

ECUADOR

## New law

On 17 February 2009, the National Assembly of Ecuador approved a Bill on food sovereignty, which aimed to ensure self-sufficiency in healthy, nutritious and culturally appropriate food for the people of the country. But the process received a setback on 20 March, when President Rafael Correa blocked several of the provisions of the new law, one of which stipulated that illegally acquired lands in coastal areas, including mangrove forests, should be handed back to the State. This about-face is reportedly due to pressure from Ecuador's aquaculture lobby.

Despite the official recognition of the right to food as integral to the right to life and health, one in five Ecuadorian children still

suffer from malnutrition. The new law on food sovereignty was meant to address this contradiction. It was the outcome of the deliberations of a Food Sovereignty Commission, composed of public functionaries and civil

to address issues of land and rural development through a process of wide-ranging public consultation.

The new law specifies that lands illegally occupied, mainly by the aquaculture industry, should be handed back to the

parliamentarian, is evidence of the pressure and influence exercised by the shrimp lobby, which does not want the illegally occupied lands to revert to the State. "We must not allow this illegal activity to be regularized", Avila stated.

The new law defines food sovereignty as the "right of people to define their own food production, storage, distribution and consumption policies and strategies, in line with the right to adequate, healthy and nutritious food for the entire population, respecting their cultures and their diversity of food production methods, trade and the management of rural areas by *campesinos*, fishers and indigenous people, with women playing a fundamental role".

The main source of animal, vegetable, aquatic and fishery foods for food sovereignty should be from national production that is environmentally sustainable, inclusive and cross-cultural; with priority given to small- and medium-scale producers, so that dependence on external food supplies can be reduced. Artisanal fishing is defined as an activity "carried out by people using family labour, with low levels of investment, and generally undertaken in coastal areas and lakes".

Hopefully, the course of the next year will see the full institution of the new law and its provisions, particularly the restoration and rehabilitation of mangrove areas. Supporters of the new law say that the State should not give with one hand, and take back with the other.

For more:

Food Sovereignty website of Ecuador's National Assembly [http://asambleanacional.gov.ec/blogs/soberania\\_alimentaria/](http://asambleanacional.gov.ec/blogs/soberania_alimentaria/)  
C-CONDEM website <http://www.ccondem.org.ec/boletin.php?c=594>  
El Mercurio "Observaciones a ley de Soberania Alimentaria" 21/03/2009 [http://www.elmercurio.com.ec/web/titulares.php?seccion=LPdYzLB&codigo=9DyJgOO2xi&nuevo\\_mes=03&nuevo\\_ano=2009&dias=21-icias=2009-03-21](http://www.elmercurio.com.ec/web/titulares.php?seccion=LPdYzLB&codigo=9DyJgOO2xi&nuevo_mes=03&nuevo_ano=2009&dias=21-icias=2009-03-21)

—compiled by Brian O'Riordan



society representatives. The Commission was given a year to formulate legislation

State for the rehabilitation of mangrove areas. This, according to Abél Ávila, a

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ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

## Ecoceanos



Founded in 1998, the Ecoceanos Centre for Conservation and Sustainable Development is an independent civil society organization (CSO) based in Santiago de Chile, Chile. Its objectives include the conservation and sustainable management of coastal and oceanic ecosystems and resources; strengthening the informed and proactive participation of civil society in resource management; and the sustainable development of artisanal fishing and coastal communities and economies in the region.

Chile's economy and the well-being of its people depend highly on the freshwaters, marine resources and ecosystems along its 4,200-km coastline. Ecoceanos campaigns to raise awareness on marine issues, and to mobilize civil society in defence of sustainable and equitable development.

Ecoceanos functions at national, regional and international levels, and works closely with fishing, coastal and indigenous people's representatives. Over the last 10 years, Ecoceanos has campaigned against the privatization of fisheries and coastal resources through the implementation of the individual transferable quota (ITQ) system under the 2002 General Law on Fisheries and Aquaculture, and the transformation of the southern coastal areas into salmon enclaves.

