



## 5<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of World Forum of Fisher Peoples (WFFP)

**World Forum of Fisher Peoples (WFFP):** World Forum of Fisher Peoples (WFFP) is an international alliance of 36 mass based national organizations of fisherfolk working in 32 countries of all continents of the world. WFFP aims to protect, defend and strengthen the communities that depend on the fishery for their livelihood, and represents the small scale, artisanal fishers' interest at the international level and play the role of global political organ of the same communities.



**Background of General Assembly:** General Assembly of WFFP is organized after every three years as per the WFFP Constitution. So far WFFP's three Constituent Assembly Meetings and one General Body had been held at Delhi, India; Loctudy, France; Kismu, Kenya and Negombo, Sri Lanka respectively. It ensures democratic functioning, elections for the new office bearers, plans out for the global common agenda for the artisanal; small scale fisher communities and the membership of 40 million fishers across the world. Fifth General Assembly of the World Forum of Fisher People was organized by PFF in Karachi from 27<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2011 at Hotel Regent Plaza Karachi. Some 60 international delegates from 17 countries participated in this event.

***Major objectives of the meeting were as under:***

- To protect, defend and strengthen the communities that depend on fishing as their sole livelihood
- To assist member organizations to secure and improve upon the economic viability and quality of life of Fisher People
- To recognize, support and enhance the role of women in the social, economic, political and cultural life of the fishing community
- To create an understanding of the resource as a common heritage of humanity. And through sustainable fishing practices, conservation, regeneration of the marine and inland resources and protecting the ecosystems, to ensure that it is passed on to future generations
- To protect fishing communities, fish resources and fish habitats, such as coastal zones, watersheds and mangroves, from land-based, sea-based and air-based threats includes pollution (including the use of the sea as a dumping ground for toxic waste), destructive industrial aquaculture, over-fishing and destructive fishing practices, and unregulated tourism
- To create common understanding on the regional as well as Global issues of the small scale fishermen and take these issues on global policy forums (Livelihoods, sea water territorial issues, fundamental rights etc)
- To raise cumulative voice on global forums against anti-fisherfolk policies by the IFIs, and multinational companies etc.

The issues encircling disputes on water territories, detained fishermen and several international frameworks like UN Law of sea, Depletion of the fish stock caused by several reasons including deep sea fishing by

deep sea trawlers, food security issue, depleting natural resources, climate change etc. were discussed in detail in the meeting. Global fisheries policy has also been focused to overcome the issues and bridge the gaps among states. Constitutional amendments in WFFPs constitution and discussions to strengthen WFFP were also held.

**Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF):** Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF) is a peoples' organization having a membership of 60,000 fisherfolk across Pakistan. PFF has been striving to protect the socio-economic and political rights of underprivileged fishermen of Pakistan since last 12 years. PFF is a founder member of World Forum of Fisher Peoples.

#### **WFFP Coordination Committee (CC) Meeting:**

**Title of Activity:** Coordination Committee (CC) Meeting



**Date:** April 27-30, 2011  
**Time:** 09:00 AM to 10:00 AM  
**Venue:** Hotel Regent Plaza, Karachi  
**Participants:** Male: 250 Female: 150 Total: 400  
**Chaired by:** Ms. Sherry Pittou from Canada

**Proceedings:** General Assembly started with a Coordination Committee Meeting which was presided by Ms. Sherry Pittou. She welcomed the guest and extended appreciation to PFF. Mr. Naseegh also appreciated PFF's efforts and shared the agenda of the meeting.

- A brief report from PFF with respect to preparation of the programme and the agenda of 5<sup>th</sup> General Assembly
- Constitutional issues related to participation/quorum
- Confirmation the number of participants who are present

M. Ali Shah then presented the detailed programme of the GA-5 and read out the agenda. He said, after this CC meeting, inauguration ceremony would be held, where provincial minister for Fisheries would join them at the ceremony. Earlier, Chief Minister of Sindh province was scheduled, but he did not come. Inauguration ceremony included two parts, speeches in the first part and cultural programme in the second part. First speech would be from PFF as a welcome speech and then Herman Kumara from Sri Lanka would introduce WFFP. One speech will be delivered from ex-Chief Justice of high court and he would tell about the issue of detained fishermen.



After speeches, a cultural programme would be held. One famous artist Ms. Sheema Kermani would perform a dance on issue of detained fishermen. On 28th PILER and PFF would hold a dinner at PILER Centre and on 29<sup>th</sup> a rally would be organized.

The participants further discussed on the points of the schedule. Mr. Naseegh highlighted the constitutional issues related to quorum. He said according to Constitution for a General Assembly each of country must send two delegations, total 25 countries are enlisted that means they must have 50 delegates there. Quorum would be two-third, that means out of 50 two-third must be present.

Mr. Muhammad Ali Shah confirmed that he had received 44 nominations including six observers. Mr. Naseegh added if official number was not there, they would hold a Special General Assembly instead. The remaining schedule would be the same. They decided to announce the quorum later after Inauguration Ceremony.

## Inauguration Ceremony of the 5th General Assembly of WFFP

**Title of Activity:** Inauguration Ceremony of GA-5 of WFFP  
**Date:** April 27-30, 2011  
**Time:** 11:00 AM to 01:00 PM  
**Venue:** Hotel Regent Plaza, Karachi  
**Participants:** Male: 250 Female: 150 Total: 400  
**Chief Guest:** Mr. Zahid Hussain Bhurgari (Provincial Minister for Fisheries)

**Proceedings:** The inauguration ceremony has been started with the Sufi song (Wai) of Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai which was followed by the welcome speech of Mr. Muhammad Ali Shah (Chairman Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum). He welcomed the chief guest, honorary guests, delegates from all member organizations of WFFP all over the world and other participants belonging to civil society, media, academia etc. He showed his determination that the GA-5 will bring new paradigms in the field of small scale fisheries the world over. He said, more or less the issues in small fisheries are same in almost all the countries and hoped that WFFP will chalk out a very thoughtful strategy to find a way out of these issues and challenges.



Then the chief guest Mr. Zahid Hussain Bhurgari expressed his views by saying that he felt much pleasure to see the fisherfolk of the world united and struggling for their rights. He said that his government has done significantly good for protecting the rights of fishermen by referring the recently done legislation in the provincial assembly to

abolish the contract system of fresh waters that ensured the ownership of indigenous fishermen of these waters.



Mr. Herman Kumara Ex. Secretary General of WFFP, in his speech, gave a brief introduction to WFFP and shared some success stories of WFFP. He said that exploitation and depleting marine resources, increasing pollution and other issues brought the leaders of fisherfolk across the world to form WFFP in Delhi. He said that WFFP have already designed a global policy for fisheries with recommendations collected from all the member countries. That comprehensive document, he said, can be submitted by every member organization to their respective government.

PFF General Secretary Mr. Saeed Baloch and PFF's General Manager Mr. Hussain Jarwar also spoke on the occasion. At the end of the session, the fishermen leaders expressed their solidarity with the world fishers and vowed to continue their struggle with commitment and dedication.

**Cultural Segment:** During the inauguration ceremony, Ms. Sheema Kirmani with her group performed a dance depicting the theme of fishing and the issues and challenges of community. Her group received appreciation for her performance by observing pin drop silence during her dance and a big hand from audience. Then the cultural team along with Ustad performed some tableaux and sang some traditional songs which fascinated the participants.

