

No. 29

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SAMUDRA

REPORT

INTERNATIONAL COLLECTIVE IN SUPPORT OF FISHWORKERS



POLLUTION IN ISRAELI WATERS

SUPERTRAWLER

MALAGASAY MARITIME SECTOR

RESERVED ZONES IN MAURITANIA

WEST AFRICAN ARTISANAL FISH FAIR

MSC CERTIFICATION IN BRAZIL

FORTHCOMING INDIAN OCEAN CONFERENCE

NEWS ROUND-UP

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Comment

Shameful incarceration

It is a matter of great concern that, over the last four years, fishermen of various nationalities are being arrested and detained for illegal fishing or for just accidentally straying into the territorial waters of neighbouring countries. There are numerous instances, for example, of Indonesian, Thai, Burmese, Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, Egyptian, Yemeni, Filipino, Peruvian, Costa Rican and Trinidadian fishermen being arrested and bundled into prison. In some cases, due to tardy procedures, fishermen end up spending years on end in the jails of neighbouring countries. A conservative estimate of total arrests and detention of fishermen during these last four years, based on media reports, puts the figure at close to 2,000.

Most of these arrests and detention in the world occur in the Indian Ocean region and involve developing countries (with the exception of Indonesian fishermen in Australian jails). It is a shame that those who are thus arrested and detained are some of the poorest in the world, fishing not for profit but for life and livelihood.

In this context, the recent unilateral decision by the Government of India to release all Pakistani fishermen detained in Indian prisons is a welcome move. According to CNN, Atal Behari Vajpayee, the Prime Minister of India, has gone a step ahead, and "ordered that, from now on, all fishermen caught accidentally transgressing into the Indian waters should be turned back rather than arrested".

Even between adjacent maritime zones with boundary agreements, there is poor demarcation of boundaries, making it difficult for fishers from one country to safely ascertain if they are transgressing the territorial sovereignty of the neighbouring country.

Recognizing such practical difficulties, arrangements to prevent arrest and detention of innocent fishermen at a bilateral level exist, to our knowledge, only between Costa Rica and Nicaragua. They have a 'sea of tolerance' straddling their respective maritime boundaries. Local authorities alert fishermen and allow them to return safely home if they sail past these boundaries.

There is sufficient food for thought in the 1998 International Court of Justice Award of the Eritrea-Yemen Arbitration Tribunal over the Zuqar-Hanish and Zubayr groups of islands in the Red Sea. While upholding the territorial sovereignty claim of Yemen over these island groups, the Tribunal found "sovereignty entails the perpetuation of the *traditional fishing regime* in the region, including *free access and enjoyment for the fishermen* of both Eritrea and Yemen." Using the same logic, there should be legal recognition everywhere in the world, of traditional fishing regimes in adjacent waters, even if it means accommodating fishers of one country in the territorial waters of the other, subject to these regimes not resorting to non-selective and destructive fishing methods and techniques.

Even in cases of illegal fishing that leads to arrest and detention of fishermen (for example, interception of Sri Lankan multi-day tuna fishing boats and arrest of crew in several Indian Ocean countries), there can be agreements between countries to allow the small-scale fishing units using selective gear and techniques of one country limited access to the surplus fish stocks of another.

Recognizing traditional regimes and developing bilateral or regional mechanisms to share fish stocks can go a long way in resolving this vexing issue of inhuman incarceration of fishers. This will also be a principal concern of the forthcoming conference on the Indian Ocean Region, organized by ICSF and the International Ocean Institute, to be held in Chennai, India, between 9 and 13 October.

Pollution kills

A report from Israel that should serve as a warning to those who work in polluted waters

In Israel, industrial and municipal polluters are now accused of causing a cancer epidemic among fishermen and other workers of Kishon Fishing Harbour. On 14 June 2001, thirty-one fishermen, and fishermen's widows and orphans submitted a multi-million dollar civil lawsuit to a Haifa court. They accused six major petrochemical and chemical plants, including the Haifa Refinery, a fertilizer maker, Haifa Chemicals Ltd., and a municipal effluent purification plant for knowingly polluting, for at least two-and-a-half decades, the Kishon River, for many years biologically dead. The lawsuit also names some government agencies for neglecting enforcement of existing anti-pollution laws and regulations, and neglecting to warn the fishermen and other workers in the Kishon Fishing Harbour of the risk of exposure to its waters and fumes.

The lawyer acting on behalf of the fishermen prepared, with the help of a multi-disciplinary team of experts, a two-volume lawsuit that describes the man-made fishing harbour at the Kishon River estuary as a hydrological trap for the pollutants, and the Kishon River itself, or what's left of it, as the most polluted stream in Israel and one of the most polluted in the world. The lawsuit cites the plant's effluents as containing an array of highly concentrated carcinogenic heavy metals and organic compounds, some volatile. Some 30,000-75,000 cu m of the industrial and municipal effluents have been flowing daily into the lower Kishon during the two-and-a-half decades since the mid-1970s.

According to the epidemiological opinion included in the lawsuit, there is a statistically significant connection between this influx of pollutants and the conditions of work and of exposure to

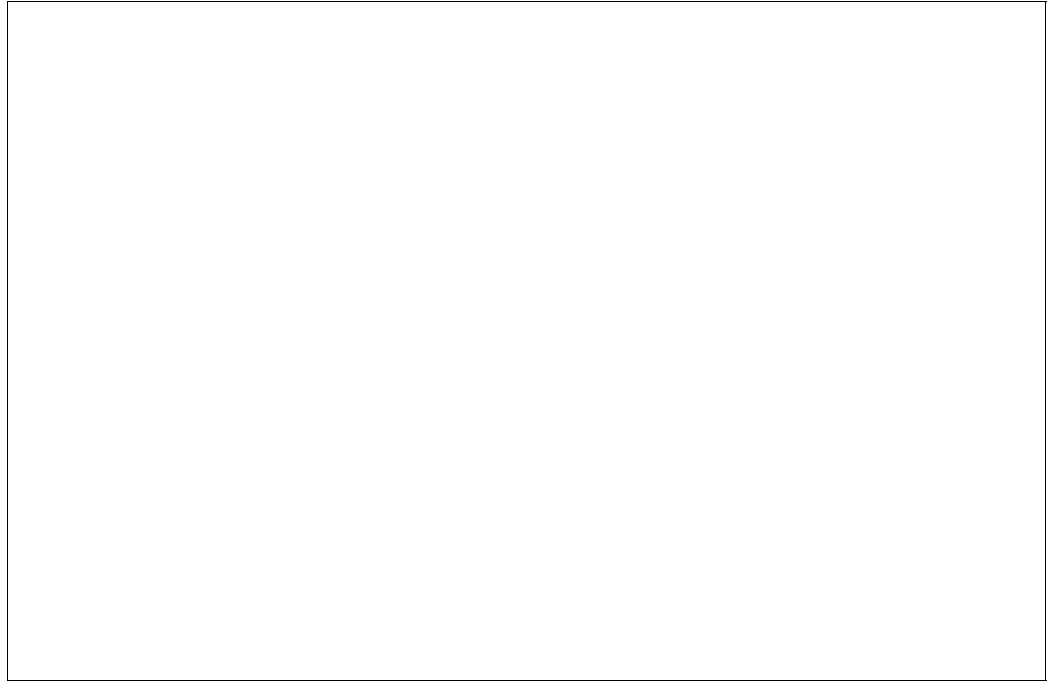
carcinogens and the high cancer incidence (34-44 times that among the Israeli population at large) amongst the fishermen and other workers in the Kishon Fishing Harbour. Another medical opinion, of an environmental medicine specialist, places a very high probability for the association between the various types of cancer diagnosed and the pollutants present in the harbour's waters and sediment. In view of the lack of focused research, the synergetic effect of the various mixtures and chemical compounds that might have been created by the separate pollutants coming together in the extremely acidic environment is very hard to assess.

E. Fichman, the fishermen's lawyer, told a press conference that, while he was giving the last touches to the lawsuit, four more fishermen were diagnosed to have cancer and will later be added to the list of plaintiffs. "Each one here is walking with a time-bomb," said one fisherman. "We just don't know how soon they're going to kill us." Said another, "Sometimes I wish we were dolphins; at least, we would be getting plenty of publicity and public sympathy."

Among the plaintiffs are four members of the crew of a dredge, which used to be employed every couple of years, for a fortnight or so each time, to deepen the harbour and clear its entrance to the Kishon estuary of silt. This work required considerable contact with the heavily polluted sediments. Nobody ever warned the crew of any risk to their health. Today, however, three of them are already dead of cancer, while the last one is ill with it.

Military commission

The Kishon fishermen woke up only recently, after a military commission of inquiry, headed by a former president of




Israel's Supreme Court, had started investigating the alarmingly high rate of cancer among former naval commandos.

The one common reason for this epidemic was that they all exercised in the Kishon estuary, swimming and diving in its polluted waters. Capt. Moshe Raba, a retired fishing skipper, who, until recently, served as the president of Kishon fishermen's union, found out that there has been hardly any cancer-associated mortality among the fishermen in the other Israel harbours, Ashdod, Yaffo, and Acre, while almost every single Kishon fisherman who had died during the last 20 years had died of cancer. Then he found others who are ill with cancer, and yet others who fell ill, but shunned medical attention, and had to be persuaded to seek medical assistance and undergo tests, only to be diagnosed ill with cancer.

The fact that Kishon is heavily polluted with carcinogenic substances was well known, first, to the polluters themselves, then to the laboratories that performed occasional studies, to the Water Commissioner's office, whose legal duty was to deny water supply to polluting industries, to the Ministries of Health and of Environment, to the inter-municipal association for environment, as well as to several other institutions and green organizations. None of the above had done anything during all those years to

warn the fishermen and other workers in the Kishon Harbour of the risk involved with their working environment, in general, and with physical contact with Kishon's polluted air, water, and sediment, in particular. All worries expressed had to do with aquatic life, loss of Kishon River's aesthetic values, and the danger of polluted fish in the Haifa Bay, unfit for human consumption.

Israel has developed very fast since its establishment over 50 years ago. Before public opinion and government agencies became aware of the dangers of environmental pollution and habitat destruction, plenty of damage had already occurred. The plaintiff fishermen and their legal team hope not just for compensations, but also contributions to the struggle in Israel and other countries against development that ignores people's health. 

This piece is by M.Ben-Yami (benyami@shani.net), Fisheries Adviser, Haifa, Israel

Misplaced machismo

***Atlantic Dawn* must surely be the biggest, baddest and most brazenly illegal supertrawler yet**

The poor state of the world's fishery resources, together with the related problems of fishing overcapacity and overinvestment, are matters of serious concern. Over the last two years, the United Nations, through its Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) has been trying to persuade the world's fishing nations to develop and sign up to a number of "Global Plans of Action" (GPOAs). Two of these specifically address the related problems of fishing overcapacity, and Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) fishing activities (essentially flags of convenience by another name).

In Europe, since 1990, the European Commission has been trying to persuade Community Member States to agree to capacity reduction targets, and thus bring fishing effort into line with available resources. In Spain, a nation heavily dependent on distant-water fishing, some 600 vessels have been laid up since November 1999 due to a hiatus in the fishing agreement with Morocco. Like other nations, Morocco would like to see that its own economy and population be the first to benefit from its fishery resources. What then is the future for this idle Spanish fishing capacity, for the fishermen, their families, and the associated fishery sector enterprises? Should they be considered to be part of the European fishing fleet, or not? Is it right for the European Union (EU) to distinguish between the fleets that fish in its waters and those that fish in distant waters? What kind of regulations and provisions should govern EU fleet size at home and abroad? These are the kinds of questions facing the EU in the review of its Common Fisheries Policy, a review that will attempt to rationalize and integrate the four policy strands of Conservation, Fleet Structure, Markets, and International Relations.

In such a context, it is surprising to find that the world's largest and most powerful fishing vessels are being constructed in European countries, first in Holland and now in Ireland—built primarily not to fish in their own waters, but to fish stocks in other countries' waters. Like the supertrawler pack spawned by the Dutch Pelagic Fishing Company over the last two years, the *Atlantic Dawn* has been built on the same Klondike prospecting mentality that spurred the Gold Rush: invest now whilst stocks last! Hardly a sustainable approach to fisheries!

In Ireland, it seems to be a matter of national pride that the owner of the world's latest and largest supertrawler is Irish. The *Atlantic Dawn* is reputed to be the biggest and most powerful in a trio of "140 m-plus new-generation pelagic freezer stern trawlers being put into service this year" (*Fishing News*, 15 September 2001), and Kevin McHugh, a well known Irish businessman, is the proud owner.

Press reports estimate that more than 100,000 people visited Dublin port to marvel at the size of this fishing giant, whilst on the West Coast, traffic queues 15 miles long built up outside the port of Killybegs as people flocked to see the ship.

Proud moment?

VIP visitors included the Irish Taoiseach (Prime Minister) Bertie Ahern and Fisheries Minister Frank Fahey. According to *Fishing News*, Minister Fahey proclaimed, "This is one of the proudest moments for the Irish fishing industry. Kevin (McHugh) is the epitome of its finest fishermen, leading at the forefront, and taking steps into the unknown." Whilst the vessel itself may be a marvel of modern times, "the steps being taken into

the unknown”, referred to by Minister Fahey, are a matter of grave concern.

It is also a matter of grave concern that alongside national pride, the smirking face of “*Might is Right*” fishing machismo is all too apparent. In Europe, as in so many other parts of the world, fishing machismo is elbowing all other voices out of its way. Vast profits, mega-catches, the most powerful modern industrial technologies, and the most efficient catching techniques are being promoted (and subsidized) as the only way forward for the fishing industry. Never mind all the evidence that most of the world’s fish stocks and fishing grounds are now unsustainable.

At 144 m long, *Atlantic Dawn* is the largest and potentially the most destructive fishing machine in the world. It will use two of the least selective fishing techniques known to mankind: pelagic trawling and purse seining. The purse seine alone is reputed to be more than 3,600 ft in circumference and over 550 ft deep (large enough to engulf two London Millennium Domes!).

The ship’s processing ability (to freeze 300 tonnes of fish a day) and storage capacity (7,000 tonnes of frozen fish) are staggering: in one day, *Atlantic Dawn* can process as much fish as several large African canoes can catch in one year of good fishing!

And as for subsidies, the £50 mn plus investment has received the equivalent of at least £3-4 mn (44 mn Norwegian kroner) in subsidies provided by the Norwegian government to the shipbuilding company, Umoe Sterkoder. There is also the issue of subsidized fishing access, discussed below, where EU taxpayers contribute the equivalent of some US\$ 200 mn annually to secure access rights for the overcapacity of the European fleet in distant waters.

As far as the steps into the unknown are concerned, there are indeed a great many unanswered questions surrounding this and other recent supertrawler ventures in Europe. Hence, the embarrassed and almost deafening silence of the Irish fishing sector. Some have raised the issue of Article 4—the well-known Irish

loophole to avoid planning restrictions using a “build first, ask questions later” approach. By adopting this approach, operators shift the onus from themselves onto the national authorities to justify their investments, often using obliging officials and clever lawyers.

