

A New Dawn, A New Day

Starting their international year on a high note, the African Confederation of Professional Organizations of Artisanal Fisheries (CAOPA) hopes to become a prominent platform

On the eve of the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAFA 2022), artisanal fisheries have never been more essential to the survival of coastal communities and local populations across Africa. Speaking at the launch of the World Fisheries Day event organized in Senegal by the African Confederation of Professional Organizations of Artisanal Fisheries (CAOPA) in November 2021, Adama Djalo, CAOPA vice-president, represented the perspective of women fish processors from Guinea Bissau. “During the COVID-19 crisis, despite harsh measures that have severely affected—and continue to affect—our livelihoods, men and women from our sector have shown their resilience and ability to provide essential food to African families,” she said.

The future will be challenging for African fishing communities. Global warming is already aggravating matters, posing challenges such as increasingly difficult navigation conditions at sea, coastal erosion, and migration of fish resources further offshore, to name a few. To make fishing communities more resilient in these difficult times, CAOPA is calling on governments to ensure access to fisheries resources and markets for small-scale fisheries—covered in SDG 14b—through the implementation of the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (the SSF Guidelines).

This requires reforms, both in policy and in practices; that does not come easily. Dawda Foday Saine of Gambia, general secretary of CAOPA, expressed his pride that the organization, now present in 27 countries, has been successful in “giving our communities

the confidence to claim their rights, and to assert their benefits, in social, economic and cultural terms and as managers of coastal ecosystems.”

But there was also some frustration. “Despite our efforts, all too often, our decisionmakers and their partners do not look at us, do not value us, ignore our needs, and favour others,” he said. “All too often, fishing licences are given out to destructive foreign industrial vessels. And all too often, agreements are signed with companies that destroy our coasts for exploiting gas, oil or for tourism. All too often, polluting industrial units like fishmeal factories, some of which steal our fish, are built at our doorstep. All of this is done in total secrecy. All of this is done at a huge cost to our coastal ecosystems, and to the artisanal fishing communities that depend on them for their livelihood.”

When CAOPA members gathered in Senegal for World Fisheries Day, it was to discuss how to ensure that African States walk the talk on supporting African fishing communities to thrive.

CAOPA is calling on governments to ensure access to fisheries resources and markets for small-scale fisheries

As the discussions started, they received some good news: CAOPA president Gaoussou Gueye had been elected co-ordinator of the African Continental Non-State Actors Platform, a consultative body set up with the support of the African Union development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), and the InterAfrican Bureau for Animal Resources, in collaboration with FAO and funded by the European Union.

This article is by Béatrice Gorez (cffa.cape@gmail.com) of the Coalition for Fair Fisheries Arrangements (CFFA)

CAOPA



Participants at CAOPA's World Fisheries Day event in November 2021 in Senegal. All around the world, fishing communities see young people deserting the sector. In this context, it was remarkable to see the participation of young men and women fishworkers in this gathering

44

... these coastal areas should be entirely co-managed by the State and artisanal fishing communities

“This platform has the ambition to mobilize all African fisheries stakeholders, professionals and civil

society organizations alike, to help the continent meet its commitment to improve nutrition and food security, thanks to fisheries, and support sustainable livelihoods in African fisheries-dependent communities,” said Gueye.

The big three for IYAFA 2022

Based on CAOPA's work over its 10 years of existence, more than 50 participants, from Africa's continental and maritime artisanal fisheries, identified three priority areas for reforms and concrete action. The first one is to secure access to resources for African artisanal fisheries. States are asked to grant exclusive fishing rights

to artisanal fishers in coastal areas. To ensure the sustainable management of coastal ecosystems and resources, these coastal areas should be entirely co-managed by the State and artisanal fishing communities, including through appropriate conservation tools such as protected marine areas designed and managed by fishery-dependent communities.

The second priority is safety at sea, which is crucial for SSF's secure access to resources. The participants, therefore, emphasized that African countries should ratify and implement the Work in Fishing Convention (No. 188) of the International Labour Organization (ILO). The implementation of this Convention can help improve some essential elements that include: safety training for pirogue captains and crews; the use of new technologies; and raising awareness of fishers regarding safety issues.

Women are present at all stages of the artisanal fisheries value chain in African countries. They form the essential link that gets the fish to local and regional consumers. They are also the mainstay of families in artisanal

fishing communities. Recognizing their role, giving them equal representation in professional organizations, in decision-making processes, and providing them with appropriate support are the priorities for securing access to resources and markets.

Micheline Dion Somplehi, a fish processor from Ivory Coast and the co-ordinator of the CAOPA women's programme, summed it up: "Without women there will be no sustainable artisanal fisheries in Africa. Women perform miracles every day with small means, always improving the quality of their processed products, always finding new markets and improving the living conditions of their whole community. Their capacity for innovation is infinite. Whether it is to develop new processing techniques or to increase the availability of affordable fish as raw material for processing, supporting innovation in women's activities is the key to the survival of our sector. Our States should give priority attention to supporting this, and also invest in the necessary services and infrastructure that will allow such innovations to be successful."

Women are also involved in artisanal fish farming, a good way to supplement their supply of raw materials and to cope with periods when fishing is stopped (during biological rest, for example). Fatoumata Diallo Sirebara from Mali, whose husband is an artisanal fisherman, is passionate about developing artisanal fish farming in Africa: "I started small, growing vegetables, then growing fish in containers. I got young women to join me in this activity of artisanal aquaculture that everyone thought was reserved for men because people thought it's expensive, and you need big capital to do it. These young women saw that they could do it. Anyone can do it. As I work without pesticides or fertilizers, I use the water from the fish tanks for the vegetable I grow in containers. When the fish are big, we sell them live, at West African CFA Franc (XOF) 2,000 (US\$4) per kg. People come, catch what they want and, if they want, we smoke the fish for them, for an extra XOF 500 (US\$1) per kg. Growing fish and vegetables in containers can be

done anywhere in Africa. Anything can become a productive garden or a fish pond."

Despite all the positivity about the opportunities IYAFA 2022 offers for advancing their agenda, African fishing communities have a big concern: The competition from other sectors included in the Africa 'Blue Economy' strategy—financially and politically powerful sectors such as oil and gas exploration, tourism and fishmeal factories—could jeopardize the future of artisanal fishing. The artisanal fishing communities' interests lie in protecting ocean resources from such predatory sectors.

In their view, the precautionary approach must guide the development of the Blue Economy. They ask African States to carry out independent social and environmental impact assessments, with the utmost transparency and with the participation of affected coastal communities. No new ocean-use activity should be allowed by States, nor supported by donors, if it negatively impacts ecosystems and coastal fishing communities. States should put in place transparent mechanisms for consultation and conflict resolution between users of maritime spaces, allowing for informed and active participation of all affected fishing communities.

The artisanal fishing communities' interests lie in protecting ocean resources from such predatory sectors

A new dawn is rising

All around the world, fishing communities see young people deserting the sector. In this context, it was remarkable to see the participation of young fishers and women in fisheries in this gathering. Take, for example, Angelo Matagili from Tanzania, in charge of the CAOPA youth programme. He talked inexhaustibly about ways to harness solar energy for the benefit of fishing communities. Or Dorcas Malogho from Kenya, representing

YOANN GAUTHIER



Pirogues docked in Ndar (Saint-Louis), Senegal. "With the energy of our youth, with the experience of our elders, we have only one message to decisionmakers: 'Get ready, we're coming!'"

46

coastal women in fisheries. Or Nana Kweigyah of the Canoe and Fishing Gear Owners Association of Ghana, who read the final statement, emphasizing the need for fishers to be responsible.

"Our efforts must not be ruined by greed and corruption, which occur mostly in the darkness of offices, but sometimes on our beaches, in the artisanal sector. As the saying goes, when you point a finger at someone, there are three fingers pointing back at you. Our first duty is to be responsible players," said Kweigyah.

He insisted on the responsibilities young CAOPA leaders carry: "Throughout the next year, we, the younger generation of CAOPA leaders, will assist our leaders by relentlessly knocking on the doors of our decisionmakers, at the regional and national African levels, and ask them to entrust us with the co-management of our coastal zones." Kweigyah said that they will request support, in the form of appropriate infrastructure and services, to catalyze innovations in the value chain, especially for women's activities."

With so many opportunities to make IYafa 2022 a success in Africa, the younger generation of CAOPA leaders has a clear path forward, as Kweigyah concluded: "With the energy of our youth, with the experience of our elders, following in their footsteps, passing through the doors they opened for us, we have only one message to send to our decisionmakers: 'Get ready, we're coming!'"

For more

World Fisheries Day 2021 CAOPA declaration

<https://caopa.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Declaration-WFD-2021-EN.pdf>

For the post-COVID-19 period, CAOPA calls for decent working conditions for artisanal fisheries

<https://www.cffacape.org/news-blog/for-the-post-covid-19-period-caopa-calls-for-decent-working-conditions-for-artisanal-fisheries>

Africa Blue Economy Strategy

<http://repository.au-ibar.org/handle/123456789/421>

Too Big to Ignore

Powerful messages emerged from the pilot event of the Regional Small-Scale Fisheries Governance Training Course for Africa

14

The quote below is a sobering reflection. "...821 million people across the world—one in nine—still go to bed on an empty stomach each night. Even more—one in three—suffer from some form of malnutrition. Eradicating hunger and malnutrition is one of the great challenges of our time.”
- UN World Food Programme

They epitomize one of the key motivations in the development and implementation of the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines). One that envisions healthy and thriving small-scale fisher communities, in place of the vulnerable and challenging conditions they currently face. The SSF Guidelines are embedded within the human rights-based approach that guide its principles toward equitable, socially just, economically viable and environmentally sustainable reform of small-scale fisheries.

economic losses of up to US\$100 billion every year.

Exacerbating the challenges for fisheries governance in Africa are its diverse political, social and institutional landscapes—complicated by political instability, civil war, inequality, poverty and hierarchical top-down approaches to governance. Yet, the past two decades have seen immense and commendable strides toward an increased recognition in advancing approaches to human rights, sustainable development, and a move toward participatory modes of governance for small-scale fisheries. Several countries have begun to develop and implement new and participatory approaches, policies and instruments.

It is in recognition of these challenges that the Regional Small-Scale Fisheries Governance Training Course for Africa was developed by the International Ocean Institute - Southern Africa (IOI-SA). Designed to improve the understanding of good governance approaches and encouraging the implementation of these approaches in policy and practice, the course aimed to address the unique challenges of the small-scale fisheries sector in Africa. This would, in turn, contribute to creating an enabling environment for the implementation of the SSF Guidelines.

Several countries have begun to develop and implement new and participatory approaches, policies and instruments.

What has governance got to do with it?

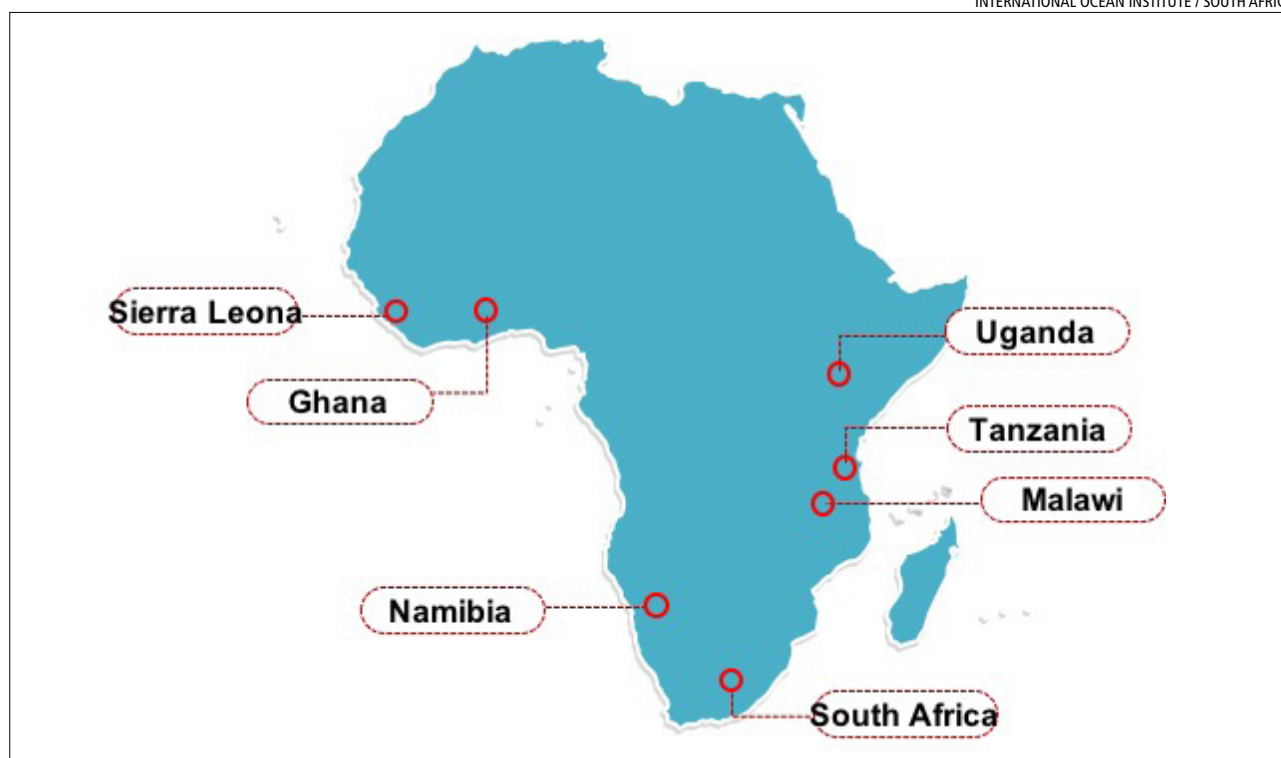
Small-scale fisheries have been the pillar of coastal communities in Africa for thousands of years. Today, in a continent that experiences widespread economic strife, small-scale fishing activities offer a lifeline to food security and socioeconomic development of its people. Yet, estimates indicate that poor fisheries governance in Africa can cause

SSF Guidelines in Africa

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to necessitate the prioritization of our safety and those of others, in February 2021, a collaboration between the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the IOI-SA brought together seven African countries to participate in a week-long virtual pilot training course.

The participants included small-scale fisheries government officials and

*This article is by **Kashiefa Parker** (kashiefaparker@gmail.com), International Ocean Institute - African Region, Newlands, Cape Town, South Africa*



The participants included small-scale fisheries government officials, regional office consultants from participating countries, regional fisher representatives, regional bodies and non-governmental organizations from Western, Eastern and Southern Africa

15

FAO regional office consultants from Ghana, Malawi, Namibia, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda. These countries were nominated because they are already working with FAO on small-scale fisheries projects toward implementation of the SSF Guidelines in their national contexts. In addition, regional fisher representatives, regional bodies and non-governmental organizations from Western, Eastern and Southern Africa were also invited.

