



21 November
World Fisheries Day



Week of Action Against Ocean grabbing and implementation of voluntary guidelines on small scale fisheries



**Pakistan Fisherfolk forum/World Forum of Fisher
People (WFFP)**

21 November
World Fisheries Day
Week of Action
Against Ocean Grabbing
And Implementation
Of International Guideline on Small Scale Fisheries
15 to 21 Nov 2014

Concept:

World Fisheries day is celebrated every year on November 21 throughout the world by the fisherfolk communities. Fishing communities worldwide celebrate this day through rallies, workshops, public meetings, cultural programs, dramas, exhibition, music show, and demonstrations to highlight the importance of maintaining the world's fisheries..

A recent United Nations study reported that more than two-thirds of the world's fisheries have been overfished or are fully harvested and more than one third are in a state of decline because of factors such as the loss of essential fish habitats, pollution, and global warming. The World Fisheries Day helps in highlighting the critical importance to human lives, of water and the lives it sustains, both in and out of water. Water forms a continuum, whether contained in rivers, lakes, and ocean.

Every year Pakistan Fisherfolk forum celebrates this day. This year PFF in light of WFFP decisions has planned to mark this day with theme of week of action against Ocean Grabbing and Implementation Of International Guideline on Small Scale Fisheries. Ocean grabbing has been global phenomenon. the former UN Special Rapporteur for the Right to Food, who in an address to the UN General Assembly stressed that “‘Ocean-grabbing’ – in the shape of shady access agreements that harm small-scale fishers [...] and the diversion of resources away from local populations – can be as serious a threat as ‘land-grabbing.

Reportedly, The World Bank’s Global Partnership for Oceans (GPO) is one-such legal framework for ‘grabbing’. Bringing together a set of powerful actors – from USAID to the Walton Family Foundation (the family behind Walmart) to big environmental NGOs .GPO’s goal is to spread private property rights over the ocean’s fish resources.

As you know that Small-scale fishers and fishing communities in Pakistan are also increasingly threatened by many nefarious plans of ocean grabbing such as destruction of Mangroves and reclamation of land, newly planned cities, promotion of destructive models of fishing, encroachments of water bodies so on .This process is leading not only to the dwindling of control by small-scale fishers over these resources, but also in many cases to their ecological destruction and very disappearance.

Broadly speaking, ocean grabbing includes marine and coastal seawaters, inland waters, rivers and lakes, deltas and wetlands, mangroves and coral reefs.

Considering all this, Pakistan Fisherfolk forum carried out various activities to mark this day with theme of against Ocean Grabbing and Implementation Of International Guideline on Small Scale Fisheries. Various activities would be carried out through out Sindh.

Seminar on illegal occupation of fresh water bodies.

Pakistan Fisherfolk organized a seminar “Illegal Occupation on Fresh Water bodies and Implementation of Licenses system in Sindh” at District Council Hall Sanghar. It was held on November 20, 2014. In the context of 21st November World Fisheries Day to celebrate Global Week of Action Against the Ocean Grabbing and Implementation of International Guidelines on Small Scale Fisheries.

Sindh like the other provinces of Pakistan is full of natural resources. Fishing is a main earning livelihood resource of the majority of the fisher people whether they are living near to the river Indus coastal areas or to the remote areas of the province. PFF’s sustainable struggle for the protection of the livelihood rights of the fishermen, compelled the government of Sindh to replace the licenses system instead to the contract system of the fresh water bodies. Sindh Government Passed a bill in 2011 through which 1980 fisheries act was amended and government removed the contract system from the fresh water bodies including fishing and issued the licenses of the water bodies to the fisher people. With the recognized of right of getting of licenses over the small scale fishing water bodies the socioeconomic conditions of the Fisher families became better. But still number of water bodies are under control of influential's mostly belonging to the feudal class. Fishing communities are also facing a lot of difficulties in getting licenses due to bureaucratic hindrances of fishing department of Sindh.

For the peaceful resolution of the issue of encroachment of fresh water bodies and implementation of licenses, in its real sprit, to its natural owners, the fisher men, PFF conducted a seminar for the legitimate rights of fishing communities. Near about 300 people including women belonging to the fishing communities, peasants, laborers, minorities, media, civil society and person belonging to different walk of life participated in the seminar jointly and actively.

Mr. Muhammad Ramzan Mallah central Deputy General Secretary, welcomed the participants of Seminar and presented the brief history of PFF struggle at Sanghar against the illegal encroachers on fresh water bodies and gave detailed importance notes of Implementation of License System. He also gave his Tribute to Thomas Kochery and Pir bux Mallah for their struggle for the fisher’s community.

Mr. Mir Hassan Mari PFF Associate and Activist said that it is the process of transformation and the travel to social change. He appreciated the struggle of fishermen, farmers and working class people. He said that fishermen should have ownership rights of the



waters where they live through generations and civil society should help strengthening the voice of the oppressed people.