It seems that McHugh’s venture has been built outside any legal framework for new fishing vessel construction in Europe. Even before it rolled off the production line in Norway, the *Atlantic Dawn* is said to have had its registration numbers painted on its hull. And yet, despite having this Irish registration, *Atlantic Dawn* does not form part of the legal Irish fleet with permission to fish in EU waters. To do this, it would have to comply with the strict EU regulations on fishing capacity that demand that all fishing vessels form part of agreed Multi-Annual Guidance Programmes (MAGPs). *Atlantic Dawn* does not.

So, if *Atlantic Dawn* is not allowed to fish in Europe, where can it fish? This is now a burning question that EU and Irish government officials must concern themselves with. Whilst *Atlantic Dawn* is currently reputed to be fishing in Mauritanian waters under a private agreement negotiated through the Dutch Pelagic Fishing Company, its future prospects are likely to depend on the subsidized access agreements negotiated by the EU with third countries, using European taxpayers’ monies. And if these agreements should fail, then it is the unsuspecting European and Irish taxpayers who will again have to bail out McHugh’s investment.

No legal basis

But if, under European rules, vessels like the *Atlantic Dawn* are not legally entitled to fish in European waters, is it responsible of European nations to allow the construction of such vessels to fish in other nations waters? And what should the role of the Commission be towards such vessels when negotiating access rights to third country waters through fisheries agreements? Is it right for third country fishery agreements to provide a legal loophole and safety valve for fishing sector investors like Kevin McHugh? Also, the issue of whether or not *Atlantic Dawn* forms part of the Irish tonnage is a

burning issue with regard to access rights in European waters, where the Dutch supertrawlers are already fishing for herring and mackerel. The unsuspecting Irish pelagic fishing sector may also find itself fishing in *Atlantic Dawn's* shadow, and perhaps flying not an Irish but a Dutch flag! That would add a new dimension to quota hopping!

As far as the future is concerned, until mid-2001, the EU has the possibilities to deploy up to 22 vessels fishing for pelagic species in Mauritanian waters. Currently, there are six Dutch vessels taking advantage of these licences. In addition, countries from the former Soviet Union (FSU) have an agreement with Mauritania for 50 vessels to fish the pelagic stocks in these waters.

The collapse of the Russian distant-water fleet in West African waters in the early 1990s opened up fishing possibilities for others. Hence, the 1996 EU Mauritanian fisheries agreement, and the spate of European supertrawler construction that has ensued since.

Whilst the vacuum created by the departure of the FSU opened up possibilities, given the efficiency of modern technology, these possibilities do have considerable limits. For example, it is estimated that the effective fishing capacity of modern pelagic supertrawlers is, on average, five times that of the

previous generation of pelagic trawlers in the FSU. On this basis, the six Dutch supertrawlers fishing in Mauritanian waters under EU licences are equivalent to 30 old FSU vessels! With the return of up to 50 modern vessels from the FSU, and with giants like *Atlantic Dawn* heading for West African waters, just what are the prospects for sustainability?

Sardinelle are the main species of small pelagics targeted by the EU supertrawlers in these West African waters. These are shared stocks that migrate between the waters of Morocco, Mauritania, Senegal and countries further South. In recent years, the total annual catch of sardinelle is estimated to have increased from 300,000 tonnes (in the early 1990s) to more than 500,000 tonnes.

A significant part (estimated to be more than 300,000 tonnes) of this is taken by the artisanal fleets (mainly Senegalese), for whom sardinelle is the basic "bread and butter".

Vital access

Such species form the backbone of the highly dynamic artisanal fishing sector, providing the raw material for important fish processing and trading enterprises. Access to such fish resources is, therefore, vital to the local fishing economy, to traditional livelihoods, and to food supplies in Senegal and other West African coastal States.




A further 150,000 tonnes of sardinelle is estimated to be taken by the EU's supertrawler fleet. The Dutch have indicated that they hope to increase annual catches up to 300,000 tonnes. They further claim that their activities help rather than hinder fish supplies in fish-eating West African countries: "catching fish where there are no fishermen, and supplying it to where there is not enough fish". However, such a claim is highly questionable. The marketing of low-cost, industrially caught fish in West African countries competes directly with the market for local, artisanally caught fish, and establishes marketing outlets totally dependent on imports. Again, hardly a sustainable approach to fishing and food supplies.

Given the fragility of these pelagic resources, and their tendency for large fluctuations, the build-up of a large industrial fishery in the region represents a serious threat to sustainability. And when the collapse comes, where will these giants move to? The South Pacific, off Chile? The South Atlantic, the Indian Ocean, or back to Europe? Whose fishery is next on the chopping block?

In such a context, the question also arises about who should have priority access to these rich, highly sought-after but fragile resources: a foreign fishing fleet catching fish for the international market, or the local artisanal fleet, supplying local

processing industries, providing thousands of jobs, and meeting local food needs? All logic and all international fishing conventions highlight the need for precaution and sustainability, and the protection of access rights for local, small-scale coastal fishing communities.

Is this how Ireland would like the rest of the world to see it—an international quota-hopping Robber Baron? 

This personal perspective, derived from various sources, comes from Brian O'Riordan, Secretary, ICSF Brussels office

Running too fast?

For traditional fisheries in Madagascar, it is a long road to recognition

Hindsight, they say, is a great teacher, and we all know the benefits its wisdom can bring! However, its lessons are often learned at great cost. This is particularly so in Madagascar, where, for a number of years, the attention of several European NGOs has focused on the Malagasy maritime sector. In the last few years, the approach of these NGOs has changed dramatically, thanks mainly to the several hard lessons of the past. Issues of livelihood rights and food security in the traditional fisheries sector have only really come on to their agenda in the last four years. Previously, the NGO development agenda had largely been determined outside Madagascar, and had focused on technology transfer, foreign training, and institutional support in the seafarer sector.

Given what we now know about traditional fisheries in Madagascar, it is easy to be critical of French agencies that financed the transfer of a trawler to Madagascar over a decade ago. If they knew then what we know now, it is likely that the project would have drowned in the water long before it came to grief in Madagascar. At the time, however, the initiative was strongly supported by, on the one hand, NGOs—the Catholic Committee for Development and Relief from Hunger (CCFD) and the Apostleship of the Sea) and, on the other, by the French fishing sector—Le Marin, Credit Maritime and people from several fishing communities.

For them, the northern development model was still the model to be followed by the small-scale fisheries in developing countries, and institutional development was along the lines of Northern NGOs. Perhaps, there was also some confusion in understanding about artisanal fisheries. The official French and Malagasy

government definitions of artisanal fisheries bear little relation to the reality of small-scale, traditional coastal fishing communities in Madagascar. In France, where a “small inshore boat” is a 20-25 m trawler, powerful trawlers up to 25 m in length are classified as “artisanal”. In Madagascar, the artisanal fishing sector describes a small fleet of trawlers, with a maximum of 50 HP. The traditional fisheries, which would be described as small-scale or artisanal in other countries, are still not officially recognized in Madagascar.

To a large extent, it is thanks to such lessons that earlier this year, in March 2001, for the first time ever, representatives from several traditional fishing communities were able to meet with government officials to jointly discuss the development priorities of their sector. This roundtable meeting was organized by the Collective of Malagasy Maritime Organizations (COMM), with support from CCFD, Coalition for Fair Fisheries Agreements (CFFA) and the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF). It was entitled *Sustainable Development, Poverty Alleviation and Food Security: the Role of Traditional Malagasy Fishing Communities*. The meeting was a further step in the “long march” towards the recognition of the Malagasy traditional fishing sector by the Malagasy authorities.

Dominant interests

In the current context of Malagasy fisheries, where French government and fishing industry interests are dominating the scene (see *Pink gold, muddy waters*, SAMUDRA Report No 25), the road ahead seems a long and daunting one. In addition to the task of building up a national network of groups representing their interests and developing their

capacity to participate in management and decision-making processes, traditional fishing communities find themselves in a highly confusing and competitive situation. Two significant national programmes in fisheries and coastal area development are currently being initiated, whilst the European Union (EU) is providing significant revenues to the Malagasy government to pay for fishing rights. Some of the latter have been earmarked for the development of the traditional fishing sector.

Backed by French public monies for development aid, the French industrial fishing interests in Madagascar (the GAPCM) are promoting “Fisheries Concerted Management Zones (ZACs)” as an experimental tool for resolving resource allocation problems and conflicts between fishing sectors. The scheme has the backing of the Malagasy Ministry of Fisheries, and is to be piloted over the next five years primarily as a means of resolving conflicts and encouraging the rational development of the shrimp sector.

The GAPCM acknowledges that the ZAC is not fully developed as a tool, and that the concept requires testing and refinement. However, the fact remains that with the backing of French public funds, this ZAC project and the agenda of the French fishing industry will dominate the fisheries management debate in

Madagascar. Rather than promoting the autonomous development of traditional fisheries in Madagascar, the GAPCM would like to see the development of small-scale coastal fisheries as a service sector to the shrimp industry. At another level, the National Office for the Environment (ONE) is promoting integrated coastal area management. Through a decentralized approach to management and resource conservation, the GELOSE (Protected Local Management) project is being developed. This will encourage the formation of local groups and their participation in autonomous provincial councils to manage coastal resources and activities (mainly forestry, farming, aquaculture and fishing). The GELOSE approach would seem to be entirely different to ZAC in that GELOSE is about local management, whilst ZAC is mainly about allocation of access rights.

As regards the EU fisheries agreement compensation monies, it is ironic that the first steps taken towards recognizing the traditional Malagasy fishing sector were perhaps precipitated by the renewal of the 1998 EU-Madagascar fisheries agreement. That agreement, for the first time, included provisions for supporting the development of traditional fisheries in Madagascar.

Recognition

This first symbolic recognition came about as a result of the efforts of the Madagascar

Maritime Programme (the PMM, an NGO and trade union platform), and thanks to the campaign initiated by the Brussels-based CFFA. At their request, letters of support were sent by several development NGOs (CCFD, ICSF, Entraide et Fraternité, etc.) to the Malagasy and European authorities.

The first step was to get to know the traditional sector. In May 1998, at the time of renewal of the Fifth Fishing Agreement between the EU and Madagascar, a series of exchanges were initiated between Malagasy and European NGOs. These focused on the recognition of traditional fisheries in Madagascar.

Several meetings were then organized with traditional fishing communities in the regions of Mahajanga, Toliary and Toamasina. Fishermen were informed about the existence of the Fishing Agreement, and about the articles of special relevance to their sector (which included a budget line for traditional fisheries and also for surveillance, monitoring, etc.).

There were also discussions about the activities of European companies in the industrial shrimp fisheries sector, which were seen as a threat to the traditional fisheries sector. Fishermen from the west coast were a special focus of the debate. Meetings were also held with official representatives (Malagasy political authorities, FAO, EU, etc.). A press campaign was subsequently organized to create a debate on the contents and implementation of the Fishing Agreement. This concluded with a press conference organized on 15 May 1998, entitled *For a Fishing Agreement Consistent with Sustainable Development*.

One of the key lessons arising from this initial step was an understanding that for actions to be more effective, it is necessary for the fishermen themselves "to be aware, first of all, of their rights and duties". In other words, fishworkers must realize that while they are the ones mainly affected, they are also principally responsible for the actions to be undertaken towards improving their lot. Up to that point, all major information exchanges and decisions had been made by actors from

outside the sector (international NGOs and other organizations, government officials, etc.).

It was this principle that formed the basis of a new collaboration between Malagasy and European NGOs, with the strategic objective of achieving recognition for the Malagasy traditional fishing sector. As a short-term measure, a workshop on the *Future of Traditional Fisheries* was organized to bring together traditional fisheries representatives from the entire country. The motivation and organizational strategy for preparing the workshop were influenced, to a large extent, by a training programme organized by ICSF in Ghana in August 1998 (see *An African Briefing*, SAMUDRA Report No 21). Two members of the Malagasy NGO platform were invited to this workshop on *Social Analysis and Organizational Strategies*. Their participation was to have a major influence on future approaches of NGOs to fishing community development in Madagascar.

The aspects that particularly influenced the Malagasy participants were the discussions around the various approaches to development (i.e. modern and traditional). These included the transmission of knowledge; choice of technology (boats, fishing gear and processing); and social control (resource management and division of labour between men and women).

For the Malagasies, one of the key messages from the Ghana workshop was expressed by the women processors of the National Collective of Artisanal Fishworkers (CNPS) of Senegal: "The partners of fishworkers can only be other fishworkers! European NGOs or those from other countries can only help us by supporting these partnerships."

Questionnaire

Following the Ghana workshop, a questionnaire was drawn up to help understand different aspects of the lives of traditional fishing communities, the basis of their social structure and how it had evolved over the last few decades. Based on this questionnaire, which was translated into Malagasy, a series of field studies were conducted in 10 localities

representative of traditional fisheries: Nosy Be, Ankazomborona, Majunga, Maintirano, Morondava, Tulear, Fort-Dauphin, Farafangana, Manakara, Marosiky, Vatamandry, Toamasina, Soanierana-Ivongo (Manakatafana) and Sainte Marie.

Following the programme of field visits, a meeting was held in Majunga in May 1999 to bring together delegates, both men and women, from these localities to discuss their future. For many of them, this provided a first opportunity to interact with representatives of Malagasy authorities. Several high-ranking officials and experienced technicians were present.

A “Fishworkers’ Recommendation” setting out 20 specific points was issued by the participants and presented to the official delegates. The main points included issues of: ownership of equipment and boats; production, processing, and preservation; trade and markets; roles and responsibilities of women (in fish trade and collection of products); the need for fishermen themselves to take charge of decision-making in their own sector.

The issue of the two-mile traditional fishing zone was raised as a matter of particular concern. This, it was felt, had to be addressed as a priority, as the Malagasy government was in the process of developing a decree on “utilization and access rights in the two-mile zone”. In addition to being the zone where most traditional fishing activities take place, it is also here that most disputes with the industrial shrimp fisheries sector occur.

The second step was to define the rights and responsibilities of the traditional fishing sector. The issue of the two-mile zone was taken up by the NGOs not only because of the demands of the fishermen, but also because it was seen as important to influence the fisheries policy debate in Madagascar (particularly the government decree on the two-mile zone). As a result, a collaboration was established between local and international NGOs. Such collaboration was necessary to investigate the relevance of reserving a fishing zone for traditional fisheries in Madagascar (to clarify the two-mile zone issue). These

investigations were carried out in Madagascar as part of a wider study being conducted by ICSF to analyze whether legally reserving a zone for traditional fisheries was a useful tool for fishery management, and, in particular, to determine whether such a zone promotes sustainability (by restricting access to fishery resources), and whether it protects the rights of coastal communities dependent on small-scale and traditional fishing practices to life, livelihoods and food — rights recognized in the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (Article 6.18).

