

Yemaya

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ICSF's NEWSLETTER ON GENDER AND FISHERIES

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From the Editor

Dear Friends,

Greetings! This issue of *Yemaya* has articles from Chile and Brazil in Latin America, and from the European Union. Both Chile and Brazil have seen government initiatives to devolve powers to local communities to manage fisheries resources. These are also based on the recognition that for management to be effective, the participation of local communities is critical. In Chile, management and exploitation areas (AMERB) have been set up, providing well-defined community groups, quasi-property-rights to sedentary resources. A slightly different concept of marine extractive reserves (RESEX) is presently being consolidated and applied in Brazil.

Articles in this issue of *Yemaya* explore these initiatives from a gendered angle. Thus, the article from Chile highlights the efforts of a women's group seeking allotment of management and exploitation areas for seaweed, and the challenges they are facing in the process, particularly from fishermen's unions.

The article from Brazil raises issues about the need for the RESEX approach to consider issues of land and sea together. The article emphasizes that even if communities are given rights over inshore waters, benefits are minimal if they lack similar rights over their land on the coasts. This is particularly in the context of the other, more powerful interests, such as tourism, keen to gain access to coastal lands. The article also discusses the differing aspirations of men and women in fishing communities, as well as the differing priorities of local

communities, the tourism industry and conservation groups.

The European Parliament resolution on "Women's networks: fishing, farming and diversification (2004/2263 (INI))" adopted on 15 December 2005, is noteworthy. It asks Member States to launch the necessary actions to secure greater legal and social recognition of the work of women in the fisheries sector. It calls on the European Commission to explore measures to assist in the development of a women's network at the pan-European Union level. In this context the recent formation of a network comprising fisherwomen's organizations and networks from Europe, called the "AKTEA European Network: Women in Fisheries and Aquaculture", is also noteworthy.

We also reproduce a news piece on the use of solar-powered driers by fisherwomen in Tamil Nadu, India. The post-tsunami period has seen several interesting initiatives for fisherwomen, and the experiences from these could well be relevant for fisherwomen in other parts of the world.

We would like to thank those of you who responded to the *Yemaya* readership survey questionnaire. Your feedback is important. For those who are yet to respond, the questionnaire is also available on the ICSF website (www.icsf.net). We look forward to your comments and contributions for *Yemaya*. In case you would like to receive an e-mail request two months prior to each issue, requesting articles, comments, write-ups, etc. and other news of relevance to women in fishing communities, do let us know. You can reach us at icsf@icsf.net.



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Latin America / Chile**Unaccounted and undervalued**

Even though women are highly involved as workers in artisanal fisheries and in their communities, their roles have been constantly undermined and undervalued.

by Fabio Iacomini of Terra Nuova, Italy

In a context where development is identified fundamentally with the exploitation of natural resources, and where fishing is mainly associated with men in the sector, the work and presence of women is largely invisible. Illustrative of this is the fact that only since 2001 has gender been included as a variable in the official register of the sector. However, the Artisanal Fishing Register of the Servicio Nacional de Pesca (SERNAPESCA) does not recognize the support activities generally undertaken by women, which include baiting hooks, processing and the direct sale of fishery products. What is more, only 4,105 women are officially recorded in the artisanal fishing register as being directly involved with artisanal fishing, a figure far from reality, and estimated to be only 10-18 per cent of the female workforce associated with fisheries.

This situation marginalizes women in the various government programmes: if they are not taken into account, how can they become the focus of any development strategy? A similar situation exists with the official programmes that aim to improve productivity in the sector, through larger-scale production, requiring higher levels of organization. Groups of women interested in developing economic and productive activities tend to be excluded.

This prompted the Women's Network of the Confederación Nacional de Pescadores Artesanales de Chile (CONAPACH) to prioritize the issue of access to, and control over, natural resources as a key strategy. In effect, because women are not recognized as actors in the fisheries sector, they cannot claim any access rights. The control they can exercise over the resources they harvest or those on which their work depends, is even lesser. They can neither show any record of their past activities in production nor any landing figures that could be used to claim historic rights. This has a particularly important bearing

in the context of the fisheries management model being currently promoted, which is strongly geared towards the privatization of resources, and the establishment of fishing quotas based mainly on recorded catch histories. This policy has been fiercely contested by organizations of artisanal fishermen, who feel that their fishing rights are threatened.

