
Comment / Labour**Not broad enough**

Women who work to support their husbands' fishing activities should also be covered by the proposed ILO Convention on Work in the Fishing Sector

This comment is by Cornelia Quist, Member of VinVis, Netherlands, and a Member of ICSF

I was very happy with the contents of the ICSF Statement at the International Labour Conference calling for a broader definition of 'fisher'. Don't you think it is also good to include the 'collaborating spouse' in the definition? Many women who work in the family fishing enterprise have no other status than that of wife of a fisherman and her work is primarily seen as a sort of extension of her domestic activities. Therefore, she has no right to represent the family enterprise, to be elected to the boards of fishermen's organizations or to join social security schemes. The principle of equal treatment for men and women in a self-employed activity should be followed, to include spouses who are not employees or partners, but who habitually, under the conditions laid down by national law, participate in the activities of the self-employed worker and perform the same or ancillary tasks.

Regarding 'collaborating spouse', there is legislation in France that covers this. This legislation was achieved as the result of the demands of fishermen's wives in Brittany, following the crisis in the fisheries sector in the country. Women demanded the status of 'fisherman's wife' in order to benefit from social security (retirement) provisions, professional rights and professional training. This was achieved on 18 November 1997 with the passing of the Fisheries Orientation Law. Fishermen's wives were given the status of spouse, with rights to retirement benefits, to represent their husbands on economic councils, and to training sessions.

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