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Editor's Notes *Small-scale fishers unite!*

By the time you read Fishers Net, the 6th General Assembly of the World Forum of Fisher Peoples will either be in progress or will have been completed.

The Assembly takes place every three years and spotlights the key issues facing small-scale fishers worldwide.

The sector accounts for half, sometimes up to two-thirds of the world's fisheries and has the potential to put food on the table for hundreds of millions of people.

Small-scale fishers are currently grappling with two major issues. The one is commonly called Ocean Grabbing which entails the privatisation of the oceans by powerful business interests at the expense of small-scale fishers. This contributes further to the growing inequality in society. The second is related to the adoption and implementation of a set of International Guidelines for the sector.

These two issues have been on the agenda for some time. Fishing communities are increasingly mobilising against Ocean Grabbing and strong resolutions would have been taken on this by the time the General Assembly has been completed.

The International Guidelines provide a framework for the growth of the sector and the empowerment of those who rely on the ocean for their livelihoods. They were adopted in Rome in June this year and before the end of 2014 an implementation plan will be agreed upon.

Representatives from 40 organisations from numerous countries and four continents are giving attention to these crucial matters. They need to take them forward during the five days of the conference and the months and years ahead.

Each conference has seen the organised part of the sector growing. This developing strength is vital and has to be accompanied by long-term unity in action.

A global assembly of small-scale fishers



The 6th General Assembly of the WFFP, taking place from 1 to 5 September 2014 in Cape Town South Africa, brings together more than 100 delegates from more than 30 countries.

Countries represented are the host South Africa, India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Canada, France, Honduras, Ecuador, Senegal, Kenya, Tanzania, Mauritania, Philippines, Mali, Martinique, Gambia, Bangladesh, Thailand, Malaysia, Uganda and the Caribbean Islands.

Many participants are from the four coastal provinces of South Africa, representing Coastal Links, a mass organisation of small-scale fishers.

The assembly receives reports from member organisations and focuses on issues of Ocean

Grabbing and the International Guidelines for small-scale fisheries.

Participants are engaging in serious debate but are also visiting the Langebaan fishing community along the West Coast of the Cape and other places of interest.

A representative of government is addressing the assembly and the key note speaker is Seth Macinko who teaches courses in fisheries law and management in the Department of Marine Affairs at the University of Rhode Island (USA) where he is an associate professor.

Cultural items are presented throughout the week and there is engagement with numerous mainstream and community media as well as social network platforms throughout the Assembly.

FISHING AROUND THE WORLD



WFFP unites fishers across the globe

“UPHOLD our human and fishing rights as fisherfolk of the world, protect our livelihoods, pursue social justice for fishing communities, preserve and promote the culture of fishing communities worldwide, affirm water as the source of all life and commit ourselves to sustain fisheries and all aquatic resources for present and future generations of the world”.

With these words, fisherfolk from 24 countries and 35 organisations formed the World Forum of Fisher Peoples (WFFP) on November 21, 1997 in India. Since then, WFFP has grown hugely in strength and stature.

Member organisations of the WFFP are daily waging struggles in their respective countries, and draw strength from the lobbying, advocacy work, campaigns and research done by the WFFP.

WFFP is engaged in a range of lobbying and advocacy work right up to the United Nations (UN), European Union (EU), African Union (AU) and regional organisations and their subsidiary bodies and agencies.

Naseegh Jaffer, National Director of Masifundise, a South African WFFP member organisation, and co-ordinator of WFFP, believes that belonging to WFFP holds tremendous benefits for local organisations.

“It provides solidarity, we can take similar positions on issues, we can learn from each others’ struggles, build a strong social movement and together learn to bring about change that will benefit SSF (small scale fishing) locally and internationally,” says Jaffer.

Herman Kumara of the National Fisheries Solidarity Movement (NFSM) in Sri Lanka, and WFFP co-ordinator, says that SSF in Sri Lanka were marginalised and did not have recognition, their rights as fishers were not respected, and their contribution as food producers were not recognised. This started to change when they started to organise themselves and later joined WFFP.

“As a member of the wider WFFP family, we gained the recognition. Also, in the area of national policy formulation, we are campaigning against land and sea grabbing based on the access rights of Voluntary Guidelines for SSF.”

For a long time, SSF just watched as big companies and foreign vessels caught their fish in huge quantities and emptied seas of the fish. A mass exodus of fisher folk from fishing communities occurred in many parts



Delegates at the WFFP General Assembly in Sri Lanka in 2007

of the world due to their loss of access to fishing grounds and coastal lands.

Jaffer says that this is called ocean grabbing, a process whereby big companies and individuals take control of the sea and its resources, due to their massive economic and political power they wield, and through laws that exclude those with less powers from the resources of the ocean.

WFFP has made it one of its main goals to fight this scourge of ocean grabbing all over the world and is still heavily involved in campaigns against ocean grabbing.

Through WFFP fisherfolk globally can campaign together for political benefits, which in the end will translate into legislation that will positively impact on the lives of SSF.

Through WFFP, local organisations can lobby for support, and provide for direct input from fisherfolk into legislation and other discussions that impact on the lives of fisherfolk.

“WFFP demands the recognition and protection of fisher folk’s traditional rights in national law-making and policies, and rejects the practice of destructive fishing such as trawling and dynamite fishing,” says Mohamed Reza, of the SNI (Serikat Nelayan Indonesia / Indonesia Fisherfolk Union).

Through the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the UN, WFFP extensively and vigorously campaigned for and contributed to the development and adoption of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication. (full article on page three).

WFFP Member organisations, through duly mandated delegates meet every three years in the General Assembly (GA), its highest decision making body.

The GA is held in a different country every

time it meets, and was only once held in Africa, when it met in Kenya in 2005, and this year, Africa will get its second turn, when it will be held in Cape Town, South Africa.

