

Yemaya

No. 22

ICSF'S NEWSLETTER ON GENDER AND FISHERIES

SEPTEMBER 2006

From the Editor

Dear Friends,

This issue of *Yemaya* carries articles from Chile, Brazil, Norway and India, as well as news about recent developments, publications and websites that should be of interest.

The article from Brazil touches on an issue of growing importance for coastal fishing communities across continents—the increasing competition for coastal lands from other sectors, such as tourism, industry, housing, ports and so on. In this case, the community of Prainha do Canto Verde in the northeastern State of Ceará, Brazil, fought, and won, the right to the coastal lands they have traditionally occupied. Their fight was against the takeover of their lands by a real-estate speculator.

Indeed, there are many such struggles being waged across the world, as beaches are increasingly targeted for tourism and real-estate development, displacing the traditional occupants of these lands. Communities usually find it difficult to challenge the takeover of their lands by powerful and wealthy opponents. The fact that communities often do not have legal titles to their lands, even though they have well-established traditional rights going back several generations, makes them even more vulnerable. Displacement from their coastal lands invariably means a loss of livelihood, given the imperative of proximity and access to the sea for income-generating activities. Simply put, fishing communities need to be close to the sea if they are to pursue their livelihoods.

There is need for much greater attention to the issue of secure land

rights for fishing communities. It is not enough to have rights to fish or to access fish resources. Rights to inhabit lands that provide unhindered access to the sea are as essential—the other side of the same coin, as it were. Fishery policies and resource management debates must be broadened to bring in issues of access to land and sea within the same framework.

The article from India takes us a little further down this line of argument. It points out that even though fishing has become technology- and capital intensive, and incomes from fishing have increased—at least in some cases—paradoxically, the quality of life of fishing communities, and the situation of women in these communities, have not improved to the same extent. It is common knowledge that fishing communities, in several parts of the world, suffer from lack of access to basic services such as health, water, sewage disposal, education, and so on. The challenge for policymakers is to adopt a holistic perspective when looking at fisheries issues. Development of fisheries should be closely linked to an improvement in the quality of life of fishing communities on land.

As always, 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 for articles, comments, write-ups, 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/Brazil

A historic victory

Recently, in March 2006, the Superior Federal Court of Justice, Brazil, ruled in favour of the rights of the community of Prainha do Canto Verde over their land

by René Schärer, of the Instituto Terramar, Brazil, and a Member of ICSF

Prainha do Canto Verde, a small fishing village in the State of Ceará in northeastern Brazil, was settled around 1870, soon after the abolition of slavery, by people from neighbouring communities, mostly freed slave labour from sugarcane plantations. While fishing is the main source of livelihood in Prainha do Canto Verde, the village does not have a port, as the *jangadas* (sailrafts) used are beach-landing craft.

The calm of the village was interrupted in 1976, when Antônio Sales Magalhães, a specialist in acquiring beach terrain, appeared in the vicinity and made up purchase contracts of land belonging to 12 families, stretching from the dunes behind the village until the coast. Within a year and a half, he had acquired 749 ha of land at about one US cent per sq m. The fisher families living on, or close to, the beach did not know what was going on. Actually, nobody seemed to understand why the well-dressed gentleman, Antônio, was buying sand dunes.

In 1979, Antônio started a process to clear the land titles; that is, the local judge began to call neighbours and other interested people to find out if the purchase of land was legal. The fishers again were not aware of the process as they were not specifically invited and could not read the official, or any other, newspaper.

In 1984, the district judge of Beberibe ruled in favour of the purchase since no objection had been registered and there were witnesses who testified to the legality of the purchase. Once the land purchase had been laundered, Antônio passed the land on to the real-estate company called Henrique Jorge SA.

Though the fishers had missed the deadline to register their objections to the deal, they were fortunate in

receiving support from a human rights group called ‘The Centre for Defense and Promotion of Human Rights (CDPDH)’, founded by the Cardinal and Archbishop of Fortaleza, Dom Aloisio Lorscheider, one of the defenders of liberation theology and social action by church members.

In August 1989, legal advisers of the CDPDH appealed against the verdict of the district judge and against Antônio Sales and the real-estate company, in the Superior Tribunal of Justice of the State of Ceará. The Court judge returned the case to the district court of Beberibe for an inquiry into the circumstances of the purchase. For the next 10 years, between 1989 and 1999, the case remained in the district court.

