

Idea floated that a quota system would be better applied to administrators

THERE are those within the fishing industry who are prepared to bet if there were a head count of the administrators in the Scottish Office, London, and Brussels who monitor them, there would be more than there are fishermen, writes Graeme Smith.

While they are prepared to accept safety legislation can be necessary and quota restrictions are required, they question the need for the increasing imposition of rules and regulations which control them.

"They really resent the volume

and weight of regulations," said Scottish Fishermen's Federation chief executive Hamish Morrison. "Even in this last year alone there has been legislation on designated ports, new safety codes that may or may not achieve what is intended, and satellite monitoring is in the wings, not to mention all the existing enforcement log books."

He cited one example: "We have had to re-measure all our boats in gross registered tonnage simply because they believe everyone in Europe should be

the same. Although it might only cost £200 or £300 to re-measure a new boat because it can be done on the computer on which it was designed it can cost £5000 to re-measure a 25-year-old boat. It may have started off as a seine netter and gone through many changes to now be a prawn netter and there are no line drawings because there weren't any when it was built in a traditional boat yard.

"Why should we pay for something that is of no benefit whatsoever to the business. A fishing

boat is a small business and we are supposed to be good at looking after small businesses.

"There are controls on quotas which should be enough but the way you have controls on the capacity of your boat.

"Then there are restrictions on your gear, the size of nets, and in the pelagic fleet in particular you have a restriction on the number of days at sea.

"The problem with all these controls is they are all independent and free standing and no one is related to another.

"What are all these restrictions for? Take designated ports for example. The only other place in Europe to have designated landing ports is Holland and they have only three ports anyway.

"The Irish have flatly refused to have them, the French don't have them, the Spanish certainly don't have them.

"We understand catching must be kept in line with the regeneration of stocks but the situation is that there is an elaborate process of working out how

much we may take and how we will control how we take that.

"Then someone says: 'Oh, and by the way we want to control your engine power as well.'

"Why? If they are already controlling what we take, shouldn't the engine power be a commercial decision?

"In the most extreme situation in the mackerel fleet, without too much paranoia, you could have a situation where the number of days fishing are reduced and where the engine power is reduced to such an extent that

you would not be able to catch your entitlement."

Mr Morrison said he did not believe this was done deliberately but instead arose as a result of more and more layers of legislation being added to the original in an attempt to make it effective.

Turning to the regulatory approach for safety, he said: "Rules and restrictions are too often and too easily regarded as the total answer to safety problems."

"The regulatory framework

does provide a basis for the definition of guilt and the apportionment of blame and so, it is argued, there will be consequential deterrent effect.

"The deterrent value might be less than it seems. Accidents occur for a variety of reasons. In any case, deterrence would only work if fishermen were knowingly careless or neglectful of the safety of themselves, their colleagues and the vessels. There is no evidence of such attitudes amongst fishermen - quite the reverse."

As EU ministers meet in Brussels to discuss quota cuts, Herald writers look at the state of the Scottish industry

Tide must turn for fishing

DAVID THOMSON AND
ALISTAIR MCINTOSH

LIKE the proverbial cod, something has rotted from the head down in Britain's fishing industry. The bottom-line evidence is decay of Scotland's once-thriving fishing communities.

Robbed over the past three decades of significant portions of their most basic resource, they are also diminished in what Gaelic poet, Derek Thomson, called their "laughter like a sprinkling of salt" and "a sprinkling of pride on their hearts".

What has happened is that centralised government and big-business control have sacrificed social and environmental considerations at the altar of narrowly conceived monetary objectives.

The Government's latest scheme is a case in point. It permits white fish landings at only 19 designated ports. Arbroath is excluded from the list so its famous haddock "smoke" risks extinction.

Such measures reduce once self-reliant communities to dependency cultures. They are forced to take their bearings, cap-in-hand, from London and Brussels, the metropolitan centres where, through quota proceeds and corporate taxation, the benefits of resource colonisation end up.

In consequence, the sons and daughters of one of the richest tributaries of Scottish culture get scattered to the four winds. Those left at home are made to feel bad about becoming junkies, if they are lucky, only to regional aid.

The root of the problem is fishing profits have become concentrated in the hands of a very few.

Fleet owners have been forced to modernise, or get squeezed out by a Common Fisheries Policy that favours "survival of the fittest" rather than "survival of the most fitting".