Finally, the participants were served with lunch.

## **Minutes of GA – Day 1**

**April 27, 2011**



First Session of 5th General Assembly of World Forum of Fisher People started after inauguration ceremony and lunch.

Alexis Fossi explained about translations. He said translations were available in English, Spanish and Urdu, French and Thai.

Three members (Coordinators) were at the dais:

1. Naseegh Jaffer from South Africa, Coordinator
2. Sherry Pictou from Canada, Coordinator
3. Herman Kumara from Sri Lanka, General Secretary and Coordinator

Mr. Naseegh welcomed all to Pakistan and said that the inauguration ceremony was very impressive. They have been hearing about conflicts, bombs in Pakistan but discovered a human side of Pakistan, a country of beautiful culture. He praised Mr. Muhammad Ali Shah and encouraged his hard work. He thanked PFF for setting new standards for WFFP and declared 5th Assembly open on behalf of CC of WFFP.

Introduction of the participants (names and country) carried out.



Mr. Naseegh pointed out that due to visas issues, some delegates could not attend the assembly from Uganda, Sirloin, Mauritania, Horandus, Mali. Some countries did not nominate their delegates. Ms. Nataliya treasurer WFFP and Thomas Kochery from India is attending the assembly on special invitation. They had the official quorum so Mr. Naseegh announced the Official 5<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.

General Secretary WFFP submitted the report regarding minutes of last meeting that was held three years ago. Mr. Naseegh further said that such types of forums belong to the delegates talking about the problems of fishermen in their countries. The decisions will be made by consensus not through vote. He posed two questions in front of delegates and asked to give short presentations not more than 10 minutes regarding the same. The questions were;

1. Since last GA in SL in 2007 explain what is current situation of small scale and traditional fishing in your country especially for the last 3 years?
2. How you, as WFFP member, are responding to this situation?

The participants were allowed to speak in their own language. He gave few minutes to gather thoughts during that time, Mr. Kochery distributed a souvenir.

The response from the delegates is as under continents wise in alphabetical order.

#### **Continent Africa:**

**Guinea:** Small fishermen who sell their products can be benefited from the fruits of their work. Conditions of fishermen's work are going bad in Guinea. During three years the President has changed twice or thrice and then military took over. The country is not stable and going through with a transition period.

But fishermen have organized themselves for their rights of catching fish. In January 2011 after the elections they have defined a new path which is leading them towards betterment and fisherfolk are coming to their place with the passage of time.

**Senegal:** As we know since 2008 there are a lot of difficulties in this sector, especially for women. Young women working in the factories face a lot of administrative and other problems. Load shedding is another big issue in this country. The countries near to our fishing zones take away all fish stocks especially the trawlers from China and ships from Taiwan, Russia, Ukraine are totally robbing fish from Senegal.

Fishing organizations are approaching media and demanding for ban on foreign vessels. However some efforts have been made in Africa and fishermen on Mauritania have obtained support from other



African countries. If all countries of the world support us the artisan fishing would be protected. We have to join hands to protect our cause together and the organizations have to negotiate with the Senegal Government.

**South Africa:** South Africa has many problems because the government does not want to recognize small scale fishermen. Big businessmen and all those who have money and power have all the rights but small scaled fishers have no fishing rights. Due to this discrimination the poverty is increasing day by day and the poor fisher people are becoming criminals, their children cannot go to schools, they cannot enjoy having their basic needs and above all the government is also against them.

Community leaders have made organizations in fishing communities across the coast to address the government. They have taken the government to courts and made them realized their mistakes and fishermen won the case. Although fisher people want to go to sea and are contributing in writing fishing policy but it is still a challenge to organize them and create unity in fisher folk.

#### **Continent America:**

**Canada:** It was a welcome sign that Canadian delegation was there. In Canada, the fishers are threatened by the Industrial use of chemicals. Change in international market place, reduction in prices and lack of control over market place are some other threatening factors. Continuation of privatization of fishing and shell fish harvesting habitats are some major issue. There has been ongoing erosion of indigenous rights of fishermen.

All our responses are building strong alliances and solidarity with fisher. In Canada small scale fisheries are not so organized and the movement is weaker. There is a lot of work to do and the Canadian fisher folk leadership is trying to build indigenous fisheries. The basic issues are aquaculture and privatization so that they are trying to overcome these problems.

#### **Asia Continent:**

**India:** There are many problems in the country including water pollution, over fishing and other people are encroaching to their resources. Their great leader Harekrishna campaigned against all these issues and launched a movement against Coastal Regulation

Zone (CRZ) notification. Indian government wanted to make changes and bring more industries in the coastal areas, they also bringing nuclear power plant in coastal areas. The Indian fisher folk movement is protesting and demanding to cancel all nuclear plants and industries in the coastal areas and campaigning against it. There is a need to establish the rights on fishing.

WFFP should have a demand that 50 km border area should be declared as peace zone so the neighbouring countries can do fishing in that area. Fishermen are travelling all over the world. In every country visa for fishermen should be free, visa should be given to fisher people at the airport or on arrival. Water and land are fishers' rights; there is a need to reform land and aquatic resources in all the countries.

**Pakistan:** (Chair allowed four people from Pakistan to speak.) Hussain Jarwar (GM PFF): Fishermen in Pakistan are also facing the same issues as the fisher people in India. Deep sea trawlers are fishing in Pakistani coastal line. Then there is marine pollution, which is depleting fish stocks. Use of destructive nets is another issue. Though these nets are banned, many fishermen are still using. Depletion of fish stocks due to reduction of fresh water flow in Delta area is another issue; there is lack of fundamental rights for fishermen. Most of fishermen who live in islands do not have civic rights, health, education, drinking water facilities. Federal fisheries policy is not pro-fisher policy. There is no provincial fisheries policy. PFF has demanded a separate policy at provincial level.

Detention of fishermen is a serious issue. There is a network built at national and regional levels. PFF and PILER are jointly working for release of fishermen. A press conference was organized, jointly filed a Constitutional petition in Supreme Court of Pakistan for release of fishermen who have completed their sentences. As a result of the petition, Pakistan government has released more than 400 Indian fishermen. The government had established a contract system. They were giving contracts to rich people to do fishing. In 2007 the contract system was abolished in one province. Sindh has a separate fisheries law, rest of provinces have separate laws.

Tahira Ali Shah (Vice Chairperson PFF): Women fishermen do not have employment opportunities. Water shortage in Indus delta, cutting of mangrove forests, marine pollution are some problems which are creating unemployment. There was gender balance in fisheries, but after increase in population, now role of women has declined. Illegal occupation of land by Army and Police is another problem. We are

devoid of basic rights, drinking water, education, health and employment. Fisherwomen's rights are not included in any fisheries policy. Many people have lost their houses in flood. People are living shelter less. There is no state level support neither they pay any attention to resolve such problems.

PFF through mobilization has organized fishermen at a platform. Seminars and workshops were held on fishermen issues of Sindh and Balochistan. The leadership of PFF is in continuous struggle, training centres have been opened for fisherwomen, letters have been sent to the authorities for women employment and releasing fresh water in delta area. Fisherwomen take part in struggle for their rights they are mobilized and when Army acquired land of a graveyard, women were in the forefront. They know their rights and are not afraid of enemies. The active participation of fisherwomen is another reason of PFF's progressive success.