This situation, combined with the intrinsic uncertainty and insecurity of fishing, is made even worse by the fact that neither men nor women benefit from any savings or insurance schemes, greatly increasing the social vulnerability.

A further aspect that affects a significant number of women is that their productive work is not valorized. The work of fishermen's wives is seen as an extension of their roles in the family. This also includes the support activities of their daughters and other female relations. It is thus difficult to assign any economic value to their work, which generally remains invisible, along with all their domestic tasks, and makes it difficult for them to get access to any professional occupational training. In addition, their participation in unions and other organizational activities is restricted, and they are excluded from any healthcare and insurance schemes.

Another issue is women's low levels of participation in decisionmaking and their representation in artisanal fishing organizations. Thus, for example, in CONAPACH's previous 21-member National Committee (prior to 2004), there were only three women. At the local level, there were no women presidents in any of the 24 regional federations, and only 14 women in the entire country were presidents of union bodies out of a total of 504 artisanal fishing organizations at the national level.

Nevertheless, there have been important increases in the numbers of women found in organizations with jobs that require low levels of decision-making—as treasurers and secretaries in unions and federations. It is important to highlight that some women's capabilities for financial management are held in high regard, and their skills for handling cash and for financial management are generally recognized by fishermen and particularly appreciated by their leaders, an accomplishment that is associated with their gender.



This provides the context for addressing many of the practical needs of women engaged in the sector, which are difficult to resolve without dealing with issues such as access to resources and decisionmaking.

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Latin America / Chile

Long road ahead

Seeking allotments of management and exploitation areas can be a major challenge for women engaged in artisanal fisheries in Chile today

by Maria Teresa López Boegeholz, Professor of the State and Specialist in Environmental Education and Gender Relations, University Deacon, University of Concepcion, Chile

In Chile, use and exploitation rights are granted to organizations of artisanal fishermen in the five-mile coastal zone through management and exploitation areas (AMERB), an administrative measure of the Fisheries Subsecretariat (Subpesca).

The AMERB process involves a number of steps, starting with a request from the interested organization, with an outline and co-ordinates of the possible management area. This must be submitted to Subpesca, which then, together with other public

bodies (the National Fisheries Service, the Marine Subsecretariat, and the General Direction of the Marine Territory), elaborates a technical report. This is followed by the publication of the decree in the Official Diary publicizing the fishermen's proposal.

The request from the fishermen's organization goes through the following stages in an AMERB project: proposal for a baseline study (ESBA); undertaking the ESBA; and formulation of a management and exploitation plan (PMEA).

Once this is sanctioned by the fiscal institution, the area is handed over to the fishermen's organization through a user contract. The PMEa is formulated based on a modern understanding of coastal management that balances conservation and exploitation objectives, so as to achieve sustainability of the coastal ecosystem. It requires the technical advice of relevant professionals. In this way, fishery access is regulated, conservation of resources attempted, and the capacity of the fishermen/fisherwomen for responsible commercial management, enhanced.

Requesting management areas is a major challenge for women engaged in artisanal fisheries in Chile today. In this context, it is important to note the efforts of a group of 45 women who have overcome major hurdles to enhance their basic competence and capacity to use new technologies, and to administer and manage their scarce economic resources.

These 45 women live in the *caleta* (village) of los Moros in the bay of Coliumo, Chile. Of the 1,200 people in the *caleta*, 380 are fishermen, belonging to four *sindicatos* (unions). Two of the *sindicatos* are of men (fishermen and vessel owners), one is mixed, and the other groups the 45 women. These women are engaged in administering three management areas for the following seaweed species: 'marine chicory' (*Chondracanthus chamissoi*); 'black luga' (*Sarcothalia crispata*); and 'spoon luga' (*Mazzaella laminariodes*). The first species, highly sought after in Taiwan for direct human consumption, requires ever more stringent quality certification, a lot of care to control growth and profitability, as well as systems for replanting and protection. The value of the other species comes from their gel and agar content.



These 45 women formed the *sindicato* of “Independent Women Workers, Fisherwomen and Women Gatherers”, a legally constituted body that meets the requirements of the Labour Inspectorate. The president is Sara Garrido, who started off her career in fishing 16 years ago when still in her teens, gathering seaweed in spring and summer, and later going with her husband to sea to fish for conger eel and crabs. She learned to commercialize the catch and administer the income for the wellbeing of her family and the education of her two daughters, now 17 and 12 years old.

