

SMALL-SCALE FISHERIES

The Crisis of Small-scale Fishing in Latin America

Fishing is a risky activity per se. Hurricanes, storms, and rough waters are a constant hazard for the thousands of men and women whose livelihoods depend on the water. Yet political and economic forces on different levels currently present a more dramatic and far-reaching threat to small-scale fishing in the Global South. These forces constantly provoke territorial conflicts that make fishing waters a politically and ecologically turbulent terrain upon which multiple interests and actors collide.

On January 27, 2014, artisanal fishers and residents of the Chilean city of Arica waved black flags and marched throughout the city. They were “mourning the sea” after the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague redrew the Chile-Peru maritime border. After six years of dispute between these two countries over their maritime boundaries, the ICJ ruled in favor of Peru and granted it about 21,000 square

kilometers of ocean territory formerly claimed by Chile. The ICJ’s decision, however, was followed by political turmoil that made visible other problems artisanal fishers face today such as the monopoly of fishing companies, the scarcity of fish, and the precariousness of the labor conditions. As a result, the situation of Arica’s fishers has become illustrative of a broader crisis that also impairs artisanal fishing throughout Latin America.

For the fishers of Arica, the ICJ’s decision meant what many are referring to as the “death” of the sea, given that part of the maritime territory where hundreds of men and women subsisted for decades will no longer be available to them. Yet this geopolitical dispute was not the only cause of the general discontent in Arica. In an interview for Radio Universidad de Chile, Nelson Estrada, a member of Consejo Nacional de Defensa de la Pesca, pointed out that the real concern beyond

the loss of maritime territory is the so called ‘*Ley Longueira*’—a recently approved law that favors the monopoly of large-scale fishing companies. According to Estrada, the fishing communities of Arica are subordinated to the monopoly and control of prices established by the Angelini Group, a very powerful company that also invests largely in mining, timber, and natural gas.

This type of conflict between artisanal fishers and large-scale fishing companies has provoked multiple protests well beyond Chile. In February 2014, artisanal fishers of Bahía Blanca, Argentina, denounced the critical effects of fishing trawlers—large commercial fishing vessels that drag nets through the water, known for disrupting the ecosystems on the ocean floor—on small-scale fisheries and the sustainability of fish fauna. The Argentinian state ruled in favor of artisanal fishers by revoking the license of two major fishing trawlers. Yet in doing so, the state unleashed a new strike on the part of local workers and unions whose livelihoods rely

on the resource extraction of fishing trawlers.

The unbalanced and unfair competition between artisanal fishers and large-scale extractive companies is a part of a complex crisis in which the ecological sustainability of water is also at stake. The expansion of large-scale industries such as oil exploitation, for instance, is becoming a major source of water contamination in fishing territories. That is the case of the Argentine oil firm Pluspetrol, which is responsible for the contamination of rivers and the dramatic pollution of the Shanshacocha lake in the Peruvian Amazon.

Source: <http://globalvoiceonline.org/2014/08/14/the-crisis-of-small-scale-fishing-in-latin-america/>

50

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

Frysian Inland Fishers Union

Formed in 1891 by 16 local fisher groups in The Netherlands, the main objective of the Friese Bond van Binnenvissers (the Frysian Inland Fishers Union) is to protect the interests of its members through advocacy and negotiation with the national and provincial governments and the water management board. Currently, the union, which is affiliated to the National Association of Inland Fishers, has 14 enterprises as members.

Among its major activities are: distribution of fishing rights; engaging in responsible and participative fisheries management; working on social and cultural valorization; shortening the market chain

and ensuring high-quality fish products; and entrepreneurial development or capacity building.

The union rents fishing rights from the provincial government and distributes

FRYSLAN

them among its members. When a fisher retires without a son or daughter to succeed him, the union allots the newly available fishing rights.

Based on an European Union directive, The Netherlands government developed an eel management plan, which, through a three-month closure of the fishery, aims to restore the

stock through 40 per cent escapement of adult silver eels into spawning grounds.