In October 2008, the Presidential Decree that established the Chilean exclusive economic zone (EEZ) as a sanctuary for all whale species

was the outcome of a long Ecoceanos campaign, conducted with the National Confederation of Artisanal Fishers (Conapach) and with the Cetacean Conservation Centre (CCC). It resulted in popular support for an indefinite ban on hunting of all cetaceans in an area of 3.5 mn sq km in the Southeast Pacific.

A campaign in the Patagonian region, supported by artisanal fishing groups and CSOs, called for a moratorium on the expansion of salmon aquaculture and the grant of 1,170 new concessions in the Magellan region of southern Chile, so as to regulate the salmon farming industry and protect marine biodiversity, public health and the rights of coastal communities and artisanal fishers.

Ecoceanos is also pushing ahead with a campaign to regulate the Antarctic krill fishery, as part of the Antarctic Krill Campaign of the Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition (ASOC). The expanding krill fishery, targeted particularly by Norwegian companies, provides feed for Chile's growing salmon aquaculture sector.

Ecoceanos has also taken an active role in discussions aimed at establishing a new Regional Fisheries Management Organization (RMFO) for the South Pacific. In 2007, as part of its work with the Deep Sea Coalition, Ecoceanos helped secure a ban on bottom-trawling operations in the high seas of the Southeast Pacific.

For more: [www.ecoceanos.cl](http://www.ecoceanos.cl)

EXCERPTS

# The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture-2008 (SOFIA)

Excerpts from *The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture - 2008 (SOFIA)* from the Fisheries and Aquaculture Department of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO):

The total world fish production for 2006 was about 143.6 mn tonnes, of which 92 mn tonnes was from capture fisheries and 51.7 mn tonnes from aquaculture. Capture fish production decreased from 93.2 mn tonnes in 2002 to a peak of 94.6 mn tonnes in 2004, declining to 92 mn tonnes in 2006. The estimated first-hand value of global capture fisheries production amounted to US\$ 91.2 bn, representing a 4.5 per cent growth over the value recorded for 2005. Asia, contributing to over 52 per cent of the global capture fisheries production in 2006, has the largest share. The top 10 countries are China, Peru, United States of America, Indonesia, Japan, Chile, India, Russian Federation, Thailand and Philippines.

Marine capture fisheries production was about 82 mn tonnes in 2006, with China, Peru and United States of America remaining as top producing countries.

China remains by far the largest producer, with reported fisheries production of 51.5 mn tonnes in 2006, of which 17.1 mn tonnes is from capture fisheries and 34.4 mn tonnes is from aquaculture. Asian countries accounted for 52 per cent of the global capture production.

Aquaculture is also heavily dominated by the Asia-Pacific region, which accounts for 89 per cent of production in terms of quantity and 77 per cent in terms of value. Capture fisheries and aquaculture supplied the world with about 110 mn tonnes of food fish in 2006; of this, aquaculture accounted for 47 per cent. From a production of less than 1 mn tonnes in the early 1950s, production in 2006 was reported to have risen to 51.7 mn tonnes, with a value of US\$78.8 bn.

Freshwater environment contributes 58 per cent by quantity and 48 per cent by

value; marine environment contributes 34 per cent of production and 36 per cent of total value; and brackishwater production, while it represented only 8 per cent of production in 2006, it contributed 16 per cent of the total value, reflecting the prominence of high-value crustaceans and finfish. The top ten producers in terms of quantity are China, India,

But globally, the number of people engaged in capture fisheries declined by 12 per cent in the period 2001-06. The major increases in the total number have come from the development of aquaculture activities. In 2006, the estimated number of fish farmers are nearly 9 mn, with 94 per cent operating in Asia. This figure is indicative only, as some countries do not collect

that for each person employed in the primary sector, there could be four employed in the secondary sector (including fish processing, marketing and service industries), indicating employment of about 170 mn in the whole industry.

However, each jobholder, on average, provides for three dependents or family members; thus, taking account of dependents, about 520 mn people could be dependent on the sector, or nearly 7.9 per cent of the world population.