Gulab Shah: After construction of dams on River Indus, delta area has been destroyed. Sea is intruding the land and almost three million acres of land has come under water. The government is seeking loans from World Bank and IMF for construction of dams, but they are destroying Indus Delta. IMF and World Bank should be asked to put a ban on construction of dams.

PFF representative from Balochistan: In 1984 Korean made destructive nets, which are being used by fishermen till date. Because of these nets many species of fish have been destroyed. Prawns, lobsters are not found much in Balochistan.

**Sri Lanka:** Coastal people in Sri Lanka face a lot of problems. Development plan of Sri Lankan Government is focused on tourism. After tsunami many islands have been privatized for tourism and aquaculture. Though it is always very difficult to fight for rights even then fisher people in Sri Lanka struggled against tourism project because it was one of the major problem for them. As a result of their hard struggle, the government had accepted their demands.

Indian trawlers fish around Sri Lankan waters and use bottom trolley, which is destructive. The Sri Lankan Fishermen taken up this matter and had dialogues with Indian fishermen. They convinced them to avoid use of destructive nets and came up with an agreement. But the Government is not accepting that agreement because it was between individual and not the states.

As a result of their hard work and continuous struggle they won a case in Supreme Court and the use of destructive gears has officially been restricted. The fisherfolk movement in Sri Lanka is active and mobilized they have now formed an alliance to fight tourism project of the government.

**Thailand:** The Thai Government support commercial and modern fishing business and does not recognize the problems of common fisherfolk. But fisherfolk in Thailand are mobilized and trying to conserve natural resources by themselves. They are in continuous efforts to make networks to change the fisheries policies in Thailand.

**Caribbean:** Small fishermen have the same problems all over the world. WFFP has become a civil organization, representing small fishermen at international level and is fighting for women's rights also. We represent WFFP everywhere we go. Since last assembly in 2007 in Sri Lanka, They have big problems like use of pesticide, destruction of mangroves etc.

**Spain:** Galicia is a major fishing zone in Spain, which represents 90 percent of the fishing in the country. Their Organization named Agamar has been working for the rights of fisherwomen and represents Galicia at national and international levels. They are negotiating with European Union for artisanal fishermen rights; the other problem in Spain is aquaculture. They have been working for the rights of women working in seashell factories but still women have very less rights as compared to men.

After the presentations from each member country Mr. Naseegh address the audience that the main purpose of meetings like that was to have solidarity and get support across the borders. Those borders which have been made by the governments should not separate fishers. They must act in unity with each other.

Mr. Herman as WFFP General Secretary gave a presentation and presented the decisions of previous GA. He said in the last General Assembly in 2007 15 decisions were made. Some decisions got implemented, but some could not be able to do so. In December 2007 the WFFP GA-4 it was unanimously decided that the GA-5 will be held at Pakistan. It was year 2010, the due time period for the WFFP GA-5 to held according to the decisions of the GA 4 and the CC. However, the challenges WFFP faced caused to delay the scheduled time to convene the GA-5.

He gave credit to PFF for organizing GA-5. He said *“Fortunately, we are here at Karachi, Pakistan today to celebrate our unity among small scale, artisanal fisher people in the world, as well as to plan out our future activities to be visualized our issues and concerns as fisher people in the global level. However, the amount of work, commitment, labour and wisdom behind the organizing GA-5 was enormous among the CC members, very specifically among the members of PFF executive board. It is commendable the work of our team at Pakistan which WFFP family is grateful for their hard work. We are here today because of the role played by PFF”*.

He further added about the meeting conducted or attended by the WFFP.

WFFP conducted two CC meetings at Bangkok in 2008 and Rome in 2009. However, they were not able to conduct a CC meeting in 2010 due to practical reasons. One major barrier was the funding limitations at WFFP during the period. However, they wanted to conduct the 2010 CC meeting while they are having the WFFP General Assembly at Pakistan.

**COFI Meetings:** COFI is a global inter-governmental forum examines the major challenges in international fisheries and aquaculture and makes recommendations to Governments, Regional Fisheries Bodies, and the fishing industry, trade unions, NGOs and fishworkers. The work carried out by the WFFP since the Securing Sustainable Small Scale Fisheries conference [4SSF] held at Bangkok, Thailand, in October 2008 come to the peak at the COFI meeting which was convened by FAO, Rome this year. The WFFP and the other civil society organizations came up with the Civil Society Statement which WFFP and the collaborated organizations used as the instrument for sustain the lives, livelihoods of the small scale fisher people. WFFP CC held at Bangkok in October 2008, has decided that widest possible participation for the member organizations to the COFI meeting and with the preparatory home work at the respective national governments. WFFP member organizations did an advocacy work just before they come to COFI, Rome in March and met the government delegations to COFI for their support for the Civil Society Statement of the 4SSF. With the collaboration of the ICSF and the facilitation of IPC for the food sovereignty, WFFP had gained several achievements at the COFI.

Importantly, WFFP organized a side event which was also very vital to highlight the issues and also the solutions proposed as the Small Scale Fisher People in the world.

The WFFP members were energized and gained much courage to continue their struggles and there is another agreement of the team as they need to continue their struggles at country level in much organized and vigorous levels and demand for the rights of the small scale, artisanal fishers in the world.

COFI 29th session was held at Rome, Italy on 26th January to 2nd February 2011. This was also very important event for the SSF as the outcomes of the regional conferences held in Asia, Africa and Pacific & Caribbean regions were finally compiled and presented to the COFI 29th session. From WFFP around six members' delegation attended and closely worked with WFF/ CFFA/ICSF. The outcome of the session was to propose to draft an international instrument for voluntary guide lines for small scale fisheries.

**IPC Meetings:** IPC is a collective to advocate food sovereignty at FAO and in the world which is an international body of social movements, NGOs, experts and other concerned groups. WFFP was a regular participant of the IPC process and worked with farmers, fisher folk, pastoralists, women, environmentalists, consumers, and many other small food producer groups in the world. The main aim is to focus food security issues in relation poverty, malnutrition, bio diversity, climate change.

As a result of collaboration in the IPC process, WFFP was able to represent the Committee on Food Security, which was the outcome of the renewed CFS process at FAO. WFFP nominated Mohammed Ali Shah as the representative of the interim committee of the CFS in the year 2010/11.

**ICSF Meetings:** WFFP collaborated with ICSF in many occasions in the global fisheries events organized by them.

**COP Meetings:** WFFP invited to number of COP meetings held and attended by WFFP delegates. The Bio Diversity secretariat and ICSF facilitated WFFP's participation and the close collaboration on this was appreciable.

He said that the major constraint to organize WFFP GA-5 on time was the financial difficulties we faced. WFFP needs funds, for regular communication in three languages. The new coordination secretariat

should be supported through funding to do this. This way the level of communication among the member organizations needed to be improved in the future. The member organizations need to consider their contribution to function the WFFP to be an international organization to represent them. There are very few organizations are in coordination with the coordination secretariat of the WFFP. At the same time, WFFP face serious financial difficulties to conduct the programs, international representations, delegations etc. As WFFP is a member based organization, all the member organizations are expected to contribute through subscription, which is 250 USD per year.

Then Mr. Thomas Kochery presented the financial and audited statement with the members and Mr. Naseeah discussed the funds issues with the members in detail.

