

**The following documents is selected from the meetings in Eritrea in 2006 with the aim to get the project back on the track.**

### **Protocol from meeting 18-5-2006**

*Date: 18.5.*

*Present: Tewolde, Mingis, Hassan, Fatma, Knud, Kurt, Mahmud, Henrik, Alim.*

Tewolde: We have 38 cooperatives, which are not currently strong. We are trying to strengthen them and making it possible for them to establish their own offices. But they exist. The problem is that you can't get them to a meeting – as much as you want. But we have made several meetings, and we are almost through in making a structure for Massawa (which is a little bit ahead of the others). We are in the process of deciding how to give them a building or maybe give them some land – to establish their own premises.

Kurt: There is a charter for them, but when we talk about this, we mean: Do they have a mandate to talk on behalf of the fishermen.

Tewolde: They have a mandate – full mandate. They have all the power, all the mandate – except: they don't know what to do! They are leaning on us!

Mingis: We need them to be independent. They have the rights to do whatever they like.

Tewolde: He is right. They like the capacity, but that is not the main reason, but the main reason is that they don't understand cooperative as such. They don't see the road ahead. They are only extending their hand for someone to guide them. We have to start teach them even WHAT cooperatives are. What they can achieve, if they are united. For them to know, where they would want to go, and how! This is what we have started to undertake – work shops, to pass to them the message of what real cooperatives are. Knowing this, definitely, they will be on course – to manage their own affairs. At present it is hazy. They don't exactly where to go. Of course they come to us and say “now we are facing problems, because fuel is expensive, and the price for fish is much lower, so can you help us”. I will them: Go to the administrator (regional), tell him your problems, and let him deal with whoever is responsible for the market. But I – no. I can approach him in my own way – your problems you must take to your government. I listen to them, and I do my own homework.

Kurt: But don't they understand this point? Why do they come then?

Tewolde: The aim of them forming cooperatives is not deeply inside them, in their blood. Now I tell them: Do you want to be organized in these cooperatives – after explaining the aims and meaning of the cooperatives, duties and obligations of members of cooperatives. Now, do you really want it? They say: Oh, yes yes, why not. But mind you: Cooperatives to be managed by yourselves. I can speak for them in the proper places, but I cannot be solution to their problems. And once they are in power, they will definitely be managing their own affairs. For them to have an understanding of what it would be to have an office functioning as a place to unite them. They can at least bring a cup of tea to that place and talk about their problems and discuss solutions. To your summary from yesterday: Road Map for *empowerment* of the AFS is much more correct.

Kurt: But we have to some understanding of why this didn't happen already?

Fatma: Because they don't have much educational background, not enough resources, materials, which are basically what the reason is.

Tewolde: I have studied this very well. The cooperatives were established in 1997. When I saw them the way they are, I have come to a conclusion. The people, who established them out of good will, have created them with limited functions. They did not have enough conceptual understanding of cooperatives. The ministerial people did not have enough conceptual understanding of it. I am sure they have read a lot, but their starting point was more theoretical. And when they started, they had one aim: To have the cooperatives to be a means of distributing loans. They only made them as an instrument of distributing this law. And then with some "flowery aims" of this and that. But in their mind, they only created an instrument. And as a result of this, in the mind of the members of the cooperatives, they are only there as the instruments for this distribution of the law (for the sake of administrators). They made them dependent on them – because the structure and aims were very short sighted. They established secondary cooperatives – a collective, top national fisherman leadership at the top (elected), who paid by the government. But the common fishermen were pushed out. We have not yet established the fundamental associations. Now, what we are doing here, is: tell them what cooperatives is, what they can do, what is the obligations and duties of an individual member. And then we ask them: Now that you know this, do you want this? If not, then we leave them aside, until they are ready.

Mahmud: To organize the fishermen in cooperatives started in 1993. The office of UNDP started it. Up to 1995, most of the members were the owners of the boats – then I will be able to take loans from the UNDP. As of 1997, after 2000, we tried to organize the fishermen again, to manage themselves. Through this period, the ministry did its best to give awareness to the fishermen to guide themselves. But in 2003 and 2004 we held several meetings with the fishermen to guide them to be independent. But in general there is very limited capacity.

Tewolde: More or less, strengthens what I have said. And Makhmut has been in the ministry since early 1990s, so he was there and has some experience. But when these cooperatives started in 1993, they started in limited areas with some UNDP support. Maybe these people had very good aims, but they didn't pass it neither to the fishermen, nor to the government administrators. The by-laws then later on, came from the top, and there were a lot of bargains there. But probably Hassan could clarify this more.

Hassan: The problem starts at the beginning, when the cooperatives were established. There were Japanese people also involved. Before independence, the fishery administration was part of the ministry of agriculture. The concept from this beginning. I thought it was the beginning, but it was the end.

Mingis: At the end of last year, we were discussing it with the fishermen, how to build the cooperatives. But the thing is – how to start? They have their own worries, etc. But after a long discussion, they were convinced, but how to start? There is no problem with the fishermen.

Alim: The problem is in how to change their minds.

Hassan: The problem is not only here. Even in Yemen, it is the same. An "office" is somewhere where you go and ask for help to solve some concrete problems – not your own.

Kurt: Can I ask. In the Western world, we talk about advocacy – to be the voice of someone, like the fishermen. Political concept in fishery normally is for instance division of industrial and artisanal fishery. Then you have a conflict about the resources etc. And how to give the artisanal fisherman a voice, to say that he has a right to keep his fishery. Do you mean this also?

Mingis: It depends on the development of the cooperatives. They have total freedom to do that. If they are well organized, they will have this power.

