

FILM

Against the Tide: One Tale, Two Versions

Direction: Sarvnik Kaur | Duration: 97 mins | Language: English subtitles

By Indu MG (indumg@yahoo.com), Independent Researcher based in Mumbai, India

The documentary *Against the Tide* explores the intertwined lives of two fishermen, illustrating how climate change and globalized corporate greed impact their contrasting fishing practices. The film follows Rakesh and Ganesh, two friends from

Mumbai's traditional Koli fishing community, one of the city's few original inhabitants.

Rakesh adheres to ancestral, sustainable fishing practices but struggles to provide a decent life for his family. In contrast, Ganesh thrives by employing modern deep-sea fishing techniques, using large vessels and employing a sizable crew. Despite Ganesh's encouragement for Rakesh to transition from shallow-water subsistence fishing to deep-sea operations, Rakesh remains steadfast in his traditional approach.

The camera captures candid moments between the friends, revealing the economic and social divide between them. Despite their differing lifestyles and methods, both men face the harsh realities of dwindling fish stocks, driven by climate change and human exploitation. As the film progresses, it becomes clear that both are at the mercy of the same depleted sea. Rakesh is eventually forced to sell his boat, while Ganesh grapples with mounting debts to sustain his increasingly unviable operations.

Although Rakesh's mother provides some perspective, the film lacks vocal contributions from other women, which could have added depth to its themes. Women are primarily portrayed as custodians of traditions, preserving rituals, songs, dances, and social bonds. Additionally, at times, the personal narratives and interpersonal drama between the two friends overshadow the core environmental and economic issues the documentary seeks to address.

Against the Tide is a highly engaging film, marked by commendable direction, cinematography, and editing. It delivers powerful messages about overfishing, climate change, and the threats to sustainable traditional occupations in the face of globalized economic activities across the oceans. 🌊



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the International Collective
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22 First Floor,
Venkatrathinam Nagar, Adyar,
Chennai 600 020, India
Tel: (91) 44 2445 1216
Fax: (91) 44 2445 0216
E-mail: icsf@icsf.net
Website: www.icsf.net

EDITED BY
Nilanjana Biswas

DESIGNED BY
M.S. Vasanth Christopher

Writers and potential contributors to YEMAYA, please note that write-ups should be brief, about 2000 words. They could deal with

issues that are of direct relevance to women and men of fishing communities. They could also focus on recent research or on meetings and workshops that have raised gender issues in fisheries. Also welcome are life stories of women and men of fishing communities working towards a sustainable fishery or for a

recognition of their work within the fishery. Please also include a one-line biographical note on the writer.

Please do send us comments and suggestions to make the newsletter more relevant. We look forward to hearing from you and to receiving regular write-ups for the newsletter.