

# Fisheries on the agenda at The World Seafood Summit, Paris, February 4th 2010

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*Jeppe Høst, Africa Contact reports back from the summit*

## Fisheries expansion is a sign of non-sustainability



In his keynote speech at the World Seafood Summit 2010, one of the worlds leading fisheries scientist, Daniel Pauly, put the facts on the table. "There are no such thing as sustainable trawling" Pauly said to the more than 600 attendants, among many from the fishing industry and ecolabelling business. Instead he noted that "small scale fisheries have the characteristics of sustainability", all though he underlined, that if you take more out of the bank than the interest, you will end up loosing your capital.

Pauly focused on industrial fishing as a pyramid scheme, referring to a system where you pay of investments with capital from new investors. In fisheries the new capital is the fish stocks, and in the industrial fisheries the central element of the pyramid has been expansion. In the 20th century, we have seen a massive expansion in three ways. In geography, by fishing in distant waters and getting access to African, Caribbean and Pacific waters; in water depth, by fishing deeper and deeper; and in a taxonomic expansion, meaning that industrial fisheries have targeted more and more species. Fish that earlier were considered inedible have been renamed and put on the market, and in that way Slimeheads has become the delicate Orange Roughie to please consumer. The problem is, as Pauly explained, "it is international robbery... You can supply the market this way, but it is not sustainable", and he concluded that the fisheries expansion is a clear sign of non-sustainability.

Africa Contact has for long argued that the un-sustainable fishing and business practises of particularly the European Union and the European fishing industries, continue to undermine the livelihoods of millions of Africans, and that these practises contribute to increased poverty and regional and international migration. The evidence from Kenya and Somalia, where local fishing communities witness increased fish catches and social and economic development - unforeseen in the past many years - as a direct result of the absence of foreign fishing vessels, clearly illustrates the devastating impact of the presence of foreign fishing.

Looking at solutions to the current crisis, Pauly underlined that aquafarming is not going to be the saviour of the wild stocks. First of all, the farming of carnivor fish takes wild fish protein to produce, and therefore accelerate further exploitation of fish already overexploited fish stocks. Secondly, the international statistics have been corrupted by false Chinese data, and thus the the total world production in aquaculture has been overrated. Instead, in Western countries, we have to look at fish

in a different way, as a luxury and ritual eating and not as protein that is going to supply the worlds growing masses. This means that we should stop the international robbery and pyramid scheme and instead promote local food security.

Africa Contact fully agrees on Pauly's perspectives, and further stress the importance of a complete stop of foreign trawl fishing in Africa waters in order to enable the millions of Africans to regain access to their fish resources and thereby benefit from social and economic justice. Furthermore, Africa Contact demand that the European Union put a complete stop to entering new Fisheries Partnership Agreements with ACP countries. For more information contact Jeppe Høst (+45 2726 6448) or Carsten Pedersen (+45 2162 2195).

Nyheder

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