

Fisheries training

Towards participatory management

A forthcoming training programme in the Netherlands offers an opportunity to learn about successful participatory fisheries management

In most parts of the world, the mandate to manage aquatic resources has, in the past centuries, been placed in the hands of the government. For decades, a top-down approach was followed. The track record of this approach in both developed and developing countries is a mixture of some successes and many failures (or something in between). The growing pressure on aquatic resources, resulting from technological developments, expanding fleets, increased coastal populations as well as claims from other users of the coastal area, has made fisheries management more complex.

In the past decade, the realization has spread that natural resource management can only seldom be undertaken by central or local governments alone. Especially in developing countries, government departments often lack the staff and resources needed to manage fisheries effectively, particularly of small-scale fishers, who are more numerous, more widespread and remote, and are often more difficult to monitor and control.

It is also increasingly realized that compliance is better when those expected to obey the rules have a say in their creation. Combining the knowledge, skills and expertise of both government staff and fishers has, in many places, led to a better management set-up. Fisher organizations and their supporters are increasingly willing to play a role in resource management, but cooperation (co-management) between parties that had a tense relationship in the recent past does not come overnight. Possible obstacles are wide differences in educational background, experience, culture and understanding of natural processes as well as a reluctance to share

power. An enabling legal framework is necessary, but often not in place.

The training programme *Towards Participatory Fisheries Management* of the International Agricultural Centre (IAC) is designed to discuss these issues and the various approaches to fisheries management. The programme will be held from October 4 to November 19, 2004, in Wageningen, the Netherlands, and consists of two courses that are held in sequence.

The first course, *Fisheries Management: Perspectives, Information and Co-management*, (duration: three weeks), is more analytical in character and covers various approaches to fisheries management, analysis of catch and effort information and collaborative management (cases, lessons learned).

The second course, *Tools for Fisheries Management*, (duration: four weeks), is more practical in character and discusses the toolboxes available for fisheries managers and a number of methods to collect information from resource users. The sharing of participants' experiences is an important component of the course.

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The training programme is open for staff of NGOs and government agencies involved in fisheries planning and policy making, researchers and lecturers working in the field of fisheries management, programme officers responsible for the implementation and monitoring of fisheries management and development projects, staff involved in capacity-building activities in fishing communities and leaders of fisher organizations. Requirements are: competence in the English language, an educational background at the B.Sc. level



in a relevant field and several years of work experience.

More information and application forms can be requested from: The International Agricultural Centre (IAC), PO Box 88, 6700 AB Wageningen, Netherlands (email: training.iac@wur.nl, website: www.iac.wur.nl)

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