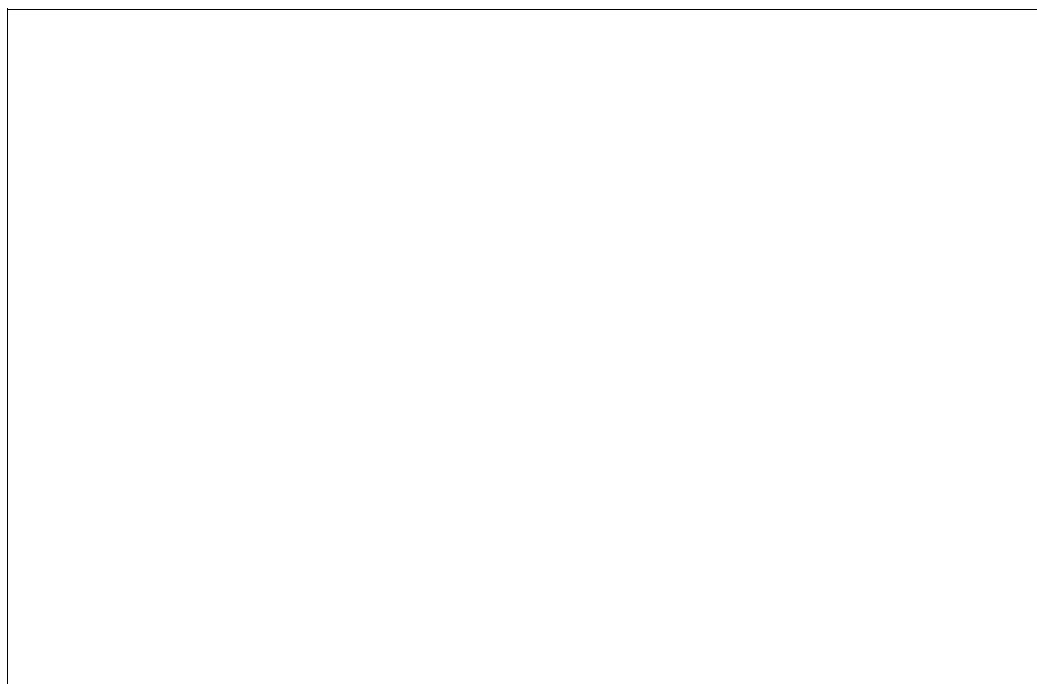
The following approach was adopted for the study:

A questionnaire was drawn up and fishermen were contacted by mail in May/June 2000. They were sent a series of documents to help prepare for their participation in the study. Local interviewers visited eight major traditional fisheries sites in June/July 2000: Nosy-Be, Mahajanga, Maintirano, Toliary, Manakara/Farafangana, Vatamandry, Toamasina and Manakatafana.

Twenty-eight local associations were interviewed, 1,650 fishermen contacted and the estimated number of active fishermen in these fishing sites was put at more than 10,000. The findings of these studies were set out in two documents (a region-wise document and a general document) and transmitted to the fishermen delegates at these eight sites (two per site) for discussion during the meeting that was to take place between 25 and 28 August 2000.

A meeting was then organized in Toamasina for 20 traditional fishermen delegates whose communities had been involved in the study. Local and international NGO resource persons (from COMM, ICSF and CFFA) participated. The aim was to validate, analyze and share the findings of the study. The main issues arising from the discussion included:

- how to define the sector;
- who is considered a traditional fisherman; and



- what criteria are recognized by the fishermen themselves to qualify to be a traditional fisherman.

The majority of fishworkers interviewed came from fishing families. All the traditional fishermen answered that fishing was their main activity or source of livelihood.

The use of special fishing gear, observance of family traditions, restrictions and taboos were also referred to in the study as elements that were common to all traditional fishermen.

A key issue for the sector was vulnerability, relating to:

- traditional fishing gear and boats, bad weather and collisions (especially with industrial fishing boats);
- traditional fishing communities, faced with competition from other activities (like industrial aquaculture and different types of pollution in the coastal area); and
- fishery resources on which traditional fishermen depend: if the coastal area becomes overexploited, the very survival of coastal families and communities is threatened.

Given this vulnerability and the fact that traditional fisheries plays a key role in the development of the country (in terms of employment and the protein it provides to Malagasy families and communities living along the coast), it is important to protect the activities of this sector.

Also of significance is the need to get the sector formally recognized by the public authorities in terms of the nature of representation at national level, and the kind of actions the public authorities should undertake (as in operations relating to census, taxation, subsidies, etc.).

The participants underscored the problem of recognition of traditional fisheries by the administrative and political authorities. The meeting was informed that, in many countries, recognition of the small-scale fisheries sector had resulted in a certain amount of formalization at the administrative level. But fisheries policies do not recognize traditional fisheries or do so inadequately.

The administrative representatives who were present explained that formalization of the sector was extremely difficult due to ignorance about the sector and due to the fishermen's distrust of the authorities. They also pointed out that formalization could have a negative impact on their activities (through red tape, taxes, etc.).

Two Controversial Miles

In Madagascar, the issue of the two-mile zone has become highly controversial. The first official references to the zone would seem to come from a decree of 5 June 1922 which stipulates (Article 10) that "...the use of...trawls for fishing all fish species is only authorized at a distance of two (nautical) miles from the coast..." The industrial shrimp trawlers assert that the legal basis of this is questionable, as a 1971 decree overturns this ruling by stating that "...by derogation to Article 10 of the decree of 5 June 1922, trawler fishing licences may authorize their holders to fish for prawns in the two-mile zone..." They also argue that fishing is not profitable unless they are allowed to fish in this zone. Furthermore, they dispute the legal definition of coast, and question where the baselines should be drawn from which the two miles should be measured.

However, it is worth noting that the representatives of the national authorities present acknowledged that "traditional fisheries exist", that they "help earn foreign exchange for the country", and that "they play an important role in the fight against poverty". The Deputy Mayor of Toamasina said that "improving the living and working conditions of the traditional fishermen should be a priority."

Any recognition of the rights of fishworkers had to be reflected in the protection given to the traditional fisheries zones. The fishermen present reasserted their property rights in the traditional fishing zones as well as to the resources found in them. Consequently, they wanted their rights of access to be recognized and protected. They also wanted to be involved in the management of their coastal zones and their resources in order to ensure sustainability of stocks and to fight against coastal pollution.

The third step involved recognizing the rights of traditional fishing communities. After the Tamatave meeting, several developments took place. Madagascar has recently completed all the necessary internal procedures to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). However, there is a difference between "ratification" by a parliament under internal law and ratification under

international law, which means the deposit of the instrument of ratification with the depository (here, the Secretary-General of the UN).

It is also hoped that with the ratification of UNCLOS, the communities of traditional fishermen would be in a stronger position to defend their rights of access to the two-mile zone.

During the French Presidency of the EU from June to December 2000, a campaign was launched through the offices of the French NGO, Agir Ici. This questioned the use of French and EU public funds for development of industrial fishing in Madagascar, and was aimed directly at the French Ministry responsible for Development Co-operation and the European Commission. Eleven thousand people sent letters to the French and EU authorities. This precipitated the French industrial fishing sector in Madagascar to demonstrate publicly that they were taking the local traditional fishing sector into consideration. The ZAC proposal (which the French NGO CEASM was contracted to produce) was their response.

Felix Randrianasoavina, Executive Secretary of COMM, says, "Engaging in a debate with the industrial fisheries sector, as things stand today, could entrap the genuine traditional fishermen. They have already come a long way together in their struggles. They want to get their due recognition. We must respect their struggles, try to listen to them and be patient, even if they are not yet ready to tell us anything because, perhaps, it is not that the fishermen are slow but that we want to run too fast."

This article was written by Brian O'Riordan (briano@skypro.be), Secretary, ICSF Brussels office

Balancing priorities

It is essential that a fishing zone reserved for artisanal fishing be created in Mauritania

In most countries of the South, artisanal fisheries provide the basis for centuries-old traditional ways of life associated with the sea. Most studies show that such fisheries are highly valuable, contributing to income generation and food supplies, and, in addition, provide the basis for a wider range of economic activities in areas lacking in alternative resources.

This article looks at the artisanal fisheries of Mauritania, which (with the notable exception of the Imraguen) have only developed in a major way since the late 1980s. In Mauritania, the artisanal fishery is, therefore, in the main, a highly modern sector, targeting mainly species for export. As discussed below, like artisanal fisheries in other parts of the world, artisanal fisheries in Mauritania make a vital contribution to the economy and a unique and indispensable contribution to the country at large.

For several years, the Mauritanian government has sought to provide “ring fence” protection for the artisanal fishery through a zoning scheme. This provides exclusive access for small-scale fisheries in denoted areas. As noted in *The Twilight Zone* (SAMUDRA Report No 27): “One of the suggestions made to protect the livelihoods of small-scale fishermen throughout the world is the installation of special artisanal fishing zones.” This article looks at the issue of the artisanal fishing zone in Mauritania in the context of the wider fishery, and from the perspective of the unique and indispensable contribution fisheries make to the country.

“Ring fencing” the artisanal fishery through zoning regulations may provide much-needed protection. However, such ring fencing can also pose a major

constraint to development, particularly if controls are not applied to industrial fishing activities, and if the zone is the only area where artisanal fishing is allowed to take place.

In the case of Mauritania, given the recent alarming developments in the octopus fishery, such ring fencing clearly needs to be combined with strict limitations on the access allowed to distant-water fishing vessels throughout the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

Octopus and other cephalopods represent the most valuable resources in Mauritanian waters. However, a recent international working group meeting, organized in Nouadhibou by the National Centre for Oceanographic and Fisheries Research (CNROP), with the participation of the FAO, EU and several of the top international experts on octopus, discussed the management of fisheries resources in Mauritania and highlighted the vulnerability of these stocks. In particular, they noted that octopus stocks, which provide 80 per cent of the annual turnover of the national fisheries sector, have declined to alarmingly low levels. These are under dangerous pressure from both national and international fleets.

New restrictions

Noting the warning signals, the Minister of Fisheries has placed a restriction on the deployment of any new cephalopod vessels. However, it seems that this restriction only applies to the local sector. The EU and other distant-water fleets are not being so restricted. In the context of closed-door and secretive negotiations with the EU on a new fisheries agreement, from which the local sector is barred, the prospects for similar restrictions being applied to the international fleet seem remote.

Those in the administration who favour the signing of a new agreement use the departure of the Chinese trawler fleet as justification. In fact, the departure of this fleet, which stopped fishing long back, does not seem to have had any beneficial effect on the fishery, which is still in a very poor state. Whilst these justifications were used for the last agreement, CNROP estimates that there is now a surplus fishing effort of 30 per cent! The crisis affecting the fisheries sector since the signing of the current agreement in 1996 has confirmed CNROP's worst fears.

Worryingly, it seems that Mauritania is ready to renew the provisions of the existing protocol with the EU. People from the profession, mainly artisanal fishworkers, are completely opposed to this.

When discussing the issue of the fishing zone in Mauritania reserved for artisanal fishing, one must, therefore, look at the local context, and, in particular, the fisheries sector in its entirety.

The World Bank has placed Mauritania in the list of the least developed and most heavily indebted countries. Evaluated against the UNDP's Human Development Index, the country occupies the 150th position amongst 175 countries.

The rural sector, traditionally the main source of occupation for Mauritians, is still the most important one for the national economy, with the mining sector representing one of the pillars of the modern sector. The latter challenges the fisheries sector for first place in the country's exports, which has become the main engine driving national development. It provides more than 50 per cent of the foreign exchange earnings, 10 per cent of the GDP, between 25-30 per cent of the government revenue, and some 30,000 jobs.

The waters of the East Central Atlantic that border 700 km of Mauritania's territory in the west are well known for the abundance and diversity of their biological resources. This is thanks to the existence of an intense upwelling in these waters (the phenomenon of deep waters rich in mineral salts rising to the surface,

where, in contact with the sun's rays, an intense photosynthetic activity is produced). Thus, Mauritania's EEZ is one of world's richest in fishery resources.

The Mauritanian EEZ has a surface area of 230,000 sq km, with a continental shelf area of 39,000 sq km. Of this, 9,000 sq km is entirely taken up by Bay of Levrier the Arguin Bank. Level with Cap Blanc, the continental shelf extends for 64 km. It reaches its maximum width of up to 128 km off the Arguin Bank. Beyond Cap Timiris South, it never reaches more than 48 km.

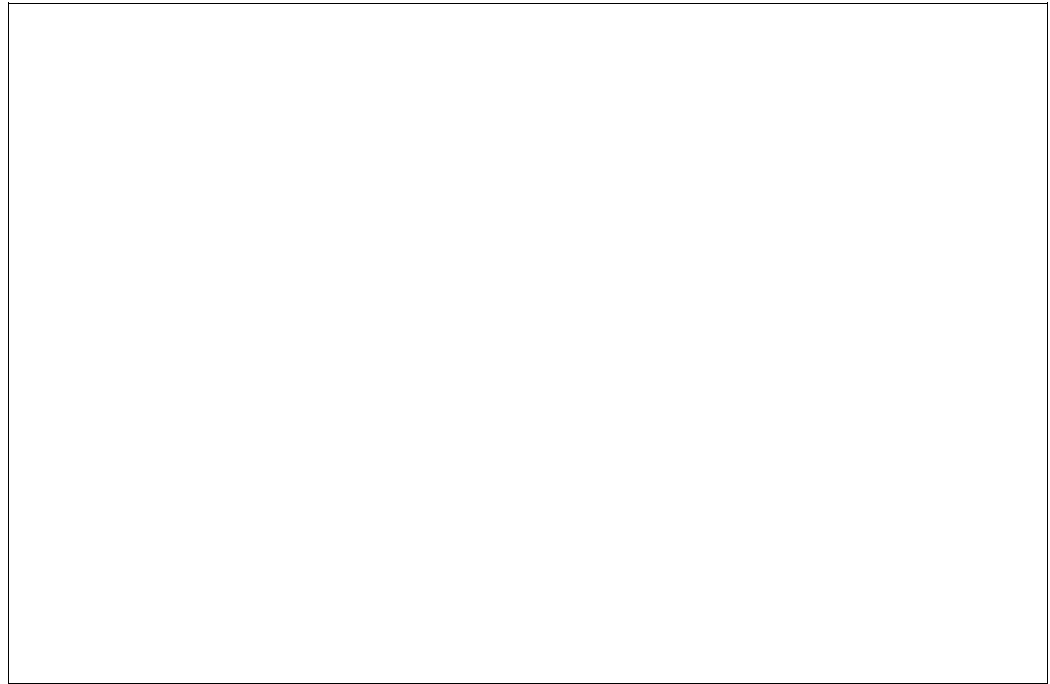
The Arguin Bank is one of the most remarkable features of the Mauritanian coastline. It consists of a zone of shallow banks about 80 km wide, bounded in the west by breaking surf, except in the region of Cap Blanc. It comprises a series of sand and mud banks, covered with seagrass beds and some rocky outcrops; the depth never exceeds more than 4 m except in the eastern area, where it reaches up to 14 m. The southern part contains several islands that are home to one of the most important populations of sea birds, and where some of the world's rarest species have evolved.

The Arguin Bank forms part of the Parc National du Banc d'Arguin, a protected area created in 1976, with a coastal length of 180 km, covering a land and maritime area of 12,000 sq km.

The ecology of the site is remarkable, being designated as a wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention, a UNESCO World Heritage site, and recently classed as a "gift to the world". Thanks to its vigorous biological productivity, it contains abundant biodiversity. So, today the Parc National du Banc d'Arguin is governed by a special law, which, compared to the rest of the coast, enhances its protection, its autonomy and its unique features.