The number of fishing vessels powered by engines is estimated to have been about 2.1 mn in 2006, of which almost 70 per cent were concentrated in Asia. Almost 90 per cent of the motorized fishing vessels are less than 12 m long, particularly dominant in Africa, Asia and the Near East.

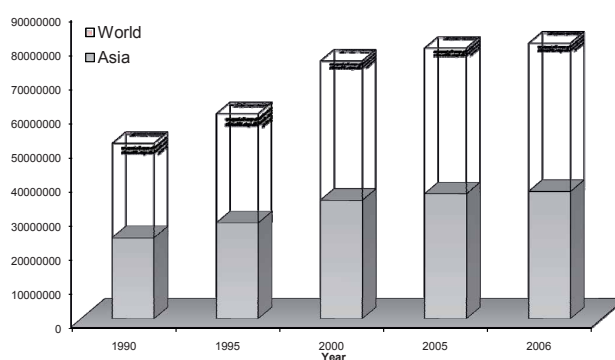
In 2007, about 28 per cent of the stocks were either overexploited (19 per cent), depleted (8 per cent) or recovering from depletion (1 per cent), and thus yielding less than their maximum potential owing to excess fishing pressure.

A further 52 per cent of stocks were fully exploited and therefore, producing catches that were at or close to their maximum sustainable limits, with no room for further expansion. Only about 20 per cent of stocks were moderately exploited or underexploited, with perhaps a possibility of producing more.

Most of the stocks of the top 10 species, which together account for about 30 per cent of world marine capture fisheries production in terms of quantity, are fully exploited or overexploited.

Fish and fishery products are highly traded, with more than 37 per cent (live weight equivalent) of total production entering international trade as various food and feed products. World exports of fish and fishery products reached US\$ 85.9 bn in 2006.

World Fishers and Fish Farmers



Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Chile, Japan, Norway and Philippines.

In 2006, an estimated 43.5 mn people were directly engaged, part-time or full-time, in primary production of fish either in capture from the wild or in aquaculture, and a further 4 mn people were engaged on an occasional basis (2.5 mn of these in India). They account for 3.2 per cent of the 1.37 bn people economically active in agriculture worldwide.

In the last three decades, employment in the primary fisheries and aquaculture sector has grown faster than the world's population and employment in traditional agriculture. Eighty-six per cent of fishers and fish farmers worldwide live in Asia, with China having the greatest numbers (8.1 mn fishers and 4.5 mn fish farmers). In 2006, the other countries with a significant number of fishers and fish farmers were India, Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam. Most fishers and fish farmers are small-scale, artisanal fishers, operating on coastal and inland fishery resources.

employment data separately for the two sectors, and some other countries' national systems do not yet account for fish farming.

While the number of people employed in fisheries and aquaculture has been growing steadily in most low-income and middle-income countries, employment in the sector has fallen or remained stationary in most industrialized economies. In 2006, the estimated number of fishers in industrialized countries was about 860,000 representing a decline of 24 per cent, compared with 1990.

In addition to fishers and fish farmers involved in direct primary production of fish, there are people involved in other ancillary activities, such as processing, net and gear making, ice production and supply, boat construction and maintenance, manufacturing of fish processing equipment, packaging, marketing and distribution.

Others are involved in research, development and administration connected with the fishery sector. No official data exist on the estimated numbers of people employed in these activities. It has been estimated

WEBSITE

## Voices from the Fisheries

<http://voices.nmfs.noaa.gov/index.html>

Oral history database documenting the human experience of the fisheries of the United States compiled by the National Marine Fisheries Services of the *National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration* (NOAA).

The Voices from the Fisheries Database is a central repository for consolidating, archiving, and disseminating oral history interviews related to commercial, recreational, and subsistence fishing in the United States and its territories. Each story archived here provides a unique example of this connection collected from fishermen, their spouses, processing workers, shoreside

business workers and operators, recreational and subsistence fishermen, scientists, marine resources managers, and others.

Separately, each history provides an in-depth view into the professional and personal lives of individual participants. Together, they have the power to illuminate common themes, issues and concerns across diverse fishing communities over time. The Voices from the Fisheries Database is a powerful resource available to the public to inform, educate, and provide primary information for researchers interested in local, human experience with the surrounding marine environment.