Day One Meeting adjourned.

## **Minutes of GA – Day 2**

**April 28, 2011**

**Agenda:** Discussion on major topics, Small Scale Fisheries (SSF) consensus statement; COFI statements; other issues from country reports.

The day started with a documentary followed by a presentation on Pakistan Fisher folk Forum's (PFF) work for flood relief in Pakistan. Pakistan battled with the worst floods in its history that immersed one fifth of the country's land and displaced 20million people. Sind was one of the worst affected provinces with 17 districts affected. PFF made a tremendous contribution to the flood relief working in the coastal belt of Theta and other affected areas of Sindh.

It was decided that the pre-tea break session would be devoted to brief country reports. The post tea session was to discuss the new international instrument on small scale fisheries. Group work was to be followed in the post lunch session after which the groups were required to share their deliberations.

In the pre tea break session, Ms Sherry Pictou from Canada shared the details of the formulation of the Bangkok statement that contains the



key demands of CSOs, the FAO, other United Nations agencies, regional fisheries bodies and national governments. The statement highlights a *“deep sense of urgency about the neglect of small-scale and indigenous fisheries and demand immediate action to avert impending disaster and conflict.”*

Ms Pictou observed that the process provides a good insight into how governments and international systems work for policy formulation. The statement is a consensus-driven draft as the WFPP members were engaged in drafting the statement through a consultative process. WFPP finally got the FAO to support the rights of the small scale fishermen. It should be considered as partial victory as this will ensure that the international agencies will focus on the developing countries.

**Other remarks:**

- Fernando Large Hiccup and Hannah Chevy Marie from Philippines highlighted conversion, privatization, eco tourism, and reclamation of fisheries land and mining as major problems confronting the fisheries community in the Philippines. Hiccup informed that the coastal areas are fast being taken over for so-called development work, with airports restaurants, recreational spots casinos being built along coastal areas. The famous Laguna Lake has seen multiple development projects being stepped up, posing increasing challenges to the fisheries community and restricting their livelihood options. He informed that the community is well mobilized and has been fighting for issues through campaigning, mass protests, lobbying with parliamentarians, and filing petitions etc. Due to strong lobbying of the fisheries community, an \$18.7billion programme along the Laguna Lake was brought to a halt.

- Misbahul Munir Aziz described poor working conditions of the Indonesian fishermen who also have to struggle with a state that has been increasingly favouring capitalist ventures at the cost of small scale industries. He identified state apathy reflected in unconditional support for privatisation of marine resources and heavily capitalist ventures as well as pursuance of policies that are not beneficial to fishermen at all; arrests of fishermen over accidental border crossing; and climate change as major issues compromising fisheries community's rights and access to resources. Being a disaster prone country, the challenges for native small scale fishermen compound in the face of a state that makes no efforts to resolve fisheries community's issues. He pointed out promotion of education and political awareness, institutionalization of small capitalization,

involvement of fishermen in government planning, promoting involvement of women fishers, strengthening organisations struggling for fishermen as key areas of intervention and informed that the Indonesia Fisherfolk Union is also working in these areas.

- Lala Diop from Senegal made her remarks about women in Senegal. The administration and management of the fisheries community in Senegal is heavily dominated by women. They have organized to raise their issues with local, national governments and at the international level. Major problems include infrastructure development, poor civic amenities, access to basic political rights. She shared that there are efforts being made to ensure that women are involved at every step of the decision making processes at the state.

- Among other speakers emphasized the need for solidarity among the fisheries community. Highlighting of the issues of women involved in fisheries was specifically emphasized. It was observed that the multi-national character of a forum such as the World Forum of Fisher Peoples that has membership from fisheries communities from across the world lends strength to the platform as a strong representative body of the fisheries community.

- Tahira Shah from Pakistan spoke on the issue of women in the context of a fisheries sector that is struggling for survival. Environment issues, mangroves cutting, and development of mega projects all continue to contribute to the miseries of the fisheries communities. The situation is forcing migration of communities to areas that offer relatively better income generation opportunities. This migration not only creates difficulties for immigrants, it also poses challenges for those in the areas where immigrants are moving, as access to resources and livelihood shrinks over time due to higher demand.

**International Instrument on Small Scale Fisheries:** Launching the crucial session on International Instrument on Small Scale Fisheries, Mr. Herman Kumar made a presentation on the subject. He briefed that the FAO Committee on Fisheries approved the development of a new international instrument on small-scale fisheries in February 2011. The instrument, which should be taken as guidelines rather than a plan, will draw on existing relevant instruments, complementing the Code (of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries), and will be voluntary in nature, address both inland and marine fisheries and focus on the needs of developing countries.

Following a consultative drive to set WFFP's position on the Bangkok statement, three critical points were endorsed: (i) fishery access and user rights, (ii) post-harvest rights and (iii) human rights. It was

emphasized that a responsible and sustainable small-scale artisanal and indigenous fisheries is possible only if these points are addressed in an integrated manner. The FOA Committee on Fisheries (COFI) continued to meet to discuss the ways for developing small scale fisheries within an international policy framework.

On the civil society side, the WFFP, WFF, ICSF and IPC had strongly lobbied for a new international instrument. The main elements of an International Instrument were proposed as:

- a) will include a human rights approach addressing both States and stakeholders;
- b) will address the particular requirements and characteristics - including the social and cultural aspects - of small scale fisheries
- c) will provide the basis for developing national and regional plans of action to secure small-scale fisheries on the one hand, and assist, on the other, actions by communities and fish workers' organizations at different levels (paragraph 23, COFI/2011/8) consistent with a human rights approach.

It was emphasized that efforts are needed to ensure that the respective governments take into account the WFPP's views as they move to contribute to finalize the VGSSFI at COFI. In this regard, a critical task for the WFPP is to make sure that input is gathered from communities directly so that governments and COFI could be directly informed about what the fisher people feel must be done to provide an equitable and better sustainable living conditions for us. It was emphasized that WFPP develops its own set of guidelines. These guidelines could be used to engage COFI to ensure that the WFPP's views are inserted in the final official draft.

**Group Work:** Four groups were constituted to carry out group work to explore possible ways to carry out the above mentioned task. Four questions were asked and each of the groups – divided on the basis of languages; English, Urdu, French and Spanish – was required to present answers after two hours of deliberations. Following is the brief answer by all four groups to the questions asked.

**1. What practical steps must we take at community level to inform our communities about VGSSFI and to get their contributions as to what purpose it must serve and what it must contain?**

**English Group:** Conduct massive education in fishing community; establish links between local, national and international levels; pursue empowerment of organisation; publicize the Bangkok Statement through adaptation in accessible language and medium; incorporate the Bangkok statement into every activity; educate, organise and

mobilize the fisheries community to assert their rights; use media, internet, written communication material (for wide distribution) to educate people; organise trainings for women; conduct consultations on what the Bangkok Statement would contain (ILO, UNHCR, CEDAW conventions).

**Urdu Group:** The PFF and the NFF informed that they are already working at community level for awareness-raising on fisheries issues. However, both pledge to focus on holding corner meetings, focus group discussions, seminars and workshops, prepare IEC material and will disseminate the same among communities in order to strengthen grassroots' participation in VGSSFI. Efforts for sensitisation for abiding by sustainable policies for small scale fisheries would also be undertaken.