In 1999, things began to move when a new district judge started to clear the backlog. The case was opened again and witnesses were heard. The case was then referred back to the Superior Tribunal of Justice, Ceará.

In 2000, the community learned that the legal opinion of the State Attorney was in their favour, with the land purchase being described as immoral and illegal, and proposing that the land be turned over to the “(morally) rightful owners”—the community. In May 2001, judges in the Superior Tribunal of Justice followed the opinion of the State Attorney and voted eight votes to nil in favour of the community.

The legality of the transaction was questioned, given the fact that part of the land (at least 30 m of beach) was State property (under the federal government), so that only a federal judge could have ruled the legality of the land purchase.

Despite this ruling, in 2001, the real-estate company Henrique Jorge SA appealed to the Superior Tribunal of Justice. It lost the case, again by eight to zero votes. Not satisfied, the real-estate company appealed again, this time to the Superior Federal Court of Justice in Brasilia in 2003, claiming procedural mistakes.

On 14 March 2006, five Superior Federal Court judges, following the legal opinion of the Federal Attorneys, voted five votes to zero to uphold the sentence of the lower court in favour of the community.

The real-estate company was asked to compensate for the costs incurred by the court and the lawyers.

This was a historic victory for the community. They won because there was a small group within the community that never gave up, all the way to the last appeals court. Many other communities in the same situation would not have been able to resist the resultant pressure, violence and aggression, and, sooner or later, would have accepted a settlement out of court, which invariably would have been against their interests. Antônio Sales and Henrique Jorge SA could never have dreamt that illiterate fishers would outlast them.

The people of Prainha do Canto Verde held out to the end, because they always had support from other communities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and supporters throughout Brazil and even abroad. And the man who deserves most of the credit is, without doubt, Dom Aloisio Lorscheider, Cardinal and Archbishop of Fortaleza, who created the Centre for Defense and Promotion of Human Rights. The community is hoping that Dom Aloisio Lorscheider, though aged, will respond to the invitation for the victory celebration some time later this year (2006).

The decision of the Superior Federal Court should give new hope and courage to the many communities



that are being driven from their beach lands along the vast and beautiful coasts of Brazil.

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Latin America/Chile

Whose gain?

The community of Mehuín, on the southern coast of Chile, is fighting against the polluting operations of the cellulose company, CELCO, in order to preserve the source of their livelihoods

by Juan Carlos Skewes and Debbie Guerra, Professor and Associate Professor, respectively, at the Universidad Austral de Chile

The ten years spent defending Mehuín, on the south coast of Chile, has developed into a kind of saga for the population, whose only demand is that the source of their livelihoods be protected and preserved. Fishermen, women, indigenous people and coastal inhabitants have united to defend their birthright from a daunting foe. And their foe has now come armed with the Chilean Navy, and is confronting fishermen in the bay of Maiquillahue along the coastal fringe. Fishermen have deployed their boats to prevent the destruction of their source of livelihoods: the sea and the water courses.

But what is this story all about? In 1986, a company, Celulosa Arauco y Constitución (CELCO), planned the construction of a cellulose processing plant. Then, as now, they looked at the possibility of discharging the plant's waste into the sea through a 20-km long pipe. The resistance of the people of Mehuín in 1998 stopped that from being realized.

When the company started up in 2004, it opted to dump its waste in the Río Cruces, whose waters feed the Carlos Anwandter Nature Sanctuary, a Ramsar site (Ramsar Site No. 222). That this was a catastrophe was clear after the deaths of the black-necked swans, the usual residents of the reserve, were recorded.

In their search for alternatives, CELCO came up with new proposals and, once again, the sea seemed to

be the most convenient solution for waste disposal. For the Valdivian coast to be put to such a use, new environmental impact studies were required. The vessel hired by the CELCO company to do this work had the protection of the Chilean State, and the coastal residents knew that they had no option other than to prevent these studies from being undertaken — studies that would then allow the construction of the ominous pipe.

The huge ship contracted to carry out the environmental impact studies has entered the bay twice this year, towards the end of July and in mid-August, under escort from Chilean naval vessels. The naval-industrial advance was confronted by numerous artisanal fishing boats and fishermen who sought to prevent the intended operations.