Lobbying and political pressure from the National Association of Inland Fishers for an alternative eel management plan during 2009-2011 led to a pilot project for decentralized eel management in Fryslan.

Instead of a three-month closure, fishing was permitted throughout the year under annual quotas managed by the union.

These management measures were taken up in consultation with recreational fishers’ organizations. An eel reserve has been set up in collaboration with an environmental non-governmental organization (NGO).

The union has also collaborated with scientists to collect and record data on catch and fishing effort.

FORCED LABOUR

MSC statement on forced labour

The Marine Stewardship Council Board has issued a statement condemning the use of forced labour, and has agreed to include a clear policy on the issue of forced labour within the future requirements of MSC certification.

Companies which have been successfully prosecuted for forced labour violations in the last two years will be out of scope of the MSC programme and will be ineligible for MSC certification.

For fisheries, this amendment will be included in the MSC fisheries certification requirements to be released in October.

For Chain of Custody certification, this addition has been incorporated into the revised Chain of Custody certification requirements, which opened for public consultation on 1 August as part of the Chain of Custody Programme Review.

Source: www.worldfishing.net/news101/industry-news/msc-statement-on-forced-labour#sthash.zEzEKL4.dpuf

FISHERIES FACTS

Fishers and Fish Farmers

Many millions of people around the world find a source of income and livelihood in the fisheries and aquaculture sector. The most recent estimates indicate that 58.3 mn people were engaged in the primary sector of capture fisheries and aquaculture in 2012. Of these, 37 per cent were engaged full time, 23 per cent part-time, and the remainder were either occasional fishers or of unspecified status. In 2012, 84 per cent of all people employed in the fisheries and aquaculture sector were in Asia, followed by Africa (more than 10 per cent), and Latin America and the Caribbean (3.9 per cent). About 18.9 mn (more than 32 per cent of all people employed in the sector) were engaged in fish farming, concentrated primarily in Asia (more than 96 per cent), followed by Africa (1.6 per cent), and Latin America and the Caribbean (1.4 per cent).

In the period 2010–2012, at least 21 mn people (about 36 per cent of all those engaged in the overall sector) were capture fishers operating in inland waters, concentrated primarily in Asia (more than 84 per cent), followed by Africa (about 13 per cent). The above figures do not include people engaged in fish farming in inland waters as the employment statistics collected by FAO do not separate marine from freshwater aquaculture.

Historically (1990–2012), employment in the fisheries sector has grown faster than the world's population and than employment in the traditional

agriculture sector. The 58.3 mn fishers and fish farmers in 2012 represented 4.4 per cent of the 1.3 bn people economically active in the broad agriculture sector worldwide, compared with 2.7 and 3.8 per cent in 1990 and 2000, respectively.

However, the relative proportion of those engaged in capture fisheries within the fisheries and aquaculture sector decreased overall from 83 per cent in 1990 to 68 per cent in 2012, while that of those engaged in fish farming correspondingly increased from 17 to 32 per cent. At the global level, the number of people engaged in fish farming has, since 1990, increased at higher annual rates than that of those engaged in capture fisheries.

In the last two decades, the trends in the number of people engaged in the fisheries primary sector has varied by region. In percentage terms, Europe and North America, with very low population growth and decreasing economically active populations in the agriculture sector, have experienced the largest decrease in the number of people engaged in capture fishing, and little increase, or even a decrease, in those engaged in fish farming. These trends relate to the trends in production from capture fishing and aquaculture. In contrast, Africa and Asia, with higher population growth and growing economically active populations in the agriculture sector, have shown sustained increases in the number of people engaged in capture fishing and even higher rates

of increase in those engaged in fish farming. These trends in employment are also related to sustained increases in production from capture fisheries and even more so from aquaculture.

The Latin America and Caribbean region stands somewhere in between the tendencies already described, with a decreasing population growth, a decreasing economically active population in the agriculture sector in the last decade, moderately growing employment in the fisheries sector, decreasing capture production and rather high sustained aquaculture production. However, its vigorously growing aquaculture production may not result in an equally vigorously growing numbers of employed fish farmers as several of the important organisms cultivated in the region are aimed at satisfying foreign markets. Hence, efficiency, quality and lower costs rely more on technological developments than human labour.