So it is that some three dozen millionaires scoop-up Scotland's entire catch of herring and mackerel. Indeed, just 45 pelagic ships with 450 crew now monopolise an erstwhile community resource which, at the end of the Second World War, supported over 1000 boats, 10,000 crew and an even greater work-force on shore.

Almost gone is the dignity of reverence that caused a previous generation of fishers, mindful of the 104th Psalm, to give their boats names like "The Lord's Prayer".

If the nineteenth century saw Clearances from the land, the twentieth century has nailed the coffin lid to maritime communities. It has done so with three main tools. Each would have been harmless, even benign, on its own. But like rides, wind and swell compounded, their cocktail has proven treacherous.

Europe, obviously, was the first nail. But it is easy to duck domestic responsibility by making Brussels the scapegoat.

When Ted Heath negotiated Britain's entry to the Common Market in 1970, he made fisheries the dowry. At that time, most community-based family-run boats had little political voice or lobbying power. Those which were well organised - the distant-water corporately-owned trawlers - were quite happy to see Britain's resource gambled away because they had their eyes on greater horizons.

As their industry had the upper hand in technology and capital,



Unhappy landings: Arbroath has had a port for more than 600 years but the harbour today stands almost deserted as boats move to Aberdeen or Peterhead

Picture: ROD FLEMING

Still waters at the port where men trawl for jobs

ARBOATH is known internationally as the fishing port which is the home of the "smoke" and is likely to remain so for generations to come.

However, while the process which produces the smoke continues in the largest town in Angus, sadly the fish are unlikely to be landed at the port.

Arbroath has had a harbour for 600 years but it is little more than a century and a half since the town council invited fisherfolk to make the three-mile journey from Auchmithie and the fishing industry developed.

Now, however, it has undergone a dramatic decline.

The blacksmiths, the engineers, and many others whose livelihoods depended on the men who went to sea have either been forced to retire or change career direction. Only

one boatyard remains in the town but it no longer builds, only maintains vessels.

But, while the bulk of the fleet may have gone fishing, blood still courses through the veins of the community.

The Arbroath Fishermen's Association was one of the first and was founded in 1925 and still has around 100 members or shareholders.

Three-quarters of them no longer go to sea but they retain that membership for probably no reason other than to cling to their heritage.

"They may be taxi drivers, offshore oil workers, some of them have retired, and I guess they remain members because it is in

the blood," said association manager Peter Donald. "Perhaps they hope that one day they will go back."

However, no decision in Brussels is going to change the situation which is simply that the inshore waters have been overfished.

"The boats which remain have diversified as best they can by going further afield or going into different species."

"As far as big boats we have about six of them, about a third of the number 15 years ago. The association will continue to tailor the services to fit the requirements."

Mr Alex Smith is one who has given up the sea but he is now president of the Scottish

Fishermen's Federation and today he will be in Brussels lobbying on behalf of his colleagues who still go to sea.

However, he admits that Brussels cannot be blamed for the demise of Arbroath.

"It is really just because of the way fishing has gone," he said. "Many of the boats have been sold up to the bigger players who have come into the market and bought the licences to aggregate to build bigger boats."

"Even though the fish came back inshore it would be practically impossible for those who have left the fishing to get back in because people are having to pay astronomical prices to purchase

licences. The fleet working from Arbroath is just a fragment of what it was."

"Even the six or seven larger boats that belong to Arbroath now work in either Aberdeen or Peterhead."

"The decline has meant the disappearance of many of the small processors."

There were probably 30 or 40 sourced their fish locally to make their smokies and employed two or three people.

Although there is still a healthy processing industry with the larger firms a considerable number of the smaller ones have given up.

"The Arbroath smoke will most certainly continue but sadly not with Arbroath fish. It will be fish landed at Aberdeen and Peterhead, although it is the process not where it is landed which makes it unique."

they reckoned on stealing the march when Norway compromised its fisheries' sovereignty on entering the Common Market.

However, Norway's fishing communities voted against Europe. Meanwhile, Iceland's claims were ratified in the International Court. And those same companies which had backed the pawning of Britain's fisheries

nosived, dragging down with them Grimshy and Hull.

Ted Heath had actually wielded a double hammer-blow to traditional fishing communities. In presuming to treat fish as a national and European resource, centrally controlled, he also unwittingly undermined fishermen's sense of being responsible for their own patch.

This opened up that "tragedy of the commons" which results whenever traditional constraints and practices are replaced with a beggar-my-neighbour free-for-all.