**Spanish Group:** Human Resource at the base is needed to inform and collect all needed information to address the existing problems. This was already discussed at FAO, with emphasis on civil society's necessity to reinforce itself before governments to form the base especially in Human Rights, and Rights to Water, To Resources and To Territory.

Member countries' commitment to comply with the instrument is very important. It is also important to differentiate clearly with the small fisheries and the semi-industrial fisheries taking into account the different characteristics of the countries and regions; Fishing methods need to be considered with emphasis on making the fishing activity self sustaining. The Instrument must have some defined parameters in this respect to advance towards the future.

**French Group:** Need to highlight important days, such as the day of 21 November, the fishermen day, artistically and by way of some national declaration.

**2. How must we go about to inform our governments about our view on this issue in order to get them to accept it? Suggest strategies that could be followed at national level. Also suggest activities that can that can give practical effect to these strategies.**

**English Group:** Work politically as well as the bureaucracy way. Policy forums need to be conducted inviting participation from officials; series of national level workshops are needed before COFI, stronger coalitions need to be formed; lobby with the local government; try to put this on the agenda of political parties; use media and public access forums; demos, street action; a full fledged campaign before COFI;

have a common action all around the world; also pursue country specific activities.

**Urdu Group:** Consultations meetings with parliamentarians, political leaders and locally elected representatives of government, CSOs, journalists to sensitize them on our demands and recommendations about VGSSFI. If the government pays no attention, law courts would be pursued.

**Spanish Group:** Firstly it is important to have a Commission that is able to explain to the government the issues pertaining to the fishing communities. This Commission must be formed, and must represent the different bodies so that there is “One Voice” to communicate with the highest level of government. The Commission can bring awareness to the governments to the necessities of the small fishermen and their importance in the local economy, in the social fabric of the nation and in the protection of the environment as we have seen in the video presented by the PFF.

Strategies proposed include: Finding ways to open communication channels amongst the different fishing communities at the national level to be able to represent them; identify the problems, so that solutions can be found; the COMMISSION must initiate talks to inform the different communities of the objectives to strengthen the bases of the movement; to make clear that unity amongst the communities is fundamental to achieve objectives.

**French Group:** To make country specific report for different governments, international institutions. We have to pursue media action at local and international level.

**3. What strategies do you suggest that WFP should adopt at central level to support local, national or regional (continental) level to get the most support for ensuing that our contributions on VGSSFI is accepted at COFI? What role is there for country-to-country collaboration on a regional level?**

**English Group:** Build alliances with others; pursue other international alliances to join the fisheries community alliance; anticipate potential influential individuals/organizations; create forums/conference; connect people in every way; WFP should convene larger convention; WFP must facilitate regional workshops; come up with a draft (instrument) and pursue a consultative process to finalise it; act in solidarity with developing countries. For certain issues there should be regional cooperation e.g. cross border issues etc.

**Urdu Group:** The WFFP should also organize conferences and workshops at regional, continental and international level to address VGSSFI. The recommendations of these workshops should be drafted for approval and acceptance at COFI. Besides, there is need to observe certain Days/Weeks for taking collective actions at regional, continental and international level.

**Spanish Group:** The main strategy of the WFFP should be to be very clear and concise. As for the role of the country to country collaboration level, it is important to be able to find common points of interest and achieve accords to defend those concrete points. Collaboration is essential and countries with experience can help develop objectives preventing the mistakes already made by them.

**French Group:** The International Collective in Support of Fish workers, WFFP etc with the collaboration with FAO, should organise regional meetings and ensure that the parity between men and women be represented and respected.

**4. What strategies or suggestions do you have for WFFP to ensure that traditional fishing communities in developed countries must also be covered by VGSSFI?**

**English Group:** The exclusion of small fishermen from the developed countries must not be allowed; there is need to bring members together as a block on the forum and articulate their situation; work with the WFFP to lobby for their inclusion; Canada and Spain need to talk and lobby with other developed countries to expand to other developed countries.

**Urdu Group:** The WFFP should organize a conference of member organizations of Northern block to discuss the issue as to how the developed countries be covered by VGFFI.

**Spanish Group:** Open communication lines between communities, countries and use the experience of developed countries to help the under-developed ones. Find formulae for labelling to identify small fisheries products.

**French Group:** Answer not clear.

In an extensive discussion following the group work, it was emphasized that media interaction is the responsibility of the WFFP

members of any given country. The WFPP headquarters cannot be expected to issue statements over country-specific issues.

Day Two Meeting adjourned.

## **Minutes of GA – Day 3**

**April 29, 2011**

**Agenda:** Planning for 2011-13 period, what we are going to do. Budget Discussion

The session started with a brief stock taking exercise of the earlier session. It was decided that to answer the points highlighted in the agenda, there is need to carry out group work as this allows brain storming as well as sharing of ideas.

Groups were constituted according to the members' comfort with one of the four languages at the Assembly. This includes, English, Urdu, Spanish and French.

The groups were given following nine topics and tasked with bringing recommendations before the house.

1. Climate Change
2. Food security/rising prices
3. Women and fishing
4. Trans-border issues
5. Child labour
6. Privatization of coastal areas
7. Industrial and overfishing
8. Maritime pollution and cutting of mangroves
9. Visa process for WFPP

After two hours of thorough deliberations, each group presented their recommendations to the house. The recommendations in this report were presented according to the topics given.

### **Climate Change**

#### **English Language Group**

- Climate change is not only an issue of fisherfolk, it concerns all people. However, it mostly affects fisherfolk.
- Organize an awareness programme for fisherfolk to debate the effect of climate change.
- Build alliance and network with other sectors concerned about climate change.



- Participate in the meetings of the UN convention on bio diversity.
- Help member countries to lobby with their governments to give compensation and support to fisherfolk affected by climate change.
- Raise awareness pertaining to the small scale fisheries, which are not the problem, but solution to climate change.
- The CBD must recognize the WFFP as a permanent representative of the fisherfolk.

#### **Urdu Language Group**

- Campaign should be launched at international level to pressurize the USA and China, and other major contributor of COs to ratify international climate change related frameworks.
- Week of action against climate change should be observed at local and international level in order to aware, mobilize and organize the fishing community. The proper time for observation could be around June-July. Emphasize public hearing, demonstrations, distribution of communication material etc.
- A proper document should be developed on effects of climate change on fisher folk by benefit existing reports.
- Fisheries community should be sensitised and mobilized to raise concerns regarding climate change and its main contributors.
- For Cope 17, the WFFF should document set of recommendations and the WFFP should hold parallel peoples' campaign on climate change.
- Campaigns should be launched against the World Bank and the IMF. Both contribute in Cos through funding climate enemy projects.
- World Bank will monitor the Green Fund worth \$140 Billion. It should be demanded that the Bank develop a proper mechanism to disburse the funds to the people of south, especially the fisherfolk.
- At local level, proper concerned institutions should be identified to help with awareness-raising regarding climate change.
- The WFFP should convene an international tribunal on "Impacts Of Climate Change On Fisherfolk". ResponsSible authorities, experts and institutions can be brought to the tribunal for participation.
- Campaigns should be devised and launched to draw attention to the hazards of dumping in sea. Dumping in sea should be banned.
- At the local level, the WFFP members should devise and launch campaign against climate change
- The WFFP should take actions for decommissioning of Dams and mega power plants.