Ancient communities

The park is the territory of the Imraguen, the country's most ancient fishing communities. The population of around 2500 to 3000 is divided into seven villages. As far as the fishery is concerned, it is only the Imraguen who have access rights. Increase in their activities is restricted, and they must only use their traditional gears,



notably their sailing launches, as motors are strictly forbidden.

The park does not contain such large quantities of fishery resources as the neighbouring areas: the main species of the EEZ are practically absent (e.g. cephalopods). Those that are present are poor in number, and consist of small-sized individuals with a low market value.

According to CNROP, the total Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) of Mauritania's fishery resources is 1.5 mn tonnes, of which 1 mn tonnes are pelagics and 0.5 mn tonnes are demersal. In terms of volume and value, the most important resources are the cephalopods (50,000 tonnes) and small pelagics (980,000 tonnes).

Cephalopods provide nearly 70 per cent of the foreign exchange earnings from the fisheries sector. In terms of volume and value, the most important species is the octopus (*Octopus vulgaris*), which accounts for half the turnover of the sector. The rest is shared equally between several demersal and pelagic species.

In recent years, fishing effort has been poorly controlled. This has resulted in the overexploitation of certain stocks such as the octopus, the potential of which has been reduced by 30 per cent. In general, demersal stocks are considered to be either overexploited or fully exploited,

whilst the fishing pressure on the pelagics should be eased. The main concentrations of fishery resources are found in the coastal zone between the 10 and 80 m isobaths. Throughout the EEZ, from north to south, these concentrations are found both within and beyond the 12 nautical miles that demarcate the extent of the territorial waters.

The depths found here are easily accessible to the modern *pirogues* used in the artisanal fishery that, using lines and nets, target both demersal and pelagic fish with scales (i.e. fin fish), and catch cephalopods with pots (in the case of octopus) and traps.

But this is also the preferred fishing zone for demersal trawlers, particularly those that supply the shore-based factories. As a result of this, there are frequent conflicts between industrial and artisanal fisheries. For the latter, this is costly both in terms of human life and fishing gear. For several years, these conflicts have become increasingly acute due to declining catches.

No tradition

Apart from the Imraguen communities who dedicate themselves to their ancient livelihood traditions of subsistence on the Arguin banks, the Mauritanian peoples have no maritime traditions. Several thousand young people coming from rural areas have now taken up fishing as a

profession. This is subsequent to the rural exodus caused by the drought affecting the country during the decades of the 1970s and 1980s, the appearance of significant urban settlements along the coast, and the State-led development of fishing as an important activity, first in Nouadhibou, the economic capital situated in the extreme north of the country, and then Nouakchott, the political capital. Currently, the sector employs 30,000 young Mauritians, of whom 25,000 are associated with the artisanal fishery.

Despite making weak progress during the 1960s and 1970s, the Mauritanian artisanal fishery started its rapid expansion only after the 1980s, with the development of the octopus fishery through a pot-based sector, and the expansion of the export sector sending fresh fish to Europe, supplied by line fishing.

The landings of octopus from the artisanal fishery have shot up, increasing from less than 100 tonnes in the mid-1980s to more than 9,000 tonnes in 1993. But this expansion halted in 1994, following a very sharp increase in fishing pressure from cephalopod trawlers, and the increasingly frequent and destructive incursions of fresh-fish trawlers into the coastal zone where trawling is forbidden.

At present, the octopus production of the artisanal fleet fluctuates at around 4,500 tonnes, with the *pirogues* being thrice the number in 1993.

Despite its youth and the difficulties it is experiencing, the subsector plays a major role in the economy and society. Apart from the usual contributions made to employment, income generation and wealth distribution, to nutrition and food security, artisanal fishing makes a very important contribution to foreign exchange earnings.

The main reason is that high export prices are obtained for its better value-added products, markedly superior to the earnings of the industrial fishery. With foreign exchange earnings worth more than several millions of dollars, the subsector has a very important role to play in levelling the balance of payments.

The raw material supply needs of the several dozen processing factories constructed in Nouadhibou and Nouakchott depend on this subsector, as does the supply of fish for local consumption.

The development of the artisanal fishery for octopus shows how important it is for the Mauritanian artisanal fishery to establish their own fishing zone, with effective surveillance. Decree 89-100 of 26 July 1989 under the old 1987 fisheries code, defines artisanal fishing thus:

“Artisanal fishing boats are vessels which lack any means for trawling and any onboard freezer installations, and with a maximum horsepower less than or equal to 200; boats that do not correspond to this definition are industrial fishing boats.”

A decree from the Fisheries Minister should define, where necessary, the different categories of artisanal and industrial fishing boats. No such decree has been issued.

Of note is that this definition is based purely on technical criteria. The decree in the process of development is probably going to introduce new categories of vessels. The proposal submitted by the Technical Consultative Commission with the responsibility for this subject, anticipates three categories: artisanal vessels, decked vessels for coastal fishing, and industrial vessels.

In reality, the tendency in the developing national vessel fleet is for the intermediate category of small-decked vessels to disappear, with only a few rare old specimens surviving. Due to their low profitability, these will, in all probability, not get their licences renewed. In future, it could be that the coastal fishery category will not contain many units. The fleet will basically then be made up of cephalopod freezer trawlers and modern *pirogues*.

Complementary

The *pirogues* are currently aluminium or fibreglass boats mainly targeting the octopus fishery, and with a complementary fishery outside the octopus season using nets for sole, *courbines* (bass/perch) or sharks. Wooden boats of Senegalese design fish with lines



for the high-value bottom fish destined for the fresh-fish export market, and with purse seines for mullet and small pelagics.

The territorial sea has a width of 12 nautical miles, measured from the following baselines:

The area extending from Cap Blanc (20° 46'N) to Cap Timiris (19° 21'N): a straight line joining the point of Cap Blanc with the point of Cap Timiris. Cap Timiris South as far as the Southern border (16° 04'N): low tide level.

The zonal divisions of fishing activities are fixed by decree. The rationale for these zones is generally based on resource conservation needs, but equally takes into account the supply needs of the local factories and the national fish market, and has broader aims of integrating the sector into the national economy. Also, the vessels that unload in Mauritania are the ones generally authorized to fish in the zones closest to the coast.

The zone specifically reserved for artisanal fishing is a narrow band of territorial sea of little significance, situated in the northern part of the territorial waters, but *de facto*, the artisanal fishery enjoys an exclusive zone because of the prohibition on the use of certain fishing gears in one part of the coastal fringe. Industrial fishing is effectively banned in the north, west of a line 4.8 km from the

baseline, and, in the south, 9.6 km from the baseline. In this way, the artisanal fishery benefits from a not inconsiderable exclusive zone. The limits are defined by the zone where industrial fishing is permitted, by the coast, and by the selectivity criteria applied to the protected areas in the Parc National de Banc de l'Arguin.

Proposals submitted to the Fisheries Ministry by the Technical Commission for including in the Decree on the application of the January 2000 fisheries code include the banning of demersal trawling in depths less than 25 m, and pelagic trawling in depths less than 50 m.

In the southern zone, it is proposed that the following exclusions be adopted:

	Restricted zones for trawling (Distance from the coast)	
	Pelagic trawling	Demersal trawling
Cap Timiris to Nouakchott	28.8 km	14.4 km
Nouakchott to Senegal Border	19.2 km	9.6 km

However, the maritime authorities are convinced of the need to create an exclusive zone for artisanal fishing, legally reserved for this activity, and effectively protected, as a key part of the government's fisheries policy.

The technical committee dealing with this issue had proposed a zone with a width of 12 nautical miles, measured from the baselines. But this proposal came up against the opposition of the industrial sector, in particular, the foreign pelagic vessel owners with local interests, who say that the main concentrations of sardines are to be found inside this zone.

The growing social and economic importance of the artisanal fisheries subsector, and the worsening situation of competition and conflicts with the industrial fishery over the fishing zone, makes it essential that a fishing zone reserved for artisanal fishing is created, sufficiently large to allow for its expansion, and efficiently surveyed to protect its activities.

This zone was one of the main demands made by artisanal fishery representatives from the West African subregion, following a workshop organized in October 2000 in Nouakchott by the NGOs CFFA (Europe) and PECHECOPS (Mauritania), who proposed the adoption of an exclusive artisanal fishing zone of 12 miles, measured from the same baselines as used for defining the limits of the territorial waters. ¶

Mauritania



This article, by Ahmed Mahmoud Cherif, a former Director of Fisheries in Mauritania, and Director of the Mauritanian NGO PECHECOPS, has been translated by Brian O’Riordan

A new space

Excerpts from the report of the Workshop on Problems and Prospects for Developing Artisanal Fish Trade in West Africa

Fish processing and trade have a long tradition in the West African region. Processed fish products—dried, smoked, salted or fermented—are eminently suited to local tastes and cuisines, and provide a rich source of nutrition, even in remote regions.

Activities related to fish processing and trade have significant livelihood, social and cultural implications. They provide diversified marketing and employment opportunities within the fisheries sector, especially to women of fishing communities. They contribute to food security, especially of the poorer sections of society.

Trade in these products is mainly through informal networks. These dynamic and diversified networks, although able to respond to demands for fish products through the region, are constrained by poor transport infrastructure, problems at borders, tariff barriers, poor market facilities, lack of access to market information, among others.

The International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF) has been working in collaboration with fishworker organizations and NGOs in the West African region since 1986. Several workshops have been organized by ICSF in countries of the region, as in Senegal, Ghana and Togo, to discuss issues of concern to artisanal fishworkers.

A long-standing demand of the women of fishing communities in the region has been to work towards enhancing regional fish trade. This demand was further reiterated at the workshop on *Fisheries, Social Analysis and Organizational Strategies in Africa* organized by ICSF in Ghana in August 1998. Participants in the workshop included representatives of

NGOs working with fishing communities, as well as representatives of fishworker organizations from nine African countries, including six countries from the West African region. To better understand and address these issues, a study on *Problems and Prospects of Artisanal Fish Trade in West Africa* was undertaken.

It is against this background that the *Workshop on Problems and Prospects for Developing Artisanal Fish Trade in West Africa* was organized from 30 May to 1 June 2001, followed by the *West African Processed Fish Fair* on 2 and 3 June 2001.

These events were organized by ICSF in collaboration with the Collectif National des Pecheurs Artisans du Senegal (CNPS) and the Centre de Recherches pour le Developpement des Technologies Intermediaires de Pêche (CREDETIP). They were supported by the FAO-DFID Sustainable Fisheries Livelihood Project (SFLP). There were a total of 64 participants from 13 countries in the West African region, that is, Senegal, Gambia, Guinea Conakry, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Mali, Guinea Bissau, Ivory Coast, Togo, Benin, Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Mauritania. While there were two to three delegates from most countries, there were larger delegations from the host country, Senegal, and from Benin and Mauritania.

Participants

Participants included representatives of artisanal fishworker, fish processor and trader organizations, and of governmental and non-governmental organizations working with, and providing support to, artisanal fishing communities in the region. In addition, participants included representatives of the FAO-DFID Sustainable Fisheries Livelihood Project (SFLP), DFID, UK, FAO Regional Office for Africa, as well as

fisheries departments officials from countries of the region—members of the country-level National Co-ordinating Units (NCUs) instituted by the SFLP project. Also represented were organizations working with fishworkers from Mozambique and France.

The workshop provided the space for women fish processors and traders, together with their supporters, to discuss some of the issues affecting their livelihoods, in a focused way. It was significant that while each group stressed the support that needs to be extended by policymakers and development organizations, they also stressed the vital role and responsibility of fishworkers and their communities in this process, advocating the need for a participatory approach. The need for forming strong associations at the community, national and regional levels was forcefully articulated.

It was evident that, given the right support and policy environment, these dynamic women can develop stronger linkages with each other, giving a boost not only to intra-regional trade, but also to regional food security, diversified and sustainable livelihoods in the artisanal fisheries sector and to regional integration.

Statement from the Workshop

Fish is important for food security in the West African region and artisanal fish processors and traders contribute in important ways to a better distribution of fish within the region. Fish processing and trading at the artisanal level are of great social, cultural and economic significance in the region.

Fish processing and trading activities provide employment and income to hundreds of thousands of people, especially women, and are crucial to sustaining livelihoods within fishing communities in the region.

Recognizing this, we, the representatives of fishworker organizations and NGOs from 12 countries of the West African region—Senegal, Gambia, Sierra Leone, Mauritania, Burkina Faso, Guinea Conakry, Guinea Bissau, Ivory Coast, Benin, Togo, Ghana and Nigeria—participating in the above

workshop, commit to work together to sustain and promote artisanal fish processing and trading activities within the region.

To achieve this, we are aware that participatory action is required at the level of fishing communities and professional organizations, at the level of NGOs that work to support fishing communities, as well as at the national, regional and international levels.

We call upon governments as well as sub-regional, regional and multilateral organizations to support fish processing and trading activities in the following ways:

1. Fish trade

a) Facilitate the speedy implementation of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) programmes that aim to promote intra-regional trade, especially those that relate to:

- reducing and simplifying complex customs and trade formalities;
- eliminating taxes imposed on artisanally processed fish products traded within the region;
- minimizing difficulties in trade arising from the use of different currencies within the region and working towards a common currency.
- Publicize these measures through the media, through notices put up at checkpoints and at government offices;

b) Reduce the number of customs and police checkpoints and stop the harassment of women traders;

c) Improve transport facilities within the region by: constructing proper roads connecting fishing and processing centres to important markets; improving and renovating rail routes, and building new ones; facilitating the availability of cargo vessels for transporting processed fish within the region, both along sea and river routes;

- d) Assist associations of women traders to obtain and operate their own vehicles for fish transport;
- e) Create and support banks providing micro-credit, and make credit available at low rates of interest to women processors and traders;
- f) Facilitate the dissemination of information on markets, prices, and trade regulations through local radio and other mass media, and improve telecommunication infrastructure in the region;
- g) Use market taxes to improve facilities within markets, to provide shelter and access to vending space, to improve sanitation and water supply, and to create storage space for fish products;
- h) Create central markets for processed fish within each country.

2. Fish processing

- a) Recognize the right of processors from fishing communities to processing sites on beaches through appropriate arrangements such as land titles, to prevent their displacement through activities like tourism;
- b) Ensure amenities like storage facilities, water, sanitation and power supply at processing sites, as well as childcare facilities;
- c) Provide training in improved methods of fish processing, packaging and storage, to ensure better product quality;
- d) Promote appropriate technology for greater fuel efficiency, in ways that reduce the health hazards faced by women processors;
- e) Facilitate access to land to be managed by women processors as woodlots for fuel supplies;
- f) Facilitate availability of credit at low interest to women processors.

3. Access to fish supplies

- a) Given that artisanal fish processing activities in the region are centrally

dependent on artisanal capture fisheries and a sustainable resource base, to protect the interests of the artisanal capture sector and improve the fish resource base in the following ways:

- Implement current fisheries legislation, put in place effective monitoring, control and surveillance measures, restrict destructive trawling activities and regulate the indiscriminate use of monofilament nets, ring seines and beach seines, especially in the inshore zone;
 - Reduce the number of foreign vessels operating under fisheries access agreements and other arrangements, especially those targeting pelagic species, and ensure that these vessels observe the terms and conditions of the agreement, and do not engage in piracy and other illegal practices;
 - Use mass media to develop awareness among fishing communities about fisheries management measures, and to facilitate training and exchange programmes on these issues.
- b) Ensure adequate and appropriate infrastructure at landing sites, including insulated boxes, refrigeration and storage facilities, to reduce wastage and post-harvest losses.