In 2002, this group of women decided to apply for a seaweed management area, in view of the overexploitation affecting this resource. Even today, there are no regulations or administrative plans for exploiting seaweeds. The women, therefore, “became alarmed and took defensive action”. They were allotted three management areas, and a management plan (PMEA) for sustainable management of the resource was finalized.

The women have three management areas: the first of 0.6 hectares, already in use, and two others of 4 hectares each. Due to a dispute with a men’s *sindicato*, which is against ownership by the women’s *sindicato*, there is objection to all of these. The problem may finally be resolved through a negotiation process that will provide the women with access to other areas, in

exchange for the ones under litigation, even though these already have their ESBA’s approved, and are co-financed through a project that they put together and got approved. The areas they will receive in exchange have no ESBA, and, moreover, they have no natural banks of seaweeds.

The vision of Sara Garrido is striking. In the tiny assigned management area of half a hectare, and with the management plan accepted, she is thinking about how to effectively assess and replant seaweeds, so that the spores of ‘marine chicory’ will take root and grow. She feels confident because she listened attentively to the university specialists and technicians who helped her with the ESBA and she always took their advice and heeded their warnings.

She also has another approved project comprising a seaweed drying and dehydrating plant, with which profitability can be greatly improved. The women have worked hard to obtain funding through the organizations, Fosis (Social Solidarity Fund for Investment), Sercotex (Service for External Credit) and Chile Barrios (a development programme to alleviate poverty in vulnerable settlements). This has allowed them to establish a micro-enterprise to start activities within an appropriate legal (co-operative) framework.

In future, they want to manage a project for an “experimental fishery” for seaweeds, and through this, gain access to co-financing, which will also help them get effective technical advice on socioeconomic and environmental sustainability of the coastal areas where the natural seaweed banks are found.

In the fiercely oppressive atmosphere arising from the response of the men’s *sindicato*, which may influence local fisheries policies, listening to Sara, feeling her energy and understanding her courage, makes one realize how long a road must be travelled before there is a genuinely transparent and gender-balanced participation in the development of artisanal fisheries.

(This article has been translated by Brian O’Riordan of ICSF’s Brussels office)

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Latin America / Chile

Fishing for generations

Women in Chile are out at sea with their husbands. And they are not work-shy. Their only worry is leaving their children alone in case something goes wrong.

This article, by Soledad Neira, first appeared in the Chilean Daily “El Mercurio”

(www.elmercurio.com)

PUERTO MONTT - “Lets get out fast, or else we won’t leave here alive,” said Bernardita Llancapani to her husband, trying to stay upright in their fishing boat. All around, a violent storm pounded the gulf of Comau in the Province of Palena, Los Legos, Region.

The launches seem like nutshells leaping across 4- and 5-m-high waves. Bernardita has got no time to be scared. All her thoughts are on her three- and five-year old daughters waiting for them in Quiaca, on the Isle of Llancahué. “We are going to die. What will become of them?” she reflects, whilst her husband urges her not to lose hope.

They had gone out fishing with other relatives when they heard a Navy warning. A storm was brewing and the only safe haven was private, in Huinay. They would have to ride out the storm on the ocean, where they could lose their launch, with their lives on the line.

Quiaca is an island locality in Huailahué. Thirty-three families live there and all the women are fishermen. Grandmothers, mothers, daughters and granddaughters all go out in their fragile craft for days at a time. Most go with their husbands. Others, on their own, manage their own boats.

All are inscribed in the fishing registers and have up-to-date licences. In Bernardita’s family, three generations of women have fished. She, her mother and grandmother Cbtilde, 56 years old, who, since being widowed, has worked alone. Shipwrecks and serious material losses do not deter them. Although in Chile fishing is historically man’s work, increasingly women are going to sea with their husbands or working as crew. They even have their own unions.

The catch quota set by the National Fisheries Service (Semapesca) is for 330 kg, but at times, they don’t

catch even 12 kg and hardly receive CLP700 (around 1 Euro) per kg. With such a low quota, says Rosa Ojeda from Quiaca, if her husband had to pay a crew, there would not be enough to go round. So that’s why she has to go fishing too.

They start work during childhood. They learn the ropes in summer “when there is less hardship”. “In winter you get soaked and it is very dangerous”, says Bernardita, who has been fishing since the age of six. They also engage in lesser tasks, like baiting and cleaning the hooks. When working as a crew, you must always be on the alert. One false move, and you are in the water, she says.