The GA elects a Co-ordinating Committee (CC), which manages and runs the activities of the WFFP between General Assemblies.

At the GA, time is set aside for the delegates to meet as Continental Fora, each to serve on and represent their continents on the CC.

The CC meets once a year and consist of two co-chairpersons, secretary, treasurer and the two officials from each continent.

The head office of the WFFP is located in Pakistan, the country in which the secretary resides, the secretary sets up a secretariat in his office, from where s/he co-ordinates all the activities of the WFFP.

The WFFP has 16 objectives, which is important in protecting the human, social, and gender, education, and justice, political and economic rights of fisher folk globally.

Briefly, some of these objectives are to, advocate and lobby for the rights of fisherfolk and the future existence of fishing communities, their families and future generations; Fight for the equal participation of women in fishing, by supporting, enhancing and recognising the role of women in the social, economic, political and cultural life of fishing communities; Educate fishing communities and others about the importance of small scale fishing, and the protection and conservation of the fishing resource.

Compliance with the law is important in protecting small scale fishing and WFFP aims, ‘to promote a legal regime that will ensure the traditional and customary rights of fishing communities ...’

WFFP hopes to grow in the coming years and to represent small scale fishing communities in all countries of the world.

Global fisheries guidelines promote food security and poverty eradication

Small-scale fishers worldwide will benefit significantly when international guidelines governing the sector are finally adopted.

The Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (The Voluntary Guidelines) was approved at a COFI Meeting in Rome in June..

have participated in many regional and international forums and contributed in the formulation of the guidelines. The October, 2008 FAO event in Bangkok was historical to the formal recognition and protection of small scale fishery," says Mohamed Reza of SNI.

"WFFP was also involved in the technical consultation process to develop

on the guidelines, where representatives of organisations representing fisher folk were given the opportunity to speak," says Jaffer.

WFFP also worked closely together with the International Planning Committee (IPC), to facilitate access to FAO. IPC is a Secretariat Service to social movements in the food security field.

"The IPC set up a civil society group consisting of WFFP, WFF and other social movements to impact on the discussions relating to the voluntary guidelines."

The Guidelines is a guide for governments, government agencies, world and regional bodies on how to deal with small scale fishing.

And, for small-scale fishing communities globally it gives hope, in that it gives recognition to small-scale fishing from an agency of the UN and its member countries.

"Through the guidelines we can begin a dialogue with national policy makers, legislators, politicians, media and social movements to negotiate and defend the rights of fisherfolk. There is a hope raised and we all can claim the adoption of the guidelines as a victory for SSF and an example of the importance of collective efforts," says Herman Kumara, National Convener National Fisheries Solidarity Movement in Sri Lanka and WFFP co-ordinator.

The Guidelines have as its main objective to

continued on page 12



Delegates gather at a meeting of Committee on Fisheries in Rome this year, to discuss the International Guidelines.

According to Naseegh Jaffer, National Director of Masfundise and Co-ordinator of the WFFP, the Voluntary Guidelines secure fundamental human rights for small-scale fishers all over the world, because it was adopted by governments at the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations (UN). It now has to be implemented in member countries.

Jaffer says an implementation and evaluation strategy will be developed in December at the next Committee on Fisheries (COFI) meeting.

Small-Scale Fisheries contribute about half, and sometimes up to two thirds of global fish catches destined for direct human consumption. Because of this, (FAO) considered it important that the sector be protected.

The idea of the Voluntary Guidelines was first mooted in Bangkok in 2008 at the Global Conference on Small-Scale Fishing. WFFP then put pressure on FAO to develop the guidelines and to involve the sector in the process.

"The Indonesian Fisherfolk Union (SNI)

the guidelines, and at each COFI meeting we had preparation workshops to develop strategies to get governments to support the guidelines. FAO also held expert workshops

Chandrika always in our memory

Six months after Malaysian flight MH370 went missing, the energy and dedication of Chandrika Sharma still resonates powerfully across the world.

She was a key driver in the formulation, development and adoption of the International Guideline on small-scale fishers. Chandrika led the civil society participation in the negotiations for the International Guidelines with distinction, over many years.



The mystery around the March 8 disappearance of the plane with Chandrika and 238 others on board remains unsolved. In the circumstances, her family, friends and comrades are unable to find closure. But the momentum of her tireless work and dedication to human rights for small-scale fishing communities forges ahead in the present.

As the General Assembly gathers, we recall her boundless energy, her sharp intellect, her capacity for research, her relentless advocacy, her warmth, her kindness, her ability to bring people together and her quiet humility.

Dr Seth Macinko keynote speaker at General Assembly

Seth Macinko teaches courses in fisheries law and management in the Department of Marine Affairs at the University of Rhode Island (USA) where he is an associate professor. He has served on the Scientific and Statistical Committee of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (which manages the fisheries off Alaska) since 1996. He has published widely on proposals to introduce so-called property rights into fisheries and on the impacts of contemporary management trends on fishing communities. He earned his PhD at the University of California, Berkeley.



Before becoming an academic, Macinko used to fish commercially in Alaska, and remembers when he began hearing about individual quota programs in 1980. Since then, interest has built worldwide, and now, he says, the individual transferable quota system is the reigning orthodoxy in fisheries management. "The logic is that ownership creates stewardship," he underlines but the proponents of these privatisation schemes are "confusing management with ownership. Under any ownership regime you still have to manage wisely."

Voices from the Coast

South African fisherfolk and activists speak on the General Assembly, Ocean Grabbing, solidarity and the sharing of knowledge.



