



Illustrations created by Anna Loveday-Brown

Editorial

Fishing for their futures - small scale fishing communities fighting for their way of life

Developing countries are generally more vulnerable to the effects of climate change than more developed countries due to their low capacity to adapt to climate change and variability. Increasing global surface temperatures, rising sea levels, irregular changes in average annual precipitation and increases in the variability and intensity of extreme weather events pose a major threat to coastal and island communities, which are heavily dependent on fish resources for their wellbeing – communities in which poverty is widespread and few alternative livelihoods are available.

Amidst the destruction caused by a lack of responsible governance of the use of land and natural resources, small-scale fishing communities are fighting to claim back their fishing grounds as governments and land use planners are seizing the catastrophe as an opportunity to halt small-scale fishing activities in such areas and allocate the areas to the development of tourist infrastructures and other uses. Fishing is not only a source of employment, income and food for small-scale fishery; it is a way of life based on social and environmental harmony which strengthens communities and supports adaptation measures particularly for the most vulnerable, especially women. Small-scale fishing communities can build and strengthen their capacity to adapt if they are supported, and not forced to leave their waters.

Margaret Nakato

Co- President of the World Forum of Fish Harvesters & Fish Workers



28 November – 9 December

17th Conference of the Parties (COP17) of the United Nations Framework Convention – Durban, South Africa

Mobilize!

3 December - Global Day of Action

5 December - Agroecology and Food Sovereignty day

More info on the C17, the Civil Society Committee for COP17 <http://www.c17.org.za/>

November – December

Regional UN Conferences on Sustainable Development (Rio2012). We will participate in the regional meetings to ensure sustainable agriculture is on the agenda of Rio and to make sure that market based solutions are rejected! Check the calendar for your region-Check the calendar for your region: <http://www.unccd2012.org/rio20/index.php?menu=23>

Road to Rio a countdown-map of key events
http://www.etcgroup.org/upload/ETC_rio20_maplist_v8_4web.pdf

Subscribe online now!
www.nyeleni.org

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

page 2



Swimming with the small fish

Small-scale fishing communities play an essential role in the livelihoods and providing access to food for millions of people around the world. Over 500 million people in the poorest countries depend either directly or indirectly on fisheries and aquaculture – equivalent to the whole population of all Latin America and the Caribbean. These small-scale fisheries employ more than 90 percent of the 35 million capture fishers worldwide and they support another 84 million people employed in jobs associated with fish processing and distribution. There are also millions of other rural dwellers, particularly in Asia and Africa, involved in seasonal or occasional fishing activities with few alternative sources of income and employment¹.

1 - These figures are from the FAO survey and could underestimate reality <http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i1820e/i1820e.pdf>

Who we are

In the last years hundreds of organizations and movements have been engaged in struggles, activities, and various kinds of work to defend and promote the right of people to Food Sovereignty around the world. Many of these organizations were present in the Nyéléni Forum 2007 and feel part of a broader Food Sovereignty Movement, that considers the Nyéléni 2007 declaration as its political platform. **The Nyéléni Newsletter wants to be the voice of this international movement.**

Organizations involved: Development Fund, ETC, FIAN, Focus on the Global South, Food First, Friends of the Earth International, GRAIN, Grassroots International, IPC for food sovereignty, La Via Campesina, Marcha Mundial de las Mujeres, Oxfam Solidarity, Real World Radio, Roppa, The World Forum Of Fish Harvesters & Fish Workers, Veterinarios Sin Fronteras.

Now is the time for Food Sovereignty!



The European Union, USA, and Asian countries such as Japan, Republic of Korea and China, have signed several access agreements to fish outside their national waters. In particular the EU, through fisheries partnership agreements (FPAs) **is able to sustain its lucrative fishing industry and export its overfishing problems to other parts of the world** – Africa, the Caribbean, the Pacific – often with disastrous consequences for local small - scale fishers. <http://www.grain.org/es/article/entries/724-empty-coasts-barren-seas>

Forced to piracy

The last ten years has seen the resurgence of pirates in International waters – especially off the coast of Somalia. While there are numerous reasons for why so many Somalians have turned to piracy (poverty, conflict and so on), the most common accusation is **that there fishing waters were destroyed by “drag trawlers”** which intensively fished in Somalian waters and ruined the breeding grounds of the fish upon which coastal communities depended.

