



Daily Rights

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A Civil Society Newsletter for 4SSF

Signing Off

This is the eighth and final issue of Daily Rights. It comes almost a month after the dust from 4SSF held in Bangkok has settled. This final issue compiles the reflections that have been received from civil society participants on 4SSF. Specific proposals for the "next steps" after 4SSF are also given. This issue also carries an interview with one of the South African fisherwomen participants at 4SSF. And some photos from Bangkok!

Comments on this issue, and your own suggestions on the way forward, can be sent to smallscalefisheries@googlegroups.com. The message will go to members of the civil society co-ordinating group that had been set up to engage with the 4SSF, that is WFFP, ICSF, FSF, SDF and IPC.

For previous issues of this newsletter, please see <http://sites.google.com/site/smallscalefisheries/Home>.

The Daily Rights Team

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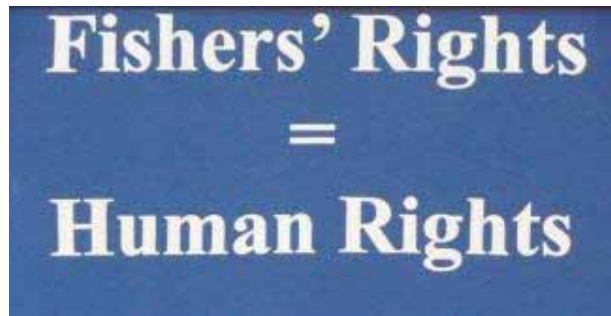
4SSF Feedback

The FAO 4SSF conference in Bangkok definitely steps forward in the approach of artisanal fisheries within the context of Human Rights & Sustainable Development. It is more than a remarkable step taken towards a shift in the international view of the global problem concerning fisheries worldwide. In my view, the FAO conference needs, therefore, a follow up within this process under the basis of 4 principles:

1. The civil society statement.
2. The principles of food sovereignty applied to SSF.
3. The recognition of the right to fish for subsistence as a fundamental right of small-scale fishermen and communities.
4. The establishment of domestic and international frameworks to protect those rights and principles.

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It is the first time that traditional and small-scale fisherfolk around the world talked for themselves and their interests from perspectives different from the development approach; their network and commitment to strengthen every effort locally and globally is the most powerful to continue to fight against marginalization.

The existing network is the start and it needs to be maximized; we need to work in a collaborative manner between the small-scale fishing community organizations, academia, NGOs and funding organizations. It is also very clear that the voluntary guidelines are not enough; we need to go further beyond those. The most important thing is how to empower the mass organizations, so as to enable them to argue and influence their national governments. For this, support from NGOs and funding organizations is needed and urgent. (We have a good vision already, the only thing that still needs expanding is the capacity and capability of the fisher people)

Let us unite nationally to fight against corrupt governments whose policies are drive by neo-

liberalism and free market interest, and let us struggle globally to fight against global neo-liberalism.

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I was mostly interested in gender equality, the aspects and meaning of which I found very intense on the whole during the discussions. It better equipped me for future work on the people who have been extremely marginalized, the fisher widows. The pre-meeting was indeed an excellent opportunity to come up with new ideas and agenda.

On behalf of our organization, PUGAD, the next agenda should be on the care of our seas and its habitant. This is very urgent.

More power to the Small Scale Fishers!!

Evelyn Bengco Sonderholm, Denmark

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It was a celebration of the small fisher people of the world. The biggest achievement was the consensus statement from the Civil Society workshop, with 106 participants.

But there was no time given to respond in the 4SSF process. Though the group works were informative, the FAO was pushing its agenda wherever I went. If FAO's approach was to give positive and negative

points, there was no need for group work. An intelligent person is enough to give both sides? The challenge is to achieve a consensus.

Many presentations were ideal, without much discussion as to how to achieve these ideals. What after 4SSF? It is like FAO Food Summit, on how to reduce world hunger by half, by 2015. But these numbers are increasing. What is the use of such summits? These summits become mere rituals. It is good for FAO officials and some NGOs can survive through these rituals. All the ideals of 4SSF will remain on paper. I have no hope in COFI also. Nothing will come from there.

Let us call for a meet of all the small-scale fisher people of Asia, Africa and South America to discuss on how to achieve the Consensus statement realized, 106 of them?

