

Yemaya

No. 13

ICSF's NEWSLETTER ON GENDER AND FISHERIES

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From the Editor

Dear Friends,

Greetings! This issue carries write-ups from several countries, including the Philippines, Indonesia, India, Chile and the Netherlands.

The article from the Netherlands presents a complex case in which small-scale fishers and their families are feeling the impact of the action by the anti-cartel Authority of the Netherlands to penalize the shrimp sector (producers and trading companies) for limiting production and thereby influencing prices to the disadvantage of consumers. As has been pointed out, small-scale producers and their families find it inexplicable that they are being treated like big telecom and oil companies. Undoubtedly the present situation, where there is overproduction and oversupply of shrimp in the market and small-scale producers are struggling to fish more to make ends meet even as prices crash, is not the optimal solution. How can the interests of consumers, producers, trading companies and environmental sustainability be balanced? That is the challenge for policymakers. The stories from Philippines are of women who are part of local committees for coastal resources management. They describe their struggles and achievements, as they try and organize to take advantage of the spaces created for community participation in coastal resources management as a result of the passage of the 1998 Fisheries Code of the Philippines.



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As pressures on coastal lands increase in all parts of the world, fishing communities, the traditional inhabitants of the coasts, increasingly face displacement. The write-up from India describes the displacement that threatens the fishing population of Chennai, a metropolitan city on India's south-eastern coast. It emphasizes the need for greater cultural and social sensitivity in coastal and town planning. The article from Indonesia is sad testimony to the fact that people's participation in resource management has, in practice, only theoretical acceptability. At the ground level, communities still find themselves marginalized and disempowered by decisions taken by donors and decision-makers in the name of conservation and management, in which they are not even consulted. Thus, the *apong* fishers of Kampung Laut in Java risk losing their source of livelihood amidst plans to develop the area.

The article from Chile profiles the emergence of a woman as Administrator of a fish quay in Chile, a job that is traditionally held by men. It documents the way women are taking on new untraditional roles in the fishery, even as they struggle for greater recognition of these roles, along with a greater recognition of their traditional roles in the fishery and in fishing communities.

As always we invite you to send in your responses, write-ups and feedback for the next issue of *Yemaya*, by 30 October 2003.