

DC Newsletter

Newsletter from the Documentation Centre (DC) of International Collective in Support of Fishworkers

September 2000

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Documentation Centre

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Dear friends,

Greetings from the Documenta-
tion Centre of ICSF.

Welcome to the first issue of the
DC Newsletter. We received
several responses to the
questionnaire sent out in Febru-
ary 2000, seeking suggestions
on the role of the DC. One
suggestion was that the DC
should initiate a regular newslet-
ter on current developments in
fisheries. We plan to bring this out
on a regular basis.

In its present format, the
newsletter carries news from
different parts of the world, of

relevance to fishworkers. Also
included are interesting
websites, and summaries of
useful documents available with
the DC that may be of interest
to you. If you would like a copy
of the complete documents, do
let us know.

At the moment we are able to
bring out this newsletter only in
English. However, we hope to
bring it out in Spanish and
French also, in due course.

Do send us your views and
suggestions on this newsletter.

Best wishes,
Indu MG

Release jailed Sri Lankan fishermen

The Catholic aid agency CAFOD is appealing on behalf of over a hun-
dred Sri Lankan fishers currently held in foreign jails. Up to one thou-
sand people, including women and children, have been severely af-
fected by the imprisonment of the fishers. The arrested fishers had
strayed into foreign waters in India and the Seychelles. Some have
been imprisoned for two years. This has left their families without a
regular income, but still having to pay back loans and interest on the
impounded boats.

CAFOD supports its partner organisation NAFSO in the call for a memo-
randum of understanding between the Indian, Sri Lankan and Sey-
chelles governments to authorise traditional fishing by each other's
nationals in return for payment of royalties. Part of the background is
the squeezing of traditional fishing by high-tech commercial methods,
which result in over-fishing. Yields are falling and the small boats have
to travel further to find fish.

People wishing to support the fishers can request their release and
ask the Indian, Sri Lankan and Seychelles governments to authorize
traditional fishing by each other's nationals. They may write to the Sri
Lankan minister at the following address:

Hon. Mahinda Rajapakse, Minister of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
Development, Maligawatte, Colombo 10. Sri Lanka
Fax: 00 94-1-446187; e-mail: www.priu.gov.lk/feedback.html

Source: CAFOD News Release. For further details contact, Patrick
Nicholson (pnicholson@cafod.org.uk)

UN crack down on pirate fishing

A quarter of the world's fish catch now comes from pirate boats, flying flags of convenience and flouting international law to hunt down valuable but endangered species such as tuna. Pirate fishing has doubled in the last ten years, threatening to drive some fish to extinction. Fearing the collapse of world fisheries, the UN is to crack down on the illegal business at a meeting in Rome in October to agree on international controls. The UN refers to the practice as IUU fishing - Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported. Draft rules due to be agreed by 180 countries would close all ports to IUU fishermen to prevent them refuelling, taking on fresh crews or landing catches. The rules would also demand the closure of companies that own and control the illegal ships.

Pirate ships are regularly registered in countries such as Panama, Honduras, Belize and Cyprus to avoid fishing regulations but are owned by companies in Europe, the United States and Japan. These boats, often large factory-style trawlers roam the Atlantic and Southern Ocean catching tuna and the Patagonian toothfish. Toothfish, sold as Antarctic or Southern ocean sea bass in Britain, is known as white gold to the pirate fishermen because of its high value. Although an international fishing agreement is in operation in the Antarctic to try to save the toothfish, the commission for the conservation of Antarctic marine resources has no method of enforcing its rules, and illegal vessels outnumber legal ones three to one.

One boat suspected of carrying illegally-caught bigeye tuna worth up to £1m was held in the Japanese port of Shimizu. Greenpeace tracked the Japanese owned and crewed freezer vessel flying the Panamanian flag from the Atlantic where it loaded the tuna from two other vessels, one flying the Belize flag and the second a Cambodia flag. All three were acting illegally under international law, because in the Atlantic only countries that are members of the international commission for the conservation of Atlantic tunas can legally fish.

In 1999, the governments of Japan and the US tabled evidence identifying 345 flag-of-convenience vessels fishing for tuna in the Atlantic and the Mediterranean. They flew flags from seventeen countries, notably Honduras (103), Belize (83), Equatorial Guinea (51) and St Vincent and the Grenadines (50). Most are owned and managed by Taiwanese enterprises.

Courtesy: The Guardian, 15 August 2000

Salmon Aquaculture

The Terram Foundation, an environmental think tank based in Santiago, released a report critical of Chile's salmon farming industry. Entitled "The Inefficiencies of Chile's Salmon Farms" and presented by Terram Director Marcel Claude, the report says salmon and trout farming operations in southern Chile have adversely affected the environment and have resulted in serious social costs.

The Terram report suggests that after the current boom the salmon industry is experiencing, a bust will occur. This will force many to leave the sector and create economic ruin for others. Chile's fresh, cultivated salmon industry has grown strongly since the early 1990s. Still, the industry's rapid growth has not translated into improved salaries for workers, even while taxes fall.

