

# SAMUDRA

A surreal illustration of a man in a small boat on a crescent moon against a dark blue background. The man is standing in a small, dark boat that is positioned on the inner curve of a large, light-colored crescent moon. The man is wearing a dark, form-fitting outfit and is looking towards the viewer with his right arm raised. The background is a deep, dark blue, suggesting a night sky or a vast, dark ocean. The overall mood is one of uncertainty and contemplation.

THE UNCERTAIN FUTURE OF THE EARTH

SAMUDRA - Report n° 5&6 - June 1992

Special Edition for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.



# SAMUDRA

Editorial .....	3
The difficult road to Rio .....	4
“Earth Summit”	
ICSF concerns and views .....	6
Fisheries and the environment.....	10
The Namibian fisheries experience.....	16
Organization, legislation and the rights of fishworkers in the Philippines .....	21
From slavery to citizenship .....	25
Women’s rights and fisheries development .....	30
On the islands of the south west Indian ocean .....	33
ICSF 1984-1992.....	36
Supporting the ICSF proposals.....	47
International Collective in Support of Fishworkers .....	52
World’s news .....	55

## ADDRESS

### All correspondence should be addressed to:

SAMUDRA Publications  
International Collective in  
Support of Fishworkers  
Liaison Office  
65,rue Grétry  
B-1000 Brussels, BELGIUM  
Fax: 32.2.2181538

SAMUDRA Publications  
c/o CEDIPAC  
Casilla 3776  
Valparaiso  
CHILE  
South America  
Fax: 56.32.232602

### Please let us know if you wish to receive our publications

SAMUDRA - Report  
SAMUDRA - Dossier  
SAMUDRA - Monograph

Please inform us your change of address  
Cover illustration: Young Bangladeshi woman.  
Homage to an afflicted people

Limited circulation

## REDACTION

### Editorial Board

Michael Belliveau - New Brunswick (Canada)  
Nenita Cura - Manila (Philippines)  
John Garbutt - Canberra (Australia)  
Pierre Gillet - Brussels (Belgium)  
Francisco Gutierrez - Bogotá (Columbia)  
John Kurien - Trivandrum (India)  
Héctor Luis Morales - Santiago (Chile)  
Aliou Sall - Dakar (Senegal)  
Amporn Sugandhavanij - Bangkok (Thailand)

### Editor

Héctor Luis Morales  
Coordination: Juan Pablo Morales  
Translation: Jorge Cambias  
Design, layout and typing: Ernesto Malbran,  
Juan Pablo Morales, Francisca De Iriarte  
and Veronica Vergara  
Printing: CRAN, Santiago, Chile. Phone: 56.2.6817816

## ...Our wet Planet

The United Nations has convoked an Earth Summit to determine the present state and future condition of the planet's environment, the basic living space for all of us. Innumerable actions have been undertaken to prepare for this conference by official agencies of the United Nations system, governments and civil society, especially non-governmental organizations representing all kinds of activities and tendencies.

The road to Rio '92 has been long and difficult. We still have no certitude about what will come of this conference, since participating countries have opposing interests and action is often blocked by diplomatic details incomprehensible for scientists, social leaders and citizens looking for clear decisions regarding problems of pollution, climatic changes, protection of species and agreements between countries to provide the financial means needed to launch global and pinpointed actions to defend an already seriously endangered environment.

The International Collective in Support of Fishworkers has done its bit for this process by gathering the concerns of fishermen and fishworkers around the world, expressed in conventions, seminars and campaigns over the last eight years, and summarized in the Charter of Basic Rights of the Fishworkers of the World, spelling out the rights to a clean environment for the preservation of resources and just social and human treatment on the part of authorities and society as a whole.

The international movement of fishermen and fishworkers has consolidated its bases. In many countries its organizations have achieved encouraging results. Efforts are slowly accumulating, and on coasts around the world new groups are rising up to continue the struggle for their legitimate rights to a clean, protected coastal area reserved for fishing and aquaculture, participation in decision-making bodies, the active participation of women in fishery activities and their organizations, access to resources and to the benefits of modernization, especially social and job security, technical and financial support, and respect for their customs and traditional systems for managing and protecting resources and the environment.

This double issue of SAMUDRA is a contribution to the Earth Summit, to inform government representatives and the general public about the efforts being made by fishworkers around the world to be recognized as persons, have their rights respected and be accepted as environmental workers, human beacons watching over seashores, rivers and lakes, protecting water to preserve life.

This contribution is made in the hope that the efforts of national and regional organizations lead to the creation of a representative international organization of fishworkers, capable of making its voice heard in international forums to support emerging groups in their efforts to conquer new professional, social and economic spaces, a task which the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers has made its own. □

Héctor-Luis Morales  
Editor-in-Chief

# THE DIFFICULT ROAD TO RIO

*Héctor Luis Morales*

The Rio de Janeiro conference has awakened great hope throughout the world. Its results could also lead to great frustration if government representatives fail to reach a practical agreement to solve the serious environmental problems facing our planet.

The preparatory meetings of the United Nations and the seminars, conferences and publications by governments, research centres, civil organizations and social movements have shown that the road to Rio is difficult, owing to the quantity and gravity of the political, environmental and economic problems that have been detected.

Even though environmental problems and their solutions can be detected and quantified, it is difficult to understand the rigidity of the governments of rich countries in blocking overall solutions proposed in international fora. Negotiations in those meetings do not follow the recommendations of scientists nor the agreements of the social groups affected. Instead, they satisfy the short-term economic interests of the rich countries.

Who will pay the debt for the environment? Who has caused the damage? The answers heard in meeting rooms and hallways hide the truth: the modern industrial development style, invented in the countries of the north and extended to the south, has polluted our planet and led to weather changes, the hole in the ozone layer, exhaustion of natural resources, impoverishment of millions of people and a political and social situation marked by wars between different countries and abhorrent social and economic inequalities.

Therefore, responsibility for paying the environmental debt should be shared and proportional for those who polluted more than others, in order to seek solutions that are more harmonious for peoples as well as for their relation to their environment, in a perspective of long-term sustainability. This is difficult in practice, due to the high cost involved and resistance to the changes that must take place in current production and consumption patterns. Responsibility for these changes should also be shared by the governments and civil society of the less developed countries. A tremendous contradiction has been revealed in the preparatory meetings for the Earth Summit, as this conference has come to be called. Humanity is fully aware of the risky situation which threatens to collapse its environment, yet it is prevented from moving

radically to solve the problem because of a lack of decision on the part of the industrialized countries unwilling to pay the bill for the damage they caused.

Fishermen live from the resources of the sea and different bodies of water. Coastal and marine areas are known to be vitally important both economically and ecologically for a large part of the population of the planet. These areas are subject to overexploitation and competition, due to short-term demands, especially from the rich countries, such as Europe, Japan and the United States, who normally do not produce enough fishery products and are willing to pay high prices in third world countries to obtain them.

The oceans and continental waters are being polluted from land-based sources such as urban, chemical, agricultural, pesticide and mining effluents, seriously endangering the survival of human beings and the species of those waters, and mainly their diversity. Certain ecosystems are in danger of being destroyed, which would mean the disappearance of species whose nutritional value and potential for medicine and industry are still unknown. Weather changes brought on by the emission of gases like methane, carbon dioxide or CFC can raise the level of the sea and provoke enormous catastrophes by flooding and the destruction of aquacultural areas, plankton and marine productivity.

These facts are known and have been sufficiently denounced by scientists, ecological associations and international agencies that deal with these issues. What we want to show in this article and this issue of SAMUDRA is the role that fishermen and their organizations have played in defending the environment and their rights as professionals, by making their concerns known to governments and opening up roads to request respect for their concerns and satisfaction for their demands.

During the meetings of the preparatory committee of the conference, ICSF presented different viewpoints that were accepted and incorporated in draft documents, eventually becoming a proposal that summarized these demands and that, if adopted, will serve as a platform for the struggles of national and regional organizations.

The proposed Plan of Action, called Agenda 21, contains a special chapter on the protection of the oceans and types of seas, including closed and semi-

fishing. To do so, they should:

- integrate the development of small-scale artisanal fishing into planning for marine and coastal areas, taking into account the interests of fishermen, workers in small-scale processing operations, women, local communities and indigenous populations, by encouraging representation, of these groups where possible, even ensuring that in negotiations and the implementation of international agreements the interests of local communities and indigenous populations are taken into account, especially their right to subsistence;

closed seas, coastal areas, and the protection and rational use and development of their living resources. Points C and D of that chapter present a series of statements that provide a basis for what ICSF has called the Charter of the Basic Rights of the Artisanal Fishermen and Fishworkers of the World.

- The state of the marine environment is generally recognized, especially with reference to the handling of living resources through uncontrolled fishing, overcapitalization, oversized fleets and the use of insufficiently selective fishing methods; also, the use of the sea as a dumping grounds for all kinds of land-based urban, industrial, agricultural and mining pollution.
- It is imperative that states commit themselves to conserve and use living resources in a sustainable manner, in order to meet the nutritional needs of human beings, maintain and restore populations of species, promote the creation and use of selective fishing methods, conserve endangered species and habitats and promote scientific research on these resources.
- States should also take into account in their production and managerial systems the traditional knowledge and interests of local communities, small-scale fishermen and autochthonous populations. They should also develop the potential of living marine resources by preparing inventories for their conservation and sustainable use.
- Special emphasis is placed on having coastal states support the sustainability of small-scale artisanal

- recognize the rights of those involved in small-scale fishing and the special situation of indigenous populations and local communities, including their rights to use and protect their habitat on a sustainable basis;

- establish systems to acquire and record traditional knowledge about living resources and the marine environment, and promote the incorporation of that knowledge into management systems.

- With regards aquaculture, it is recommended that the possibilities offered by marine and coastal areas under national jurisdiction be analysed; that adequate safeguards be applied in order to introduce new species, and that educational, financial and technical cooperation be developed to increase this activity together with small-scale fishing.
- A special recommendation is made about the need to recognize and protect marine ecosystems with high levels of biodiversity and productivity, especially corral reefs, estuaries, temperate and tropical wetlands, including mangroves, oyster and algae beds and other areas of reproduction and growth. A request is made to establish limits and define protected areas.

The Charter of the Rights of Fishermen summarizes the proposals of Agenda 21 in an easily understood fashion. Our hope is that they gradually become the ideas that inspire the struggles of organizations to recover their dignity and achieve the recognition that is due to fishworkers for their contribution to the survival of families and the environment in which we live.

# “EARTH SUMMIT”

## CONCERNS AND VIEWS OF THE ICSF

Sebastian Mathew

### Introduction

The first-ever “Earth Summit” -the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development (UNCED)- will be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil from 1-12 June 1992. It will be the largest meeting of heads of state to date. The primary goal of the Summit, according to Maurice F. Strong, Secretary General of UNCED, “will be to lay the foundation for a global partnership between developing and more industrialized countries, based on mutual need and common interests, to ensure the future of the planet”.

The Conference is meant to coincide with the twentieth anniversary of the United Nations Conference on Human Environment, held in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1972, where environment, for the first time, was placed on the world agenda. The summit in Brazil will try to ensure that the issue becomes central to policy-making and implementation in every sector of economic life.

Further more, according to Strong, the summit “will be the ultimate security alliance and a means of mobilizing the political will of the nations to take concrete actions to redress the environmental and related economic imbalances that threaten the future, and set the world community on a new and more hopeful course”.

The summit is expected to facilitate an international agreement on the crucial issues of environment and development and the mechanisms to provide solutions to these problems. A plan of action -Agenda 21- will be formulated at the summit. It will establish programmes, define targets and fix objectives as well as strategies and actions to meet them. Agenda 21 is also supposed to outline what humanity has to do to achieve those goals in the twenty-first century.

Seven areas have been identified to be of crucial importance. Two working Groups have already been formed to prepare documents for the preparatory committee of the summit. Working group 1 tackles atmosphere issues, biodiversity, land and agriculture, biotechnology and forestry. Working group 2 deals with the oceans, toxic chemicals and hazardous wastes. Also planned is a third working group to consider legal and institutional questions.

For the first time ever, NGOs and citizen groups have

been invited to contribute to the preparations for the summit. Although it is unclear at present whether NGOs will be allowed to participate in the actual 1992 Conference or not, a parallel conference-to be hosted by the Brazilian NGO Forum, a grouping of 450 members of independent sectors in Brazil-will facilitate the participation of NGOs. This Conference is expected to complement the summit.

Through the preparatory committee meeting of UNCED and parallel NGO conference, the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF) is planning to launch a campaign to build up awareness about the problems of fishworkers arising from depletions on the environment.

### Environment and development: a general discussion

Over twenty years ago, Evelyn Hutchinson, the celebrated limnologist, wrote in his seminal paper on the biosphere:

*“.. the length of the biosphere as an inhabitable region for organisms is to be measured in decades rather than in hundreds of millions of years- This is entirely the fault of our own species. It would seem not unlikely that we are approaching a crisis that is comparable to the one that occurred when free oxygen began to accumulate in the atmosphere”.*

The Biosphere,  
Scientific American, Sep. 1990

Almost a decade and a half after Hutchinson wrote this, the ozone hole over Antarctica was discovered. As James Gustave Speth of World Research Institute puts it:

*“The ozone hole over Antarctica was such a surprise that scientists at first missed it altogether. Satellites had collected all the raw data that would have demonstrated its existence during the 1970s, but their computers had been programmed to discount as error any reading that were far outside “normal” parameters. British scientists who eventually discovered the ozone hole in 1982 did not publish their discovery until 1985 because it was so incredible that they wanted to verify it first.”*

The Hindu Survey of the Environment 1991

This revelation about the ozone hole came in the midst



of growing concern over the accumulation of air pollutants and its impact on the earth's atmosphere, today better known as the "greenhouse effect". It is believed that the combined effect of ozone depletion and global warming from the "greenhouse effect" will cause devastating changes all over the world in the coming century. These would lead to problems of adverse temperature and rainfall, sea-level changes, damages to crops and marine ecosystems, increased incidence of skin cancer and cataracts and damage to the immune system. Since these trends have a forward momentum, which makes it difficult to turn around as and when one would wish, there is a growing consensus among scientists that it is imperative for nations everywhere to move in the right direction during the 1990s to avert disastrous consequences later.

"The fault of our own species' that Hutchinson refers to is the indiscriminate onslaught on our precious ecological capital. i.e., the environment -a process continuing unimpeded even today. These depredations in pursuit of development -a summary concept usually meant to indicate merely quantitative changes- have been seen to be the root cause of pollution and depletion. Moreover, these problems mainly arise when development activities cross nature's threshold of rejuvenation and replenishment.

Often, "human activity' is regarded as the cardinal reason for environmental degradation. But this generalization completely glosses over the structural factors and the manipulation of the development process by a few in search of enormous profits. When we talk about "human activity" it is important to put in the dock those few who command capital, technology and knowledge, for they are the principal offenders. This anonymous but powerful group, whose existence is tantamount to a global "club" or 'cartel", has also decisively hijacked the advancements in information technology. This permits them to even control and distort markets, often by confusing and manipulating consumers. The ultimate effect is a continuous transformation of the "wants of a few into the "needs' of the many. In the process, the ecological capital that we have inherited is heavily eroded.

However, the consequences of this are borne most often by the weaker sectors of society, and they will undoubtedly be borne by future generations as well. The most affected are the poorest and the marginal communities, who lack the means to influence the decision-making process or to improve their income levels.

The process of development as it pursued today threatens the very source of livelihood of the marginal communities. Many tribal groups, for instance, have been relegated to the status of development fugitives.

One of the consequences of such a callous development process is water pollution. Not surprisingly, most

affected are fishworkers who not only have to suffer the effects of this pollution, they are also victims of activities that displace them from their traditional fishing grounds.

## Why are fishworkers concerned?

Occupying the rim of the world and operating in coastal waters, fishworkers are interjected between the negative impact of land -and sea based activities. Therefore, the relationship between development and the environment is of particular concern to them. Already marginalized, they are arguably the most disadvantaged section -certainly in comparison with workers in other sectors of the economy. Thus, the concern they demonstrate for their principal source of livelihood -the sea- arises from a genuine fear for the fishery resources. Their very existence is jeopardized, particularly in developing countries.

Alarming discoveries about the health of the ocean - taken for granted till recently for its 'infinite" capacity to accommodate filth- have come at the right juncture. Coastal fishworkers in different parts of the world are already fighting destructive fishing practices, like indiscriminate trawling, gill-netting and purse-seining. These are undertaken by industrial capital in pursuit of mammoth profits, invariably at the cost of sustainability of the resource-base. Fishworkers both in the south and north are struggling to cope with decimation of traditional stocks, depletionary tendencies shown by many species and disruptions to their fishing activities as a result of changing prey-predator relationships. Furthermore, technology-induced causes have also dislocates fishermen from their traditional fishing grounds to unknown grounds. It takes time to develop an understanding of a new fishery.

In the fisheries sector, just as in agriculture and industry, technological advancements have been incorporated into inequitable economic structures. While this has led to enhanced exploitation of resources, it has also had the opposite effect of resource depletion and pollution in several parts of the world.

Environment and development in the marine context  
Broadly speaking, five activities are responsible for the deteriorating conditions of the sea and the fisherfolk who live off it. These are:

- indiscriminate use of the sea as a waste-disposal sink
- inadvertent drainage of toxic chemicals from land
- exploratory and extractive activity in the mountains, rivers and the seas
- coastal construction and reclamation
- military activities.

Most of the environmental problems faced by coastal fishworkers originate from land. Dumping of domestic waste into the coastal waters affects fishery resources, spawning areas and nursery grounds. The introduction of excess nutrients into the environment changes the marine food web. The decomposition of sewage decreases the availability of oxygen for finfish larvae. The introduction of viral and bacterial pathogens in untreated sewage could contaminate fish, particularly shellfish and result in the unmarketability of fishery products.

Similarly, run-off from the use of pesticides and herbicides in agriculture severely affects marine organisms. Over accumulation of nutrients in coastal areas can significantly change the composition of species and the abundance of important food organisms. Insecticides used for vector control can cause bioaccumulation in fish which would thus reduce its marketability.

Industrial waste disposal endangers fishery resources, spawning and nursery grounds. Among the detrimental activities that have a negative impact on the fishery resources are:

- dumping of toxic chemicals
- discharge of large amounts of organic wastes with high biological oxygen demand from agriculture-based industries
- transfer of waste heat from industrial structures
- introduction of radioactive wastes into the environment from nuclear plant facilities
- injection of organic chemicals into the environment which may have mutagenic effects on fishery resources
- release of petrochemicals which are among the most potent carcinogens

Coastal or near-shore constructions can destroy habitats as a result of dynamiting and excavating; land reclamation does the same thing.

Nuclear power plants also pose threats. Chlorine and other antifouling chemicals used in cooling operations of nuclear electric power plants can build up in estuarine areas. The build-up of such chemicals has been implicated in large fish kills in the United States. Release of heat from nuclear plants into the coastal marine environment can adversely affect the flora and fauna in warm tropical waters, since these species already live dangerously close to their upper limits of temperature tolerance, particularly during the summer. Defoliation of mangrove areas, practiced in the preparation of sites for aquaculture, and use of fertilizers, lime and pesticides in aquaculture areas negatively in-

fluence the coastal fisheries. Destruction of mangroves not only destroys coral reefs and causes heavy siltation in the near-shore waters, but also exposes vulnerable coastal communities to the fury of cyclones in the Pacific and the Indian ocean. The clearing and sifting in of mangrove areas constrict the supply of nutrients to nursery grounds, and also reduce habitat area.

Siltation resulting from mining, land clearance for agriculture, lumbering, urbanization and industrialization, and dredging of harbour channels and estuaries, decrease the productivity of water and depletes fishery resources. Turbidity of water from suspended silt dwindles fish catches.

Thus, for example, silt created by offshore tin mining has been implicated in declining fish catches near Phuket, Thailand. Similarly, pollution of the coastal waters as a result of heavy discharge of mud from the Rokan River owing to massive lumbering along its banks is a factor that precipitated violent conflicts between trawler and gill-net fishermen in Sumatra, Indonesia.

Extraction of coral for the manufacture of chalk, pigment and cement; use of coral debris for road construction, land reclamation, nuclear explosions and the practice of dynamite and cyanide-fishing have widely destroyed coral reefs, an important habitat for many species of fish. Additionally, coral reefs are also highly vulnerable to constant exposure to pollutants, particularly oil. India, Mauritius, Madagascar, Seychelles, the Philippines, etc., provide enough examples of coral reef destruction.

Military activities also contribute to pollution and deny access to fishing grounds. For example, Ciguatera fish poisoning, largely related to military activities that disturb coral reef ecology, is widespread in the South Pacific, particularly in Micronesia and Polynesia, the centre of American and French nuclear tests since 1946.

The South Pacific islands are also affected by sizeable leakage of radionuclides, from either nuclear tests or the destruction of waste disposal areas by natural calamities. Similarly, rocket firing and gunnery practice ranges, mine laying and other naval exercises interfere with the freedom of access of fisherman to particular grounds, as in the United Kingdom and India.

Permanent rigs and oil and gas exploration/exploitation activities also block access to fishing grounds. Approximately 47 km<sup>2</sup> of fishing grounds have been lost in the vicinity of pipelines and suspended wellheads in the North Atlantic. Oil installations also constitute hazards for fishing vessels, and oil spills have tainted fish catches, making it unmarketable, for example, in Texas and the Mediterranean coasts.



## Fishworkers' right to livelihood

The above discussion gives some idea about the kind of activities that pose a threat to the marine environment and the fishworkers dependent on them. As mentioned, coastal fishworkers are one of the most disadvantaged sectors of the international labour-force. What is at stake is their livelihood, crucially dependent on the quality of the marine environment. Damage to the marine ecosystem as a result of ozone depletion, for example, will have immense consequence on the primary productivity of the sea, which in turn will affect fisheries at a global level.

For many other sectors of society, the degradations of the environment in the immediate future may result only in a reduction of their range of choice of commodities, but in the case of fish-workers, the loss of oceanic resilience will threaten their very right to a livelihood. This has longterm intergenerational consequences. So far, fortunately, we have not yet crossed the instability threshold and -who knows?- there could be other nasty surprises in store for the future like the surprise ozone hole at the South Pole. This may eventually take us to the calamitous situation forewarned by Hutchinson: "The length of life of the biosphere as an inhabitable region for organisms is to be measured in decades rather than hundreds of millions of years".

## Do we have options?

To prevent further exacerbation of the reciprocal relationship between environment and development it is imperative that a global consensus should emerge. Fishworkers are not unaware of the fact that all development activities in general have an inherent tendency to deplete and pollute. At the same time, nature's capacity to replenish and rejuvenate is limited. Only when the extent of depletion and pollution crosses the instability threshold of nature -its capacity to replenish and rejuvenate- does development become a problematic issue. If a symbiotic balance can be struck between environment and development, harmony can be restored. This, as far as we are concerned, is what sustainable development is all about.

The coastal fishworkers -"beacons of the sea" as a Chilean fisherman proudly characterized them-have already been emitting signals. It is as important to acknowledge these danger signals as it is to ensure that fishworkers are an effective party to any resolution on development processes that may have a bearing on the marine environment.

Legal institutions should legislate and formalize fishworkers' right to participate in decision-making processes and their right to advise on matters of concern and relevance to them. Already, in the oil and gas exploration/exploitation activities in the North Atlantic, fishermen are party to the decision-making process and enjoy a legally formalized right to advise on routing of pipelines. The UK Petroleum and Submarine Pipelines Act of 1975 is a good example. Similarly, in Norway, fishermen's organizations have been involved in planning oil-related activities such as decisions on the choice of areas for drilling, its extent, designation of supply boat routes, etc. In addition, the Norwegian Ministry of Petroleum and Energy also holds regular consultations with fishermen's organizations on all matters of mutual interest. These are isolated examples, confined to the oil related activities. A dialogue, more general in nature and coverage, has to emerge.