#### **Spanish Language Group**

- Climatic changes disturb the natural habitat of fish. It also promotes migration of fishing community, negatively affects fishing productivity; limits the source of livelihood causes destruction of certain species; destabilise families; compromising education of children; destroys the natural plants, and animal life. Besides being a health hazard, it also degrades environment.
- It is necessary therefore to pursue an awareness programme to inform about the negative and destructive impact on earth cause by world population as well as climate changes. It is also important to have an infrastructure base on fishing community level so that it could facilitate the commercialisation of sea products.

#### **French Language Group**

- Countries need to invest more in alternative energy sources. There is need to reduce dependence on existing sources that are pollutants.
- Research and development (on climate issues) is of fundamental importance.
- Promotion of recycling practices is also important.
- Cleaning of coastal sea floors on the port; educate people to litter less need to be pursued.
- It should be emphasized that the government must comply with the laws regarding climate change.

### **Access to Rights and Privatization**

#### **English Language Group**

- Almost the same companies are involved in privatisation all over the world. We can gather all voices from different countries and develop a common media product for dissemination; (documentary film recommended).
- Develop online petitions, sign and circulate all over the world.
- Lobby with the companies on the issue
- Create a WFFP page on facebook and other social networking sites – applicable to other issues.
- Conduct fact-finding missions and document issues.

#### **Spanish Language Group**

- The sea and the oceans belong to everyone in the world. Everyone has the right to fishing to support one's family (staying within legal boundaries).
- Access to resources should be exercised through rules and regulations set by the governments. As sea belongs to everyone, it should be shared by everyone by respecting the law.

#### **French Language Group**

- Preserve the primary sector of fishing and agriculture.
- Prevent privatisation (through campaigning).
- Push the government to promote protection of small fishing so that it has a future.
- Train fishermen in techniques that could help them preserve their catch, improve sanitation and to better commercialise their products.
- Also, to bring awareness to the governments that preservation of the small fishing communities is in the interest of the nation and future generation.
- Tourism and the fishing community can coexist. Tourism must not drive the fishing community out of the system.

## **Food Security**

### **English Language Group**

- Pursue genuine agrarian reforms (build alliance with organisations).
- Ban commercial fishing on small fisherfolk grounds.
- Lobby with the UN, especially for subsistence fisherfolk.
- It is also important to monitor whether countries follow international conventions that they sign.

### **Urdu Language Group**

- Commercial Aquaculture should be preserved.
- Chemicals used for fishing should be stopped.
- Mono Aquaculture and commercial fishing should be banned.

### **Spanish Language Group:**

- Information and training regarding fishing with responsibility, and tools for durable fishing need to be promoted.

### **French Language Group**

- Is important to maintain the basic sectors such as small-scale agriculture and fishing as these favour food security and also preserve the culture of the people involved.
- Due to the rising price of fuel, transgenic seeds are being promoted though the consequences are unknown. They may turn out to be harmful for human consumption.
- To control prices, there has to be control in speculation. Transparency in the process of exchange of the channels of commercialisation is very important.
- Protect small local markets. Product labelling needs to be promoted since it is taken as a source of information on the origin of the product and other details.

## **Child Labour and Fishing**

### **English Language Group**

- Follow up on ILO;
- Link the issue of child labour with the question of rights; advocate for the right to fishing; lobby for the government to give support to small fisherfolk.
- The issue of child labour cannot be addressed in isolation. It is related to the fundamental problem of the right to fishing.
- Identify child rights advocates and join them
- Lobby extensively on the right to education; explore the possibility of giving scholarships to children of fisherfolk

### **Urdu Language Group**

- Under 16 years children should be banned from fishing.

### **Spanish Language Group**

- Child labour should be forbidden till the age of 16 years, but we must find some solutions for the poor families who use their children to support families.

### **French Language Group**

- Child labour must be prohibited. The government must promote education of fisheries communities.
- The system of learning should allow children (after reaching a certain age limit) to simultaneously work as well as get education. There must be an age limit so that the child can join the fishermen once he has a certain level of education that will help him be at sea.

## **Trans-border Issues**

### **English Language Group**

- Conduct a forum/conference to address the issue.
- There is need to engage the state to lobby for declaring free zones for the fisherfolk.
- Emphasize on ratification of the UN law of the sea.

### **Urdu Language Group**

- WFFP should demand that all countries should ratify the UN law of the sea and incorporate it into their respective constitutions.
- 100 NM should be declared as buffer zone that small-scale fisherfolk can share. For India and Pakistan, the forces of the two countries must exchange a list of deserved small scale fisherfolk who could be given access to the zone.
- The ICSSF and the WFFP should hold global conference on trans-boundaries issue and its effects on fisherfolk.

### **Spanish Language Group**

- In order to have free exchanges and to facilitate the business of sea products, governments must grant permission for fishing in the sea border areas to the fishermen of the two countries.

#### **French Language Group**

- Frontiers have to be well demarcated at sea. Each country must mark their region.
- There must be democratic protocols to deal with the transgressing of frontiers. Corruption or violation of these protocols needs to be prevented.
- These democratic protocols must involve the fishermen's dialogue of the countries involved.
- Communities near the frontiers must have special permits to roam the conflicting areas.

#### **Women and Fisheries**

##### **English Language Group**

- It is important to ensure first that our own organizations recognize gender issues and protect women's rights.
- Campaign for effective legislation in respective counties to protect women's rights.
- Workshop on models to involve women in fisherfolk organizations could be initiated.
- Forming an international commission to explore the possibility of advocating the rights of women needs to be considered.

##### **Urdu Language Group**

- Equal rights for men and women need to be ensured.

##### **Spanish Language Group**

- Equal rights and status for women need to be recognized; women should be provided facilities, and their work in the field of fishing needs to be encouraged (and promoted).
- Sea food prices need to be checked to make it accessible for all.

##### **French Language Group**

- Education is the key to solve this issue.
- Respecting women as human beings with rights; respecting the role of women in the fishing communities; highlighting their role in the related fields is very important.

#### **Industrial Aqua Culture**

##### **English Language Group**

- Campaign to inform the consumer (general public) about industrial aqua culture.

##### **Spanish Language Group**

- Treatment of water must be pursued before it is thrown in the open sea.
- Eradication of dynamite fishing, ban on the destruction of mangroves, and humid zones to avoid and protect the habitat, fishing resources and the environment is highlighted.
- See footnote<sup>1</sup>

#### **French Language Group**

- It is totally a negative practice as it infringes upon the territory of the small fisheries.
- Sharing of information about previous experiences in the countries where it has been practiced is one suggested direction.
- Aquaculture is positive when it is directed to benefit the environment and to empower the local fishing communities.
- Efforts need to be made to sensitise the public at large about the harms of industrial aquaculture.

#### **Pollution/Degradation of Mangroves**

##### **English Language Group**

- Draw up a programme for regeneration of mangroves and natural habitat.
- Campaign to highlight the benefits of mangroves.
- Lobby in international organizations like the UN.
- Protect the natural eco system.
- Draft a coastal zone policy led by fisherfolk.
- Highlight the displacement of people related to privatization.
- Campaign theme of We are being treated as “refugees in the world” could be pursued.
- Maintain communication with displaced persons as well as the big NGOs who will work with the government on the issue.
- Conduct research survey among members.
- Draft a good Coastal Zone Policy by fisherfolk.