Kurt: Can we conclude then, that the cooperatives started with some help from abroad. Every time there was credit giving, material reasons why the cooperatives went up. When there was no such motivation, they went down. So, how do we avoid this situation that the fishermen are very interested in our project, but in reality they don't accept this as a means to really be more independent?

Mingis: Like I said, we already started last year to make meetings and discussions with them. And they do have interest to build that kind of cooperatives. That could give a great future for the fishermen.

Kurt: But don't you think that they were told about this before, in the 1990s?

Tewelde: They had the concept. And they were also, probably, informally they were trying to pass their message. But as I said earlier, for both the administrators and the members of the cooperatives, the only aim for the creation of the cooperatives, deep inside, was a means for the credits.

Kurt: But how can we do this better in the future?

Tewelde: I have already said that. We have been undertaking work shops to tell the fishermen about what cooperatives are, and what they can achieve if they are organized. They will have bigger muscles. In the market, they can demand better prices. They can even organize themselves to present a candidate for the local parliament. And also: To have a very clear objective, so that they can look at this objective, and AIM at this objective. How are new members to be recruited, how can you reject members. And finally, we tell them: "Would you like to form these kinds of cooperatives? Then do it. We will assist you, but we will not out our words on your by-laws".

Mahmud: In 1995, there was a very limited awareness of this. Now it is better, because we conduct a lot of meetings with the fishermen. Even they give him training and they conduct work shops on the cooperative concept, concerning organization etc.

Kurt: So, the reason is not that they are looking forward to more material support from foreign donors. Our experience from KZ was exactly that fishermen were ready immediately to organize in cooperatives when we demanded this as condition to get nets, support etc. But now, when there is much less support, they continue to go to the meetings.

Mahmud: As I said, in 1995, the members were only the owners of the boats. Most of the cooperative members now have no boats. You can be member just as a fisherman.

Kurt: Can I also ask you, which places the fishermen now are the best organized? Best understanding.

Mahmud: In general, the Massawa area is better organized than others.

Tewolde: We have problems of transportation, communication, etc. So, if we do achieve something here, we can more easily move and implement in other places also.

Knud: I think that if we should have cooperatives, they should have common ownership of facilities. Maybe to have their own sales organization. Maybe common ownership of ice factories. I am here the first time, but I think that the education for all has to be continued. Could they read papers or a book for instance?

Tewolde: Most of them can read and write.

Alim: Around 80 % of them can read and write in Arabic.

Fatma: I think around 50 %.

Tewolde: We agree with you, Knud. To have an office, a building, which every member says "Ah, this is ours!". Number two, to have a common property that can tie together, like a mother ship that collects the fish, processing plant. Shop, store for equipment. So that it could be tied together. So that the member can say: "Ah, I am member of this cooperative. This is our!" This is what we tell them. There must be something to cement the bond. So, I try to look at the positive picture. But normally, in the whole world, cooperatives go up and down. I think there are very few cooperatives that are really successful within these expectations, we are describing. But the main thing is the understanding of the concept, which is what we are trying to achieve.

Knud: There are two issues. There is the question about the practical related to selling, getting better prices. The other side is the identity. They should be proud to be fishermen, and to be coastal fishermen.

Kurt: We had a seminar here. One of the questions was raised: What is the feeling among fishermen about the high prices on gasoline? It seemed to be that the fishermen identified very much in terms of the national identity. They did not want to push on the government for subsidies for instance – because it is a national problem, not only their problem. So, you could say that the pride/identity is very broad – it is very national. What Knud is saying is that we need to strengthen the identity of the fishermen AS fishermen. Not that they should be unpatriotic of course. But they can do even more good for themselves and everyone by identifying together as fishermen. [Compares Danish situation, where fishermen always put pressure on government for subsidies for fuel].

Knud: In my own village, the fishermen themselves build up the harbour – and only after 30 years they got some support from the government. And since then, they very much fight for their harbour.

Mingis: I think that if it will really happen, and there will be some common property, the bond could be very strong.

Knud: We should support the fishermen, but it is very important that they can't get support if they don't work together.

Mingis: But if they have this as a possibility they will work very hard. Without it, it would even be a shame. It is a good start to have as a perspective.

Kurt: Maybe from there, we can take some more concrete steps. If we look at the future of our project: Should there be any criteria for getting support? In some cooperatives, the equipment is owned by private people. Now, nets and material are coming from Denmark. What should be criteria for receiving this support? Do we claim that the fishermen who receive support should be registered, be in cooperatives etc.? A private fisherman who doesn't like cooperatives, should he also get support?

Fatma: No.

Mingis: For example. To distribute some material, we have already used some criteria. First to member of a cooperative. Second, to have a good name in the cooperatives. Repaying his loans (or at least some of it). Is he an active fisherman.

Kurt: Except from catching fish, are there any other responsibilities? Common activities?

Mingis: Yes, yes. Landing sites, etc. If he is a fisherman, we will see him. But first of all, he must be an active fisherman. Works daily on fishing.

Kurt: When Knud talked about taking care of their own property – the question is: will they take care of the ice machines, landing sites, etc. Should this also be criteria? I am not sure about it, but how can we build it in?

Tewolde: Sometimes I look at this in the way: Could we only give support to members of cooperatives? What about a fisherman who doesn't want to join for his own reasons? Sometimes I wonder about this. There were once two or three young men who wanted to go fishing, and they asked for some support. They came to me. But Fatma said it is not allowed if they are not member of the cooperatives. Such considerations should be included in our decisions.

Kurt: But it must come from Eritrea. In KZ, like I said, they build up cooperatives. But it was very much on our demand. In 2000, ca., they started to split them up again and reorganize.

Tewolde: But I think we can discuss what is the best way. You have been dealing with the cooperatives so far. The others are outside. They have no say. But what do we do with them? If we only deal with cooperatives, probably we are favouring the cooperatives so that others could be forced to joining them. So, are we doing the right thing? What do you think?