ISRAEL MBHELE KWAZULU-NATAL, ON THE INTERNATIONAL GUIDELINES AND THE GA

For us small scale-fishers in South Africa, we feel great about the world coming to our shores. For many years we have operated under the apartheid government, and even now we do not have full rights to sustain our livelihood, the international guidelines is a tool that will free and help us move away from poverty and give us ideas and direction on how to sustain our livelihoods. The WFFP GA has put us on the world map, it is an eye opener, a platform where we can share thoughts and talk about how we live with other fishers from around the world.



ZINGISA LUDUDE EASTERN CAPE -ON INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY AND OCEAN GRABBING

Sharing ideas with other people who somehow share a common goal or interest is important as solutions to problems can come about. Small-Scale fishers have no access to land, our rights are taken away, we have no income and we are poverty stricken – talking about the effects of Ocean grabbing is important for us – it is important because it is negatively affecting how we live. Let's share knowledge and our experiences.



SARAH NIEMAND WESTERN CAPE – ON WELCOMING THE DELEGATES

We welcome all the people, we are glad that you've made it this far. We learn from each other and we hope that discussions,

sharing of ideas and solutions about issues faced by small-scale fisher men and women around the world help us move forward. Touching on the role of women in fisheries- we have to support and empower women as they are important in the sector.



NORTON DOWRIES WESTERN CAPE - ON OCEAN GRABBING AND SOLIDARITY

Ocean Grabbing is a serious issue. People are destroying habitat and overfishing. People are uninformed about issues and they need to be informed. We have to act accordingly, we need to combat ocean grabbing as it is destroying our livelihoods, and we as small-scale fishers we want to protect our resources. International solidarity means we can learn and help each other with issues that are related to small- scale fishers all over the world; we will find solutions and talk with a united voice.



MICHELLE JOSHUA WFFP GA ORGANISER – ON WELCOMING THE GUESTS

WFFP members and conference participants- we've welcomed you to the WFFP 6th GA and to our beautiful country. The GA programme has been designed for you to engage with, share and receive information and for you to gain new insights on how to better serve your constituency. I am pleased to meet and engage with fisher folk on issues that influence their lives, seeing and hearing how they live and hear how the work of WFFP has managed to better livelihoods.

Ocean Grabbing – a worldwide threat

In an address to the United Nations General Assembly in 2012, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Olivier De Schutter, spoke about the major threat “Ocean Grabbing” poses to small-scale fishers. For the first time, the UN used a term which progressive movements had used for years. But little has been done to unpack its meaning, understand its scope and assess its impact. In this story, we explain what Ocean Grabbing is.

Ocean Grabbing is not confined to the oceans – as the term may suggest. It is essentially about the grabbing of marine and land natural resources that small-scale fishers depend on for their livelihoods and food sovereignty. Food sovereignty means peoples’ democratic control over the production, processing, marketing and consuming of food. In the case of fisheries, it relates to all types of food that is harvested, caught or produced by people from the fishing communities. The grabbed resources include fish, shellfish, seaweed and other plants and animals harvested or caught from oceans, rivers and lakes. Ocean Grabbing affects both inland and coastal communities.

Before the ‘grabbing’ takes place, the small-scale fishing communities have reasonable access to and control over natural resources. This often includes traditional forms of ownership and long established rules for controlling and managing these resources. Rich and politically powerful companies and people use their connections, their enormous financial capital and even violence to ‘grab’ the natural resources. In this process, all democratic practices are abandoned and fishing communities become oppressed by political and economic elites. Traditional fishers are displaced and denied access to sea and land. Cultures, traditions and lives are lost.

In Ecuador, 70 percent of the country’s original 360 000 hectares of mangroves have been grabbed by the corporate shrimp farmers, the tourism industry and other actors, resulting in the displacement of tens of thousands of

fishers. Mr Lider Gongora from C-CONDEM, the Ecuadorian member of the WFFP explains that “the estuary has become a war zone, and shrimp farmers even use packs of dogs and armed militias to protect their farms”.

Typically, the ‘grabbers’ are national and transnational companies, rich individuals or nation states seeking to exploit natural resources for their own profit. There is usually little respect for people or nature. Actions include the grabbing of fish stocks, coastal land for tourism projects and large-scale industrial agriculture and coastal zones for sea bed mining, oil drilling and other extractive industries. There has also been the destruction of mangrove forests for industrial shrimp farming, the appropriation of land areas for coal or nuclear power-plants as well as river areas for the construction of large-scale hydro-power dams.

In Bangladesh, there is an increasing demand for electricity. In response, the government has developed a coal-power plant just north of the world’s largest mangrove forest, the Sunderbans. The project is run by state-owned energy companies from India and Bangladesh, and there has been no real consultation with people who will suffer from pollution. Mr Mujibul Haque Munir, co-ordinator of the Bangladesh Fish Workers Alliance and member of the WFFP warns that “flooding will be more frequent and make more coastal land unsuitable for farming. Also, salt-water intrusion in freshwater supplies will lead to shortages of drinking water”. All of this will negatively affect the five million people living in the Sunderbans area.

The grabbing of the natural resources is made possible by the neo-liberal policies pursued and agreed to by nation-states around the world. Some of these policies take the form of trade and investment agreements between two or more states. It is through these kinds of agreements that foreign companies, states or



Overfishing along the West Coast of Africa

individuals manage to grab resources around the world. In today’s entrenched global neo-liberal system, it is clear that decision-makers in the Global South and North increasingly align themselves with the interests of national and transnational corporations. Together this alliance dictates national and international policies and agreements behind closed doors, without meaningful participation of social movements.

In the Kalpitya peninsula of Sri Lanka, 2 500 families have been evicted from their land to make way possible holiday resorts and five star hotels. The convener of the National Fisheries Solidarity Movement, Herman Kumara, observes that “the political consciousness of fisher people is on the rise and this of greatest importance in the struggle against the grabbing of the land and the sea.”