Law-abiding fishers thereby found themselves being criminalised as they struggled to cope with continental fleets and out-of-touch regulations. Most notorious of these is the enforced dumping of

unwanted accidental by-catches of species that exceed quotas.

As the skipper of MFV Amorion wrote in last week's Fishing News: "I have just returned from yet another fishing trip where we were forced to dump 200 boxes of cod and 100 boxes of haddock - value up to £18,000 - and I am absolutely disgusted with this total waste of resources."

The second nail was new technology. It facilitated a radical increase in range, catching efficiency and destructive side-effects.

Handed-down skills, social understanding and an innate respect for how the ocean and seabed were treated got ousted by a youthful generation to plunder as much as possible before competing foreign vessels did likewise.

All this led inevitably to the third nail - capital intensification. Fishing as an intensive industry rather than an integrated way of life became a magnet for investors with more interest in quota transactions than community cohesion and holistic resource management.

In these ways, the industry's conquest by globalisations was

St Andrew's House must cast our net upon the waters. A "miraculous catch" awaits.

Alastair McIntosh is a fellow of Edinburgh's Centre for Human Ecology. David Thomson is a former staff member of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations and has served in over 50 countries.

Federation chief dispels misconception on stock conservation

IMAGINE the frustration of sailing 500 miles from your home port through storms and heavy seas only to find the mackerel which you were chasing have left these waters, writes Graeme Smith.

However, on the horizon are several Norwegian fishing boats being in the quantities of blue whiting required to pay the crew, the fuel, and the huge loan you have taken to buy your fishing business.

When you take the chance of ending up in court for hauling in nets full of whiting or would you make the 1000-mile round trip to secure the correct licence? The

fact that one Fraserburgh skipper made that round trip in those circumstances last week highlights not only the burden of bureaucracy which they face, however justified, but also that perhaps fishermen are not the lawless breed they are perceived.

Indeed there are other perceptions which may not be accurate as Hamish Morrison, the chief executive of the Scottish Fishermen's Federation is keen to point out. He is midway through his first year in a job where the remit seems to be to constantly defend the right of fishing to do their job as they wish.

The first misconception which he is eager to dispel is that fishermen have no interest in conservation. Fresh from an interview at the fish market with a television

environmental journalist he makes the aside that most of the media contact he has is now with environmental correspondents.

"I think a big part of my job now is telling the conservation story from the fishermen's standpoint because however you slice it many of these guys have put a lot of money - their own money - into new boats and new gear. That is for the long haul, not for one year's quota. They are interested in conservation. It is obviously not in their interest at all for stocks to collapse and be put in jeopardy. Somehow that message has to be got across."

"There is a tendency in the more militant of environmental lobbies to see fishermen as essentially rapacious and lawless and careless with the environment and none of these things is true."

Mr Morrison also believes it is wrong to suggest that the fishermen are always at odds with the scientists about fish stocks and suggests that in fact they enjoy a very good relationship. He feels that the third player in the fish stocks equation, the Government, can sometimes take the blame for the tension.

"The scientists are quite open about the inexact nature of what they are doing," he said, "but the tendency of the Government is to use the scientists when it suits them and to disregard them when it suits them."

The Federation believes the scale and the nature of the task which the marine scientific community faces is too great for its resources and although a number of scientists go to sea every year would like to see that greatly

increased and would also like far greater involvement of professional fishermen and their boats in data collection and stock assessment.

He pointed out that a major role of the Federation was charting out fishing vessels for non-fishing activity and in the current year it had taken 4500 vessel days out of the fishing effort.

Mr Morrison said that one of the major problems of the industry was the ageing fleet, a problem which European grants were helping solve in other member states.

He said that safety, something which the Government saw as a priority, could be improved by a replacement programme.

"It is galling to us that every other major fishing nation in Europe is getting huge sums of money out of Brussels to do that. There is a five-

year programme in Spain at the moment worth £1bn which involves the construction of 1200 completely new vessels and the modernisation of 1700 vessels which is financed 50% EU, 10% Spanish Government, and 40% industry.

"If we had access to a fraction of that we would have the best fishing fleet in the world bar no-one. The tragedy is that a European aid scheme exists to facilitate such a programme. There is an ongoing debate with the Government about the applicability of this scheme to the UK fleet on the grounds compliance with the fleet capacity reduction programme has not been met."

