

SUPPORTING THE ICSF'S PROPOSALS

Development policies in Brazil have traditionally not respected nature, despite extensive legislation guaranteeing the preservation of the environment. This development brought a "progress" that victimized the majority of the population to the benefit of a privileged minority.

Given the serious environmental violence endured by fishermen (oil refineries, paperboard and alcohol factories, chemical pollution, toxic agricultural run-offs, dams, real estate speculation, clearing of mangroves, predatory fishing, etc.), the survival of artisanal fishing as a food producer is in danger.

Despite this situation, fishermen are not passive in the face of these injustices. They are mobilizing at the municipal, state and national level, promoting the proposals adopted at the National Meeting of Fishermen on the Environment, held 1-4 August 1990 and the Fifth National Meeting of Fishermen, held 23-27 October 1991.

In addition to environmental degradation, the Brazilian government favours entrepreneurial and industrial fishing to the detriment of artisanal fishing. Also, because no area is reserved for artisanal fishing, artisanal fishermen have to compete for fishing grounds with industrial boats of large companies.

Brazil's artisanal fishermen, in their Fifth National Meeting, adopted and assumed the "Charter of Basic Rights of the Artisanal Fishermen of the World", and also decided to send to the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers proposals for the document of the ICSF.

MONAPE, as a leader in the movement of artisanal fishermen, fully accepts the proposals of ICSF to be presented to the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development, understanding them to synthesize the concerns of the world's artisanal fishermen, and therefore a significant contribution to the movement in Brazil.

National Movement of Fishermen MONAPE

The fishermen of Chile, represented by the National Confederation of Artisanal Fishermen of Chile (CONAPACH), express with this letter our support for this initiative and our hope that the heads of state adopt the proposals made by the working commissions for the defence of the rights of fishermen, especially the

right to a clean environment and just treatment.

The National Council of Artisanal Fishermen of Chile was founded in 1986. This Council supported efforts to organize at the local and regional level. It held three national conventions in four years, more than 10 regional meetings and conventions, attended international meetings and scientific events. CEDIPAC was founded in 1988 as a technical body and has carried out training courses for leaders, seminars and development projects. It has published eight issues of *La Caleta*, a CONAPACH's publication. At this time, CONAPACH is constituted as a National to the Artisanal Fishermen of Chile since 9 August 1990, it is comprised of 12 federations and more than 125 grassroots organizations. Its headquarters is located in Valparaiso.

The main conclusions of the three conventions held between 1986 and 1989 center on the following points:

- We request that organized fishermen be allowed to participate in decisions that affect their working conditions, especially the fisheries law, determination of seasons and prohibitions to fish certain species, credits and other problems.
- We ask the state to assume a subsidiary role in problems of retirement and social security. For this purpose, we postulate the need for a tax on fish exports. We propose that a social security system be established shortly, based on internal saving and payments by welfare departments of organizations for health care and pensions.
- We petition that systems be established to market at the national level and export, credits provided to improve the, infrastructure of the artisanal fleet, set up a network of refrigeration facilities, and provide support to transport products in good condition to local markets and export points.
- We seek to consolidate systems to train fishermen in business practices, especially the leaders, so that they can deal with marketing, organizing cooperatives, credits and institutional relations.
- We also agreed to establish a broad network of national and international institutional relations, especially with other like-minded organizations of fishermen, in order to fight to defend resources, establish commercial and technical links and broaden the social bases of a Latin American and international movement of fishermen.

Regional organizations, for their part, have set up trade unions, local or regional councils and, later on, trade union federations. These have actively participated in the formation of a national confederation, in national conventions, training courses organized by CEDIPAC and in distributing the review La Caleta.

Some development projects have also been launched, either for marketing, self-financing through aquaculture, or local projects for women's organizations, radio communications, services for the aged, marine products processing centers, trade union headquarters, etc. CONAPACH has contributed to these programs by submitting the projects for funding, training leaders, intervening on their behalf with authorities, and to other development activities and the defence of fishermen in parliament, especially when the fisheries law was being drafted. I would like to give a detailed account of our experience with this last point.

Fishing was opened to everyone during the last century, as a means to promote trade and shipping and regulated in 1819. In 1832 fish products were declared duty free as either imports or exports. In 1855 the Civil Code established that only Chileans and resident foreigners could fish in territorial waters. In 1931 a decree was issued regulating fishing activities. It was in effect up till 1991. 1952 was the year of the Declaration of Santiago, in which the governments of Chile, Peru and Ecuador established that their sovereignty extended up to 200 nautical miles from their respective coasts. This gave rise to new regulations in the form of decrees, but without a definitive legal codification.

The application of a free-market economic policy brought with it a series of pressures to eliminate legal barriers, quotas and restrictions on fishing in general. A new decree was made in 1980 eliminating these obstacles, immediately setting off a race to exploit Chile's marine resources, and in some cases even leading to overinvestment in equipment in some fisheries.

The United Nations Convention for the Law of the Sea established the exclusive economic zone in 1982, and stated the rights and obligations of coastal states, especially for the management of the ocean's live resources. In 1986, law 18565 established a territorial sea of 12 miles, a control zone of 24 miles and an exclusive economic zone of 200 miles.