##### **Urdu Language Group**

- Nation level campaign for protection and preservation should be launched.
  - All states should declare (commitment for protection of) mangroves forest.
  - A collective action by the WFFP for reserving a day to plant mangroves
  - Collective action by the WFFP for reserving a particular day against marine pollution.
-

### **French Language Group**

- We need to participate at (related) international forums and develop ties with NGOs that specifically deal with these issues.

### **Visa Issues**

#### **English Language Group**

- Initiate a campaign against visa fees
- Support member organizations in lobbying with the government on visa issues.

#### **Urdu Language Group**

- Visa process on arrival should be easy not cumbersome

#### **Spanish Language Group**

- For the visas, the WFFP must negotiate with embassies for speedy handling of the demands of the visas like it has already done in Sri Lanka.

#### **French Language Group**

- Communities must sensitize the government regarding the need for meeting with other communities, and (demand) streamlining and facilitating the process of visa issuance.
- The host communities/countries should contact the ministry in their region to draft a letter from the official.

## **Decisions of the General Assembly 5**

After group work done the chair announced the following decision taken by WFFP in GA-5.

### **Decision 1**

The General Assembly unanimously adopted the report of the General Secretary, Herman Kumara, which included the minutes of all previous Coordinating Committee meetings of the last term. The Assembly also adopted the financial report as tabled by Father Thomas Kocherry.

### **Decision 2**

The General Assembly unanimously adopted the following plan of action with respect to the development of a new global instrument on small-scale fishing by COFI (FAO):

1. WFFP and its members will endeavour to inform and raise the awareness of local fishing communities about the Bangkok Statement, the UNCLOS, UN declaration of human rights, Convention on Biodiversity, UN Declaration on the rights of Indigenous People, and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). This will be done by using plain local language in an



accessible form, as well as alternative print and electronic media, in focus group discussions, workshops and seminars. These activities will ensure that fisher communities are mobilised in order to provide their own contributions to the content of the global instrument on small scale fisheries.

2. Alongside the above, we will also organise a range of different engagements with state officials at all levels, political leaders and NGOs in order to inform and seek their acceptance of the views of local fishing communities. Furthermore we will use different national level media and other advocacy instruments to further advance the interest of fishing communities to ensure that the voice of communities are being heard when governments prepare their input for COFI.

This will be done through striking alliances with potential allies and partners and organising national level workshops / forums.

3. We will pursue international alliances with WFF, ICSF, IPC and other potential groups in order to strengthen the position of our mass based struggles in fishing communities. We will organise regional country to country collaboration and workshops as well as international level meetings to coordinate and strengthen the drafting of civil society 'draft' code that we will use as our base document to inform the content of the official global instrument.

4. Small-scale fisher people in the developed and developing countries have similar challenges as a result of globalisation. In order to avoid dividing small-scale fisher communities in these two parts of the world, WFFP members in the developed countries will formulate a strategy to mobilise small-scale fishers in 'similar countries' to contribute to this process.

5. We will work with this group to facilitate the articulation of their needs and to develop strategies for their eventual inclusion into the global instrument.

### **Decision 3**

The General Assembly unanimously adopted the following decisions on the injustice of climate change:

- While studying the ICC effects on fishing communities, to the humanity and to the globe, it was decided to conduct awareness programmes by member organizations of WFFP on negative and destructive impacts on earth caused by Climate Crises among fishing communities.

- While emphasising the role the national government must play to reduce the impact of ICC, it was decided that national governments must comply with the laws regarding climate change injustices and the WFFP member organizations should become involved to advocate through agitations. This must happen in their respective countries.
- It was decided that the WFFP should build alliance with other sectors, social movements who work on ICC issues and alternatives.
- It was decided that the WFFP should represent fisher folk at UN convention on bio diversity on a regular basis.
- It was decided that the WFFP should pursue the national government to compensating the Fisher folk affected by ICC; funding such compensation should begin with the renunciation of illegitimate and odious debt to IFIs.
- It was decided to launch international campaign to pressurize the USA, China and other major contributors of CO2 and CO to ratify international ICC related frame works.
- It was decided to mark 'week of global action' in June & July regarding the ICC & IFI's climate enemy projects and Climate injustice in all member countries.
- It was decided that the WFFP should convene an international tribunal on "Impacts of Climate Change injustices on fisher folk".
- It was decided to launch a mass based campaign against sea pollution.
- The WFFP will take active participation to plant mangroves all over the world.

#### **Decision 4**

The General Assembly unanimously adopted the following decisions on Access to Rights and Privatization:

- It was decided that training of fisher folk will be initiated with appropriate technologies in small scale fishing sector.
- It was decided to launch a mass-based campaign to promote protection of small scale fisher folk, from displacement, and to ensure livelihood rights, preserve access, which are results of privatisation.
- It was decided to launch campaigns, struggles against privatisation by alliance building, and networking, throughout the world.
- It was decided to enhance the mobilisation of the fisher folk for durable and responsible fishing practices.
- It was decided to protect small local markets. Local product labelling needs to be promoted since it is taken as a source of

information on the origin of the product and the way it produced and other details.

- It was decided that the WFFP should take stand against commercial corporate fishing which destroys small scale fishers and aquatic resources and environment.

#### **Decision 5**

The General Assembly unanimously adopted the following decisions on Child Labour and Fishing:

- It was decided that the WFFP member organizations should advocate and agitate on their respective governments to ratify and draft legislations based on ILO fishing standards convention in 2008.
- It was decided that the WFFP members should advocate and agitate on their governments to pay special attention to ensure education facilities for fisher folk families through scholarship schemes.

#### **Decision 6**

The General Assembly unanimously adopted the following decisions on Trans-border Issues:

- It was decided that the WFFP should take a stand to declare a 100 NM buffer zone that fisher folk of neighbouring countries could fish peacefully.
- It was decided that WFFP should organize global conference on trans-boundary issues.
- It was decided that eight Indian adivasi fishermen who disappeared while fishing in Pakistan water should be find out and repatriated. All Indian & Pakistani fishermen who were held in the jails in both the countries should be released immediately.

#### **Decision 7**

The General Assembly unanimously adopted the following decisions on Gender & Women Rights:

- It was decided that the rights of women involved in fisheries should be protected by launching campaigns and agitation to legislate and implement existing laws.
- It was decided that international commission on women's rights should be established within WFFP.

### **Decision 8**

The General Assembly unanimously adopted the following decisions on Aqua Culture:

- It was decided that masses and relevant stakeholders should be sensitized at large about the harms of industrial fishing and commercial aqua culture.

### **Decision 9**

The General Assembly unanimously adopted the following decisions on Pollution and Degradation of Mangroves:

- It was decided to participate at (related) international forums and develop ties with mass movements, NGOs that specifically deal with these issues.
- It was decided that the WFFP member organizations should observe mangrove replanting and preservation day internationally.