The community of Mehuín do not — and cannot — trust a company that, since the outset of its operations, has deceived them, sending, first of all, divers operating in an undercover manner and then, attempting to do so at night, on New Year. Worse still, they cannot trust a company whose claims of technological excellence were only mere distractions, as past experience has shown, to set up one of the most lucrative businesses in Chile, that of processing cellulose.

Thus the questions of the artisanal fishermen and their organizations seem legitimate: Who does the State



serve? Who is the enemy? What is a legitimate State? The community of Mehuín has not only been witness to the unleashing of naval power by the public authorities to protect private interests but is also the victim of persecution and surveillance at home by the police.

The official response in such cases is well known: authority is backed by legality. Even as the authorities hide behind legal norms, such norms permit disasters to happen, like those in the nature reserve. It is, of course a fact that there is no scientific proof to indicate that CELCO is the direct cause of the tragedy of the Río Cruces— just as it is possible that there is no convincing proof that the victims of Hiroshima suffered from the direct action of the atomic bomb. Whatever the men and women in the locality have seen can obviously be twisted around by scientific reasoning and (especially) by the use of statistics. But, is this the role of the State? To turn a blind eye to, and step back from, such a terrible act, whose only objective is personal gain?

Once again, Mehuín is calling for Chile's attention. Once again, the resources belonging to Chilean men and women are being used for the benefit of a few Chileans, to the disadvantage of the great majority of the people of the country, and once again, such benefits are being procured at the cost of the health of current and future generations of coastal inhabitants.

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Latin America/Chile

Supporting the struggle

Many groups are providing support to the struggle being waged by the community of Mehuín in southern Chile

by Brian O' Riordan, of ICSF's Brussels office, based on information provided by ECOCEANOS, Chile

There is now a nationwide campaign to halt the latest move by CELCO (see story above). A group calling

itself the “Communities in Conflict with Celco Nueva Aldea”, which brings together producer organizations, NGOs and community-based organizations from the Itata Valley and the coastal fringe opposed to CELCO, have organized mass protests. They have accused the authorities, whom they consider to be the most “compliant and irresponsible that the region has known”, of approving a project that will pollute the last remaining basin of clean waters in the Eighth Region, on which 45,000 people depend for drinking water and irrigation for fields and vineyards of international quality.

They are demanding that CELCO be ordered not to start discharging its liquid waste into the river Itata, and describe the environmental regulations applied to CELCO as being “irresponsible, polluting and not giving any guarantees to the communities, while violating their constitutional rights to live in an environment free from pollution”.

At a meeting in the city of Temuco on 28 July, more than 100 representatives of civil society organizations associated with human rights, environmental issues, social movements and NGOs gave their total support to the community of Mehuín. They issued the following statement:

1. We demonstrate our solidarity with the community of Mehuín and its organizations who have decided once more to reject the intervention of the CELCO-ARAUCO company in its territory.
2. We reject the position of the government in providing support to CELCO-ARAUCO through ordering the intervention of police and navy personnel in this area so as to assist the work of this company. Through this action, which took place last Tuesday (25 July), the government showed its total lack of interest in the views of its people, and endorsed the activities of a company whose irresponsible social and environmental behaviour has been brought into question.
3. We demand that the government finish all collaboration with CELCO-ARAUCO, which is accused in this province of destroying a nature

reserve and polluting the rivers of Valdivia, causing serious damage to many agricultural and indigenous communities and local economic activities, and also putting the health of the people at risk. We also demand that the surveillance of the community representatives be stopped, and that the alleged agreements between CELCO and the Chilean Navy for operations at sea be clarified.

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Latin America/Chile

Action, not more words

This profile of Zaida Zurita Huaitisa, a seaweed harvester in southern Chile, and a member of CONAPACH’s Executive Committee, is based on an interview by Brian O’ Riordan

Zaida Zurita Huaitiao comes from the fishing community of Maullin in Chile’s southern Tenth Region, a community of shellfish divers (*buzos* and *mariscadores*) and seaweed harvesters (*algueros* and *algueras*). A fisherman’s wife and mother of six children, she is herself a fishworker. She works both as an *alguera*, cultivating and harvesting the seaweed *gracillaria*, and in a small aquaculture concession where she cultivates the mollusc, *loco*.