"A more significant problem would appear to revolve around the matching funding required from the UK Government. Although the Fontainebleau Agree-

ment would impose an increased funding share compared to other EU Governments, the absolute amount of Government investment would be modest against the safety gains which could be achieved."

The European Common Fisheries Policy poses many problems for the UK's fishermen and the vast majority would almost certainly like to withdraw from the Union. However most are also pragmatic enough to realise there is no political will for that to happen and they must operate within its constraints.

"Most fishermen regard the CFP in the same way as Churchill regarded democracy," said Mr Morrison. "It is the worst system imaginable apart from all the others that have been tried. We have to make what we can of it and the reform we have in mind is zonal management,

"That involves cutting the main fisheries of the EU into manageable bits like the North Sea, the Baltic and the Mediterranean. That has the Commission pulled in two directions because on the one hand they are supposed to be in favour of subsidiarity but on the other hand they say they came in to remove all these differences and have a single fishery."

"I would entirely reject that second argument because these fisheries are different, always have been different and always will be different and therefore should be managed in a way that acknowledges the difference."

He said the Federation hoped that when the policy was reviewed in 2002 many of the complexities could be simplified.

MONETARISM IS KILLING COMMUNITIES

Fisheries development consultant **David Thomson** and academic **Alastair McIntosh** argue that fisheries policy should concentrate on maintaining coastal communities and employment and that government and economists are taking too narrow a view.

In his famous Gaelic poem 'The Herring Girls', Professor Derick Thomson contrasts the 'laughter like a sprinkling of salt' of Scots fisherfolk with the harsh 'topsy turvy of history [that] had made them slaves to the short-armed cures'.

Today it is the short-sighted bureaucrats and big-industry lobbyists who have stolen the smile from the face of our fishing communities. Current government policy and management of the fishery sector is dictated solely by monetary considerations and neglects social and environmental needs. The more profit for the fewer operators is considered progress no matter how much unemployment is created, or how many small coastal communities die as their basic resource is taken from them.

The idea that only profit matters in resource development has long since been dropped by financial institutions like the World Bank. They have had to come to terms with the needs of developing countries for whom social stability, employment, rural development, and economic empowerment of ordinary people is vital for future prosperity and national well-being.

Recently, the former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, who is no liberal, criticised the International Monetary Fund for ignoring social and socio-economic issues when laying down conditions for economic assistance.

The revered Adam Smith, often looked to as the father of modern economics, was not as socially blind as today's monetarists. He saw the community and its well-being as the bedrock of any flourishing society.

Treating a fishing industry solely as an investment option,

and not as a food production system based on renewable natural resources, or as an employment provider for coastal settlements, results in both social and environmental damage. This is why fisheries policy is sensitive in every part of the maritime world.

A local fishing fleet of 30 or 40 boats may look like small beer to a Treasury bureaucrat, but to a small coastal town, the fishing fleet may be the backbone of the economy. Such a fleet provides around 200 sea-going jobs and possibly 400 shore-based jobs.

Additionally, their purchases support local grocery shops to the tune of £500,000 a year. Ship chandlers also receive considerable support. Local businesses like the ice plant, a marine workshop, a slipway, and marine electrical shop all depend directly on such a fleet, not to mention the fish processing establishments and transport by road, rail, sea, and air.

In other words, as a primary industry, a region's fishing fleet creates linkages and multiplier effects into secondary sectors of the local economy.

To see what happens to a fishing port when the fleet disappears or is reduced to a rump of its former size, one need only look at Grimsby, Hull, Fleetwood, North Shields, Granton, Arbroath, Buckie, Lossiemouth, Oban, or Ayr.

Other ports like Brixham, Lowestoft, Eymouth, Macduff, Wick, and Ullapool are showing signs of vulnerability as the coastal fleets shrink and as licences are amalgamated to construct large offshore trawlers and pursers, all now to land at a few designated ports often far from where the catch was obtained.

'The more profit for the fewer operators is considered progress no matter how much unemployment is created'



'A local fishing fleet of 30 or 40 boats may look like small beer to a Treasury bureaucrat'

In Britain and Europe the fishing industry and fishing communities are suffering from the application of monetarist economics. This does not consider the social or environmental damage which results from their application. The more profit that is concentrated in fewer hands is progress to such economists.