Claude says the industry's success is premised on its access to pristine waters, a factor not built into operating costs, although the 60 percent profits reported by the industry leave ample room for such considerations. The report recommends a temporary halt to fishing concession licenses so that government authorities can have time to evaluate the industry's efficiency and to modify the current law governing the sector, which facilitates the industry's expansion.

The Terram study underlined the environmental harm caused by the industry. Large amounts of antibiotics and chemicals, used in prevention of diseases, get concentrated in a single area.

Source: Finning News, August 23, 2000

UNICPOLOS

The UN Open-Ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (UNICPOLOS), set up by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Commission on Sustainable Development, aims to facilitate deliberations in the General Assembly on developments in ocean affairs. An informal consultative process was convened in New York from 30 May -2 June 2000 which focussed on two themes: responsible fisheries and illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing activities; and the economic and social impacts of marine pollution and degradation, especially in coastal areas. Discussions addressed, among other things, measures to promote regional cooperation in combatting piracy, and improving management of illegal fishing.

*Contact: UNICPOLOS, United Nations, New York NY 10017, USA
e-mail:baezl@un.org*

Agitation against Fuel Price Hike

Angered by soaring fuel prices, French fishermen staged protests at harbours along the Atlantic and Mediterranean coasts against fuel prices which have already tripled this year. The protestors tightened their grip on the French ports and blockaded access to the Channel tunnel. The fishermen said that a steep rise in fuel prices was threatening their livelihood.

About 200 fishing vessels blockaded a bay in Thailand, in protest over steadily rising diesel prices. Thai fishermen have threatened to stage a nationwide mass protest and strike to call attention to the lack of government action to halt soaring fuel prices.

Source: Businessline, August 31, 2000

Fishermen Say No to Cement Plant

The residents of Abagatanen, a tiny fishing village north of Manila, are among the thousands of Filipinos who derive sustenance from the country's 17,000-kilometer long coastline. Earlier this year, Abagatanen fishermen teamed up with divers and marine biologists and seeded 35 giant clams (*Tridacna gigas*) in a nearby cove, signalling the setting up of a marine sanctuary in the area.

The fishermen, as well other groups, are in an uphill battle to convince local officials that the sea and the livelihood it provides are more important than the jobs and profits being promised by a Taiwanese company about to operate in Agno, of which Abagatanen is part. The Goldsun Cement Corp intends to set up a 13 billion-peso (29 million-dollar) limestone quarrying and cement manufacturing operation in Agno. While the quarrying will be in another part of the town, the cement plant and pier will be in Abagatanen. The pier for shipping out the cement will be located at the very same spot where the marine sanctuary is now. But the mayor has made it clear that he wants their clams out of the cove, because these are in the way of the project.

The town council also passed an ordinance reclassifying 300 hectares of agricultural land so these could be used for the project. When the Abagatanen fishermen set up the sanctuary last February, Agno Mayor Adan Rosete was less than pleased. He has since insisted that because Goldsun was granted an Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in March 1999, it has prior rights to the area now occupied by the sanctuary. The mayor has also said that the clam stocking had no permit from his office and was therefore an act of defiance against him.

The Goldsun project is now being investigated by the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources chaired by Robert Jaworski. The senator has questioned the indiscriminate grant of permits, licenses and consent by local government units and the DENR to quarry operations and cement plants, especially in environmentally critical areas. Jaworski's committee has been swamped by complaints about projects that cause destruction of watersheds, drying up of water wells, flashfloods, and contamination of fishing grounds.

This has prompted the senator to remark, "It is not enough that proponents secure papers that legitimise their op-

erations. We will have to deal with the old question of why mineral rights have always gained the upper hand to the detriment of people's rights to health, sound ecology and economic welfare."

Courtesy: InterPress Service, 11 September 2000

NAFSO Proposal for Fishworkers' Rights

The National Fisheries Soliarity Organisation (NAFSO) has been working with the fishing communities of Sri Lanka for over six years. NAFSO has done a survey of the conditions of work and life of the fishworkers. Based on the data collected by the survey, the organisation has prepared a proposal to improve the working conditions of the fishworkers as well as their safety at sea. The proposal was submitted in November 1999 to the committee appointed by the Ministry of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development of the country. The ministerial committee collected all the information and drafted a bill for protecting the rights of fishworkers. The bill has been approved by the ministry.

Copies of the proposal may be had from: Mr. Herman Kumara, NAFSO, 85 Kattuwapitya Road, Negombo, Sri Lanka e-mail: nafso1@sl.lk or Documentation Centre, ICSF

Web Resources

Fisheries Law

The Internet Guide to International Fisheries Law, is a comprehensive and free guide to the subject, including a large collection of legal texts, copies of fisheries cases, information on international fisheries organizations, a glossary, a news section and a large collection of links. There is a considerable amount of information relevant to shared stocks. <http://www.oceanlaw.net>

Fisheries Statistics

The latest version of Fishstat Plus containing fisheries statistics from 1950 upto 1998 can be downloaded from the FAO website. <http://www.fao.org/fi>

Fishing in Japan

Gives fisheries statistics, lists of booklets and videos available and an overview of the Japanese fishing industry. <http://www.maff.go.jp/eindex.html>

The Guardian on Fishing

The Guardian is running a series of articles on fisheries. <http://www.guardianunlimited.co.uk/fish>

Web Resources

Fishrights99 Conference

The website of the FishRights99 Conference held in November 1999 in Fremantle, Australia contains conference proceedings and a variety of information on the conference, sponsors, speakers etc. <http://www.fishrights.org>

Fishing Software

With a click of a mouse, scientists at the University of British Columbia are helping fisheries managers to predict what effect their fishing practices may have on the stocks on which they, and other species, depend. EcoSim, a complex modelling software program, could help reverse catastrophic declines in fisheries around the world.