In addition to her busy professional and domestic life, Zaida is also an elected fishworker representative at both local and national levels. She is President of the Federation of the Syndicates of Artisanal Fishermen and Agriculturists of the North Bank of the River Maullin, and a member of CONAPACH’s Executive Committee. CONAPACH is a national fishworker organization in Chile.

It is a struggle to make a living from fishing, emphasizes Zaida, and to survive, it is important to keep one’s options open. “Management areas are not the answer, but only one option. As a fishworker in Maullin you have to work in a variety of activities”, says Zaida. (In Chile, management and exploitation areas provide well-defined community groups, quasi-

property-rights to sedentary resources, based on approved management plans.)

One of the biggest challenges facing fishworkers, according to Zaida, is maximizing their earnings, particularly as the seasonal nature of their activities tends to saturate markets at times of peak production, reducing prices.

Zaida participated in the recent ICSF workshop on “Emerging Concerns of Fishing Communities: Issues of Labour, Trade, Gender, Disaster Preparedness, Biodiversity and Responsible Fisheries”, held from 4 to 6 July 2006 at SESC Colonia Ecologica in Fortaleza, Brazil.

She found that the issues being discussed at the workshop were very important, but was not clear about how such a meeting can make real progress towards resolving them. She cites the issue of trawling as a case in point, which, in her view, needs firm and concrete action, not just more words.

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Asia/India

Development for whom?

Even though incomes have increased as fishing becomes more technology- and capital-intensive, they often do not translate into a better quality of life for the fishing community, particularly for women

by Nalini Nayak, a member of Protsahan, an NGO based in Trivandrum, India, and a Member of ICSF

I recently saw the film *Darwin's Nightmare*. While, on the one hand, it highlights the impact that the introduction of the Nile perch in Lake Victoria has had on the ecosystem, on the other, it also vividly reveals the interlinkages between neoliberal globalization and patriarchy that result in inhuman lives for people who actually live around this ‘highly productive’ lake. The film was well done, although a bit long-drawn-out. Yet it has the effect of entering one's bones and arousing anger from within.

I also saw another film in the making, which depicts child labour in the fishery of the Upper Volta region of Ghana. The children lead a hard and precarious life and, in the process, are denied the normal rights of children. This is another face of neoliberal globalization, where children's labour is exploited. And yet society is supposed to be progressing and technology so highly advanced. It is clear that all these advances are not aimed at creating better lives for most people, but at profit and well-being for a few.

In this context, I would like to mention a study that I, together with two other colleagues, have just completed, on the impact of development on coastal population dynamics and the environment. This is a study undertaken in three locations on the west coast of India. Although there is no space here to share all the complexities and findings of the study, some disturbing facts are worth highlighting.

One of the locations of the study was a coastal town (population: 158,000) that houses two major industries, the fishing industry and a chemical industry that produces rayon. Both these industries employ a large number of people, and the town buzzes with activity. The harbour there saw large fish landings in the 1980s and 1990s, and fish exports from there generated a great deal of foreign exchange for the country.

There is only one community (caste) that controls the fishery there, and their members are the owners of the trawlers, the dominant fishing craft. There are over 2,500 trawlers (32-45 feet long) in just one harbour. These boats have no modern equipment, not even a global positioning system (GPS). The boatowners themselves do not go to sea, and several of them are illiterate. The majority of the workers on the boats are migrants who come to the area for the nine-month trawling season. Throughout this period, they live on the boats, as their fishing trips are long, between nine to 11 days, with one day at the most in the harbour for offloading fish and loading ice and provisions, before they return for the next trip. While they get wages, they remain invisible workers who have absolutely no other rights.

As mentioned earlier, the fishery in this area was booming until about three years ago when overfishing

resulted in falling catch per unit effort. But what has been the impact? Some of the boatowners certainly did make money, constructed big houses and were able to educate their children, and some even moved into other businesses. But the life of the workers on board the trawlers is pitiable, and so is the life for women in the community.

The town receives water for a few hours, once in two days. It is the women's burden to fetch and store water. Some women have to walk one kilometre to fetch water, or pay for it. The city has absolutely no drainage system so all wastewater runs on the streets. There is no organized sewage disposal system either. Children use the open drains and the pigs act as scavengers. Most of the sewage flows into the canal and into the harbour.