Adapting to the virtual world

While the IOI-SA had originally developed an in-contact training event to be held in Cape Town, South Africa, the pandemic necessitated a switch to a virtual event. The virtual environment poses unique challenges, but also unique opportunities, one of which was hosting expert speakers from the continent and abroad. In continuing to adapt to the new norms, the 21 training participants embarked on a virtual journey together over the period of five full days. The packed training schedule saw them discussing a number of issues pertinent to small-scale fisheries governance in Africa. Content was presented by

experts whose regional experiences and commitment to enhancing small-scale fisheries in Africa were displayed through their dynamic talks and sessions.

Each day of the training event focused on a specific training module.

The virtual environment poses unique challenges, but also unique opportunities, one of which was hosting expert speakers from the continent and abroad.

Day 1 was about getting to know the participants and setting the African scene with regard to the SSF Guidelines. This was done through introductory talks by the FAO, the World Fisher Forum (WFF) and the participants themselves, who gave an interesting snapshot of their national SSF profile. A dynamic talk on SSF as complex socio-ecological systems by the University of Cape Town introduced many of the participants, for the first time, to the term of 'wicked problems'. This certainly became one of the buzzwords for the rest of the

training! Once it is understood, it really encapsulates the complex challenges of small-scale fisheries.

Day 2 kicked off with the Module 2 on Governance. The organizers were honoured to have AUDA-NEPAD as a guest speaker on the international and regional frameworks. This backdrop set the scene for framing SSF governance and the various instruments that guide and complement the development of the SSF Guidelines.

However, it was the session on Responsible Governance of Tenure, by the Legal Resources Centre of South Africa, that had participants glued to their screens. Wilmien Wicomb delved into the legal status of small-scale fishers, their human rights, tenure rights and legal rights. This session forced participants to critically reflect on their national constitutions, to analyze the extent to which they reflect human rights, and which policies they should look toward or develop in protecting the rights of fishers. The theme of fisher rights as human rights came through strongly in each module.

In the afternoon, speakers from the University of Cape Town and the

Guidelines. Through the use of ICT, it addresses issues from the incorporation of local knowledge, empowerment in the value chain, gender equity, disaster risk and climate change, and social development. This brought us to Module 4: Understanding small-scale fisheries as complex socio-ecological systems.

The virtual field trip was novel to Abalobi and IOI-SA. The participants were not sure of what to expect. They did their best to replicate an on-location field trip by having interactive sessions, photos and videos. Is there any virtual setting that can take the place of actually being in the field, meeting the fishers, immersed in the activities and the fresh air? Probably not, but everybody was making the best of the difficult circumstances.

Day 3 also encompassed dedicated sessions on two of the key thematic areas of the SSF Guidelines: gender and social development. The talks were delivered by the University of Cape Town and the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF).

Towards implementing SSF Guidelines in Africa

In the final days of the training, attention shifted toward Modules 5-6, which consider the various institutions and role players involved in implementation of the SSF Guidelines. It is important in understanding which agencies (and their capacities) play a role in the implementation of the SSF Guidelines. What is the specific role of States or fisher organizations in the implementation process? The modules also aimed to reflect on the barriers and opportunities to implementing the SSF Guidelines in the national context—with a view to the way forward.

A session was presented by the FAO and Duke University on the importance of data and information on SSF—specifically highlighting the Hidden Harvest study—and the important role this type of information can play in informing the implementation of the SSF Guidelines. With the AU-IBAR and the University of the Western Cape, the module also discussed Blue Economic Strategies at length. The focus here was in relation to social justice and the concept of Blue Justice. This was another session that forced participants to

The participants spoke about how they felt motivated and empowered to effect change that could improve the lives of vulnerable people and marginalized groups.

University of the Western Cape took the participants deeper into Module 3: Concepts, principles and approaches for small-scale fisheries governance. It focused on participatory approaches and understanding legal pluralism or multiple levels of governance that involve state and customary systems.

Governance in action—and armchair travel

Midway through the training event on Day 3, the participants donned their sunhats and sunscreen as they were (virtually!) whisked off to a virtual field trip to the Southern and Western Cape of South Africa by the Abalobi ICT4Fisheries team. The Abalobi programme encapsulates many of the best practices set down in the SSF



Virtual field trip. In continuing to adapt to the new norms, the 21 training participants embarked on a virtual journey together over five full days to the Southern and Western Cape of South Africa, in a trip organized by the Abalobi ICT4Fisheries team

critically evaluate the role of small-scale fisheries in policies and instruments.

The training event concluded with a focus on tools and processes for the implementation of the SSF Guidelines. Participants were involved in the development of a group exercise centred on the draft NPOA-SSF toolkit developed by the FAO. The toolkit aims to assist countries in implementing the SSF Guidelines in the national context by providing a template for a comprehensive implementation plan. The objective of the exercise was to familiarize participants with the process of developing a NPOA-SSF toolkit.


Champions of change

Though the training was intense, the participants rose to the occasion. They showed great commitment and appreciation of the content. They were enthusiastic, engaged and motivated. One of the highlights came towards the end of the training event. Participants were discussing the challenges and opportunities in implementing the SSF Guidelines in their respective countries. The challenges were coming thick and fast! There was a range of

very real issues such as lack of political will, lack of funding, lack of awareness, lack policy harmonization, the need to capacitate fisher organizations, and the need for institutional collaboration and communication.

Too big to ignore

Yet, when participants spoke of the opportunities, the possibilities that the implementation of the SSF Guidelines presented were so overwhelmingly empowering that all the challenges seemed to disappear! The participants spoke about achieving gender equity, about the empowerment of women, access to markets and what this would mean, equality, recognition, food security and nutrition. The participants spoke about how they felt motivated and empowered to effect change that could improve the lives of vulnerable people and marginalized groups. This was the training's takeaway message:

They have fed the world. They have come from a place where they have been ignored. And now, for the first time, the world is looking in their direction. They are too big to ignore... Small-scale fishers' lives matter! 

For more



International Ocean Institute – Southern Africa (IOI-SA).

<http://ioisa.org/>

UN World Food Programme

<https://www.wfp.org/>

Co-operate to Move Forward

An Africa Workshop focused on creating awareness about the SSF Guidelines, lobbying for their implementation, and aligning them with national fisheries policies

Despite the already highlighted importance of small-scale fisheries (SSF), the acknowledged need to develop infrastructure for improving post-harvest handling facilities for fisherfolk, and public investment in SSF is still very minimal in many communities. Little has been done to improve access to fisheries resources and social services. In Uganda, for instance, supporting private investors in fishing communities has taken precedence over supporting local communities that had supported food production in the country. Women's role in governance in the export-led

inter-governmental negotiations, also with the participation of civil society organizations, to guide interventions in SSF, aimed at eradicating hunger and promoting sustainable development.

Globally, threats to a smaller-scale mode of food production in fisheries have intensified, expropriating from the many and appropriated by a few. Interventions from other sectors, such as real-estate development, result in land acquisition along coastal and inland waters that restrict fisherfolk's access to fishing grounds. Global arrangements for funding of the development of water bodies further contribute to the demise of SSF, on which more than 200 mn people worldwide depend for their livelihood.

Strategies discussed by the 31 members of the WFF from the five continents were to amplify the voice of small-scale fisher communities, complemented by concerted efforts at the regional level, where issues that affect small-scale fishers were shared. The strategies focused on creating awareness about the SSF Guidelines, lobbying for their implementation, and aligning these Guidelines with national fisheries policies as they strengthen and give more importance to small-scale fishing communities.

Social development

The meeting also evaluated the regional capacity-building workshops carried out in Asia and Latin America. The lessons learned from the completed regional workshop guided the preparation of the Africa Regional Capacity-building Workshop that was hosted by the Association pour le développement de Fisher (ATDEP), in Tunisia, in September 2017.

Globally, threats to a smaller-scale mode of food production in fisheries have intensified, expropriating from the many and appropriated by a few.

fishery industry, and their access to fish for trade and local consumption, are declining over time.

The World Forum of Fish Harvesters & Fish Workers (WFF) had its General Assembly, held every three years, in January 2017 in Salinas, Ecuador, hosted by FENACOPEC, a member from Ecuador. Discussion during the General Assembly explored members' capacities to implement the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (the SSF Guidelines), endorsed by the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) in 2014, and also debated how to reach a consensus on an implementation plan. The SSF Guidelines were a product of

This article is by **Margaret Nakato** (mnakato@worldfisherforum.org), Co-ordinator, Katosi Women Development Trust (KWDT), Uganda, and Executive Director, World Forum of Fish Harvesters and Fish Workers (WFF) and **Rehema Namaganda Bavuma** (brehema@worldfisherforum.org), Capacity-building Officer, KWDT and Programmes Officer, WFF

The Africa workshop was meant to create awareness about the SSF Guidelines among the members present, which included leaders of small-scale fisher organizations from 13 African countries. The workshop also took into consideration the regional needs in SSF. It explored how members' interventions at the national level could contribute towards implementation of the Guidelines. The presentations revealed a rich experience in actions of small-scale fishing communities, inspiring WFF members to seek documentation of these for learning and continued transfer of good practices.

The formation of the African Women Fish Processors and Traders Network (AWFISHNET) was an important development, in which the WFF Co-President became the General Secretary. The Guidelines were translated into the local languages by ATDEP for the Maghreb region. The social-development initiatives that contribute to sustainability of the SSF were shared by KWDT from Uganda. Accounts of training of fishing communities by ATDEP and the Sierra Leone Artisanal Fishers' Union (SLAFU) were all inspirational stories on how to secure the livelihoods of fisher communities. Child-labour practices that are common especially in SSF were discussed to explore measures to curb them. Participants noted that in some countries, such as Mauritania, child labour is not a choice. It is imposed by the financial situation of the families, and by the customs or the politics of the region. In Tunisia, as reported by the participants, fishermen experience shortage of labour as young people do not want to practise fishing activity anymore. To remedy this shortage of labour, they are forced to make their sons work with them, thus transferring the tradition of fishing from father to son and from older to younger generations.

The Africa Workshop also sought the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context



In January 2017, the 31 members of the WFF during the General Assembly in Salinas, Ecuador, discussed the strategies that could amplify the voice of small-scale fisher communities

of National Food Security (VGT), parallel to the SSF Guidelines, as loss of land adjacent to water bodies results in loss of fishing grounds, particularly of small-scale fishing communities. The need for intensified regional activities and co-operation, to engage with regional fisheries bodies and governance institutions such as the Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AUIBAR), was emphasized. It is important to organize SSF communities, especially women, into co-operatives to enhance their production and increase their access to the markets. When small-scale fish producers are equipped with knowledge and skills to improve the quality of their production, processing and how to access and maintain markets, they can reduce post-harvest losses, claim a relative share of the fish market, and be able to produce in large quantities, as opposed to individual household production.

Governance of land, water and fisheries resources should be improved and put into the hands of small-scale fisherpeople who are directly engaged with, and are affected by, the poor governance of such resources. Privatization of resources, in many of the countries, has placed the resources in the hands of a few private investors, further marginalizing the local population/fisherfolk as they have no, or limited, access to the resources that they protect and that have been a source of their livelihoods for decades. 3

For more



<http://worldfisherforum.org/>
World Forum of Fish Harvesters & Fish Workers (WFF)

<http://www.katosi.org/>
Katosi Women Development Trust

<http://fenacopecu.blogspot.in/>
Federación Nacional de Cooperativas Pesqueras del Ecuador (FENACOPEC)

Lake Ties

Fisherfolk use their social networks to navigate formal and informal rules in accessing the fisheries of Lake Victoria

Access to the fisheries of Lake Victoria in East Africa is often described as 'open', meaning that anyone can join the fisheries, but in both policy and practice, there are a number of formal measures and informal rules that have to be navigated to work and trade in the fisheries. Fisherfolk make use of their social networks to help them through this myriad of formal and informal rules and processes.

Lake Victoria is the second largest freshwater body in the world, supporting the livelihoods of millions of people in the three countries bordering the Lake (Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda) through income, food

919,310 tonnes, valued at US\$840 mn at the beach level. However, there has been much concern about declining stocks and catches of Nile perch since the early 2000s, attributed to high fishing pressure, the prevalence of illegal fishing and ecosystem degradation.

This concern has led to the adoption of measures to manage, and potentially limit, access. However, access is not yet limited though there are many formal and informal systems and rules that mediate access to the fisheries, and these are set out here as including the co-management system, boat licensing and social and economic ties between fisherfolk. The article also reflects on how movement between landing sites affects access, and how women negotiate access to fish, before identifying cage farming and efforts to manage capacity as activities that may affect fishers' access to the Lake.

However, the installation of cages is controversial, with fishers concerned that their access to the Lake is being taken away from them as shorelines are closed off.

and water. There are three main commercial fisheries: Nile perch, most of which is processed and exported through processing plants; Nile tilapia, serving mainly the domestic and regional markets; and, *dagaa*, a small sardine-like fish which is widely used in the region and exported to other African countries for both human and animal consumption.

The Lake is managed by the national fisheries departments which co-ordinate their plans and measures through the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization, which is a structure of the regional intergovernmental organization, the East African Community (EAC). The latest Fisheries Management Plan for the Lake reports an estimated total catch in 2014 of

Co-management and access

A system of co-management was introduced in the three countries from the late 1990s, initially supported on Lake Victoria by the World Bank-funded Lake Victoria Environmental Management Programme. The introduction of co-management primarily involved the formation of community-based Beach Management Units (BMUs). Guidelines and legislation require a BMU to be formed at all landing sites with at least 30 boats; those with fewer boats join with other sites to form a BMU. Everyone working within fisheries at a landing site is required to be a member of a BMU. Accessing the fisheries, therefore, requires fisherfolk to be a member of a BMU, and a register of members should be kept by each BMU.

This article is by **Fiona Nunan** (f.s.nunan@bham.ac.uk), Senior Lecturer, International Development Department, University of Birmingham, United Kingdom

Access to the fisheries is formally through applying for a licence to operate. Licences are required to take a boat out to fish, and to use a boat to collect and transport fish. Licences are also required to process, trade and transport fish on land. Responsibility for issuing licences rests with the government. In Kenya, the State Department for Fisheries is responsible for issuing licences, which it does through the County Fisheries Officer. Central government is also responsible for licensing in Uganda, with the fees kept by the Department of Fisheries Resources for the sector. A register of everyone issued with a licence should be maintained and a certificate issued, together with a fishing vessel identification plate. In Tanzania, boat licences are issued by local government for vessels below 11 m in length. Various restrictions apply with regard to boat licences, such as keeping within fishing regulations, and licences cannot be transferred.