Yet, it is important to underline, that national governments – or sovereign states – have the right to reject policies and agreements leading to Ocean Grabbing and instead pursue people-centred policies that build on the principle of social, economic and environmental justice.

To counter Ocean Grabbing – and enforce democratic control and food sovereignty – we need to hold our own decision-makers accountable and enforce a radical shift in policy orientation. Our own governments – from local to national level – can make this possible, but only if we mobilise and fight back against this full frontal attack on our communities and way of life.

See the Ocean Grabbing report for more information. Visit: www.worldfishers.org or request a copy from Masifundise.



Ocean Grabbing brings suffering to small-scale fishing communities



WFFP Member Organisations

Coastal Association for Social Transformation Trust

The Coastal Association for Social Transformation in Bangladesh started as an NGO in 1998, in the southern part of Bhola island, in one of the world's most dangerous cyclone zones. It mainly focuses on the poor, experiential learning, equality, economics, respect to own culture, gender equality, right to participation in decision-making, and governance, environment & diversity, as it relates to fisherfolk.

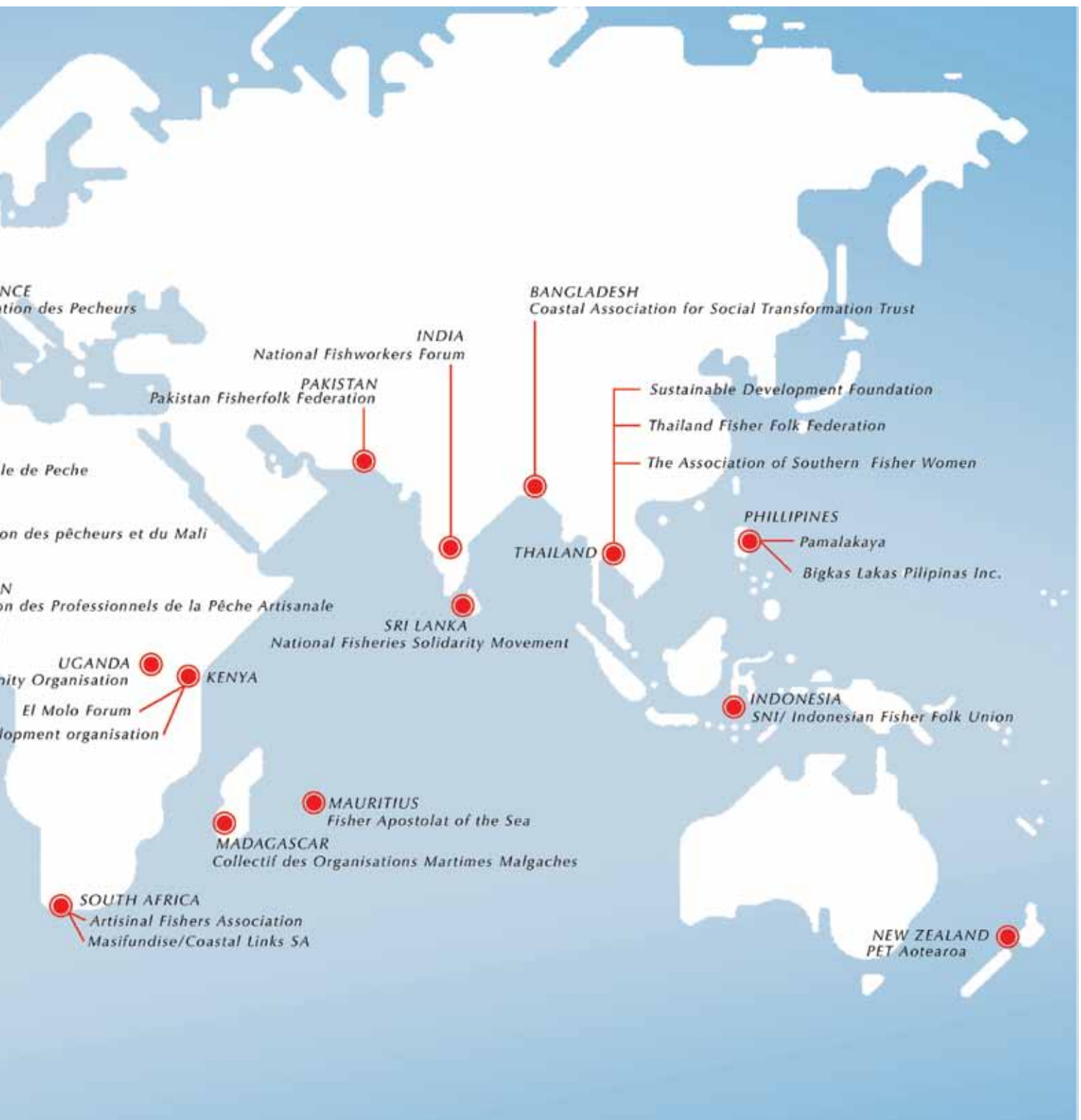
Bear River First Nation

The Bear River First Nation (BRFN), a Canadian Indigenous People, have their own vision for a food and livelihood fishery based on a long historical relationship to the natural world premised on respect and self-sufficiency, to avoid hunger and sickness for all people. The BRFN opposes the Individual Transfer Quota system (ITQs) being imposed on the scallop and most of the ground fisheries, because it has become

clear to the BRFN that these fishing agreements serve only to integrate First Nations into a commodification process, and thereby watering down "treaty rights" signed between Indigenous people and the Canadian government.

C-CONDEM

The C-CONDEM from Ecuador, was formed on July 26, 1998, during an international campaign organised by FUNDECOL in Muisne, in response to the destruction of the mangrove ecosystem. In the 1980s, middens, crabbers, fishermen and clam and oyster harvesters in the province of El Oro tried to stop the aggressive incursion of the shrimp industry. C-Condem has also carried out



reforestation work and has restored hundreds of acres of mangrove swamp.