It is also worth noting that as fishing has become more capital-intensive, the practice of dowry ('gifts' in cash or kind given by the girl's parents at the time of marriage) has become more common. The women become the medium through which capital transfers are made at the time of marriage. Parents of girls who cannot afford a dowry remain unmarried. The community sometimes arranges collective marriage ceremonies to cut down marriage costs. The female sex ratio in this town has also fallen: In 2001, there were only 953 females to 1000 males in the population and, worse still, only 913 females to 1000 males in

the 0-6 age group. Female foeticide has been reported from some parts of India. One wonders whether this is happening here too.

As surprising, in this otherwise prosperous town, there are still a large number of people who cannot afford to send their children to school. Around 26 per cent of children between 6 and 16 years do not attend school. Our study reveals that despite development improving gross incomes, it does not translate into a better life for people in the community at large and for women, in particular. The role of the State in providing basic infrastructure and social services is pitifully absent. Ironically, this State happens to be one of the most economically advanced in India. As women, we need to look more closely at the impact of present-day development on women, in particular, and begin to dream of another development paradigm that respects both life and livelihood.

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Europe/Norway

Women, men and fishing quotas

The professionalization of the coastal fishing fleet and the introduction of fish quotas have further marginalized women in the fishing industry of Norway

by Siri Gerrard of the Department of Planning and Community Studies, University of Tromsø, Norway

In most Western industrialized countries, fishing is considered a male profession; for, in most cases, both fishers and fishing boatowners are men. Yet, the existence and contributions of female fishers are not in doubt; feminist researchers, particularly, have documented women's fishing-related activities that ensure good harvest and the viability of fishing households in many communities. A continuing feature of these female activities is that they are mostly supportive of fishermen's activities, and remain unpaid, unregistered, unrecognized and invisible outside local communities. Unseen work is generally uncounted,



unrewarded and outside the realm of public planning and action; in Norway and other Nordic welfare countries, social rights and opportunities are connected exclusively to paid and statistically visible work. Thus, cases abound of mismatch between fisherwomen's work and their public welfare rights, such as sickness allowance, wages, and unemployment and pension benefits.

The introduction of the fishing quota system in 1990, following a nine-and-half month cod moratorium in the northern part of Norway, has had tremendous impact on the livelihoods of fisherfolk. In this article, I intend to focus on the gender dimension of this quota system.

Before addressing the relationship between gender and fishing quotas, it is perhaps important to begin with an outline of gender distribution in the Norwegian fishing industry. In 2004, while 281 women and 12,396 men were registered as full-time fishers, 114 women and 2,795 men were fishing on part-time basis. In 1990, there were 554 women and 19,921 men as full-time fishers, and 112 women and 6,931 men as part-time fishers. In a sense, while the number of full-time women fishers decreased by 50 per cent, there was stability in the population of part-time fishers. Full-time male fishers decreased by nearly 38 per cent in relation to an almost 60 per cent decrease in part-time male fishers. Several reasons could be adduced for these downward trends. But there seems to be a direct correlation between the quota system and the number of fishers; the women and/or men, who have left the fishing, were not replaced.

Since the quota system was introduced, the quantity of fish landed has varied from year to year. For 2006, the total allowable catch (TAC) of cod was 240,000 tonnes. Such TAC is shared among the coastal fleet and the ocean-going boats according to a fixed percentage, which is often challenged, especially by the coastal fishers.

Norway operates a system of non-transferable boat quotas. This means that quotas cannot be sold; fishing quotas follow the boat. Full-time fishers, who have been registered for a year or more, can buy a boat with a quota that belongs to a category referred to as

Group 1. Part-time fishers too can buy boats in Group 2. Since the available fish for the entire fleet in Group 2 is fixed, fishers are required to cease fishing when they exhaust their quotas, unless they live in the most fishery-dependent areas of Tromsø and Finnmark in northern Norway. In principle, the quantity of fish available to boats in Group 2 is less than in Group 1.

In 1990, when the quota system was introduced, boats in Group 1 had quotas for cod, haddock and saithe, the most valuable fish species in northern Norway. The length of fishing boats was also relevant in deciding the size of the quota. This model has since been changed; registered full-time fishers can now simultaneously buy and own several boats with quotas. They can also rent a quota or a boat with a quota, and rent out a quota or a boat with a quota. In both 2005 and 2006, boats smaller than 10 m in Group 1 were able to harvest more cod in relation to boats between 10 m and 15 m in size. The reason is that many boats in Group 1, smaller than 10 m, were scrapped. Quotas of such scrapped boats were then transferred to the remaining similar-sized boats in Group 1.