Forced to migration and changing their lives

While many members of coastal communities worldwide **are migrating to urban areas**, other artisanal fishers – mostly men - are forced to **leave their boats and start working on fishing factory ships**. Often others – especially women – work seasonally in **seafood processing industries and factories** with poor and often dangerous working conditions; excessive noise levels and low temperatures; bioaerosols containing seafood allergens and toxins; poor ergonomic practices, etc.

The TNCs: Pescanova and the others

Pescanova is one of the world's largest fish producing companies. The Spanish company owns the largest fleet of fishing vessels in the world - second only to the fleet operated by the Chinese government. It has secured exclusive fishing rights in a number of fishing grounds around the world. Between the biggest corporations in this sector are: the Carlyle group and China Fisheries Group limited, Nippon Suisan Kaisha Ltd (Japan), Thai Union Frozen Prod. Pub. (Thailand), Maruha Group Inc. (Japan), Marine Harvest Group (Norway), Austevoll Seafood ASA (Norway), the Norwegian Aker group and many others, including US fish canning operations.

Artisan fishing communities in the crossfire

Small-scale fishing communities are endangered by a multitude of factors: environmental contamination and degradation, displacement and loss of marine biodiversity and increasing competition for fishing space and fishery resources from other interests, including larger-scale destructive and non-selective fishing gear and practices². These threats are now further aggravated by climate change and by the *false solutions*³ proposed to mitigate the effects of the climate crisis. Industrial farming, aquaculture and fishing is increasingly replacing the traditional ways of producing food: small scale and agroecological crop growing, livestock breeding, fish breeding and rearing in small scale aquaculture and artisan capture fishing. **Large-scale fishing vessels ply our oceans causing disastrous social, economic and environmental impacts**. Despite this, governments and policymakers in many countries tend to support industrial fishing through laws and financial schemes, making it increasingly difficult for artisanal fishers to access both resources and markets. Intensive fishing is still **wrongly** considered the only way to provide enough fish protein for the world population. Statistics show the opposite for example - **of the 70% of the world's total fish catch that comes from developing countries, over a half of it comes from small-scale fisheries**⁴. We should also remember that a very large proportion of the catch from industrial fisheries is not used for human consumption but is processed into fish meal and fish oil or is used directly for aquaculture and animal feeds⁵. At the same time industrial agriculture, livestock farming and aquaculture involving intense use of fertilizers, pesticides, genetically modified feed, high concentrations of animal manure and other waste products are **polluting** the coastal and marine environment. Due to this contamination, fish stocks are diminishing or disappearing completely, and vital ecosystems are rapidly declining, such as the receding of mangrove forests and seagrass beds along tropical seacoasts. If this were not enough, the wellbeing of many habitats and the livelihoods of millions of fisherfolk is endangered by the **construction of large infrastructural projects**: hydroelectric dams (such as the Bello-Monte project in Brazil on the Xingu river⁶), sand - mines or mines for the extraction of metals (such as the gold mines in Indonesia⁷), factories, off-shore oil and gas exploitation, real estate speculation, tourism projects, commercial harbors, wind farms and many others.