FLASHBACK

## Deal with hunger and poverty first

Coastal and indigenous fishing communities undoubtedly have a long-term stake in the protection and sustainable use of biodiversity, given their reliance on coastal and marine biodiversity for livelihoods and income. It should not, therefore, come as any surprise that several decades before issues of conservation and sustainability of coastal and marine resources became part of the international agenda, fishworkers in many countries of the developing world were drawing attention to, among other things, the negative impacts of pollution, uncontrolled expansion of industrial fisheries and aquaculture, and technologies such as bottom trawling for shrimp, both on coastal biodiversity and on their livelihoods.

Against this backdrop, the commitment by governments to significantly reduce the current rate of loss of marine and coastal biological diversity by 2012 can only be welcomed.



Equally to be welcomed is the stress on participation of indigenous and local communities, on protecting the preferential access of artisanal and small-scale fishworkers to traditional fishing grounds and resources, and on ensuring that the programme of work directly contributes to poverty alleviation.

For artisanal and small-scale fishworkers, this could well mean opportunities to address issues relevant to both their livelihoods and biodiversity protection. More concretely, it could mean an opportunity to draw attention to, and regulate, the pollution of inshore waters caused by effluents and tailings from industries, mining activities and fishmeal plants. It could mean the opportunity to strictly regulate bottom trawling, particularly in tropical, multispecies fisheries. It could mean opportunities to regulate the destruction and pollution caused by industrial forms of aquaculture. It could also mean that the initiatives taken by fishworkers to regulate and manage their resources are accorded due legal, institutional, financial and other forms of recognition.

All this will, however, remain in the realms of wishful thinking if governments do not put in place an enabling legal framework that recognizes, protects and strengthens the rights of coastal fishing communities to access and use biodiversity in a responsible manner, to pursue sustainable livelihoods and to participate in decision-making and resource management processes at all levels. The very real danger of imposing prefabricated models of marine protected areas, which do not take into account local histories and knowledge systems, needs to be avoided at all costs. There is enough available experience to indicate that non-participatory conservation initiatives, which do not draw on and recognize local knowledge and management initiatives, are counterproductive not only in terms of protection of biodiversity, but also from the point of view of avoiding further exacerbation of poverty in communities well known for their economic and social vulnerability. As celebrated Canadian geneticist and environmentalist David Suzuki stressed in his keynote presentation to COP7, "If we don't deal with hunger and poverty, we can forget the environment; people have other priorities".

—from the Comment in SAMUDRA Report No. 37, March 2004

BOOKSHELF

## Overfertilization of lakes

THE ALGAL BOWL: OVERFERTILIZATION OF THE WORLD'S FRESHWATERS AND ESTUARIES David W Schindler and John R Vallentyne, Earthscan, London. pbk. 334 pp. 2008. ISBN 978-1-84407-623-9

In this book, two of North America's leading water scientists have joined hands to focus on eutrophication—the overfertilization of lakes with nutrients and the consequent changes—and massive algae bloom. A follow-up to the first edition, titled "The Algal Bowl: Lakes and Man", the present work revises and updates the findings of the earlier, pathbreaking study. Five chapters of new research update scientific data, including the effect of eutrophication on

ocean estuaries.

Pointing to algal blooms and fish kills in lakes, the authors stress how the Algal Bowl can disrupt ecosystems, displace human populations and cause economic hardship, making potable freshwater and productive fisheries a thing of the past in many parts of the world.

Though focused mostly on North America, the book reveals the dangers of phosphates in freshwater systems anywhere in the world. Having explained the science behind eutrophication, the authors then go on to offer strategies and prescriptions to tackle the problem of protecting entire water systems from eutrophication and algal blooms.

VERBATIM

Fishing is no longer about catching what you can using a skill; it is about selectivity and technology. And that is why much of it has disappeared.

—MIKE SMYLLIE  
IN 'HERRING: A HISTORY OF THE SILVER DARLINGS'