Clearly, we do have options and these must be explored. For, in the final analysis, the survival of fishworkers as well as their right to livelihood and a clean environment, is imperative for the survival of humanity. Irreparable damage to the oceans will eventually destroy terrestrial life. As Rachel Carson wrote in her preface to the revised edition of her pioneering work, The Sea Around Us:

*"It is a curious situation that the sea, from which life first arose, should now be threatened by the activities of one form of that life. But the sea, though changed in a sinister way, will continue to exist; the threat is rather to life itself." □*

# FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Francisco Gutierrez

## Introduction

Fishing is a dangerous and unstable way to earn a living. It has a higher accident rate than any other civilian job and depends on irregular variables, prices and changes in the world's climate that are becoming harder and harder to predict.

Pollution and the weather changes predicted for the year 2025 (a rise of 1.560 in the temperature of the ocean surface and an increase of 20 cm in level of the sea) are endangering the planet. The delicate makeup of the oceans is very sensitive and will be one of the first to suffer permanent and irreversible damage. Weather changes and pollution will do devastating harm to the fishing industry and its communities.

The first signs of these changes have already appeared. Estimates of maximum sustainable yields (MSY) have been rapidly declining, and reductions in fishing quotas have affected fish-workers over the last five years. Fishery stocks are declining and abnormal shifts in the seasons and location of many species have taken place in many areas. The reductions that have been produced show that there are other variables that diminish stocks and interfere in reproductive cycles. These have not been introduced into statistical models for analysing populations. However, one thing sure is that we are paying the price for imprudent environmental behaviour. If we do not take measures now, the future of the fishing industry and fishermen will be bleak indeed.

## Pollution

Thirty years ago, pollution was taken as a bother that had to be tolerated, the inevitable consequence of urban life and even a symbol of prosperity. With the development of technology and research, it has been demonstrated that its effects involve much more than aesthetic unpleasanties. Pollution has serious consequences for human health and the quality of ecosystems.

For an idea of the magnitude of environmental problems in relation to the real possibility of solving them, we have only to recall that according to data from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) of the United States and the World Health Organization (WHO), in 1991 there were approximately 80000 chemical substances used every day throughout the world. No more than 3000 of them have been carefully studied. Once they are released, they undergo transformations which multiply their number.

Nature has ways of purifying itself, but these are limited and can be overwhelmed. In that happens, irreversible changes take place in the environment, causing sickness, death of species and destabilization of ecosystems.

When tens of thousands of tons of industrial wastes are thrown every day into rivers and the sea, when cities are covered with heavy layers of pollution, when forests begin to disappear because of irrational lumbering, when insects begin to change habits and become resistant, when new plagues appear because of unsuitable use of agricultural chemicals, when land becomes exhausted, sterile or begins to turn to desert, when eating seafood becomes dangerous and strong sanitary controls are needed, then the time has arrived to urgently review the principles governing the way humankind relates to nature.

The industrialized countries produce enormous quantities of hazardous waste, turning the oceans into a potential dump. Moreover, they seek to use the sea floor of third world countries as a dump, in return for foreign currencies to pay their external debt. They want to eventually move their contaminating industries there, arguing that labour costs are too high at home and that such a move generates employment in the third world. The oceans have been treated as a "free resource" to dump any kind of waste.

The composition of waste disposed of throughout the world varies from one area to another, but it all ends up moving, mixing with others and spreading its effects. Every kind of waste has several elements and compounds, some poisonous, others harmless, and some eventually become dangerous when they accumulate. These latter can be highly dangerous especially when they combine with other elements or compounds. There is very little knowledge about these combinations.

## South-east Pacific

The south-east Pacific region extends approximately 10500 km<sup>2</sup>, from 90 LN in Panama to 570 LS at the southern tip of Chile, and includes five coastal states: Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Panama and Peru. The continental area covers 3520842 km<sup>2</sup> and the sea area 5145000 km<sup>2</sup> (Gallardo, 1984). There are many population centres throughout the region. The five countries have some 74 million inhabitants. By the year 2000, the population is estimated to reach 104 million, with an annual growth rate of 2.4%.

The United Nations Regional Seas Programme, through the Permanent Commission of the South Pacific, and the Plan of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment and Coastal Areas of the South Pacific have gathered basic information on the regional distribution, dispersion and dilution of petroleum hydrocarbons, the occurrence of tar on coastlines, contents of heavy metals in the water, marine sediments and organisms and an inventory of sources of pollution.

On the basis of information available in 1989, three diagnostic analyses were done: for contamination by heavy metals, bacteria and eutrophication (Gutierrez, 1989); petroleum hydrocarbons (Ramorino, 1989), and land-based sources of pollution (Cabrera, 1989) which show the state of the environment for its multitude of users and/ or resident organisms. Studies have also been done on climatic changes and their effects on land-based coastal ecosystems (forests, grasslands, hydrographic basins), marine ecosystems (coral reefs, mangroves, pelagic coasts, benthos, estuaries), and on the fisheries of the region (PCSP, 1990). These studies took as a reference the changes produced by the "Nino" current, which gave a short-term view of the size of the problem.

With these elements, the present and future situation available to fishworkers in the south-east Pacific can be seen, if the current complacency about the pollution that is already affecting us continues unabated. After 1813 tests on pesticides, it has been found in water the presence of eight compounds. For 1474 analyses, the same eight pesticides were reported in water, with the exception of two. Studies on organisms based on 489 analyses in 28 species of fish, 9 crustaceans and 3 mollusks revealed 14 pesticides.

Eutrophication pollution in the coastal areas of the five countries is serious. It is caused by effluents from homes, industries and rivers. Bacteriologically, the sanitary state of the water is bad. There are threats of intestinal diseases such as cholera. The beaches of the region are not suitable for use, due to the presence of salmonella.

Records of pesticides found in the water show serious contamination in some areas. Pollution in sediments is moderate. For organisms, pollution is moderate in Chile and Peru and heavy in Panama. Heavy metal contamination of water for the region as a whole is worst in cadmium, moderate in chrome and, zinc, and serious for copper, iron and mercury. In sediments only mercury presents problems of serious contamination. Finally, for organisms, with some exceptions, only moderate contamination is found.

## The "Niño" 1982-1983

The "Nino" current in the south-east Pacific provides us with an example of what global weather changes

can do to ecosystems. Records of the "Nino" exist since 1541. Archeological records of the phenomenon date from 500 and 1100 A.D., and recent geological studies done in Ica, Peru show that similar occurrences took place up to 18 million years ago. This was shown by the existence of a round stone bank in a sequence of diatoms from that age.

The Nino is detected by the invasion of warm, less salty water, changes in the characteristics of coastal waters, and climatic phenomena like rains, storms, variations in fog, etc. On land, the effects are landslides, run-offs into streams and rivers, erosion of river and stream beds, floods, droughts and the growth of vegetation in coastal deserts. Fish and sea birds die, ecological disasters take place, species disappear and others develop rapidly (Teves, 1990). In general, the socioeconomic effects, especially in Ecuador, Peru and Chile, have been disastrous.

This is a large-scale ocean phenomenon of the interaction between the ocean and the atmosphere. The equatorial sea responds to fluctuations in atmospheric pressure and wind patterns. Equatorial winds die and those in the central Pacific suddenly rise. This produces effects in Kelvin waves that move south down the coast of Ecuador, reaching the Chilean coast in two to three months. Kelvin waves have a double effect: eastward circulation is intensified and the thermocline is driven deeper (with maximum vertical degrees of temperature). Both effects tend to warm the surface waters of the ocean; the first by convection of western waters and the second by preventing deeper and colder water from rising to the surface, producing higher water levels along the coast.

In 1983, the abnormal warming of the South American coast was related to two different water sources: north (150N), warm surface water and low salinity, associated with the tropical waters of Panama, and South (150S), warm surface water with high salinity, associated with the advection of 'subtropical waters along the coasts (Erfen, 1984). As a result of this abnormal invasion of warm water, the surface temperature rises above normal throughout the region. The warm waters along the Peruvian coast were over 10°C above normal. The waters along the coasts of Chile and Ecuador rose 5°C above normal (Lagos, 1984; Cucalon, 1987).

The arrival of Kelvin waves to the eastern shore of the equatorial Pacific and their subsequent dissemination to the pole and along the American coast was seen in the strong deepening of the subsurface thermic structure throughout the region. As a result of these movements, the waters in Ecuador and the north of Peru had their thermocline four times deeper than usual. All the surface isotherms were above 12°C. Consequently, large subsurface thermic abnormalities were recorded, above 9°C at 50 m of depth (Lagos, 1984, op. cit; Cucalon, 1986).

Sea level variations also reflected the vertical movements of the thermocline. In 1983, sea levels rose off the coasts of Ecuador and Peru by 30 cm to 40 cm, surpassing normal ranges. Surface temperatures rose at the level of the thermocline. To a lesser extent, sea level and the surface temperature in the eastern equatorial Pacific rose substantially. Thus the flow of heat from the ocean to the atmosphere intensified convective processes in the atmosphere, with abnormal rainfall in the south-east Pacific region.

The whole South American coast was seriously affected by torrential rains associated with an abnormal displacement of the zone of inter-tropical convergence of winds towards the south. This was a characteristic common to all the events produced by the "Nino". On the Pacific coast of Colombia, rainfall in 1983 was twice the normal rate, 40 times the in Ecuador, and 340 times in Peru (Jordan, 1984; Cucalon, 1987). Rivers rose, causing flooding that displaced earth, deepened shallow seabeds and modified terrain. Torrential rains and floods affected agriculture, dwellings, public health, school buildings, transport industry and caused the loss of human life.

Rises in the surface temperature of the ocean in the central and eastern Pacific contributed to the formation of hurricanes in places like Tahiti and Hawaii. Large tornadoes were also produced in the north-east.

These phenomena caused drastic changes in the morphology of South America. The joint action of higher sea levels and the destruction caused by large waves caused coastlines to recede, widespread flooding, erosion along the coasts, destruction of shrimp farms, mollusk beds and coastal infrastructure, and the disappearance of some fishing communities.

The economies of the countries of the region depend heavily on agriculture and fishing. Thus more knowledge about the climatic, ecological, and economic implications of the "Nino" would provide valuable guidelines for medium- and long-term economic planning for future weather changes.

Changes in the circulation of ocean and coastal currents were evident. Associated with the abrupt changes in sea level and tides that repeatedly assailed the coasts of South America, coastal currents behaved erratically. The cold waters of the Humboldt current were forced to the south. The current from the Bay of Panama was significantly intensified in the latitudes south of 15°S. (Lagos, 1984). The system of equatorial currents and the northern counter-equatorial current intensified notably; the southern equatorial current underwent reversions (Hanser, 1984).

All this contributed to the accumulation of warm water on the coast of South America and the appearance of certain species of fish in unusual areas. For example,

on the coast of Peru and the north of Chile, tropical species appeared massively. Also, deep-water species were drawn into coastal waters. Changes in the marine environment, particularly the depression in the subsurface thermic structure, brought on alterations in the distribution and behaviour of the more important pelagic species. In this regard, vertical and horizontal migrations were reported (Jimenez and Herdson, 1984). Fishing-fleet landings, particularly in Ecuador and Peru, were drastically reduced, to the point of totally paralyzing operations. The fishery sectors of Ecuador and Peru lost over US\$ 200 million (Jordan, 1985, op.cit.).

## Its impacts

Each occurrence of the Nino since 1958 has had different effects. In 1957-1958, the distribution and harvest of anchoveta were affected. In 1972-1973, the consequences were greater and longer, since the anchoveta population was drastically reduced (IMARPE, 1985 and 1987).

The lowest landing in Peru since 1959 was the one recorded in 1983 with 1 537019 metric tons. Landings in the whole region normally run between 6 to 8 million tons per year. The fishing industry lost US\$ 100 million in 1983.

The most important pelagic species are anchoveta (*Engraulis ringens*), sardine (*Sardinops sagax*), horse mackerel (*Trachurus murphy*) and mackerel (*Scomber japonicus*). Harvests of these species totaled 1 404700 tons (93.5% of the catch of all species). The resource was affected by the "Nino in 1982-1983.

Processing of these species, begun in 1950, has been the backbone of the fishing industry. But anchoveta's stocks were greatly affected by the "Nino" in 1972-1973 and 1982-1983 causing the industry to collapse in 1983, when the sardine replaced the anchoveta as the main harvest. In 1982-1983, the anchoveta population was reduced and migrated at depths below 100 metres. The population became erratic and uncertain, and spawning was affected. Larvae experienced a high rate of mortality, which showed itself in 1984 when the harvest was only 23000 tons.

Between 1950 and 1972 sardine landings were small. The situation changed radically in 1973. During the unusual oceanographic conditions of 1983, the sardine migrated north to south, seeking the current of Peru and the north of Chile, and paralyzing the processors.

The horse mackerel and mackerel showed a huge biomass with the "Nino". Horse mackerel concentrated in the south and mackerel in the north. But the situation changed when they migrated to deeper waters. Traditional boats depended on these fishes, 40000 people were affected. Mackerel broadened their range of distribution and were caught in unusual areas.

Harvests of the main demersal species —chilean hake (*Mer/uccious gayi*), yellowfin croaker (*Paralonchorus*), flukes (*Paralichthys*), sharks (*Mustelus*), lorna (*Saena deliciosa*) and false flying fish (*Prionotus stephano phrys*)— surpassed 100000 tons in 1973. In 1978, 300000 tons were landed. It is estimated that the “Nino” in 1972-1973 contributed in a positive way to the increase in harvests.

Artisanal coastal fishing depends basically on species associated with coastal areas. The most important are: cabinsa (*Isacia conceptions*), yellowtails (*Seriolella violacea*), mullets (*Mugil cephalus*), lorna (*Saena deliciosa*), herring (*Ethmidium maculatus*), silverside (*Odonthes regia*), and pintadilla (*Cheilodactylus*).

The figures show that harvests are stable, increasing from 38000 tons in 1970.

The figures show that harvests are stable, increasing from 38000 tons in 1970. Harvests of lisa were 16000 tons; in 1982 the total capture was 70000 tons. This group was replaced by tropical species such as dolphinfish (*Coryphaena*), sawfish (*Scomberomeres*), skate (*Myliobatis*), and others. Argentines were practically exhausted, affecting artisanal fishing.

Captures over the last 15 years of crustaceans species fluctuated between 1000 and 2000 tons. They increased to 10000 tons in 1983, as a result of the unusual appearance of titi shrimp (*Xiphopenaeus riveti*). These have natural ecological niches in the north, but they moved south to the northern coast of Chile. Harvests of this shrimp increased by 60% (6000 tons), due to the high temperatures. The warmer waters also favoured the appearance of a species of crab (*Euphyllax robustus*), which caused damage to artisanal fisheries.

The mollusk group is comprised by species such as razor clams (*Mesodesma*), clams (*Semele gari*), mussels (*Aulacomia*), abalone (*Concholepas concholepas*) that suffered drastic mortality rates, even though total harvests were not greatly changed. The concha de abanico (*Argopecten purpuratus*) did attain high levels of reproduction, as seen in an increase in landings from 1 000 tons to 10000 tons in 1983. Weather changes could cause mobile shellfish to migrate to temperatures more favourable to their life cycles (hypothesis of gradual change).

The massive elimination of macrocystis favoured green, brown and red algae- Since 1972, harvests have run between 100 and 300 tons. Algae and mobile organisms have the alternative of adapting to new oceanographic conditions. Spores and/or larvae probably find more favourable areas.

Guanos are birds closely linked to the anchoveta. Three species are found: guanay (*Phalacrocorax*

*bouganvillei*), piquero (*Sula variegata*) y pelicans (*Pelecanus occidentalis*), which have high mortality rates. In 1982 and 1983 their reproductive cycles were upset. The population was reduced to 300 000 in 1983, due to the loss of the anchoveta, their basic food source.

The mammals species as chusco (*Otaria*), and fino (*Arctocephalus*) species suffered high mortality rates due to a lack of food for adults. Therefore, they rejected their own young. The Brydae whale was absent from the northern area, which is its normal habitat.

The positive abnormalities of the 1982-1983 Nino (2 to 4.5 °C) introduced substantial changes into the migratory patterns of economically important species (mollusks, crustaceans, et al.). Anchoveta was not harvested and disappeared. Specimen that were studied showed changes in their physiological conditions and low fat content. Harvests dropped from 325145 tons in 1981 to 7696 tons in 1983. The same happened to horse mackerel and mackerel.

## Conclusion

The panorama of pollution described here and the effects of the “Nino” as a parameter of what could happen on a large scale with foreseeable weather changes point to the need for environmental policies governing the extraction of resources that are clear and coherent with regional needs. This means forgetting about the macro concepts into which many of our countries fell when they became net exporters of fish-meal. From the total catch for Latin America and the Caribbean (97.5% to maritime fishing and 2.5% to continental fishing) 75% goes to the production of fish-meal and oils, 18.75% to exports and only 6.25% is used as a food source for the region. This is a serious situation, given that today more than 70 million people in Latin America and the Caribbean are malnourished or simply die of hunger.

When allowable limits are set for hydrocarbon-based pesticides, heavy metals, sewage, etc., the senseless practice is followed of dumping gradually to stay within those limits, but without taking into consideration the accumulative effect. In a short time, we could be without fauna. Also accumulations of mercury and other metals can become directly incorporated in cell structures. The operative concept should not be a limit, but rather human health and the conservation of ecosystems. We do not live in a clean environment in the south-east Pacific. We have little consciousness of environmental quality, and little is done politically and legally to preserve the environment. The expected climatic changes, over which scientific experiments have been performed (by Canada’s Pacific biological station), will severely affect fishing areas, and the “Nino” confirms that in practice.

Skeptics perhaps suspect that the effects of the rise in temperature around the world could be limited to move-

ments of stocks of species in the oceans, benefitting the reserves of some countries to the detriment of others. According to Russek (1990), nobody benefits from global warming. It is impossible to predict the consequences of overall changes that a warming of the seas will provoke in the flow of organic matter and energy. Poland's Institute of Maritime Fisheries determined that fish stocks will diminish throughout the world, except at the poles. As Russek shows (1990, op.cit.), scientists have concentrated their efforts on the repercussions of the greenhouse effect on land. It is urgent that scientists and government agencies that deal with the oceans and fisheries carry out investigations to determine the impact of that threat.

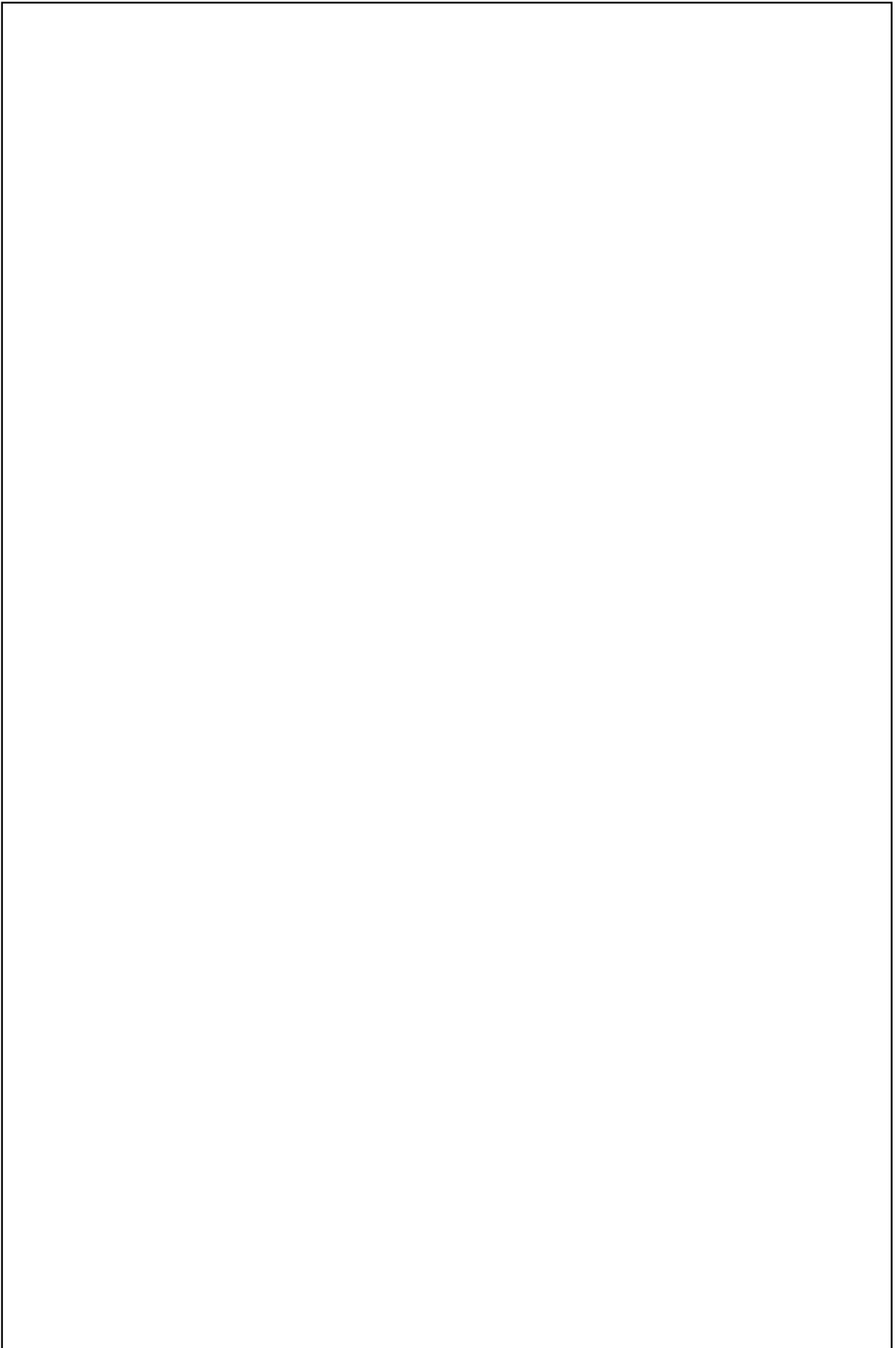
Fishworkers, their trade unions and organizations have an important function to fulfill with respect to disseminating information about the environmental threat to the oceans, not only because there is a risk for many communities and jobs, but also because it is the largest renewable resource on earth. The solution and the task should be clear: strict environmental controls have to be established in order to prevent the seas from being

poisoned. The production of greenhouse gases has to be reduced. Fishworkers, trade unions and organizations have to join their voices to the growing worldwide campaign to achieve these objectives. The threat to the oceans is the same that threatens the whole planet.

The United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development is approaching. Already banners are being raised in defence of a development now called sustainable. We need a strong and precise declaration in which worldwide, regional and individual obligations are clearly stated, to make this planet what it once was. Nature is giving clearer and clearer signs that it is being misused: temperature rises, reduction of the ozone layer, greenhouse effect, floods, droughts, reduction of agricultural land and fishery resources, recurrent and new diseases.

The only thing left to us to do with regards the relation between humankind and the planet is to reason well and on time, or our blindness will lead to even worse consequences. We already have enough evidence of what our irrational behaviour is leading to.