We recognize the need for local and regional level organizations, and commit to work together on these issues. We call upon governments, sub-regional, regional and multilateral organizations, as well as NGOs, to support us in this process. 3

The Workshop on Problems and Prospects for Developing Artisanal Fish Trade in West Africa was held at Centre Social, Derkle, Dakar, Senegal, from 30 May to 1 June 2001

MSC certification

A small start

An experiment in Prainha do Canto Verde tests the MSC's principles and criteria for community-based certification of a fishery

The rich lobster fishery of the northeastern part of Brazil has been exploited since 1955. The older fishermen remember a certain Mr. Morgan introducing traps from Florida and starting to export lobsters to the US. The fishery was artisanal, using small canoe-shaped boats with sails, called *canoas* and sail-rafts called *jangadas*. (Interestingly enough, the word *jangada* originates in India and comes from the Malayalam word *changgalam*).

There was no danger of overfishing until the motorized fleet was introduced in 1965. But, in the 1970s, once the fleet had grown out of control and greedy merchants began to buy undersized lobsters, the first danger signs appeared.

The fishery was administered by a federal agency called "SUDEPE", together with scientists and the syndicate of exporters. Artisanal fishermen and the Fishermen's Union were simply ignored. Even when the newly created IBAMA (Environmental Institute of Brazil) took over responsibility for fisheries, management was conducted in a very isolated manner. The result was that Brazil's total lobster capture and exports crashed from a peak of 5,000 tonnes to 3,200 tonnes in 1993 and, later, to 1,700 tonnes in 1999. The struggle for participation in fisheries management started in 1993 after conflicts with crews of fishing boats with illegal diving equipment led to several deaths on both sides. Fed up with the *laissez faire* attitude of the government and law enforcement agencies, fishermen in Prainha do Canto Verde reacted and went on a 76-day protest trip to Rio de Janeiro on the *jangada S.O.S. Survival* (see *Sailing for a Cause*, SAMUDRA Report No 18, 1997).

In the last eight years, a lot has changed and the fishermen are now part of the

decision-making process. The NGO "Instituto Terramar" (which was founded as a result of the protest in 1993) started to bring together fishing communities, organized a statewide awareness campaign and nursed along the first initiatives of community fisheries management. (For more background information on the project Prainha do Canto Verde/Instituto Terramar go to www.fortalnet.com.br/~fishnet). The government and the fishing industry continued to drag their feet, not addressing the main problems: excessive fleet, lack of control of the access to the fishery and predatory fishing.

I have been following the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) experience and the debate promoted by ICSF with great interest, seeing the potential, on the one hand, of a market-based instrument, and, on the other, its limitations for small-scale and artisanal fisheries. Julia Novy, director of Community-based Certification (CBC) in the WWF Endangered Seas Campaign had learned of our community management experience in Prainha do Canto Verde. She invited me to participate at a workshop in Seattle in 1999, together with a number of representatives of community fisheries and several WWF staff from all over the world (Europe, USA, Asia, Australia and Latin America) and the directors of MSC.

Open mind

Being a newcomer to fishing, I am always keen on participating and learning, and keep an open mind for anything that may bring some hope to our lobster fishery. The workshop was, thus, an excellent opportunity to learn from other community experiences and, at the same time, get a chance to debate the issue with representatives of MSC. It seemed just great to have the opportunity to test the

principles and criteria of MSC, knowing, from the SAMUDRA debate, that these were being questioned.

During the debate, MSC project manager Carl-Christian Schmidt talked about field testing of the certification system in small-scale fisheries, but there remain doubts whether small or community-based fisheries had really been made part of the consultation process.

It was clear to me from the beginning that our lobster fishery would have great difficulty to obtain certification under any scheme, because it is so badly managed. But I felt that to go ahead with the experience would be useful for three reasons:

- It would provide the opportunity to test MSC's principles and criteria in a community fishery.
- It would alert the lobster fishery stakeholders to the need for action.
- It would allow an independent and international entity to furnish evidence to pressure Brazilian fishing authorities to implement the existing fisheries management plan.

The WWF took over the costs of the project, which included a preliminary phase,

including awareness raising for stakeholders and the pre-assessment for MSC certification.

It was quite a surprise for the fishing industry in Brazil to learn that NGOs and fishermen were once again a step ahead. Fisheries managers had very little information about MSC, but got very keen when they learned that the Western Australian lobster fishery was already applying for MSC certification. Suddenly, we became more interesting as partners. Five NGOs and fishermen entities were quickly admitted to the "Lobster Foundation" an organization that is supposed to lead the search for responsible fisheries management.

Thus, on 26 November 1999 in the five-star Hotel Marina Park in Fortaleza, Ceará stakeholders and the media got firsthand knowledge of the Lobster Foundation and the MSC's first appearance in Latin America. Two days later, the presentation for fishers and communities took place at the traditional *Jangada* Sail Race in Prainha do Canto Verde.

Media coverage

The event, which attracts over 10,000 fans, and for which we had outstanding TV coverage, was ideal to introduce fishers from many communities to certification and community fishery management as it is practised in Prainha. The former Environmental Minister and Member of

the Board of MSC, Henrique Brando Cavalcanti, was present and was impressed with the state of community organizations in Ceará.

Over the next five months, the community-based certification concept and the community fisheries management plan were presented in communities of the eastern seaboard of Ceará, to fisheries managers, scientists of two universities and the two main research centres of the country (the lobster fishery extends over nine federal States and 1,800 nautical miles of coastline).

In May 2000, Chet Chaffe of Scientific Certification Systems of Oakland California, who had led the team that certified the lobster fishery in Western Australia two months earlier, arrived in Fortaleza.

At a workshop, 20 scientists and fisheries technicians were briefed about certification, before the address to 250 delegates at a fisheries industry gathering sponsored by the fishing industry.

The visit to the lobster fishery at sea and the days spent with the fishermen and contacts with lobster specialists quickly revealed the obvious:

“The pre-assessment does show that certification will not be possible in the short term. The Brazilian government needs to do something about saving the lobster fishery first as it is in a very bad condition. However, potential buyers can rest assured that the fishing co-operative in Prainha do Canto Verde is doing everything it can and doing it well. If the government were doing its job properly, the catch out of Prainha do Canto Verde would meet the MSC requirements for certification. The fact that it does not, is no fault of the fisherman.” (For the detailed report of Scientific Certification Systems go to www.fortalnet.com.br/~fishnet and search for the MSC page).

The result just confirmed what we already knew: we can't save just the lobster fishery of Prainha do Canto Verde; it's all or nothing. The recovery of the lobster fishery is crucial for the survival of coastal communities. Over the past 15 years, the

lobster fishery has become more and more artisanal, and exporters depend on the small-scale fishers for the harvesting of lobster. Price increases on the international market are passed on to fishermen. In this particular fishery, everybody stands to benefit from MSC certification.

The pre-assessment was a positive experience. During the hours spent with Chet, we learned that we know very little about our fishing area. Since then, fishers of Prainha have started to innovate. They are in the process of marking and mapping “their” ocean, firstly, to obtain detailed knowledge about all the resources, and, secondly, to manage it better. We need to convince fishing authorities that the whole coastal area has to be managed in a new way, through community areas with management teams that integrate fishers and scientists.

Maintaining contact with Julia Novy and her community management team has allowed me to keep abreast of the discussions going on around the world. Participants at a WWF-sponsored Community Fisheries Workshop in Sydney in 2000 had some very interesting discussions.

The conclusions they reached do not differ much from the ones we reached in Prainha. But they took the debate a step further and started a discussion on how community certification schemes might look like.

I hope that Julia Novy will keep SAMUDRA readers informed about the progress of this discussion and that the WWF expands its activity in the field of community management to other continents.

Lack of data

Some of the difficulties under MSC certification are the non-availability or poor quality of data in community fisheries or, in the case of Prainha, the lack of comparative data from other communities; or the fact that most resources move around and the community has no control outside its fishing area; and the lack of enforcement capacity. To prepare a fishery for a “real” MSC certification would need time and resources that community fisheries don't

and international funds and organizations. The MSC could be one of the sponsors of a community-based certification “seal of excellence for community fisheries management”, with financial support by MSC signatories and certified fisheries. ICSF, WWF and other NGOs that work with small-scale fisheries could be the stewards for this initiative. A community-based certification programme will be a powerful tool for sustainable coastal development.

Since the MSC presentation in 1999, the community of Prainha do Canto Verde and Instituto Terramar have gained national recognition and are pushing for major changes. At a regional level, we have been able to convince mayors of six coastal counties (municipal governments) to launch a regional management effort along 200 km of coastline, including enforcement actions with a community-owned motor boat and over 50 local actions aimed at controlling the fleet, eliminating backyard lobster buyers (trafficking in undersized lobsters), launching awareness campaigns and many local actions to create alternative fisheries or alternative sources of income in order to take the pressure off the lobster fishery. The federal government has already indicated that it is supporting the initiative and is making available money from the National Environmental Fund to support the plan.

Next on our list are Brazilian exporters and US importers of seafood; we do hope they come aboard. But if they don't, we are in touch with the organizers of the Boston Sea Food Show to present our “case” in March 2002. At this year's show, one of the conference themes was: “Boycotts, Petitions and Purchasing Guides: What's the Industry to Do?”

This article is by René Schärer (fishnet@fortalnet.com.br), a Member of ICSF. He has been working with the community fishery in Prainha do Canto Verde since 1992, and is the co-founder of Instituto Terramar.

have, while the returns would not justify the investment.

For most community fisheries, the benefit may not necessarily be money, but: recognition, validation of community management techniques, technical and financial support for community management programmes, employing community leaders to transfer the knowhow to other communities and the long-term sustainability of the fishery. Active WWF support for community-based efforts to sustainably manage their local fisheries can help convince national governments to support these efforts. That is one thing we still hope will happen in Brazil.

Just the fact of having been chosen to test MSC certification has helped the community of Prainha do Canto Verde find sponsors for the project of marking and mapping their fishing area, and there is a good chance to obtain support from the federal government to extend the experience to other communities.

We may come to the conclusion that the way it stands, MSC is an unlikely instrument to certify artisanal or small-scale fisheries. But we should not deny it the recognition that it has started a discussion that could go a long way to advance community fisheries management and put it on the agenda of national governments, multilateral banks

MSC Certification

Lobbying for lobsters

This is a partial pre-assessment report of the Prainha do Canto Verde Community-based lobster fishery in Brazil

The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) is a non-profit organization dedicated to the long-term protection or “sustainability” of marine fisheries and related habitats. First started as a joint initiative between Unilever and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), the MSC is now a fully independent organization that is governed by an independent Board of Directors advised by a panel of scientific, economic, and fishery experts.

The MSC Mission Statement is:

To work for sustainable marine fisheries by promoting responsible, environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable fisheries practices, while maintaining the biodiversity, productivity and ecological processes of the marine environment.

Dedicated to promoting “well-managed” or “sustainable” fisheries, the MSC initiative intends to identify such fisheries through means of independent third-party assessments and certification.

Once certified, fisheries will be awarded the opportunity to utilize an MSC promoted eco-label to gain economic advantages in the marketplace. Through certification and eco-labelling, the MSC intends to promote and encourage better management of world fisheries, many of which have been suggested to suffer from poor management. In September 1996, the MSC gathered together a group of more than 20 preeminent persons experienced in fisheries and fisheries-related issues (scientists, social scientists, economists, lawyers, etc.) to discuss the establishment of guidelines for defining “sustainable” fisheries. Pulling from large volumes of work by a number of leading organizations (FAO, Greenpeace, WWF, ICES, etc.), as well as their cumulative

experience and expertise, the group was able to develop a document entitled “Draft Principles and Criteria for Sustainable Fishing”. These principles and criteria, which are now approved for final use by the MSC Board of Directors, form the basis for qualifying fisheries as certified and able to utilize the MSC ecolabel.

At the request of Julia Novy, Director of the Community Based Conservation Program for World Wildlife Fund and Rene Sharer of Instituto Terramar, Scientific Certification Systems, Inc. undertook a Pre-assessment of a small community-based lobster fishery in Prainha do Canto Verde in Northern Brazil to determine if this fishery is a good candidate for MSC certification. More specifically, this pre-assessment project was divided into two parts:

Part 1: Collect and assess general information about the fishery and the status of lobster stocks in Brazil. If information is found that strongly suggests that the fishery under evaluation could not meet the MSC certification requirements, the project would not move on to Part 2.

Part 2: Complete the data collection and interviewing of relevant managers, scientists and stakeholders in the fishery to provide information on the following issues:

- The fishery management policy objectives, regulations, and practices;
- State of preparedness for assessment, in particular, the extent to which the fisheries systems are based upon the MSC principles and criteria;

- List of stakeholders in the fishery;
- A short description of the fishery;
- General historical background information on the fishery and area;
- Identification of other fisheries in vicinity, but not subject to certification;
- A decision as to whether it will be possible to move from the pre-assessment to final assessment stage;
- A discussion of the key issues and factors identified as potentially troublesome in completing a successful certification assessment based on the MSC principles and criteria, and;
- A budget estimate for conducting a full certification assessment.

The following report details the work completed for Part 1 of this project, noting that the project was terminated after the completion of Part 1 due to the information obtained on the status of lobster stocks in Brazil. Part 2 of this project was therefore not completed.

Scientific Certification Systems (SCS), founded in 1984, has developed a series of

programs to independently evaluate and certify environmental and food safety performance. The company's mission is to provide objective, scientific information to industry, government policy makers, and consumers about the environmental and health consequences of various industrial and agricultural practices, and to encourage voluntary, responsible improvements through recognition of outstanding industry achievement.

SCS consists of a multi-disciplinary team of scientists, trained in the fields of chemistry, chemical engineering, process engineering, packaging engineering, biology, statistics, entomology, geology, nutrition, agricultural sciences, marine sciences, and forestry.

Chet Chaffee directed this pre-assessment. Chaffee has over 15 years experience in the field of marine sciences, and more than 10 years of experience in environmental certification and eco-labelling. Chaffee has conducted or participated in certification projects for both small and large (Fortune 50) companies in a wide variety of industries from chemical manufacturing to food to resource extraction.

Bruce Phillips has more than 30 years experience in fisheries research and management from both a practical standpoint, having worked at

Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO) and, academically, as a professor at Curtin University.

Phillips is internationally recognized as one of the leading authorities on lobster biology and lobster fishery management having worked as a consultant and research scientist to lobster fisheries in Australia, New Zealand, Brazil, Mexico, Cuba, and several Asian fisheries. Most recently, Phillips has been working as the editor for a compendium of papers on lobster fisheries and their management around the world.

The community of Prainha do Canto Verde (PCV) comprises a small number of fishers that use traps to catch lobster. The community, through the livelihood of the fishers, is dependent on lobster through both subsistence and commercial fishing.

