

## **Fishing: the World Bank at the helm.**

"When the media, think tanks and even research funds are controlled by a small faction of the population whose interests are well identified, equality before the vote becomes a fiction"<sup>1</sup>

### **Issues of environmental summits.**

One may question the results of large masses devoted to the environment, from Rio 1992 to Rio 2012 through Johannesburg in 2002. Fishermen are virtually absent, but we realize in retrospect that these summits are important steps in a process that ensures the future of fishermen. In 1992, the Rio Summit resulted in the Convention on Biological Biodiversity, the Agreement on Straddling Stocks in 1995 and the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. In 2002, in Johannesburg, are signed commitments for the maximum sustainable yield (MSY) and the creation of marine protected areas and reserves. In 2012, Rio + 20 delivers a Global Partnership for Oceans (GPO) initiated by the World Bank. Under the guise of protecting the oceans, it is in fact a large program to promote the privatization of resources involving governments, companies, research institutes, foundations and ENGOs. It takes several years before the fishermen and their organizations perceive concretely the impact of choices made and driven at these summits. There may be positive effects, but the artisanal fishermen and their representatives are not associated with the guidelines implemented during such summits. It is mainly thanks to ICSF<sup>2</sup> that fishworkers' organizations are aware of the challenges of these summits and have attempted to make their voices heard. They did it in certain places such as the FAO<sup>3</sup>, but it is far from the case elsewhere. In fact, when the guidelines are adopted, the forces that implement them are already working to define strategies and implement them, their documents are ready. There is no plot, the documents are public, but these are strategies with their goals, their actors, their intellectual and financial resources, Their timelines. There is no unanimity among the players either, but convergence of objectives and means

### **Charting a Course to Sustainable Fisheries<sup>4</sup>**

In July 2012, a group of California researchers published a very elaborate program of action, as we have noted in the report "Blue Charity Business." It is the action plan for implementation in fishing of the GPO World Bank. Its development has brought together the

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<sup>1</sup> Jean-Paul Fitoussi, *Le théorème du lampadaire*, Les Liens qui Libèrent, 2013, 250 p.

<sup>2</sup> International Collective in Support of Fishworkers, [www.icsf.net/](http://www.icsf.net/)

<sup>3</sup> Samudra report, N° 51, Novembre 2008.

<sup>4</sup> California Environmental Associates, *Charting a Course to Sustainable Fisheries*, Juillet 2012, 120 p.

elite promoters liberalization of fisheries under the auspices of big liberal foundations that fund and steer the project. They include the Walton Family Foundation, related to Walmart, and Moore, Packard and Oak foundations. The Pew foundation is absent, it distanced itself from some liberal options and focuses on the promotion of reserves and political action at the highest level with governments and the United Nations. Pew and other foundations share the same objective of priority to the conservation and wilderness, coordinate their action in the United States within EGA (Environmental Grantmakers Association) and are frequently found to fund all programs or organizations (Oceana, Ocean 2012, Global Ocean Commission, etc.) that can clearly commit themselves to liberal options (Oceana)<sup>5</sup>. There is no unanimity between all these foundations, but a division of labor and the belief that conservation is the priority before human rights and imposes to put fishermen under tutelage. Alongside foundations, the Advisory Committee consists of researchers (Hilborn and Worms), the Danish Minister of Fisheries, ENGOs representatives (Environmental Defense Fund, WWF), international organizations (World Bank), representatives of Fishing Companies (Scotland, tuna), various consultants, etc. Lead authors are scientists in California (Costello) and representatives of EDF, great promoters of liberalization of fisheries in the United States. For this team, the aim is to transfer the American liberal model to the rest of the world.

### **Conservation through privatization.**

Fishing activity is designed according to the priority of preserving habitats, biodiversity and resources. A healthy and resilient ecosystem must allow to create wealth and reduce poverty, but it is a secondary objective that must flow naturally from the first. Yet we know that this is far from always being the case. We must first pay the price of adjustment and the availability of resources is no guarantee that they actually benefit those who need it to live, especially in a liberalized system. There is even a resource curse for the poor.

The conservation objective leads to constraints that can undermine the livelihoods of coastal communities. The authors also recognize that the creation of reserves does not guarantee that the benefits outweigh the constraints. Indeed reserves lead to the loss of fishing areas, significant costs of control, a lot of money is also needed for scientific monitoring and organization of the reserve. These costs are largely borne by the coastal fishermen as the preferred solution is to allocate them territorial use rights (TURFs) on their fishing zones linked with reserves. The allocation of these collective rights - positive in itself - is therefore under the supervision of conservationists organizations (ENGOs and Scientists).

For deep sea fishing, the choice of the report is clear, it is to generalize transferable, individual or collective quotas. It is also recommended to prohibit some fishing zones,

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<sup>5</sup> cf the press releases of Oceana and Greenpeace about the fisheries reform in Chile.

severely restrict, if not prohibit trawling, ban driftnets and to fight against all by-catches. All these objectives can be achieved through the implementation of "Policy-market dynamics". It is of course ITQs (Individual Transferable Quotas) and transferable concessions, various pressures on buyers, processors, distributors and consumers through the dissemination of lists, labels (MSC), boycott campaigns, mobilizing chefs. The questioning of subsidies and tax exemptions. The successes of management are improperly presented as the result of the implementation of ITQs while mere compliance with catch limits (TACs) or limitation of the fishing effort, without portability, would suffice to explain them.