Pakistan Fisherfolk Federation

The Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum, a non-governmental organisation was formed on May 5, 1998, and is based in Karachi. It works in the interest of fisherfolk's social, economic, cultural and political rights, and target a wide range of issues which are directly or indirectly associated with about four million fishers in Pakistan.

Pamalakaya

Pamalakaya (National Federation of Small Fisherfolk Organization in the Philippines), is an alliance of activist

fisherfolk groups, with over 100 000 members, and was formed on December 7, 1997. Pamalakaya maintains regional chapters and offices in Central Luzon, Southern Tagalog, Bicol, Eastern Visayas, Central Visayas, Negros Island, Panay and Guimaras, Far South Mindanao and Northern Mindanao.

Masifundise

Masifundise was formed in 1980, with its main focus on literacy, information and educational programmes with the overall aim to end apartheid. In 2004, Masifundise made a strategic shift to only work with fishing communities and aiding them in their struggle for a sustainable living and building a sustainable fishery that

will benefit them and their descendants into the future. Masifundise and Coastal Links (fisherfolk organisation) were instrumental in the development of the country's small-scale fisheries policy. Masifundise and Coastal Links do extensive advocacy and empowerment work and represent about 5 000 fishers countrywide.

Sri Lankan National Fisheries Solidarity Movement (NAFSO)

Sri Lanka National Fisheries Solidarity Movement (NAFSO) is a fisher people-based movement fighting for human rights, sustainable development, and peace across Sri Lanka, and was launched in 1993. NAFSO currently has about 12,000 members, including small-

WFFP Member Organisations continued

scale artisanal fishers as well as agricultural and industrial workers. The group partners with 17 other groups in local and national campaigns for food sovereignty, land rights, education, and women's empowerment.

Sustainable Development Foundation

The Sustainable Development Foundation (SDF) in Thailand is a national organisation that empowers NGO's and organisations at local, provincial and national level to promote and advocate for human rights and the development of transparent public policies on natural resource management. Collectif des Organisations Maritimes

Malgaches

The Collectif des Organisations Maritimes Malgaches, (Collective for the DEFENSE of the Land of MALAGASY) in Madagascar was formed to defend the land and natural resources of Madagascar and to support citizens and farmers in their development and their struggles.

Penang Inshore Fisherfolk Federation

The Penang Inshore Fishermen Welfare Association (PIFWA) of Malaysia, was formed in 1994 in response to the growing coastal development which limited fishers' access to the sea and the growing fish resource depletion in Malaysia. PIFWA promotes traditional and sustainable fishing practices and prudent management of the coastal environments, mangrove habitats, and river ecosystems. PIFWA ran a campaign to replant mangrove trees, and they replanted mangroves in many of the cleared coastal areas. The 2004 tsunami taught Malaysians the importance of conserving the natural environment, when areas protected by the PIFWA replanted mangrove forest were undamaged or experienced less destruction.

Association Familale Maritime

The Association Familale Maritime is a voluntary membership organisation that was formed in 1998 in St Martinique and operates in the cities of Rouen and le Havre. It is driven by the values of solidarity and intervenes with families and elderly people.

Federation Nationale de Peche,

The Fédération Nationale de la Pêche of France, was founded in 2007, and coordinates the activities of associations, departmental federations and regional unions. It is politically independent and works in partnership with several bodies

and organisations. It is a member of all the bodies involved in the protection of aquatic environments: Comité National de l'Eau, Comités de Bassin, Agences de l'Eau, and it works actively with local authorities, professional groups, trade unions and scientific or educational bodies.

Fisher Apostolat of the Sea

The Apostleship of the Sea is a Catholic charity supporting seafarers worldwide, was founded in Glasgow in 1922, and provides practical and pastoral care to all seafarers, regardless of nationality, belief or race, working in more than 250 ports around the world.

National Fishworkers Forum (NFF)

The National Fishworkers' Forum (NFF) is the only national federation of state level small and traditional fish workers' unions of India. NFF has affiliated organisations in all the coastal states and union territories of the Indian mainland. NFF fights to protect the life and livelihood of the fishing communities and its basic source - fisheries resources, biodiversity and natural environment. NFF, as a major partner, is associated with the international movement of the fishing communities led by World Forum of Fisher Peoples (WFFP)

The Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organisations

The Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organisations "CNFO" is a network of fisherfolk organizations and includes groups from Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, the Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

The formation of the CNFO, which started in 2003, is still ongoing, dependent on the formation fisherfolk organisations in member countries, and up to now, most national fisher folk organisations have been launched, and steering committees have been set up in others to work towards the launch of national fisherfolk organisations.

Uganda Fisheries and Fish Conservation Association (UFFCA).

Uganda Fisheries and Fish Conservation Association (UFFCA) is a development and advocacy non-government organization (NGO) founded in October. UFFCA is a national collective of community-based fisheries-related organisations working for the concerns, needs and strategic interests and aspirations of over 2.5 million lake-dependent communities throughout Uganda.

Association des Pecheurs

The Association des Pecheurs of France is a non-profit organisation that promotes and strengthens bonds of friendship and mutual support, and security between the port users of the city Locquirec. It also works for the protection of the maritime resource, and is actively working with management agencies in ports, and tries to find solutions to the problems of fishermen and boaters.

Association de pecheurs du Sud Basse

The Association de Pecheurs du Sud Basse of Guadelupe is concerned with defending, encouraging and promoting the interests of fishermen, and is actively involved in all forms of study, expertise, promotions and outreach related to general fishing.