We artisanal fishermen have benefitted from a series of legal provisions, such as duty-free imports of fishing equipment, exemption from income tax, a reserved zone one mile from the coast, etc.

The modernization of Chilean fisheries called for a new harmonized legal code. For this reason, in 1988 an initiative of the military government, elaborated by the Ministry of Finance, launched a heated discussion. The proposal attempted to establish a broad freedom of

access to marine resources for both Chileans and foreign investors in Chile. Special regulations were to be established for fully exploited fisheries by assigning definitive individual quotas to the enterprises that had worked in the zone during the last three years. Artisanal fishermen were completely ignored, treating them as small shipowners. Aquaculture concessions were to be sold to the highest bidder. And no incentives were to be provided for the development of artisanal fishing or research.

From January 1989 onwards, numerous actions were undertaken throughout the whole country to express disagreement with this draft law. Entrepreneurs, academics and workers spoke out in forums, seminars, radio programs and periodicals. They rejected completely free access for foreign fleets. Different ways of exerting pressure were used. We artisanal fishermen went on strike on numerous occasions, to protest against the military government's law. The military junta, with the support of the Chilean Navy, modified some of the concepts concerning artisanal fishing, granting it a reserved zone of five miles, but keeping the general concept of practically complete freedom of access. The law was passed at the end of 1989, to go into effect 11 April 1990.

On 11 March of that year, to our good fortune, Chile returned to democracy and Patricio Aylwin became President. Congress suspended the law and began a long process of reformulating and changing the text proposed by the military junta. The National Fisheries Council was established and we artisanal fishermen were invited to participate in that body. The House of Representatives adopted the text with a series of modifications, but the Senate changed many of the provisions in response to the interests of a few large companies. Numerous negotiations were needed to finally obtain a definitive text which was signed by the President on 28 September 1991 in a solemn ceremony held in Caleta Portales in Valparaíso.

What are the results and benefits that we fishermen have obtained with this law?

- The most important is the participation in the national, zonal and regional fishery councils, to which our organizations can send their representatives. The councils will take decisions with respect to regulations, prohibitions to harvest certain species, managerial systems, etc
- A zone five miles from the coast is reserved for artisanal fishing and closed to industrial fleets, giving artisanal fishermen preference to develop their activities.
- The Artisanal Fisheries Development Fund is created with resources from licenses and fines under this law. This fund will finance infrastructure, catches,

processing and marketing. The administrative council of the fund will be comprised of three representatives from organizations of artisanal fishermen. The law also calls for a special fund to promote research on fisheries.

- Organizations will have exclusive management of areas with benthic resources, as a first step to obtaining aquaculture concessions. This creates an alternative to the exhaustion of certain resources.
- Artisanal fishermen will have to register in their regions and will not be allowed to work in other regions, except in certain cases involving migratory species or benthic fisheries in adjoining regions. Each fisherman will only be allowed to own two boats with a maximum gross registry of 50 metric tons.

We fishermen can fight for our rights at higher legal levels. We should have confidence that we will achieve our goals to the extent that the members of our organizations actively participate. We face many challenges, especially the internationalization of fisheries and the aggressiveness of the industrialized countries that have exhausted their own resources and are looking for new fishing grounds along our coasts, taking advantage of their technological superiority. We need training, ways to educate our leaders so that they can correctly orient our actions in benefit of the organizations' interests and not those of individuals. We are fighting for social change. That means we constantly have to make sacrifices, affecting even our families, for our organizations.

Each goal implies new responsibilities and obliges us to continuously assume new administrative tasks in our reserved zone, aquaculture concessions, new processing and marketing enterprises and intelligent participation in the fisheries councils. In order to do so, we should seek of our own or supporting technical bodies

But we fishermen need a general framework in which we can fight for our rights:

- Recognition of a coastal zone with access reserved exclusively for artisanal fishermen who live on the coast, especially indigenous communities who have lived and worked certain coasts since time immemorial.
- The right for representatives of fishermen to participate in decision-making and planning bodies, especially those that regulate the sector.
- The right to a clean and unpolluted environment, to protect the source of life and work.
- The right of women to participate freely and be respected in the professional and social activities of artisanal fishing.

- Access for fishermen and their communities to benefits like credit, housing, health care and education. The state and civil organizations should contribute to these benefits and constantly collaborate with the organizations and their communities, without the paternalism that characterizes many public and private projects.

Fraternally,

National Confederation of Artisanal Fishworkers of Chile, CONAPACH

Norges Kystfiskarlag (Norwegian Coastal Fishermen's Union) hereby expresses its support for the proposals listed in your letter and shares the hope that these proposals will be included in the Final Declaration. We will also notify the Norwegian government and the Norwegian delegation to the UNCED on your intention, and ask for their support.

Norges Kystfiskarlag is a young organization, founded by small scale fishermen who felt that the old organization, Norges Fiskarlag (Norwegian Fisheries Union), being a federation of several organization representing small-scale as well as industrialized fisheries, had become merely a spokesman for the pursuing industrialized fishing fleet, pursuing totally different goal that those of small-scale fishermen and small fisheries-based communities.