The aim is conservation, as well as reaching the Maximum Economic Yield, that is to say, even beyond the profitability of fishing, the maximum profit. This MEY involves a small number of boats and fishermen and makes it possible to privatize and get paid in full by the fishing companies all costs associated with the activity (research, monitoring, control, administration, port development, security, etc. ). The rapporteurs forget to mention that all of these costs are added to the price of quotas and usually involve lower income for the crew. Contrary to what is often claimed, these costs of control for ITQs and various constraints are also very high (estimated at 20% of the catch value). We understand why we should reach a maximum profit!

## **50 in 10**

In November 2012, in Vancouver, 36 organizations came together for a few days workshop to finalize the implementation of the "Charting a Course". They named the project "50 in 10", which means restoring 50% of fisheries in 10 years. The plan was declined by major types of fisheries, of countries and especially for coastal fisheries. Among the organizations the big liberal foundations are to be found : UN agencies (FAO, World Bank), researchers (Hilborn) ENGOs (WWF, Oceana, Rare, EDF, Conservation International, The Nature Conservancy, etc), Multinational Fishing companies (Nippon Suisan), fishermen's organizations from Sweden and the United States, representatives of States (The Netherlands and USAID).

The workshop on coastal fisheries is particularly interesting because this sector is a headache for the Liberals, difficult to control and socially sensitive. They discussed how to attract private capital in this sector which requires large funds. ENGOs have been heavily involved in this sector by organizing reserves and MPAs and their role will grow. The introduction of ITQs is envisaged for certain resources, especially those that are shared with the deepsea fishermen. The report states « the need to do a widespread education campaign to overcome fear and initial rejection of rights-based management »<sup>6</sup>. However, the most promising orientation is one that would link a company with a monopoly on the marketing of fish with a community that has territorial use rights and management of fishing areas integrating a

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<sup>6</sup> *50 in 10 Design Workshop, proceedings*, Vancouver 7-8 November 2012. 43 p

reserve . The report, "Charting a Course" also indicated the need to change the laws to allow these traders monopolies. "The market be able to better facilitate the establishment of TURF systems if national laws are modified so as to give processors or buyers functionally exclusive access rights to certain areas."<sup>7</sup> Inshore fishermen will then be completely in the hands of wholesalers and processors themselves subjects to ENGOs. This system begins to develop in Indonesia with the support of WWF. The role of ENGOs in this program is important and often central. Some also play a major role in the organization and running of the seminar, as EDF who prepared the introductory report and controlled the development of "Charting a Course". All ENGOs, whatever their orientation, are mobilized to advance the program, whether it is pressure on distributors, consumers, restaurant owners, the press, politicians and, for some, the direct implementation of projects. Thus the role of Greenpeace is widely emphasized even if this NGO is not directly associated with the project. The foundations are there to provide an abundance of the necessary funds and Greenpeace International largely benefits from them to launch campaigns towards the public and distributors.

### **Corporations, foundations and the United Nations.**

The most recent initiative is the creation of the Global Ocean Commission, created in 2013 by the big Anglo-saxon foundations (Pew, Moore, Oak, Marisla, Waitt, etc.). It brings together high-level politicians (ministers and presidents), industrialists like Tata. Its stated goal is to develop proposals for submission to the UN in 2014 for the management and protection of international waters. So the private sector gets a position to recommend public policy in this domain. For Pew, it is mainly to promote its program of big reserves on the model of the Chagos or Palau. In Palau, a Pacific micro-state of 21,000 inhabitants, Pew got the prohibition of commercial fishing on the entire EEZ, the size of France, in exchange for a promise of tourism development. Pew is currently laying siege to the French authorities in the Pacific to advance its projects of giant reserves<sup>8</sup>. Obviously, for Pew, tourism is always preferable to fishing divers admirers of corals and whales traveling by plane and staying in hotels, however, have a higher ecological footprint than fishermen, not to mention the social impacts of mass tourism .

Another clear objective of these foundations stemming from large multinationals is to control the development of all marine activities, from transport to the extraction of minerals. As on land, the creation of large reserves without fishing makes it possible to justify the development of potentially more destructive and polluting mining, even if they are highly regulated. A large meeting was held in Washington in April 2013 between the Global Ocean Commission and the World Ocean Council, an organization that brings together most of the

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<sup>7</sup> Op. cit, *Charting a Course for Sustainable Fisheries*, p 108.

<sup>8</sup> *Scientists Say More Large Ocean Wilderness Parks Needed*, April 15, 2013, on RedOrbit.

major companies involved in international waters, oil, mining and transport companies with also, curiously the "Cape Cod Commercial Hook Fishermen's Association." These liners from New England are funded with millions of dollars by some foundations, a good excuse to show that the foundations support small-scale fishermen, but are not they bribed to be used as support for a Corporate Control of marine resources of the planet?

Very clearly the organizations of artisanal fishermen grouped in two forums, the WFF and WFFP, took a stand against the Global Partnership for Oceans<sup>9</sup> and its options in favour of widespread privatization policies of fish resources. They complain that the fishermen have not at all been associated to the development of this policy and demand that fisheries policies be defined in the respect for human rights and to ensure the freedom, food sovereignty and dignity of fishermen. For its part, FAO has initiated a long process of meetings with artisanal fishermen throughout the world to develop a program of support for small-scale fisheries. This is an important step towards the recognition of the rights of small-scale fishermen, but what weight do they have against the financial powers that control the decision-making process with the connivance of large ENGOs who claim to represent the citizens and even the interests of fishermen, shameless?

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<sup>9</sup> *Fishers groups express reservations about Global Partnership for Oceans*, in Samudra News Alerts, 21 mars 2013.