems also await those in **Chile** who hoped to rake in millions from the 'broiler chicken of the sea' a cheap and tasty farmed salmon. They may no longer be able to grin their way to the bank.

Though the quarter-billion-dollar industry is said to be an overnight success story, less than ten years old, unchecked growth and pollution could well create a unchecked growth and pollution could well create a back-lash, say local residents and environmentalists.

Lakes in even remote areas have been converted into salmon farms. The result: waters are polluted by uneaten fish feed, waste and

chemicals. Lack of supervisory infrastructure allows these farms to get away with violations of environmental laws.

Model ocean

At the Universite de Moncton in New Brunswick, **Canada**, the Chair in Sustainable Development has proposed a model ocean concept to solve the crisis in the Atlantic groundfish fisheries.

The concept is based on the principles of sustainable development and an integrated management of resources. It is proposed to test the concept in a specific marine region of the Gulf of Saint Lawrence known as the Shediac Valley, located east of New Brunswick and north of Prince Edward Island.

Zones of protection

Benefits are also likely in the **United States**, where the Clinton administration has proposed new restrictions on logging, grazing and related activities along the 16,800 miles of streams in the Pacific North-west to help save troubled fish species. These will be managed by the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management.

The 50 to 300-feet wide riparian buffer strips are similar to those planned for national forests containing northern spotted owls.

This move comes in the wake of reports that nearly half of the 400 species of anadromous fish like salmon and trout are showing significant drops in numbers.

Already, 106 are extinct. One cause is logging and grazing along stream banks, which speed up erosion. This fills the streams with silt and also destroys the shade needed to keep the water cool enough for some species of fish.

The north-west regional director of the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations says this is the first time that good fisheries science has prevailed over the timber harvest programme.

Zones of assault

If only equally good sense prevailed over the powers that be in **India**, screamed the National Fishworkers' Forum (NFF). It recently organized a two-day fisheries strike to protest against the Indian government's new-found passion for joint ventures in its EEZ.

It is doubtful whether the deep seas have the resource potential to sustain the several licences the government has lately granted. Also to be affected are the catches of the artisanal sector in India which has around 1.5 million active, sea-going fishermen.

The NFF campaign, spread over a couple of months, built up public awareness on the dangers of over-fishing. It also received widespread and sympathetic media coverage in India.

The sea is often spoken of as infinite and featureless. To Milton it was 'dark, illimitable ... without bound.' William Cullen Bryant, as we may remember from 'Thanatopsis', mourned 'old ocean's gray and melancholy waste.' James Russel Lowell, in a more prosaic declaration, said he understood why there were pirates. It was, he claimed, because 'there is nothing so monotonous as the sea.'

It has never been so to fishermen. To them, the sea offers an endless progression of small clues—small heralds of things to come or of transition from one zone to another—which they watch carefully and study with great attention.

— from **Distant Water** by William W. Warner



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

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