Election of Secretary General, office bearers,  
Coordinators, Treasurer and Office Bearers:

After the decisions the electoral college of WFFP unanimously elected the candidates as;

**Coordinators:** Ms. Sherry Pictou and Naseegh Jaffer

**Secretary General:** Mr. Mohammad Ali Shah

**Treasurer:** Ms. Natalia Laino

**Committee members Asia:** Hanna Chevy O. Fiel and R K Patel

**Committee members Africa:** Fatoumata Diarra and Sid Ahmed Abeid

**Committee members Europe & Caribbean:** Marie Adamar and Xavier Ezeizaberena

**Committee member America:** Jorge Varela

**Special invitees:** Dao Gaye, Thomas Kocherry and Herman Kumara

**Official translators:** Zavier Ezeizabereina and Alexis Fossi

After announcing the elected candidates the committee announced the decisions taken regarding next meetings which are as under;

### **For the CC meetings and the General Assembly:**

- The next Coordinating Committee Meeting would be held in Canada in 2012.
- The 6th General Assembly of the WFFP would be held in South Africa in 2013.

- Boarding and lodging would be looked after by the host community.
- Air travel is the responsibility of the WFFP.

**Pledges of the Coordinating Committee:**

1. We work as a team.
2. We have regular communication among us through teleconference and skype every three months.
3. We have communication in all three languages: English, Spanish and French.
4. We implement our GLOBAL FISHERIES POLICY.
5. We implement all our decisions.
6. We launch a movement of planting trees and mangroves wherever we are.
7. We celebrate November 21 as the WORLD FISHERIES DAY to reiterate that we, the traditional artisanal and small fisher people of the World, who depend on water bodies, coast and fish resources for livelihood, own and manage this Natural Capital
8. General Secretary is responsible for all official communication in three languages; newsletter; WFFP webpage; raising money for administration, coordination committee, General Assembly, and auditing. Mr Naseegh Jaffar Mogamad is responsible for telecommunication and skype.

**Concluding Ceremony**

The event ended with a concluding ceremony in which all the women delegates stood with the newly elected CC members. Sherry Pictou spoke the following. “This is a historic moment for all particularly for women of the WFFP and PFF. We women are proud of being part of the WFFP. We women are respected by the men. Women in Pakistan are freer than the counter parts in the World. WFFP has a structure of 50/50 Men and women. This is the only International structure with this kind of representation. This has been made possible because of Thomas Kocherry. He is with us in spite of his lifelong medication and rest. We thank him and honour him with a small memento – fisherwoman fishing”.

Thomas Kocherry responded with the following words: “GA-5 itself was a struggle for freedom and Justice. Coming to Pakistan, itself was this celebration. WFFP continues its struggle all over the World against Globalization, Class Contradiction, and Gender contradiction. Let us

stand together as a team. We stand for the rights of traditional artisanal and small fishers all over the World. I accept this honour with great gratitude".

### **PILER hosts reception for WFFP delegates**

Pakistan Institute of Labour Education and Research (PILER) hosted a dinner reception in honour of participants of 5th General Assembly of the World Forum of Fisher People (WFFP) from various countries at PILER Centre on April 28, 2011. Noted architect and urban planner Arif Hassan was the chief guest, who also gave away PILER's memento to each foreign participants on the occasion. A large number of civil society representatives and local people also attended the function.

In his welcome remarks, PILER Chief Executive Karamat Ali greeted the guests in Sindh province and said this is the land of peace. Some religious fundamentalists have sabotaged the peace of this land, which was actually under the influence of Sufi saints. He said music and dance are favorite pastime of the people in this part of the world. Sufi saints like Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai gave a message of love and peace not only for Sindh but for the entire world.

Chairman of Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF) Mohammad Ali Shah said that it is an honour for PFF to host the 5th General Assembly of WFFP. He said problems of fisherfolks all over the world are the same. He expressed his happiness that representatives of fishermen from all continents are present in this assembly, which has discussed the problems of fishermen. He also expressed his happiness about presence of a strong delegation from India.

Herman Kumara from Sri Lanka who is also General Secretary and Coordinator of WFFP appreciated the struggle of Pakistani fishermen at the platform of PFF and said PFF has actually written a history of fishermen's struggles. He also briefly told about problems of Sri Lankan fishermen.

Father Thomas Kocherry from India lauded the role of Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF) and said in a brief time the organization has achieved many targets. He hoped that under the leadership of Mohammad Ali Shah as the new General Secretary the WFFP would also make achievements.

Abid Qaiyum Suleri, Executive Director of Sustainable Development Policy Institute; B. M. Kutty, Secretary General of Pakistan Peace Coalition (PPC) and Nazim Haji also spoke on the occasion and

appreciated the efforts of PFF particularly for hosting WFFP Assembly in Karachi.

A musical/cultural performance was organized on the occasion. Traditional Faqeers of shrine of Hazrat Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai gave their performance by reciting poems of the Sufi saint. Jogi faqeer (snake charmers) Juman Jogi and Misri Jogi gave their traditional performance along with snakes and dancers. The participants of the reception also took part in the dance on the music. Everyone took part in this cultural performance. After the dinner the participants departed for the hotel.

### **A Grand Rally & Reception by PFF at Ibrahim Hydri:**

Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum organized a grand rally on April 29, 2011 in which all the delegates from different countries of all the continents across the world as well as Pakistani fisherfolk participated. The rally aimed at expressing the unity, integrity and solidarity of the fisherfolk across the world. There were thousands of fishermen and fisher women in the rally who were raising sky cracking slogans. The international delegates were received by local fishermen at Eid Gah Chowk of Ibrahim Hydri by showering rose petals upon them. The rally moved in the narrow streets of Ibrahim Hydri (the largest village of fishermen in the country) with the snail pace. The participants seemed to be overjoyed by their gestures, slogans, songs and dances. The rally marched past the Secretariat of Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum and arrived at the sea side where it turned into a grand celebration.

Mr. Hussain Jarwar (GM of PFF) led the proceedings of the event. Mr. Majeed Motani (President of Karachi Committee of PFF) welcomed the audience and showed his gratitude to see the representatives of fisherfolk from different countries across the world. Then Mr. Thomas Kochery was invited to sing a song of international solidarity and peace. He was joined by some ladies of Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum. The audience enjoyed the song and were moved by its simple tone and great message.

Mr. Muhammad Ali Shah (Chairman of PFF and newly elected Secretary General of WFFP) addressed the audience. He expressed his happiness to see international delegates of fisherfolk among Pakistani fisherfolk and assured his support, cooperation and coordination with the fishermen throughout the world on behalf of PFF as well as WFFP. He said that he believes in international peace and solidarity and will be striving for this cause. Finally he thanked all the participants and

the volunteers of PFF who made this grant event possible and successful.

Then it was the turn of musical segment which comprises mainly of traditional dances and tableaux. The cultural group of PFF performed various tableaux and dances of different traditional songs. There was hardly a person who was not dancing with the cultural group. Then a local Jogi of world fame performed some astonishing items with snakes and Been (flute). The participants enjoyed a lot and appreciated the Jogi for his wonderful performance.

Finally some international delegates spoke to express their feelings about Pakistan and Pakistani fisherfolk and PFF as well. They said that they were very much conscious about the law and order situation of Pakistan especially to that of Karachi. Besides, they were afraid of religious extremism in Pakistan but all our perceptions proved to be untrue when they interacted with the fishermen of Pakistan. They said that the people of Sindh are very much hospitable, caring, loving and peace loving. Their culture and traditions are deeply rooted in Sufism. They said that they were taking an entirely different and nice message of peace from local fishermen to their respective countries. In the end the participants were offered with dinner.