There is no limit to the number of licences that can be issued and so licences are seen as a way of raising revenue from the fisheries. However, although licensing is supposed to take place on an annual basis, there have, at times, been considerable delays in issuing licences in Uganda and uncertainty in Kenya since the introduction of the county government system following the 2010 Constitution over which level of government should have the responsibility for issuing licences. The cost of a licence is not prohibitive, and fishers are more likely to be arrested and sanctioned for fishing illegally as are traders/processors dealing in undersized fish than fishing or trading without a licence. They can, however, be sanctioned for not having a licence and a bribe may be offered or sought in lieu of a sanction.

The 2016-2020 Fisheries Management Plan for Lake Victoria sets out a number of measures to be developed to improve the licensing system and to work towards controlling access. These are: the development of harmonized fishing craft registration and licence registers;

introduction of Species Specific Licensing for Nile perch; and, the development and piloting of regional guidelines for a user rights-based management system. It is then possible that the system of accessing the Lake fisheries will change over the coming years.

Access to the fisheries is not solely down to paying for a licence. For boat owners, access requires the purchase of a boat and gears, which often relies on access to credit. This credit is generally provided by fish agents, who buy fish on behalf of the fish-processing factories and provide credit to boat owners in exchange for a reliable and long-term supply of Nile perch. For boat crew, access to the fisheries is made possible through employment by boat owners. Employment relies upon good relations with the boatowner, as the owner must trust the crew with their boat and gears and to return with all of the catch. Boat crew also rely on friends for recommendations to boat owners, particularly when moving to a different landing site.

Access and migration

Around half of the boat crew are believed to move between landing sites, in search of higher catches and prices. Boat crew do not always move with a boat but seek work with a different boatowner on arrival at a

FIONA NUNAN



Sorting a catch of Nile perch. The credit is generally provided by fish agents, who provide credit to boatowners in exchange for a reliable and long-term supply of Nile perch

FIONA NUNAN



Boats parked up on island landing site. Employment relies upon good relations with the boatowner, as the owner must trust the crew with their boat and gears

32

landing site. Migrants are expected to carry with them a letter from the leader of the BMU at the landing site they have left, which they present to the leader of the BMU at the new landing site. Such a letter should confirm their identity and good character. Access to employment as fishers move around the Lake also depends on social networks, with boat crew relying on contacts in accessing information on fish catches and prices and in making new connections for employment and housing.

Lake Victoria fisherwomen

Women make up around a quarter of the people working in fisheries at the beach level, with the majority of women engaged in processing and trading fish, particularly tilapia, *dagaa* and undersized Nile perch. Access to fish relies on establishing good relationships with boat crew and boat owners. This may result from marriage, with women fish processors and traders buying fish from their husbands. Alternatively, credit or gifts, such as cigarettes, may be provided to crew to persuade them to sell their fish to those providing the gifts. The practice of 'fish for sex' is also found on Lake Victoria, where sex is exchanged for access to fish. This practice has been associated with high levels of HIV/AIDS around the

Lake, as well as with alcohol use and boat crew migration.

Two key challenges may affect access to the fisheries of Lake Victoria in the coming years. These are the introduction of cage farming on the Lake, and plans to manage fishing capacity. In terms of cage farming, allowing private investors to establish cages in the Lake is in line with the increasing attention given to aquaculture in the region, and seeing the adoption of aquaculture as a solution to declining catches in capture fisheries. However, the installation of cages is controversial, with fishers concerned that their access to the Lake is being taken away from them as shorelines are closed off. The Regional Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity on Lake Victoria (RPOA-Capacity), agreed in 2007, aims to introduce a number of measures to manage and—in the case of Nile perch—control, fishing capacity. Some of those measures can be found in the latest Fisheries Management Plan, but measures to control or limit fishing capacity remain contested, given the lack of alternative livelihood sources in the region. ¶

For more



<http://www.fao.org/nr/tenure/land-tenure-journal/index.php/LTJ/article/viewArticle/74>

Governance of tenure in the Lake Victoria fisheries, Tanzania

<http://www.fao.org/3/a-bl763e.pdf>
Nile Perch Fishery Management Plan 2015-2019

<http://securefisheries.org/blog/future-lake-victoria-part-1>

The future of Lake Victoria: A looming conflict over fisheries

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/08941920.2017.1383547>

Community Cohesion: Social and Economic Ties in the Personal Networks of Fisherfolk

Women for Fisheries

The following Statement was made by CAOPA, the African Confederation of Artisanal Fisheries Professional Organizations, on the occasion of World Women's Day

On the occasion of the World Women's Day, on 8 March 2014, after two days of discussions,

We, representatives of the African Confederation of Artisanal Fisheries Professional Organizations, CAOPA,

On behalf of our national professional organizations from Mauritania, Senegal, Gambia, Liberia, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Kenya, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Morocco, Tunisia, Burkina Faso, Togo, Benin, Cape Verde and Côte d'Ivoire, which welcomed us,

In the name, particularly, of the women from these organizations, and the communities that depend on fishing for their livelihoods,

We urge the Ministers of Fisheries and Aquaculture of all African countries,

Who will meet from 14 to 18 March 2014 in Uganda, for the second Conference of the African Ministers of Fisheries and Aquaculture, CAMFA,

To take into account our concerns and proposals when they will decide the future of our sector, by voting for the Pan-African Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy Reform.

We believe that:

- there are limitations in the legal and regulatory fisheries frameworks in our countries, including in relation to artisanal fisheries, in order to ensure the sustainable management of our fisheries for the benefit of coastal communities and populations;
- ways need to be found to limit fishing capacity in fisheries where access is currently free for all;
- there are good reasons to suspect that illegal fishing is growing in many African countries and that the difficulties in combating it, both in

terms of means and political will, remain huge;

- African artisanal fisheries are increasingly showing their potential, when they are supported adequately, to provide an engine for development that is socially, economically and environmentally sustainable; and
- that the professionals, active in the artisanal fishing sector, and women, in particular, are not sufficiently informed, consulted and involved in the decision-making processes that affect them directly, whether

...if the women and all of our communities are vulnerable, it is because the fish is becoming rarer and more expensive, and the costs of fishing operations are increasing.

at national, regional or Pan-African levels.

We are concerned:

- by the growing vulnerability of women in artisanal fishing communities, which does not allow them to fulfill either their role in contributing to food security, through processing and marketing activities, or their responsibilities for the well-being of families and the education of the children;
- that the women and all of our communities are vulnerable, it is because the fish is becoming rarer and more expensive, and the costs of fishing operations are increasing;
- that one of the main reasons for this situation, which has been a trend for decades, is the intensification of fishing in many African countries, by vessels flying foreign flags, or

*This statement was made by the **Confédération Africaine des Organisations Professionnelles de la Pêche Artisanale (CAOPA)**, the African Confederation of Artisanal Fisheries Professional Organizations, on World Women's Day, 8 March 2014, at Abidjan, Ivory Coast*

vessels of foreign origin reflagged, chartered or fishing illegally, and the growing export of fish away from our continent, while the needs of African countries in proteins and nutrients from fish are growing, in line with the growth of our population;

- that if part of these foreign vessels are fishing in the context of formal agreements, a large number of vessels also fish under opaque

...empowering the artisanal fishing communities through integrated management of the marine ecosystems adjacent to their coastal lands...

conditions, often not complying with the legislation in force in African waters—including existing legislation for the protection of the artisanal fishing zone—using highly destructive and unselective methods;

- that foreign vessels are not the only cause of the excessive pressure on African fish stocks. There is also a largely uncontrolled growth of artisanal fisheries in many African countries; and
- that as soon as the fish becomes less abundant because of overfishing, the tendency of desperate local fishermen in some countries, to maintain the level of catches, is to use nets with very small mesh size, or even dynamite.

We call on our Ministers of Fisheries and Aquaculture, in the context of the reform of African fisheries strategy,

To improve governance for a more transparent and participatory fisheries management

- by promoting, with their respective States, the signing of the Aarhus Convention on public access to environmental information;
- by committing to publish regularly information on fishing licences granted and on the contracts and agreements signed;
- by putting in place transparent and independent licence allocation

committees, which include representatives of the artisanal fishing sector;

- by performing independent audits on the effectiveness of the fisheries administrations;
- by recognizing that the organizations representing democratically the artisanal fishing sector professionals are their privileged interlocutors;
- by developing with these organizations a dynamic partnership, including permanent consultation mechanisms with women and men of the artisanal fisheries sector and civil society, founded on:
 - the recognition of the capabilities and the knowledge of the small-scale fishing communities to develop resource management and conservation initiatives; and
 - the ability of the State to share power and responsibilities for management and conservation; to define a policy framework for the management of fisheries; to provide efficient legislation, to ensure its effective application; to provide various types of assistance to communities (means of implementation, scientific knowledge, control means, awareness activities, etc.)
- in particular, the implementation of transparent participatory surveillance schemes at the level of each country, as part of co-management initiatives, should be supported (legal recognition of the professionals involved, incentives, supply of means of communication, exchange visits, setting up of management committees);
- by giving special attention to ensure that women from the communities are represented equally (50 per cent) in decision-making consultations, as well as in the planning and implementation of these decisions;
- by empowering the artisanal fishing communities through integrated management of the marine ecosystems adjacent to their coastal lands, reaching an

agreement negotiated between the users (through their organizations), and the authority responsible for fisheries, which defines the objectives of management, rights and obligations of both parties, and is duly approved by the competent local authorities;

- by encouraging active civil society groups and the media to denounce certain practices that break regulations and are unethical; in this context, freedom of the press must be total;
- where criminal activities are detected, by imposing penalties and sanctions which are of sufficient severity and are widely circulated in the media;
- by stimulating co-operation between different departments within a State, and between African States for:
 - the fight against illegal fishing;
 - the concerted management of shared resources; and
 - the improvement and harmonization of legal and regulatory frameworks, in a way that recognizes local co-management initiatives.

To give priority access to resources for sustainable small-scale fisheries

- by exclusively providing access to small-scale fishermen to the

resources that they have the ability to fish in a sustainable manner;

- by reserving the coastal zone and the continental shelf for small-scale fishery activities, defining clearly the legislation, and protecting it effectively against the incursions of trawlers;
- by acknowledging the artisanal communities access rights in fisheries legislation and in the management of fisheries resources;
- by refusing to privatize and organize a market for access rights to resources, as suggested in the reform strategy, because these systems allow those holding capital to grab the sea's resources which artisanal fishers depends on for their livelihoods, driving our communities to poverty and misery;
- by adopting, at the next FAO Committee on Fisheries, in June 2014, and implementing as soon as possible, the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries, in order to preserve coastal populations livelihoods, to ensure their food security, their economic survival and the preservation of their cultures;
- by promoting resource recovery through management and the use of

INOUSSA MAIGA



A demonstration by members of the African Confederation of Artisanal Fisheries Professional Organizations (CAOPA) in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, on 8 March 2014

INOUSSA MAIGA



A meeting of the African Confederation of Artisanal Fisheries Professional Organizations (CAOPA). Members called for action on a Pan-African Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy Reform

tools like artificial reefs and marine protected areas;

- by promoting the use of new technologies all along the fisheries value chain, for better management and use of the fish resources; and
- by fighting against flags of convenience.

To implement the right to food, and ensure the contribution of fisheries to the realization of this right

- by encouraging their governments to sign the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and to translate it, in particular with regard to the right to food, to incorporate it in their constitution and national legislations;
- by putting in place a pan-African process whereby citizens can appeal to press governments to respect the right to food and the laws relating to it;
- concerning the promotion of aquaculture, which is an important element proposed in the reform of African fisheries policy strategy to increase fish production, we advocate:
 - restriction of the development of aquaculture to non-carnivorous species, which are not dependent on fishmeal produced from our small pelagics, that must be reserved for direct human consumption;

- promotion of small-scale aquaculture, through the establishment of a national agency for aquaculture development; and
- encouragement of private investment in such sustainable aquaculture through capacity-building and awareness-raising programmes, with financial and technical support, and ensuring, through this agency, that coastal populations are integrated in this dynamic and benefit from it.

We hope that our voices will be heard by our Ministers of Fisheries and Aquaculture, and we wish them fruitful debates on the adoption of a strategy of reform for African fisheries that recognizes and protects the rights of our communities to develop sustainable fisheries in Africa. 3

For more

caopa-africa.org/

CAOPA

www.cape-cffa.org/new-blog/2014/1/7/caopa-on-line-consultation-on-the-panafrican-fisheries-policy-and-reform-strategy

CAOPA Online Consultation on the Pan-African Fisheries Policy and Reform Strategy

Testing Transparency

An access-to-information survey reveals the unwillingness of public authorities and companies in Africa to respect freedom of information

26

TransparentSea is a new initiative that aims to promote access to information and accountability in marine fisheries. It was initiated in 2011 with the support of the Coalition for Fair Fisheries Arrangements (CFFA), a non-governmental organization (NGO) based in Brussels. The main motivation was the tendency of the fisheries sector to be secretive. Citizens, including small-scale fishers, rarely have access to information that is necessary to understand how their marine resources are being exploited. The prospects of responsibly and

countries, among fishing companies, governments of distant-water fishing fleets, international organizations like the United Nations and the World Bank, and among regional fisheries management organizations. Moreover, confidentiality in fisheries in African countries is often conditioned by foreign actors for their own benefit (such as in bilateral fisheries agreements), making it misleading to blame poor levels of transparency on an African governmental culture.

This article describes and comments on the access-to-information survey, and on what further steps could be taken to ensure that transparency is embedded in wider debates on fisheries reform. But, in doing so, we note that there are limits to what improving transparency can do; a more transparent sector is not necessarily a good one.

The access-to-information survey was inspired by the 'access-to-information monitoring tool' developed by the New York-based Open Society Justice Initiative. It was designed to show real-world experiences of access to information, and how NGOs, journalists or members of fishing communities can get certain types of information easily.

It was necessary to limit the scope of the survey and to avoid overburdening fishing authorities with extensive questions and requests for information. We, therefore, focused on two related themes.

Up-to-date information

First, we wanted to test whether citizens can get up-to-date and detailed information on 'fisheries authorizations'—namely, which

equitably managed fisheries are unlikely as long as those in positions of power are impervious to public scrutiny.

TransparentSea's programme in 2011 included an access-to-information survey in 12 African countries, which is hoped to be developed further this year. While organizations and experts are increasingly talking about the lack of transparency in fisheries, this survey was the first effort to provide some evidence and compare situations in different countries. The survey was limited; focusing on levels of transparency in African governments. This is likely to endorse a view that African countries have a unique problem with government openness. However, secrecy in fisheries is equally problematic in many developed

The access-to-information survey was inspired by the 'access-to-information monitoring tool' developed by the New York-based Open Society Justice Initiative.

