

## Sustainable development

# A call for a new balance

## Friends of the Earth International wants the Commission for Sustainable Development to address fundamental issues

**I**n view of the continuing crisis in world fisheries, Friends of the Earth International (FoEI) calls upon the Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD) to address the issue of over-capitalization of the world fishing fleet at its forthcoming April 1996 session.

We call upon the CSD to acknowledge that world fisheries are going through a crisis, characterized by resource depletion, destruction of coastal communities, serious conflicts over resources and the use of fishing techniques which destroy the marine environment.

Furthermore, there is a need to recognize that at the root of these problems lies a tremendously over-capitalized global fishing fleet. The gap between the investments in the global fishing fleet and the available resources leads to an annual deficit of around US\$ 54 billion.

Fish was once the poor man's protein. Now more and more fish are being exported from the South to the North. They often end up as luxury food or feed for livestock, pets and farmed fish.

This development is threatening the contribution of fish to food security in the Third World. This trend is closely linked to the structure of the global fishing fleet and to the structure of international trade.

Therefore, we call upon the CSD and national governments submitting reports to the CSD to work to secure the availability of fish for those who depend on it.

This will help re-establish a balance between capacity and available resources through a drastic reduction in the world's industrial fishing fleet. In the process of fleet reduction, unambiguous criteria

need to be set to decide which portions should be eliminated from fishing.

We note that, to a certain extent, such considerations are to be found in UNCED's Agenda 21, the UN Convention on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks and the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

FoEI, therefore, calls upon the CSD to conclude that there must be a conscious effort by the international community to reduce and restructure the world's fishing fleet and to promote the following criteria as part of such a strategy:

- usage of as little energy as possible per unit of catch
- employment of as many people as possible per unit of catch
- contribution to food security
- minimizing of by-catch and discards
- minimizing the negative impact environment.

This report has been sent by Gunnar  
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