Kurt: I don't know. I have not been here enough to understand that. [Compares to situation in Denmark, and in Kazakhstan]. Fishermen always try to stay alive. But I think it is important to think about this in the longer perspective: What is the best solution in ten years? In my heart, I think we should include these three young men, but I don't know here.

Tewolde: We believe in the cooperatives, that is why we are forming them. It makes it easier to deal with representatives (one instead of many). On the other side, there are also very clever and hard working fishermen who by choice don't want to join. So, I would say that primarily we deal with cooperatives, but we let it open for special cases to deal also with people outside. To make a window.

Knud: What should we call this. In one situation it might be better to make cooperatives. In another maybe rather a more unofficial group. In Denmark, for instance, fishermen go together to buy equipment. Personally, I like to organize cooperatives, but it might not always be the only right solution. Maybe if someone wants to be outside of a cooperative, he will simply not get the same benefits, it could be “more expensive”.

Tewolde: Then it becomes an individual decision whether to join or not. A fisherman will join a cooperatives if he knows that he will get advantages. So, in order to get more members, should we target only cooperatives? I would still say: Lets target cooperatives, but with a small window to also assist some individuals with exceptional cases.

Knud: I think these questions maybe should be one of the questions, the cooperatives should decide.

Tewolde: When discussing with members of cooperatives, they will of course say: Don’t work with anyone else! So, I think we must make some principles.

Kurt: Well, if the council can make a statement around this which makes sense I don’t think it is a problem.

Mahmud: Every cooperative has a chairman, and they are members of the councils, and the council has the right to decide on behalf of them.

Tewolde: But the council cannot decide to support someone outside the cooperatives!

Kurt: Ok, the council must make some decisions. Of course we will make work with cooperatives. But there can be good logical arguments to support also others. For instance the example you mentioned, about the three young men, sounds logical. People will understand. Maybe they will get support for a short period, some months.

Tewolde: Living Sea must make some decisions on this. You can for instance present to the council that which they are able to provide over. And then have some additions. For special cases.

Fatma: [In Tewolde’s translation: I think we can *only* work with cooperatives].

Knud: I agree...

[Short break]

Tewolde: One item is the clarification of the approach for the 2007 pilot fishing project, which will help us to identify the necessary inputs, starting from boats, engines, gear, navigation equipment, etc. Yes, for convenience, we can regroup the places into three: North, Central, South, but we are aiming at a very special job: a pilot fishing. Lets be very clear: What do we aim to do, and how? I think we aim to run a fishing exercise with different configurations. One issue is boats: Do we try both hurri and sambuk?

Kurt: Yes.

Tewolde: Engine: We can try inboard, definitely, but also outboard kerosene? Gears?

Kurt: Now, they use drift net and hand line. That's all.

Tewolde: And different sizes?

Kurt: Drift net is nearly the same to catch Spanish Mackerel. Drift net and hand line is what is known.

Tewolde: In our last meeting, you were speaking about different types of gear. Which?

Kurt: Can I just at first say something about the division into three areas? In the South, they can catch fish, no doubt about that. Let's focus on the South, to build up the structure, to distribute on local market, and to sell Spanish Mackerel and maybe other species on the national market. In Zula or Erefaile, there will be a central in the South. We think that there we have the best possibilities to show that fishermen can organize and make more of their fishery. We don't need to introduce a lot of new equipment and methods there. In the Central (Massawa), the infra structure exists. There we need more trial fisheries – with sambuks or hurries. For example we have two boats, sambuks, – one of them we change totally, with new equipment, GPS, etc. Another will fish with traditional methods. Then we can compare them over a season. Another case could be to change a hurri to have an inboard motor, janma. And we monitor: What are the changes – in results and expenses? In don't know are kerosene, but let us keep that in mind. One boat could be totally changed to bottom set net. And the fishermen compensated, because they might catch less in that period. But then the fishermen are trained to use the new methods. This type of trial fisheries has to be supported from Denmark. But we can not send people all the time of course. There will typically be one fisherman here for one month, who will work with people and go out. And then the staff here will continue the work and the monitoring afterwards. Then there is the North. As we discussed with Henning earlier, it seems very difficult now for us to go and build big capacities in Wekiro. If that should happen, I think the Eritrean government has to go in – just to get the station to work (roads, pier, station). My opinion is that in that region, we should for now focus on the foot fishery. To give nets to the young fishermen, maybe support them for small canoos, or similar. To give them a feeling that some changes and improvements are possible. Maybe this is a very modest proposal, but I think it might be very risky to want more. We need results now, in the next two years.

Tewolde: In that case. The North and South require only to be organized.

Kurt: Well, in the South we need to show that fishermen can take care of properties etc.

Tewolde: Ok. What are then the inputs required? Hurries and sambuks are available. Engines? Have to be brought in, I think?

Kurt: We can take some yanmar, whether to buy them here or from Denmark, but we have learned not to introduce new types of engines. But for now, we can only equip 1-3 boats. It is focused on trial activities. We must prove that we can work together and show results, introduce fish to the market. But we cannot say that we will simply bring 10 new motors and distribute them. Nets, of course, we can take a lot of inner nets, which everyone can benefit from (according to decisions of the council).

Tewolde: Haulers?

Kurt: With bottom set net, we need haulers.

Tewolde: I am trying to define, what to be expected to come from Denmark.

Mingis: It is already listed in the project application.

Kurt: Yes, but that can be changed. It is not a big problem.

Mingis: In that case, if it can be changed, he asks for a list of what can be expected.

Kurt: First we have to take some decisions about the approach to the different regions.