According to the employment statistics for selected countries, including China, where more than 14 mn people (25 per cent of the world total) are engaged as fishers (16 per cent of the world total) and fish farmers (9 per cent of the world total).

In general, employment in fishing continues to decrease in capital-intensive economies, in particular in most European countries, North America and Japan. For example, in the period 1995–2012, the number of people employed in marine fishing decreased by 30 per cent in Iceland, by 42 per cent in Japan, and by 49 per cent in Norway. Factors that may account for this include: the

application of policies to reduce overcapacity in the fleets; and less dependence on human power owing to technological developments and associated increased efficiencies.

In addition to differences in per capita average outputs between aquaculture and capture fisheries, there are also regional differences.

The most populated regions—Africa and Asia—that together also account for the largest proportion (94 per cent or more) of fishers and fish farmers, show the lowest outputs with annual averages of about 1.8 and 2.0 tonnes per person per year, respectively.

Those figures contrast with annual average outputs of 24.0 and 20.1 tonnes per person in Europe and North America, respectively. Latin America and the Caribbean, with annual average outputs of 6.4–11.7 tonnes per person, lies somewhere between the aforementioned low- and high-output regions. To an extent, production per person reflects the higher degree of industrialization of fishing activities (for example, in Europe and North America) as well as the relative importance of small-scale operators, especially in Africa and Asia.

This contrast is more evident for aquaculture production. In 2011, the annual average production of fish farmers in Norway was 195 tonnes per person, compared with 55 tonnes in Chile, 25 tonnes in Turkey, 10 tonnes in Malaysia, about 7 tonnes in China, about 4 tonnes in Thailand, and only about 1 tonne in India and Indonesia. The information provided to FAO still lacks sufficient detail to allow full analyses by gender. However, based on the data available, it is estimated that, overall, women accounted for more than 15 per cent of all people directly engaged in the fisheries primary sector in 2012. The proportion of women exceeded 20 per cent in inland water fishing and is considered far more important, as high as 90 per cent, in secondary activities, such as processing.

Source: The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2014, FAO

World fishers and fish farmers by region

	1995	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012
	<i>(Thousands)</i>					
Africa	2 392	4 175	4 430	5 027	5 250	5 885
Asia	31 296	39 646	43 926	49 345	48 926	49 040
Europe	530	779	705	662	656	647
Latin America and the Caribbean	1 503	1 774	1 907	2 185	2 231	2 251
North America	382	346	329	324	324	323
Oceania	121	126	122	124	128	127
World	36 223	46 845	51 418	57 667	57 514	58 272

INFOLOG: NEW RESOURCES AT ICSF

ICSF's Documentation Centre (dc.icsf.net) has a range of information resources that are regularly updated. A selection:

Publications

The Value of African Fisheries. de Graaf, G. and Garibaldi, L. **FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Circular. No. 1093. Rome, FAO, 2014**

<http://www.fao.org/3/a-i3917e.pdf>

This study was carried out in the framework of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)-FAO Fisheries Programme (NFFP) funded by the Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency (Sida). It saw the participation of national experts from the Ministry/Department of Fisheries and National Bureau of Statistics in 23 African countries, three Regional Fishery Bodies (Regional Fisheries Committee for the Gulf of Guinea [COREP], Fishery Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea [FCWC] and the Southwest Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission [SWIOFC]), the NEPAD Planning and Co-ordinating Agency (NPCA) and the International Partnership for African Fisheries Governance and Trade (PAF) programme.

An Activists' Guide to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

http://www.cb dalliance.org/en/images/publications/AN_ACTIVISTS_GUIDE_TO_THE_CBD.pdf

This guide is intended to provide a simple and accessible introduction to the CBD and current efforts to protect biodiversity. It aims to reflect a range of views held by members of the CBD Alliance, and includes summaries of CBD materials and other resources.