Efficiency to a monetarist is the displacement of employees by capital. The ultimate result in the fishery sector is a handful of millionaire vessel owners having all the resource harvesting rights, and employing relatively few crewmen. This is already the situation in our pelagic fishery, where around 30 or 40 millionaires employ a few hundred fishermen and harvest the country's entire catch of herring and mackerel.

Contrast that with the 1930s when 10,000 herring fishermen were employed on over 1000 vessels, and supported an even greater army of shore processing and transport personnel in scores of fishing ports. The comparison shows starkly the degree to which a community asset has been hijacked.

What the Government and the Treasury are closing their eyes to while pursuing this strategy is the knock on effect of the redundancies, and the loss of basic industry to small coastal communities. Add up such 'externalities' as the costs of unemployment, the loss of income from taxes, the drop in rural economies, and the stagnation and decline of former fishing towns and villages, and the 'profitability' of the modern small, efficient industry,

begins to look less attractive.

There is also a moral argument against the monetarist approach. Although bureaucrats may claim that 'the fishermen do not own the fish' or that the government has the right to give, sell or lease the resource to whoever it pleases, this is not so.

The coastal fishing communities of Britain and Ireland have already paid for their right of access, over and over again, by generations of blood, toil, tears and sweat. There is scarcely a fishing family that has not lost a member at sea, within living memory. The modern technology available today has been developed empirically over the last 100 years by countless numbers of

The Peterhead drifter *Shemara* heads into Lowestoft as dawn breaks to catch the early herring market during the autumn herring season. Such vessels are now museum pieces and the UK herring catch today is taken by a relative handful of 'super trawlers' and fishermen.

fishermen entrepreneurs who mortgaged their homes and risked their savings to pioneer progress in fishing.

How can a government think of making access to the fishery something to be auctioned to the highest bidder? As a farmer has the right to use of the land, so fishing communities ought to have rights over their maritime resource base.

Today's fishery administrators, both politicians and bureaucrats, must answer some searching questions. What is gained by this enforced economic rationalisation of the fishing fleet?

Not greater incomes, only the same gross income in fewer hands. Not more fish, certainly, for the landings are determined by TACs. Not better conservation, for it is those very powerful ships which are posing the threat, rather than the hundreds of medium and small sized vessels.

The only answer the man-

agers might give is greater ease of administration, and greater profits in the fewer hands of those with the financial and lobbying muscle.

On the debit side are the redundancies. Visit any of the now defunct fishing ports and you can see the human waste—scores of qualified, experienced fishermen and engi-

'Around 30 or 40 millionaires employ a few hundred fishermen and harvest the country's entire catch of herring and mackerel'

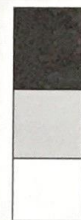


Freshly tanned herring nets being put aboard a herring drifter at Lowestoft in the 1950s. The drifter fishery employed around 1000 boats, thousands of fishermen and an army of shore workers.

MEDIUM SCALE VESSELS



Marketing and sales
Fish processing
Fishermen



INDUSTRIAL FLEETS



50,000
100,000

The differences in job creation between medium scale vessels (owner producers or fishing companies) and industrial fleets. Source: FAO.

neers who now walk their dogs and muse over past times in coffee shops and bars.

Then there are the vacant premises, the boarded-up shops, and the scores of 'to let' and 'for sale' signs interspersed with holiday homes on every street near the harbour. How can this be justified in the name of economic progress?

During the 1980's, fishery development workers with the United Nations and related agencies began to address the same problem as the impact of mindless development financed by international banks and big business, began to take its toll on developing states.

The Table above was drafted for FAO and ICLARM by the author to illustrate the hidden costs of such develop-

ment. It was based on the contention by Dr E.F. Scumacher in his book *Small is Beautiful* that the economics of the world needs 'economics as if people matter'.

Japan has long sought to provide special long term protection for its coastal fishermen. The United States is now allocating CDOs or community development quotas to fishing communities, in an effort to prevent resource access being lost to these groups through the market dominated ITQ system. Portugal has affirmed its support of national control of national waters so it may protect the livelihoods of its 25,000 coastal fishermen.

Despite opposition from the big fishing companies, the new South African government is trying to ensure that fishing communities, formerly denied quotas under apartheid, will now enjoy a modest share of the resource in perpetuity.

The old fish wife used to say it was not just fish, but fishermen's lives her customers were buying. Today, those who buy up licences and quotas from small communities are purchasing the future livelihood and economic well-being of those towns and villages. The FAO figure below shows how important small and medium scale fisheries are to employment and economic activity both on shore and at sea. It is time for fishery managers and politicians to take note.