Tewolde: I think we have agreed on that already. But then we should define exactly what is needed to bring from Denmark. I think that must be decided by you. Then you will decide on the list.

Kurt: I just stress this (about the regions). Because YOU will have the problems from the fishermen, because they will feel that the distribution is not equal.

Tewolde: I think we will meet the council on Monday, and there we will communicate about this. There we will discuss what is expected from them, us, and you.

Kurt: So, we will make some description, and already start doing that while we are here.

Mingis: We would need then some description of the material supposed to come.

Kurt: Yes, yes. But it is very difficult. Maybe we should write something and distribute it to you, and then discuss it more carefully.

Tewolde: Very well. Another theme: The bank account. I will work on this. But once we finish that, how are we going to handle the financial movement. I want it to be very transparent. How do we withdraw money from the bank, for what purposes, etc. It has to be defined. Secondly, who will be the people to sign the withdrawal. Now we have the council and the facilitating office.

Kurt: In KZ, we have the president and the local project manager, and the bookkeeper. Two persons must sign (the head of the presidency and the manager).

Mahmud: Who is the president of our council?

Tewolde: I would suggest: Lets look on all transactions in two parts: One below 5000 Nakfa, one above. Above, I will involve you for all concrete decisions. Below, without even notifying the Living Sea – one member of the division (Hassan), and one of the cooperative members from Massawa. Those two could be the signatures. How do you think?

Kurt: Of course two persons is good. The practical issue is that we don't like to have to take decisions on every transaction (even above 5000), but rather to have a report every month on how the money has been spent.

Tewolde: But who should sign?

Kurt: You suggested Hassan and one of the cooperative members?

Tewolde: I would also include Mahmud – as the coordinator of the project. So three persons.

Kurt: Yes, it is very important that the coordinator is involved.

Tewolde: This is for amounts less than 5000, but more than 5000 I want to involve you.

Kurt: Ok.

Tewolde: And then the monthly report – Alim will be responsible for that. (Jordanos has left us and went to her “father’s home” in Italy. She had been here since ca. 1996). Alim has been working with the cooperatives since 1995, with the bookkeeping. So I think we have even a better choice. So, I will clear the account in the name of the cooperative. Now, about the marketing. As I said yesterday, I think the input from this project to influence the market is very limited. We are a small fish in a big ocean. But we have agreed yesterday to have a fishery festival, which would motivate the fishermen, and the fish consuming community, and through this we aim to influence the habits of eating fish, and also the marketing. So, in October or November 2007, we expect to have a fish festival. How do we get this organized? We will start from now, here. Fatma will carry one with collecting some songs, tales, go to the villages, ask the children to develop some songs etc. Slogans in the local language. And we will propagate the idea to the local administration. From your side, starting from the logo, and maybe t-shirts and hats...?

Kurt: All the identity of the festival of course is Eritrean. But all material, what is needed for the “marketing” of this festival, streaming, caps, t-shirts, etc. It is something we can do in Denmark. Daniel can probably help us with language etc. Well, if it is price worthy to do it Denmark.

Tewolde: How do we develop the logo?

Kurt: We could make a competition, among children in schools for instance.

Tewolde: Any additions on this issue?

Kurt: I think we need some committee to take care of it.

Mahmud: What about local traders here in Massawa? Maybe we could involve and facilitate them?

Kurt: The shop here, I talked with the manager. We discussed some items needed to strengthen the local marketing. He was an open minded, English speaking person. Maybe he could even be involved in the arrangement of the festival? Maybe we should visit him today already, when we go to the Eri-Fish.

Mahmud: Yes. You can see other shops also.

Tewolde: As we go by, we will appoint a committee. Next issue: Clarification of methods of communication?

Kurt: Here – you have the system that fishermen come and talk with you...(?) Well, then 50 % of the fishermen cannot read. We have to have some kind of wall with daily news, pictures, events, are posted.

Mingis: We can make that. Most of the people come here. So, it is fine.

Kurt: Then communication to Denmark. I think it must be through e-mail? Of course sometimes phone, if needed, but first of all e-mail.

Tewolde: Yes. But then the format for the financial report and monthly report.

Kurt: We have a proposal for that.

Tewolde: Monthly – the office here will report?

Kurt: Yes, maybe. But consider that. If it will take too much energy, it might be better with a quarterly. Better a good quarterly than just a monthly.

Tewolde: Yes, lets make it quarterly. Meetings? Here, locally, we will carry on meetings as required. The office will determine when, why, agenda, etc. But can we agree specified, about the meetings between Living Sea and Eritrea? Can we fix some schedule? How often can you be here?

Kurt: The project coordinator (me) will come once per year. In the future, maybe we can do more. And then four month of experts (four trips, or four experts). We can manage some changes within the frame we have, but only if it will be needed. Maybe even we will be able to find some additional funds. Daniel and John also will come here within their own frame, and they of course will also visit and have meetings.

Tewolde: Staff. Which functions will be performed by whom? Mahmud will be coordinator. Mingis will be responsible of gear. Alim will be bookkeeper. Abdul is out – he was supposed to attend a meeting, the seminar which was the very starting point. But never came – for no reason – I even reminded him of the meeting on the evening before. He is very good, but if he didn't come for that, I didn't want to gamble – would he come for the next year? It is very disappointing for me. [Discussion (in Arabic) about finding someone else – or giving Abdul a second chance, to come for the meeting on Monday].

Kurt: What about the connection to the Muslim fishermen, especially in the South? Do we have a person who can do that? This has to be considered, if we take this North-Central-South approach.