Fisheries and climate

In the last decades the temperature of the planet *has begun to increase* due to escalating concentrations of greenhouse gases (GHG) in the atmosphere, caused by human activities. **The current carbon-fuelled civilization** - based on consumerism and trade liberalization made possible by governments and transnational corporations - **is causing the climate change** that amongst others, also heavily impacts fishing communities worldwide⁸. Climate change is *modifying fish distribution* and the productivity of marine and freshwater species, obliging some fishing communities to relocate or to stop fishing. *Extreme changes in rain and weather patterns*, floods, cyclones, storms and other natural disasters are increasingly affecting the lives of local communities in coastal areas. The average temperature of the ocean is rising, causing snow and sea-ice to melt (this September, sea ice covering the Arctic Ocean fell to its second-lowest extent on satellite record, which began in 1979⁹). Consequently, *global sea levels are increasing* and threatening the survival of many coastal communities. Furthermore the high concentration of carbon dioxide (CO₂, the main greenhouse gas) in the atmosphere is causing what is called **ocean acidification**. The oceans absorb part of the excess of CO₂ in the air - a natural phenomenon that has been mitigating climatic effects for years, but storing carbon dioxide in the oceans comes at a steep cost: It changes the chemistry of seawater.

Increasing ocean acidity disrupts the development of many marine species such as crustaceans, molluscs, corals, shellfish, etc. Some of these vulnerable species are crucial for entire ecosystems. Small shell-building organisms are food for invertebrates, such as molluscs and small fish, which in turn are food for larger predators. Coral reefs create an underwater rain forest, cradling a quarter of the ocean's biodiversity. *These changes may bring a vast wave of extinctions!*

False solutions to climate change put fisherfolk even more at risk

Worldwide, local fishing communities are already facing many challenges and the future doesn't look bright. In fact, most of the *“solutions”* proposed by many governments at international meetings to tackle climate change **risk producing the opposite effects**. *Many of these false solutions are in the hand of markets and in reality they only promote profits for corporations* (examples are the *Reducing Emissions from Deforestation in Developing Countries* projects - REDD, the market-based mechanisms established within the Kyoto Protocol, the promotion of agrofuels production and “climate-ready” crops, as well as other practices suggested for agriculture, etc.¹⁰).

Small but mighty, Daniel Pauly

Benefits	Large-scale Fishery	Small-scale Fishery
Number of fishers employed	about 1/2 million	over 12 million
Annual catch of marine fish for human consumption	about 29 million tonnes	about 24 million tonnes
Capital cost of each job on fishing vessels	US\$30,000-\$300,000	US\$250-\$2,500
Annual catch of marine fish for industrial reduction to meal, oil, etc.	about 22 million tonnes	almost none
Annual fuel oil consumption	14-19 million tonnes	1-3 million tonnes
Fish caught per tonne of fuel consumed	2-5 tonnes	10-20 tonnes
Fishers employed for each US\$1 million invested in fishing vessels	5-30	500-4,000
Fish and invertebrates discarded at sea	10-20 million tonnes	little

<http://www.conservationmagazine.org/2008/07/10-solutions-to-save-the-ocean/>

2 - From the blog on climate change of the ICSF, <http://climatechange.icsf.net>

3, 8, 10 - *Nyeléni Newsletter Num1*, www.nyeleni.org

4 - The figure could also underestimate reality. The WorldFish Center, 2008

5 - Check the illustration *Small but mighty*

6 - Article at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-15102520>

7 - Example at <http://www.minesandcommunities.org/article.php?a=9984>

9 - For more data <http://nsidc.org/>



The fishing quota system

The quota management system was created to control over-fishing. Under the quota system a sustainable total catch or harvest of fish (*Total Allowable Catch* or TAC) is set and individuals or companies are each allocated a proportion of the total TAC, giving them the right to catch certain quantities of particular species. Every country has developed slightly different mechanisms but everywhere **quotas are increasingly becoming like other forms of property** – they can be leased, bought, sold or transferred, as through Individual Transferable Quotas (ITQs). However, some regard fishing quotas as *bureaucratic mechanisms* for assigning access rights that valorise capital accumulation and market speculation (for quotas) over labour and community interests. The quota system can also encourage the concentration of access rights in the hands of intensive fishing industries, as well as encouraging such bad practices as **high grading and other procedures that lead to high discard rates**. This can happen for several reasons: fishers may catch a different type of fish for which they do not have a quota; or because they have inadvertently caught more than their quota; or because they have caught fish of low commercial value. Of course, **the real problem with over-fishing is the fishing industry** which uses intensive, indiscriminate fishing methods **which lead to the contradictions in the quota system**. In small scale fisheries, which are seasonally diverse, low in impact, flexible, family based and so on, effort control (days at sea, closed areas, gear restrictions etc) may be more effective than a quota system. However, **quotas remain necessary in order to limit the negative impact of the fishing industry**. Ultimately large scale **intensive fisheries vessels need to be decommissioned** in order to change not only how much fish is caught, but the way it is caught.