*This article is by **André Standing** (andre.standing@transparentsea.co) of TransparentSea*

companies fish in their countries, where they are from, how much they pay for fishing access, and what are the terms for the issue of fishing licences. Details were also sought on bilateral access agreements, including their value and the number of boats able to take up fishing opportunities. The European Union (EU) publishes the contract details of its access agreements with African countries; we were thus more interested in information on non-EU access agreements, which include those with China, Russia and Japan.

Secondly, we wanted to test whether citizens can get up-to-date and detailed information on the financial management of their fishing authorities, including budget documents and financial reports. This is important information for citizens to understand what revenues are derived from fisheries, what activities governments prioritize, and whether the resources made available to fishing authorities are sufficient and used well.

The survey was divided into two phases. The first involved participants reviewing publicly available material. In particular, we were interested in examining what information was made available through government websites and annual reports, and whether these exist at all. In the second phase of the survey, participants were instructed to write a letter to their fishing authority asking for some basic documents and facts and figures. The letters were the same for each country and, in most cases, they were sent by email. In two countries, the letter was delivered by hand due to difficulty in identifying the correct email address to use. We then allowed two months for a response, although the survey was kept open for longer in order to include responses that came after two months; that, however, has not actually happened.

Although the survey initially covered 14 countries, it was implemented successfully in only 12 countries: Senegal, the Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Togo, Ghana, Nigeria, Gabon, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique and Mauritius.

In each country, we preferred participants from organizations representing the rights of small-scale fishing communities, or independent journalists with a longstanding interest in covering fishing news.

In this type of research it is important to consider the profile of the participant. The Open Society Justice Initiative's access-to-information monitoring tool was implemented by several different people (up to six) in 14 countries. The results suggested that in some countries, who is asking for information has a bearing on whether it is given out. As the survey only used one participant per country, this variable could not be controlled. It is possible that in some countries the participant's job, social standing, ethnicity or gender made it less likely that he or she would receive information from the government. However, we assume that in a country with strong levels of public access to information, it does not matter who asks for information.

Overall, the survey suggested enormous shortfalls in most countries in levels of government transparency. In the first phase of the survey, in most countries participants elicited very little information.

In five countries, fishing authorities do not have websites. Where sites do exist, it was found that, in most cases, these had limited content or had not been updated for over four years. In



KAJSA GARPE

Participants at the TransparentSea meeting at Mbour, Senegal. The meeting found enormous shortfalls in most countries in levels of government transparency

KAJSA GARPE



TransparentSea meeting participants taking a break at Mbour, Senegal.
Lack of transparency can be seen as one factor that marginalizes small-scale fishers

In only one country—Gabon—does the fishing authority publish a list of the individual fishing vessels that are provided government authorization to fish, and this list also contained information on the fees paid by each boat and what was their flag State. This information was available for 2010 only and was made available in a national newspaper. (Gabon does not have a fisheries website or annual report.)

Also, Gabon is the only country where the fishing authority publishes recent information on the cost of each individual fishing licence. In Kenya, the Department of Fisheries announces the cost of a purse-seine fishing licence, although the information is more than four years old and there is no additional information on the cost of licences for other types of fishing vessels, such as longline boats.

Participants in five countries found some publicly available information on non-EU fisheries access agreements. However, the survey revealed no information whatsoever on the value of such agreements, on their contracts and any evaluation of them.

Finding recent budget and financial documents for the fishing authorities was extremely difficult. There was no example where these documents were available on the dedicated website of the authorities. In 10 countries participants failed to locate a budget document or end-of-year financial statement for their fishing authority. In Mauritius, the website of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development publishes the annual budget and end-of-year financial report for the Ministry of Fisheries. This also includes policy objectives for the fisheries ministry and key achievements.

Unavailable

In Ghana, the budget for the Ministry of Fisheries is available, but only in hard copy. The fishing authority there told our participant that it would provide him with a copy of the budget, but the person authorized to do so was on leave during our survey, and hence

several cases, links to key reports and documents were not working, and contact details for the fishing authority were no longer correct.

In eight countries, the fishing authorities did not publish annual reports. In three countries—Nigeria, Ghana and Guinea-Bissau—participants were aware that the fishing authorities do produce annual reports, but these are kept confidential and only shared within the government or with donors.

In four countries where annual reports are made available to the public, there is a long delay in publishing them. The latest reports for Mauritius, Senegal and Mozambique were from 2009, and for Ivory Coast, 2008. The quality of the annual reports varied, but none contained information on the income and expenditure of the fishing authority or lists of fishing vessels authorized to fish in the country's waters.

In only three countries—Gabon, Ghana and Mauritius—could participants locate recent information on the total number of commercial vessels authorized to fish in their country's waters. However, in Gabon and Ghana, the information was only available for 2010. In Mauritius, the total number of fishing licences sold to both foreign and local firms is detailed in the Ministry of Fisheries annual budget document.

the participant was unable to get the document. In Tanzania and Kenya, there are budget documents available on government websites for the ministry in which the fisheries department is located, but it is impossible to separate the budget for the fisheries department specifically.

In the second phase of the survey—where participants requested information in writing from their fishing authorities—our results were again extremely disappointing.

In seven countries, letters to the fishing authorities went unanswered. Although participants were not instructed to undertake follow-up work, in five countries participants reported sending additional mails, making phone calls and even personal visits. None of this extra effort made any difference.

In five countries, the written requests were acknowledged, but, after a period of two months, a positive response was received only in Mauritius and the Gambia. In Mauritius, the fishing authority provided all requested information within four weeks. This included information on the value of fisheries access agreements, and a copy of the terms of licence agreements. In the Gambia, the Director of Fisheries provided a list of current licensed fishing vessels, but information on the other questions, including financial information on the management of the fishing authority, was not provided.

In the remaining three countries where the authorities acknowledged the letters, they failed to provide any answers to the questions within three months, and did not explain why the requests for information were not successful. In each case, the authorities requested further information from participants on why they wanted the information, which runs counter to the international norm of freedom of information being unconditional for members of the public (meaning that citizens should not have to justify why they want information).

In summary, if there is a view that fisheries management in Africa lacks transparency, then our survey

provides some empirical evidence to support it. Out of 12 countries surveyed, in only Mauritius can we say that the fishing authority displays good levels of transparency. There are still ways in which the fishing authority in Mauritius can improve, such as by publishing its annual report on time, publicly sharing a draft budget for comments, and publishing a full list of licensed fishing vessels.

Gabon also stands out as being the only country that publishes detailed information on the list of commercial vessels that purchase fishing licences, including the fees they pay, although it should be noted that Gabon has done this only for 2010. We know, however, that the decision to publish this list of fishing vessels was encouraged by the World Bank through its lending support. Whether the World Bank is successful in promoting similar levels of transparency in other African countries is a matter that deserves more attention.

However, in the remaining countries, access to information is minimal, and in several countries, non-existent. Our survey suggests

In the second phase of the survey—where participants requested information in writing from their fishing authorities—our results were again extremely disappointing.

that if citizens in these countries wanted to find out basic information on which companies fish in their waters, how much revenue is being generated by commercial fishing, or what is the income and expenditure of their fishing authorities, then they are not able to find this in open-source publications by their governments, and they probably will not get this information if they asked for it.

Poor transparency

Our survey did not give us a good insight into why there are such poor levels of transparency in most the countries surveyed. It is possible that the requests went ignored because

there was no one in the fishing authority designated to act on public requests for information, or it may be the case that the authorities did not want to share this information. This appears to be the case in Nigeria, where the survey participant—E. Umejei, a local journalist—undertook further investigative work after the survey was completed and published an article, dated 11 November 2011, titled “Nigeria’s Fishing Sector in Transparency Crisis” in the *Sunday Independent*. He discovered that Nigeria provided licences to 156 foreign vessels in 2010, but his source at the Department of Fisheries explained that all information on the cost of licences, the names of the companies buying them, and the revenues received by the Nigerian State was ‘classified’.

Improving transparency is an intuitive response to fisheries governance failure. Lack of transparency can be seen as one factor that marginalizes small-scale fishers and coastal communities and it may be important in understanding the political economy of overfishing. Lack of transparency in fisheries affects the rights of fishing communities to participate in decision-making processes that impact on their lives and livelihoods, and their right to free, prior and informed consent—a key principle in international law and jurisprudence.

The latest (2010) State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture Report from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) states: “Lack of basic transparency could be seen as an underlying facilitator of all the negative aspects of the global fisheries sector—illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, fleet overcapacity, overfishing, ill-directed subsidies, corruption, poor fisheries management decisions, etc. A more transparent sector would place a spotlight on such activities whenever they occur, making it harder for perpetrators to hide behind the current veil of secrecy and requiring immediate action to be taken to correct the wrong”.

Despite being an encouraging statement, it is hard to locate evidence that the FAO or other international actors are adopting strong measures to address this problem. The World Bank makes reference to the need for transparency in the ‘wealth-based approach’ to fisheries, framed first and foremost as a condition necessary to provide ‘investor confidence’. But the World Bank’s fisheries projects in Africa are opaque, with hardly any publicly available in-depth evaluations and audits.

A major stumbling block is the lack of willingness of public authorities and companies to respect freedom of information. There are strong vested interests in sustaining confidentiality. Voluntary transparency reforms are often promoted by governments, but these can be disappointing; leading to selected disclosure of information that can easily morph into propaganda campaigns. To be sure, some information is still better than nothing, but what is needed are mandatory rules that provide citizens the right to access information they want, as well as access to justice when this right is ignored. 3

For more

<http://transparentsea.co/>

Transparent Sea

www.soros.org/initiatives/justice/

Open Society Justice Initiative

www.cape-cffa.org/spip.php?article262

Securing Transparency in African Marine Fisheries

fao.org/docrep/013/i1820e/i1820e00.htm

The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture

pdc.ceu.hu/archive/00002352/01/Access_to_Inform.pdf

Justice Initiative Access to Information Monitoring Tool: Report from a Five-country Pilot Study

JAPAN'S TSUNAMI

Devastating Tsunami Drives Away Fish

On the day of the tsunami that hit Japan on 11 March 2011, Mexican fishermen reported a stellar fishing day and it is being reported that the tsunami drove fish in their direction.

Thousands of sardines, anchovies, striped bass and mackerel surged along the coast of Acapulco, packed so tightly that they looked like an oil slick from above.

Delighted fishermen rushed out in wooden motor boats to scoop the fish up in buckets.

The fishermen attributed the strange phenomenon to the

unusual currents unleashed by the tsunami, but experts couldn't be sure.

"It would fall into that category where you would love to make the connection, but who knows?" said Rich Briggs, a geologist with the US Geological Survey.

Sadly, the tsunami has wiped out fishing harbours and ports—and not just in Japan.

In Japan, the port of Minamisanriku was destroyed and Misawa was devastated. The fishing hub Ofunato was also badly hit, as was the fishing town of Rikuzentakata, and Hakodate.

It has been reported that the commercial fishing harbour of Crescent City in California was destroyed. The town was still recovering from a tsunami in 1964. 53 vessels were damaged, including 15 that sank, said Alexia Retallack, a spokeswoman for the state Department of Fish and Game.

The damage in Santa Cruz Harbour is estimated at nearly £10 million. The harbour is housing 58 commercial fishing vessels that were not able to leave the harbour, said Lisa Ekers, director of the Santa Cruz Port District.

Meanwhile, the explosions and leaks from the Fukushima nuclear plant have worried consumers about whether it is safe to eat Japanese fish, for fear of radiation poisoning.

www.worldfishing.net/news101/japanese-tsunami-hits-fisheries

BOOKSHELF

Johannes, R.E., 1981. Words of the Lagoon: Fishing and Marine Lore in the Palau District of Micronesia. University of California Press, California.

Words of the Lagoon" is an account of the pioneering work of a marine biologist to discover, test and record the knowledge possessed by native fishermen of the Palau islands of Micronesia.

When Palauans fish, land-based protocol is suspended. Harsh criticism or 'words of the lagoon'—*teko i l'chei*—may be hurled by man or boy of any rank at anyone, chief included, whose efforts do not measure up on the fishing grounds. No one, irrespective of rank, may express offence at being scolded under such conditions. The Palauans' sensitivity to marine ecology and their centuries-old use of conservation methods employed only recently by industrialized societies are meshed in the traditional values of the culture that gives a special place to 'Words of the Lagoon'.

VERBATIM

I was drunk on as addictive a thing as was ever poured from a bottle. I sang to myself, The sea, the sea, the crazy old black sea.

—DIANE WILSON
IN "AN UNREASONABLE WOMAN"

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

50

The African Confederation of Small-scale Fisheries Professional Organizations

Despite its economic, social and cultural importance in Africa, small-scale fisheries remain the poor relation of development policies. The looting of marine resources through illegal practices is now jeopardizing the survival of fishing communities, and is one of the greatest threats to future generations.

National organizations grouping small-scale fishing professionals are being established in various African countries, but alone, they are unable to stop the scourge and influence fisheries policies.

Aware of the urgency of solving these issues, after several years of dialogue between West African small-scale professional organizations from Mauritania, Senegal and Guinea, the African Confederation of Small-scale Fisheries Professional Organizations (CAOPA) or the *Confédération africaine des Organisations professionnelles de la Pêche artisanale* was launched in March 2010, in Banjul, Gambia. Founding members included men and

women representing the national small-scale fisheries professional organizations of Senegal, Gambia, Mauritania, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Cape Verde, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Togo and Ivory Coast.

CAOPA's vision is "to develop an African small-scale fisheries organizations' dynamic". Its main objectives are "to add value to the fish resources they live from, in order to ensure the well-being of their communities, and to get involved in the design and implementation of fisheries policies."

CAOPA is there to "defend the material and moral interests of its members; to have their

improve women's working conditions and involvement in decisionmaking."

First and foremost, CAOPA wants to become and remain "a force of proposal for sustainable fisheries in the face of States and all other national and international development partners".

In September 2010, CAOPA members participated as observers to the first Conference of African Fisheries and Aquaculture Ministers, organized by the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), in Banjul. In 2011, these efforts were pursued with the participation of a CAOPA delegation to the FAO Committee on Fisheries, where they participated in daily briefings organized by the NEPAD for African delegations. CAOPA also participated in the World Social Forum in Dakar, co-organizing an event on "Fisheries and Food Security" and presenting their views on foreign direct investments in fisheries, in a meeting looking at 'sea grabbing' issues.



legitimacy to fulfill this role recognized by governments as well as by national and international institutions; to be involved in defining policies for responsible and sustainable fisheries, which contribute to fighting poverty, but also to

The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture

According to the “The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2010” (SOFIA), capture fisheries and aquaculture supplied the world with about 142 mn tonnes of fish in 2008. Of this, 115 mn tonnes were used as human food, providing an estimated apparent per capita supply of about 17 kg (live-weight equivalent), which is an all-time high.