### **Protocol from meeting 19-5-2006**

*Date: 19-5*

*Present: Tewolde, Kurt, Knud, Henrik.*

Tewelde: About accounting. I have been thinking about the procedure of validating expenditures above 5000 Nakfa. I would like to add the procedure that I must endorse such purchases (I and Kurt both) – simply to endorse it. About Kurt’s statement about the importance of connection to the “Muslim fishermen in the South”: I think it is not correct to emphasize this. First of all, most of the fishermen all along the coast are Muslim. Secondly, why to emphasize this and make an issue of it? For instance, I noticed earlier in your project document that you said that “most of the authorities in the administration are Christian.” This is factually not true. Then, for today’s agenda. I think it would be wise to look now ahead of the two years.

Kurt: That was exactly our thoughts about the agenda for today.

Tewelde: So, what about after the first two years? Do you imagine something like “more of the same”?

Kurt: Well, of course in the end of 2007, we will know much more. So, the first question could be: How do you see the artisanal fishery here after 10 years? If you imagine a scenario of this, what would it look like? Now we have eight new Italian trawlers, for instance. Is this the course?

Tewelde: There is always going to be contradiction between industrial (be it Egyptian or local) and artisanal fisheries. Once the local capacity of the industrial fishery grows, the contradiction will stay and maybe be bigger. This we have to consider. I think the effort should be to constantly upgrade the capacity of the artisanal fishery, training, introduction of new technologies, and get them (cooperatives) involved when they are stronger into the processing or semi-processing.

Knud: Then they need facilities to work with the fish?

Tewelde: Yes. Maybe they can process it and transport it to Asmara. This is how I see it: Constantly upgrading their capacity with new systems, procedures and capacities. Drying, packaging, delivery – like on the East Coast. So far, the fish is used for animal feed there. But we are planning to process anchovies for human consumption (soup, dried). The same idea like coming up with recipes, trying to develop eating habits. Then: Be ready to supply the market. So they have to make processing plans. This is what I see.

Kurt: I understand the emphasis on drying fish. Milk fish for instance can be very nice dried. But it is very low technology. Normally, this would not be the way, the fishermen would want to go.

Kurt: But it could involve for instance jobs for women...

Tewelde: Lets take shrimp for instance. Beheading, packing in one kg. packages...

Kurt: Yes, yes. I agree that processing of dry fish, keeping high quality, sanitary standards etc., this includes technology too. The fish we saw yesterday for instance, were in the boat for seven days, and the last they took out from the bottom, were of less quality than the first.

Tewelde: Yesterday in the evening, we also talked about taking out the guts on the boat, as you do it in Denmark. Actually, this was obligatory here also. But this procedure was stopped.

Kurt: Here you have a very high quality of fish. It must just be handled to keep this high quality.

Tewolde: I think experience must guide us – but sometimes I also like to dream, to go out of the orbit. When you (Knud) mentioned the women, I remind the snail nail, which women are taking out – very delicately not to kill the snail. It is very expensive. Very difficult to collect one kilo, but expensive. This is one activity of the women, which we must look at. Secondly, fish oil. There are very expensive types of fish oil – simply put it in a barrel and boil it. It can be very expensive for sauces, etc. Fishery is seasonal, so there are high seasons and low seasons, so if we can also diversify the activities of the fishermen, in a sustainable way. Maybe too much wood would be required to boil the oil, etc. – then we could look for alternative sources of energy. But diversification is important.

Kurt: Do you have someone produce a management plan? The industrial fishery and the artisanal fishery – will the development of the industrial fishery influence the artisanal fishery? Do they catch the same species?

Tewolde: You know, the only way we restrict the fishery is by area. Within some limits, for instance, trawlers are not allowed.

Kurt: Most of important species for artisanal fishermen in ... is sardines. But now trawlers are also beginning to catch them. This will create some problems. To avoid big trouble there is need of a biological investigation. Do you have such prognoses already?

Tewolde: I don't think so. But for now, it is certainly no problem.

Kurt: Yes. But we just have to think in terms of LFA: What will happen in a longer scenario. In the discussion, we have to include at least considerations of this. We must take into consideration the reasons why it is currently not conducted, and in which perspective it will be needed.

Knud: If you catch the species outside, they will not come to the shore. There are seasons, as you said, but if they are caught outside, the coastal fishermen will have problems.

Kurt: That is why we develop industrial fishery, in a sense: Because “we don't like seasons” – we want the same fish all the year. Therefore they are caught inside in the season and outside as well.

Tewolde: How can you restrict the industrial fishery not to catch this and this and this?

Kurt: By the effort. How many hours are you allowed to have the trawl in the water.

Tewolde: Kurt, I think this is highly technological already for the Eritrean fishery. The only thing which could be controlled would be the areas.

Kurt: Yes, probably you are right. We just have to be aware of this discussion. Without it, we cannot make a trustworthy project document. The fight for the resources is the problem all over the world. But who is in charge of this here?

Tewolde: We had a very strong division for that here, but now it is not so strong. The people in GEF who work here are working more in terms of habitats and by-catches (turtles, etc.)

Kurt: Could you imagine that we asked GEF to do something about this? So that it would not be on our shoulders?

Tewolde: Maybe you can pick it up with them, yourself, when you meet them here.

Kurt: In the future, also women is a topic for discussion in the project document. I know that Fatma did some interviews along the coast line with women. Could it be possible for us, not just to get this, but – we need to make a component of the women in fishery – to make some considerations of how different women from different ethnic groups could be involved?

Tewolde: You see, Kasay started this issue. He was transferred, and I always try to open this issue with Hassan and others, but they have not been able to take up this issue yet. But anyway...

Kurt: But how can we get this done?

Tewolde: You the marine college is here, in Massawa, and I am constantly speaking with the dean to make studies, economic studies on the fishermen, on processing anchovies, on environmental damage, mangroves, corals, etc. Now, they are on their second year, so maybe next year, we can give them, sponsor them, to make some studies, on such kinds of topics. For two reasons: One, we get results, second they get experience.