As the collapse of the Newfoundland cod fishery suggests, the issue at stake is both social cohesion and ecological sustainability. It is a question of getting right our human ecology.

David Thomson is a fishery development consultant who has worked in over 50 countries for the United Nations Agencies, the Development Banks, and bilateral government aid programmes.

Alastair McIntosh is a Fellow of the Centre for Human Ecology who has written and lectured widely on sustainable development, land reform, and ecological issues.

Coastal fisheries management – lessons from abroad

IT is not only in Scotland, England, and Ireland, that coastal fishermen feel their livelihoods are under threat from unfair competition and the purchase of licenses and quotas by big fishery groups from elsewhere.

Portugal, which has more than 10,000 fishing boats of less than 10 metres length, is experiencing similar concerns, and is calling for national control of national waters.

If the Portuguese coastal fisheries are made open to all EU fishing fleets, the country's artisanal fishermen will face a severe problem.

It will create a problem for the national economy as well, as the fishery now relies heavily on the coastal fleet due to the reduction in the Portuguese offshore fleet and its production.

Not only in Europe but in practically every part of the world today, the management of coastal fish resources is being given serious attention.

Special arrangements are being made to protect and enhance both the coastal environment and the economies of coastal communities.

Squeezed

International bodies, research institutes and think tanks are giving serious thought to the management of coastal fisheries in view of the way they are suffering and being squeezed by a system that allows the market and big business to dictate developments.

Following the International Conference in Kyoto, Japan in 1995 on the Sustainable Contribution of Fish to Food Security, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation is commissioning case studies on five national fisheries.

The areas studied will be selected from Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas where indigenous fishing communities are under threat.

The studies will examine local management systems and

DAVID THOMSON and ALISTAIR MCINTOSH say the problems experienced by UK fishermen, are being mirrored across Europe

significant social and cultural features related to the industry and its way of life.

It is interesting to note that two countries which have paid serious attention to the problem are ones with large, highly industrialised fleets.

Japan, despite its huge high seas fisheries, has long sought to protect its coastal waters and to develop participative management systems with local fishing communities and co-operatives. Such co-management started by the allocation of Community Fishery Rights (CFRs) to local and regional co-operatives and their members.

The CFR system promoted community-based management along most of the Japanese coastline. In 1961, the scheme was further strengthened by introduction of ASMR or the Agreement System on Resource Management.

Encouraged

This measure encouraged fishermen's organisations, and co-operatives to play an active role in conservation by agreements on outputs, inputs, and technical measures, in their respective fisheries.

The United States has a long history of provision of special protection and management systems for coastal fisheries such as the Chesapeake Bay, and the traditional Indian fisheries on the Pacific coast. More recently, it has attempted to protect coastal communities from loss of access to fish resources by means of CDQs or Community

Development Quotas:

These are granted to a fishing community on the basis of traditional access and present

need. They may not be sold to non-residents.

The concepts of participatory management and granting of ownership rights to local communities, were taken up by United Nations Agencies and by NGO's working in the fishery sector in developing countries.

Here it was recognised more readily than in Britain that employment and food production were more vital than profits.

Two serious facts were recognised. Firstly, if open access to fishing grounds was to remain in place, then there would be no incentive for fishermen to conserve stocks (the tragedy of the commons).

However, if fisherfolk had ownership rights over the resource adjacent to their villages, then they could begin to apply long term management principles.