This project was undertaken as an MSC-compliant pre-assessment of that part of the Brazilian lobster fishery fished by the fishers at PCV. This means that the scope of the project is to look at how the fishers in PCV manage and fish for lobster in an area defined geographically by the ability of the fishers to sail their *jangadas* (indigenous sailboats) to fishing locations.

The project is not concerned with other fishers or other management activities except where these activities may impinge

on or significantly effect the management and fishing of lobster by the community at PCV.

In essence, to examine if this community of fishers is managing and fishing a sustainable fishery as defined by the Principles and Criteria of the MSC, one must look at three things:

1. The health of the stock being fished by PCV fishers
2. The ecological/environmental impacts of fishing lobster in the areas fished by PCV fishers, and
3. The robustness of the system in place to manage the lobster fishery fished by the fishers of PCV.

In terms of community-based fisheries, this means looking at the following:

1. Stock Status: Even though a community such as PCV may be fishing a small portion of a large stock that is being fished by many others, the sustainability of that fishery is dependent on the entire stock being in healthy condition.

If the stock is not healthy, then it may become quite problematic to catch lobster in PCV or any other area in Brazil. As a result, the pre-assessment must look at the health of the entire lobster stock throughout its geographic distribution.

2. Ecological Impacts: It was determined by the MSC Standards Council that it is part of the MSC process to look at ecological impacts anywhere in the fishery where the impacts could either be tied directly to activities of the fishers applying for certification, or of such magnitude that the impacts from other areas not fished by the applicants could have detrimental effects on that part of the fishery under consideration.

3. Management System: In the case of a community fishery, it is incumbent upon the certification body conducting the pre-assessment to determine if there are multiple management systems at work in the fishery. In the case of PCV this is certainly the case. The PCV community has its own management system for structuring the fishing effort, protecting the resource, and minimizing effects on the local environments. At the same time, the federal government has a management system in place that provides some regulatory controls and is responsible for the effort applied throughout the lobster fishery along the entire coast of Brazil.

At the beginning of this project, there were some suspicions that there may be problems with the health of the lobster stock or stocks in Brazil. If this could be shown to be true, it would be difficult to see how the lobster fishery in Prainha do Canto Verde or any other part of Brazil could be considered sustainable under the MSC program. As a result, WWF asked for this project to be separated into two parts:

Phase 1 Examination of the health of the stocks in Brazil and in the areas fished by fishers from Prainha do Canto Verde.

Phase 2 - If the stock or stocks of lobster being fished in Brazil can be shown to be healthy, then the remainder of the pre-assessment examination of the ecological impacts of fishing and the robustness of the management system could be undertaken.

If evidence became available that the stock(s) is in poor condition and that the fishery would not be able to be certified under the MSC program, then the project would be terminated to avoid further expenses to WWF.

Two main species of lobster occur in the catches of Brazil; *Panulirus argus* and *P. laevicauda*. *P. argus* is the predominant lobster caught in Brazil and makes up the larger part of the catch in the PCV fishery.

Early discussions with fishery scientists, fishery managers, and others in Brazil provided excellent evidence that the lobster stocks in Brazil in general are in serious decline. In and of itself, this may not have been sufficient for the project to be terminated if there were some indication that the stock being fished by the fishers of Prainha do Canto Verde was a separate and identifiable stock from other lobster stocks in Brazil. However, after considerable discussions again with fishery scientists and managers in Brazil it became clear that there is no reliable or reasonable evidence to suggest that separate lobster stocks exist along the coast of Brazil. There is some anecdotal evidence that there may be some geographic or hydrologic barriers between areas that could facilitate the separation of breeding units and, therefore, stocks (Fonteles-Filho, 2000), but to date there is no scientific support for this. All the scientists interviewed in Brazil and the literature reviewed suggest that there is a single stock of both *Panulirus argus* and *Panulirus laevicauda* and the Brazilian government manages the lobster fishery as one management unit.

Landings of lobster in Brazil were once considered to be the world's second largest catch of warm-water species. Landings showed an upward trend from 1965-1979, but from 1979 to present there has been a gradual decline with a few production peaks as in 1982, 1984, 1990, 1991, 1995, 1996.

The decline in the total annual catch is only one indication that the lobster fishery is in trouble. The catch per unit effort or CPUE has also declined from 0.936 and 0.410 kg/trap-day in 1965 to 0.097 and 0.019 kg/trap-day in 1997 for *P. argus* and *P. laevicauda* respectively.

Increased effort

To try and bolster the economic aspects of the fishery and maintain annual catches, the effort in the fishery has increased considerably over the years. Effort has increased by expanding the number of

boats in the fishery and by increasing the geographic boundaries of the fishery. In addition, the types of boats and gear in the fishery have changed so that there are now many more industrial fishers with large motor craft in the fishery that are able to expend a good deal more effort than the traditional indigenous fishers using local sail craft (*jangadas*).

The distribution of effort in the fishery at present shows that the number of boats is near equally distributed between sail craft and motor craft, but the effort is skewed such that more than 90 per cent of the effort is produced by the motorized fleet, and less than 10 per cent of the effort produced by the traditional sail fleet.

There may be many reasons for the decline in the catch of lobster in Brazil from changes in the biological and oceanographic regimes to fishery management. However, due to the fact that there is such agreement that the decline is real and is continuing, this pre-assessment project was terminated as there would be no way the fishery would be able to meet the MSC requirements for certification. Further effort was not expended to determine the causes of the decline.

One thing appears to be clear, the management of the fishery in Brazil does not appear to be making the necessary effort to change its management practices to stop the decline in the lobster fishery and rebuild the stocks. This appears to be a serious problem that is putting the PCV lobster fishers, other fishers, and the local ecology and fishery at risk through no fault of their own.

Although Phase 2 of the project was discontinued, Chet Chaffee upon his visit to Brazil was able to talk with the fishers in PCV to see what measures, if any, were being taken on a local level that might have been useful in an effort to obtain MSC certification.

In terms of understanding the local ecological effects caused by fishing, there was some local and traditional knowledge that PCV fishers were able to provide. The fishers in PCV have a good understanding of the distribution of lobster in the areas

fished. There is good awareness of areas with high incidence of juveniles and these areas are avoided whenever possible. In addition, the fishers appear to be very aware of changes in catches and move to new locations whenever catches are down. This appears to help distribute the effort over space and time, thus reducing fishing pressure on any one area.

In discussions with fishers in PCV, it also became clear that there was a significant amount of knowledge about the distribution of habitat types in the fishery areas. However, this base of knowledge had not been captured in any formal way to better help local management efforts in terms of sensitive habitats. Today, it appears that the fishers in PCV are working with a local NGO (Instituto Terramar) to map the various types of habitats in the PCV fishing territory.

From this information, it appears that the local PCV fishery could meet the necessary requirements under Principle 2 of the MSC certification should the fishery ever be in a position to apply (i.e. the stock status changes due to improved management at the federal level). The fishers are actively engaged in efforts to better understand and mitigate the impacts of fishing within the geographic boundaries of the PCV fishery.

Two groups handle the management of the lobster fishery at PCV: the federal fishery management authority, IBAMA (Institute for the Environment and Natural Renewable Resources), and the local PCV fishing community.

At the federal level, there appears to be some changes necessary to improve the fishery. There are many regulations in place to protect the lobster fishery, but there appears to be a problem with proper enforcement. For example, there are laws making it illegal to land, sell, or transport lobsters smaller than 65 mm CL (*P. Argus*) and 59 mm CL (*P. laevicauda*).

Closed season

There is also a closed season from January to April. In addition, it is illegal to fish by commercial diving as this is considered to be a non-selective practice. While these laws are present, the certification team was told that there are many instances of



what Brazilians call “predatory fishing” where illegally fished and undersized lobsters are taken, sold, and exported (including to the United States) because there is a lack of federal government enforcement in the fishery.

In addition to the lack of enforcement, there also appears to be a power struggle within the federal government about who should control the management of fisheries. While IBAMA has traditionally had the responsibility, it appears now that the responsibility may be split with other agencies. This split in control along with declining budgets for fisheries management seems to be affecting fisheries management and enforcement in Brazil.

At the local level, the PCV fishing community appears to have excellent local management. The PCV community has a local management council and strict regulations regarding who can fish, what time of day fishing can occur, what can be caught.

In addition, the community has placed restrictions on gear, enforces closed seasons, and is working hard to patrol their own fishing territory to ensure that overfishing and predatory fishing do not occur.

There are severe penalties for those who violate the local fishing regulations from

losing permission to fish for given periods of time to having either fishing gear or boats confiscated.

In terms of meeting the MSC Principles and Criteria for management it is clear that the local PCV community has excellent measures in place to create a sustainable fishery within its local waters. However, it does not appear that the federal management would meet the stringent requirements of the MSC.

In general, we found that the Prainha do Canto Verde fishing community was doing everything it could to ensure the long-term sustainability of its fishery. The PCV community and fishers should be applauded for their hard work, their diligence, and their continued commitment to making their local fishery as sustainable as they possibly can.

Through no fault of its own, the PCV fishery at this time would not meet the MSC requirements as the stock is in serious decline with what appears to be little or no effort being made to reverse the situation. If ever the situation should change in Brazil, we believe the Prainha do Canto Verde lobster fishery would make an excellent candidate for MSC certification. In the meantime, we sincerely hope that any commercial concern purchasing lobster from PCV will recognize the efforts that these local fishermen continue to make toward the sustainability of their fishery. **§**

This document was prepared by Chet Chaffee, Scientific Certification Systems, Oakland, US, with assistance from Bruce Phillips, Curtin University of Technology, Perth, Australia for Prainha do Canto Verde, Brazil

Forging unity

This is the prospectus of the forthcoming conference on the Indian Ocean Region, organized by ICSF and International Ocean Institute

The Indian Ocean is the third largest ocean in the world. Encompassing the body of water between Africa, the Southern Ocean, Asia and Australia, it provides the earliest evidence of human adaptation to the marine environment.

The Indian Ocean, after the Pacific, accounts for the largest number of commercial marine species and for the largest share of full-time fishers' population in the world.

The Indian Ocean Region (IOR) has the largest small-scale, artisanal fisheries in the world. The wide variety of craft-gear combinations employed to catch hundreds of marine species is the hallmark of the region. Fish is a culturally important food as well as a source of employment, income and foreign exchange. The IOR produces significant quantities of fish, both for the domestic and the export markets. Tuna and tuna-like species form the bulk of fish production in the Indian Ocean, with about 19 species contributing to about 20 per cent of the total fish catch.

According to the FAO, a quarter of the world's tuna production is from the Indian Ocean and its adjacent seas. Half the catch is believed to come from the artisanal and small-scale fisheries, while in other oceans most of the tuna catches are netted by industrial vessels. The IOR also produces large quantities of shrimp and cephalopods.

While species like tuna, shrimp and cephalopods are mainly exported, accounting for an important source of foreign exchange, smaller pelagics, which account for the largest bulk of production, are, in general, locally consumed and are the most important source of vital nutrition for the poor. Between 1950 and

1998, the population of the IOR doubled from less than one billion to two billion. Over the same period, marine fish production increased eight-fold—from less than 1 mn tonnes to about 8 mn tonnes. It is significant that while the Indian Ocean population remained at 40 per cent of the world total during this period, the share of Indian Ocean marine fish catch to the world catch increased from under five per cent to about 10 per cent. The potential of the fishery to contribute to the overall well being of the IOR is, therefore, well evident.

Despite this significant increase in fish production, the open-access nature of the marine fishing ground has led to the overexploitation of fisheries resources within three nautical miles in almost all IOR countries. However, according to the FAO, while most of the fishing areas in the world have reached their maximum potential for capture fisheries production, there is still potential for production increases in the eastern and western Indian Ocean, in waters beyond the littoral sea. There is, therefore, a need to ensure that the Indian Ocean does not follow the example of other ocean areas, with respect to poor resource conservation and management. This implies improvements in international agreements, better quality monitoring and control, supported by improvements in the quality of data and compatible institutional arrangements at the national and regional levels.

More poor people

From a human development point of view, the Indian Ocean has the largest number of people living below the income poverty line of US\$1 a day. Madagascar, Mozambique, Kenya, India and Bangladesh, for example, have significant shares of their total populations living

Objectives

Keeping in mind this background and the array of issues relevant to the coastal fishing communities, ICSF, in collaboration with the International Ocean Institute, will hold an international meet in Chennai, India from 9 to 13 October, 2001 with the following objectives:

- to create an awareness among the participants about the bio-geographical and cultural unity of the riparian communities of the IOR;
- to highlight the importance of sustaining the livelihoods of the artisanal and small-scale fishing communities dependent on marine fisheries in the emerging context of new developments in fisheries in the IOR;
- to forge greater unity between communities to:
 - advocate for participatory regional and bilateral arrangements among the riparian nations of the IOR for access to, and responsible management of, fisheries resources, consistent with the UNCLOS;
 - discuss mechanisms for conflict resolution and conflict reduction in the IOR and for humane treatment of fishworkers; and
 - develop a shared vision statement for responsible utilization of fishery and coastal resources in the IOR.

below this line. Judged against the Human Development Index of the United Nations Development Programme, the most disadvantaged countries in the region are Madagascar, Mozambique, Tanzania, Yemen, and Bangladesh.

Issues

Countries in the region share a long heritage of coastal fishing, seafaring and maritime trading that persists today. As indicated above, artisanal and small-scale fisheries provide the mainstay of the fisheries sector, both in terms of employment and catches.

With widespread poverty and underdevelopment in the region, and with significant dependence on fishery resources for food and livelihoods, artisanal and small-scale fisheries could make a vital contribution to the region's long-term development.

However, for this to happen, a number of trends must be addressed and remedied in ways that promote the sustainability of the Indian Ocean fisheries resources. Also, and more than ever before, some of the fisheries management issues are acquiring a regional dimension and, therefore, require a 'community' approach to management—an approach that involves all nations with their principal stakeholders in the IOR.

Based on discussions with some of the key policymakers, NGOs and fishworker organizations, the main issues identified are summarized below:

Modernization and Expansion of Fisheries

There is evidence all over the IOR of depletion of resources and overcrowding of inshore fishing grounds.

The increasing availability of small-scale, modern fishing technologies, such as outboard engines, fibre-reinforced plastic boats, hand-held Global Positioning System (GPS) receivers and so forth, have contributed to fishers in the artisanal and small-scale fisheries in several Indian Ocean countries moving out of their traditional fishing grounds, and also fishing more intensively.

Growing Conflicts

Previously, conflicts in coastal waters may have been exacerbated by large-scale industrial fishing vessels or bottom-trawling units moving into the inshore waters.

However, today, there seems to be a change in the direction of the conflicts. They are often precipitated by the artisanal, small-scale (gillnet and longline/handline gear groups) moving out into fishing grounds more usually the preserve of large-scale industrial fishing

vessels, or into the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of other countries. The conflicts have expanded in scope and scale.

The trans-border illegal movement of fishing vessels amongst riparian nations is more pronounced amongst the South Asian and South East Asian countries and between the South Asian and island countries in the Indian Ocean. There are reported cases, which are on the increase, of Indian fishing vessels being apprehended in Sri Lanka, Maldives, Pakistan and Myanmar; of Sri Lankan fishing vessels being apprehended in India, Seychelles, Somalia and Myanmar; of Pakistani fishing vessels being apprehended in India, Oman and Iran; and of Thai vessels being apprehended in India, Bangladesh and Myanmar, for fishing illegally.