Mr. Aslam Ansari Deputy Director Fisheries said that now you have opportunity for fishing after your long struggle. He appreciated to Mr. Muhammad Hussain Mallah District President PFF Sanghar and other activists of PFF who make it possible with their efforts for registration of license. He further added that Hussain started to register his own and family members license then he mobilized to other members regarding the importance of license and they realized and many licenses registered but still there is need to get all license because number of license are not enough. He added that if you don't get this authority then you will lose this opportunity of fishing licenses and same lease system may occurred again.

Mr. Ghulam Mustafa Mirani Vice Chairman PFF Started his speech with the appreciation to Great Ex-International Fishers Leader Late Mr. Thomas Kochery and Pir Bux Mallah for their contribution for fishers.

Mr. Merani further added that at the time of lease system you were in socially and economically in critical condition but after getting your right to caught fish via having License. He said that If you don't register your license you will lose this system. He asked to them to take serious it serious note the licenses issues. Whereas the license fees is approximately 600; it is a price of only one fish while other persons are eager to avail license but they are not eligible because they are not fisher community, so please register your licence immediately. He also added that fisheries department that kindly facilitate our fishers for the registration of licence it is your responsibility and you have to go in fields and make strong efforts. If the community is not getting interest so the fisheries department may strictly implement the license system as per government law.

Tribute pad to Father Thomas Kocherry



Proceedings:

The Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF) paid rich tributes to the founder of the World Forum of Fisher Peoples (WFFP) Thomas Kocherry at his first death anniversary on Thursday. The event was moderated by Mr. Ayoub Shan (Information Secretary, PFF). The welcome note was presented by Mr. Yousif Kadani and then Mr. Ayoub Shan presented a paper on the life and achievements of Father Thomas Kocherry.

Ms. Tahira Ali Shah (Ex. Senior Chairperson of PFF) said fishermen communities called him the “Father of Fishermen” due to his uncompromising efforts for the rights of the fishing communities. She also read out a poem in his memory. Ms. Tahira Ali, Samina Kadani and Mr. Azhar Shan also presented a song which Father often used to sing whenever he visited Pakistan.

Mr. Majeed Motani (President PFF’s Karachi Chapter) while speaking at the event said that he had held an number of meetings with Father Thomas Kocherry and found him hard working, untiring and very committed to the cause of fishing communities and conservation of fisheries resources.



Mr. Mustafa Gurgaze (Programme Manager Livelihood, PFF) also spoke at the event and said the unmatched contribution of Thomas Kochery can never be forgotten. He not only gave vision for the movement to strengthen the voice of small scale fishers around the world but also practically founded the World Forum of Fisher People (WFFP) which is now an international forum of fishing communities.

General Secretary PFF, Mr. Saeed Baloch while lauding his efforts for the fishing communities of the South Asia said, “He was known for the rigour with which he demanded the rights of the fishermen.” He added that he was strongly against nuclear proliferation.

Recalling his activities, Baloch said that in 1982 Kocherry was elected as president of the National Fish workers Forum and in mid-1990s lead a nationwide campaign to stop the Indian government from opening the country’s fishing industry to a growing fleet of 2,600 large foreign trawlers. “With 10 million Indians dependent on a sustainable fishery for their survival, the stakes were high,” he said.

Mr. Muhammad Jan a senior member of PFF presented a cultural song at the event to pay tribute to the father of fishers. Mr. Talib Kachhi (General Secretary of PFF’s Karachi Chapter) also spoke at the event and paid vote of thanks to the participants.

Rally against Ocean grabbing, mangroves forests degradation and marine pollution



Activity: Rally against Ocean grabbing, mangroves forests degradation and marine pollution during Global Week of Action to mark the World Fisheries Day

Participants: PFF's central leadership and around 300 fishers including females and youth from different villages of the coastal area, Karachi.

Against Ocean Grabbing and Implementation of International Guideline on Small Scale Fisheries

World Fisheries day is celebrated every year on November 21 throughout the world by the fisherfolk communities. Fishing communities worldwide celebrates this day through using the advocacy forums like rallies, workshops, public meetings, cultural programs, dramas, exhibition, music show, and demonstrations to highlight the importance of maintaining the world's fisheries. The World Fisheries Day helps in highlighting the importance to human lives, of water and the lives it sustains, both in and out of water. Water forms a continuum, whether contained in rivers, lakes, and ocean. A recent United Nations study shows that more than two-thirds of the world's fisheries have been overfished or are fully harvested and more than one third are in a state of decline because of factors such as the loss of essential fish habitats, pollution, and climate change. According to experts, Pakistan has serious threat to overfishing of marine and freshwater bodies, it will make affect livelihood of fishing communities and coastal peoples are under the heavy menace of climate change.



Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum celebrated Week of Action in the context of World Fisheries Day with the theme of “Ocean Grabbing and Implementation of International Guidelines on Small-Scale Fisheries in Pakistan” from 15 November to 21st November 2014 in different districts of Sindh.

While week of action PFF organized several activities across the country. At the end of the week Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF) holds a grand Rally and celebration of world fisheries day in Hyderabad on 21st November 2014. Rally attracted a large number of fishing communities and Peasant from right and left bank of the River Indus and civil society including the representatives of print and electronic media.



Main objectives of World Fisheries day rally as to raise awareness among masses regarding oceans grabbing in Pakistan and to emphasis government to adopt International Guidelines on Small-Scale Fisheries and to save the livelihood rights of the fishing communities.

Moreover it was also tried through grand rally to raise the voice regarding to protection of natural resources of indigenous people and take action against Ocean Grabbing.

Believing the earth's climate is destabilizing the planet and fishing communities are facing sever crisis. Fishers' livelihood resources are depleting drastically and ocean grabbing is compelling them towards displacement and food insecurity.

Fisher women and men take part in a Rally from Badin, Sanghar, Jamshoro, Thatta and Karachi, above than 600 persons were included in a Rally.

Rally took start from Gul Center Hyderabad marching from Old Campus ended at Press Club Hyderabad. The colorful rally with play-cards holding fishers, chanting slogans "stop looting natural resources", "stop mega projects on Sindh-coast" concluded the rally at Press Club. At the end of Rally a Street Theatre was performed by PFF Theatre Group in-front of Press Club. Theatre concept was to stop grabbing water resources, avail and restore livelihood of Fisher Peoples. Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum Leadership and Civil Society Activists orated on that occasion.



Orating to rally Vice Chairperson of Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum Mr. Mustafa Mirani said, PFF celebrates World Fisheries Day every year to highlight importance of fisheries; theme of this year is Action against the Ocean Grabbing and implementation of Voluntarily Guidelines on Small-Scale Fisheries. 100 million metric tons of fish consumed in a year globally, despite of that livelihood of fishing communities on borderline of devastation. Although there are no boundaries for fish, but instead of that Pakistani Fishermen arrested by Indian Navy and Indian Fishermen arrested by Pakistani Navy, recently 61 fishermen of Pakistan being arrested by Navy of India. Some masked forces grabbing coastal, wetlands especially Keenjhar Lake and Manchar Lake of Sindh to develop mega cities and other projects.

Speaking to fishers Senior Vice Chairperson Ms. Fatima Majeed said that, Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum has been advocating the case of Pakistani fishers. We salute workers of PFF for their hard struggle and leadership of PFF for focusing their aim. Socio-Political Activist

Ms. Nazeer Qureshi social activist said, Ocean Grabbing is a main issue of Sindh, influential persons grabbing water bodies with support of government institutes, and they are making it corporate land. It's appreciable step by PFF for raising voice against grabbing.

Saeed Baloch General Secretary of Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF) said that 38 countries of world celebrating World Fisheries Day under Ocean Grabbing theme. Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum celebrates this day every year throughout the Pakistan, to aware communities and embosses its value. World Fisheries and aquaculture employ more than 43 million individuals worldwide and more than 25% of the world's dietary protein is provided by fish. Globally, annual fisheries exports are valued at 85 to 90 billion dollars. We salute those who were martyred in this struggle especially of Kaka Village. Parents of mangrove martyrs are also present here; we salute for their courage.



A rally against ocean grabbing, marine pollution and degradation of mangroves forests was organized by Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum under announced week of action against ocean grabbing on the occasion of World Fisheries Day.



The central leadership of Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum including General Secretary PFF Mr. Saeed Bloch, Senior Vice Chairperson Ms. Fatima Majeed, President PFF Karachi Chapter Mr. Abdul Majeed Motani, Manager Livelihood Programmes Mr. Mustafa Gurgaze and Manager Monitoring and Evaluation Mr. Sabir Jarwar led the rally in which around 300 fishers including a vast majority of women fishers took part.

The rally was started from Aalyani Para of Ibrahim Hyderi-Karachi and moved through Bebyani, Karyani and other paras (Muhallahs/Streets) via main bazaar of Ibrahim Hyderi. The participants were carrying placards and banners with different slogans against oceans grabbing and degradation of mangrove forests. They chanted slogans against those who are involved in such illegal activities. Having passed through a number of streets in the locality the culminated at Charan Jetti where the participants formed human chain to show their integrity and determination against ocean grabbing, land grabbing and the genocide of mangrove forests. The leaders of Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum addressed the rally and highlighted the issues. The speakers demanded that government authorities must take notice of these mal practices and take hard actions against those land grabbers, mangroves cutting mafia and those are contributing to the marine pollution.