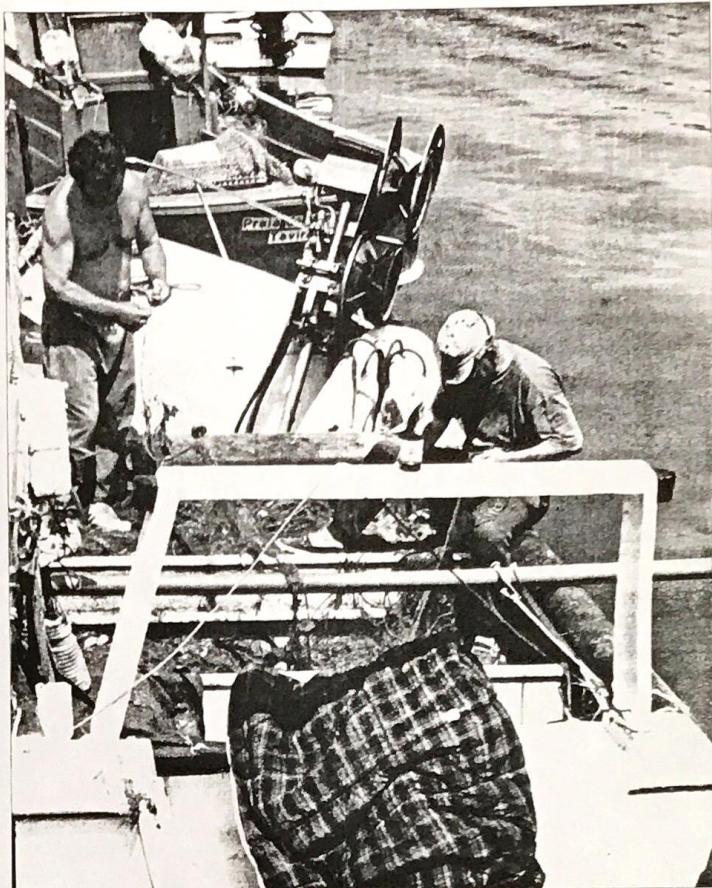
And secondly, if the market was allowed to dictate development, then millions of small scale fishers would be displaced by fleets of large powerful vessels built by those with access to finance.

Instability

Countries like Indonesia, China, and India could not afford to have their millions of coastal fishermen lose their livelihoods and then descend as squatters on the capital cities. This would only bring an increase in crime and social or political instability.

Such recognition led to the formulation of the TURFS concept 'Territorial User Rights in Fisheries.'

Coastal fishing villages were to be granted management and harvesting rights over the fish-



Portuguese and UK inshore fishermen face similar problems

ing grounds immediately adjacent to their communities. Having control, they then had the incentive to conserve fish for future years, and to move gradually from a hunting to a husbandry approach.

Where appropriate, traditional management systems were revived and given recognition under national fishery management regimes. Indonesia, Thailand, and other countries began to apply the concepts which proved useful in other ways.

There was no need for expensive patrol vessels in the coastal waters, and less danger of corrupt officials spoiling the system when the management was brought down to the village level.

In Pacific Island countries the centuries old methods of reef fishery management proved to be surprisingly effective in satisfying the local communities whilst also maintaining a sustainable fishery. A more recent idea and innovation is for coastal waters (to 12 miles from base lines) to be held in trust for the local fishing communities by local or regional councils. This ensures that the resource may not be sold to fishing corporations from outside the region.

It could be that, aided directly

or indirectly by influence from the new Parliament, a similar approach might be developed for Scotland. Local Authorities might implement the scheme in close co-operation with the relevant fishing towns or villages. Quotas allocated to the fleets within the 12 mile coastal zone and the Firths and Minches, might be allocated to the Councils and leased to bona fide fishermen in the area, according to strict criteria.

The quotas would thus be ring-fenced to prevent their sale to non-local companies. The benefits of multipliers and linkages would thereby remain in the local economy. The Local Authorities would also be able, like the Fishery Committees in England (to a lesser degree), to determine local regulations in co-operation with local fishermen, and ensure that these are observed throughout the regional coastal zone.

This would permit a solution to problems like the conflict between static and mobile gear, and would make it possible to limit or ban the use of certain methods like twin trawls, nephrops trawl brushes, and / or beam trawls.

Alain Le Sann in his book 'A Livelihood From Fishing' shows how management of

fisheries can be shifted from a purely economic and administrative base to one that gives local communities some control. In reflecting on its message, our up and coming MSPs might give consideration to the possibility that if they can reform Scottish fisheries policy either within an amended CFP or without it.

Major results of that achievement would be resource enhancement and preservation of coastal economies. An intangible and possibly more important benefit would be the recovery of cultural identity and civic pride. Social cohesion could be rebuilt and the social costs of unemployment and despair reduced. Now that would be a catch worth harvesting!

• David Thomson is a former Scottish fishermen who has worked in fishery development in over 50 countries, for the U.N. Agencies, the Development Banks, and bilateral aid programmes.

Alastair McIntosh is a Fellow of the Centre for Human Ecology (formerly part of Edinburgh University) who has written and lectured widely on land reform, sustainable development, and on social and ecological issues in Scotland and the developing world.



Mediterranean fishermen are suffering from dwindling stocks



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