Alejandra Contreras, from the island of Juan Fernández, is now an expert lobster fisher. Bait must be caught, put in the traps, and the traps set. Day in day out they must be lifted and checked, and then reset.

Two thousand km to the south, Miguelina Oyarzún, who is 64, and comes from Chiloé, has worked at sea since the age of 22 in Punta Arenas. She used to fish for bass (*robalo*) or hoki (*merluza de cola larga*). Then she tried her hand at spider crabs. She has two boats, *La Gordi* and *La Marina*, and hopes to be at sea in July, in the spider crab season. She has had two serious accidents, but “I have never thought about leaving the sea. If I have to die there, so be it”, she says.

In Antofagasta, Daniza Orrego, who is 26 and nicknamed “La Chunga”, has followed after her father as crew. Mother of four children, she is the only person interviewed who has felt discriminated against. All the others have even felt welcomed and supported by their men.

Daniza recalls an occasion when she entered the fish-hold to unload: “My fellow workers got angry. They thought that I was there to waste time. But I was doing the same work as them”, she says. There is always one such case, and often there are strange happenings. Once, when on the verge of going under, everyone took off their clothes to jump overboard, only Daniza kept her clothes on.

The women don’t fear the sea, but they respect it. “One is always ready for an accident to happen. But you’ve got to go, for the children’s sake. To get on”, underlines Rosa Ojeda.

Out of the 50,000 Chilean fishermen registered by the National Fisheries Service, 2,089 are women. The Lakes Region (Los Lagos) has the greatest number: 11,500 men and nearly 1,000 women. The Region of Biobío follows, with 9,200 men and 550 women. In the Aisén Region, of the 2,000-odd fishermen, only 19 are women, who are scattered amongst the tiny localities between Puerto Cisnes, Puerto Aisén, Puyuhuapi, Isla Gala, Gaviota and Puerto Aguirre.

Latin America / Brazil

Conservation contradictions

The marine extractive reserve (RESEX) model could have greater benefits for local communities, as compared to other conservation approaches. However, for this to happen, certain issues will need to be resolved.

by Regina Célia Di Ciommo, based at the Laboratório de Ecologia Humana e Etnoecologia in the Universidade Federal de São Carlos (UFSCAR), Brazil.

Since 1989, Brazil has been experimenting with a novel and unique partnership in natural resource extraction and conservation, called “Reservas Extractivistas” or RESEX. This article is about the Ponta do Corumbau Marine Extractive Reserve (Corumbau RESEX), located on the Costa do Descobrimento, 800 km south of Salvador, the capital city of the State of Bahia, Brazil. The region is home to part of what remains of the Mata Atlântica—areas of mangroves and coral reefs recognized as a World Historical Site by UNESCO in 1999.

The Corumbau RESEX was established in September 2000, thanks to the initiatives of artisanal fishermen from nine different communities. The idea was to protect the region from predatory fishing by industrial fleets, whose operations were harming the shrimp stocks in the area.

The user rights to the resources have been guaranteed to the traditional extractive populations along the coast—484 registered members distributed between nine different communities, organized in three associations. The founding decree of the Corumbau

RESEX states that it “aims at ensuring the sustainable exploitation and conservation of renewable natural resources traditionally used by the local extractive population.” Research institutions and government agencies, however, provide essential support for resource conservation and effective results.

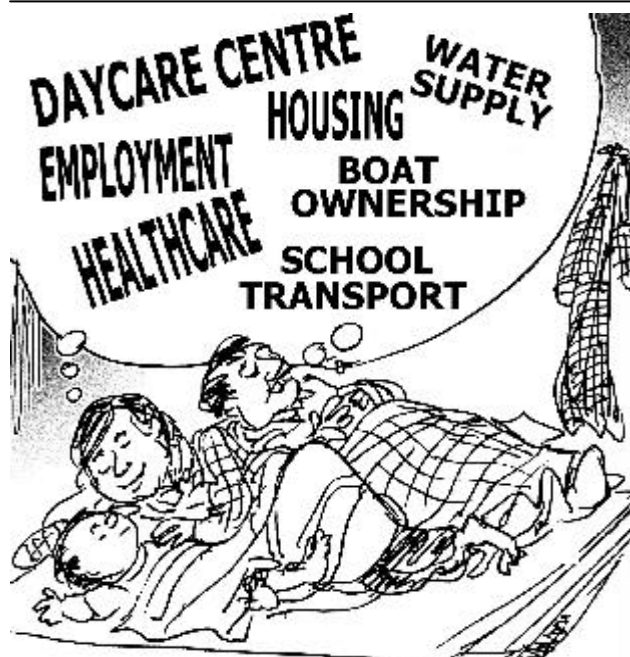
Alpina Begossi’s work in the Amazon concluded that extractive reserves offer significant potential for political organization and improving environmental and social resilience, compared to other conservation approaches. This has, however, yet to be achieved in Corumbau.