# THE NAMIBIAN FISHERIES EXPERIENCE

*Paul Goodisan*

## **A unique environment**

As a consequence of the upwelling of the nutrient rich Benguela current the fishing grounds off the coast of Namibia were once the most productive in the world. Fishing activities off the coast of Namibia have always been organized into two quite separate in-shore and off-shore industries. In shore pilchard and anchovy dominate, whilst off shore hake and Horse Mackerel dominate. A highly integrated fish processing industry based on the in-shore pilchard has been built up at Walvis Bay, whilst off-shore long distance foreign fleets with few links to Walvis Bay have dominated the fishery.

Rock Lobster off the southern coast near Luderitz was however the first fish resource to be commercially developed in the 1920's. It was not until the late 1940's with improved refrigerated transport that the lobster canning industry really took off. Sadly, as was to be repeated with other fish resources in Namibia, intensification of the exploitation of the lobster stock soon gave way to over-exploitation and within 25 years stocks had been severely depleted and a mere 20% of peak levels of catches were the norm.

This experience of over exploitation in all major fish stocks has an important bearing on the current attitude of the Namibian Government towards fisheries management.

## **The in-shore fishery**

In the early years of the development of the pelagic fish industry in Namibia (1949-59), conservation minded local fisheries officials carefully regulated the exploitation of the available stocks. However, corporate pressure from the South African industry coupled with South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia led to the abandonment of these careful management policies from the beginning of the 1960's. The 1960's saw a huge expansion of the fish processing capacity installed and pilchard quota's granted. From 1965 the on-shore processing capacity was supplemented by the deployment of South African factory ships, outside of the 22 Km jurisdiction of the local Namibian fisheries administration. This occurred despite serious warnings of impending stock depletion by the local fisheries administration. The intensified fishing effort proved disastrous. In 1968 a staggering 1387000 tonnes of pilchard were swept from the oceans off the coast of Namibia, slaugh-

tering in one year between 30% and 50% of the pilchard biomass. This over exploitation of the pilchard stock was compounded by the assumption of direct control of the fisheries administration by the South African Government. This was to ensure that the plunder of the pilchard stock continued until the decline in stock levels was terminal. The decline of the pilchard stock, led to an intensification of the anchovy fishing effort. This rapidly resulted in the decline of the Anchovy biomass from 750000 tonnes in the 1960's to between 40000 and 150000 tonnes in the early 1980's (after which some recovery apparently took place).

The decline of the Pilchard fishery had a devastating impact on the local economy. In 1975 with some 10.8 million cartons of canned fish being produced, processed fish accounted for 10% of Namibia's GDP and 15% of exports. It was furthermore the second largest industrial employer after mineral processing, with some 850 people employed on the boats, some 7500 employed in the fish processing industry itself and a further, 750 employed in associated activities, a total of over 9000 employees. By the time of Namibian independence only some 5700 people were obtaining employment from fishing, fish processing and related activities. Namibianization had resulted in an expansion of employment arising from fishing activities per se, with some 1200 jobs now being undertaken by Namibians. On the processing side however a dramatic reduction of employment occurred (despite a remarkable improvement in the utilization of available fish landed, with 80% of pilchards now finding their way to the cannery), with only some 3250 workers being employed in canning and reduction, of whom fully 2450 or 75% were seasonal labourers, who had employment for only some 2 to 3 months per year.

The crisis in the in-shore fishing industry arising from over-fishing has thus made itself sorely felt on the under-developed areas of Ovamboland which remain dependent on labour remittances from migrant labourers who can now only obtain a small proportion of the employment they previously enjoyed.

The principle cause of this decline in the in-shore fishery was seen to be a lack of national control over the fishing effort. This perception has ensured that in the context of a newly and hard won independence, the Namibian Government fiercely guards its sovereignty in setting the terms and conditions under which fishing activities can take place in its EEZ.

The sensitivity of the Namibian Government on the sovereignty question in the fisheries sector has not been fully appreciated by the Commission of the European Community in its handling of negotiations for a fisheries agreement. This sensitivity is heightened by the shortage of experienced and skilled fisheries administrators in Namibia. For while the Namibian Government may have clear ideas of what it would like to see happening in the fisheries sector, its capacity to bring this situation about is extremely limited at the present time.

Here again the Commission of the European Community has not always displayed sensitivity in its appreciation of the Namibian Government's limitations.

Finally, the Commission has demonstrated a singular insensitivity towards the history of exploitation of Namibia's off-shore fish stocks, where the Spanish fishing fleet (alongside East European fishing fleets) bears a heavy responsibility for the depletion of the all important Hake fishery.

## **The hake fishery**

In value terms deep-sea trawling has always been far more significant than the inshore pelagic fish industry. This was the case even at the peak of the inshore fisheries productivity, when the offshore white fish, when processed accounted for twice the value of the inshore pelagic industry. However, the offshore industry, exploited as it was by long distance foreign fleets, brought little benefit to Namibia

Yet despite the value of the fish caught in Namibia's EEZ to date, the deep sea fishing industry off the coast of Namibia has brought little or no economic benefits to Namibia, for the deep-sea fishery has been almost exclusively exploited by long-distance foreign fleets. Early Namibian efforts to develop a white fish trawler fleet in the 1920's were frustrated by the distance from major markets. From 1984 foreign interest in Namibia's off-shore fishing grounds grew rapidly, with the advent of large long distance freezer trawlers. In 1964 a mere 47 600 tones of Hake were caught by foreign vessels in Namibian waters by 1968 this had risen to a staggering 629 100 tones.

The importance of the fishing grounds off the Namibian coast led in 1969 to the establishment of the International Commission for Southeast Atlantic Fisheries (ICSEAF). This FAO initiative brought together those fishing nations who were involved in exploiting the fish resources off the coast of Namibia with a view to: providing a forum for the pooling of scientific research; agreeing on regulatory measures and organizing backup administrative monitoring and information services. Whilst ICSEAF was modeled on similar fishery conventions for the North Atlantic it was from the start no ordinary fishery convention. Its focus rather than being regional was almost exclusively Namibian and yet, since South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia

was not recognized internationally, the interests of the coastal state rather than dominating the activities of the Convention were only marginally and indirectly represented through South Africa, which was but one of ICSEAF's 17 members.

Despite the regulatory measures it sought to introduce which at various times included: catch quota's, minimum mesh size regulations, limits on the hake by catch, closed zones and a system of inspection, ICSEAF was to oversee a massive plunder of Namibia's Hake fishery and its serious depletion. All in all in the 20 years between the establishment of ICSEAF and its dissolution in 1990 over 8 585 000 tones of Hake were swept out of Namibia's waters, leaving the Hake biomass in Namibia's waters at only 20% of its 1969 level. The value of this fish was put at a staggering Rand 1411500000 (over Rand 14 Billion). Out of this bounty Namibia received a meagre \$180 000 from a Trust Fund created by ICSEAF in 1981 for an independent Namibia. Only one payment was ever made into the Trust Fund by the fishing nations who were members of ICSEAF and that payment came from South Africa in 1981, the year the Trust was first established.

Over the lifetime of ICSEAF the direct financial benefit to Namibia from the foreign activity in its deep-sea fishery amounted a mere 0.004% of the value of the fish taken. This appallingly low level of financial benefit to Namibia was overshadowed however by the damage done to the hake stocks. At independence the Hake biomass was only 20% of its 1969 peak.

The over exploitation of Namibia's has bequeathed to the Government of an independent Namibia the enormous task of ensuring, for a ten year period, such stringent monitoring and control of its EEZ, as to enable a rebuilding of its hake fishery to a level which will be able to sustain a yield of a mere 4% of the peak level of yield taken from Namibia's waters under ICSEAF's regulation and some 81% of the average yield under ICSEAF's regulation. With this Herculean task in mind in 1991 the Namibian Government set the TAC for hake at 60000 tones, 7% of the peak catch of 1972.

The Spanish fishing industry played a particularly important role in this depletion of the Hake stocks. From the outset Spanish vessels concentrated on the Hake stock, and even when signs of depletion emerged and the East European fleets began to switch to Horse Mackerel, the Spanish fleet continued to concentrate on the Hake fishery.

So it was that as the 1980's drew on the Spanish fishing fleet came to play the dominant role in the continued over-exploitation of the Namibian hake fishery. Between 1981 and 1988 Spanish trawlers reported catching over 1105706 tones of hake in Namibian waters, valued at some Rand 4.25 billion. By the time Namibia began the final leg of its road to independence

some 173 Spanish vessels were dependent on access to the Namibian Hake fishery, to sustain the livelihood of 6200 seamen and on-shore employment for 40000 fish processing workers.

This was the background against which with the independence of Namibia the European Community sought to negotiate a fisheries agreement with Namibia.

## **Fisheries agreements**

The Namibian Government has sought to learn the lessons of the fishing experience of the coast of Namibia. The first lesson which has been learnt is that fish stocks require careful management.

Catches of Hake off the Namibian coast rose progressively from 1964 with only minor hiccups until an all time high of over 820 000 tones was reached in 1972. Declining catch levels then began to provide clear indications that the Hake stock was being over fished. A couple of years of good recruitment however, gave the industry a false optimism that the decline had only been temporary and as the fishing effort intensified catch levels once again began to rise, until a major decline in catch levels began to set in 1977. By the 1978-79 period Catch per unit of effort had fallen 60% compared to the 1968-69 period. This led most of those nations who had been fishing primarily for Hake to switch over to Horse Mackerel, with the notable exception of the Spanish, fleet. 1980 catches were the lowest since 1964. Good recruitment in subsequent years however was not capitalised on with a view to rebuilding stocks, rather it was seen as giving a green light to a renewed intensification of hake fishing activities. As a result although catch levels increased in the mid 1980's this was unsustainable and by the end of the 1980's reported catch levels were once more on a declining trend, with the total biomass much reduced and the fishing effort being applied being of such an intensity as to maintain the hake stock in its severely depleted state.

Whilst over this time ICSEAF introduced a range of measures (increased mesh size, establishment of quota's) designed to restrict fishing activities in the interests of conservation, these measures proved to be too little too late.

The often tentative nature of stock recovery has not been lost on the Namibian authorities, as a result of its experience both in the pelagic and demersal fishery. As a result the Namibian Government is now determined to set the annual TAC at a conservative level in order to ensure that any nascent process of stock recovery is not endangered. This policy has aroused considerable criticism in Europe arising from the strong commercial interest of the Spanish fleet in the Namibian hake fishery. Yet to date the Namibian Government has firmly resisted all pressures for an upward revision of the total allowable catch for Hake.

Flowing from the ICSEAF experience, it became ap-

parent at independence that it the Namibian authorities were to effectively pursue the management goal of stock recovery then it was essential that a low total allowable catch be set to allow good recruitment years to find their way through to adulthood and so expand the overall hake biomass. It was also apparent that not only will a low TAC need to be set, but that stringent enforcement of monitoring and control measures will be required to ensure that the TAC is not exceeded for the hake fishery (both by directed fishing and as a result of by-catches in fishing effort directed at other species).

It was also apparent from the stock history that ICSEAF scientists' assessments exceeded the actual potentials of the stocks and that either their data or their model for assessing stocks and permissible catches were wrong. Independent assessments by German scientists in 1986 and 1989 indicated that the fishing levels rather than being moderate were in fact set at almost double the level which should have been the maximum fishing level. This experience reinforced the believe in the importance of an accurate scientific basis for stock management derived from the experience of the in-shore fishery. In the case of both the in-shore pilchard fishery and the offshore hake fishery the stock history provided a clear demonstration of the dangers inherent in any policy which is driven by the commercial interests of established operators. In both cases scientific warnings of impending collapse had been given, yet singularly ignored, for the management regime was excessively influenced by the interests of the commercial operators.

This lesson has not been lost on the Namibian Government. which is seeking to keep a tight regulatory hand on the development of both the pelagic and demersal fishing industry in Namibia with a view to avoiding over-investment in capacity (both fishing and processing), which has generated such damaging pressures on fish stocks both in Namibian waters in the past and EC waters today.

For the Namibian authorities what the ICSEAF experience demonstrated most was the need for a strong and independent Namibian management authority, determined to enforce its fisheries regulations and with the capacity to do so. Indeed it is against this background that the Namibian authorities are carefully weighing up all external offers of assistance in the fisheries sector and critically examining all proposals for fisheries agreements.

## **Implications for negotiations**

These lessons have an important bearing on the Namibian Government's approach to the negotiation of a fisheries agreement with the EC. The Namibian Government is committed to fostering a process of stock recovery. With this in mind a conservative estimation of the Total Allowable Catch is used, particu-

larly since the Namibian authorities, at the present time, only have a limited capacity to monitor and control the actual fishing activities which take place. In this manner it is hoped that years of good recruitment can be capitalised on in order to foster a rapid process of stock recovery.

Since the Namibia Government is committed to the development of its own indigenous off-shore fishing industry and fleet, so that more of the benefits of the fishing industry can accrue to the Namibian people, one immediate and direct implication of this approach is that, in the coming years, there will be only limited fishing opportunities made available to overseas fleets. This is something which the Commission of the European Community has yet to fully take on board. The Commission rather than focusing on securing the fullest share of the fishing opportunities likely to be made available to foreign fleets, has focused on criticizing the scientific basis on which the TAC is set. This is wholly counter-productive, given the sensitivity of the sovereignty question.

The Namibian Government is keenly aware of the need for effective monitoring and control to back up fisheries regulations, for without effective enforcement the majority of fisheries regulations are ignored. During the first round of fisheries negotiations with the Commission, the Namibian authorities made clear their concern over effective monitoring and control by putting forward a number of specific provisions for inclusion in any fisheries agreement and by seeking to move away from Gross Registered Tonnage as the sole basis for calculating access to a formula based on the Effective

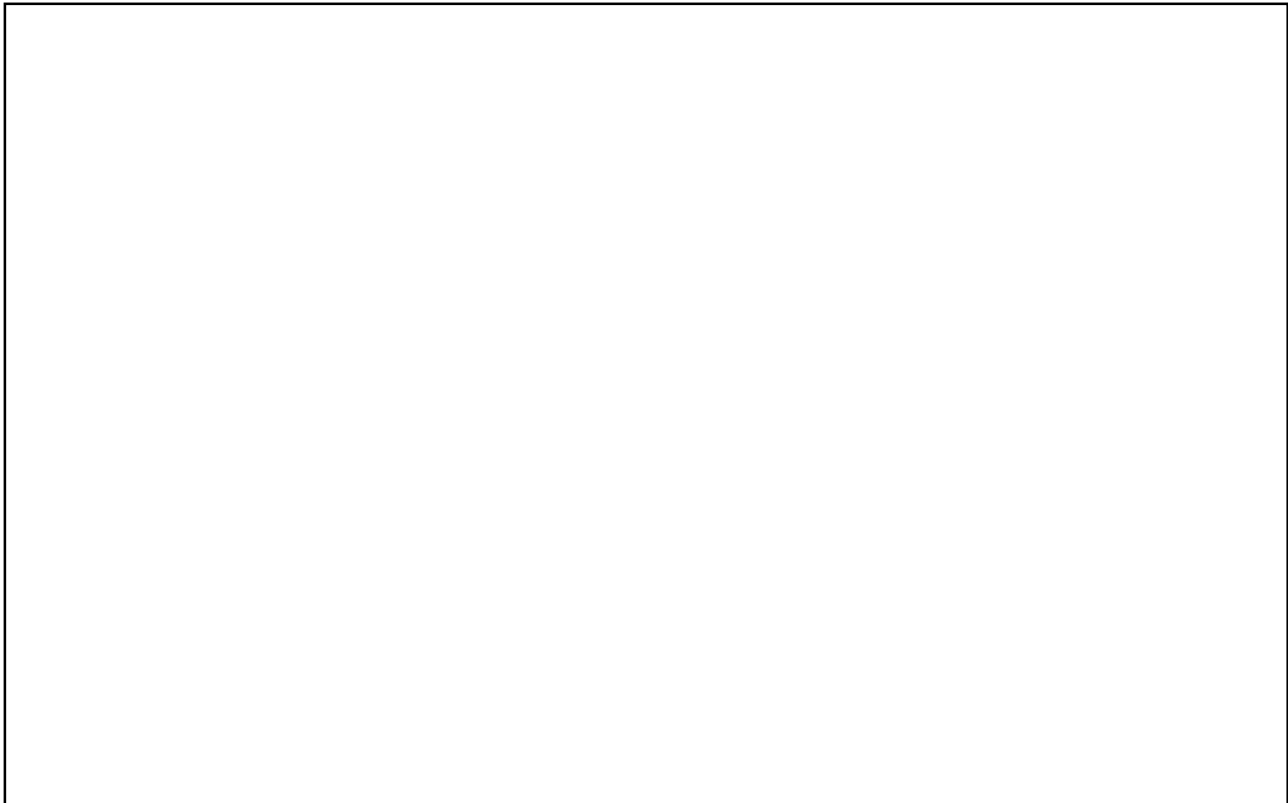
Fishing Effort of the boats allowed access.

From the Namibian perspective, given the state of depletion of the stocks and the strong commitment to the development of an indigenous off shore fleet, a traditional fisheries agreement with the EC will bring little financial benefit to Namibia. A fisheries agreement at the present time is primarily of interest to the Namibian Government to the extent that it brings the weight of the contracting party behind the efforts to establish effective monitoring and control. For without effective monitoring and control which is capable of ensuring stock recovery, there can be no future for the Namibian fishing industry.

For the Namibian authorities therefore, questions of monitoring and control and the role of fisheries agreements in supporting effective monitoring and control are a central concern. Given the stock depletion in the waters of other ACP states, the Namibian Government's efforts to secure a fisheries agreement with the EC capable of promoting a process of stock recovery, is of considerable interest.

## **Namibia and the European Community**

The EC fishing industry is an industry in crisis. As a result of the shortcomings of the management regime, a wide variety of fish stocks are seriously depleted. As a result securing access to third country waters has become of growing importance.



In 1987 while some 4.5 million tonnes of fish were caught by Community vessels in Community waters, some 3.5 million tonnes were imported and a further 1.7 million tonnes caught by Community vessels in third country or international waters. Thus in 1987, some 54% of all fish (for human consumption, meal, oil and other uses) originated from non-EC waters. Considering only salt water fish for human consumption, landings by EC vessels accounted for 56% of supplies to the 20 market, with approximately some 25% of these originating in non EC waters. Thus a meagre 42% of fish for human consumption on the EC are now originating in the EC's own waters.

Thus no matter which way one tries to cut the cake "the Community fishery products market is highly dependent on imports from non- Community countries".

Extrapolating from the fact that 25% of fish for human consumption landed by EC boats originates in third country waters (allowing for the fact that 95% of all marine resources lie within a 200 mile EEZ) and taking into account the greater capital intensity of long distance trawlers one can see that the jobs of over some 30 000 fishermen and perhaps a further 200 000 workers in related industries are directly dependent on continued access by 20 vessels to third country waters.

One can thus see the economic importance to the European Community of maintaining access to third country waters and why fishing access agreements are now a "basic element of the common fisheries policy." Indeed, the development of fisheries agreements is deemed to have:

"made it possible to maintain, restore and develop the vital interests of the Community and the Member States"

Yet there is a growing perception in the Commission that the old basis for fisheries agreements is now inadequate. Indeed, as developing countries acquire their own fishing capacity so the Community must look towards means of safeguarding its position through "new association formula's" which provide for more lasting cooperation.

From a Commission perspective these new association formula's would largely be limited to establishing a firmer basis for joint ventures in fishing operations. These joint venture arrangement would not even be extended to processing and marketing aspects of the fishing industry.

The question of what from an ACP perspective these "new association formula's" should encompass has yet to be elaborated. Certainly the current debate offers certain opportunities which ACP states should seek to develop to ensure the "second generation fisheries agreements" contribute more fully to the broader economic development of the economies of ACP states.

From a Namibian perspective what "second generation fisheries agreements" should entail is clear. It should encompass effective measures to support the monitoring and control of fishing activities in order to ensure a process of stock recovery. It should include greater provision for shore based inspection and it should base access on effective fishing effort, which should be in line with the catch allocated to EC vessels. The Namibian position raises the general question:

Will the EC extend the conclusions arising from the evaluation of its own internal fisheries management regime to the type of fisheries agreements it concludes in the future with ACP states? Will the EC be willing to sign fisheries agreements which include effective provisions on monitoring and control, to ensure stock recovery, if this runs against the short term commercial interests of EC fishing operators? Will the EC be willing to conclude a fisheries agreement which fosters the progressive development of an indigenous Namibian off-shore fishing industry, with associated on-shore processing industry and the processing, packaging and marketing skills to expand exports to the sophisticated EC market?

At the present time there can be little doubt that the importance of access to third country waters in assisting the EC in coping with the immediate problems in the EC's own fishing industry, is leading the Commission to take a short term view of the function of fisheries agreements. The Directorate General for Fisheries (DG XIV) principle concern in fisheries negotiations remains maximizing short term access to fishing opportunities for the EC fleet. If this is going to be altered a wider debate on the role of fisheries agreements in promoting both specifically, the development of an indigenous fishing industry and more generally, economic development in ACP States needs to be launched.

The recent establishment of an ACP-EEC Joint Assembly Working Group on the "Role of Fisheries in Development" provides an ideal forum for the launching of such a wider debate.



# ORGANIZATION, LEGISLATION AND THE RIGHTS OF FISHWORKERS IN THE PHILIPPINES

*Nenita Cura and Jose Ventura*

It reflects the Philippine government that its fishing laws and policies provide mainly for the use of fishing and aquatic resources and not primarily for the rights of fisherfolk. The provisions in PD 704, the Fisheries Decree of 1975, that directly affect fisherfolk are prohibitory, and other policies constrict access to traditional fishing grounds.

There are basically six reasons why fisherfolk perceive PD 704 as contrary to their interests.

First, PD 704 favours the use of fishing resources to generate capital and stimulate investments instead of satisfying basic needs. This is a shift from Republic Act N- 3152 of 1963, geared towards self-sufficiency.

Premised on the belief that Philippine fishery resources remained largely untapped, PD 704 attempted to capitalize on the 17642 kilometers of coastline and 212 million hectares of marine and fishery resources.

It was thought that by playing in the arena of world trade and investments, the Philippines would “develop” by amassing investments, dollar-earnings and foreign-led industries. The benefits of which would “trickle down” to millions of subsistence Filipinos. This policy discriminated against fisherfolk in favour of large capital investments in the fishing industry and competed with and limited fisherfolk’s access to their resources.

Second, the “trickle-down” effect did not materialize. In fact, PD 704 had disastrous results. The world market did not “conform” to expectations and the new approach also disturbed traditional production relations without providing stabilizing mechanisms. The only ones that profited from the policy of massive commercial exploitation of fishery resources were big investors, corrupt government officials and their cronies.

Although total production improved by 500 000 tons in 1989, it was due more to the frequency and efficiency of commercial fishing operations, with incentives under PD 704, and less to the abundance of fishery resources.

These developments in the fishery sector reflect the global consequences of multinational investments in national and regional production areas.

Third, massive commercial exploitation resulted in environmental resource degradation. Evidence of this is the fact that 25 of the 45 traditional fishing grounds are overfished and the estimated 4.5 million hectares of mangroves in 1920 are reduced to only 100000 hectares. Consequently catches dipped and average monthly income was estimated to be only P1973.00, far below the poverty level pegged at P2714.00 for a family of six.

Sheer desperation has made more and more fisherfolk turn to fishing with dynamite and toxic substances. Even the dangerous muro-ami has been a viable alternative for thousands from coastal communities.

Fourth, PD 704 centralized fishery management in the Manila- based Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), discouraging the participation of fisherfolk in managing resources. Local government units’ jurisdiction over municipal waters became nominal, since local ordinances and grants of fishery concessions had to be approved by BFAR. This doomed many local initiatives to immediately solve she-specific problems.