Since fishing quotas are related to boat ownership, gender is a relevant tool for comparison.

In 2005, throughout Norway, 161 women and 7,386 men were registered as owning boats smaller than 28 m, with an owner share of more than 49.99 per cent. In Group 1, women owned 11 of the registered boats, compared to 2,417 boats for men.

It is particularly interesting to compare the data trend with previous years. In 1994, 192 boats out of a total of 16,216 were registered in the name of women. Fifteen boats with quotas were registered in the name of full-time female fishers, compared to 3,382 for men, while 148 women and 3,774 men owned boats with quotas in Group 2.

Furthermore, from 1994 to 2005, there was an absolute decrease in boat-owning women and men in both Groups 1 and 2. In terms of percentage, however, the decrease in male owners was considerably higher. Also, the heavy gender imbalance in ownership of boats and quotas persisted. The right to fish, which, before 1990, was open to both women

and men, has now practically become men's preserve. These findings clearly indicate that women own and control a limited share of fishing quotas in Norway, a country that is otherwise considered a symbol of gender equality.

Many mutually reinforcing reasons possibly underlie these glaring gender imbalances. But I will propose only a couple of assumptions or hypotheses for further discussion or research:

- The price of boats increased when male fishers started buying boats with quotas, creating difficulties for both new male and female fishers.
- Lack of experience and capital poses problems for potential female fishers.
- The quota system has strengthened male dominance in fishing.
- Both gender neutrality and insensitivity in fishery policy have undermined women's ability to buy, own and register boats, and their general involvement in fishing.

In sum, women, who perform unpaid fishing-related tasks are hardly recognized and registered as fishers. There are also indications that the 'market', 'advanced technology' and male fishers have taken over most of women's practical tasks. This is particularly evident in cases where fishers have converted privately owned boats and quotas into private limited companies - a fairly recent ownership model for small-



scale fishing boats in northern Norway. Few of these limited-liability companies related to boats below 15 m in size, have women on their governing boards. In cases where women have fisher-husbands, they still continue as discussion partners, motivators and in other statistically invisible roles, which clearly represent work without any formal rights and benefits.

These tendencies show that professionalization of the coastal fishing fleet and the commodification of fishing rights through the quota system, have not benefited women. I agree thus with researchers who hold the view that the quota system reflects a hegemonic model, which is reminiscent of the "recent international neoliberal consensus". This model advocates a market-based restructuring of economic and environmental policies, as well as the medium of social communication and life. In countries where the quota system has been adopted, there have been serious consequences not only for female fishers and fishing-related women, but also for male fishers, whose numbers are showing a heavy decrease.

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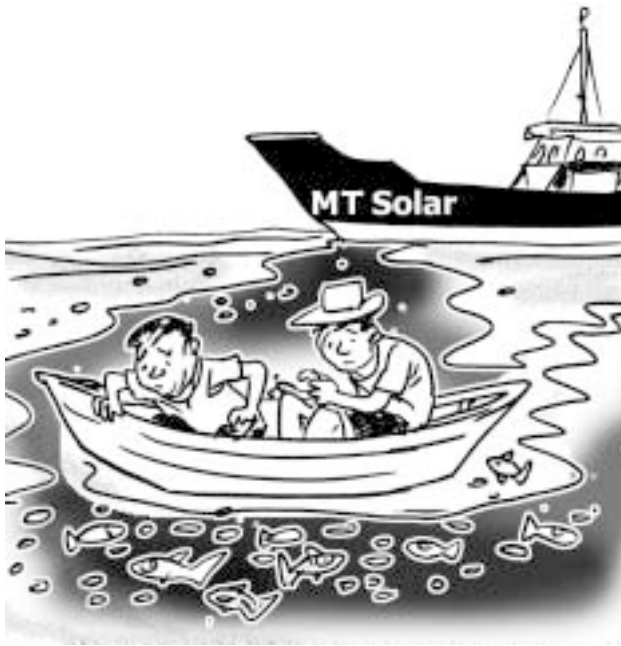
News/Philippines