- 11 - The International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF), - SAMUDRA Monographs <http://icsf.net/icsf2006/ControllerServlet?handler=OTHERPUB&code=viewPubn&language=EN&subsiteId=2&pubnType=monograph>
 12 - Nyéléni newsletter Num 1 – *Voices from the Field*.
 13 - The first report *Blue Carbon* was published in October 2010
 14 - The *Coral Triangle Initiative* is an example, <http://www.cti-secretariat.net/about-cti/about-cti#>
 15 - <http://www.etcgroup.org/en/issues/geoengineering>
 16 - Biological material from living, or recently living organisms
 17 - <http://pwccc.wordpress.com/support/>

In recent years, the concept of *Marine Protected Areas* (MPAs) have been extensively promulgated. An MPA is considered to be any coastal or marine area in which certain uses are regulated to conserve natural resources, biodiversity, and historical and cultural features. The *Convention on Biological Diversity* (CBD) agreed to bring at least 10 per cent of the world's marine and coastal ecological regions under protection by 2012. Several studies¹¹ show how MPAs are becoming a **serious problem for small-scale and artisanal fishers** in many parts of the world, as **many communities have been expelled from their traditional fishing grounds and living spaces** (the same abuses that REDD pilot-projects are imposing on small – scale farmers in many countries¹²). MPAs fail to consider local communities as an integral part of the ecosystems and fail to recognize the collective rights that communities have codified over time and currently hold. **Blue Carbon** is another new creation of carbon markets (within the REDD+ projects)¹³. Marine and coastal ecosystems such as seagrass beds, salt marshes and mangroves are very important carbon sinks, meaning that they absorb and store large quantities of carbon by sequestering it from the atmosphere. The idea behind *Blue Carbon* is to allow rich industrialized countries and business to offset their carbon emissions through the “conservation” of ocean ecosystems. In other words Blue carbon is going in the same direction as all the other false solutions. Together with the MPAs, it will support **more carbon trading and the privatization of these ecosystems**, which means more grabbing of natural resources and displacement of local communities¹⁴. **Geo-engineering** is the intentional large-scale manipulation of the environment most often discussed in the context of combating climate change. More than a set of technologies, however, it is a political strategy aimed at **letting industrialized countries off the hook for their climate debt**¹⁵. These manipulations can endanger the balance of Earth ecosystems, including oceans. Some examples from the sea: *Ocean fertilization* consists in “fertilizing” the ocean with iron nanoparticles to increase the number of phytoplankton (micro-organisms that dwell on the surface of the ocean and sequester CO₂); *dropping limestone* into the ocean to reduce its acidity in order to soak up extra CO₂; *the storing of carbon by dumping tree logs or biomass*¹⁶ into seawater; or the *creation of synthetic microbes and algae* to sequester higher levels of CO₂. Even if a **moratorium** was declared on geoengineering at the CBD meeting in 2010, some companies and governments are still eager to continue with these experiments. **Many civil society groups are now asking for this moratorium on geoengineering to be recognised by the Rio+20 summit in June 2012.**