Norway is a unique country, blessed with a long coastline and access to rich fish resources. Unfortunately, many of the species making up the economic base for coastal fisheries such as the North Atlantic Cod, are highly migratory species.

Every winter and early spring the spawning stock of this cod migrates from its feeding and nursing area in the Barent Sea to the coast of North Norway, where it is harvested by coastal fishermen in what traditionally has been known as the world's richest cod fisheries. During summer, there is another migration of adult fish to the coast, feeding on spawning caplin. These coastal fisheries are carried out with passive and selective fishing gears, aimed at harvesting the stock in the ecologically as well as bio-economically best possible way.

While still nursing in the Barent Sea, the juvenile fish is however subject to heavy overfishing by Norwegian, Russian and other European trawlers, consequently reducing the migrating stock and thereby the income-earning possibilities of small-scale fishermen. Due to this situation, every fishing vessel has been given strictly limited fishing quotas.

As a result, large parts of the Norwegian coast are on the brink of collapsing economically. As we understood the situation, the Norwegian government is trying to reduce small-scale fisheries and small fishery-based communities by denying the fishing quotas high enough to enable them to sustain their way of life, while at the same time promoting big-scale industrial development.

The fishing fleet and industry of Norway is among the most advanced in the world, but the problems the fishworkers are facing are the same as in the rest of the world; money is moving in to make them their culture, their way of life and their communities of obsolete. In the process, fishworkers are made to live on social welfare, their communities are turned into ghost towns and their age old culture and craftsmanship are decaying because of lack of practice.

Given this background, we have made the demand for higher quotas for small-scale fishermen our first priority. This struggle is now at its peak, and we are witnessing how the different actors on the arena of Norwegian fisheries are grouping themselves into two opposing armies.

On the one hand we have the people who want to utilize their investment capital as the basis for future development. Here we find the owners of large vessels and industrial complexes, the major banks, supported by the Ministry of Fisheries, and as their spokesman; Norges Fiskarlag.

On the other hand are those who want employment, social and cultural values, and a sustainable resource management as a basis for future development. Among these are most of the fishworkers and members of small fishery-based communities. Although their struggle is supported from many quarters, Norges Kystfiskarlag is their only representative organization, fighting to defend their way of life.

As our goals and problems to a large extent are common, Norges Kystfiskarlag welcomes any opportunity to join forces with fellow fishworkers wherever they might be on this planet. We would also welcome the possibility of a closer cooperation with the ICSF in the future, because only in unity are we able to reach our goals.

With the best wishes for an ecologically stable future,
yours,

NORGES KYSTFISKARLAG

Maurice F. Strong
UNCED, Secretary-General

At the time of the FAO World Conference on Fisheries Management and Development, held in Rome in July 1984, some 100 representatives of artisanal fishermen's organizations and support organizations from 42 countries, mostly in Africa, Asia and Latin America, met in that same city to participate in an alternative conference of fish-workers.

In that meeting the fishermen asked the support organizations to help them strengthen the organization, education and development of fishing communities throughout the world, a task taken up since 1986 by the INTERNATIONAL COLLECTIVE IN SUPPORT OF FISHWORKERS (ICSF), a non-governmental organization, in which people from 17 countries participate in local educational and developmental activities in their communities.

Since 1986, ICSF has organized activities for dissemination, education and campaigns to defend the basic rights of fishermen, especially in Trivandrum (India, 1986), Dakar (Senegal, 1987), Valparaiso (Chile, 1988), Lisbon (Portugal, 1989), Bangkok (Thailand, 1990), Manila (Philippines, 1991), Paris (France, 1991) and Dakar (Senegal, 1991), in collaboration with professional and support organizations in each of the countries mentioned.

The impact of these actions has been different in each case. Generally speaking, they have raised the consciousness of fishermen and their communities about their basic rights and needs, especially the right to:

- an unpolluted environment, apt for the reproduction and development of the species and resources that provide them with life and work;
- participate actively in democratic decision-making in each of their countries;
- an exclusive zone for fishing and aquaculture and priority access to the coast and its resources;
- respect for their own traditions and customs, especially their way of relating to the environment;
- of women to participate in extraction and cultivation, and in organizations representing fishermen;
- participate in the benefits of modernization, especially for extracting, processing and marketing fishery products;
- social and job security.

Artisanal fishermen throughout the world expect decisive support from UNCED for their demands and the

satisfaction of their needs, especially in the form of a code of norms regulating sources of pollution, over-fishing and the exhaustion of aquatic resources, and agreements that provide resources for the definitive development of their communities, in which they wish to participate through their local and national organizations.

The members of the Animation Team and Board of Directors of ICSF are pleased to communicate this progress to you, grateful for the important task you are

undertaking for the protection of the environment and natural resources of our planet, and we express our support for the work of the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development.

Be assured of our kindest regards,

INTERNATIONAL COLLECTIVE IN SUPPORT OF FISHWORKERS