Gap Analysis of National and Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Priorities and Initiatives in Southern and Eastern Africa in Respect to Climate Change and Disasters. Davies, S., Sheridan, S., Hjort, A. and Boyer, H. **FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Circular No. 1095. Rome, 2014.**

Fisheries and fishing-dependent people are particularly vulnerable to disasters and climate-change impacts. The objective of this study was to identify regional and national gaps and opportunities to reduce the vulnerability of the sector to impacts from climate change and increase the resilience of fisheries and aquaculture livelihoods to disasters.

Inuit Knowledge and Climate Change

<http://www.cinemapolitica.org/film/inuit-knowledge-and-climate-change>

Nunavut-based director Zacharias Kunuk (Atanarjuat The Fast Runner) and researcher and filmmaker Dr. Ian Mauro (Seeds of Change) have teamed up with Inuit communities to document their knowledge and experience regarding climate change. This new documentary, the world's first Inuktitut language film on the topic, takes the viewer "on the land" with elders and hunters to explore the social and ecological impacts of a warming Arctic. This unforgettable film helps us to appreciate Inuit culture and expertise regarding environmental change and indigenous ways of adapting to it.

FLASHBACK

Cracking the Code for Small-scale Fisheries

There is need for both an international instrument and a global programme to address the specific needs of the world's small-scale and artisanal fisheries

Should the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) be "opened up" to include a special Chapter on



small-scale artisanal fisheries? This was called for by the civil society organizations at the FAO's Global Conference on Small-scale

Fisheries (4SSF) in October 2008. The call was reiterated by civil society at the 28th Session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI 28).

The CCRF, while making several references to small-scale fisheries and fishworkers, does not provide specific guidance on how the small-scale artisanal subsector, which employs about 90 per cent of those engaged in fishing and fisheries-related activities, should be supported and promoted. The CCRF also lacks a gender perspective—especially to address the specific forms of discrimination faced by millions of women who are part of the fisheries worldwide, or to acknowledge the vital role they play at all levels. For civil society, these are areas that need urgent attention.

However, several delegations to COFI 28 opposed opening up the CCRF, which, it was argued, could prove to be a "Pandora's Box". If opened up for small-scale artisanal fisheries, then why not for other interests? While there was consensus on the need to support small-scale artisanal fisheries, there was no consensus on the best way to do so. Many Members expressed the need for an international instrument on small-scale fisheries, which could comprise a new article in the Code, an international plan of action (IPOA) and/or the development of guidelines that would guide national and international efforts to secure sustainable small scale fisheries and create a framework for monitoring and reporting. In addition, many Members called for the establishment of a new COFI Sub-Committee on small-scale fisheries. In the end, COFI 28 directed the FAO Secretariat to examine various options to carry these suggestions forward.

—from SAMUDRA Report No. 57, November 2010

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MEETINGS

2nd World Small-scale Fisheries Congress

21-25 September 2014. Merida, Mexico

The congress' main theme is "Options and Opportunities for Small-scale Fisheries", with the following sub-themes: economic viability; livelihoods and well-being; ecosystem stewardship; rights and access; governance and governability; food security; and assessment and monitoring.

12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity

6-17 October 2014. Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea

The meeting will address the programme of work on marine coastal biodiversity, with specific reference to traditional knowledge in ecologically or biologically sensitive areas (EBSAs) and on marine spatial planning.

IUCN World Parks Congress (WPC)

12-19 November 2014. Sydney, Australia

One of the focus areas of this WPC is on marine and coastal protected areas. The stream sessions on enhancing diversity and quality of governance, respecting indigenous and traditional knowledge and culture, and supporting human life have a specific focus on marine and coastal protected areas.

WEBSITES

World Forum of Fisher Peoples (WFFP) www.worldfishers.org

The official Facebook page of the WFFP <https://www.facebook.com/worldfishers?fref=ts>

World Forum of Fish Harvestors and Fish Workers (WFF) <http://www.worldfisherforum.org/>

The official Facebook page of the WFF <https://www.facebook.com/wff.fisher?fref=ts>