Knud: There are scientists who can make such interviews?

Kurt: Not scientists, but college level.

Tewolde: They get a certificate of marine ecology, engineering, quality, inspection. Probably there is also one on sea food.

Knud: But what about the more social and ethnic dimensions?

Tewolde: That is why we try to make them do concrete studies – after having been buried in the books.

Kurt: But say, Fatma has talked, made interviews with a lot of women, then she asks one young woman: Could you imagine working with fish in the future. Maybe she says no, maybe she says I could imagine this or that. It seems to me to be very important to get women's own view – what could they imagine doing after ten years.

Knud: And not ask in a way which will just give you the answer you want. It is not so simple.

Kurt: When we were on Dissy Island, when I was sitting in the yard of Osman, smoking. In the beginning, women saw me, from a distance, but in the end they passed very close to the fence, and opened the scarf, very quickly saying “hello-mister-how-are-you”. Everything can change. We have learned from Kazakhstan that all changes come from the women. Women change the world.

Tewolde: When the time comes, when the demand comes, be it women, or environmental control... Now, men are earning the living... Like, you know, the need is there. Younger wives – their hus-

bands were martyrs in the war. They have to do something to support their children. The need is there.

Knud: For instance in Norway, they have very strong societies of fishermen's women. They have the role of wives of fishermen, not fishing themselves, but about everything else surrounding the actual fishery, supporting the local society, etc. They go around, speak up about the local problems, because they are often better speakers than men.

Kurt: Women need, just as men, identity. When fishery is going back, women also need some way of supporting. To do this, it is not just coming from above. It must come from the people themselves. To do this, public awareness and capacity building is needed. How can we support the need to raise the awareness about and among the women? If we start slowly, not with too much, because of various traditions, etc. Everybody has their own culture. So to start, we need to know which of the Ethnic group is more realistic to start with. Kasay, I remember, said that Afa is the best place to start. You said that we don't have the capacity to that now, but how can we make it operational?

Tewolde: Maybe I can contact Kasay, maybe he can process some of what he started. Otherwise, as I said, the students in the college could start up this work. The problem with Fatma... she is very good, approaching the fishermen, but she is not so focused, she is storing information and tends to mix up things a little bit. All the issues are important, but usually at the same time... and she tends to politicise everything. So, she needs very close guidance.

([Saidna enters and says hello. He is from infra structure division (other two: artisanal and inland)]. Information about fish ponds: We have around 50 dams, planted with fish. The problem again is eating habits. Not just to catch or "grow" fish, but also to change the eating habits. Once, when we tried to introduce new recipes, I heard afterwards that the women who were preparing it, themselves were staying, holding their nose, with heads turned away... I think the young people will easily go for fish.

Kurt: Something similar happen to us in Kazakhstan. The flounder was very unusual, what with the eyes on top of the head, etc. It took time to accept it, but that has improved a lot now.)

Kurt: About Fatna. This Danish group was very fascinated by her.

Tewolde: She is very good. She has all the names, all the information in her head. We have very good use of her. But again: She needs some guidance.

Knud: I am the first time here, so I can't see clearly about everyone, but I do get some first impressions – there is a lot of difference between the attitudes of people.

Tewolde: Yes, and in this sense you are right. Even though Fatna doesn't speak much English at all, she just needs a little bit translation, before she goes "oh yes, yes!!" etc.

(Going through which places are still to be visited by Danish delegation).

Kurt: What do you think about the landing facilities in Erefaile? Should we include that in the South-component of our project. [To Knud, Henrik: Tewolde told that it might be useful to introduce canoes in Erefaile. I suggested to try land seines, but it seemed not to work either. What then?

To make a pontoon bridge? Or maybe: Put a beton stand some 400 meters out, and then pull a fleet forward and back to it, to carry some 4-5 tons of fish. Knud: Sounds like a very good idea.] In principle it could be a way of solving some problems without too many costs. All the material, cranes, etc., can probably be found somewhere. This we will include in the description then.

## **Protocol from the first meeting for negotiation of principles and perspectives for the project on the Red Sea Coastal Fishery**

*Date: 17.5.2006*

*Present: Tewolde Tewoldemikael, Knud Andersen, Kurt Christensen, Henrik Bjerre, Mahmud.*

First item: Planning of program (change of schedule due to National Independence Day, 24.5.).

Tewolde: How to arrange the work around the 24<sup>th</sup>? While we (Eritreans) are busy celebrating etc., you (Danish delegation) can re-write, discuss and conclude, i.e. on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. Then on the 26<sup>th</sup>, we will meet again and work through the plans for a common conclusion.

Tewolde: Saturday and Sunday will be for travelling (I will be in Asmara), Monday meeting with fishermen.

Kurt: We plan to leave Massawa Friday in the afternoon. During the three days, when we are working with our documents, is it possible to call you?

Tewolde: Yes, yes. I will be here.

Kurt: Maybe I should introduce shortly how we imagine (“in our brain”) the division of the discussion: Of course we need to discuss and agree how to pass through the current situation, but apart from that we would like to discuss the perspectives for a project document. That is, we have the current two years program, but we would like to see also ten years ahead.

Tewolde: Ok, I am a little bit short sighted. I would like to dream of course...

Knud: Well, anyway, we have to do that. Our people at home demand that we have a perspective in mind all the time.