Part of the same struggle

Small-scale fishing communities together with small-scale family farmers, pastoralists, indigenous people and social movements, attributed the main responsibility of the current climate crisis to the **unsustainable capitalist model**, and during the *Cochabamba People's Conference on climate change* last year proposed measures to protect the rights of mother Earth and its people¹⁷. Fishing communities are struggling around the world for their survival, which also means a struggle *to maintain the well-being of the marine and coastal environment*. More small-scale fishery means more fish for human consumption and not for industrial processing; more people employed directly in the fishing or indirectly in the preservation and selling of fish - especially women; a more lively rural and coastal environment; less fuel consumption; almost no discards at sea and no damage to sea and ocean beds; etc. Local fishing communities also play an important role in *protecting* their fishing grounds and can play a more central role *in the conservation of fish stocks* through community management. In order to do that, **decisional power needs to go back into their hands and the current policies to support industrial fishing need to change, while all the market-based mechanisms** conceived for solving the climate crisis or for managing important natural resources **need to be rejected** – as they are not the solution. Supporting local communities means supporting *a model of society that steps away from the current unsustainable neo-liberal model and includes the values of Food Sovereignty*.

Voices from the field

Short stories from Africa, America, Asia and Europe, resistance and alternatives

Confronting the twin challenges of climate change and unsustainable development

Magline Peter, state convenor of the Theeradesa Mahila Vedi (Coastal Women's collective) based in Thiruvanthapuram in the Indian coastal state of Kerala.

I belong to the Theeradesa Mahila Vedi (a collective of over 10,000 women fish-vendors in the state of Kerala) which was a feminist response to the challenges faced by women in the traditional fishing community. The onset of ‘modernisation’ in the sector through the Indo-Norwegian fisheries project **had a deep and profound impact on women in specific ways** – loss of occupations such as net making, salting and preserving fish and fish-vending. The initial opposition to the project, led mostly by male fishworkers, focussed only on the entry of large mechanised trawlers and fish-catch. The women's collective recognises and attempts to respond to the multiple challenges of an export led fisheries model and the current issues around climate

change. *Members of the forum are in the frontlines of the battle against expansion of ports and tourism projects on the coast and false solutions such as artificial reefs*. In the coming decades due to climate change, sea erosion will increase; fish-catch will further decline, storm surges will also be more intense and frequent. In order to help the community adapt, *we want the government to enact a total ban on sand mining, put early disaster warning systems in place and enforce a moratorium on harbour and port expansion*. Kerala is unfortunately a food import dependent state today. **It has to reclaim self sufficiency in food and in the area of fisheries**. On fisheries, it should stop issuing licences to deep sea trawlers, overturn the export led model and focus more on policies that ensure the livelihoods of traditional fishworkers are protected. We recognise that to win this battle, *we have to align with other democratic struggles being fought by communities against mega energy projects, corporate control over agriculture and industrial zones*.

No water today, no food tomorrow

Rehema Bavuma Namaganda, Ugandan fisher woman and member of the World Forum of Fish Harvesters and Fish Workers (WFF).

Land-grabbing must stop today, because if it doesn't stop today there will be no food tomorrow. [...] We, fisherfolk, depend on dry and wet land – especially the land around bodies of water – for food, employment, access to water, etc. But the land around water bodies (lakes, rivers, oceans) is selling like hot cakes today. All big industries, such as oil, mining, gas industries and big investments are fighting for places near water bodies and this endangers our lives directly because when they come and occupy these territories, fisherfolk have no access to water anymore. That implies they have no food, no job, no water, their lives are affected directly. Back at home, along lake Victoria, everybody used to have an income, men and women: men used to catch fish and women to smoke it. Right

now when you go there, the people who are living around the lake are not eating fish anymore, if you find a family along the lake with fish on their plates, then it is a rich family. Why? Because all fish has been caught by private investors and taken to other markets. This should not happen. For us the issue of land-grabbing is not just on paper is in our lives, we want to stop it today. We want the fisherfolk to have secure rights over their land. [...] Unfortunately even today while we are witnessing the collapse of the current economic model, some governments still insist on big investments in land. *There are many evidences that show how this does not help and does not solve the problems of food insecurity in households, it is only for private gains.* What we want is to see local households having access to proper food, and this will only happen if they have tenure rights on their lands. The whole interview at <http://www.radiomundoreal.fm/No-Water-Today-No-Food-Tomorrow>