Devastating oil spill

The oil spill from the ship of the Sunshine Maritime Development Corporation (SMDC), which sank on 11 August, south of Guimaras, as it was transporting more than 2 mn litres of bunker oil for the Petron Corporation, is devastating the livelihood of thousands of fisherfolk

This write-up is from the website of Kilusang Mangingisda, a coalition of five national fisherfolk federations in the Philippines (<http://www.fisherfolkmovement.org/>)

The oil spill that recently occurred off the coast of Guimaras will destroy and affect the livelihoods of some 8,000 fisherfolk living in the coastal fishing communities of Nueva Valencia, Jordan and



Buenavista and several islands off the coast of Guimaras Island, according to Kilusang Mangingisda chair, Ruperto Aleroza.

“It is with sadness and rage that we heard the news that an oil spill occurred in the Visayan region last week. No amount of dole-outs and financial contributions will make up for the devastation that the oil spill has wrought, and its effects will be felt in the loss of livelihoods and the displacement of thousands of fisherfolk living in the coastal communities,” he said.

The oil spill has also affected the other coastal towns of Villadolid, Bago City, Pontevedra and Hinigaran in Negros province, and will further threaten the coastal towns of Oton, Tigbauan, Guimbal, Leganes, Zarraga and Dumangas in Panay. Likewise, the spill could also affect the northern coastal towns of Enrique, Manapla and Victorias in Negros, and Barotac Nuevo and Banate in Panay because of the proximity of the spill to some of the richest mangrove areas in the Visayas.

The oil spill, the second to hit the country in a year, could cause massive pollution in violation of Republic Act No. 9275 or the Clean Water Act. The oil tanker chartered by Petron, *M/T Solar I*, was carrying 2.4 mn litres of oil when it sank off the coast of Guimaras.

Apart from the severe ecological damage, the spill could threaten the economy of Guimaras, which was once one of the poorest provinces in the Visayas. “Fishing is the major source of livelihood for the people of Guimaras, which was recently taken out of the list of the poorest provinces by the National Statistical Co-ordination Board (NSCB) because of the resurgence of its local economy and tourism. Now the province would go back to being a backwater region once again because of the damage wrought by the spill,” lamented Aleroza.

Data from the Bureau of Agricultural Statistics (BAS) cites Iloilo City as having the highest municipal marine production at 67,885 tonnes annually, followed by Negros Occidental province, with 35,260 tonnes, and Guimaras, with 3,266 tonnes in 2005. Fisher leaders from Kilusang Mangingisda fear the daily fish catch in municipal fishing will suffer a drastic drop in figures as the region braces itself for the ill effects that the oil spill has wrought.

Kilusang Mangingisda would send a team to Guimaras to conduct a study on the gravity of the damage as well as to get video footage, and talk with local partner fisherfolk organizations in the area. The group is also studying the possibility of filing damages against Petron for the economic and ecological destruction it has caused to the thousands of fisherfolk in Guimaras, once it concludes its fact-finding report.

“The rich biodiversity of the Visayan Strait was severely compromised by the laxity of laws by the national government and equally, by the wanton disregard of shipping regulations by huge corporations like Petron. The consequence is wholesale devastation of mangrove and marine resources. Surely the answer shouldn’t be the thousands of fisherfolk commissioned by Petron to clean up the spill in coastal communities. For a fisherfolk community, there is nothing more difficult than to leave their traditional fishing ground,” said Aleroza.

Added Aleroza: “Ultimately, the real losers in all of this will be the lowly fishermen struggling mightily to contain the spill. They work until sundown scooping up the gooey sludge that the vessel caused. They will go home with just enough money in hand to feed their families and survive the

day but not for long. No one addresses the long-term economic damage to the thousands of fisherfolk and their families living in coastal communities in the Visayas.”