Fifth, the violation and offenses punished by PD 704 could not be strictly enforced. The perception that violations were “victimless”, since it is a crime against the State coupled with the general ignorance of the police and other government officials, made the strict implementation of PD 704 impossible, with fisherfolk on the losing end.

The power to compromise PD 704 violations or accept settlements from commercial operators by BFAR and the Department of Agriculture Secretary denies the fisherfolk equal protection of the law.

Sixth, government-sponsored and imposed fishery projects are undertaken with little regard of cultural

considerations and community needs. Government also involved fisherfolk in law enforcement by deputizing them as fishwardens. But in implementing the law, they have been harassed and threatened by commercial exploiters and dragged into legal controversies without even minimum legal assistance from BFAR, which had deputized them in the first place.

### **An unfolding process**

Against this backdrop, the formation of fisherfolk organizations, alliances and movements gradually but steadily took shape. The once docile fishermen, used to the bounty and goodness of the seas, started to fight for their rights to the seas in municipal halls, in the streets, government offices, in Malacanang and in the halls of Congress. Their formation at specific points in Philippine history is reflective of the specific situation in the country. The listing of fishermen organizations that have been organized after Martial Law to date, is impressively long. Of this list, the following are regional and national organizations/ movements in the order of their establishment: The Batillos (fishing port) of Navotas, 1973; Kammmpi, 1977; Calariz, 1980; Bigkis-Lakas, 1986; Hummabi, 1987; Pamalakaya, 1987; Visfac, 1989 and Nacfar, 1990.

While their organizing strategies and approaches vary, depending on their orientation, they are united in their

vision of a free, clean, just, and humane fishing environment.

It is worth noting that the nature and fervour of the fishermen's struggle started from a practical concern for just pay and working conditions; the elimination of illegal fishing activities and their deputizing as fishwardens; their right to organize and to participate in matters affecting them, and access to the means and fruits of fish production. There is a more global ecological concern for protecting, developing, controlling and managing their fishery resources. This environmental aspect in the struggle of fishermen for their liberation, as well as that of their marine resources, has ushered in a new spiritual dimension, thereby elevating their struggle to a more holistic and global view of man's relatedness with his Creator, the state, his fellowmen, and nature. It is perhaps: this spirituality that shall eventually unite us at the global level.

This phenomenal growth in social consciousness among fisherfolk could likewise be viewed from the perspective of the politization taking place in the Philippines at all levels, especially at the base of the socio-economic political pyramid and among those concerned with development (i.e.. the Church, schools, professional groups, non-governmental organizations and financial institutions). Their combined efforts, in partner-

ship with the marginalized sectors, account for growing social consciousness and mass actions for alternative development.

## The alternative

The new democracy brought about by EDSA Revolution with the Aquino government assuming power fueled the hopes of the fisherfolk. The 1987 Constitution provided for the exclusive enjoyment and use by Filipino citizens of fishery resources (Art. XII, sec. 2, par. 2) and for the protection of fisherfolk's right of subsistence through access to communal fishing areas (Art. XII, sec.7). The satisfy-basic-needs-first approach enshrined the promise and the mandate of the new government.

The fisheries code firms up the fishermen's resolve to take matters of their subsistence—their life and death—into their own hands by asking the government to delegate fisheries management to them. The reasoning seems ironclad: centralized administration in Manila at the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources has left unattended most local concerns about enforcement and resource allocation. It only succeeded in facilitating the commercial exploitation of fisheries, which was good for the few entrepreneurs and capitalists, bad for the environment and worse for subsistence fishermen.

The fishermen now want the government to implement the policies that the fundamental law already spelled out: plan and implement the sustainable use of fishery resources to satisfy basic needs first and build a truly Filipino fisheries industry.

Central to this proposal is the empowerment of fisherfolk, through local fisheries resource management councils, to enforce fishery laws and see to it that their fishing areas remain viable and free from the ravaging incursions of commercial fisheries. They would leave the management of more distant, more capital- and technology-demanding fisheries at the inter-island and national levels to those who can afford it and to the government. To oversee all fisheries, they suggest the creation of a national fisheries resource management council, comprised of representatives of the various levels of resource management councils, who would guarantee that issues at specific fishery sites would be articulated and attended to.

## Prospects of change

By the second half of 1988, this new proposal was already filed as legislation in Congress as House Bills 9580 and 21120 in the House of Representatives, and as Senate Bills 648 and 711 in the Senate. For some time, fishermen turned lobbyists basked in the newfound glory of speaking at legislative hearings and of trading ideas, and even barbs and insults with legislators and officials from the executive branch.

Their bills were, after all, more comprehensive in scope and bigger in the sheer bulk of their provisions than any of the decrees that Mamos issued, and were more thought-out than most of the legislative proposals the men and women in Congress churned out. In fact, only SB 804, Senator Agapito Aquino's counterproposal of a fisheries code, came close to matching the fisherfolk's idea on the demarcation of fishery areas and users based on the mutually complimentary goals of social justice and environmental protection- And in contrast to the other bills that proposed bigger bureaucracy and more "formal" government presence in the administration of fisheries, the fisherfolk's fisheries code sought to decentralize power to community-based councils. At least these proposed councils would not have distance from the resource as an excuse for inefficiency. It seems hardly disputable that those whose very livelihood depends on fisheries would also take the best care of this resource. For if they mess it up, they imperil their own lives and futures.

The steady build-up of official resistance to the fishermen's proposed code was initially obscured by the novelty of their legislative proposal and of the fishermen's hobnobbing with the powers-that-be. Yet to the objective observer, that resistance should have been clear enough from the start, even from the questions and clarifications demanded by the staffs of the legislators who eventually sponsored and supported the fisherfolk's bills in Congress.

The politicians with national ambitions are partial to the broad picture, but whether breadth of vision also means depth of perspective is another question. And so it was -and is- easy to point out the obvious flaws of the fisheries code: its proposal for the small-scale use of near-shore areas, the most productive fishery areas, run roughshod on the production requirements for the Philippines' exports. Its proposal for the creation of resource management councils at the local and national levels did away with the "experience", "expertise" and manpower of the Bureau Of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources. Veiled in the criticism that not all fishermen in the various fishery areas are organized to manage fishery resources is the pointed accusation that an ordinary fisherman, unschooled and unlettered, could not properly take care of resources that take bureaucrats years of formal schooling to comprehend.

And so after four years of deliberation, the Senate and the House of Representatives produced their own version of the fisheries code. A corn promise in both chambers, leaving for future legislative action the question about the structure of fishery administration, paved the way.

The silence of the fishery code versions of both chambers of Congress on the fishery administrative structure was not sufficient, however, to unite the legislators

at the bicameral conference committee level and pass a harmonized fisheries code. As of this writing, objections to the approved versions of the code, especially on the part of Congressmen, surfaced at the bicameral conference and doomed efforts to pass at least the policies part of the code before Congress finally adjourned.

A small chance remains that during the remaining days of the Congress the code may still be enacted into law. This chance comes from the fact that President may call Congress for special sessions, and that bicameral conference committee meetings can be held even if Congress is not in session. However, the election frenzy presently hounding the President and the legislators, who all have significant personal stakes in the outcome of the election, may finally hammer the last nail to the coffin of any prospects of long-term law reform.

To fisherfolk, these developments are not completely unexpected. They have waited for so long that a few more years of rather unfruitful struggle in the legislative arena will not break the back of their resolve to effect changes in their lives and their lifeline.

Fisherfolk realize that the struggle for change can be waged in different milieus - their own localities included.

It is this realization and their confidence in the strength of their growing organizations and the justness of their cause that will sustain them. Laws, after all, are only as good as their implementation. If fisherfolk go ahead and transform the issues plaguing their means of subsistence, the law would simply remain a spectator, helpless to stand in the way of changes long warranted by intolerable and unjust social conditions on the fisheries front.

At fisherfolk's own localities, in particular, in most of the 12 major bays and gulfs declared overfished by the government, unrelenting petitions from fisherfolk have convinced the Department of Agriculture and BFAR to issue fishery administrative orders to close these bays and gulfs to destructive and overly-exploitative commercial fishing.

A visit to fisherfolk communities in Lamon Bay in Cuezon Province, under the Bigkis-Lakas network, yields hope that all is not lost for subsistence fisherfolk and fishworkers. The rehabilitation of an over-exploited fishery and its return to its former productive condition testify to the great results possible if only government listened to the people, took to heart their recommendations for protecting, conserving and developing local resources, and harnessed their collective strength and resolve to implement these recommendations. □

# FROM SLAVERY TO CITIZENSHIP

*Antonio Diegues and Luiz Silva*

Artisanal fishermen, together with the *seringueiros* and those who live in the Amazon jungle, were one of the last social classes in Brazil who effectively won their citizenship. This conquest of citizen rights came late not only because of the geographic isolation of fishermen dispersed in small communities along the coastline, rivers and lakes, but mostly because of the structures of domination in which they lived.

Indeed, data from the colonial period seem to indicate that most fishing was done by slaves, who provided the *latifunda*, *haciendas* and large urban centres with fish, particularly in the northeast during the time when sugar cane was grown for export. Just like the slaves who worked the *latifunda*, the fishermen slaves were the merchandise and property of their masters. Their only right was to servile work.

Slavery ended in Brazil only at the end of last century, in 1888. In 1919, fishermen were linked, often by force, to the so-called "fishermen's colonies", created by the Navy to control those populations and convert them into "defenders of the Brazilian coast".

## Colonial times

With the exception of whaling, fishing was mostly for subsistence, with whatever surplus there was being sold in towns and cities. In the south and south-east, fishing was often associated with subsistence areas of the economy that is, to those areas connected with the export-producing *latifunda*, mostly those producing sugar cane (Diegues, 1983). Many fishermen along the coast were also farmers. Several of these subsistence areas were had been previously involved in production for export. When one-crop, agriculture ended, these areas returned to multi-crop farming. This was the case on the southern coast of Sao Paulo; once they stopped growing rice, many small farmers turned to fishing (Diegues, 1973).

In the north-east, where slave-based agriculture predominated throughout the colonial period, fishing, done by slaves, was one of the activities of the *latifundum*. The main activities of this export-oriented slave social

formation in the north-east did not exclude other kinds of production for the domestic market. Fishing was one of the more important.

Thus, according to a Dutchman writing in 1630, there were 300 slaves in Olinda who worked exclusively as fishermen, when the population of that city was barely 4,800 (Silva, 1991). In 1864, towards the end of slavery in Brazil, of the 1991 fishermen registered with the port authority of Rio de Janeiro, 47% were slaves (report of the Maritime Ministry, 1854, annexes).

In 1836, the *Diario de Pernambuco* advertised for sale "a slave who can fish with a net from canoes; capable of all services". (*Diario de Pernambuco*, 18 April 1836).

During the last years of slavery, according to the census of 1872, there were fishermen in Brazil. In the provinces and the bays, according to the same census, there were 4662 fishermen (Silva, 1991).

All these people were part of the regional market for foodstuffs, and certain cities, like Recife, had a fish market from the seventeenth century (Silva, 1988).

These fishermen laid the bases for a maritime lifestyle and culture in Brazil: They comprised the group most clearly dedicated to struggling with the sea and as tasks.

Aware of this, the Brazilian Navy, in the middle of the nineteenth century, thought that fishermen could provide a naval reserve par excellence for the Navy.

Thus the first measures taken by the nation state with regards fishing was precisely to have all fishermen register by districts- This provided detailed knowledge of how many fishermen there were and where they were located, in order to recruit them for the Navy. Despite everything, the fishermen strongly resisted being recruited.

During the time of the Empire, fishermen did not register with the port authorities and fled from their districts. After the republic was inaugurated, several uprisings

of fishermen took place, such as those of Rio de Janeiro in 1903 and Ceara in 1904. Many died and even more were wounded. There was only one motive behind these uprisings: resist obligatory recruitment of fishermen by the Navy (Silva, 1991).

*Later*, in 1919, the so-called fishermen's colonies rose throughout Brazil. These were an alternative proposed by the Navy as an attempt to undermine resistance to recruitment. The official line was that the colonies were "a more modern and broader way of seeing national defence, and especially the protection of the valiant people of our coasts" (Vilar, 1945).

The colonies, situated at conceived as state-level federations and the General Confederation of Brazilian Fishermen, headquartered in Rio de Janeiro. Leadership positions in this system of representation were traditionally occupied by military personnel, businessmen, shipowners, et al, never by fishermen.

This situation lasted more or less up to the 1960s, except for rare cases, such as Pernambuco where the link between fishermen and the peasant movement ("peasant alliances"), denouncements of industrial pollution of rivers estuaries and the shoreline, and attempts to take over the state federation of colonies led to the beginnings of a social movement of fishermen (Callou, 1983).

## The 1960s

Artisanal fishing went through several changes beginning in the 1950s, owing to the increasing urban development of the Brazilian coast and the consequent rise in demand for food. Up till that time, more than 50% of fisheries production was provided by artisanal fishermen.

In 1962, with the creation of SUDEPE, the decision was taken to develop fishing on the basis of industrial enterprises. The government began in 1967 to spend large sums of money on fishing fleets and processing plants. More than US\$ 100 million was invested in industrial enterprises between 1967 and 1974. Meanwhile, aid to artisanal fisheries through PESCART (programme to support artisanal fishing) was less than US\$ 10 million (Diegues, 1983). Moreover, much of these scarce resources never reached the bands of artisanal fishermen; they were mostly used to maintain the state fisheries bureaucracy.

The results of these investments in the fishing industry were not very encouraging: some scarce species along the coast were overfished for export, such as shrimp, lobster, and overinvestment in onshore facilities (ice plants and cold storage) led most of these firms to bankruptcy. Artisanal fishing continued to be important to the sector, either as a source of labour for the firms or by selling their catch to these firms.

Artisanal fishermen continued to belong to the colonies, in most cases dominated by people not involved in the sector or by businessmen who still controlled the marketing of fish.

Conflicts between artisanal fishing and capitalist industrial fishing increased from the 1960s on. Large trawlers exterminated schools of fish and shrimp that were fished by artisanal fishermen. The industrial fleet frequently destroyed and still today destroy the work instruments of small-scale fishermen, sometimes provoking violent reactions (Diegues, 1983; Melo, 1989; Laureiro, 1985).

Such conflicts with capitalist industrial fishing, together with those connected with the degradation and pollution of the coast, estimated an increasingly stronger reaction on the part of artisanal fishermen.

Urban expansion has been the biggest cause the destruction of vegetation in mangroves in large areas where coastal species reproduce, such as the Bays of Guanabara, Todos los Santos, Sao Jose and Sao Marcos, and in numerous estuaries in the north-east and south-east

Mangroves have been cut down to build Urban complexes for the middle class and bourgeois' as happened in Coroa de Meio in Aracaju, Sergipe. First, the crab fishermen who lived there were removed and the whole mangrove cut down. This let in sea water which finally destroyed streets and threatened the buildings themselves.

Many large beaches and reefs were subdivided risking the very existence of these important eco-systems, as happened in Isla Comprida in Sao Paulo. Besides that, many islands were and still are being privatized to be made into recreation and marine areas. The artisanal fishermen are always driven out.

Ports and large chemical and petrochemical complexes were built in ecosystems of high biologic productivity and valuable for their scenery and tourism potential, as happened in Laguna Mundau y Manguaba, in Alagoas, an estuary Suape, Pernambuco, and in Laguan de los Patos, in Rio Grande do Sur.

When Proalcohol was launched, subsidized sugar cane invaded the lands of the north-east, even taking over adjoining mangroves, as in Mamanguape, Paraiba. Tons of winery distillery residues and biocides are criminally dumped into rivers and estuaries.

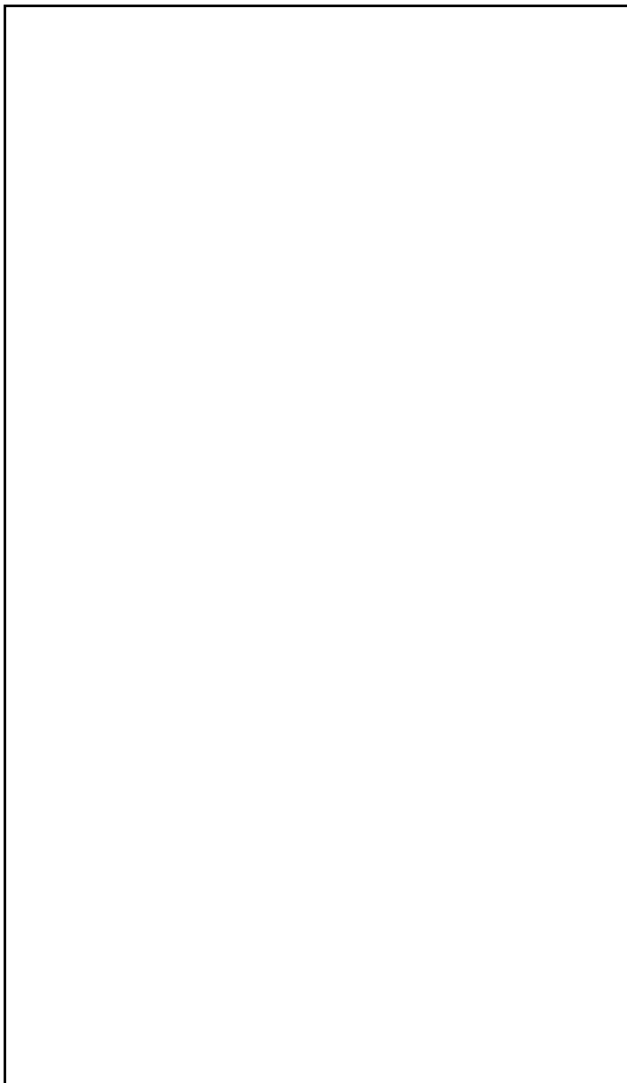
Consequences of these processes are irreversible, completely destroying precious ecosystems that produce food for low-income groups, as happened with the destruction of hundreds of hectares of mangrove by the salt works of Galinhos, Rio Grande do Norte. Lake Batata, in the Amazon, was completely polluted by cast-offs from mining operations.



Another destructive element in rivers and lakes of the Amazon is the use of *mercury* in treating gold, particularly in rivers (like the Madeira, Gaupore and Mamore). Levels of mercury contamination are so high they approach those that caused the “killer-mine” disease that killed hundreds of people in Japan in the 1960s (Petrere, 1991).

Besides affecting the quality of life of Brazilian society as a whole, these processes have even more disastrous consequences for artisanal fishermen and their communities, ending up almost always with their being expelled from their lands and beaches.

On top of the pollution of the environment, certain actions of the state have also helped make the already difficult survival of artisanal fishing communities even more so. These actions, include the creation of parks and reservations in areas traditionally occupied by fishing communities. Many parks and ecological reservations were created without even consulting the fishermen who made their living from those natural resources. These areas were preserved because of the respect artisanal fishermen had for them, depending on them for their livelihood. These conservation units system-



atically prohibit fishing, leading to the expulsion of these small producers from their beaches. Moreover, rigid government control is always for artisanal fishermen, never for industrial fishing, trawlers, lumber operations, palmito, etc. This is highly unjust and makes artisanal fishermen and small coastal producers the villains of the story as those responsible for ecological destruction. Guided by their urban view of conservation problems, these pseudo-ecologists end up penalizing those who need clean, unpolluted water to feed their families and the general population -those who need mangroves, bays and beaches uncontrolled by construction companies, so they can exercise their profession.

Without a doubt, the rapid and intense degradation of the coastline was one of the main reasons fishermen and coastal communities mobilized from the late 1970s onwards.

In 1979 and 1980, fishermen in Pernambuco began to denounce the damage caused by the waste from alcohol production and winery distillery residues generated by the industries of the municipality of Goiana (Silva, 1989). In doing so, they were supported by the recently created Pastoral Office for Fishermen, organized by the episcopal conference of the Catholic church in Brazil (CNBB). The industries in question even gave death threats to the leaders of the fishermen. In 1983, the fishermen in that state demonstrated with a march against dumping winery distillery residues into the rivers from the Capibaribe river, which runs through the city of Recife.

These demonstrations by fishermen comprised an important social datum in a social category that was, up till then, totally dominated by the corporatist structure of the fishermen’s colonies, federations and confederations.

This struggle to improve the environment of the coast was part of an emerging movement of artisanal fishermen in search for citizenship that was begun during the authoritarian military government. This movement consolidated at the end of the dictatorship and the beginning of the democratization of the country.

During that period, fishermen of some colonies began to organize to take over the leadership of those organizations. After important mobilizations, almost always supported by the Pastoral Office for Fishermen and progressive political parties, they won the presidency of some of these colonies and federations. In the states of Para, Bahia and Maranhao, fishermen became president of those federations. The struggle was fierce in those states, involving imprisonment, intimidation and even death threats for the new leaders. The Federation of Fishermen of Pernambuco was won in 1984, and in 1987 that of Alagoas, followed by others in the south (Silva, 1989).

An important moment in that emerging organization of artisanal fishermen was participating in the elaboration of the 1989 Constitution, for those parts dealing with fisheries. Several meetings were held between 1986 and 1988 for that purpose. The main reason for the movement was to elaborate a law governing the system of representation of the fishermen, since several other causes (water pollution, social security for fishermen, etc.) were politically blocked by leaders of colonies and federations who were not fishermen. Given that situation, the fishermen attempted to draw up a Magna Carta for themselves, for the movement known as the "constitutional assembly for fisheries". Despite the widespread support and participation of the whole sector, the movement was resisted by some presidents of state federations controlled by conservative sectors, generally connected with fisheries but part of the remains of the military regime.

Towards the end of the process to elaborate the Constitution, the main result of the movement was, first, the impetus given to organizing fishermen and the consciousness that they comprised a class of small producers spread along the coasts, rivers and lakes of Brazil. They also had some key victories in the text of the Constitution, such as the possibility of organizing themselves into free trade unions autonomous from the state. Fishermen also contributed to having important ecosystems like the coast and the wetlands of Mato Grosso declared *priority* regions for environmental conservation.