Tewolde: I would like to try and explain our viewpoint, why we prefer to work together with Living Sea, instead of opening an independent office. I think your aim of working in the fishermen-to-fishermen frame must be motivated by a wish to see actual, concrete change. We really appreciate this approach very much. And we would simply like to be part of this. I, myself, for instance personally have so much understanding of your aims, short term or long term. Even though I will not interfere in the course of the project (to dictate it), I know that I will be guiding from here the project to its goal. When I speak now, we in the ministry of fishery, development IS the mandate of this department. The purpose of our work is exactly to do (although in a broader sense) the same job at which you are aiming. We even appreciate and understand what you have described about “makker-

skab” from Danish. In Tigrina, Mehzenet (Erkenet is “friendship”, Ashenet is “partnership”) is a total commitment. Mahasut we are, when we share a small pepper to seal our commitment – we can stretch this out even to commit my son to your daughter... So, since we totally understand your long term objectives. And we can be of help. But if you push us out... I mean I don’t see how four bloody people in this office can be of any trouble. We have daily contact with the fishermen. We have contact to all government levels.

Knud: What we are aiming at, however, is to work for that the fishermen themselves have the feeling of taking responsibility for their own fishery, organization, etc. I agree that it is very important to have connections to the government, etc., but I think the fishermen will be stronger, if they will have their own organization, their own system to tell you their points of view, opinion about the situation, etc. We have to build that component into this project in a very real sense.

Tewolde: For you, to do just that, we are here to facilitate this. We are there exactly to connect you to the fishermen. We will not be any obstacle to that. It is just what we have done for the last two-three years. I don’t think we have been an obstacle. Did we somehow corrupt you?

Kurt: No, no, of course. Even now, as we talk, we are improving our understanding of each other. But ok, we have this talk, but there are also some formal problems. Maybe I will let Henrik explain and retell, translate the letter we have received from the donors.

Henrik: [translates the letter from the Danish donors (the branch of Danida), the paragraph stating that the donors cannot support the project, if it is no longer an NGO project]

Tewolde: From the very first word, there is a misunderstanding. The authorities did not *take over* the project. There is a council, consisting of the members of Living Sea and fishermen. This council is the highest authority of the project. We are only facilitating this council.

Kurt: Nonetheless, there are some formal problems. The bank account for instance...

Tewolde: Again: We took an existing bank account to facilitate the current transfer. But we will make an account in the name of the cooperatives. The account was going out of use, and it will now be transferred with documents to be in control of the council.

Kurt: Good. This is why we are here – to get such things clear. But the main problem for the donor is to keep the structure of an NGO to NGO cooperation.

Tewolde: This was, is and will be the aim of the work. The final end will be there. And: We have these two years, which can be a transition period. If we are happy after these two years, we can continue.

Kurt: Ok, I agree. But for us, it is impossible to say that after two years, maybe we will say goodbye to you. If we go into that, it becomes our responsibility to find ways to continue our work.

Knud: When we engaged, we continue. It is impossible to say goodbye after two years. We are not donors, we are fishermen. I have been a skipper for 25 years. And I have feeling for the fishermen. I don’t have another project which I will go to work on after two years. It is colleagues. Of course the situation can turn out to be impossible (war or what ever).

Tewolde: You have children? (Knud: Yes, three daughters). We can find a fisherman for one of them.

Henrik: [Talks about identity of Living Sea: There is a sort of fundamental paradox. We are, financially and structurally rather weak, a small organization. But this is also our greatest strength. If we adopt a project as our aim, it becomes our identity. The one (of one of very few) items we are really working for.].

Tewolde: We buy and totally accept your agenda and identity. We are only here to facilitate this. If you agree with us in doing this, we will fill this vacuum. If not, then we might as well break it off here...

Kurt: Now, in Eritrea, the situation is that in a period, you will facilitate this work. This is how we must proceed. For instance, we were able to invite a big group of fishermen from Aralsk to Denmark in 1996 to start our "Mehzenet" – today that would be impossible (because of the political situation, and because of changes in the principles of what can be funded by such projects).

Tewolde: The situation is, that to make a project in the same terms here, Living Sea must register as an NGO, etc. You must have bank account, etc. I am having a lot of such issues at the back of my head, which I am trying to avoid. I hate to dictate you or put pressure on you to come to our terms. But these four people who are here in the ministry department will put two hearts in this project. One is the official heart, and one is the personal engagement. A heart to do everything to facilitate the work. I want you to understand our situation objectively, rather than accepting it because of my pressure.

Kurt: From all things I can say, I must say that we have no problems. I don't know exactly how this feeling has occurred.

Henrik: Our problem again, is not trust in the concrete persons, we work with. Everybody, Kurt, Henning, John, Daniel, tell us that it will work, and that there are good people with two hearts, etc. But the formal structures at home, and also our own steering committee tell us, what if these people are changed, political structure changes, etc.? What about the sustainability of the project, without the NGO, organization of the fishermen, etc.?

Tewolde: This is what we are working for! We should not trust in individuals. It is not what we can depend on. What if someone dies? But we should build a system, which we can trust in. This system, we can each of us leave behind. What would happen in Kazakhstan, if one of your leaders dies? NOW, it would continue. Because you have build a structure. We should work with the fundamental aim of strengthening this structure, build it.

Kurt: For us, it is very important, nonetheless: We are here, simply because of you (mr. Tewolde). If you would have been another person, if we would not see, understand the aims and engagement of your work, we would not be able to work here at all.

Knud: But the problem is of course – how can we make a system, which enforces, secures this basis. How can we make sure that the work, involvement, etc., with the fishermen, will be made possible and strengthened. The fishermen here must be sure and know that they have colleagues in Denmark

who support them. We really trust that you have feeling for the fishermen, for the development, etc., but how shall we write this down in such a way that it is trustable for others to read?