<http://ens.lycos.com/ens/mar2000/2000L-03-09-06.html>

Fishing in Europe

This magazine from the European Commission covers diverse topics related to the fishing industry in Europe. http://europa.eu.int/comm/dg14/magazine/mag1_en.pdf

Documents at the DC

Nets for Social Safety: An Analysis of the Growth and Changing Composition of Social Security Programmes in the Fisheries Sector of Kerala State, India

This study focuses on the growth and changing composition of social security provisions in the fisheries sector of Kerala State in India. It enumerates the achievements and the problems being confronted by a developing maritime state in taking concrete and definitive measures to ensure that a section of the population, which was initially left out of the development process, is netted back into the mainstream.

Antonyto Paul and John Kurien. *Samudra Monograph, ICSF, September 2000, 65p.*

Report of the Technical Consultation on the Measurement of Fishing Capacity, Mexico City, Mexico, 29 November-3 December 1999: FAO Fisheries Report No. 615

The Consultation examined measurement issues in relation to the implementation of the International Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity adopted by the Twenty-third Session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries in February 1999. Discussions took place in the context of two working groups dealing with issues related to aggregation and with measurement of fishing capacity in the case of specific fisheries.

FAO, 2000, 51p.

Integration of Aquaculture into the Farming Systems of the Floodprone Ecosystems of Bangladesh: An Evaluation of Adoption and Impact

The decline in fish catches from open waters due to increased fishing pressure and other natural causes and human interventions has resulted in declining availability and intake of fish, especially among low-income rural households. The majority of households in rural Bangladesh have multi-purpose

homestead ponds and ditches, which have the potential for increasing production and availability of fish to rural households. However, the challenge is to develop and adapt low external input aquaculture practices that can be incorporated into the existing farming systems.

Modadugu V.Gupta et al. *ICLARM, 1999, 32p.*

ACP-EU Fisheries Research Initiative: Proceedings of the EXPO'98 Conference, 'Ocean Food Webs and Economic Productivity- Lisbon, Portugal, 1-3 July 1998': ACP-EU Fisheries Research Report No.5

The report presents the proceedings of the three-day conference on *Ocean Food Webs and Economic Productivity*. The conference was based on the premise that the continued economic productivity of the oceans depends on the maintenance of their ecological integrity, much threatened by a global fisheries crisis which manifests itself in runaway fishing mortality and vanishing social benefits.

Daniel Pauly et al (ed.), *European Commission, September 1999, 87p.*

Marine Ranching: Global Perspectives with emphasis on the Japanese experience: FAO Fisheries Circular No. 943

The circular reports the status of marine ranching programmes throughout the world, with a special emphasis on the enhancement work ongoing and planned in Japan. The circular contains the proceedings of the *International Symposium on Marine Ranching, 13-16 September 1996*, in Kanazawa, Japan. They address a variety of issues that are necessary for responsible and cost-effective marine ranching.

FAO, 1999, 252p.

Report of the Interregional Workshop on Findings and Results of Micro-Level Studies and Curriculum Development Activities of the FAO/UNFPA Project on Strengthening of Research and

Training in Population and Development Dynamics of Rural Fishing Communities, Serdang, Malaysia, 14-18 December 1998: FAO Fisheries Report No.599

The findings of the micro-level studies suggest that a majority of coastal artisanal fisherfolk are well aware of the deterioration of the coastal environment and decline in fisheries resources. Fisherfolk are also aware that, in addition to large-scale commercial fishing operation, industrial pollution and other factors, the rapid increase in the population of fishing communities over the past two decades has contributed to the present situation.

U.Tietze, *FAO, 1999, 55p.*

Fisheries Policy Research in Developing Countries: Issues, Priorities and Needs

Conference proceedings of the *International Consultation on Fisheries Policy Research in Developing Countries held between 3-5 June 1997 at the North Sea Centre, Hirtshals, Denmark* emphasizes the need for prioritizing fisheries policy research in developing countries. It brought together selected key researchers and policy makers from developing and developed countries. The proceedings provide an overview of key policy-relevant research questions in developing country fisheries.

Mahfuzuddin Ahmed et al, *ICLARM, 1999, 112p.*

Biodiversity, Trade, and the Fishing Sector: Case Study - West Africa

This paper analyzes the legal and policy framework in the context of marine fisheries in sub-Saharan Africa and, in particular, in the six West African nations party to the CSRP (Commission Sous-Regionale Des Peches).

Christopher D.Stone, *IUCN, 50p.*

For copies of any of the above, please contact the DC