In the case of the Corumbau RESEX, communities live in isolated conditions due to the poor state of the roads and bridges in the area, and due to the absence of electricity. This hinders the active participation of the local population in management and decision-making processes. Participation of women is also generally limited due to several difficulties, two key ones being motherhood and cultural traditions that make it difficult to both speak out at meetings and get a grasp of the issues being discussed.

The RESEX includes both the marine and the surrounding land area. However, it is only in the marine area that the extractive populations have user rights. They have no such rights in the surrounding land area where they live, and it is here that most of the social conflicts arise. Whilst the marine reserve is an area of common property protected by law, the land area is governed by commercial and private property laws, where economically stronger sectors, such as the hospitality and tourism industry, exert a considerable influence.

These interests are fuelling a growing speculation in real estate. RESEX community residents are being forced to sell their houses at very low prices, and move far away, where there is no infrastructure or government assistance of any kind. Also, due to the increasing privatization of access to, and use of, the coastal strip, access to the sea is becoming more difficult for communities. This is leading to a gradual cultural erosion, and the complete exclusion of fishing communities from areas near the coast.

A gender-focused participatory appraisal exercise (PAGP) was undertaken to promote the active



participation of various interest groups, especially women, in the management of the RESEX, faced as they are with changes imposed by tourism. The PAGP techniques and tools used were those recommended by IUCN—the World Conservation Union.

This article focuses on the results of two of several PAGP workshops: *Rain of Dreams* and *What Hurts Most*. The former was designed to identify the main aspirations of men and women regarding improvements in their personal, community and environmental conditions. The latter aimed to identify critical problems, and to understand how they affect men and women in their personal, domestic and public lives.

Overall, 118 women and 17 men participated in the workshops. Although the limited presence of men constrained the possibility for comparative analysis, it highlighted the existence of power relations between men and women in the communities. The workshop discussions also highlight the differing priorities of women and men, with women more concerned about balancing their productive and reproductive roles. Women expressed concern about children's welfare, the absence of proper medical care in communities, and the lack of piped potable water. The "dreams" highlighted by the women were public daycare centres for children up to six years old, and job and income opportunities that could increase financial independence and their ability to support their families. Participants pointed out that job opportunities abound

during tourist seasons, and were daycare centres available, many women could benefit.

The men wanted better working conditions, boat ownership and public transport services. In general, men's dreams related more to improved conditions for their productive activities.

Both men and women ranked lack of healthcare as a primary concern, followed by lack of education. School transport was a "dream" many fathers shared, since their children were attending day or night school in other villages. Women also explained how vulnerable they are to violence, expressed in a variety of ways and worsened by their financial dependence on men.

Both men and women pointed out that associations and other forms of community organizations were non-existent, and drew attention to the problems caused by the lack of local policies for housing, healthcare, water supply, employment creation, and so on. Women specifically mentioned other factors of distress, such as lack or loss of their own houses, non-existent water supply, grief caused by loss of family members through death or by separation imposed by distance, and by lack of family support.

We have used the word "community" advisably, as the power relations between different social groups make it difficult to consider the community as a co-operative and homogenous unit. Existing profound conflicts will probably only make themselves known over time, as the project progresses. However, there is no doubt that the workshops on "dreams" and "painful realities" at RESEX Corumbau have been able to pinpoint critical problems that have a bearing on the quality of life of communities, ranging from housing, education, electric power and water to personal happiness, despair, violence, and alcohol and drug abuse.

It is ironical, though, that it is precisely such "rusticity" that is a tourist attraction. The burden falls mainly on women, and performing daily activities under prevailing conditions is becoming increasingly difficult and strenuous. The construction of roads is another area that needs to be discussed. This is an issue on which local people and conservation organizations are in conflict due to the potential threat road construction represents to the area, as it could pave the way for mass tourism and for environmental and cultural damage.

