

fishing groups, thereby depriving the latter of access to these resources.



*Impact of global trade:* Pressures from South Africa's trading partners in the North, such as from the countries of the European Union, coupled with the government's current export-oriented economic policy, have affected decisions about quota allocations, ostensibly in order to promote investment in the industry. These policies are being implemented at the expense of the income and food security of local fishing communities.

Local fishing communities are thus facing social and economic crises as a result of the restricted access to fishing resources. Many fisher people who used to be active now sit at home. In other cases, the limited quota allocations mean that households have a greatly reduced seasonal income.

In certain cases people turn to poaching (catching fish without a license/ quota) as a means of short-term survival. They are attracted by the large sums of money that are paid for protected species. In some instances, local people poach in return for payment in drugs. Powerful drug cartels use the lucrative trade in valuable marine resources as a way of obtaining finance. In communities where poaching is rife, problems, such as drugs and gangsterism, are on the increase. Linked to the high levels of poverty, gangsterism and drug abuse, is an increase in rape, sexual abuse and trafficking in women and children.

For communities that do not poach, the economic future is precarious. Given the seasonal nature of incomes, households find it difficult to pay their house rents and

there is increasing food insecurity and poverty. Fishing communities are relatively excluded from economic development in their regions and have expressed their frustration at the lack of information on alternative economic initiatives, for example, on how to access the tourism market.

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## Africa/ South Africa

### Why Deny Us the Right to Live?

*Demands of South African fishing communities at the Fisher People's Forum organized from 24 to 27 August 2002, as part of the Civil Society Forum prior to the World Summit on Social Development (WSSD)*

- Access and rights to the sea and marine resources through transformation of national fisheries policy;
- Preferential rights for *bona fide* fisher people;
- Challenging unfair global trade and finance policies that affect fisheries;
- Provision of fishworker's rights through the extension of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act and other labour protection and benefits, including safety regulations to cover subsistence and small-scale fishers;
- Access to means of sustaining families and livelihoods in the off-season;
- Provision of subsidies to subsistence, artisanal, small-scale and limited commercial fishers, given that currently it is the big companies that get petrol subsidies and tax breaks but not small-scale fishers;
- Provision of infrastructure such as jetties and slipways, adequate roads and access to finance for equipment, cold storage facilities and markets;
- Participation in the management of marine resources;
- Organization of fisher people so that they can be adequately represented to ensure that their issues are addressed;
- Democratization of the fishing industry;
- Visibility of women in the fishing industry.