Union Nationale Des Pecheurs UNPAG

Union Nationale des Pecheurs (UNPAG) is a small scale fishing organisation representing small scale fishers in Guinea. When in 2004, the Government of Guinea withdrew from the sector and cut its support to small-scale fishing, Unpag set up the Mutuelle d'épargne et de crédit des pêcheurs artisans de Guinée (MÉCREPAG) in 2006. This microfinance institution is officially registered and recognised by the Central Bank of Guinea. Since it opened, millions of small-scale fishers in Guinea had access to proximity credit with reasonable interest rates.

CODDEFFAGOLF

The Committee for the Defence and Development of Flora and Fauna of the Gulf of Fonseca in Honduras was created on March 26, 1988, through a meeting of fishermen, small farmers and farmers in Valle and Choluteca.

The organization is known by its acronym "CODDEFFAGOLF" and was established as an NGO. The organisation defends the coastal marine resources and associated ecosystems and supports and contributes to the development of communities living in these villages and communities of the coastal areas on the Gulf of Fonseca.

El Molo Forum – Kenya

The El Molo Forum of Kenya was established in 2003 and registered as a trust in 2005 to confront issues of marginalisation and discrimination of indigenous people in Northern Kenya, specifically the El Molo people - a small minority group living on the eastern shores of Lake Turkana.

The El Molo live off fishing and one of the smallest and most underprivileged communities in Kenya; their language

is almost extinct, illiteracy levels are very high, and access to services such as healthcare, is severely limited. The El Molo Forum engages in advocacy work for the attainment and enjoyment of the rights of indigenous peoples and the rights of women in Northern Kenya and beyond, and is actively involved in advocacy work for climate and environmental justice.

SNI/Indonesian Fisherfolk Union

The Indonesian Fisherfolk Union (SNI), is waging a struggle against neo-liberal and free market policies that threatens the food sovereignty and the self-esteem of the Indonesian artisanal fisherfolk.

SNI actively fights, lobbies and advocates for a subsidy to strengthen the local industry, the artisanal fishers' right to municipal waters, programmes that address the needs of local fishing communities, equal opportunities for women, and to stop the destructive programme of aquaculture.

The Budalangi Health and Development Organisation

The Budalangi Health and Development Organisation (BUHEDE), was founded in 2001 as a strategic nation NGO to coordinate the struggle against poverty and injustice and to empower the rural fisher people of Budalangi through sustainable poverty alleviation programmes that effectively deliver social, economic and environmental benefits.

BUHEDE advance human achievement, lobby and advocate for gender equity, offer education support for children orphaned by HIV/Aids and develop education initiatives. Collectif National des Pecheurs Artisanale, Senegal

Galatia

Was established in 1987 and, it has 7 500 paying members, or represents 15% of the Senegalese artisanal fishermen. CNPS is as an apolitical and non-denominational organisation of artisanal fishers.

CNPS works in a spirit of openness and tolerance and focuses on the rights of fishermen, improved living conditions and safety at sea.

AGAMAR/Association Galega de uartsaradas

AGAMAR (Asociacion Galega de Mariscadoras/es) is a Spanish state level association that was created in 1998 with the aim of bringing together all the shellfish workers of Galicia to get a common voice dedicated to achieving the objectives of the sector, through the articulation of diverse lines of action.

<http://www.agamar.es/en/>

A Lifetime of service

Father Thomas Kocherry

International activist, **Father Thomas Kocherry**, who died in May this year, was an ordained priest, had a law and science degree and lived a remarkable life of struggle and service.

A leading light in the World Forum of Fisher Peoples, Kocherry ended up behind bars no fewer than 16 times as a result of his tireless dedication to the cause of the poor.

He was a union leader, an anti-nuclear activist and spent long periods working in underdeveloped villages.

Kocherry was born on 10 May 1940, to Vavachan and Aleyamma Kocher. The fifth of eleven children, Kocherry grew up in the Kerala region, where poor fisherfolk used small boats to eke out a living from the fresh waters near the Indian Ocean.

He studied for a bachelor's degree at St Berchmans College Changanacherry, and graduated with a law and science degree.

In 1971, at the age of 31, he was ordained as a priest, and began his priestly life in the northern states of India.

Early influences in his adult life were the church and the radical left movement, which put him on a path to serve the poor of this world for the rest of his life.

In the 70s he helped to set up the Kerala Independent Fishworkers Federation, and by 1982, Kocherry was elected president of the National Fishworkers Forum (NFF) of India.

In 1981, Kocherry and a fellow leader of the fishworkers embarked on a 11 day fast in favour of a Monsoon ban, (breeding season of many fish), in Kerala, and got arrested on trumped-up charges.

In the 1990s, Kocherry led the fish workers of India in a major campaign against the opening up of the Indian fishing industry to foreign trawlers. The militant campaign forced the government to back down, a significant victory to the fishers.

He believed in bottom up movements. "The challenge is to create an evolving revolutionary structure that never becomes institutionalised or ossified by power," he once said.

Kocherry became instrumental in organising fish workers on a global scale, and he was a key driver in the launch of the WFFP in India in 1997. In 1998 the UN

awarded him the 'Earth Trustee' title for his efforts to establish the WFFP. In 1999, he received the Sophie Prize for contributions to the struggle of the poor from the Sophie foundation in Oslo, Sweden.

Soon after, he began to work in a small fishing village called Poothura near Thiruvananthapuram, where middlemen of a politically well-connected family used their political-clout to keep the fishers on the edge of starvation. He taught the fishers to read and write, so that they could fight their battles.

After four heart attacks, innumerable fasts and 16 stints in jail, he showed no sign of slowing down. His last target was the controversial Kudankulam nuclear plant in Tamil Nadu. The campaign has mobilised local villagers and activists from across the country.