ICSF News

Two new pages, likely to be of interest to Yemaya readers, have recently been put up on the ICSF website (<http://www.icsf.net>)

In early July this year, ICSF organized a workshop prior to its General Body Meeting, in Fortaleza, Brazil. About 60 participants from 18 countries of Latin America, Asia, Africa and Europe— ICSF Members, representatives of fishworker organizations (FWOs) and organizations working to support small-scale fisheries—participated in the workshop, titled “Emerging Concerns of Fishing Communities: Issues of Labour, Trade, Gender, Disaster Preparedness, Biodiversity and Responsible Fisheries”. The presentations made at the workshop and a summary report are available at <http://www.icsf.net/jsp/conference/GB2006>. The presentation by Cornelia Quist, a member of ICSF, on “Fisherwomen’s Movement in Europe: Achievements and Challenges”, would be of special interest to *Yemaya* readers. It is available at <http://www.icsf.net/jsp/conference/GB2006/prez/day3/cornelie.ppt>.

Another web page that has just been launched is on international legal instruments relevant to fisheries and fishing communities (<http://legal.icsf.net/icsflegal/home.jsp>). This provides detailed information for a wide range of instruments relevant to fisheries and fishworkers. It covers 124 legal instruments, categorized into the following seven themes: Human Rights, Food Security, Women and Development; Environment and Sustainable Development; Oceans and Fisheries Management; Environmental Pollution; Fishing Vessels and Safety at Sea; Labour; and Trade. Apart from providing the workings of the instruments, the relevance of each instrument to fisheries/small-scale fisheries/fishworkers is also provided. The information on this web page could be useful for fishworker and

other organizations in their struggle for an equitable and sustainable fishery. The accompanying Handbook on “International Legal Instruments Relevant to Fisheries and Fishing Communities” can be obtained from the ICSF Secretariat (icsf@icsf.net).

Publications

What do they call a fisherman?

This is the abstract from a recent book “What Do They Call a Fisherman?: Men, Gender, and Restructuring in the Newfoundland Fishery”, by Nicole Gerarda Power, 2005, St. John’s: ISER Press (http://www.ucc.mun.ca/~npower/recent_book.htm)

Newfoundland fisheries have been transformed from an industry once dominated by petty commodity production and merchant-fisher relations to one dominated by private enterprise and corporate capitalism. State efforts to enclose the fisheries through quotas and to limit participation through a core classification system demonstrate a shift in values. Science-based regulation, in which the estimates of fisheries scientists were overly optimistic, led to the collapse of the cod fishery. The recent turn to a fishery based on classical economics, emphasizing professionalization, has left inshore fishers caught between two value systems. The traditional view valorizes hard work and local knowledge about the fishing environment; the modern view embraces technology, rationalization, and professionalization.

In *What Do They Call a Fisherman?* Nicole Power examines through a feminist lens how this tension between two views - between a way of life and a way to make a living - and how these changes have affected men (and women) in the Bonavista and Trinity Bays inshore fishery. Has a ‘crisis of fish’ and the loss or diminution of livelihood led to a ‘crisis of masculinity’? Through extensive interviews with fishers and fish-plant workers, the author discovers that men have responded to restructuring in complex ways that are mediated, enabled, and constrained by their class and gender positions and by maritime cultural values and practices.

Publications



Global Symposium on Gender and Fisheries: Seventh Asian Fisheries Forum

The proceedings of the “Global Symposium on Gender and Fisheries” organized by the Seventh Asian Fisheries Forum are now available online at http://www.worldfishcenter.org/cms/list_article.aspx?catID=39&ddIID=350. The first chapter “*Changing Traditions: A Summary Report on the First Global Look at the Gender Dimensions of Fisheries*” by M.J. Williams, M.C. Nandeesh and P.S. Choo, provides an overview of the articles in the volume. They will be of interest to those engaging with gender and fisheries issues in Asia, and in other parts of the world, and can be downloaded as individual PDF files.

The article titled “*Women in Fish Border Trade: The Case of Fish Trade Between Cambodia and Thailand*”, by K. Kusakabe, P. Sereyvath, U. Suntornratana and N. Sriputinibondh, would, for example, interest those working on issues of women’s involvement in cross-border trade in West Africa. According to the abstract of the article, women engaged in fish trade between Cambodia and Thailand are considered informal traders and even smugglers. The study recommends that attention should be given to this category of traders, if regional trade is to benefit poor people living in the border areas. It challenges the notion that access to infrastructure, especially roads, will benefit border traders, and attempts to contribute to the missing link in the regional trade framework—the link between trade and natural resources management. There are several other interesting articles in this volume.

YEMAYA

ICSF’s Newsletter on Gender and Fisheries

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Printed at

Sri Venkatesa Printing House, Chennai

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.