At the end, poor fisher people of the world have to struggle to obtain their rights. They have to struggle, and give their lives for the same. There is no other way to realize these rights. All those who join these struggles have the right to exist as far as small fisher people are concerned. In the context of the Global Economic crises, the relevance of small fisher people is very high. They are becoming powerful in the world arena as producers. Land reform and aquatic reform are crucial. WFFP has proved that it was not born of out lies. It is powerful, democratic and has a gender balance of 50/50. We need struggles like Chengara in Kerala, India to realize Land Reform and Aquatic Reform all over the world.

Thomas Kocherry, India
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What did you get out of 4SSF?

A lot of new friends, a lasting impression of the potential strength of the participating organizations, the impression that FAO staff and other governmental and Intl. organizations agree that small-scale fisheries are the solution to the fisheries crises and that we have a chance to bring about the changes to improve well-being of coastal communities and for integrated fisheries management. I also realize that the real enemies are in the fishing and aquaculture industry. These enemies, along with real estate speculation under the codename tourism, will be hard to fight as long as money and development is the global goal.

What should we work towards in the coming period?

We should first evaluate and clarify for ourselves where we stand as far as FAO is concerned—is our

participation in the COFI effective enough to guarantee the fishers rights as identified in the civil society statement? What other instruments of influence and development do we have? Is the sub-committee the answer or a Global Action Plan? I think we should develop a common position and coordinate with ourselves—NGOs and civil society—until December 2008 so that we can subsequently work on our governments to support our position and proposals in the next COFI Meeting.

René Scharer, Brazil
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I was honoured to attend both the Civil Society Workshop, and the 4SSF conference, they were very inspiring for me, and left me with a guarded hope that maybe we can pull this off.

1. We need a cohesive strategy for action. Different areas require different actions, but can we coordinate our efforts?

I'm reminded of how Native Americans and the Irish fought the colonial invaders seeking to capture their respective lands and resources: The tribes and clans fought amongst themselves, they fought disjointedly, everyone pursuing their own strategies right down to the individual level, and they paid no attention to timing, and they lost in the short term, and it has taken hundreds of years for them to regain any shred of what they lost, we cannot afford to lose. So...

2. Can we develop a suite of tactics such as litigation, legislation, cooperative business ventures, and ecosystem restoration, and get these spreading among fisher communities around the world? Can we get media savvy putting out a message that resonates with the public at large? And can we utilize these tactics to serve a long term strategy aimed at creating the circumstances, the potential, for sustainable fisheries.

3. Somebody along the way asked how we could get government to help. That hadn't even occurred to me! But it is also worth considering.

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Yes, reflections are always important and may differ from the diversity of perspectives from which we come, especially on critical matters. And if you don't mind, I humbly submit mine from a very difficult place, coming from Canada and with limited experience other than with regulatory regimes of highly commercialized and privatization imposed on Indigenous Peoples, and others who have always fished small-scale and sustainably for generations, such as the hand liners and the beach based shell fish harvesters.

The impact of global commodification is also felt in all the other sectors as well—either they be mining, farming, etc. Being from a so-called "Developed" country, international processes take for granted that the very ideologies and governance structures that cause so much devastation in other countries, also cause much devastation to Indigenous and Non-Indigenous fisher people who try to fight against the system within those "developed" countries. In a country where human rights and all the freedoms are supposed to be in place, they are marginalized and do not carry any weight in this type of commodified democracy or a country with a democratic deficit. This is what lies beneath the surface of appearance and has been witnessed by us who try to demand public processes, information and propose alternatives. In fact they are right out denied and shut down. This causes us concern, because if the so-called democratic developed countries will go to these lengths to shut down their own citizens, they will stop at no cost to carry out the neoliberal agenda globally.

Now having said this, when I turn to my reflections to the Bangkok Civil Society preparatory and subsequent FAO conference, it is becoming clear to me that FAO has been frustrating for most Social Movements. Yet, as Thomas has pointed out, it was historic that they even invited the small-scale fisher folk. However, with all the frustrations and problems the WFFP experienced with the funding and logistics and all the hard work in the preparation to put forward a WFFP statement as a foundation to participate in a wider process of a civil society consensus statement, the FAO process was indeed frustrating...

Other than this, it was a good learning experience, and I especially enjoyed working in the preparatory workshop as well as the opportunity to meet and work with others during the FAO conference as frustrating as it was for all the Civil Society Groups, including WFFP.