Irrespective of the size, nature and origin of the fishing unit—whether or not they are small or big, use destructive or passive gear, belong to riparian or non-riparian nations—countries in the region deal more stringently with illegal fishing by foreign fishing vessels than with irresponsible fishing by their own domestic fishing vessels.

Distant-water Issues

Under access agreements, joint ventures or licensing arrangements, non-riparian fishing (or distant-water) vessels can access tuna and a few other resources of

the riparian fishing nations in the IOR. In 1998, according to FAO statistics, about 400,000 tonnes of fish were caught by non-riparian fishing nations in the IOR. Most of this comprised high-value tuna resource.

There are, however, no such arrangements at the regional or bilateral level amongst the riparian nations within the Indian Ocean. A regional mechanism to address conflicts over access to fisheries resources as well as fisheries conservation and management issues is important, taking into account the human dimension associated with fleet migration between countries in the region.

The absence of agreements or procedures to handle expeditiously and humanely the problem of fishermen arrested for poaching often results in the gross violation of the spirit of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which clearly discourages incarceration as punishment for poaching.

External Threats: IUU

While addressing the 'endogenous' development needs of the IOR in the realms of fisheries, it is also important to take into account 'external' threats to fisheries in the region. The illegal, unregulated, unreported (IUU) fishing activities, especially by non-riparian nations or fishing entities in the IOR, for example, have significant implications for

the development of fisheries of the riparian nations, particularly the status of targeted and dependent stocks.

The conditions of work of the crew on board these distant-water fishing vessels raise important labour and human rights issues.

Coastal Environmental Degradation

The health of the marine environment has an important bearing on fisheries management and the allocation of access rights to fisheries resources. The implications of degraded marine ecosystems include a decline in resource productivity and health risks to both fishers and consumers. Marine pollution and ineffective coastal area management (mangrove destruction, construction of large dams, etc.) impose significant external costs on coastal fisheries. The solution to the degradation of the marine environment also requires a regional, or community-oriented, approach.

Regionalization Initiatives: the rise of the IOR-ARC

The Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Co-operation (IOR-ARC), was formed in 1997 by 14 riparian States in the region. The IOR-ARC has aspirations to become like the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) or the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). Its aims are: *'to promote sustained growth, balanced development, liberalization and to foster closer*

co-operation in global economic issues and human resources development'.

At the same time, non-governmental organizations from seven Indian Ocean countries formed a Civil Society Indian Ocean Network (CSIONET). The CSIONET has as its objective *'sustainable development, economic progress, participatory democracy and environmental equity in the Indian Ocean region'*. The CSIONET hopes to function as a dialogue partner with the IOR-ARC.

A proposal on conservation of fish resources in the Indian Ocean region was approved at the IOR-ARC's Ministerial Conference held at Muscat, Oman, in April 2001. IOR-ARC also aims at maximizing the benefits of globalization to the Indian Ocean rim countries. This could lead to an expansion of industrial and service sector activities in the coastal areas, which could have significant positive and negative implications for the coastal marine environment and the livelihood of people who are dependent on it.

At the sectoral level, the establishment of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) in 1996, with the objective of optimum utilization of 16 tuna and tuna-like fish in the IOR, is also highly significant. The IOTC has management powers and it is the first of its kind among the regional fisheries organizations under the FAO Constitution. With the likelihood

of the imminent ratification of the 1995 UN Fish Stocks Agreements, regional fisheries management organizations (like the IOTC) will become quite powerful. IOTC already has provisions to allow NGO participation at its meetings, if member countries do not object.

The Conference will invite at least two representatives of artisanal fishing communities or fishworker organizations from a selected number of countries in the region. There will also be representatives of regional and international organizations, as well as of national fisheries agencies.

Following are the countries/ organizations from which participants are expected: Southern and Eastern Africa : Mozambique, Kenya, Tanzania and South Africa; Western Indian Ocean: Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles and Maldives; South East Asia: Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand; South Asia: India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Bangladesh; and Australia; International Civil Society Organizations: Greenpeace International, WWF and CFFA; International Trade Unions: ITF; Multilateral Agencies: FAO, BOBP, EC, IOR-ARC, IOTC, SADC and ILO. 3

The conference, *Forging Unity: Coastal Communities and the Indian Ocean's Future*, will be held at the Indian Institute of Technology, Chennai, India, from 9 to 13 October 2001. For more details, email icsf@vsnl.com

Women in fisheries

Gender agenda

This is an account of a meeting of women in artisanal fisheries, organized by the National Network of Women: Northern Zone at Antofagasta, Chile

The First Meeting of Women in Artisanal Fisheries: Northern Zone was held in Antofagasta, Northern Chile from 27 to 29 June 2001. It attracted 37 participants from 14 women's groups belonging to all three zones of Chile—northern, central and southern—engaged in fishing, aquaculture, baiting hooks, processing and marketing fish. Nine of these groups were from the northern region. The event was organized by women members of the *Sindicato de Buzos Mariscadores* (Syndicate of Shellfish Divers) of the *caleta* Constitución-Isla Santa Maria, a part of the National Network of Women in Artisanal Fisheries of CONAPACH (the National Confederation of Artisanal Fishers of Chile).

During the workshop, women discussed their expectations from the sector and their role in promoting artisanal fisheries. They elaborated on the concept of “sustainable development” and drew up guidelines for “community, economic and environmental development”.

Various public service organizations of Region II, as well as officials from the central level, were represented at the meeting. These included officials from Sernapesca, Dirección de Obras Portuarias, (Port Works Management) Sercotec, Sernam and the UECPS (Unidad Coordinadora del Ministerio de Obras Públicas or the Coordinating Unit of the Ministry of Public Works). They expressed their support towards developing the ideas put forward during the meeting.

The meeting was part of the project “Women Weaving Networks for the Sustainable Future of Our *Caletas*”, being executed by CONAPACH with financial support from the *Fondo de las Américas*. In

January 2001, women from the artisanal fisheries sector in Chile organized themselves into a National Network and selected co-ordinators for each zone. The members of the Network have been meeting regularly, every two months, to discuss strategies to strengthen, broaden and consolidate their movement. They have worked out zonal plans to identify new women's groups, deepen ties with those already in contact with the network, disseminate information on work being carried out by the network as well as identify sources to fund the initiatives of the movement and grassroot groups.

The Antofagasta meeting, a product of these zonal-level projects, was the largest event that the National Network of Women had ever organized. It marked a milestone for the co-ordinators of the northern zone and for the Conapach Women's Network, and was an important step towards valorizing the role of women in artisanal fisheries.

One of the main tasks of the meeting was to gauge the expectations of women from such events and to discuss how these could be integrated into the workplan of the National Network of Women. The women gave practical suggestions for achieving concrete results in their respective *caletas* and suggested creating permanent channels of communication between their organizations. There was a strong sentiment in favour of holding more such meetings in future to increase communication between groups and to strengthen the movement. They also stressed the need to elect more representatives for better co-ordination.

Local contexts

Gender issues were approached within the context of legitimizing *caletas*, and looking at them as groups that comprise

both men and women. The need for women to develop their self-potential and power was stressed, and to ensure this, it was proposed that new spaces for sharing and analyzing experiences and learning from the experiences of others be created.

The women also drew the attention of authorities to illegal fishing by the industrial sector in the 5-mile zone reserved for artisanal fishing. It was evident that even if women from the northern zone, in general, are not closely integrated into the activities of *sindicatos*, they are well informed about at least two major issues: the 5-mile zone and the fisheries law.

Their interest in protecting resources, respecting closed seasons and getting better prices demonstrated their appreciation of problems arising from overexploitation of marine resources.

Having discussed the concept of sustainable development and the need to link it to the development of communities, the economy and the environment, the women identified possible areas of intervention.

For economic development, they highlighted the need to support productive projects to improve the quality of life, based on a responsible use of resources through controlling, for example, the size of fish harvested. They

also stressed the need for feasibility studies and training programmes on organizational aspects. Possible projects proposed related to culinary skills, tourism, processing and marketing of shellfish, and making diving suits, among others.

In community development, they highlighted the need for their better organization into groups and for establishing alliances with other community-based and environmental organizations. They also proposed efforts to influence public opinion about problems faced by communities, though the involvement of the media.

The various other problems they faced included: poor accessibility of *caletas*; lack of transport, especially affecting school-going children; lack of proper sewage and drinking water facilities; and poor access to health services.

They stressed the necessity for providing decompression chambers for divers exposed to pressure-related problems and a high accident rate. They also stressed that in *caletas* where there are no medical facilities, men and women need to be trained to provide first-aid to victims of accidents, either at sea or in the *caletas*.

School dropouts

The women expressed concern about the significant number of children who drop

out of school or repeat academic years, and they highlighted the need for nursery and other schools.

As for the environment, the women proposed two broad areas for action. First, they stressed the importance of promoting citizen's participation through the efforts of neighbourhood groups, schools and unions, and with the involvement of CONAPACH, Servicio Pais, and the authorities. They emphasized the need to keep the community informed about these issues through various media.

They also proposed other alternatives for improving the environment, including recycling of organic and inorganic waste, developing green belts, controlling pollution (waste water, heavy metals, dregs, etc.), effectively enforcing the closed season, protecting resources (size and quality) and promoting environmental awareness.

The Antofagasta meeting is perhaps a landmark in developing new perspectives in the artisanal fisheries sector, in general, and in efforts towards increasing the visibility of women, in particular. Although it is a fact that women are the most marginalized in terms of direct participation in artisanal fisheries in the northern zone, what is noteworthy is that they do understand the role they play in the development of the sector. They articulate the need to control and manage resources, obtain better prices and improve the quality of products. This reassures us that it is possible to succeed in promoting development initiatives for women in the sector.

Until now, the country and different public services have invested in large-scale capture and production, within fisheries, in general, and artisanal fisheries, in particular. Analyzing the existing level of development of artisanal fisheries, we think it important to integrate women through strengthening their incipient organizations and supporting their plans for socioeconomic development. In the past, although the authorities have always intended to elevate the role of the female "actor", the efforts have, for the most part, been disjointed and based on isolated activities

rather than on an integrated approach to development. The women from the northern sector of the country require support in their activities, along with their partners—husbands, fathers, companions, etc.

It is clear to women that the issue of their integration into the sector is generally glossed over by the predominantly male organizations. In this regard, we believe that we are at a juncture where there is a strong possibility for success on an issue which is highly complex in nature.

At the meeting, women suggested several development projects directed towards *sindicatos* and the various public services of Region II. We are inviting these bodies to form a working platform that could help us define strategies and concrete opportunities for the integration of women into the development agenda. ♣

This report has been filed by Jéssica Alfaro Alvarez, Co-ordinator of the Women Weaving Networks Project of CONAPACH (pescart@unete.cl)

Focusing on insurance

The pioneer of Japan's fishery co-operative movement recalls his efforts to insure the well-being of Japanese fishermen

The Sakazuki FCA was often referred to as the model for all the other Hokkaido FCAs. The Sakazuki example was also the reason that Dogyoren and Shingyoren took the initiative to promote such savings in the their 42 prefectural Credit Federations throughout the nation.

Fifty-seven years have now passed since I first came to Hokkaido. I can still recall the pitiful conditions of the fishing villages throughout the island, in which most of the fishermen and their families lived in abject poverty, while only a few of them could be said to be well off.

“Why?” I asked myself. “Why were these fishermen so poor, and what was the cause of their poverty?” I could see no reason for the situation to be that way. The situation was particularly shocking when one realized that Hokkaido was surrounded by seas that were classified as being among the top three fishing grounds in the world. I realized that something was seriously wrong, and that realization formed the basis for my life's work in the fishermen's liberation movement.

I have done many things to resolve the countless problems that the fishermen faced. One such endeavour that was particularly important was the establishment of a mutual insurance system for fishery damage. The original motivation for this system was the aforementioned question that I had asked myself.

Managing the fishing industry can be extremely difficult due to the changes in natural conditions and fluctuating harvests. One of the features of the fishing industry is that it must inevitably deal with the effects of natural phenomena.

I realized that if we collected money regularly from the fishermen and accumulated this capital in a Mutual Insurance Fund, it might be possible for us to cover any losses that the fishermen might incur as the result of extremely bad harvests. With such a system, we would help the fishermen overcome their financial difficulties.

I had originally conceived this idea in 1933, when I was an official of the Hokkaido government, but few paid much attention to the ideas of a minor official such as I was. A certain Mr Minetomo was the only person who showed any interest in my idea. He had been a career diplomat with the national government, and after he retired, he began to promote a mutual life insurance system for fishermen, under which groups of crews were eligible for insurance by large insurance companies.

I asked Minetomo to study the possibility of initiating such a system in the fishing communities throughout the nation. Minetomo shared my enthusiasm to help the fishermen, and he conducted his research for several years, without receiving any compensation.

He got few responses from either the prefectural governments or those in the fishing communities. Most of the people he talked to said that such an insurance system would, once established, serve only to take away the motivation of the fishermen. The fishermen would become lazy and, if the insurance covered any losses, they would not risk the dangers of working on the open sea.

Insurance system

Therefore, we had to wait until 1964 before we could establish such an insurance system to protect the fishing

households. This was accomplished by strengthening the functions of Shingyoren, establishing Shidoren, the Hokkaido Educational Federation in 1961, and by restructuring Dogyoren.

While the Japanese economy had made a rapid recovery from its defeat in World War II, certain sectors of the economy had not fully recovered. Led by the steel, shipbuilding and textile industries, the economy was starting to grow at an ever-increasing rate. The incomes of the men who worked in the primary industries, on the other hand, lagged far behind the incomes of those who worked in the secondary industries.

The Japanese government realized the seriousness of the situation and enacted the Industrial Structure Improvement Act in 1960 and the Coastal Fishery Development Act in 1963. Although these laws resulted in noticeable improvements, I felt there was still one more thing to be done in order to ensure the well-being of those in the fishing communities. In order to protect them from the effects of natural disasters, I still believed that it was necessary to establish a mutual insurance fund with which they could stabilize the year-to-year fluctuation in the management or their fisheries. With the changes in the structure brought about by the aforementioned laws, the time seemed right for us to act.

Since I had assumed the post of vice-president of Zengyoren in 1952, I had proceeded to express my idea not only to the leaders of the Hokkaido FCAs, but also to those of other prefectural federations of FCAs, throughout the nation.

We requested the national government's Fishery Agency to study the possibility of enacting a law. The agency, therefore, started to research the conditions of fishery management and the possibility of establishing a mutual insurance system for fishery damages, which was to be supported by the central government.

Many officials of the fishery agency were reluctant to present a draft of a bill to the Diet. They put forth various excuses, saying that the risks in the fishing industry were too great to allow such a mutual insurance system to work effectively, or

that they did not have enough data to make any decisions, or that it was simply not the proper time to pass such a law.

Nevertheless, I continued to promote strongly the movement to have all 3 mn fishermen throughout the nation unite under a common banner. Fortunately, I had the strong support of President Katayanagi of Zengyoren, and we succeeded in establishing a "National Headquarters to Promote the Realization of a Fisheries Compensation Fund for Damages Caused by Disasters." We also worked with each of the 42 prefectural federations of FCAs so that they could all establish their own similar organizations.