Aquaculture accounted for 46 per cent of total food fish supply, a slightly lower proportion than reported in SOFIA 2008, owing to a major downward revision of aquaculture and capture-fishery production statistics by China, but representing a continuing increase from 43 per cent in 2006.

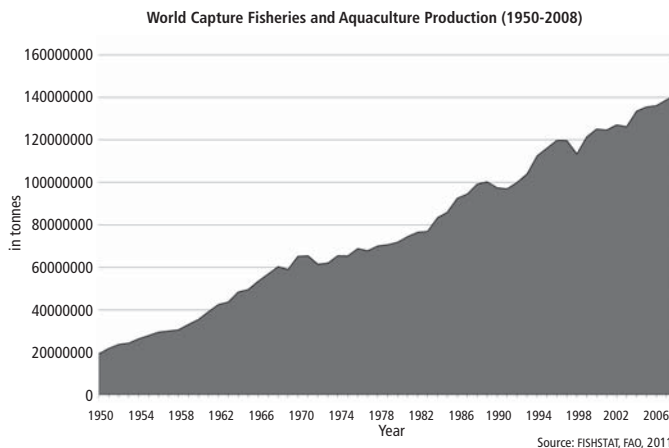
Outside China, per capita supply has remained fairly static in recent years as growth in supply from aquaculture has offset a small decline in capture-fishery production and a rising population. In 2008, per capita food fish supply was estimated at 13.7 kg, if data for China are excluded.

In 2007, fish accounted for 15.7 per cent of the global population’s intake of animal protein and 6.1 per cent of all protein consumed. Globally, fish provides more than 1.5 bn people with almost 20 per cent of their average per capita intake of animal protein, and 3 bn people with at least 15 per cent of such protein. In 2007, the average annual per capita apparent fish supply in developing countries was 15.1 kg, and 14.4 kg in low-income food-deficit countries (LIFDCs).

In LIFDCs, which have a relatively low consumption of animal protein, the contribution of fish to total animal protein intake was significant—at 20.1 per cent—and is probably higher than that indicated by official statistics in view of the under-recorded contribution of small-scale and subsistence fisheries.

China remains by far the largest fish-producing country, with production of

47.5 mn tonnes in 2008 (32.7 mn and 14.8 mn tonnes from aquaculture and capture fisheries, respectively). These figures were derived using a revised statistical methodology adopted by China in 2008 for all aquaculture and capture-fishery production statistics and applied to statistics for 2006 onwards. The revision



was based on the outcome of China’s 2006 National Agricultural Census, which contained questions on fish production for the first time, as well as on results from various pilot sample surveys, most of which were conducted in collaboration with FAO.

Global capture-fisheries production in 2008 was about 90 mn tonnes, with an estimated first-sale value of US\$93.9 bn, comprising about 80 mn tonnes from marine waters and a record 10 mn tonnes from inland waters. In 2008, China, Peru and Indonesia were the top producing countries. China remained by far the global leader with production of about 15 mn tonnes.

While aquaculture production (excluding aquatic plants) was less than one mn tonnes per year in the early 1950s, production in 2008 was 52.5 mn tonnes, with a value of US\$98.4 bn. Aquatic plant production by aquaculture in 2008 was 15.8 mn tonnes (live-weight equivalent), with a value of US\$7.4 bn, representing an average annual growth rate

in terms of weight of almost eight per cent since 1970.

The fish sector is a source of income and livelihood for millions of people around the world. Employment in fisheries and aquaculture has grown substantially in the last three decades, with an average rate of increase of 3.6 per cent per year since 1980. It is estimated

that, in 2008, 44.9 mn people were directly engaged, full-time or, more frequently, part-time, in capture fisheries or in aquaculture, and at least 12 per cent of these were women. This number represents a 167 per cent increase, compared with the 16.7 mn people in 1980. It is also estimated that, for each person employed in capture fisheries and aquaculture production, about three jobs are produced in secondary activities, including post-harvest, for a total of more than 180 mn jobs in the whole of the fish industry.

Moreover, on average, each jobholder provides for three dependants or family members. Thus, the primary and secondary sectors support the livelihoods of a total of about 540 mn people, or 8 per cent of the world population. Employment in the fisheries sector has grown faster than the world’s population. In 2008, 85.5 per cent of fishers and fish farmers were in Asia, followed by Africa (9.3 per cent), Latin America and the Caribbean (2.9 per cent), Europe (1.4 per cent), North America (0.7 per cent)

and Oceania (0.1 per cent).

China is the country with the highest number of fishers and fish farmers, representing nearly one-third of the world total. In 2008, 13.3 mn people were employed as fishers and fish farmers in China, of whom 8.5 mn people were full time. In 2008, other countries with a relatively high number of fishers and fish farmers were India and Indonesia.

Analyses indicate that the global fishing fleet is made up of about 4.3 mn vessels and that this figure has not increased substantially from an FAO estimate of a decade ago. About 59 per cent of these vessels are powered by engines. The remaining 41 per cent are traditional craft of various types, operated by sails and oars, concentrated primarily in Asia (77 per cent) and Africa (20 per cent). These unmotorized boats are engaged in fishing operations, usually inshore or on inland waters. The estimated proportion of non-powered boats is about four per cent lower than that obtained in 1998.

Of the total number of fishing vessels powered by engines, the vast majority (75 per cent) were reported from Asia and the rest mostly from Latin America and the Caribbean (eight per cent), Africa (seven per cent) and Europe (four per cent). The proportion of countries where the number of vessels either decreased or remained the same (35 per cent) was greater than that of those where it increased (29 per cent). In Europe, 53 per cent of the countries decreased their fleet and only 19 per cent of countries increased it.

Most of the stocks of the top 10 species, which account in total for about 30 per cent of the world marine capture-fisheries production in terms of quantity, are fully exploited. The two main stocks of anchoveta (*Engraulis*

contd...

SOFIA 2010...contd

ringens) in the Southeast Pacific and those of Alaska pollock (*Theragra chalcogramma*) in the North Pacific and blue whiting (*Micromesistius poutassou*) in the Atlantic are fully exploited. Several Atlantic herring (*Clupea harengus*) stocks are fully exploited, but some are depleted. Japanese anchovy (*Engraulis japonicus*) in the Northwest Pacific and Chilean jack mackerel (*Trachurus murphyi*) in the Southeast Pacific are considered to be fully exploited. Some limited possibilities for expansion may exist for a few stocks of chub mackerel (*Scomber japonicus*), which are moderately exploited in the Eastern Pacific, while the stock in the Northwest Pacific was estimated to be recovering. In 2008, the largehead hairtail (*Trichiurus lepturus*) was estimated to be overexploited in the main fishing area in the Northwest Pacific. Of the 23 tuna stocks, most are more or less fully exploited (possibly up to 60 per cent), some are overexploited or depleted (possibly up to 35 per cent) and only a few appear to be underexploited (mainly skipjack).

FLASHBACK

Editorial from SAMUDRA Report No. 1

Here, at last, in the spring of 1988, is the English edition of our little journal—born to link all those who feel concerned for the fate of fishworkers around the world: small-scale fishermen, fish processors and vendors, millions of men and women who so often must struggle to subsist but whose work is so important for mankind.

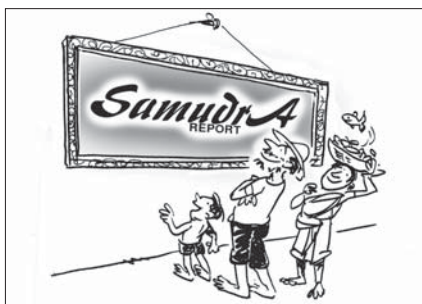
We are not a mega-size conglomerate; we are simply a network of supporters—presently located in 18 countries.

You will find that this first edition of

SAMUDRA Report in English has a strong bias towards India—where, on Kerala's sun-drenched beaches, our organization was born. But rest assured that in our next edition, the focus will be on Africa and in the issue after that, on Latin America...

So to all our friends, near and far, I send you greetings and our best wishes for a good catch!

—Pierre Gillet, 15, March 1988



52

INFOLOG: NEW RESOURCES AT ICSF

ICSF's Documentation Centre (dc.icsf.net) has a range of information resources that are regularly updated. A selection:

Videos/CDs

Heading Troubled Waters

Directed and filmed by Himanshu Malhotra. Produced by the Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve (GOMBR) Trust and UNDP-GEF

This film highlights the importance of the project on "Conservation and Sustainable Use of the Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve's Coastal Biodiversity" of the UNDP-GEF, of which the GOMBR Trust is the implementing agency. The film highlights the importance of the rich biodiversity of the region and the threats it faces due to certain fishing practices. It brings out the successful interventions of the project in relation to protection, research and livelihood options.

Bio-cultural Community Protocols

Produced by UNEP and Natural Justice

This documentary brings together materials relating to rights-based approaches to conservation, customary use of biological resources and well-being.

Publications

Putting into Practice an Ecosystem Approach to Managing Sea Cucumber Fisheries. Rome, FAO. 2010. 81pp.

Artisanal and industrialized fishers from more than 40 countries harvest over 60 species of sea cucumbers. These low-food-chain resources play important roles in nutrient recycling and sediment health in marine habitats. Owing to ease of capture and vulnerable biological traits, sea cucumbers have been easily overexploited in most countries, sometimes to local extinction. This document summarizes general management principles and a general framework for developing and implementing a management plan.

Fisheries in Sri Lanka: Anthropological and Biological Aspects.

Volume 1: *Anthropology of Fishing in Sri Lanka* by K.

Sivasubramaniam. Kumaran Book House. Chennai. 2009.

This series deals with the arrival of immigrants into Sri Lanka, their settlements along the coastal belt and the interior of the island and their contribution to the formation of marine and freshwater fishing communities of the country. It discusses the origin and arrival routes of the immigrants and the identifiable locations of their landing and formation of coastal fishing communities. An attempt has been made to identify, as far as possible, the immigrants, their racial origin, ethnicity, religion and the castes and clans and the factors that contributed to their involvement in fishing activities and the creation of fishing communities in the coastal and inland areas of Sri Lanka. Successive waves of immigrants from coastal areas of India introduced distinctly different methods of fishing, contributing to district-wise differences in the development of fishing technologies.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MEETINGS

United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea - 12th meeting, New York
20 to 24 June 2011

The 12th meeting of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea will be held at the UN headquarters in New York from 20 to 24 June 2011. Pursuant to paragraph 228 and 231 of General Assembly resolution

65/37 of 7 December 2010, in its deliberations on the report of the Secretary-General on oceans and the law of the sea, the Consultative Process at its 12th meeting will focus its discussions on "contributing to the assessment, in the context of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, of progress to date and the remaining gaps in the implementation of the outcomes of the major summits on sustainable development and addressing new and emerging challenges".

ASEAN-SEAFDEC Conference: "Fish for the People 2020: Adaptation to a Changing Environment", Bangkok, Thailand
13-17 June 2011

The conference aims to develop the "Decade Resolution and Plan of Action on Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security in the ASEAN Region (Towards 2020)" by addressing concerns on the fisheries situation and issues that may impede the sustainable development and contribution of fisheries to food security. www.ffp2020.org

WEBSITE

Women, Gender Equality and Climate Change

www.un.org/womenwatch/feature/climate_change

Womenwatch is the central gateway to information and resources on the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women throughout the United Nations system, including the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), the UN Secretariat and regional commissions.

Extensive or intensive fish farming?

The debate continues on whether to recommend intensive or extensive fish farming to farmers in sub-Saharan Africa

Extensive fish farming usually refers to fish farming conducted in medium- to large-sized ponds or water bodies; the fish production relies merely on the natural productivity of the water which is only slightly or moderately enhanced. Externally supplied inputs are limited; costs are kept low; capital investment is restricted; the quantity of fish produced per unit area is low. In brief, the control over the production factors is kept low. The return on labour is high.

Intensive fish farming, on the other hand, implies that the quantity of fish produced per unit of rearing area is great. To intensify the culture, production factors, such as feed, quality of water and quality of stocked fingerlings, are controlled to improve the production conditions. There is steady monitoring during the production cycle.

It goes without saying that all these controls entail high-tech practices and capital-intensive investments, which add to the production costs. The returns must justify increased production costs. The contribution of natural productivity into fish production is low or negligible. Besides this, intensive fish farming carries with it high costs or threats to the environment.

Apart from these two forms of fish farming, some speak about semi-intensive fish farming, referring to intermediate practices, taking elements of both forms. This is, however, ill-defined.

Before suggesting which of these forms is to be recommended, one should look at the context under which fish farming is practised. What are the farmer's objectives? The first objective is to ensure food security/livelihood for his household. This can be secured, firstly, by

growing food crops, and then by diversifying the farmer's activities over a range of agriculture and non-agriculture ventures in pursuit of his income generating strategies. The rationale behind this is to manage risk (*ex ante*) and to cope with loss (*ex post*).

The strategies devised will have to take into account his assets (resources, human capital, know-how) and his investment capacities. To carry out his strategies and best achieve his objectives, enabling market conditions need to be present. These are essentially a market system for agricultural and non-agricultural factors and products. For instance, food or labour scarcities can alter performance of the markets and prevent the farmer from achieving his objectives.

In support of his strategies, the farmer aims at optimizing the use of resources in his reach, putting to use unused or underused resources. The objective reason for going into fish farming is, therefore, the expected return to be made from fish farming. The choice of income-generating activities, amongst several options available, is made on the grounds of their expected returns and risks involved.

Farmers can be largely divided into three categories:

- those with little resources and land, no cash, short of labour, who are risk-prone and try to diversify their production in spreading risks, but who have little manoeuvring range;
- those with more resources, on-farm and off-farm; and
- the rich ones.

The first group of farmers will practise fish farming as a complementary or supplementary activity, while the two other groups can envisage fish farming as an income-generating activity on its own.

This means that, for the first group, fish farming needs to be integrated into a whole farm system, while, in the other two cases, it could stand on its own and develop into a primary economic activity.

The greater the role fish production plays in the generation of income, the larger the market needs to be to absorb the produced supply. The less fish is produced, the greater will be the home consumption of the fish produced.

Many smallholder farmers, except for the poorest ones, have off-farm incomes (trading activities, handicraft production,

basket weaving, herbalist activities, wine or beer production, and so on). These incomes are often quite important, as they are part of the risk-spreading strategy to secure a living.

In cases of failure of agricultural production due to climatic or other reasons, farmers will increasingly rely on off-farm income to tide over the critical period, though, in some cases, as in rural Mozambique, off-farm income has no discernible effect on calorie availability.

A possible explanation might be that off-farm activities are primarily accessible to men, while women are mostly responsible for the supply of food.

Non-farm income-generating activities are also important to provide means to pay for hired labour in agriculture; women will have to depend more on

mobilizing inter- and intra-household linkages to provide for extra labour.