THE WORLD IN WORDS

Voluntary Guidelines: What has been achieved

The first draft of the *Voluntary Guidelines for the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests*, with changes from July and October negotiations will be soon available in the FAO webpage. Social organisations believe that some achievements were made in the long negotiating sessions with the FAO member states. Firstly it was made clear that *the aim of the Guidelines is to protect the tenure of natural resources by the sectors most affected by hunger, such as peasants, indigenous peoples and artisanal fishers.* Secondly, progress was made in the acknowledgement of **customary and collective rights** to land tenure, which is essential since resources are being plundered under the pretext that they are not being used because they are not private property. There was also progress in the recognition of **the informal tenure of land**, which is of particular importance in urban and rural areas, and a chapter dedicated to redistribution of resources, issues that had virtually disappeared from the national and international agendas. The Guidelines should act as a reference not only for the FAO and national governments but also for agencies like IFAD or the World Bank, institutions which also influence on multilateral public policies on food and agriculture. Interview with Sofia Monsalve (FIAN), the full article <http://www.radiomundoreal.fm/Sesion-del-Comite-de-Seguridad?lang=en>

UPOV, 50 years at the service of the seed industry

On the 20th of October in Geneva, more than one hundred sustainable family farmers, members of various associations and committed citizens gathered in front of the offices of the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV), to protest on the occasion of the fiftieth birthday of the institution. They demanded "The immediate recognition of the **right of farmers to re-sow and freely exchange their**

seeds, and to protect them from biopiracy and contamination from patented genes. No to the stranglehold of seed multinationals, the New Plant Variety Certificate of 1991 and any form of patent on plants, parts of plants, their genes, or production methods." To read the whole article, <http://viacampesina.org>

People first, not finance!

As the leaders of the G20 met in Cannes, more than 8000 people participated in the alternative *People's forum* that took place from the 1st to the 4th of November near Nice. Many assemblies, actions and workshops were organized and many the proposals further developed. Calling for a halt to austerity measures and inequities an end of the demolition of public services; demanding the enforcement of taxes on financial transactions against financial speculation and a change of the current system to really solve climate change; calling for food sovereignty to an end to the privatization of natural resources and land-grabbing; demanding for free movement of men and women and solidarity with the indignados and other movements worldwide; from the struggle against TNCs to a call for real global justice and solidarity! For more info: <http://www.mobilisationsg8g20.org/english/g8g20-coalition/article/proposals-carried-within-the-national-g8g20-coalition.html>

Read the final declaration of the first international peasant conference "Stop the land grab!"

http://www.viacampesina.org/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1154:stop-land-grabbing-now&catid=23:agrarian-reform&Itemid=36

Next edition special on **food and cities, urban agriculture** – Send your contributions - news stories, photos, interviews to info@nyeleni.org by the **30th of December!**

To read, listen, watch and share

- *Studies on Marine Protected Areas*, Samudra Monograph, ICSF, <http://icsf.net/icsf2006/ControllerServlet?handler=OTHERPUB&code=viewPubn&language=EN&subsitleid=2&pubnType=monograph>
- *The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture*, FAO, 2010 <http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i1820e/i1820e.pdf>
 - *Using Fisheries and aquaculture to reduce poverty and hunger*, The WorldFish Centre, 2008, http://www.worldfish-center.org/resource_centre/WF_1105.pdf
 - *Earth Grab - Geopiracy, the New Biomasters and Capturing Climate Genes*, ETC Group, 2011, <http://www.pambazuka.org/en/category/features/77446>
 - *Políticas públicas para la Soberanía Alimentaria. Barreras y Oportunidades*, Veterinarios sin fronteras, 2011, http://www.veterinariossinfronteras.org/news/es_ES/2011/11/07/0005/politicas-publicas-para-la-sa

For reports and more references www.nyeleni.org

One does not sell the earth upon which the people walk. Tashunka Witko, 1840 –1877