

Latin America/Chile**Action, not more words**

This profile of Zaida Zurita Huaitisa, a seaweed harvester in southern Chile, and a member of CONAPACH's Executive Committee, is based on an interview by Brian O' Riordan

Zaida Zurita Huaitiao comes from the fishing community of Maullin in Chile's southern Tenth Region, a community of shellfish divers (*buzos* and *mariscadores*) and seaweed harvesters (*algueros* and *algueras*). A fisherman's wife and mother of six children, she is herself a fishworker. She works both as an *alguera*, cultivating and harvesting the seaweed *gracillaria*, and in a small aquaculture concession where she cultivates the mollusc, *loco*.

In addition to her busy professional and domestic life, Zaida is also an elected fishworker representative at both local and national levels. She is President of the Federation of the Syndicates of Artisanal Fishermen and Agriculturists of the North Bank of the River Maullin, and a member of CONAPACH's Executive Committee. CONAPACH is a national fishworker organization in Chile.

It is a struggle to make a living from fishing, emphasizes Zaida, and to survive, it is important to keep one's options open. "Management areas are not the answer, but only one option. As a fishworker in Maullin you have to work in a variety of activities", says Zaida. (In Chile, management and exploitation areas provide well-defined community groups, quasi-property-rights to sedentary resources, based on approved management plans.)

One of the biggest challenges facing fishworkers, according to Zaida, is maximizing their earnings, particularly as the seasonal nature of their activities tends to saturate markets at times of peak production, reducing prices.

Zaida participated in the recent ICSF workshop on "Emerging Concerns of Fishing Communities: Issues of Labour, Trade, Gender, Disaster Preparedness, Biodiversity and Responsible

Fisheries", held from 4 to 6 July 2006 at SESC Colonia Ecologica in Fortaleza, Brazil.

She found that the issues being discussed at the workshop were very important, but was not clear about how such a meeting can make real progress towards resolving them. She cites the issue of trawling as a case in point, which, in her view, needs firm and concrete action, not just more words.

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