Cash incomes are also important for the purchase of planting material or fish seed and farm inputs, as formal credit facilities from banking institutions are not available. Incomes generated through off-farm work, sales of cash and food crops contribute to the emergence of food and non-food markets with effective demands. With the monetisation of the economy, reliance on non-market relations, such as informal or exchange labour, is regressing; hired labour to be paid for in cash and kind is increasing. For instance, in Nigeria, traditional patterns of gender role in agriculture are changing, resulting in increased participation of Igbo women in agricultural production due to greater male participation in non-farm activities and in wage employment.

Alternative productive activities with little requirements for capital will be favoured. These offer a rapid return on investment, which can incorporate marginal labour force (children or the elderly).

Any move into fish farming will be supported by an assessment of the required conditions, i.e. suitable land (water-logged soil or proximity to a water stream), availability of water and inputs (agricultural by-products and manure), the anticipated returns from the available resources, and whether these are greater than those (expected or real) generated by other uses of the same resources (production of rice in marsh areas, compared to that of fish), and expected marketing facilities for the fish produced.

The benefits generated by fish farming are:

- a homestead pond has multiple purposes and contributes to increasing overall farm productivity;
- fish is an important ingredient in human nutrition, as a source of animal protein, as a tasty relish and as a prestige food;

- fish production has proved to provide excellent returns to land and labour and is, therefore, a profitable production; and
- fish is a high-value commodity.

On the negative side, several constraints restraining the adoption of fish farming must be considered. These, mainly, are:

- the ability to master the know-how of the new technology;
- the security of land tenure, which justifies the setting up of a costly investment (the construction of the pond); and
- the access to fish seed, to stock the pond, and to a market, to sell the fish.

In certain countries, access to wetland areas can be more difficult, as they are a common property resource, as in Malawi. Secure land tenure should not be understood in its formal sense since, as such, it is not a necessary condition for investments on land.

Social and cultural institutions, which assure individuals that they are part of a stable, equitable, well-adapted set of rights and duties, give the tenure arrangements meaning. Also, security of land tenure is less important if the investment pay-back period is short.

The various types of fish farming accessible to farmers in rural or pen-urban areas in developing countries are, essentially, fish farming in earthen ponds, irrigated rice fields, dams and reservoirs, and in pen or cages.

Irrigation

The ponds are either drainable, i.e. fed from an irrigation canal or rainfed, or non-drainable, dug in the water table. Existing irrigated rice fields can be used.

This is done by stocking them with fish and shrimps. Fisheries production in dams, reservoirs and natural water bodies can be enhanced by stocking fish in them. Further, pens and cages can be set up in dams, reservoirs and lakes to rear fish.

The bulk of fish produced in sub-Saharan Africa by fish farming comes from ponds and irrigated rice fields. What should be the level of intensity of fish farming? Before recommending anything, it should be remembered that fish farming can only be envisaged as an economic activity and, therefore, there is a need to investigate the prerequisites for the establishment of a healthy farmed-fish market. Amongst these, successful fish farming is one prerequisite.

To be successful, the technology should be feasible, productive and profitable. This means that fish farming should be within the capacity of the farmer—understood as the farmer's household and not as the male or female heading the farming household, i.e. compatible within his/her indigenous knowledge system; be easily accommodated within his/her time or labour availability, cash or capital availabilities, resources or resource base.

Further, fish farming should be productive; though, if the homestead pond is considered for under its pivotal role of supporting numerous on-farm activities, it can not be assessed from the mere perspective of the amount of fish produced, as the benefits include an improved overall farm performance. These multipurpose ponds provide water for domestic use, for watering vegetables, livestock, trapping wild fish, serving as bioreactors to dispose wastes, and so on.

Also, the amounts of fish harvested from a pond are differently assessed, according to expectations. For poor farmers, a few small fish harvested from a pond erratically fed can be a definite improvement to a diet; the marginal benefits of this production are substantial. 'Productive' is, therefore, a relative and not an absolute term.

Finally, the profitability of fish farming can be assessed in comparison to other productions. To be profitable, costs should be kept at bay, meaning that the inputs should be drawn, as much as possible, out of the farmer's resources base, making best use of underused by-products of farm activities. Labour requirements must be, as far as possible, accommodated within the available

labour force, and the use of hired labour must be minimized.

Once these conditions are met and fish farming is adopted by the farmers, the fish produced can be self-consumed and thus contribute to the household food security. However, sustainability of fish farming will be enhanced if there is an excess of farmed-fish production, a fair outlet for marketing the fish and the establishment of a farmed fish market.

To this effect, there must be a demand for farmed-fish; the cumulative offer of farmed-fish produced by the fish farmers must meet a certain number of criteria: the supply must be regular, the quality of supply must be adequate and the fish must fetch a fair price. The market requires that enough cash be in circulation, or at the disposal of the customers, to enable transactions to take place easily.

Intensification of fish farming can only occur if there is a discrepancy between the demand and supply. An increase in the supply of farmed fish can be met with an increase in the area under production, i.e. an increase of the number of producers or, alternatively, an increase in the average area of the fish farmer.

Another way to raise production is to resort to intensification. This can be realized by improved fish feed, by improving the size and quality of the fish, and by increasing the water quality. Compounding and pelleting feed to reduce wastage and to meet the nutritional requirements of the fish is, for instance, an improvement over the use of domestic wastes as feed

Different strains

Strains selected for faster growth, late maturity, male monosex fish, diploid and triploid fish, association with a predator, association of fish with various feeding regimes, artificial aeration of the water to improve the dissolved oxygen to enable higher stocking densities, and veterinary control to prevent health and disease problems, are all technological improvements to raise output.

Intensification will call for specialization in the various stages (feed preparation,

seed production) of production, which entails [he transfer of technology, the establishment of production units of the specialized sub-products (feed, seed) for intensified fish farming. This requires capital and investment, but also the market to sustain these operations at a large enough scale to be profitable.

Side effects, in terms of environmental damages, for instance, polluted water emissions from farms, destruction of ecological buffer zones such as marshes and mangroves, destruction of biodiversity in these habitats, release of genetically transformed fish species and the introduction of exotic species in natural waters result from fish farming. These effects tend to increase as fish farming gets intensified.

Further, preparation of commercial feed relies heavily on fishmeal, made of small pelagics fished at sea. This is not the most sensible way to make use of fish protein, nor is it the most economical way to produce fish.

In brief, intensification of fish farming tends to be an increasingly market-oriented production, often a monoculture, with poor waste management. It is oriented towards short-term economic benefit and profit, mostly at the cost of the environment. Intensification of production leads to an

autonomy of fish farming activities, since, soon, on-farm resources alone are not enough to support the increased production requirements, and inputs have to be provided from outside the farm, with all the attendant consequences.

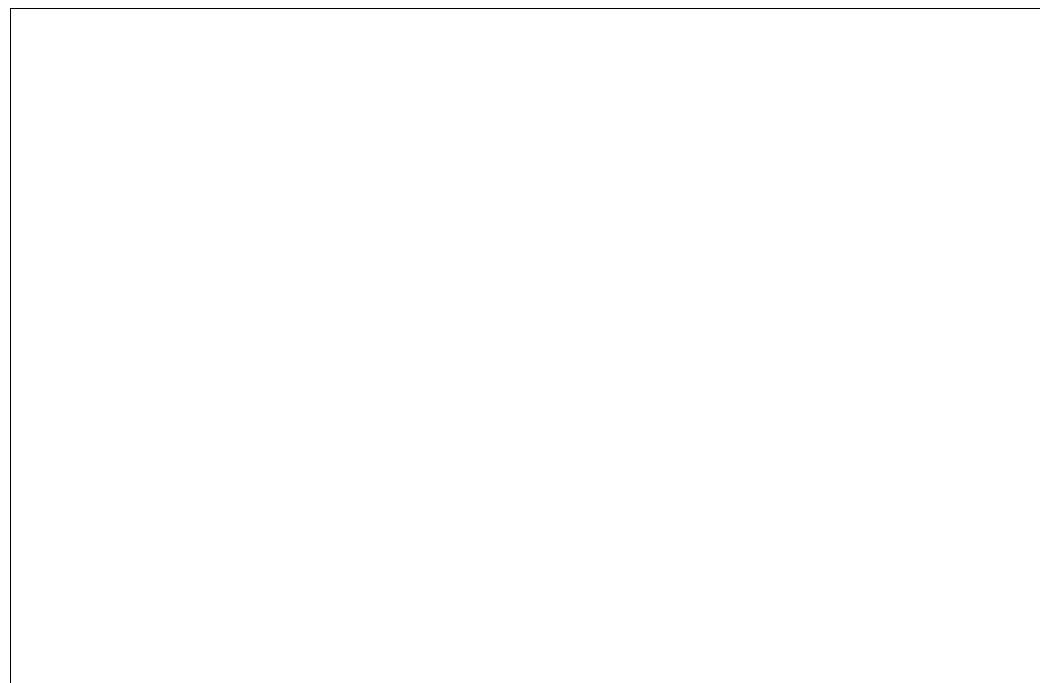
In many sub-Saharan African countries, fish farming production is low and could potentially contribute much more to rural economies. The first priority is to promote the adoption of fish farming on a wider scale, either for home consumption or for income generation.

The technological options so far extended have not been sufficiently integrated within indigenous knowledge systems to establish a solid and consistent farmed-fish production base.

Overdependence

The reasons for this failure stem from too much dependence on inputs (fish seed, feed) provided from outside, which could not be provided reliably or which needed cash to be procured, and a lack or inadequate integration of the activities within the whole farm system.

Once locally adapted and sustainable forms of fish farming have developed and begin expanding, then the supply and, concomitantly, the demand can be expected to steadily increase. With the adoption of fish farming production as an economic activity, a factor and product



market will be established. An increase of the area under production will be followed by a move towards an increase in quantity and improvements in quality. The existing situation of many rural economies suffers from a vicious circle.

The production of smallholder farmers is low, just enough to survive but below the level where it could generate some income-enabling investments; the production is poor because inputs (fertilizers and improved seeds) are not used since there is no cash (or credit) to purchase them; due to shortage of agricultural and non-agricultural incomes, there is shortage of agricultural labour during the peak demand (for clearing, weeding, ridging), leading to low yields.

Smallholder farmers produce essentially the same range of food crops, which are all harvested at the same time, flood the local market and fetch very low prices when the seasonal demand is low. In many cases, there are no facilities to collect the goods and bring them to markets where there is a demand.

If the surplus production is collected, the bulk of the profits goes to the middlemen. There is no incentive to increase agricultural production. Goods are not available in the local markets because of insufficient effective demand; such demand will not emerge unless smallholders can generate increased cash incomes through off-farm work or greater sales of cash or food crops.

Within this environment, the production of a highly perishable commodity, such as fish, can not be advocated without due consideration for its marketing. The conditions for establishment of a market with an effective demand for food crops, including fish, are found in the vicinity of urban areas.

It is in those areas that sustainable forms of semi-artisanal fish farming have appeared in many sub-Saharan African countries. The process of intensification of fish farming has concentrated on

labour-intensive, and not capital-intensive, production factors. Fish are selected and associated with predator

species to produce uniform, large-size specimens. Feeding and maintenance of the ponds are done with bulky, cheap agricultural by-products, available locally.

Fish farming development in rural areas must find its own, domestically adapted production technology, integrated in the local context. There is no "blueprint" technology that could be recommended; the technology must be developed by farmers, possibly with the assistance of scientists. If fish farming as an economic production is expected to take off, it should be offered adequate markets.

Intensification of fish farming appears where there is a greater demand for farmed fish, i.e. in the vicinity of towns and cities. This intensification is not meant to please the promoters of fish farming nor is it the result of development efforts. It is the result of the existence of an effective market.

Effective market

The intensification carried out is mainly labour-intensive, not capital-intensive. Specialization in sub-products of the production process, such as the pegging and construction of the pond, and the production of fingerlings for stocking have also occurred.

This article is by Guy Delince, an independent fisheries planning advisor from Belgium

The Dilemma of the Nile Perch

Ecolabelling could be a strategy to secure long-term market access of a fishing sector that secures the livelihoods of around 150,000 fishers in the Nile-perch fishery

10

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH is an international co-operation enterprise for sustainable development, with worldwide operations. GTZ is a German federal enterprise, and supports the German government in achieving its development-policy objectives. The German Federal Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development (BMZ) is one of its main clients.

Currently, GTZ is involved in a pilot project in Tanzania to introduce ecocertification in the fishing industry around the Nile perch (*Lates niloticus*), and is

ous ups and downs since its introduction in the 1990s. Consumer opinion shifted between 'fish of the month' and an 'African nightmare', based on the documentary film *Darwin's Nightmare*, which, due to a very negative presentation of the Nile-perch industry and the region, raised a lot of concerns. This article clarifies certain problems, and proposes ecolabelling as a strategy to secure long-term market access for a sector that, at present, secures the livelihoods of approximately 150,000 local fishers.

A lot has been published on the effects of the Nile perch's introduction into Lake Victoria, most of it controversial due to a sudden intense predation and reduction of the unique, indigenous cichlid stocks.

Therefore, opinions range, in general, from criticism as an ecological catastrophe to the appraisal as an economic success story, based on the significance of the fishery for local incomes, employment and export revenue for the riparian States of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. The latter comprised approximately US\$250 mn in 2004. Representatives of the African States repeatedly refer to these facts to stress the importance of the Nile-perch fishing sector.

Chemical use

During recent years, cases of contamination of fish consignments, the outbreak of a local cholera plague, and the alleged use of chemicals during fishing operations led to import bans

The current discussion about Nile perch is clearly dominated by a 'European' point of view, that is, one focused on pure nature and species conservation.

conducting a feasibility study in Senegal about the possibility of ecocertification. In October 2006, GTZ organized a regional workshop in Nairobi to explore the possibility of ecolabelling in Lake Victoria. GTZ is also promoting responsible aquaculture, *inter alia*, through the introduction of environmental and social standards and guidelines for product certification. For example, with the support of GTZ, Naturland initiated their first pilot project for the organic production of shrimp in Ecuador.

The German market for Lake Victoria Nile perch has gone through numer-

This article by Uwe Scholz (uwe.scholz@GTZ.de), Programme Adviser, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), was earlier published in Eurofish Magazine 6/2006 and also in Globefish (<http://www.globefish.org/index.php?id=3513>)

into the European Union, resulting in local unemployment and a huge loss of foreign exchange. A detailed analysis of all the published pros and cons related to the introduction of the Nile perch would be very time-consuming. Therefore, the following statements should be sufficient. Since its introduction into Lake Victoria, the species has established itself well and has become part of the fish fauna. It can no longer be removed or controlled to such an extent that the indigenous cichlids will not be subject to predation. The full history of the introduction is still a bit vague, as the only documentation available concerns the release of a limited amount of perch in February 1954 into Lake Kyoga, which is located downstream of Lake Victoria—at this time still separated by the Owen Falls. Today, Nile perch accounts for about 50 per cent of the landings, followed by the lake sardine (*Rastrineobola argentea*, locally named *dagaa* or *omena*) and larger cichlid species such as the Nile tilapia (*Oreochromis niloticus*), a species that was also introduced during the 1960s. Lake sardines are today the major staple source of protein supply for the local population, while tilapia are the preferred fish species for consumption in urban centres. In other words, the fish fauna of the lake is not, as is often stated, entirely depleted of all species except the Nile perch. A lot of indigenous fish species have found long-term protection in the rocky shores or overgrown shallow waters of the lake.