Another important result of the movement was the formation of MONAPE, the National Movement of Fishermen. This movement brings together the leaders of fishermen, whether or not they are representatives of colo-

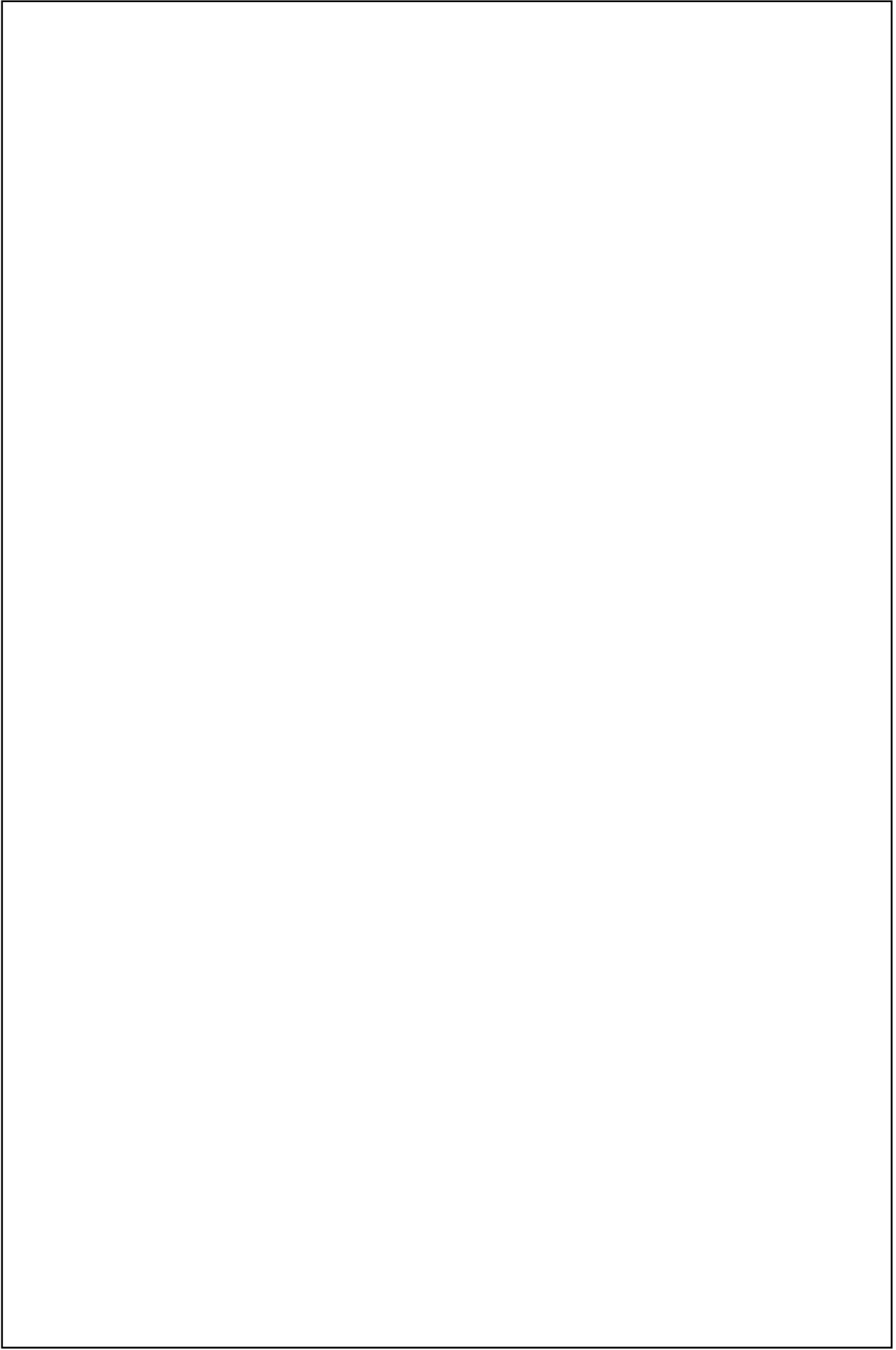
nies or trade unions, with a view to democratize the colonies, see to it that the constitutional victories are implemented and fight to improve the living and working conditions of artisanal fishermen.

One of the main concerns of MONAPE is the conservation of marine and fluvial habitats as a basic condition for sustainable artisanal fishing. In two of its national meetings - Juazeiro, Bahia in August 1990 and Olinda, Pernambuco in October 1991 - the defence of the environment in benefit of local populations was one of the main points of the agenda. In those meetings, representatives of MONAPE were concerned not only about overfishing in the sea, rivers, lakes and dams, but also about the gradual and constant destruction of the natural habitats used by artisanal fishermen, such as mangroves, lakes, estuaries, reel etc.

Pursuant to decisions taken during those meetings, MONAPE members would mobilize in different kinds of campaigns to educate and denounce the degradation of the Brazilian coast, rivers, streams, lakes and dams.

As can be seen, the fishermen's struggle for Citizenship is closely linked to the preservation of habitats and ways of life that comprise a rich cultural heritage for Brazil.

Meanwhile, the struggle is far from over, as long as government agencies continue to look on artisanal fishermen as objects for aid programmes. For its part, the goal of the National Movement of Fishermen is to demonstrate that, above all, they are producers of wealth, food, workers with a defined profession, and above all, citizens, with the rights and duties of every Brazilian.



# WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT

Nalini Nayak

Preparations go on all around the globe for the long awaited Earth Summit. Knowing that official positions may not strike any creative dimensions, the NGOs have done their best to lobby and influence policy makers. Some of these efforts are sure to pay dividends, but we from India, and I am sure, many other Asians, are more sceptical then ever. Our country, like many others, is now undergoing a process of radical structural adjustment to comply with demands of the Internodal Monetary Fund in order to receive loans to service debts. It strikes me that this is not only a massive sell-out of our country but a sure choice against the millions in favour of a new privileged rich.

Gone are the dreams of independent India—"Swaraj" as Mahatma Gandhi called it. While people everywhere crave for independence and autonomy, here are we in India willing to surrender all under the garb of growing Hindutva<sup>(1)</sup>. These processes may be difficult to understand for those who do not know much of Indian history, but these new trends are bound to take their toll on the development of fisheries too.

Thinking about women's rights and fisheries development in this context becomes all the more difficult. First of all fisheries development has for the most part paid no heed to the people whose livelihood depends on the fish resource. Even the data on fisheries relate more to the economics of production rather than to the socioeconomic conditions of the fisherfolk. Nevertheless, there are anthropological studies that document the way of life and the struggles of these communities which highlight the survival strategies these people have worked out for themselves against all odds. While this has been the case globally, in Asia and the third world at large, the situation of these communities is far more in jeopardy presently.

As it stands today, the development in technology and the demand for fish have led to the depletion of the fish resource. At the marketing level, further organizing of the market system is the only way to get a better price to the producer; therefore, many organizational and government efforts plan to develop an infrastructure for the same. Little do they realize that in the small sector it is the women who have been predominant; in this

domain; they are redundant only when there are larger bulk landings and when purchase is more on a cash than on a credit basis. So, organized marketing is one more way in which women get marginalized.

The other side of the coin is to see how the people within the sector themselves respond to the changing situation. Most of the reactions within the sector, be they in relation to organization of work, adoption of tools of production, mobilization, etc., have been survival strategies and it is logically so. Unlike in the organized sector, where the capitalist organizes production for greater profit, in this sector there is not much of the cake left to struggle for. Of course, in the long run, the struggle for a greater part of the profit even in the organized sector becomes a fallacy because of the limits to growth, depletion of raw materials, etc. Finance capital begins to play a greater role among the factors of production, leaving labour on the defensive. But, in the unorganized sector, where the dependence is directly on the natural resource for a livelihood, the demand on the State is for greater protectionism. This demand has to be accompanied by an attitude of conservation as well. This, in its very essence, demands a reorganization of society and a rethinking of social values.

The struggle for survival itself heralds the call for the limits to growth. Development in this sector does not mean having more, producing more, etc. but controlling the pollution of the waters, maintenance of ecological balance, respect for the rejuvenation of stocks and re-establishing communitarian controls. These may sound romantic measures even to progressive thinkers today. No question is actually raised about the kinds of technology used and the processes of production itself.

The rate and pace at which technology develops today is also a factor of concern. In fishing, we speak about over-efficient technologies like trawling and purse-seining - nets which have the capacity to take all that comes in their reach without being selective. Or machines that produce nets so fast that people do not have the time to test them out before they flood the market and cause disaster in the fishery. The pace at

---

(1) A movement, now also political, to establish Hindu nationalism.

which change takes place, therefore, is faster than the change in life processes itself, and before people have even learnt to master one innovation, they are flooded with others. This disregard for time, or the race against time, also throws out of gear the processes of maturing -both physical and psychological. So, while new technological innovations disrupt all natural processes, with their speed, they also create numerous imbalances and contradictions between traditional and modern systems of knowledge which in their turn destabilize people and lead to insecurity. The culture that new technology imposes on people is often only superimposed on old knowledge systems that are resilient and slow to evolve. Consciousness processes in people evolve on a very different concept of time and all change has to take this into consideration. On the other hand, despite the fact that survival strategies today have forced fishermen to adopt the technologies that are over-efficient and destructive, there may be a possibility to help them question this in their own favour.

The new ecological consciousness that I speak about, and which relates to production of life-time and not technological time, will find more fertile soil in aspects of traditional consciousness. To the extent that mobilization processes are geared to people's control over resources and sustained development alternatives, then such consciousness processes are crucial in determining the ethical frame of reference and value base for new forms of organization. While I do not advocate a turning back of the clock of history, I am categorically stating that the pace of development should and has to be determined by the broad mass of people and not technology, taking into account the natural life cycles as against 'mastering' nature. While planning will certainly play an important role in determining priority sectors and allocation of resources, active participation of local people's organizations will have to determine production strategies. In fact, this is what people's movements are demanding today. They have reached a level of maturity, being able to determine how development in their sectors should take place. The State will have to find a new role of coordination to facilitate mutuality and transference of surplus. It is certainly not an easy task, but gone are the days when the State can hope to meet either the employment or basic needs of the growing population with its centralized thrust.

It is necessary here to indicate areas in which a conceptual rethinking will have to take place if the process of transformation has to integrate an alternative development process. The crux of the matter will be the stress on the need-based rather than the want-based economy, meeting the subsistence needs of the people. This is not a romantic proposition of going back to the past because producing for need is indeed a challenge to modern science. It is a challenge to the knowledge system of modern western science as also to technology. An acceptance of a new conceptual understanding also raises many ethical questions which cannot

be ignored. They cannot be divorced from the ongoing social processes. Only genuinely participatory processes will be able to answer these ethical questions which cannot be ignored. They cannot be divorced from the ongoing social processes. Only genuinely participatory processes will be able to answer these ethical questions in the right manner. In fact, if we go back to fisheries themselves, the very concept of production is a question. If fishing is an act of capture, then this is not production but hunting. If culture fishery as envisioned today is capital intensive and leads to greater privatization, then alienation from need is a natural consequence. This kind of production will not be an alternative. These conceptualizations of production keep women totally out of it. All their unpaid household labour is relegated to the realm of reproduction and if ever they can be, 'gainfully' employed then they are the labour banks that can easily be exploited.

The re-conceptualization of production, therefore, has to incorporate the element of nurture, which has at its focus the sustenance of life, rather than profit. If we look at production from this point of view, where nurture and sustenance of life are the prime objectives, then one also sees why and how the whole patriarchal domination in society has to be upturned. In fact, it is no make-belief that 'mal-development, as explained by Vandana Siva and other feminists, has been a result also of gender discrimination and male appropriation of the rightful role of women and subsistence in society. The task of nurturing the human being and meeting the subsistence of the family has been thrust on women for no rewards. Patriarchy has been the domination of nature, and therefore life, as the acme of its development, but this is what the growing numbers of the dispossessed, which include women, and therefore more than half of humankind, begin to question today.

Only by looking at fisheries development in the above context does speaking of women's rights makes sense. In fact fisheries development may be salvaged only if women's rights are taken seriously. When I speak here of women's rights I mean:

- a nurture approach to fisheries at large
- women's participation in the decision making process in the realm of primary production and in the development of the sector
- production of life and for life get basic priority and find first place in the hierarchy of values.

While this may be the large framework in which we speak about women's rights in the development of fisheries, there is no single charter of demands that is going to make achieving this possible. It will have to be a multi-pronged approach.

Firstly, the need for a wide consciousness within the fishworker movement itself. All fishermen's unions and associations should begin to have their women as members even if they are not engaged directly in fishing or post-harvest activities. This is where the division in so called "primary production" is perpetuated. Only if women and all the demands of the household become the concern of the unions, would production begin to be looked at differently. This would eventually encourage the nurture aspects of life too.

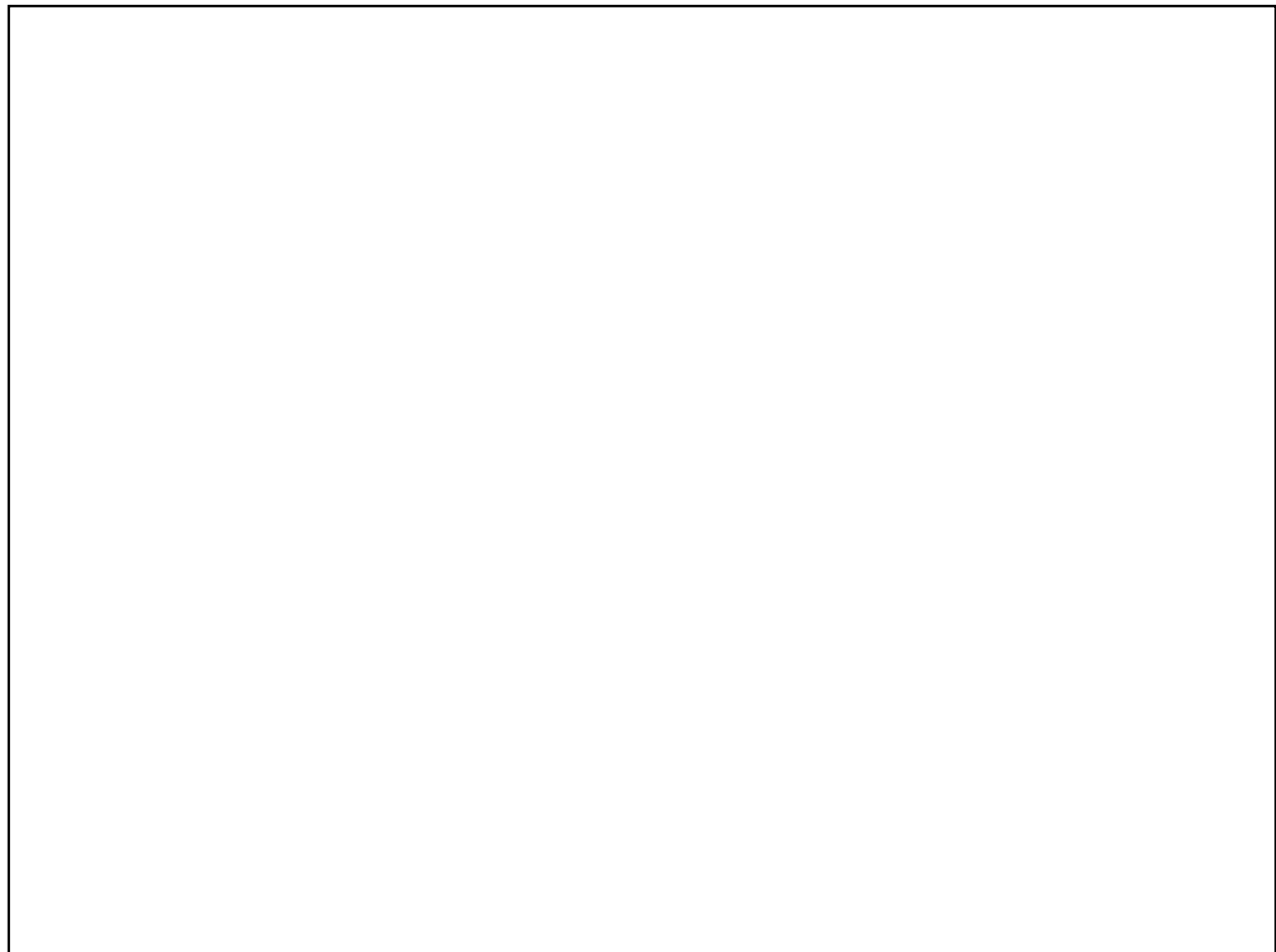
Secondly, those spaces which have all along been occupied by women in the production process should continue to be retained for them. These spaces vary from country to country—in some areas they are involved in capture but in most areas in post-harvest work. With the coming of modernisation they tend to be dislodged, and once ousted they will not be able to enter again. The planners have also to keep this in mind.

Thirdly, in areas where women have already become wage workers, their rights as workers have to be secured. Because of poor and desperate conditions women are used as contract labour and badly exploited. Efforts must be made to see that they are covered by

the Contract Labour Act and their life and work protected. They need legal protection.

Fourthly, there are all the problems of the women whose husbands work on the distant water fleets. These women are left alone to care for the family for long periods of time, not knowing where their husbands are and with no assurance of any remittances. The male workers themselves are badly exploited in this sector and while they have to be legally protected, other community efforts have to be organized to support the women who are left behind.

Returning to our point of departure, the tone of pessimism lies in the fact that the restructuring and globalization of our economy under pressure of international financial institutions will render all people's participatory processes and survival struggles futile. If the Earth Summit intends in some measure to set a new track record, then there may still be meaningful to speak of women's rights and fisheries development. The Women's Action Agenda 21, which was framed at the World Women's Congress for a healthy Planet in November 1991, includes many of these areas and should therefore receive support worldwide. □





# ON THE ISLANDS OF THE SOUTH-WEST INDIAN OCEAN

*Robert Fleurot*

There is a world of difference between the galawa (pirogue) of the Comoro Islands and the sonar-equipped fishing boat of Reunion, between the almost completely self-sufficient lifestyle of fishermen in Madagascar and the consumer society of those in the Seychelles. Nevertheless, these extremes delimit one and the same sector: artisanal fishing in the south-west Indian Ocean.

Resource and environmental management, improved fishing techniques, access to credit, middlemen, provisions, marketing and social coverage are so many problems facing artisanal fishermen. These problems-when they are not seen fatalistically and when fishermen confront them-are the starting point for a development process that seeks to raise the quality of life of fishermen and achieve technological and economical progress that leads to better production and marketing conditions. This will to confront the sector's major problems leads groups of fishermen to seek training and to act in different kinds of organizations, such as trade unions, associations, cooperatives.

## **The Comoro islands and Madagascar**

Artisanal fishing in the Comoro Islands and Madagascar grew under the impetus of the economic crisis. These are the countries with the most fishermen. Statistics show that the Comoro Islands have 8000 and Madagascar 52000. Of the countries in the south-west Indian Ocean, only Madagascar has lake fishermen. Non-commercial fishing is widespread in both countries, with a practically self-sufficient lifestyle where money hardly circulates. Fishermen's organizations are almost non-existent in the Comoro Islands. In Madagascar, on the contrary, fishermen have been willing to organize for the last 15 years. There is a trade union in the rural highlands that has organized a certain number of fishermen, but its radius of action is geographically limited.

The development of fishermen's organizations on the coast has been linked to the development of the Apostolate of the Sea. The first association of ocean fishermen was launched in 1976 in Tamatave. It has

been active ever since and continues to organize a good number of Tamatave's fishermen. Its main objective is to protect and promote the interests of the fishermen and their families. This association has been active mostly in these spheres: improved fishing techniques, engines and motors, access to credit so that fishermen can own their work instruments, a small workshop to service and repair motors, a solidarity fund and a course on navigation. Their catch is marketed through an association of fishermen's wives, who, moreover, are also active in women's issues.

Tamatave's organizational experience serves as a stimulus and a beacon to extend this spirit to other ports. Thanks to contacts with members of the fishermen's association in Tamatave, an original project to develop artisanal fishing began in 1984 in Antalaha, a small fishing port on the north-east coast. Under the guidance of a supervisor, students from the upper grades of a secondary school organize a fishing pre-cooperative, with the help of four fishermen. For two years, 16 young Madagascans go to Mauritius to learn fishing and boat building techniques.

In 1988, with the help of the Apostolate of the Sea, an instructional boat was launched at Tamatave. This boat trains not only the fishermen of Tamatave and the surrounding area, but also those of the north-east coast.

Tamatave gave the initial impulse and today most associations of fishermen and their wives are found on the north-east coast, and also at Diego, Nossi-Be and Majunga.

## **The Seychelles**

In the Seychelles, where per capita fish consumption is 80 kilograms a year and where a relatively high percentage of the population are fishermen (1100 out of 65000), artisanal fishermen are unorganized. They can, however, market their catch through the Seychelles Marketing Board, which has cold storage facilities, sells fish mostly to hotels and exports the surplus to markets in Europe, Reunion and Mauritius. After the restoration of a multi-party political system, the fishermen of the Seychelles may begin to organize in the not too distant future.

## Reunion and Mauritius

The fishermen of Reunion organized the Association of Artisanal Fishermen of Reunion (APAR) in 1971, and those of Mauritius the Association of Professional Fishermen of Mauritius (APPIM) in 1968. The purpose of these two organizations is to defend and promote fishermen's interests.

In Reunion, an overseas department of France, high costs of social benefits have been one starting point for action and have helped the creation of APAR. These costs, considered too high by the fishermen, are constantly referred to, even though they recognize a clear improvement in this area. Indeed, subsidies from the State and local organizations have made it possible to considerably lower the costs to be paid by the fishermen.

Two other issues are among the most frequent demands of artisanal fishermen: unfair competition from sport fishermen and licenses to run motor boats- Sport fishermen, often retired persons or government workers, create a parallel market when they sell their catch, thus providing unfair competition. Several actions have been taken to correct this situation, but this kind of fraud continues.

The fishermen of Reunion have problems in passing the test to run motor boats. Many of them are practically illiterate and fail the written test. One solution offered has been to exempt from the obligation to have a license those with experience and who have passed the practical tests. Not all young fishermen accept this solution.

Besides APAR, five other associations seek to defend fishermen: the Association of Wives of Ocean Fishermen, begun in 1979; the Professional Association of Fishermen of Reunion, begun in 1980; the Trade Union of Ocean Fishermen of the Democratic French Confederation of Labour, in 1981; the Trade Union of Fishermen of Reunion, 1982, and the Association for Mutual Aid and Solidarity of Ocean Fishermen of the West, 1983-

In the past, there was very little communication between these organizations. Over the years, several of them have become relatively inactive and never assemble their members. Only two are still fairly active. Even though they are recognized and consulted by the State and local organizations, they have problems in mobilizing their membership. One of these associations now has ageing leadership, most of them retired fishermen. All their attempts to organize, be it for supplies or marketing, end up as failures.

In Reunion, the State and local organizations invest massively in boats and new equipment, providing between 50% and 65% of total investment. Fishermen get tax-free gasoline. Despite all the benefits granted

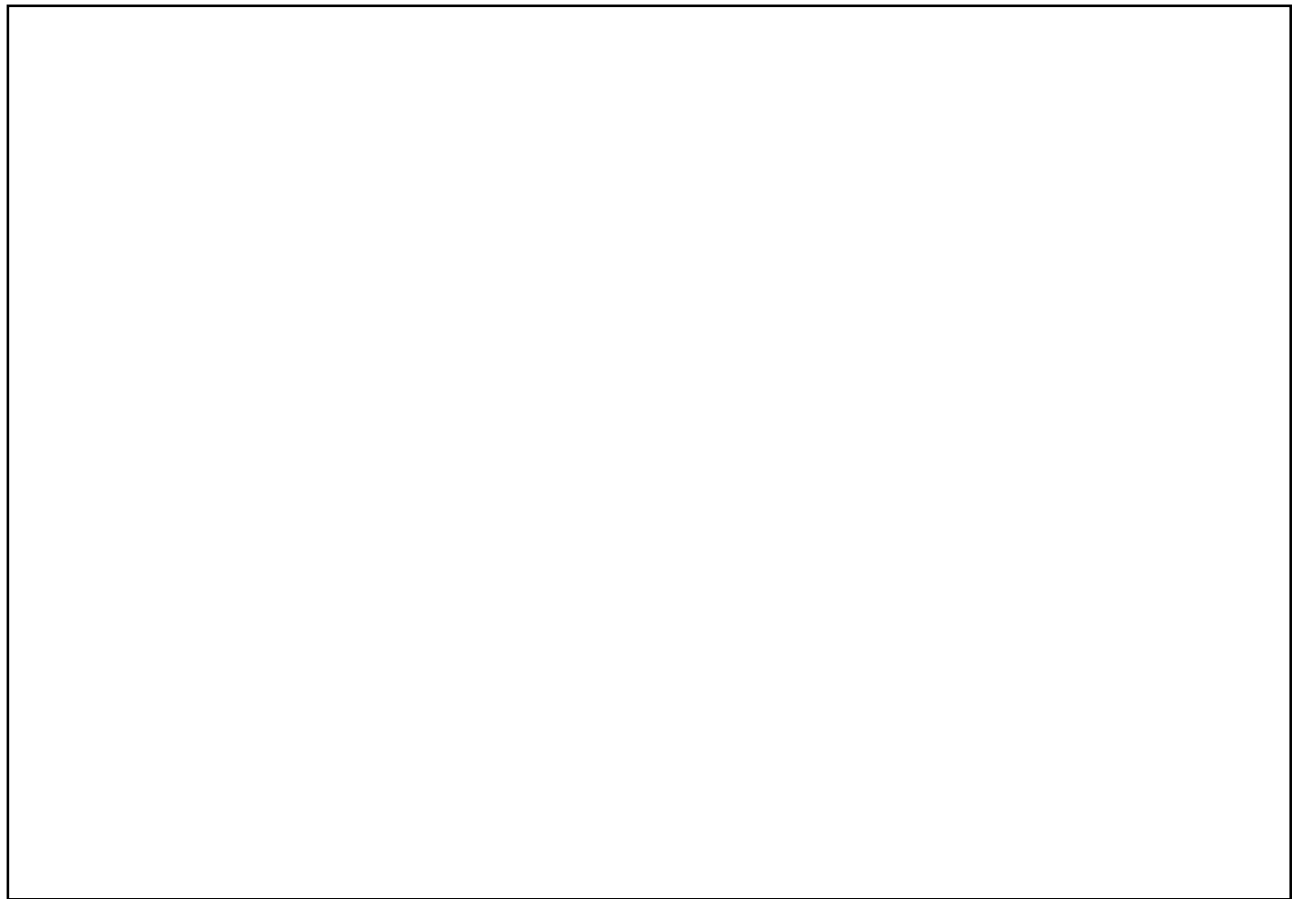
and the interest displayed by the authorities, artisanal fishing is in crisis. This can be seen in the fact that the number of boats has gone from 314 in 1980 to 241 in 1990, and the number of registered fishermen from 487 in 1980- to 404 in 1990. Fishing is difficult, owing to rough seas and an inhospitable coast, small fishing areas and a lack of a diversity of fishing methods, artisanal fishing is condemned to remain marginal.