The research has highlighted the contradictions that exist between establishing a conservation area to safeguard the marine ecosystem, and the interests and rights of the local inhabitants. The specific conservation measures required for the marine area also need to take account of the relationships between land and sea, and the complementary roles played by women and men in sustaining life and livelihoods.

Ensuring a balance between such a diversified and contradictory set of interests is a challenge that will have to be faced by those responsible for the development and management of the RESEX. To guarantee sustainability, it is particularly important that rules are set to not only control tourism activities and the distribution of its benefits, but also to restrict the behaviour of other economic interests in the area—notably real estate speculation.

This must go hand-in-hand with ensuring the regular participation of the population in the RESEX administration, ensuring gender equity. This could help to empower the community through participatory management, raise the quality of life of the residents, and ensure their contribution to the conservation of ecosystem biodiversity.

(This article has been translated by Brian O’Riordan of ICSF’s Brussels office)

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European Union

Support women in fisheries

In the European Parliament resolution on “Women’s networks: fishing, farming and diversification (2004/2263(INI)” adopted on 15 December 2005, Member States have been asked to launch the necessary actions to secure greater legal and social recognition of the work of women in the fisheries sector

Excerpts from the resolution are given below. The full text can be downloaded from <http://www.europarl.eu.int>

The European Parliament

1. Recognizes the role that the (European) Commission has played in hosting the aforementioned conference on the role of women in the fisheries sector

and in funding a number of innovative actions, and welcomes its intention to host another Conference in the near future; believes, nonetheless, that insufficient progress has been made;

2. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to launch the necessary actions to secure greater legal and social recognition of, and promote and raise the profile, of the work of women in the fisheries sector, to support their efforts to obtain better living conditions for their families and communities and to guarantee social and economic rights, including wage equality, unemployment benefit in case of interruption of work (temporary or definitive), the right to obtain a pension, the reconciliation of work and family life and access to parental leave, access to social security and a free health service, and the protection of safety and health at work;

3. Calls on the Commission to produce a report as soon as possible identifying the nature, extent, objectives and activities of women’s networks in fisheries throughout the European Union, paying particular attention to the situation in the newer Member States;

4. Underlines the fact that women’s active participation in fisheries-related activities helps to preserve cultural traditions and specific practices and aids the survival of their communities, thereby ensuring the protection of cultural diversity in these regions;

5. Recognizing that these networks have emerged above all from local or regional initiatives, calls on the Commission to look into specific measures to provide active support for both the development of existing women’s networks, particularly where they are less consolidated, and their creation where no such networks exist;

6. Calls on the Commission also to consider what measures it might take to assist in the development of a women’s network at the pan-European Union level, paying particular attention to the need to eliminate linguistic barriers;

7. Calls on the Commission to establish appropriate channels to increase and disseminate information on the situation of women in the various areas which make up, and are linked to, the fisheries sector, and to promote sociological research on fishing communities; calls on the Commission to provide active support for existing women’s networks and the creation of new networks, at national, regional and local levels,



and to foster the exchange of information and good practices; underlines, in this context, the need for close co-operation with the future European Institute for Gender Equality, with a view to improved effectiveness as regards identifying and combating discrimination against women in these communities;

8. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to give a commitment to take the necessary measures to eliminate the administrative and social barriers hampering women's full participation and progress in all areas of the fisheries sector through specific actions for the sector, and to ensure the full application of the principle of equal treatment and opportunities for women and men in all fields, in particular training, and access to funding and loans, including micro-credit, etc. to encourage entrepreneurship;

9. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to promote more vocational training and education specially geared to the activities of women working in the fisheries sector and to set up mechanisms to improve the provision of information about training opportunities and the funding available to make use of them;

10. Welcomes the provisions in the proposed European Fisheries Fund that oblige Member States to ensure that operations to enhance the role of women in the fisheries sector are promoted, and calls on the Council to adopt Parliament's Amendment 24 in its aforementioned position on the European Fisheries Fund which emphasised that efforts on a transnational level should also be promoted; nevertheless urges the

Commission to support specific projects which have as their objective the recognition, promotion and diversification of women's role in fisheries-related areas;

11. Urges the Commission, likewise, to draw up a specific pilot project to address the particular situation of shellfish gatherers;