The current discussion about Nile perch is clearly dominated by a 'European' point of view, that is, one focused on pure nature and species conservation. Stated facts are often similar to the dialogue concerning animal protection in African nature reserves, in particular, the militant rejection of partly necessary cutback of abundant species that become destructive for people and the environment, for example, elephants. Debates and controversies are both useful and essential, since they draw attention, and may lead to an increased support for African countries in their attempts to cope with the problems. However, the deliberations are often dominated by an inflexible

animal-rights viewpoint. A similar discussion in relation to a proposed culling of dangerous elephants in Malawi led a Chief of the Angoni to make the following statement: "They (the Europeans) love animals more than us."

In a region where the survival of the population is dependent on fishing, and issues like social security or compensation for loss of earnings are non-existent, people see no direct benefit in a fanatic protection of, for example, indigenous cichlids. For that to occur, income from aquarium-fish trade (which has still to be established) or 'cichlid tourism' should exceed income from Nile-perch fishing, which is unlikely to be the case.

A complete ban of the Nile-perch fishery, as demanded by the environmental organization Greenpeace, is not a solution, because the fish has established itself firmly in the ecosystem, and should rather be fished and consumed. It thus makes more sense to make use of the species, while, at the same time, paying attention to social and environmental aspects and, in doing so, trying to improve the livelihoods and living conditions of the local population. To do this, local initiatives for better fisheries management at the village level (beach management groups) and the regional Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization (LVFO), which co-ordinates



Nile perch accounts for about 50 per cent of the landings from Africa's Lake Victoria

the management efforts of the fisheries departments, should be supported.

An additional prerequisite would be that consumers in Europe are prepared to pay a premium for ecolabelled Nile perch, and that fishermen involved in better fisheries-management practices would benefit from this added value.

Ecolabelling aims at producing and marketing fish in an ecological and socially compatible way. In the case of Lake Victoria perch, a labelling process such as that of the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) would be a suitable tool, but it would have to be modified to the conditions of the African small-scale fishery in conjunction with capacity development of accredited local certifiers. An additional prerequisite would be that consumers in Europe are prepared to pay a premium for ecolabelled Nile perch, and that fishermen involved in better fisheries-management practices would benefit from this added value. The prerequisite of the price premium seems to be, meanwhile, accepted, as more and more trade chains and wholesalers have reacted to consumer pressure by offering a variety of MSC-certified products.

GTZ has gained a lot of experience with development co-operation projects in the fisheries sector worldwide. In co-operation with MSC and other partners like the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), GTZ is currently in the process of developing a concept for an increased support of the Developing World Programme of the MSC, which also targets tropical small-scale fisheries like the Lake Victoria Nile perch fishery. In a GTZ-supported stakeholder conference in Nairobi, during 4-6 October 2006, Lake Victoria was chosen for ecolabelling pilot initiatives, implemented under the co-ordination of the IVFO. The regional fisheries organization additionally received a mandate from the fisheries ministers of the riparian States, in July 2006, to assess the potential of ecolabelling.

According to Thomas Maembe, IVFO Executive Secretary, ecolabelling pilot

initiatives are welcome, and will be supported by the States concerned, as transparency, good fisheries management and labelling are seen as tools for long-term market access of Nile perch fisheries products to the important European markets. They are also seen as being of benefit to the population living around the lake, which sometimes hardly has any alternative to fishing.

In this regard, GTZ will co-finance a MSC pre-assessment of Lake Victoria, together with the German processors and importers association, Bundesverband der deutschen Fischindustrie und des Fischgroßhandels e.V. All parties have agreed to participate, and the project will commence once the administrative handling is arranged.

Since March 2007 a pilot project for ecolabelling the Nile-perch fishery in Lake Victoria has been running in Bukoba, Tanzania, in order to gain some first-hand experiences about the bottlenecks. Partners in this process are the European importer, Anova, the local Processor, Vicfish, and the certifier, Naturland. The first results are not expected before end 2007.

In recent months, GTZ has also provided backstop for an MSC initiative in Senegal. In May 2007, a feasibility study for the MSC on Senegalese small-scale fisheries was commissioned. This study is currently in the validation process, and findings will be announced in due course.

For more

gtz.de/en/presse/18444.htm

GTZ Press Release on Certification

www.anovafood.com/page.asp?lStrId=63&lStrArtNr=5.3.&IntMenuStyle=5&IntLevel=11&lStrLang=EN&lStrBuyer=&lStrPagePath=Sustainability%20%3E%20Naturland

Towards Naturland Certification

www.ramsar.org/wwd/5/wwd2005_rpt_gnf.htm

Press Release by Global Nature Fund on World Wetlands Day 2005

Women in fisheries

A room to stretch out in

A recent workshop discussed the challenges of gender and coping strategies in African fishing communities

Despite the many studies that have been conducted on African fisheries, much of the work performed by women and the social spaces they occupy have remained invisible. The lack of documentation on women's role in the sector can be explained by a number of factors. Firstly, production goals (traditionally, a 'male' space) continue to dominate national policy agendas rather than the processing and marketing sector (a 'female' space). Secondly, research is often gender-blind and fails to see the bigger livelihoods picture — women are often excluded from the decisionmaking process for cultural reasons. And thirdly, at the national level, there is no desegregation of data along gender lines, making it doubly difficult to extract information pertinent to the fisheries sector in general, and to gender in particular.

Since the mid-20th century, economic reforms, environmental degradation and increased globalization have forced fishing communities to continuously develop coping strategies to secure their livelihoods. The key to understanding how communities deal with shocks to their livelihoods is by obtaining a clear picture of how men and women interact and how gender defines their room to manoeuvre within a changing environment.

In December 2003, a workshop entitled *Room to Manoeuvre: Gender and Coping Strategies in the Fisheries Sector* was organized in Cotonou, Benin to contribute to the debate on the role of gender in fisheries. The workshop was funded by the European Commission and organized by IDDRA UK and the Sustainable Fisheries Livelihoods Programme (SFLP), based in Cotonou. The workshop brought together 14

participants from Europe (France and Madeira) and Africa (Guinea, the Gambia, Benin, Niger, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, and Tanzania), representing fisheries organizations, universities, research, administration, development, and non-governmental organizations.

The workshop had two objectives: bring into the open knowledge on the roles and social spaces occupied by women in the fisheries sector and explore how coping strategies are formed and how they have evolved in African fishing communities. The output of the workshop was a series of recommendations on how policy could be adapted to empower women and men in fishing communities to meet the ever-increasing challenges they face today. The approach adopted was to examine the challenges faced by fisheries-dependent communities, and identify the coping strategies devised by women to confront them.

The workshop recognized that fishing is a precarious occupation, and success is often dictated by elements beyond the control of the community (weather, fish stock status, and so on). Yet, the present generation believes it is facing more challenges of greater magnitude than their forebears. For the most part, the worsening social and economic conditions impact negatively on gender relations in fishing communities.

New challenges

The challenges identified by the workshop were: globalization, which is bringing benefits to some quarters, but is also pushing the cost of fish beyond the reach of many household budgets; increased demand for fish as a result of population explosion/forced migration, which reduces women's negotiation capacity during lean seasons, as well

household food security; lack of control over assets and space (Though access to assets was not a problem, many cited the problem of men moving into traditional 'female' spaces as profits from trading rose); environmental problems such as pollution, floods, drought and coastal erosion; bad fishing practices (illegal gear, fishing in shallow waters, and so on) fully addressed by the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible fisheries for some time now; and health issues, especially HIV/AIDS, a recently recognized phenomenon in the fishing communities where SFLP is currently working in Benin and Congo.

These challenges almost invariably impact upon the ability of households and communities to create sustainable livelihoods. Most of these challenges are not peculiar to Africa. Fishers' wives in Brazil also have difficulty putting food on the table, and those who do fish to provide food for their family are not acknowledged as fishers. The idea that women could fish for commercial gain is anathema to their husbands and male relatives. The result is that these women have difficulty organizing themselves officially around their fishing activities, which are considered part of their household chores rather than a serious economic venture. Fishing-dependent communities in West Africa have adopted a wide variety of methods of coping with these new challenges, and it was clear that most challenges could be better tackled

through a gender perspective whose strategic role is largely ignored or underestimated to date.

Women were seeking to improve their knowledge base so that they can run their businesses better. They are trying to gain improved access to the fisheries management decision-making process, to strengthen their support institutions, and improve literacy and numeracy skills. Credit schemes are being widely used to ease the burden of dips in income streams, but they are still difficult to access and unreliable.

Setting up alternative businesses was widely mentioned at the workshop. The case study from Niger was particularly interesting. An ecological challenge (drought) forced a radical change in fishing practices (from catching to aquaculture) in Tafouka, a fisheries community not far from Niamey. In implementing a community project on aquaculture financed by the SFLP, women and men were forced to collaborate more closely. Today, women's participation in decision making in the community has improved significantly, and the financial benefits now shift between the men and women's groups.

Financial barriers

But many West African communities face structural and financial barriers—limited access to credit and lack of institutional

support for women's organizations—that prevent effective development of coping strategies. These were the two obstacles most frequently mentioned by participants.

Another very relevant strategy that was common to Africa and Brazil was prostitution. In desperate financial straits, after being abandoned for months on end by their husbands, some Brazilian fishers' wives have been known to trade sexual services to guarantee fish supply. In other instances, women are employed on fishing vessels for menial tasks and as prostitutes for the use of the crew. Whether this was a strategy or just a desperate measure remains a highly debated point.

One of the key themes that ran throughout the workshop was the need for improved institutions. Women's institutional organizations vary widely throughout the region.

Some countries had good institutional structures that were, however, poorly supported (Senegal, for example) and others had poor organizations or none at all (The Gambia and Guinea, for example). Organizations are often an important entry point for development initiatives and the degree of capacity of the organizations will have an impact on the success of any development initiatives and their uptake.

To make gender coping strategies more effective, policymakers have to be aware of the problems and know how to help remove constraints. But, for this to happen, the workshop recommended that some basic baseline data be first collected. The level and quality of data on gender in fisheries communities needs to be improved too. Through participatory gender diagnostics, more disaggregated gender and fisheries data needs to be collected.

Secondly, information on the extent of gender-based institutions needs to be collected. Little is known, at the moment, about the number of women's institutions or the remit of these institutions. Thirdly, evaluation and monitoring tools for gender-based projects are required to ensure a more efficient lesson-learning and experience-sharing system. Fourthly, the development of a database on social and gender aspects of livelihoods at the ministerial level was considered very important in ensuring that real progress is made towards the integration of gender in livelihoods development.

Gender focus

Finally, the importance of promoting a gender focal point at the ministerial level was highly recommended, as was the creation of forums at the national level to raise awareness on gender equity and its relevance in the achievement of development goals.

Limited in time, there was only so much that the workshop could achieve. What it has done, however, is to lay the foundations for future work in this area. The workshop clearly demonstrated that gender does matter to the development process. Although many of the problems discussed (inequity, injustice, access to resources, control of benefits and so on) are not unique to gender or to fisheries, it would be a mistake to discount them from the fisheries policy framework. All these problems can be usefully tackled from a gender perspective that has at its foundation the goal of solving inequities. Such a methodology may not solve the problem overnight, but it will surely go a long way to uncovering some of the root causes of poverty in fishing communities. There is considerable political will to take these issues forward and if networks, such as those set up by the workshop, can mobilize coordination and cooperation among those working on the ground, great progress will be made in this area of West Africa.

Further information on the workshop can be found in the SFLP Bulletin (www.sflp.org/eng/007/pub1/index.html). For more information on the work of the SFLP, visit www.sflp.org. ♣

This article is by Elizabeth Bennett (Bennett@iddra.org) of IDDRA UK Ltd and Kofo Olomu (kofo.olomu@sflp-pmedp.firstnet.bj) of SFLP, Cotonou

An African briefing

A recent ICSF training programme in Accra, Ghana, dealt with issues in fisheries, social analysis and organizational strategies for Africa

The fisheries sector in Africa is an important source of food, employment, income and livelihood. The artisanal sub-sector is vibrant, providing employment and income to coastal fishing communities, and, in turn, contributing significantly to the local economy and to food security. However, developments over the past few decades are increasingly threatening the livelihood of coastal fishing communities as well as the health of the fishery resource base. Some of these issues were discussed at a recent ICSF training programme on 'Fisheries, Social Analysis and Organizational Strategies', held in Accra, Ghana between 17 and 28 August 1988.

Africa has seen a rapid expansion in industrial fisheries, employing highly efficient and non-selective fishing technology, which has caused an exponential growth in fishing effort in the region. This is leading to overexploitation of fishery resources in many areas. The practice by countries in the region of entering into fishery agreements, thereby granting access to the often highly subsidized industrial fleets of the European Union (EU) and other distant-water fishing nations, is exacerbating this situation. With resource scarcity and degradation, conflicts between the artisanal and the industrial sector are increasing. Even as returns from fishing decline, the increased costs of inputs required to remain competitive are eating into the profit margins of small-scale fishers.

Similarly, the access to fish of women fishworkers from coastal communities, traditionally involved in marketing and processing fish, is also being affected by the expansion of the industrial processing sector, as well as by resource scarcity and habitat degradation.