In Mauritius, at the time when APPIM was just coming into existence, the dragging of the corral bottom of the lagoon for lime, spread of dynamite fishing, abuse of illegal seine-nets, development of underwater fishing and the exploitation of middlemen were some of the factors that led Dr. A. Morel, an international expert who came to study the fishing sector of Mauritius, to say that "fishermen were just below beggars".

APPIM's first actions led the government to review laws concerning basket and seine-net fishing and to promulgate stricter laws to more effectively counteract fraud, thereby allowing fishing resources to replenish themselves. Another series of actions (1975-1978) led at first to a rise in the price of fish set by the government, and later to a liberalization of prices.

Over the years, the will to struggle for rights and the degree of combativeness faded as self-help service organizations came to the fore. To confront on the one hand the problems experienced by fishermen in obtaining credit to buy and renew their work instruments, and on the other hand the exploitation by middlemen, APPIM, with the help of the Institute for Development and Progress launched in 1976 projects that made it possible to free fishermen from that exploitation and maintain their independence. Afterwards, APPIM set up a mutual aid society to help families meet the funeral costs of their members (1978), a saving plan to purchase work instruments (1981) and a small service to provide supplies (1988). Despite all its work, only 10% to 15% of the professional fishermen of Mauritius belong to APPIM.

Around 1976 and 1977, cooperatives began to become popular among artisanal fishermen. Two "Maisons de Pecheurs" were constructed -centers for fishermen, each with a meeting hall, cold storage facilities and a small workshop for maintenance of motors. Six twelve-meter boats were also launched. Refrigerated trucks made it possible to market the catch according to modern standards. Towards the 1980s, an instructional boat was available to update the training of fishermen. Today, fishermen have little interest in cooperatives. The boats were sold to individuals; the "maisons de pecheur" are practically unused, the instructional boat has little activity. The cooperatives can survive with difficulty, owing to the monopoly that allows them to buy a certain quota of the pelagic fish offloaded by the foreign boats who dock in Port Louis and then sell them.



Recently, in 1990, the government of Mauritius began a program to aid and support fishermen. It offers all fishermen tax breaks on the purchase of motors, nets and life-jackets, benefits during periods of bad weather, introduction of new fishing techniques, like the apparatus to concentrate fish, life insurance, credit facilities, scholarships for their children, a pension plan and a development fund for artisanal fishing projects. A standing committee, composed of officials from different ministries, members of APPIM and cooperatives and representatives of the Development Bank, has been established to oversee the carrying out of a variety of

measures taken to ensure follow-up. The plan goes beyond the demands expressed in different memoranda submitted to the Ministry of Fisheries.

The context which gave birth to the trade unions, fishermen's associations and cooperatives in the islands of the south-west Indian Ocean has changed considerably, and the will to organize has weakened. One thing is certain: artisanal fishing will never develop unless fishermen actively participate in organizations. A second wind, adapted to the new situation, is urgently needed. "For new wine, new wineskins". □

# ICSF 1984-1992

## INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF FISHWORKERS AND SUPPORT GROUPS

*Rome, Italy 4-8 July 1984*

### Introduction

Fishermen and fishworkers, and the groups that support them in several countries, especially in the third world, decided to meet to exchange their experiences and analyze their problems, at a time when aspects and problems were being discussed to define strategies for the future development and management of fisheries.

The international conference of fishermen, fishworkers and support groups took place in Rome, 4-8 July 1984. Some 100 people from 34 different countries participated. Close to half of them were fishworkers from every continent: men and women who work as crew members, artisanal fishermen, processors and sellers. Many were artisanal workers operating in coastal or continental waters. The support groups were organizations who identified with the cause of fishworkers.

### Nature and objectives of the conference

This event was and will be historic. The main actors in the development of fisheries have been excluded from discussions and decision-making at the political level and in concrete projects. For this reason, a process was launched to develop international collaboration and solidarity. This process will make it possible for these fishworkers to overcome the obstacles that prevent them from actively participating in constructing their own future.

This was an initiative of people who were not waiting for an invitation from international organizations and who took their own decisions. They decided to meet on their own initiative, in their own style, with their own program and work methods. This conference was not conceived of as an intellectual experience. It was a vital human experience in which spontaneity, life experiences and all levels of self-expression played a predominant role.

This was a committed conference, emotionally meaningful and with an existential weight to which serious-

ness was added. It is the direct result of the fact that the participants have lived the problems they discussed; this explains their interest in finding solutions for those problems. It is one more stage in the process of struggle and collective action. Based on direct, local-level experience, the conference was an attempt to go beyond national and regional limits. The main concerns of the conference were:

- share concrete experiences and life;
- acquire greater knowledge of the problems faced and find solutions with the help of similar organization from other places;
- understand better the mechanisms that operate at a worldwide level;
- develop alternatives that ensure the future survival of fishworkers and their re-appropriation of the sea;
- consider strategies for coordinating activities and developing solidarity at both the regional and international level.

### Conclusions of the conference

- The artisanal fisheries sector has many advantages and solid elements that make its development recommendable:
  - o it entails local work and technical capacity;
  - o it saves capital and fuel (especially if out-board motors are combined with sails);
  - o its technology, organizational forms and management are well known to local communities;
  - o the distance between human settlement along the shore impedes large-scale projects that have undesirable political and social consequences;
  - o it does not lead to huge differences in income;



- o it is generally well adapted to tropical aquatic systems (there are many species with small quantities dispersed throughout coastal waters) and, when their techniques are potential destructive of fishing zones, local fishing communities have convenient ways and regulations to prevent undue exploitation of their resources;
- o far from being a stagnated sector, it has proven over the last two decades to be innovative and manageable, which allows for a high degree of efficiency;
- o it is highly flexible;
- o it is well integrated in small-scale markets and their distribution channels, and undeniably efficient. Therefore, it is incorrect to defend the development of artisanal fishing only for social reasons or for the benefit of those involved. Artisanal fishing is to be recommended for economic, technical, ecological, organizational reasons as much as for social reasons.
- In coming decades—as long as there is no rapid creation of employment nor more production alternatives found for the poor—there is no hope of alleviating the situation of undernourished masses in many third world countries, unless techniques and organizational forms are used that keep the price of basic products down. With low costs for catching, preserving, transporting and distributing fish, artisanal fishing is particularly well suited to provide these masses with low-priced proteins. More effort should go into developing efficient artisanal fishing instead of displacing it by indiscriminate support for industrial fishing.
- The future of artisanal fishing is threatened by the penetration of industrial fishing boats into coastal waters, and by the fact that some national governments which share interests with foreign countries remain passive about the phenomenon. The recent development of highly sophisticated technology for locating and catching fish, together with governments' inefficient protective measures, render overfishing a real threat, especially for third world countries that have species with high commercial value
- In many countries, industrialization, growing tourism and uncontrolled urban expansion have caused serious degradation of aquatic ecosystems, due to pollution and other harmful effects.
- Many internationally supported fishery-development projects fail because of a lack of people's participation in conceiving, preparing and implementing programs through their fishermen's and fishworkers' organizations.
- States are sometimes opportunistic and manipulatory in their aid programs and development projects for fishermen. Strong social organizations make it possible to influence such programs so that they truly help artisanal fishermen.
- Working conditions for those employed in fisheries and industrial plants are unstable and exploitative:
  - o work contracts do not provide security;
  - o social security benefits are non-existent;
  - o working conditions are miserable;
  - o wages are low and the piece-work system is used excessively.

## Recommendations

- We, fishermen and fishworkers from 34 countries of the world, express our solidarity with fishermen and fishworkers who struggle for survival and often lay down their lives for their cause throughout the world.
- We recommend to governments and we call for them to respond to the demands of local fishermen's and fishworkers' organizations, by:
  - o granting them an exclusive zone reserved for artisanal fishing in coastal waters;
  - o not allowing technologies to destroy the equilibrium of ecosystems, especially because of overfishing or pollution; and by stopping the use of chemical products prohibited in industrialized countries;
  - o inviting local fishermen's organizations to participate in decision-making and in applying regulations;
  - o respecting guarantees.
- We recommend that third world governments establish instances of international regional co-operation in order to ensure a long-term management of fishery resources.
- We recognize the essential contribution of women to the development of artisanal fishing and the industrialization of fisheries, and we call for measures to be taken in order to:
  - o protect their participation in the production process;
  - o lighten their work load;
  - o encourage a change of attitudes and values leading to their greater participation at all levels of decision-making, under the same conditions as other participants;
  - o introduce improved techniques to help them in their work.
- We recognize and value the highly positive contribution of non-governmental organizations in devel-

oping technology and participatory forms of resource management, which ensure the future of artisanal fishing.

- Priority should be given to reducing dependence on foreign capital, equipment and knowledge.
- We request that all scientists who recognize the importance of conserving and strengthening the relations between humankind and nature take a clear stand and actively support local fishermen's and fishworkers' organizations, by helping them to deepen their knowledge and capacitating them to assume their rights over the sea and aquatic resources.

## Means of action

At the end of this conference, we take the decision to establish in each region a network of contacts that will have the following functions:

- Facilitate communication within each sub-region between groups of workers in everything concerning:
  - o the nature of their problems;
  - o their struggles and actions to defend themselves;
  - o their specific needs for technical, financial and educational assistance;
  - o the strengthening of solidarity through interactions at different levels (meetings, seminars, exchange of written information, etc.).
- At least one representative of each network should participate in an interregional coordination committee. This committee should study every concrete proposal of action that could support efforts of fishworkers at their respective national and regional levels.
- Make efforts to establish a solid organization of the masses at the level of fishermen's and fishworkers' local communities.
- Take the necessary measures so that small industries and other fishermen's associations acquire representative status in the International Labour Organization.

# FIRST MEETING OF THE FISHWORKERS OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

*Valparaiso, Chile, 27 June to 1 July 1988.*

Our meeting was held in the port of Valparaiso, Chile, 27 June-July, organized by FETRINECH and FETPCHAP, Chilean and Peruvian fishermen's federations, with support from the following NGOs from the same countries: CESLA, ECONIN, PET, IPEMIN and the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF).

For the first time in history, fishermen from trawlers, industrial and commercial boats, artisanal fishermen and fish-processing plant workers from Peru, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Colombia, Costa Rica, Honduras and Guatemala, representing more than half a million fishworkers, came together for a meeting like this. Italian and Spanish fishworkers also sent delegations, and the ILO sent a delegation to participate with observer status. Some of the agreements reached:

- According to official figures, 12 of the 16 million metric tons of fish landed in 1986 were used for fish-meal and fish-oils. Another three million were used in export products, and pitilessly, only what was left, some one million tons went to feed the region.

What is most serious about that situation is that it took place at a time when more than 70 million people in Latin America and the Caribbean were undernourished or simply dying from hunger.

As fishworkers, we proclaim that we will not rest till we humanize this activity, that is to say, till it becomes the main source of animal proteins needed by the poorest of the poor and the most needy in our region, guaranteeing the most basic of all rights, the right to food.

- As fishermen or fish-processing plant workers, we declare that extraction is highly irrational and predatory. Management and administration of resources are not based on serious scientific research. To the contrary, they only seek to increase production and profits.

We will fight to defend hydro-biological resources and for good management, in which scientific criteria are used for national fisheries policy, which we fishermen have helped to elaborate and adopt. We call for fisheries laws for managing the sector, ministries of fisheries where they do not already exist, and for the governments of neighboring countries to sign agreements concerning management of resources common to both countries.

Most fishermen are artisanal, with 400000 workers and more than 100000 boats spread throughout the region.

Their operations, with a few exceptions, are threatened by industrial fleets, tuna boats and refrigeration ships. We therefore declare that an exclusive area should be established in all countries, not only to allow for the normal reproduction of species, but also to ensure the working and living conditions of our artisanal colleagues.

As fishworkers, aware that this is the most forgotten economic sector, we proclaim that we will fight so that they have technical support and credit for their training and renovation of their equipment. Also, to avoid abuses that arise from shipowners classifying industrial and artisanal boats, we state that a boat should be classified as artisanal not only on the basis of capacity, skills and equipment, but also and especially so that its crew not depend on someone like a shipowner.

- We fishworkers declare that we will fight against every open-seas policy and against everything that harms the sovereignty of our nations, and also against the free operation of any kind of boat that comes into our waters, whatever its flag, because that is the most corrosive expression of the transnational corporations of the seas. That means we also denounce the false nationalizations taking place in our region by changing flags.

We are not opposed to the operations of trawler fleet factory ships when they work under agreements, with concessions and licenses regulated by technical and scientific criteria, that is, their work is regulated by the availability of the species. We will not allow factory ships to operate with foreign fishing officers and with less than 80% of the crew being local seamen; and for boats under local flags, we demand 100% local crews.

- We denounce the innumerable and at times criminal contamination of our rivers, lakes and seas. Industrial plants, mining complexes, agricultural pesticides and often urban waste are discarded into bodies of water. The worst examples of this are the nuclear explosions in the Pacific.

If the great powers are uninterested in the life of our seas, and if entrepreneurs and governments are

also indifferent to the ecological balance of our sea and continental waters, we fishworkers state that we will launch as many campaigns as needed to guarantee the existence of species of marine fauna at the service of civilization. We will even bring those responsible to the International Court of Justice in The Hague.

- We fishworkers began to fish as children, and in most cases, we work till we are no longer able. Practically all the fishermen in the region have no assistance, retirement or social security system. Rights as basic as a daily and weekly work schedule; obligatory day-off once a week; holidays; compensation; retirement; insurance against accidents, occupational and other illnesses are all unknown to fishworkers.

Fishing is still today the most risky of all jobs, seven times more so than, mining. Therefore we will fight for the obligatory incorporation of systems of assistance, retirement and social security for artisanal fishermen; rights financed by 1% of the value of fisheries exports and for which the State and we artisanal fishermen, with solidarity, will set up social security funds in our harbors, fishing communities or ports. We will also fight for retirement at age 50, that companies provide accident insurance, for a 48-hour work week, weekends off, at least eight hours of rest a day and paid holidays that can be taken.

In an activity like ours where hundreds have died on the job, we will fight for our boats to have obligatory systems and equipment for the safety of human life on board, for air support and hospital boats to provide first aid and for partite hygiene and safety committees in fishing companies.

- The exercise of trade union, work and human rights for the fishworkers of the region is related to our present force and organization and the form of government in our countries. In countries under dictatorships, even fishing cooperatives are considered subversive. In most of the countries of Central America and the Caribbean trade union activity is persecuted and prohibited, and engaging in it means risking their lives for the fishermen in those countries. They are sometimes forced to work without provisions. Anyone who demands their rights while working is thrown overboard. They are considered to be guerrillas or drug traffickers and are jailed in neighboring countries. Common criminals attack

their boats, killing any fisherman who resists.

We will continue our struggle till international public opinion becomes aware that in that part of the region even the most basic human rights are violated, and we will not stop till these colleagues recover their condition of human beings and the dictatorships that support this situation are overthrown. For this reason, this first meeting has established a working commission composed of delegates from Argentina, Chile, Peru and Uruguay, who in the following months will knock on every door they need to and personally travel to those countries to register our complaint, in representation of more than 500000 fishworkers.

- We want to express our militant solidarity with fishworker movements in Africa, Asia and in all the countries of the third world, with which we identify and we hope to unite for the greater organizational force of fishworkers throughout the world. The same is true for those peoples who are struggling against dictators or for their liberation.
- The meeting established a permanent commission with three delegates from each of the participating countries (one for industrial fishermen, another for artisanal and a third for industrial plant workers). It also established an executive committee composed of one delegate each from Peru, Chile and Argentina, to carry out the campaigns the meeting decided on, edit a quarterly bulletin at the regional level and convoke the second meeting of Latin American and Caribbean fishworkers, scheduled for the first week of July of next year in Peru. The meeting also discussed and adopted a proposed set of statutes to be presented to the grassroots membership. They will be on the agenda of the second meeting and provide the clearest expression of the aspirations of thousands of workers: Latin American and Caribbean Fishworkers Union-UTRAPESCAL

*For the unrestricted defense of our resources.*

*For the recovery of our dignity.*

*For the respect of human, trade union and employment rights.*

*For the struggle against hunger and malnutrition.*

*For the permanent executive committee.*



# LISBON RECOMMENDATIONS

*Lisbon, Portugal, 1989.*

- The basic right of fishworkers to form their own professional organization must be the cornerstone of small-scale fisheries development.

Government and international bodies must recognize fishworker's organizations and respect their autonomy.

- The quality of the environment is a major condition for ensuring that employment, food and revenue are available for coastal populations.

Protection of the sea and the coast is a priority.

Fishworker's organizations and governments should participate jointly in the formulation of coastal planning and protection of aquatic resources.

- Resource management must be carried out jointly by fishworker's organizations and governments.

The resource must remain a collective property.

Resource management methods should be an integral part of an overall fisheries policy that takes into account social, economic and ecological objectives.

- The roles of woman in the fisheries sector are recognized and must be supported.

Their capacity to ensure the defense and promotion of their economic, social and Cultural interests must be strengthened. Special attention should be paid to the living conditions of fish-workers children.

- Scientific research must develop a capacity in consideration, and respect their culture.

Scientists who recognize the importance of the environment should commit themselves to support

fishworker's organizations in order to them defend their rights of access to aquatic resources.

- Access of foreign fishing vessels to the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) must in every case be approved and controlled by local fish-worker's organizations.

A coastal zone must be reserved for small scale fishing.

Foreign vessels fishing in the EEZ must be equipped with satellite detection devices so that their can be controlled. The extension of this method of control to the national and international levels should be discussed within the framework of the United Nations.

- International fish marketing should be reoriented in such a way to give precedence to the interests of fishworkers and of Third World populations.

Part of the revenue accruing from fishery agreements should be used for the organization of local and regional markets.

- Blue Europe must be first and foremost a Europe of fishworkers.

Joint evaluations of the impacts of the Blue Europe policies and fishery agreements with the ACP (Africa, Caribbean and Pacific) states' must be carried out by the European Commission, ACP states and by fishworker's organizations in the ACP states. The same recommendations apply to the North Atlantic region.

- A policy of co-operation has to be implemented in negotiation with fishworker's organizations from the North the South in response to an interdependent world.

# GLOBAL FISHERIES TRENDS AND THE FUTURE OF FISHWORKERS

Bangkok, Thailand, 22-27 January 1990

The Conference met at a juncture when the trends in the fisheries sector point to the imminent likelihood of major changes at the international level. These emerging changes arise not only from within the fisheries sector, but are also precipitated by pressures of ongoing development processes in the other sectors of the economy. The cumulative effect of these changes, in the long-run, threatens to destroy irreparably the aquatic cycle which is the basis of life on our planet.

## Global trends

During in the last three decades there has been a steady increase in the world demand for fish. This tendency is predicted to continue and even to accelerate during the coming decades. Consequently, there has been tremendous effort to expand the production of fish to match this rising demand. This effort has taken place at a time when most maritime countries extended their Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and thus acquired new rights and responsibilities for the management and development of their resources.

As a result of the new Law of the Sea signed in 1982, industrialized countries have been increasingly concerned with maintaining access of their long distance fleets to the waters off the coast of developing countries as well as with ensuring a steady supply of fishery products from the Third World. The latter was often achieved by enhancing the productive potential of the local fisheries through the provision of the international finance, both public and private.

This development was particularly visible in the field of shrimp aquaculture in developing countries and in the rapid increase of fishing agreements between Northern and Southern countries—especially between the European Economic Community and the African countries.

Along side these efforts to enhance fish production, there are increasing threats to the aquatic eco-system due to the developments which have occurred in the other sectors of the economy. Indiscriminate economic growth strategies have resulted in excessive pressure on natural resources, particularly in coastal regions, and in growing amounts of effluents from industries and modern agriculture which affect the biological productivity of rivers, estuaries and coastal seas. The anarchic development of tourism along coastal areas provides a striking illustration of the detrimental effects

which such profit oriented strategies have on fisherfolk and fisheries.

These trends have accentuated in the 1980's because of the external debt problem of many developing countries. Indeed, the need to service their debts in the context of a world economic crisis has forced them to plunder their natural resources and to neglect the basic need of large segments of their people in order to earn foreign exchange quickly.

## Issues in fisheries management and development

In the fisheries sector, export oriented strategies as well as the provision of access rights to industrial fishing fleets, have resulted in enhanced competition and conflicts with local fisheries, particularly with small-scale fishing communities.

These small-scale fishing communities form a particularly vulnerable segment of the fisheries sector due to a variety of reasons. They are by and large powerless against physical intrusions in waters over which they had traditional rights. Poor access to credit, modern inputs and know-how have prevented them from upgrading their fishing technologies. The political and social marginalisation resulting from their low status and lack of organisation continue to reinforce all the above vulnerabilities.

In the case of some countries, the small-scale fishing communities have been able to get their governments to reorient fisheries policies. In other cases, they have succeeded in modernising their artisanal technologies which has enhanced their ability to compete with industrial fleets. Unfortunately, this latter modernisation process in many countries has been only a short-term solution to the problems of these communities. This is so because fishery resources are already fully or even over-exploited when these measures are adopted.

Fishworkers from developing countries working on the industrial fleet are also victims of exploitation. Their own work and service conditions are abysmally poor and they are faced with the constant threat of dismissal.

## Fishworker's organizations

Collective action of fishworkers are necessary for monitoring fishing effort, *controlling* access to the sea and

managing and rejuvenating the resources. It is also a prerequisite for performing a large variety of economic, social and political functions. This include cooperative organisation for purchase of inputs and sale of outputs; improving access to credit and insurance; developing appropriate technologies and related skills; and for health and education measures.

A new genre of fishworkers' organisations have emerged during the last decades in some countries (e.g. India, Philippines, Chile). These organisations have focused their attention on, and directed their struggle at, ensuring that the State takes steps to ensure that appropriate fishery management measures are enacted and enforced.