12. Believes that the provisions of the European Fisheries Fund should afford an opportunity to support activities that have hitherto been undertaken on a voluntary basis, and calls on the Commission to consider what other sources of funding might be made available to women's networks in the fisheries sector, including sources of micro-credit;

13. Believes further that an important use of fisheries-related European funding would be the involvement of women's networks in projects researching the impact of restructuring on the fishing and farming industries;

14. Calls on the Commission to maintain the FEMMES programme, and include networks of women working in fisheries-related occupations;

15. Believes also that women's networks have an important role to play in the development of Coastal Action Groups, and that there should be sufficient flexibility in the use of the Structural Funds to allow the integration of the activities of women in fisheries-dependent communities and of women in farming communities in coastal areas;

16. Stresses the need to strengthen women's effective participation in representative, decision-making and advisory fisheries bodies at European, national and regional levels, and believes that a Commission recommendation to the competent bodies to take action in this regard would make a positive contribution;

17. Believes that women's networks can contribute to improving safety at sea and to improving the sustainability of fisheries, in particular by promoting consumption of fish from sustainable stocks, and discouraging consumption of fish from unsustainable stocks;

18. Calls on the Commission to report regularly to Parliament on the development of women's networks in the fisheries sector and on the basis on which their activities are being funded; calls on the Commission to keep Parliament periodically informed of

developments in the situation of women in the fisheries sector;

19. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to review the situation of women in fishing and farming communities at European, national and regional levels, and to address any issues relating to the adequacy of their health and other social protection, and to remove any barriers to their participation in representative activities; proposes, as an initial measure, that the Commission make a recommendation to the competent bodies that they take action in this regard;

20. Shares the concern of women working in the sector at the scant presence of young people in fishing activities, and calls on the Commission to launch measures to encourage young people to work in the sector in order to ensure its continuity;

21. Calls on all those engaged in the formation of Regional Advisory Councils to ensure the participation of representative delegates from women's networks in their activities, particularly with regard to work on the socioeconomic impact of fisheries policy; considers that, in this connection, consideration should be given to the extent to which women's networks can be compensated for the costs they incur;

22. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and Commission, the governments of the Member States and the Regional Advisory Councils.

European Union

Creating a network

Fisherwomen's organizations in Europe met recently to consolidate their network

This information is from the AKTEA Newsletter No. 7, February 2006 (http://www.fishwomen.org/IMG/pdf/aktea_7en.pdf)

A meeting organized by the social scientist members of the thematic Network, FEMMES, was held last September at La Laguna in Tenerife in Canary Islands. Some fisherwomen's organizations and networks (in Spain, the Netherlands, France, Portugal, Finland and Italy) were invited to join the meeting and discuss the future of the initiative created by the FEMMES programme. After a discussion, which considered the results of the European electronic survey by the

FEMMES programme, all participants agreed to establish a European Network of Women in Fisheries, Shellfishing and Aquaculture. The issues considered were:



The basis of the network

The agenda for women in fisheries and aquaculture in Europe, which was the outcome of the workshops of the FEMMES programme, was considered to be the common basis for organizations and individuals who may wish to become members of the European Network.

Fisherwomen's organizations and network members are aiming to achieve

- Visibility of women's role in fisheries
- Recognition of women's contribution in the sector
- Participation in decisionmaking on matters that affect women's role in fisheries
- Exchange of experiences, problems and resolutions
- An improvement in women's self confidence
- A sustainable development of fisheries and a future for fishing communities
- Political and institutional acceptance of women's organizations in fisheries

Who can be members of the European Network of Women in Fisheries?

- Women's organizations and networks working to improve the conditions for women in fisheries and aquaculture and related activities
- Individual women in fisheries and aquaculture

- Individuals who support the efforts of women in fisheries and aquaculture (civil servants, researchers, education, etc.)

Fisherwomen's organizations and networks of women in fisheries are the main members of the network, with individuals only entitled to associate membership.

Network Name

Participants expressed the desire that the new network will be a continuation of the FEMMES thematic network and were of the opinion that name of the FEMMES newsletter, AKTEA (Nereid of Greek mythology symbolizing the shore), would demonstrate this continuity. The name of the European network is: "AKTEA European Network: Women in Fisheries and Aquaculture".

Future meeting

Participants accepted an invitation to organize the meeting of the network in May 2006 in Ancona (Italy) during the International Fisheries Fair held traditionally each year in this city.