Hokkaido took the initiative in this movement by founding the "Hokkaido Prefectural Headquarters" and its secretariat within the Educational Federation. We were thus prepared to initiate a political movement in the fishery circles, but, in order to do this, it was necessary for us to lobby the members of the national Diet and have them understand our goals.

I was acquainted with Hanji Ozaki, an important figure in the national government. His father, Yukio Ozaki, had played an important role in the establishment of the parliamentary system in Japan, and his statue now stands near the Japanese Diet Building. Although he was not a member of the Diet, Hanji Ozaki was a well-respected advisor to the Yukio Ozaki Memorial Foundation, and was very influential among the lawmakers.

Political connections

Ozaki introduced me to Takeo Miki, the director of a committee in the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) which was researching political issues. (Miki later became Prime Minister of Japan in 1974). Although I was definitely not a part of any political circles, I was aware of the fact that Miki had been the leader of the former Co-operative Party, which had been established immediately after the war. Miki's political philosophy was in many ways similar to that of the co-operative movement. When I had the opportunity to meet Miki, I explained to him the situation of coastal fisheries and the FCAs. I appealed to him regarding the necessity of

a government-supported system to provide insurance for the fishermen against damages caused by natural disasters.

I told him that, although the government had enacted the Coastal Fisheries Development Act in 1963, and the FCAs had established a Foundation for Future Development, we still faced serious situations whenever we were confronted by damages caused by these disasters.

I pointed out to him that an average of 700 fishermen died each year throughout Japan as a result of accidents brought about by the danger of their working conditions. I explained to him that many fishermen would go out into rough seas at the risk of their lives, simply because they had no alternative. If they didn't risk their lives, they would be risking the livelihoods of not only themselves, but also their families and the communities. Because of the large amount of damages suffered when the fishermen engaged in their high-risk work, it was imperative that something be done to deal with these fundamental problems.

Furthermore, I outlined to him the research we had done regarding a system of mutual insurance, and explained that we needed the support of the government if we were to provide full coverage for the fishermen. Miki understood my points

and expressed his sympathy for the plight of the fishermen. He then promised to support our movement and to work for the passage of a law to help realize a system of mutual insurance.

We, along with the fishermen, spent much time and effort lobbying various members of the Diet. Our efforts proved successful by the time of the general election in 1964, when not only the LDP but also other parties promised to support the bill that would establish this system for the fishermen.

Many prefectural FCAs held rallies and demonstrations in the major cities to appeal for public support. Zengyoren also voiced its support of the movement, and more than 3,000 fishermen from throughout the nation gathered in Tokyo to demonstrate. This was the first time in the history of Japan that such a large number of fishermen gathered in Tokyo for a demonstration.

Reluctant bureaucracy

After the election, the government began to work out a budget for the fishermen's insurance system. Some bureaucrats were, at first, reluctant to have this law passed, but, because of the pressure from the fishermen, they had to draw up a bill to send to the Diet. The process of formulating the bill involved much discussion and argument. The bureaucrats in the Finance Ministry

insisted that the law be named the “Law of Mutual Insurance for Fisheries,” but we wanted to call it the “Fishery Damage Compensation Law.” It is true that this law was based on the concept of mutual insurance, but I was worried that the funds which were collected from the fishermen might not be sufficient to cover any unexpected or large-scale damages. This would impose too heavy a burden on the fishermen, and it was, therefore, necessary for us to obtain government assistance.

With the strong support and powerful influence of Mr Ozaki and Mr Miki, we managed to have the bill made into law. On 26 June 1964, the bill was passed in both the Upper House and the Lower House and it was named the “Fisheries Damage Compensation Law.”

We had been very fortunate to have the strong support of the Socialist Party, too. They showed us in this case that they fully supported us in our demands for complete coverage by the government for fishery damages.

Thus, the bill was passed by the Diet, although a government-supported insurance system was not realized in this law. A solution, however, was agreed upon by the lawmakers and affixed to the law. It stated that the government would have to improve the system by adding a re-insurance scheme within three years from the enactment of this law. ❸

This ninth instalment is excerpted from the *Autobiography of Takatoshi Ando*, translated by Naoyuki Tao and James Colyn

News Round-up

Jails beckon

The **Japan** Fisheries Agency reports that there were six cases of illegal fishing by 18 South Korean vessels in July. These were recorded in the northwestern waters of Kyushu, near Tsushima.

There were also five seizures of illegal fishing gear and two of these led to an arrest. On 18 July, the crew of an illegal fishing vessel attacked the patrol boat, the *Hakuho Maru*, physically injuring its crew.

The Japanese government has complained to the South Korean government regarding this incident, but the illegal fishing has not yet ceased.

In 1999, when the new Japan-Korea Fisheries Agreement became effective, there were five cases of illegal fishing by foreign vessels in the waters of Kyushu.

In 2000, the cases of illegal fishing rose to 38, of which 19 led to arrests. This year, between January and July, there have been 36 cases of illegal fishing and 13 cases of arrests. One of these arrests was of a

Chinese vessel, while the rest were South Korean.

Junta diktats

Thailand has rejected a set of regulations proposed by **Myanmar** as a condition for the lifting of a ban on Thai fishing trawlers operating in its waters, saying it would be a financial burden.

Myanmar cancelled Thai fishing licences in October 1999 after the Thai government supplied an escape helicopter to five anti-junta gunmen in exchange for the

release of 38 hostages held captive at Myanmar's embassy in Bangkok.

Despite a series of talks, the two sides have failed to reach agreement on the revival of fishing concessions, in a stand-off that has cost Thai fishermen dearly.

Thai Deputy Prime Minister Pitak Intarawithayanunt said Fishery

Department and Foreign Ministry officials would travel to the military-ruled nation in the hope of negotiating a workable deal for Thai trawlers.

Myanmar is proposing a range of conditions, including that Thai fishermen pay a special tax in addition to a percentage of the profits from fish caught off its coast. Thailand has countered with a plan for a single licence fee.

Opening up

The government of **South Africa** has launched a campaign to open up the fishing industry—worth 2.5-bn rand a year—to small-scale and subsistence fishers. The campaign also includes provision for poverty alleviation so, unlike commercial

fishermen, those who fish for food security purposes don't have to apply for fishing quotas. The announcement follows the expiry of

existing fishing quotas at the end of the year and no extensions are allowed.

Until noon on 13 September, 27 information stations, staffed by 60 people, will operate along the coast from Richard's Bay in KwaZulu-Natal to Port Nolloth in the Northern Cape to help quota applicants.

Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism Mohammed Valli Moosa says his department "supports the establishment of micro and small and medium enterprises, which is closely linked to transformation and, by the same token, the department will also move away from unviable allocations of fishing rights so as not to encourage 'paper quota' rights holders".

Legalese

Eritrea has accused **Yemen** of disregarding the clarification of the Hague arbitration court, which settled a dispute over fishing rights in the Hanish Islands, the London-based Arabic-language newspaper *Al-Sharq al-Awsat* reports.

The two countries fought a brief war in 1996 over the islands, which were being claimed by both. The

conflict was resolved in 1999 by international arbitration. Tewelde Medhin, the deputy head of mission in the Eritrean Embassy in Nairobi, said that the marine border had also been agreed on after the dispute over the islands dispute was resolved,

and that “relations between the two countries are good and have been getting better”.

Eritrean sources expressed surprise and dismay at what they described as inaccurate reports to the effect that Eritrea had earlier this month seized 106 Yemeni fishing boats, *Al-Sharq al-Awsat* said. The Eritreans expressed concern that some individuals may be trying to damage relations between the two countries by circulating such reports.

The differences between the two countries’ interpretation of fishing rights arises from Eritrea’s stance that traditional fishing rights are guaranteed for nationals of both countries in the disputed area, which was later given to

Yemen by the Hague court. The court, however, did not give Yemeni fishermen the right to fish in Eritrean territorial waters, said the paper.

The paper quotes Eritrean sources as saying, “despite the court’s clarifications, the Yemeni brothers continue to ignore the court’s clarification and are still interpreting the ruling in the way that suits them”.

Eviction threat

About 2,100 small-scale fishermen operating along the Dar es Salaam shore face eviction following an order by **Tanzania** Harbours Authority (THA) to clear the harbour of small boats and trawlers.

The chairman of the Association of Small Fishermen in Dar es Salaam (Uwawada), Addy Haidari, told *The East African* that THA has ordered small fishermen to move their vessels

out of the Magogoni area where they currently operate.

Haidari says the move will adversely affect the lives and

incomes of 2,098 fishermen as well as the Dar es Salaam residents who depend on fish for their daily food. About 187 fishing vessels would be affected by the move, which could lead to a shortage of fish and force consumers to pay more.

Forthcoming

On 30 August and 1 September 2001, MARE (Centre for Maritime Research) and SISWO/**Netherlands** Institute for the Social Sciences will organize the international conference *People and the Sea: Maritime Research in the Social Sciences—An Agenda for the 21st Century*.

Participants in the three-day conference will examine cross-disciplinary issues in maritime research.

Core sessions will focus on the following topics: integrated coastal zone management; property rights and multiple-use conflicts; stakeholders and policy-making processes; maritime work worlds and cultures; theory, methodology and ethics; and development and change.

The month after that will see another international meet. The Reykjavik Conference on

Responsible Fisheries in the Marine Ecosystem, organized jointly by the Government of **Iceland** and FAO, with the co-sponsorship of the Government of Norway, will be held between 1 and 4 October, 2001 at Reykjavik, Iceland.

From 3-7 December 2001, the *Global Conference on Oceans and Coasts at Rio+10: Assessing Progress, Addressing Continuing and New Challenges* will be held at UNESCO headquarters in Paris. It will

provide an overall assessment of progress achieved on oceans and coasts since the Earth Summit. It will also provide input to the discussions by governments which will take place in June 2002, when nations will converge at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Rio+10) in Johannesburg, **South Africa**, to assess progress made in the implementation of all aspects of the world agenda on environment and development agreed to at the 1992 Earth Summit.

Yado

*Yado yado Bellirena yado,
Hay yea Bellirena yado.*

*Yado yado Bellirena yado,
Hay hay hay yea Bellirena yado.*

*If you want to see the monkey dance
Break a pepper in his tail.*

*Yado yado Bellirena yado.
Hay hay yea Bellirena Yado.*

*Massa dead he leave no money.
He left no cent to wash he clothes.*

*Yado yado Bellirena yado.
Hay hay yea Bellirena yado.*

*Massa dead he no left no money,
He left he son for catch de cow whale.*

*Hay hay yea Bellirena Yado,
Yado yado Bellirena yado.*

*Massa dead he no left no money,
Mistress have to beg a penny.*

*Hay hay yea Bellirena yado,
Yado yado, Bellirena yado.*

— One of West Indies' most popular songs,
a "chantey" sung at a launching,
quoted in *Folklore and the Sea* by Horace Beck



ICSF is an international NGO working on issues that concern fishworkers the world over. It is in status with the Economic and Social Council of the UN and is on ILO's Special List of Non-Governmental International Organizations. It also has Liaison Status with FAO. Registered in Geneva, ICSF has offices in Chennai, India and Brussels, Belgium. As a global network of community organizers, teachers, technicians, researchers and scientists, ICSF's activities encompass monitoring and research, exchange and training, campaigns and action, as well as communications. SAMUDRA REPORT invites contributions and responses. Correspondence should be addressed to the Chennai office.

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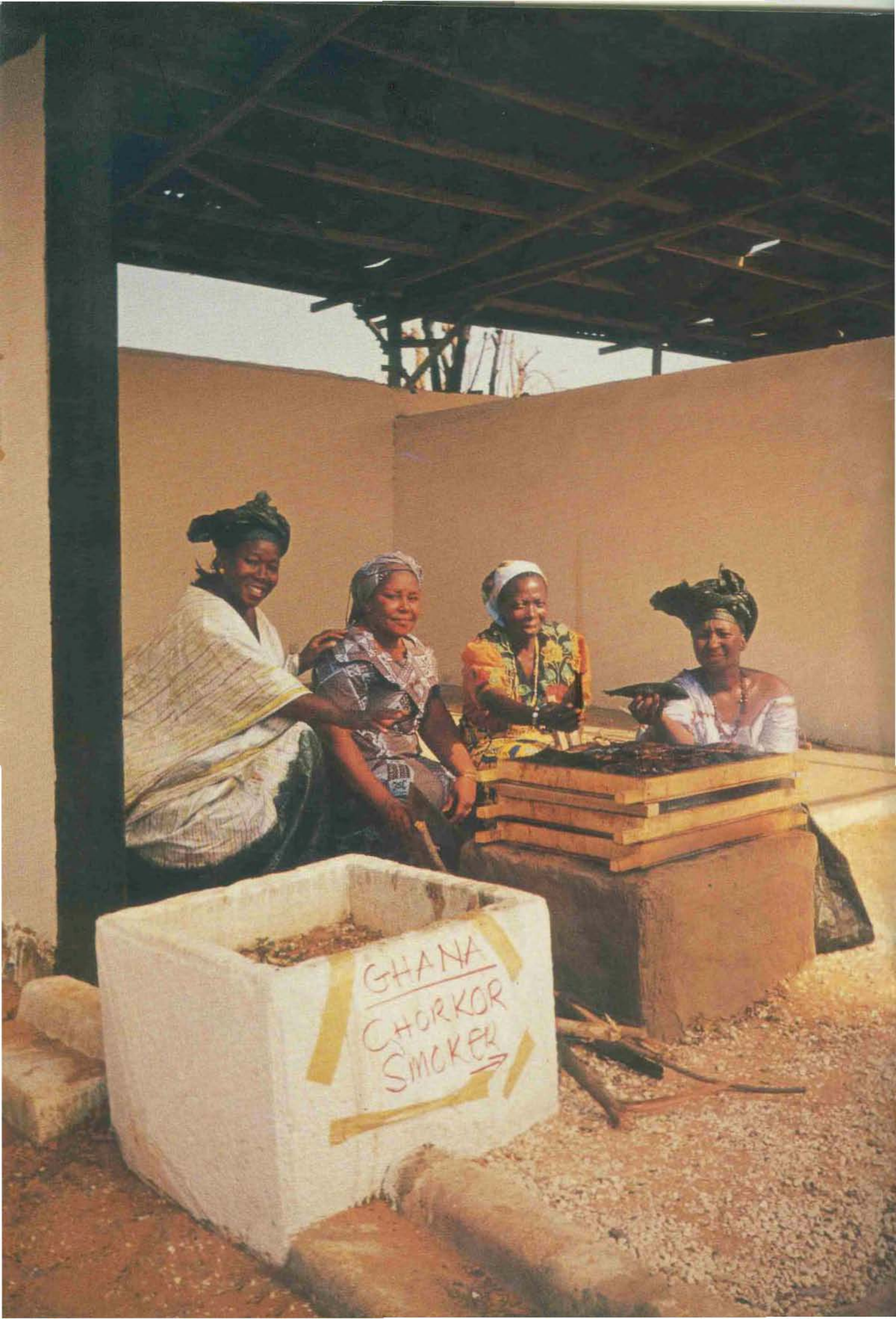
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