However, it must be admitted that in many instances the same organisations are much weaker in their ability to cope with the self-defeating character of certain fishing methods and the anarchic increases in fishing capacity aimed initially at maintaining their incomes.

Therefore a process of education and awareness-building is a basic prerequisite for these fishermen and their new organisations. Equally important in this context is the need to revive and reinstate the encyclopedic knowledge which many of these communities possess about the aquatic eco-system. This cultural knowledge should serve as an important basis for devising ways and means of controlling and reorienting effort and rejuvenating fishery resources.

Attempts by fishworkers to federate at the national level should be actively promoted. However, where such national federations are multi-sectorial, the small-scale fishworkers are likely to be marginalised within the larger structures. Such inter-sectorial problems should be openly discussed.

## Aquaculture

In Latin America and Asia, coastal aquaculture has witnessed a phenomenal growth during the last decade. Export-oriented aquaculture, it now appears, has created severe problems which jeopardise the livelihood of global peasant and fishing communities and in the long term will affect the sustainability of the natural resource base.

In the case of shrimp aquaculture in tropical countries we see the destruction of large tracts of estuarian and mangrove areas which form the natural breeding grounds of many species of aquatic life. Often, shrimp aquaculture is undertaken at the expense of the production of the staple foods such as rice and fish spe-

cies which were formerly locally consumed. After a few years of continuous cultivation, the fields are polluted owing to accumulation of toxic organic and inorganic substances.

Since much of the demand for shrimp comes from a handful of industrialised countries the increase in shrimp production on a global scale causes a fall in the world market prices. This quickly affects not only those involved in aquaculture but is also bound to affect negatively the incomes of all small-scale fishworkers involved in capture-shrimp fisheries in developing countries.

However less intensive forms of aquaculture development can provide opportunities for fishworkers communities to manage fish resources in the area where they live to obtain new sources of income and to enhance food production and employment. These require that such communities are given exclusive rights to control the water bodies and the surrounding environment.

## Perspectives for the future

- To face the future, it is imperative to emphasize the need for a more holistic understanding of the intricate relationship between the aquatic environment and the total biosphere of our planet.
- As beacons of the sea, fishworkers have a special role and responsibility in furthering this understanding.
- To achieve this holistic understanding there is an increasing need for fishworkers and their supporters to relate more closely to other deprived peoples whose survival is also affected by environmental damage, which as the case of fisheries, is hastened by development processes that pay little heed to the rhythms of nature.
- These new alliances to protect the environment should not detract fishworkers either from the demands within the fisheries sector or from the autonomous functioning of their organizations.
- Sustainability of development requires that we move from exploitative to nurturing relationship with nature. Nurture and sustenance have always been the role of women in fishing communities. This role has often resulted in them being marginalized in their own communities. Only their active participation in the economy and a recognition of its centrality, will ensure that such new relationships with nature emerge.

# PROPOSALS ADOPTED AT THE FIFTH MEETING OF MONAPE

*Olinda, Brazil, 27 October 1991.*

- That exclusive areas be established for artisanal fishing, as a way to guarantee the reproduction of species and the restoration of fish stocks.
- That the organization of artisanal fishermen, together with universities and government technical agents, regulate the use of these areas, and that they be managed by organizations of fishermen.
- That fishing seasons prohibitions for certain species be determined at the local and regional level on the basis of studies, with the participation of artisanal fishermen; that alternative activities be established for the off-season by new technicians, and that unemployment insurance be provided.
- That access to Navy land be guaranteed and ceded to artisanal fishermen; that they be given preference in obtaining jurisdiction over those lands, recognizing their social interest for effects of expropriation and establishment of groups of fishermen, through legal measures that guarantee the collective use of those areas.
- That a new fishery law be elaborated and environmental legislation reviewed, with special attention given to the state of the environment, fish species and artisanal fishermen.
- That the current concept of areas of environmental protection be revised to allow artisanal fishermen to use natural resources (land and aquatic), guaranteeing their historic right to remain in their traditional areas.
- That monitoring mechanisms effectively prevent the invasion of industrial fishing in our artisanal fishing areas, thus avoiding destruction of the environment and our work implements.
- In the face of innumerable problems (industrial pollution, land clearing, oil spills, among others it was proposed that:
  - That organizations of fishermen, along with other worker organizations, develop their own instruments and mechanisms to receive compensation from the government for the damage caused to the environment by companies that pollute, through:
    - o indemnization
    - o elimination of the source of pollution
    - cleaning up the affected area.
  - Social movements can:
    - o demand that the government enforce legislation
    - o file suit on behalf of those affected by pollution;
    - o when sources of pollution are installed, that organizations participate in the struggle to prevent or at least diminish the environmental impact;
  - That MONAPE develop channels of constant communication with the national movement of those affected by dams, to search for common strategies for dealing with the social and environmental impact of damming rivers and lakes;
  - That MONAPE maintain communication with groups working against nuclear energy, with a view to protect the lives of artisanal fishermen in the areas of risk;
  - That MONAPE encourage environmental education for its members, recovering the culture and history of fishermen, the ways in which fishermen relate to their environment, and developing exchanges with other organizations connected with education, the popular movement and the environment.

# ICSF INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR/WORKSHOP

*Manila, Philippines, February 1-3, 1991*

## Recruitment and working conditions

- International and national pressure be put on governments to control recruitment activities in their countries so that proper contracts are signed and employers' liabilities are clearly defined, wages, rights and obligations of fish-workers are clearly stated, and copies given to them and their families in the language that they understand.

Governments put an end to illegal recruitment by private agencies and ensure that illegal recruiters are prosecuted in accordance with the law of the land.

- Countries adopt better recruitment policies which should include providing fishworkers with training to enhance their skills, help prevent accidents and facilitate encounters with other cultures.
- The basic right of every fishworker to have access to full information on the catch and to control its first sale be firmly upheld and crew members be informed about the real catch value as the basis of their earnings.
- We ought to denounce the injustice done to fishworkers who are supposed to be paid their overtime work by percentage of the catch, but are never informed about the tonnage and value of the catch.
- Proper action be taken to curb the unjust salaries given abusively to third world workers, taking advantage of their numbers in the labour market; the desire of fishing companies to include in their crews different nationalities in order to maximize their gain, divide the crew and avoid all legal obligation.
- The necessary steps be taken to ensure fish-workers proper and adequate accommodations, medical facilities, protective clothing and safety equipment while aboard DWVs.

## National and international laws

- National governments be asked to implement existing ILO standards and other conventions pertaining to the safety of fishworkers, S.O.L.A.S. and other conventions, such as Tremolino.

- Each country be urged to pass a fisheries act and fisheries code, taking into account the interest of all inland fishworkers and sea-going workers; the welfare of fishworkers and their families be given due consideration.
- The Taiwanese government be pressured to take suitable action to stop inhuman treatment aboard Taiwanese fishing fleets and ensure that proper contracts are signed and honoured; those responsible for violations of human rights aboard ships be punished; and proper compensation be given to families of those who are injured or killed at sea, be they national or overseas workers.
- To ensure a sustainable development, all governments be encouraged to regulate fishing activities so that proper management of resources may be established, and destructive methods like pacific gill-nets and abusive trawling be banned. Fishworker organizations be involved in designing, controlling and managing their marine resources.

## Organizing fishworkers

- Wherever there are national fishworker organizations, they be encouraged to look into the conditions and problems of fishworkers aboard DWVs and carry out actions to remedy their problems.
- National fishworker organizations present, DWV fishworkers' conditions to immigrant workers organizations and human rights groups for appropriate action.
- ICSF bring to the attention of recognized international trade unions like ITF and people's organizations the plight of third world fishworkers on DWVs.
- Linkages and exchange of information be established among fishworker organizations of different countries.

## Social and legal services

- ICSF identify and involve professional groups, social agencies and lawyers interested in helping fishworkers.
- ICSF explore the possibility of operating funds for legal and emergency needs of detained fishworkers and their families.

## Research and documentation

- ICSF begin to collect basic information on fish-workers and the DWV industry. This information which is already available in some institutions and organizations shall include the listing of industries, countries supplying/demanding labour, number of boats, systems of recruitment, accreditations, recruiting agencies, etc. This resolution also calls for an exchange of information among organizations.
- In-depth and continuing studies be conducted on the problems and conditions of fishworkers by national fishworker organizations.

## Training

- In-country and out-country programmes be drawn up by governments and institutions in areas pertaining to the development of fishing skills including the cultural, economic and political circumstances fishworkers are likely to encounter.

## Communication/education

- Extensive harnessing of media and other communication systems be promoted. Specific groups and institutions that are already actively involved in com-

munication work be identified and linkage with them be arranged. Examples of these organizations are the Apostolate the Sea and PCT Fishermen Service Centre (Taiwan)

- An exchange of instructional, informational and training materials be instituted. These materials also must include subjects on technical information concerning fishing, accident prevention, intercultural conditions, human rights, political situations, etc.
- A regular ICSF publication be put out
- Education and information put emphasis a value formation especially with respect to human rights and the promotion of relationship among individuals, sectors and countries.
- Environmental concerns and conservation resources be stressed in the education and the training of fishworkers.
- Fishworkers be given more opportunities to reflect and express themselves in meetings fora, outings and training lessons.

## SUPPORTING THE ICSF'S PROPOSALS

Development policies in Brazil have traditionally not respected nature, despite extensive legislation guaranteeing the preservation of the environment. This development brought a "progress" that victimized the majority of the population to the benefit of a privileged minority.

Given the serious environmental violence endured by fishermen (oil refineries, paperboard and alcohol factories, chemical pollution, toxic agricultural run-offs, dams, real estate speculation, clearing of mangroves, predatory fishing, etc.), the survival of artisanal fishing as a food producer is in danger.

Despite this situation, fishermen are not passive in the face of these injustices. They are mobilizing at the municipal, state and national level, promoting the proposals adopted at the National Meeting of Fishermen on the Environment, held 1-4 August 1990 and the Fifth National Meeting of Fishermen, held 23-27 October 1991.

In addition to environmental degradation, the Brazilian government favours entrepreneurial and industrial fishing to the detriment of artisanal fishing. Also, because no area is reserved for artisanal fishing, artisanal fishermen have to compete for fishing grounds with industrial boats of large companies.

Brazil's artisanal fishermen, in their Fifth National Meeting, adopted and assumed the "Charter of Basic Rights of the Artisanal Fishermen of the World", and also decided to send to the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers proposals for the document of the ICSF.

MONAPE, as a leader in the movement of artisanal fishermen, fully accepts the proposals of ICSF to be presented to the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development, understanding them to synthesize the concerns of the world's artisanal fishermen, and therefore a significant contribution to the movement in Brazil.

### **National Movement of Fishermen MONAPE**

The fishermen of Chile, represented by the National Confederation of Artisanal Fishermen of Chile (CONAPACH), express with this letter our support for this initiative and our hope that the heads of state adopt the proposals made by the working commissions for the defence of the rights of fishermen, especially the

right to a clean environment and just treatment.

The National Council of Artisanal Fishermen of Chile was founded in 1986. This Council supported efforts to organize at the local and regional level. It held three national conventions in four years, more than 10 regional meetings and conventions, attended international meetings and scientific events. CEDIPAC was founded in 1988 as a technical body and has carried out training courses for leaders, seminars and development projects. It has published eight issues of *La Caleta*, a CONAPACH's publication. At this time, CONAPACH is constituted as a National to the Artisanal Fishermen of Chile since 9 August 1990, it is comprised of 12 federations and more than 125 grassroots organizations. Its headquarters is located in Valparaiso.

The main conclusions of the three conventions held between 1986 and 1989 center on the following points:

- We request that organized fishermen be allowed to participate in decisions that affect their working conditions, especially the fisheries law, determination of seasons and prohibitions to fish certain species, credits and other problems.
- We ask the state to assume a subsidiary role in problems of retirement and social security. For this purpose, we postulate the need for a tax on fish exports. We propose that a social security system be established shortly, based on internal saving and payments by welfare departments of organizations for health care and pensions.
- We petition that systems be established to market at the national level and export, credits provided to improve the, infrastructure of the artisanal fleet, set up a network of refrigeration facilities, and provide support to transport products in good condition to local markets and export points.
- We seek to consolidate systems to train fishermen in business practices, especially the leaders, so that they can deal with marketing, organizing cooperatives, credits and institutional relations.
- We also agreed to establish a broad network of national and international institutional relations, especially with other like-minded organizations of fishermen, in order to fight to defend resources, establish commercial and technical links and broaden the social bases of a Latin American and international movement of fishermen.

Regional organizations, for their part, have set up trade unions, local or regional councils and, later on, trade union federations. These have actively participated in the formation of a national confederation, in national conventions, training courses organized by CEDIPAC and in distributing the review *La Caleta*.

Some development projects have also been launched, either for marketing, self-financing through aquaculture, or local projects for women's organizations, radio communications, services for the aged, marine products processing centers, trade union headquarters, etc. CONAPACH has contributed to these programs by submitting the projects for funding, training leaders, intervening on their behalf with authorities, and to other development activities and the defence of fishermen in parliament, especially when the fisheries law was being drafted. I would like to give a detailed account of our experience with this last point.

Fishing was opened to everyone during the last century, as a means to promote trade and shipping and regulated in 1819. In 1832 fish products were declared duty free as either imports or exports. In 1855 the Civil Code established that only Chileans and resident foreigners could fish in territorial waters. In 1931 a decree was issued regulating fishing activities. It was in effect up till 1991. 1952 was the year of the Declaration of Santiago, in which the governments of Chile, Peru and Ecuador established that their sovereignty extended up to 200 nautical miles from their respective coasts. This gave rise to new regulations in the form of degrees, but without a definitive legal codification.

The application of a free-market economic policy brought with it a series of pressures to eliminate legal barriers, quotas and restrictions on fishing in general. A new decree was made in 1980 eliminating these obstacles, immediately setting off a race to exploit Chile's marine resources, and in some cases even leading to overinvestment in equipment in some fisheries.

The United Nations Convention for the Law of the Sea established the exclusive economic zone in 1982, and stated the rights and obligations of coastal states, especially for the management of the ocean's live resources. In 1986, law 18565 established a territorial sea of 12 miles, a control zone of 24 miles and an exclusive economic zone of 200 miles.

We artisanal fishermen have benefitted from a series of legal provisions, such as duty-free imports of fishing equipment, exemption from income tax, a reserved zone one mile from the coast, etc.

The modernization of Chilean fisheries called for a new harmonized legal code. For this reason, in 1988 an initiative of the military government, elaborated by the Ministry of Finance, launched a heated discussion. The proposal attempted to establish a broad freedom of

access to marine resources for both Chileans and foreign investors in Chile. Special regulations were to be established for fully exploited fisheries by assigning definitive individual quotas to the enterprises that had worked in the zone during the last three years. Artisanal fishermen were completely ignored, treating them as small shipowners. Aquaculture concessions were to be sold to the highest bidder. And no incentives were to be provided for the development of artisanal fishing or research.

From January 1989 onwards, numerous actions were undertaken throughout the whole country to express disagreement with this draft law. Entrepreneurs, academics and workers spoke out in forums, seminars, radio programs and periodicals. They rejected completely free access for foreign fleets. Different ways of exerting pressure were used. We artisanal fishermen went on strike on numerous occasions, to protest against the military government's law. The military junta, with the support of the Chilean Navy, modified some of the concepts concerning artisanal fishing, granting it a reserved zone of five miles, but keeping the general concept of practically complete freedom of access. The law was passed at the end of 1989, to go into effect 11 April 1990.

On 11 March of that year, to our good fortune, Chile returned to democracy and Patricio Aylwin became President. Congress suspended the law and began a long process of reformulating and changing the text proposed by the military junta. The National Fisheries Council was established and we artisanal fishermen were invited to participate in that body. The House of Representatives adopted the text with a series of modifications, but the Senate changed many of the provisions in response to the interests of a few large companies. Numerous negotiations were needed to finally obtain a definitive text which was signed by the President on 28 September 1991 in a solemn ceremony held in *Caleta Portales* in Valparaiso.

What are the results and benefits that we fishermen have obtained with this law?

- The most important is the participation in the national, zonal and regional fishery councils, to which our organizations can send their representatives. The councils will take decisions with respect to regulations, prohibitions to harvest certain species, managerial systems, etc
- A zone five miles from the coast is reserved for artisanal fishing and closed to industrial fleets, giving artisanal fishermen preference to develop their activities.
- The Artisanal Fisheries Development Fund is created with resources from licenses and fines under this law. This fund will finance infrastructure, catches,



processing and marketing. The administrative council of the fund will be comprised of three representatives from organizations of artisanal fishermen. The law also calls for a special fund to promote research on fisheries.

- Organizations will have exclusive management of areas with benthic resources, as a first step to obtaining aquaculture concessions. This creates an alternative to the exhaustion of certain resources.
- Artisanal fishermen will have to register in their regions and will not be allowed to work in other regions, except in certain cases involving migratory species or benthic fisheries in adjoining regions. Each fisherman will only be allowed to own two boats with a maximum gross registry of 50 metric tons.

We fishermen can fight for our rights at higher legal levels. We should have confidence that we will achieve our goals to the extent that the members of our organizations actively participate. We face many challenges, especially the internationalization of fisheries and the aggressiveness of the industrialized countries that have exhausted their own resources and are looking for new fishing grounds along our coasts, taking advantage of their technological superiority. We need training, ways to educate our leaders so that they can correctly orient our actions in benefit of the organizations' interests and not those of individuals. We are fighting for social change. That means we constantly have to make sacrifices, affecting even our families, for our organizations.

Each goal implies new responsibilities and obliges us to continuously assume new administrative tasks in our reserved zone, aquaculture concessions, new processing and marketing enterprises and intelligent participation in the fisheries councils. In order to do so, we should seek of our own or supporting technical bodies

But we fishermen need a general framework in which we can fight for our rights:

- Recognition of a coastal zone with access reserved exclusively for artisanal fishermen who live on the coast, especially indigenous communities who have lived and worked certain coasts since time immemorial.
- The right for representatives of fishermen to participate in decision-making and planning bodies, especially those that regulate the sector.
- The right to a clean and unpolluted environment, to protect the source of life and work.
- The right of women to participate freely and be respected in the professional and social activities of artisanal fishing.

- Access for fishermen and their communities to benefits like credit, housing, health care and education. The state and civil organizations should contribute to these benefits and constantly collaborate with the organizations and their communities, without the paternalism that characterizes many public and private projects.

Fraternally,

**National Confederation of Artisanal Fishworkers of Chile, CONAPACH**

Norges Kystfiskarlag (Norwegian Coastal Fishermen's Union) hereby expresses its support for the proposals listed in your letter and shares the hope that these proposals will be included in the Final Declaration. We will also notify the Norwegian government and the Norwegian delegation to the UNCED on your intention, and ask for their support.

Norges Kystfiskarlag is a young organization, founded by small scale fishermen who felt that the old organization, Norges Fiskarlag (Norwegian Fisheries Union), being a federation of several organization representing small-scale as well as industrialized fisheries, had become merely a spokesman for the pursuing industrialized fishing fleet, pursuing totally different goal that those of small-scale fishermen and small fisheries-based communities.

Norway is a unique country, blessed with a long coastline and access to rich fish resources. Unfortunately, many of the species making up the economic base for coastal fisheries such as the North Atlantic Cod, are highly migratory species.

Every winter and early spring the spawning stock of this cod migrates from its feeding and nursing area in the Barent Sea to the coast of North Norway, where it is harvested by coastal fishermen in what traditionally has been known as the world's richest cod fisheries. During summer, there is another migration of adult fish to the coast, feeding on spawning caplin. These coastal fisheries are carried out with passive and selective fishing gears, aimed at harvesting the stock in the ecologically as well as bio-economically best possible way.

While still nursing in the Barent Sea, the juvenile fish is however subject to heavy overfishing by Norwegian, Russian and other European trawlers, consequently reducing the migrating stock and thereby the income-earning possibilities of small-scale fishermen. Due to this situation, every fishing vessel has been given strictly limited fishing quotas.

As a result, large parts of the Norwegian coast are on the brink of collapsing economically. As we understood the situation, the Norwegian government is trying to reduce small-scale fisheries and small fishery-based communities by denying the fishing quotas high enough to enable them to sustain their way of life, while at the same time promoting big-scale industrial development.

The fishing fleet and industry of Norway is among the most advanced in the world, but the problems the fishworkers are facing are the same as in the rest of the world; money is moving in to make them their culture, their way of life and their communities obsolete. In the process, fishworkers are made to live on social welfare, their communities are turned into ghost towns and their age old culture and craftsmanship are decaying because of lack of practice.

Given this background, we have made the demand for higher quotas for small-scale fishermen our first priority. This struggle is now at its peak, and we are witnessing how the different actors on the arena of Norwegian fisheries are grouping themselves into two opposing armies.

On the one hand we have the people who want to utilize their investment capital as the basis for future development. Here we find the owners of large vessels and industrial complexes, the major banks, supported by the Ministry of Fisheries, and as their spokesman; Norges Fiskarlag.

On the other hand are those who want employment, social and cultural values, and a sustainable resource management as a basis for future development. Among these are most of the fishworkers and members of small fishery-based communities. Although their struggle is supported from many quarters, Norges Kystfiskarlag is their only representative organization, fighting to defend their way of life.

As our goals and problems to a large extent are common, Norges Kystfiskarlag welcomes any opportunity to join forces with fellow fishworkers wherever they might be on this planet. We would also welcome the possibility of a closer cooperation with the ICSF in the future, because only in unity are we able to reach our goals.

With the best wishes for an ecologically stable future,  
yours,

**NORGES KYSTFISKARLAG**

Maurice F. Strong  
UNCED, Secretary-General

At the time of the FAO World Conference on Fisheries Management and Development, held in Rome in July 1984, some 100 representatives of artisanal fishermen's organizations and support organizations from 42 countries, mostly in Africa, Asia and Latin America, met in that same city to participate in an alternative conference of fish-workers.

In that meeting the fishermen asked the support organizations to help them strengthen the organization, education and development of fishing communities throughout the world, a task taken up since 1986 by the INTERNATIONAL COLLECTIVE IN SUPPORT OF FISHWORKERS (ICSF), a non-governmental organization, in which people from 17 countries participate in local educational and developmental activities in their communities.

Since 1986, ICSF has organized activities for dissemination, education and campaigns to defend the basic rights of fishermen, especially in Trivandrum (India, 1986), Dakar (Senegal, 1987), Valparaiso (Chile, 1988), Lisbon (Portugal, 1989), Bangkok (Thailand, 1990), Manila (Philippines, 1991), Paris (France, 1991) and Dakar (Senegal, 1991), in collaboration with professional and support organizations in each of the countries mentioned.

The impact of these actions has been different in each case. Generally speaking, they have raised the consciousness of fishermen and their communities about their basic rights and needs, especially the right to:

- an unpolluted environment, apt for the reproduction and development of the species and resources that provide them with life and work;
- participate actively in democratic decision-making in each of their countries;
- an exclusive zone for fishing and aquaculture and priority access to the coast and its resources;
- respect for their own traditions and customs, especially their way of relating to the environment;
- of women to participate in extraction and cultivation, and in organizations representing fishermen;
- participate in the benefits of modernization, especially for extracting, processing and marketing fishery products;
- social and job security.

Artisanal fishermen throughout the world expect decisive support from UNCED for their demands and the

satisfaction of their needs, especially in the form of a code of norms regulating sources of pollution, overfishing and the exhaustion of aquatic resources, and agreements that provide resources for the definitive development of their communities, in which they wish to participate through their local and national organizations.