Katia Frangoudes agreed to act as a secretary of the network until the next meeting in May 2006. A working group was formed to elaborate the status of the "AKTEA European Network: Women in Fisheries and Aquaculture".

If you wish to contact the AKTEA European Network, please email: network@fishwomen.org

News/ India

Paying with their health

Women in the fish processing sector in India suffer from various health problems

*This article, dated 08 January 2006, was published on the following website:
<http://www.medindia.net/news>*

Several thousand women in India work under unsanitary and freezing conditions in the country's fishing industry towards preserving the slice and shell marine products. The National Institute of Occupational Health (NIOH) based in Ahmedabad conducted a study that reveals that many among these women age prematurely.

"Women working in fish processing units are predominantly from other states. In Kerala, you would find women from Tamil Nadu, Gujarat or Andhra

Pradesh working as contract labour. The same is the case in other states," said Pranab Kumar Nag, NIOH Deputy Director. "The promise of a regular job lures these women away from their states and they find themselves paying with their health as they have to live and work on the premises for 13 to 14 hours every day," Nag said on the sidelines of the 93rd Indian Science Congress.

Handling all sorts of tasks from slicing, shelling to hardening and processing a variety of marine products, including squids and seaweed, these women soon become prone to all sorts of health problems. The problems range from back pain and protein related asthma to Raynaud's Phenomenon, a disorder that affects the blood vessels in the fingers, toes, ears and nose.

Though more common in people who live in colder climates, a sample survey found that almost a third of the 800,000 to 900,000 women working in the industry fall prey to Raynaud's Phenomenon. "Raynaud's Phenomenon leads to permanent damage to the skin and in some cases the tip of the bone starts showing. In many of the cases, they suffer from back pain though they are just 18 to 25 years old. After just two years of working, many complain of some health problem," said Nag. This is mainly due to the long hours the women, who don't even have proper clothing, work in temperatures as low as -12 to -14 degrees Celsius required for preserving the fish.

Studies mainly in Kerala and Gujarat have revealed that the working life of most workers is very short, with hardly anyone above 30 years. Extensive studies are also planned in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Orissa and Maharashtra as a part of the problem identification activity.

"We are also proposing different kinds of remedial action, including change of work conditions and methods of handling fish through scientific intervention," said Nag. The institute, which studies the impact of various occupations and living environments on health, is also looking into various kinds of gloves and other handling material that could provide protection to the women workers.

Affiliated to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), studies by NIOH have revealed that the fish processing units lack regulation, as they do not come under the purview of industrial regulations. So, not much can be done about working conditions or the long hours the women have to put in for low wages.

News / India



Solar power empowers
Solar-powered fish driers
are now being used by
some fisherwomen's
groups in Tamil Nadu, India

This article by Veeraraghav
 T M was carried in CNN-IBN

News of 6 February 2006 (http://www.ibnlive.com/article.php?id=4950§ion_id=3)

In Chennai's fishermen's colonies, a solar-powered fish drier has brought in a revolution driving more and more women into scientific food processing and providing many a means for livelihood. It was a project that started in tsunami-hit Cuddalore district and now Chennai city has its own solar fish drier.

Karuvadur dried fish is a delicacy that 70-year-old Thangapapa has been making all her life. She buys fish and puts them on the sands to dry them out. It takes a full sunny day, sometimes two, for the fish to dry out. And it's unhygienic. But now all that's changed with the arrival of a new solar fish drier.

"If we put it for drying outside, then we will have to have five people guarding the fish. Crows and dogs will eat the fish. Now, we just have to put it in the drier and in four hours it's done. It's cleaner and more hygienic," says Thangappa. She says with the solar drier she can make double the amount of *karuvadu* in the same time. She just has to put fish in these trays and put it in the drier powered by solar energy. She's now part of a self-help group and they got the drier, which costs Rs250,000 (US\$5,000 or so), with the help of an NGO. And it's attracted more women in this fishing colony to join Thangapapa.

Says Janani, another fisherwoman, "I was unemployed earlier. Now with this machine, I have also started helping out. This means a source of income for me and we now want to put this fish in packets and sell them."

The project was first set up in the tsunami-hit Cuddalore district, where it has been implemented successfully. And now the company which makes the drier and some NGOs are planning to install more such machines in the city's fishing colonies.

YEMAYA

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

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