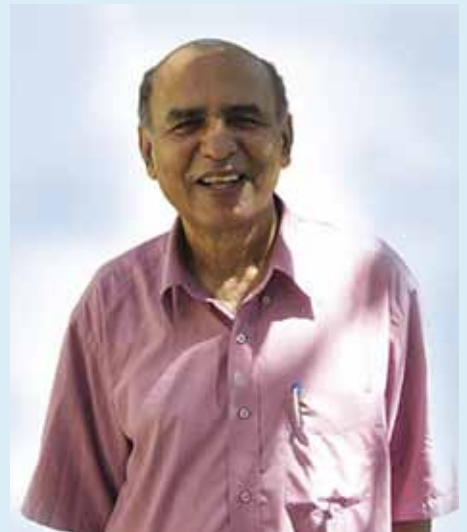
Kocherry was a true internationalist. Herman Kumara from the National Fisheries Solidarity (NAFSO) in Sri Lanka, fondly remembers Kocherry as someone who always criticised corporate globalisation.

"In 2006 at the Saranapala de Silva Felicitation Ceremony in Sri Lanka, Fr Tom said globalisation began 500 years ago when Europe was over populated and they travelled to the east. So the globalisation today is the free flow of capital while restricting labour free movement," says Kumara

He had a strong commitment to trade unions and the struggle of the working class, and told workers in Sri Lanka in 2009: "We represent the workers interest. We have only one way to survive, and it is to fight as trade unions, unionising all the working class together."

He ended off his Sophie Prize acceptance speech in 1999 in Sweden with these profound words: "The life of the planet and the dependent health and welfare of humanity must not be sacrificed to the greed of the few."

In a tribute after his death, the WFFP saluted the veteran activist. "All his international work reflected the life of the poor. We in the WFFP can attest to this and we value this personal attribute that he instilled in our organisation".



Outpourings on social media following Kocherry's death on 2 May 2014 reflect the esteem in which he was held across the world. Here are just a few examples.

Maju Varghese: My final salutes to Thomas Kocherry. Joining the millions in celebrating his life and struggle. He was representative of the voice of fishers in the struggle for saving life and saving water. From Anjengo to the Kanyakumari March, from Mumbai to Vishakapattanam, from Seattle to the Occupation Movement, his words and action shook the powerful...

Prasad Chacko: A true revolutionary.... unrelenting spirit and strength with which he led struggles for justice....that inspired a generation...Laal Salaam Comrade Tom Vijayan Mj: Leaving for Thiruvananthapuram, to join thousands of friends and comrades of Fr. Thomas Kocherry, to bid farewell to our dearest Tom Achen.... Never wanted to do this journey. Never... never! Laal Salam Tom...

Geevarghese Coorilos: We have lost yet another prophetic voice. I remember with gratitude the many challenging encounters I have had with Kocherry Achan. His leadership of people's movements for justice particularly that of the fisher folk communities has been prophetic and revolutionary



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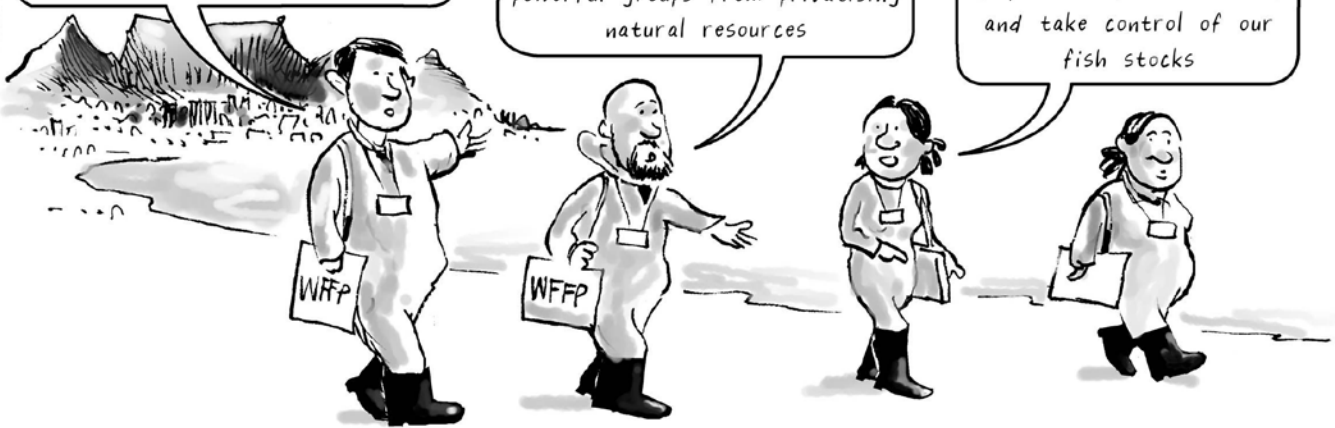
- 1. WFFP General Assembly, Sri Lanka, 2007
- 2. A march of small-scale fishers in Uganda
- 3. Small-scale fishers march for their rights in Cape Town, South Africa, 2004
- 4. A march in support of small-scale fishing rights, in Indonesia
- 5. Sri Lanka General Assembly
- 6. Thomas Kocherry at a march in Hong Kong
- 7. WFFP co-ordinators Naseegh Jaffer and Sherry Pictou

school of FISHERS

It is great for so many of us to gather here in Cape Town. The WFFP unites fisher communities from around the world!

This discussion about Ocean Grabbing is important. You see Dev, we have to stop rich and powerful groups from privatising natural resources

I fully agree Nakrop! They just come along and destroy our vegetation, displace us from our land and take control of our fish stocks



It's the same across Africa. Rivers are taken over for dams and land privatised for tourism. What should we do Elisa?