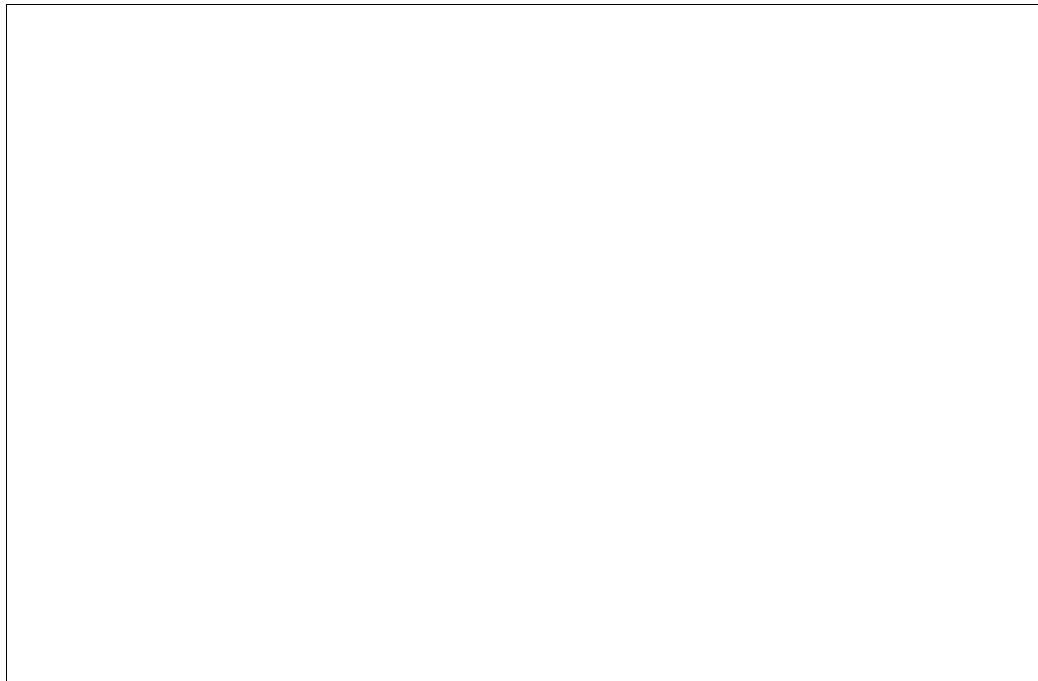
Even though there are several such challenges facing the artisanal sector in many African countries, fishworkers in the sector in most of these countries, with the exception of Senegal, are not politically or economically well organized. Some sporadic efforts at political organization have been sparked off in recent years, as artisanal fishworkers try to defend their interests, as in Ghana, South Africa, Guinea Conakry, Madagascar and Benin. These initiatives are often supported by local and international NGOs. They are often quite localized and need strengthening at the national and regional level.

It is in this context that ICSF responded to a request by TESCO (Technical Services for Community Development), an NGO working with artisanal fishing communities in Ghana, to organize a training programme for people working at the community level. This request was supported by organizations working with fishworkers in Senegal. It was decided to also invite organizations working with fishing communities in other parts of Africa. The purpose was to bring together such organizations to reflect on the common issues facing fishworkers in the region, such as resource degradation and inappropriate policies, and to strengthen networking and co-operation between them.

Programme objectives

The objectives of the programme were to:

- enable participants to develop an understanding of fisheries development and management, especially in the African context;
- develop skills related to organizational work and social analysis; and



- facilitate exchange of experiences and networking between organizations working with artisanal fishing communities in the African region.

Twenty-one participants from nine African countries—Benin, Cape Verde, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Conakry, Madagascar, Mozambique, Senegal and South Africa—participated in the programme. The participants were from diverse backgrounds. Most of them belonged to NGOs working with fishing communities in their countries, such as those from Benin, Cape Verde, Ghana, Guinea Conakry, Madagascar and Senegal.

There were two participants representing CNPS, a fishworker organization from Senegal. The three participants from Mozambique represented a government body, the Institute for Development of Small-scale Fisheries (IDPPE), which deals with small-scale fisheries in the areas of production technology and socioeconomic development.

The participant from South Africa belonged to an association, the Informal Fishing Communities, which is fighting, in the post-apartheid era, for recognition of the rights of traditional fishers to fish resources. The resource team for the programme included persons from within and outside Africa, with extensive

experience in working with fishworkers and their organizations.

A questionnaire, to collect information on various aspects of marine fisheries, was sent to participants prior to the programme. Participants were requested to prepare reports, based on this questionnaire, on the fishery sector in their country, and changes within it. These reports were presented by the participants on the first day of the programme, and set the tone and agenda for the rest of the programme.

The 12-day workshop itself dealt with the following themes:

- Fisheries development in the West African context
- Global fisheries development in the context of the development debate
- Framework for social analysis
- Organizational strategies skills and strategies
- International agreements of relevance to fisheries
- Fisheries agreements
- Fishery management options

For most of these sessions, resource material was put together by the ICSF Secretariat and the resource persons, and made available to participants in both English and French. The sessions were organized in a participatory manner, and the experiences of the participants were brought in at every stage. There were several sessions of group work to stimulate discussion and reflection and to draw in the knowledge and experience of the participants. After every two-day session, the resource team met with a small group of participants selected by the large group, to obtain feedback and to incorporate their suggestions into the programme content and structure. Sessions were conducted either in French or English, with simultaneous translations.

The workshop provided an excellent opportunity for participants to identify the problems facing their fisheries and their communities. It provided an opportunity to reflect on the kind of development and fishery they would like to work towards.

They stressed that development should lead to economic growth with equity (including gender equity), an improvement in living conditions, and the sustainable use of environmental resources. They were clear that all that is modern and technologically advanced has not lead to 'development'. In the fishery sector this has been more than evident, given the overfishing and destruction that has been made possible by 'modern technology'. As a consequence, fish resources and fishing communities are both in crisis in most parts of the world.

The workshop also helped participants to develop a greater appreciation of traditional science and traditional systems of fishery management. It was recognized that traditional knowledge systems and technologies have developed over generations of interaction with the coastal ecosystem, but are often considered backward and inefficient. However, this may not be the case. In Senegal, for instance, fishers continue to prefer the traditional craft, the pirogue. Participants felt that traditional knowledge systems and local, community-based systems of

fishery management have a great relevance today.

Participants were also emphatic about the need to question modern technologies and value systems, where production is for profit, not for need. The logic in the present system is to create more and more needs and wants, and to increase profits. People are consuming more than they need to live and survive, and, in the process, are destroying the resource base and jeopardizing their own future. They felt the need for a new value system based on caring and sharing, where the well-being of people is the focus, not on the wealth generated.

A sustainable development of the fisheries, said the participants, would require: strong organizations of fishworkers at all levels; local control and management of resources; regular consultations with all persons with a stake in the fishery; use of appropriate and locally specific technology; use of selective gear and practices by the artisanal fleet, i.e. exercising rights with responsibility; ban on industrial fisheries using destructive technology; promotion of sustainable forms of aquaculture only for local consumption, not for export; elimination of wastes at all levels, for example, by utilizing by-catch; promoting safety of fishers at sea by making use of available technology; micro-enterprises for fish-processing managed by community groups; and a regional approach to fishery management, since fish is a mobile resource.

The participants highlighted the need to work towards a sustainable fishery, where nature, men and women matter, and where fish is for life and livelihood. To work toward this ideal, participants identified three main areas they have to focus on: information and training, influencing government policy, and strengthening fishworker organizations.

Future plans

On their plans for the future, participants were clear that they would work systematically towards a sustainable fishery, as discussed during the workshop, at the local, national and regional levels. The participants from West Africa agreed that they will work

The Accra Workshop

This is the Statement of the Participants of the Workshop of Fisheries, Social Analysis and Organizational Strategies in Africa, presented in Accra, Ghana on 28 August 1998.

We, the supporters of artisanal fishworkers from nine countries in Africa namely, Benin, Cape Verde, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Conakry, Senegal, Madagascar, Mozambique and South Africa, are concerned about the growing crisis in the fisheries sector and the impact of this on food security. Millions of women and men whose dependence on the fisheries is economic, as well as cultural and social, are experiencing a growing threat to their life and livelihood.

Our concerns:

Large, foreign industrial fishing and processing companies are manipulating the political system and are, therefore, influencing the future of small-scale fishworkers at the global level. They are undermining the sovereignty of the State and reducing it to an executive institution.

The growing overcapacity of the world's fishing fleets, and the increasing deployment of these fleets from other continents to African waters, is further adding to the existing overcapacity.

Despite their sovereignty, their rich natural resources, and their numbers, the 70 ACP (African, Caribbean and Pacific) countries have no power in the negotiations, both on the Fishery Access Agreements and on the Lome Convention. This situation arises from a complexity of historical factors which have provoked dependence and led to a disintegration of their economies.

The new-generation fishery access agreements between the EU and ACP countries favour the creation and the development of joint ventures, thereby marginalizing the professional organizations in the small-scale fisheries sector in the process of negotiations.

There is an unwillingness on the part of governments and other international institutions to inform and communicate with the public, and in particular, with coastal fishing communities. The consequent alienation of fishworkers from their resources results in their disinterest towards fisheries management policies that do

not keep their long-term interests in mind. It leads to the increasing use of intensive and destructive fishing practices by the artisanal sector, which threaten fish stocks and consequently the future of their fisheries.

There is a lack of transparency in (and often contradiction between) development policies and practices. There is an absence of collaboration and/or co-ordination between the different actors who are involved in the development of the fishery sector.

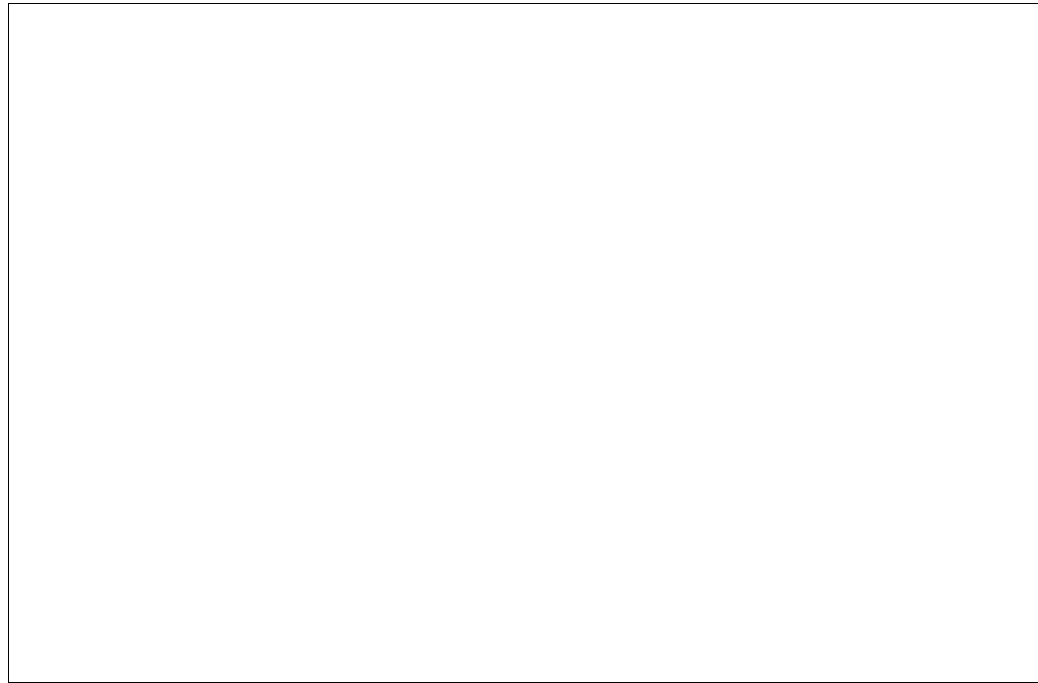
The lack of information about, and recognition by society of, the role of women in the artisanal and traditional fishery sector leads to their marginalization in the fishery and in decision-making processes.

There is increasing pollution and degradation of coastal zones by human activities at sea and on land. With the coastal zone being targeted for modern development activity, including tourism, coastal communities are being marginalized and are losing their rights of access to the coastal zone.

With the increasing demand for shrimp and other high-value species in the work market, we fear that the West African seaboard will soon be targeted for intensive aquaculture, thereby causing irreparable damage to the coastal ecosystem and to coastal communities, as has happened in several part of the world.

The working conditions of seafarers on board foreign industrial fishing vessels are inhuman and violate international standards of safety and conditions of work. We recognize that, in general, the fishworkers in Africa are not well organized and are, therefore, unable to combat the impact of adverse global and national government policies. This also hinders debate on issues that need to be dealt with at the regional level.

We are also conscious of the fact that their counterparts in Northern countries also face similar problems and that this calls for better partnership among small-scale fishworkers around the world. Given these concerns, we pledge that we will do our utmost to work towards a fishery that will sustain the life and livelihood of coastal communities, and that of coming generations.



together on the following areas: strengthening fishworker organizations and their participation in resource management at the local and national level; strengthening networks at the regional level; strengthening regional marketing networks and the exchange of indigenous processing technologies.

Participants agreed to work towards a concrete plan of action for these goals. They proposed a small committee consisting of representatives from TESCO (Ghana), ADIPEG (Guinea Conakry), CNPS and CREDETIP (Senegal) to lead and facilitate the process. The participants from the southern part of Africa were also keen to develop a network of southern African states, which could include Madagascar, Mozambique, South Africa, Angola and Namibia.

For the participants, the workshop was an opportunity to gain information, develop analytical skills to help in their work with fishing communities, and to develop a strategy to work together in the future. 🐟

This report was written by Chandrika Sharma, Programme Associate, ICSF

Local knowledge power

A workshop in March led to a declaration on community rights and access to biological resources in Africa

The task force of the Scientific, Technical and Research Commission of the Organization of African Unity (OAU/STRC) on community rights and access to biological resources met in Addis Ababa from 20 to 23 March 1998. The objective of the meeting was to develop a draft model legislation on community rights and access to biological resources to ensure the continuing control by local communities of their natural resources, knowledge and technologies, as well as to develop a draft African Convention on the same.

After national review and discussions, the model legislation would be expected to form the basis for African nations to develop national legislation on community rights and access to biological resources, community knowledge and technologies. It is expected that an African convention would create coherence among the different pieces of national legislation.

Natural resources and indigenous knowledge and technologies are a legacy humanity owes to local communities. The task force understood a local community as a section of society in a given area whose means of livelihood are based on the natural resources, knowledge and technologies of, and related to, its immediate ecosystems. The local community keeps adapting, generating and regenerating those natural resources, knowledge and technologies as its preceding generations had done and, if spared disruption by external forces, as its succeeding generations will do.

The essential role of the community in the conservation of biological diversity, on which the very survival of planet earth is dependent, is recognized by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD),

created by a large part of humanity, represented by 150 states, in 1992.

A smaller part of humanity, represented by 40 states, concluded the negotiations for the creation of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1994. The objectives of win are global and concern the movement of goods and services throughout the world to ease international trade.

It is the conviction of the task force that the WTO-based approach is predatory in nature and runs counter to the aspirations (It communities which are closely linked to the biodiversity so necessary for the survival of the planet. The task force believes that the privatization of life forms through any intellectual property rights (IPR) regime violates the basic right to life.

The task force, therefore, strongly recommends that OAU /AEC member states urgently make legislation to regulate access to biological resources, knowledge and technologies so that such access shall be allowed only with the prior informed consent of the local communities and the state, and shall benefit them, and to recognize community rights in order to protect the heritage of the people of Africa. The task force commits itself to the achievement of the noble objectives of this proposed legislation and this draft convention on community rights and access to biological resources.

This piece is based on a posting by Kristin Dawkins of the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, Minneapolis, us, on the Fishfolk mailing list.