The members of the Animation Team and Board of Directors of ICSF are pleased to communicate this progress to you, grateful for the important task you are

undertaking for the protection of the environment and natural resources of our planet, and we express our support for the work of the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development.

Be assured of our kindest regards,

INTERNATIONAL COLLECTIVE IN SUPPORT OF FISHWORKERS

# INTERNATIONAL COLLECTIVE IN SUPPORT OF FISHWORKERS

Round the globe, modern development strategies-oriented as they are primarily towards enhancing production- have given rise to serious problems of ecological sustainability and social justice. Invariably, these result in the unequal distribution and overexploitation of the earth's resources. This process has been particularly intense in the fisheries sector.

The past 40 years have seen major technological development which have enhanced the supply of fish and increased trade in fishery products the world over. However, the pressures these have brought to bear on the fishery have in some areas pushed it to the point of collapse.

Problems like deforestation and pollution, while threatening the biosphere, also affect the riverine, lacustrine and marine zones as well as the livelihood of communities dependent on them.

Moreover, there have been changes in ownership patterns prompted by the market economy. These, along with other institutional factors, have constrained equitable access to fishery resources and accelerated the rates of exploitation.

Consequently, different regions of the world witness the social and economic marginalization of fishworkers-men, women and children whose work and livelihood depend on fishery-related activities, whether these lie in the sphere of harvesting, processing or marketing.

Compounding this problem is the absence or inadequacy of forums to focus on these issues and thus enable them to fairly influence policy-making.

These were the prime motivating factors behind the International Conference of Fishworkers and their Supporters held in Rome in 1984. This Conference -principally a Third World initiative was attended by fishworkers and their supporters from around world.

The Conference addressed the question of the marginalization of fishworkers from the policymaking and planning processes at the regional and global levels. It stressed the need for creating a forum to:

- monitor issues that have relevance to the life and livelihood of fishworkers

- disseminate information especially amongst fisherfolk
- prepare guidelines for programmes that would underscore just, participatory and sustainable fisheries development and management.

It was against this broader background and specifically in pursuit of these objectives that the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF) was formed in Trivandrum, India, in 1986.

The Collective is a global, multi-faceted network of community organizers, teachers, technicians, researchers and scientists. The common factor which links the members is their close association with fishworkers' organizations in their respective areas of work.

## Activities

The activities of the Collective fall broadly four heads.

- Monitoring and research
- Exchange and training
- Campaigns and action programmes
- Communications.

## Monitoring and research

The Collective monitors the impact of technology, legislation and aid programmes on small-scale fishworkers. Other areas of concern include the conditions of work and life in the sector, the role of women in fisheries, the utilization of coastal zones, the socio-economic impact of modern aquaculture practices on fisherfolk and issues related to the degradation of the working environment. An important dimension of this area of activity is the emphasis placed on participatory involvement of the fishworkers themselves.

Two studies have already been completed under this program: one on the status of fishworkers in Latin America, and the other on the role of fishing legislation in resolving coastal conflicts in selected Asian countries.

Ongoing research deals with the impact of aquaculture on fisherfolk, the changing product relations in artisanal fisheries in West Africa, and the conditions of fishworkers on distant water vessels in Asia.

## Exchange and training

The main aim of the exchange and training program is to facilitate a South-South dialogue with a view to selectively reducing dependence on the developed countries in matters relating to technology and organization. This is achieved through the exchange of experience and know-how among Third World fishworkers themselves and between fishworkers and scientists.

This, however, does not preclude a South-North dialogue which is also encouraged to increase solidarity among fishworkers and their supporters.

Many such exchange programmes, stressing people-to-people transfer of technology and knowledge, have already been undertaken by the Collective in Asia, Africa, Canada and Latin America. Training programmes have also been conducted for rural animators in fishing communities in Africa and Latin America.

## Campaigns and action programs

These are essentially meant to draw attention to processes that have an adverse impact on the fishworkers' access to resources, working conditions and livelihood. Towards this end, the Collective has initiated efforts in several directions.

To begin with, the Collective attempts to bring to the notice of the international community and the fishworkers in developing countries the implications of bilateral and multilateral fishery agreements.

The Collective has also actively campaigned to emphasize the inequality in the negotiations between the European Economic Community and the African, Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP) countries in respect of the Lome Accord agreements in fisheries. The adverse impact of this Accord on the small-scale sector in the ACP countries has been highlighted on an international scale.

Furthermore, the Collective has brought to public notice the unfair trading practices of private fishing equipment manufacturing companies in certain regions of the world.

Plans for future programmes include lobbying within the International Labour Organization to get it to acknowledge the position of small-scale fishworkers vis-à-vis their rights to livelihood, organizations and social welfare. The Collective intends to participate in the "Earth Summit" of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, to be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992, and to associate with the fol-

low-up programmes. Also on the larger agenda is the development of a comprehensive understanding of the intricate relationship between the aquatic environment and the biosphere.

## Communications

In aiming to disseminate information on its activities and in order to facilitate dialogue between members, the Collective brings out several publications. There are published under the generic title, SAMUDRA, which means "ocean" in many Asian languages.

There are two regular publications: the SAMUDRA Report, meant for a wider and more general audience, and the SAMUDRA Newsletter whose circulations is confined to members.

Also published is a SAMUDRA series of Monographs/Dossiers. There are either detailed studies on activities identified for research or other compilations and reports commissioned by the Collective.

## Perspective for the future

For far too long fishworkers have been the victims of a skewed process of development which has pushed them to the periphery of the society, particularly in the developing countries. This needs to be changed. With this goal in sight, the Collective.

### **recognizes**

above all else the fishworkers right to livelihood which has been and continues to be threatened by inappropriate technological developments, environment damage and inequitable international agreements on fishing;

### **declares**

its support for greater people-to-people contact and exchange which will spread knowledge and build up solidarity, especially among fishworkers in developing countries.

### **advocates**

greater unity between the small-scale and the industrial fishworkers in the developing countries for the advancement of their common welfare;

### **asserts**

the need for fishworkers and their supporters to relate more closely with other deprived people whose survival is also threatened by technological changes, institutional factors and environmental damage;

### **stresses**

the pivotal role that women play in the adoption of a nurturing relation with nature, instead of the one that currently exists; and

**strives**

to contribute to the evolution of a just and participatory development process which alone will be economically and environmentally sustainable into the future.

As beacons of the sea, fishworkers have not only a singular role but also a designated responsibility in realizing these objectives. To them, the Collective commits its unfailing support.

**Structure**

The Collective has both regular and associate members from all the continents. It is mandatory that three-quarters of the membership be from the developing countries. The members are admitted on their personal capacities and do not formally represent their respective nations or organizations. Women comprise a fifth of the present membership.

The Collective has three constituent bodies. These are:

- The General Body, which comprises the entire membership, holds all the powers to fulfil Collective's objectives.
- The Animation Team, appointed by the General Body from among the regular members a tenure of 3 years, is the core body which the mandate to manage and represent the Collective.
- The Secretariat, headed by an Executive Secretary, is responsible for carrying out all the decisions of the Animation Team.

The ICSF is registered as an International organization in Geneva, Switzerland. It has an office in Brussels, Belgium. The Program Co-ordination Centre (the Secretariat) is situated in Madras, India. The regular publications are brought from Valparaiso, Chile. □

# CONSOLIDATING

## PERU

### I national assembly of FIUPAP

The First National Assembly of the Federation for the Integration and Unification of the Artisanal Fishermen of Peru (FIUPAP) took place in Lima, Peru. There, fishermen reported on the problems that concern their grassroots members.

Attention was also given to problems affecting artisanal fishermen around the world, especially in developing countries. Most of the problems afflicting us come from trawlers from other countries flying the Peruvian flag. They fail to respect the five-mile limit, catch indiscriminately, kill young species and drive away other species normally found in those areas. Other Problems dealt with concerned seals (*otaria flavescens*) that destroy our instruments of work. They are protected by the society for the protection of animals as an endangered species, without understanding that the artisanal fish-

erman goes hungry while these animals deprive him of his daily sustenance.

The problem of social security for the artisanal fisherman was also examined. Most are not insured, despite the Social Security and Benefit Fund for Fishermen (CBSSP). This agency only covers those who work in the industrial fleet.

The Artisanal Fishermen of Peru will fight for access to social security systems and the free exercise of their trade union and employment rights.

It was also agreed to set up a standing committee with representatives from the three zones of FIUPAP, in order to avoid repeating past errors.

## SENEGAL

### National conference and international seminar

Artisanal fishermen in Senegal have been very active since 1987 in organizing at the local and national level. In 1984 they participated in the International Conference of Fishworkers in Rome, presided over by Dao Gaye. In 1987 they organized a national seminar in which they planned to found the National Collective of Senegalese Fishermen (NCSF) and later a support body, CREDETIP, headed by Aliou Sall, who had done studies on the economics of fishing and the job security of fishermen in areas where they enter into conflict with industrial trawlers.

Both the Government and non-governmental organizations have developed numerous projects for fishermen, but without the participation of their grassroots organizations. The Canadian Government has invested heavily in freezer facilities, which are not used in practice because those who control distribution block any new form of marketing. Also, projects financed by Japan and France have not obtained their expected results, since the fishermen themselves have not reached an adequate level of coordination among themselves.

The National Collective reached adulthood in November 1991 when it organized the National Conference of

Senegalese Fishermen, held at the International Fairgrounds in Dakar, with more than 600 representatives of grassroots communities presenting reports and making recommendations. They came from the areas of Hann, Saint-Louis, Soumbédioune-Gulvinex, Fass-Boye, Mbour, Bargny and Toubab-Dialao-Niagal. The conference was opened by the Minister of Maritime Affairs. Delegates were sent by Guinea-Bissau, Togo, France, Canada and other countries. Non-governmental organizations provided support. With this conference the Government, headed by the President, and private agencies came to recognize the NCSF as an organization with enormous tasks to accomplish in favour of its members.

One of these tasks will be to participate in the fisheries agreements between Senegal and the European Community. Between 1981 and 1990, four such agreements have been made, with the EC contributing some US\$ 25 million in counterpart funds. For the first time, artisanal fishermen will obtain direct benefits from these negotiations, since up till now, only Government officials and entrepreneurs benefited. On the other hand, boats from European fleets caused a good deal of damage to the nets and endangered fishermen at sea.

Fishermen will be able to take more advantage of the exclusive zone of six miles from the shoreline, which was normally not respected, and establish a better local support organization to improve the living conditions of their families and communities.

An international seminar on fisheries agreements was organized by CREDETIP and the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers. One participant was the president of the committee representing the Group of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (ACP) to the EC, Mr. Adigo of Togo, headquartered in Brussels. The seminar was directed by Hector Luis Morales of Chile, Coordinator of the International Collective, and by Pierre

Gillet, James Smith, Alain le Sann and Michael Belliveau, also of the ICSF.

The main conclusions dealt with the role of fishermen's organizations in the negotiations with the European Economic Community in protecting maritime resources against the predatory practices of fleets from developed countries. To great challenge to countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America is to protect their fishery resources, since strong demand from northern hemisphere countries drives up prices and provokes predatory practices with fatal consequences for countries in the south. Fisheries agreements are the mechanisms for carrying out negotiations; fishermen's organizations should participate in them.

## **SPAIN**

### **“Rosa dos Ventos”**

The Association of Fishermen's Wives of Rias Bajas “Rosa dos Ventos” was registered and officially legalized 17 January 1991. Its roots go back to 1984, the year the Apostolate of the Sea promoted the creation of small groups. They began in Bahifla (Bayona). Early on they fought for shell fishing grounds in La Guardia and Vigo. Other groups sprung up on their own in 1988 to support their husbands in facing fishing-related problems in Bueu, Cangas, Mann and Moafla, during the conflicts created for fishermen in the Canary Islands-Sahara fishing grounds during negotiations for a collective agreement.

These reflection and action groups established relations between one another through the Apostolate of the Sea, which supports the struggle of fishermen's wives and accompanies them in their actions to defend the respect and personal dignity of fishworkers and their families, and in the just demand for their job, family and social rights. The strength and solidarity of this movement gave rise to the Commission of Wives of Galician Fishermen.

The Commission began its activities in April 1990 when it criticized the Cindadana Platform, which was drawn up when the Namibian fishing grounds were closed. The protest consisted of going to the place where the signing took place, with signs denouncing the trade unions that were signing. The protesters also threw coins at all those present who supported the platform, to express the significance of the power of money. This protest by the women denounced the lack of protection for fishermen on the part of the administration and trade union. The protest was reported in the local and regional press. The First Convocation on Maritime Safety and Rescue took place that same month. In July 1990, the Commission supported the strike of the crew

of the refrigerator ship “Nuevo Alcocero”, of the firm Puerta Prado, S.A, who were demanding their rights to a percentage of the catch and a just contract. After a year of hard work, the women consolidated and organized an association which the wives of the fishermen of Rias Bajas call “Rosa dos Ventos”.

“Rosa dos Ventos” is not linked to any political party, trade union or government agency. Its main objectives are, with unity and solidarity, to open paths to justice and dignity in the world of the sea; support fishworkers in obtaining more training and information about labour and social laws affecting the fisheries sector; raise public consciousness through mass media about the marginal situation in which fishermen and their families live; organize and participate in actions to demand respect for the rights of fishermen when they are violated; promote meetings with fishermen's wives in other ports, encouraging the creation of local groups or associations; develop International relations through the review “BOGA” coordinating experiences, actions and struggle to strengthen solidarity for the defence of the fisheries sector, and developing welfare, social and cultural activities and services for its members and other components of the maritime family.

Safety and rescue capacity are priorities in the demands of the association “Rosa dos ventos”. During the first convocation last year, the association presented a document expressing facts, denouncements and claims about safety, which were seconded by all the participants, representatives of the administration, trade unions and the grassroots of the maritime sector. The wives of the fishermen later Collected 15000 signatures in support of the document in the different areas of the coast where they are active. After a year of following up the document with a series of studies, inter-



views and actions before the administration, there is much more awareness of these issues and new means of rescue are available to the fisheries sector of Gal-Ida. Safety, to the contrary, is as poor as ever, due to the indifference of the marine commands and the health and employment inspectors.

On 18 May 1991, in a second convocation, a new document was presented that examined and evaluated the results of one year of effort. The director general of the merchant marine accepted the challenge of "Rosa dos ventos", which is now demanding that the administration assume its responsibility. The association continues to see to it that the merchant marine keeps its promises. It is also seeking to dialogue about safety with other agencies concerned with the problem.

Most crews work under unacceptable safety conditions and with inadequate medical attention. The number of on-the-job accidents and deaths corroborate the claim that fishermen are risking their lives.

"Rosa dos Ventos" seeks to better the living and working conditions of the seamen, and does not hesitate to criticize harshly the tyrannical position of the shipowners who look at fishermen only as machines for productivity and high yields.

The linkages and relations of "Rosa dos Ventos" with other associations and groups of fishermen's wives have increased since 1986. Three international meetings have been held with fishermen's wives from Pasajes (the Basque country) and the French ports on the Atlantic coast: in 1987 in the port of La Rochelle (France), which dealt with the problematic of the fisherman's family life; in 1989 in Pantón and La Guardia (Galicia), discussing international solidarity of fishermen's wives, and the last one in 1990.

Aware that the Europe being constructed is one of business interests and not one of cities, international relations are very important for "Rosa dos Ventos", since they mean information, support and rich exchanges with countries which have common maritime interests. Organizations like the Apostolate of the Sea, the Association of Fishermen's Wives of La Rochelle, the Eudine Group (France), Forpescas (Portugal), the Association of Artisanal Fishermen "A. Mar" of Malaga (Spain), the Commission of Fishermen's Wives of the Basque Country all relate to and collaborate with "Rosa dos

Ventos". The support of CCFD and ICSF are highly valued.

"Rosa dos Ventos", invited by these groups, has attended important conventions and international meetings in Thailand and Paris. These meetings have meant for the association a solidarity without borders and exchanges of experiences. The association also attended the Congress of Ministers in La Toja, Spain during the summer of last year, where it established contact with representatives to the European Parliament interested in the problems of the sector and the presence of women in Europe.

At present, "Rosa dos Ventos" is working on a three-year project to study in depth and improve critical aspects of maritime fishing, such as negotiating collective agreements, special tax, schemes, early retirement, radiophone rates, alternative employment, biological right to vote, maritime safety and rescues, etc.

In the framework of this project. "Rosa dos Ventos" travelled at the beginning of the year to Brussels to observe the discussion of fisheries and analyse how the Community Fisheries Policy is being implemented. It saw that the EEC is incapable at this time of implementing an authentic fisheries social policy, due to the primacy of the political, commercial and economic interests of large firms.

The Association of Fishermen's Wives of Rias Bajas of Galicia is resolved to travel the long and difficult road leading to a more just and humane maritime world for fishermen and their families.

## **BRAZIL**

### **V Conference of MONAPE**

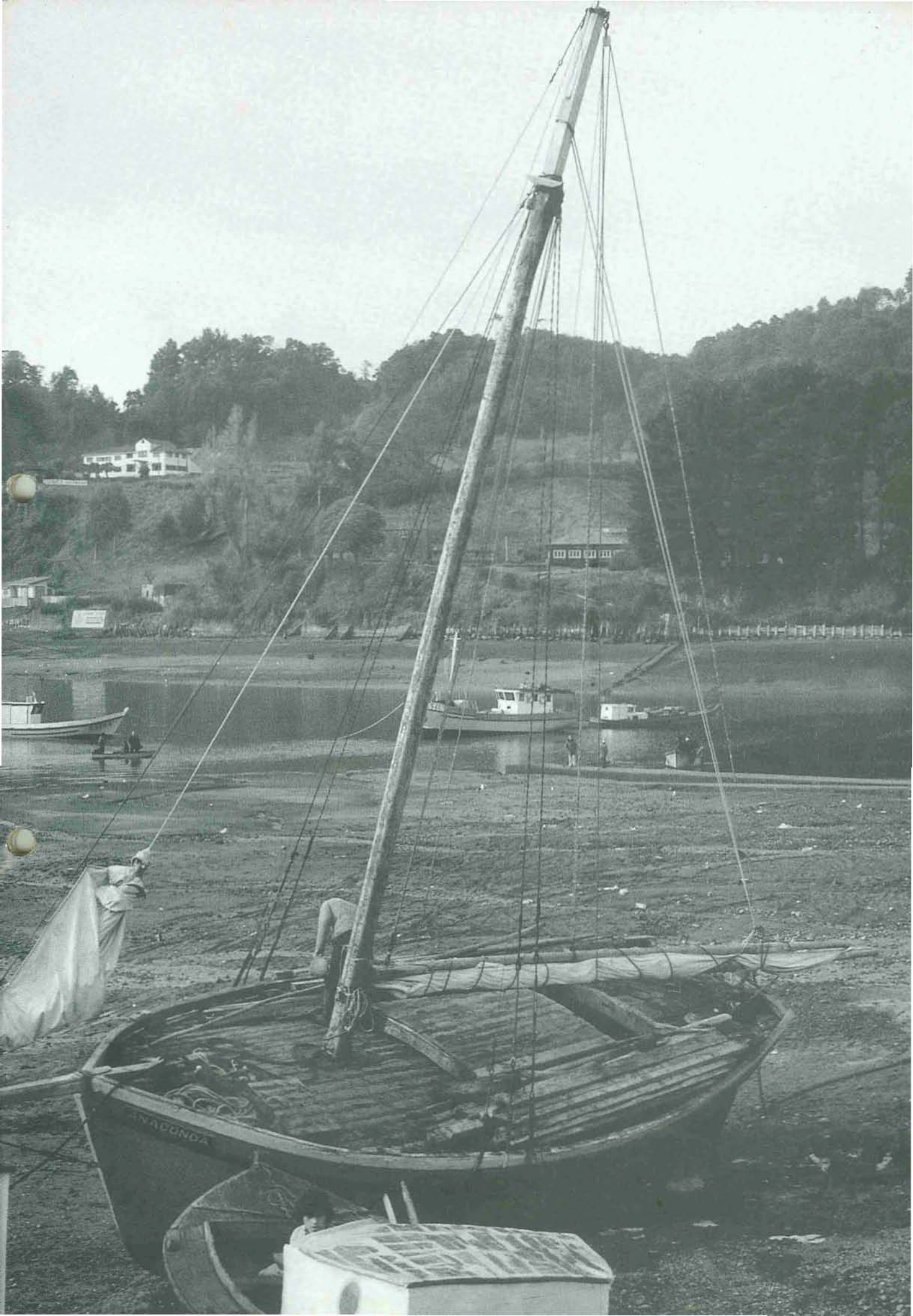
Brazil's fishermen met in Olinda-Recife in October 1991, with 34 representatives of organizations from 12 states of the Federation, and Miguel Leiva, the secretary-general of CONAPACH, Hector Luis Morales, Coordinator of the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers, university professors from Sao Paulo and Recife, especially Antonio Carlos Diegues, and several members from the Pastoral Office for Fishermen, who have provided educational and organizational support from the beginning to Brazil's fishermen.

During the conference the future of fishermen's organizations was discussed. Traditionally, the organizational form was the "colony", an institution founded at the beginning of the century under the auspices of the Brazilian Navy. However, the Constitution of 1987 established freedom of association. In many regions, trade unions have joined together with a view to becoming more autonomous from the state and the Navy and gradually developing new forms of professional organization and production.

The conference decided to found an organization for fishermen, the Centre for the Support of the Artisanal Fishermen of Brazil (CAPAB). The centre was legally registered 24 February 1992 in San Lids Maranhao. The goals of the centre are to support the organizational efforts of Brazil's fishermen; provide technical and legal support to fishermen's organizations: organize and disseminate information, technical and scientific material related to fisheries; support fishermen in their demands for a better quality of life; enter into cooperative agreements with similar organizations at the national and international level, and defend through judicial and extra-judicial means the natural resources that are essential for fisheries.

MONAPE is a movement that seeks to achieve this renovation by organizing a national convention for 1994 to consolidate a dynamic organisation capable of maintaining relations with the Government and its institutions, promoting a new fisheries law, and carry out educational and economic training for its leaders. A regional organisation was established to facilitate coordination among fishermen, taking into account the difficult geographical conditions of one of the largest countries in the world.

The meeting was held in the Fishermen's Centre of the Pastoral Office for fishermen in Olinda-Per-nambuco. The spirit of solidarity and work was impressive. A decision was taken to publish a review entitled "Pescando e Lutando" (Fishing and Struggling). It was also decided to support the initiative of the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers to present the Charter of Basic Rights of the Artisanal Fishermen of World to the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development. The text of this charter is published in this review in its original language. An emotional ceremony took place to honor the memory of Father Alfredo Schnuetgen, who died tragically in 1990. He was the person most responsible for promoting pastoral action among fishermen in Brazil. Todd Robinson Brem was also remembered. He was a sociologist and educator born in California, USA in 1943. He met a tragic death on 10 January 1988 in Fortaleza, Ceara, Brazil, trying to save some people who were drowning. Father Alfredo and Todd were active participants in the International Conference of Fishermen and Support Organizations, in Rome, 1984. We render homage to their memory and their works. □





## CHARTER OF BASIC RIGHTS OF THE WORLD'S ARTISANAL FISHWORKERS

- 1 The right to participate in their own organizations and in government-sponsored decision-making bodies.
- 2 The right to a clean environment, free especially from chemical, bacterial and mineral pollution.
- 3 The right to an exclusive zone reserved for the reproduction of species, fishing and artisanal aquaculture.
- 4 The right of women to participate in fishworker organizations and fishing activities.
- 5 The right to receive the benefits of modernization, credit, education, and technology.
- 6 The right to respect for their traditional rights, customs and technology.
- 7 The right to social security and employment safety.