I think we must build strong local organisations and speak as one voice. We need to assert our rights to sustainable livelihoods. Also we have to build solidarity at country, continent and global level



Yes, we must make our voices heard in support of the International Guidelines for small-scale fishers

It is important that the guidelines are understood and adopted everywhere



Assert our rights! Restore our dignity!!!



continued from page 3

secure sustainable small scale fisheries to contribute to the struggle for food security and poverty eradication, and has been developed as a complement to the 1995 FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF).

The Guidelines also support the responsible governance of fisheries, and sustainable social and economic development, with special emphasis on vulnerable and marginalised people, and promoting a human rights based approach.

The Guidelines recognise that small scale fisheries represent a diverse and dynamic subsector in the fishing industry, often characterised by seasonal migration, both internal and across national boundaries. It also recognises that small scale fisheries are anchored in local communities, often with strong historical links to adjacent fishery resources, traditions and values.



Small-scale fishing communities often find themselves at odds with government agencies, especially those concerned with tourism, conservation and fisheries, because they do not have tenure rights, forcing local fisherfolk off land, on the pretence conserving nature or the fishing resource, or to make way for tourism, a big money spinner, or, just push them off the land and away from the ocean, to make way for the bigger players in the industry.

Government agencies and departments tend to make laws and adopt legislation that are often at odds with the traditional way of life of small scale fishing communities, and how they make a living. This is mostly done without consulting local fishing, indigenous and marginalised communities.

Jaffer says positives for small scale fishing communities in the voluntary guidelines are that it mainstreams women and other marginalised communities like indigenous people, the disabled and the aged.

“It gives protection to the livelihoods of small scale fishing communities in legislation, and it can't be taken away, and it brings opportunities for social development and advancement”, says Jaffer.

Jaffer also emphasise that small scale fishers are now guaranteed better labour and working conditions, child care rights, and other rights like the right to housing and the right to tenure.

Jorge Varela, Executive Director of the Asociacion De Pescadores Artesanales Del Golfo De Fonseca (Apagolf) in Honduras and co-ordinator of WFFP, is sceptical about his government's intentions. “They are more interested to implement neoliberal policies than social and environmental laws. The guidelines are socio-environmental,” he says.

In the Caribbean countries, however, governments have agreed to develop supporting legislation. In South Africa a small-scale fisheries policy has been adopted that is similar to the Voluntary Guidelines.

“Since South Africa has already developed its own SSF Policy, we should look at encouraging SADC to also look at developing regional legislation for the implementation of the Guidelines,” says Jaffer.

Jaffer believes that there is only one drawback to the guidelines and that is that it is voluntary, and that he would have liked it to be compulsory on all governments to implement.

FACTS ABOUT FISHERIES AROUND THE WORLD

Africa:

According to the FAO, most commercially exploited fish stocks are at the limit of sustainable exploitation, with a third of stocks overexploited. Some estimates place the overexploitation figure even higher.

Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) activity is a major obstacle to sustainable management. The most widely cited estimates put the value of the IUU catch at US\$10 billion to US\$23.5 billion. Most of this catch occurs not on the high seas but in coastal waters under national jurisdiction.

Sub-Saharan Africa is estimated to lose around US\$1 billion annually. African coastal waters contain some of the world's most prized fishery assets. The Gulf of Guinea and coastal waters off East Africa include some of the world's richest tuna fishing grounds. According to the FAO, half of the fish stocks off the West Coast of Africa are overexploited.

Africa Progress Report on Fish, Food and Money 2014, (Financing Africa's Blue Revolution), Africa Progress Panel

The small-scale fisheries sector, including fishing and fish farming, is estimated to employ some 37 million people, of whom around 90% are in Asia. An additional 100 million people are estimated to find employment in associated activities.

South America:

The highly productive coastal fisheries of the region, together with the major riverine/estuarine system of the Amazon basin, and a range of lesser river systems, lakes and wetlands, provide a massive resource which is largely used by a diverse range of small-scale fisheries. A mix of artisanal and small commercial fisheries is involved, with a wide diversity of ecosystem conditions, fish and shellfish species, catching methods, markets and management features.

Europe:

A range of small-scale fisheries can be observed in the region, with a number of highly valued species related to particular fleets and fishing methods. The sector displays a mix of traditional rights and co-operative fishing in coastal areas, often seasonal or part-time, and in some areas considerable capitalization and capacity development in the small commercial sectors.

Asia

By far the most populous region of the world, with the greatest fisheries and aquaculture outputs and the largest markets for fishery products, the Asian region is also the most important in terms of small-scale fisheries employment, output and economic value. <http://www.fao.org/fishery/ssf/world/en>

Ocean Grabbing:

The term ‘ocean-grabbing’ – in the shape of shady access agreements, unreported catch, incursions into protected waters, and the diversion of resources away from local populations – can be as serious a threat as ‘land-grabbing’. Research estimates that ‘ocean-grabbing’ across the world costs between 10 billion US dollars and 23.5 billion US dollars per year, representing between 11 and 12 million tons of fish

<http://www.africanfisheries.org/news/fisheries-lose-billions-due-illegal-practices>

Fishing continues to be recognized as one, if not the most, hazardous occupation in the world. In 1999, it was estimated that there were 24 000 deaths annually, the large majority of these on board small vessels.

It has been estimated that there were some 4 million fishing vessels operated globally, 1.3 million decked vessels, of which probably 96 percent were less than 24 m in length, and 2.7 million undecked vessels, of which at least 1.7 million were not mechanically powered, indicating the importance of taking action to improve safety of these smaller vessels.

Implementation Guidelines on Part B of the Code, the Voluntary Guidelines and the Safety Recommendations. <http://www.fao.org/3/65975d14-36b0-5754-bfc8-852d45a8f148/i3662e.pdf>



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