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I have learnt many positive aspects of dealing the issues of small-scale fisheries, from the various deliberations at the 4SSF conference. I have learnt that FAO is not an independent and enforcing agency that can change lives of small-scale fishers, but can only add or include proposals, suggested by representatives of small-scale fisheries. But what I would like to suggest to the United Nations and World Forum of Fisher Peoples (WFFP) is that they have to go beyond, and undertake concrete action, to save lives, livelihoods and culture of small-scale fishers. The United Nations must establish a separate body from FAO, called "Fisheries Management Organization", with the main objective to protect and preserve inland and marine resources. Until a separate organization is formed, WFFP can prepare strategic policy or plan in specific to inland water bodies and resources, their exploitation and sustainable use. It would be a big challenge for WFFP and its member organization, as it would be a matter of

implementation of WFFP universal sustainable fisheries policy.

Besides this, I would like to suggest establishment of fisheries court in each nation State, similar to labour courts. The court can be a separate UN Organizations with fisheries management authority, to promote the goal of sustainable small-scale fisheries purely in the context of social-economics, politics and cultural rights. The fisheries management organization should follow the guidelines/policy prepared by WFFP in support with international and civil society and other stakeholders.

These proposals are put forward to provoke all of us, to work hard to secure our future and the future of our next generation. I hope we all will feel and act responsibly to not merely secure sustainable small-scale fisheries but poor people who are or not associated with fisheries. If there is no fish, to fish, of course, poverty will increase and burden will shift to other sectors....

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The 4SSF was a great opportunity for the civil society and primary stakeholders in the small-scale fisheries sector to voice the real concerns. We are happy that there were listening ears and open approaches. It also gave opportunities for many of us to reconfirm our belief that Fisheries management has to start from the grassroots and not from the top.



We have to work towards more practical and realistic approaches from the primary stakeholders for ensuring strategies for sustainable fisheries and livelihoods. A change in mind set towards this has to be brought about with the policy makers and implementers.

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Casting Women's Net beyond South Africa

Camelita Mostert, Coastal Links, South Africa, talks to Jackie Sunde, member of ICSF

Camelita Mostert comes from a fishing town called Saldanha, famous for its canning of pelagic fish, on the west coast of South Africa. Her family is a family of fishers and Camelita herself worked for one of the largest fishing companies as a machine operator for several years. Following a work related injury to her back she was forced to stop work with no medical assistance from the company. Neither her father nor her brother was successful in obtaining fishing rights during the long fishing rights allocation process of 2005. Camelita is a member of Coast Links, the community based network of fishing communities that has fought hard for the recognition of the rights of artisanal and small-scale fishers. In the past year Camelita has been an active member of the Women's Network within Coastal Links. Camelita shares with *Daily Rights* the process that the Women's Network has undertaken and why this Civil Society Preparatory Conference and the FAO Global Conference are particularly important for women in South Africa.

Why is this meeting significant for women in South Africa?

In South Africa we won the right to participate in the development of a new policy for the fishers. We started this policy process at local, provincial and national level but this policy process has been dominated by fishermen. We have had a lot of debates in our workshops between men and women about what it means for women to get equal rights in the new policy. Women want the right to choose whether or not they go to sea but mainly they want the right to participate and to benefit equally from the selling and processing of the harvest. But women also want to make sure that the whole community benefits from this new process, and that we find a way of ensuring that the elderly are taken care of and that the youth also benefit.

We want this policy to help us set up many other livelihood opportunities. We decided that we needed to hold a women only workshop to discuss our views on the policy. In April we had a 'Women in Fisheries Workshop' where we learnt about the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and other instruments that we can use to fight for our right to participate equally. We looked at the draft

policy through a 'gender lens' and saw that the policy process did not include women equally. We then wrote our own policy statement that demanded that women's roles in the fisheries must be seen and that we must have one woman representative on the National Policy Task Team. The government has not yet let us nominate a woman to this team but we will fight for this.

This conference in Bangkok is very important for us as we need to learn from women in other countries what they have done to make sure that women benefit equally from the small-scale fisheries. It is wonderful to be together with women from all over the world and realise that they have the same problems that we have in South Africa. The field trip also showed me what women can do in their communities. We need to stand together and demand that FAO include this in international agreements because our government does not support us women on this and many fishermen do not want women to be seen as part of the fisheries. We need WFFP, ICSF and other organisations to support women in all countries to fight for this.



"Daily Rights" is a newsletter brought out by the coordinating committee set up to engage with the 4SSF. It is an initiative of WFFP, ICSF, FSF, SDF and IPC.

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