Kurt: In a certain way, it will also be very much up to us (the Danish group). When we come here, for instance to Dissy Island, we must build this solidarity, the feeling that there are friends and colleagues in Denmark, who are there. In Kazakhstan, the fishermen for some years exactly had the security that they could go to the common office and be facilitated, write their documents, fax something, ask advice – and contact us, if it was needed. For the development of this project, it is very very important that the Eritrean fishermen have the feeling that fishermen in Denmark are there.

Tewelde: Number one is contact. Number two, Danish fishermen keep coming here, teaching, even visiting. So there will always be contact, interaction. You can write from Denmark, that you are coming for a week, etc. Then we can facilitate, make agreements, etc. But what did you say about the structure in KZ?

Kurt: Here, the main difference is that there it is through the NGO (Aral Tenizi) that the fishermen will get the advice and contact to us. Here, the situation is that you, the department, will be the facilitator. In KZ, to say it a bit bluntly, the fishermen can kick out the staff if they think they are not doing their work properly.

Tewelde: Ok. In that case, we can work for that perspective. After 1-2 years we will aim at establishing an NGO, which will so to say speak with the voice of the fishermen. That council can have one secretary, who can do the communication, kick out the staff of the administration, etc. We can work to establish such a structure.

Knud: But it is very important that it is the fishermen themselves who will decide, and elect the spokesman or secretary.

Kurt: These people should really be totally involved. When a fisherman comes and says I would like to do so-and-so, they should be employed to do and facilitate such very concrete problems.

Tewelde: First of all, I am speaking about the early years. Second of all, when the council strengthens and its activities expand, maybe a secretary, maybe even a store keeper, depending on the expansion of the activities. But in the beginning... You will send two containers. Then the council will decide how to divide them...? They will sit down and interview fishermen: “Ok, how are the plans?”

Kurt: But to make plans, to prepare such division, etc., people need to be facilitated. To not stand alone. As a fisherman, such a situation is very, very difficult. He must have a way to get advice, to meet and join with colleagues, etc.

[Short break for smoking]

Tewelde: It seems we are going to go further without having an independent office right now?

Kurt: Yes, that is how it is.

Tewelde: Ok, then at first lets discuss the shorter perspective. The first two years.

Kurt: Ok. The structures of the project can be changed according to concrete needs. But lets talk more concretely. First of all, there are some plans to make trips with the boats, to see which equipment is needed, will work, etc. Secondly, there is the problem about the handling of the fish. Of course you can make surveys, ask people why they don't eat fish, etc. But we also liked to do, is to do it, instead of asking about it so to say. To actually take the fish, through the processing link, and bring it out there, to the market, and show it to people – then we can ask them... Organizationally, the fishermen must somehow be followed. The people implementing the project must be able to follow the work very closely. We have to start now, and start implementing. In our project application we described this so that the staff of the NGO would be responsible of this. But if the situation for now is so that it cannot be implemented immediately in this way, we will have to take that into account. Maybe there would be another possible variant – to concentrate a lot (if not all) our energy in one specific area. When the donors referred to the “Zula Bay project”, I can be “blamed” for that, because I described as a possible sceanario exactly to focus on one area in this way. There is something to this. To be honest, I think that for four people here in this administration, it is a lot of work to follow up on all aspects of a broad fishery project implementation. The restricted aread approach was an attempt to think about this.

Tewelde: Let us think in concrete areas of problems. First production, then marketing. Number one – you are saying “we may start with a restricted experiment”. In production, the problems are boats, to repair boats. But when we speak about smaller boats with outboard engines, which are very expensive to operate. How can we cut down the production costs for the fishermen? Secondly, shortage of fishing gear: What type of fishing gear? To introduce new methods? Then, as Kurt has identified it in the past, there is also a lack of tools, navigation equipment etc. All in all, can this experimentation carry us to the next stage? Should we really start with a limited number of fishermen? Can we start from that – so that all fishermen understand that the experiment is a way to find out and solve all these concrete problems. In that case, we have seven village cooperatives. How can we coordinate these seven villages in these activities? I think we can go back to the council, which we will meet on Monday, and take this idea to them and discuss it with them. Meanwhile, while this experiment is going on, cant we also introduce some other... to keep the activities lively among the fishermen, some kind of input from what we know already is required.

Kurt: Yes. In our steering group we have discussed this. One way is to make a limited experiment. The other is a broad approach, where each of the seven villages will be involved. The limited approach has the advantage of being able to really identify all the problems, not just nets, but GPS, etc., to investigate how this fish will be transported to the customers, etc. Then there would be discussions about all aspects in great detail. In Ejfele for instance, we discussed about the capacity for cooling the fish. And there would be education on each step – how to operate a GPS for instance. From this, then, we can document that the fishermen are ready – the fish is sold, it is such and such quality. This is not so difficult to do, and it is relatively easy to document. There might be more possible models, but these two are the ones in play now, and we have to find a way to agree on how to choose among them. Thinking strategically, the donors, I am sure (this is what was reflected in the letter, Henrik read to you), it is much more easy to understand the limited approach. When you can show them the village of Zula of whatever, and say that people are eating fish there now, they will be very happy and understand the points. It could be a way to ensure a certain low risk level of the product. You (Makhmut and Mingis) also would have to explain us quite concretely, how to deal with very concrete problems. And we have to decide on the model, before we leave Eritrea.

Tewelde: So. The first year would be a pilot project with gear, nets, etc. to identify and standardize a “package” of fishing system, which includes everything. Then, accordingly, in the second year and so on forward, we could confidently say that “this is what the fishermen need”. It is a very good idea, but my worry is: how could we then make sure to involve ALL the seven villages from the beginning?? What was the original direction?

Kurt: The original direction was to make a trial fishery. If they like to use bottom set nets – to go close to the corals to catch snapper, etc., then they need GPS, echo sound, etc., to be able to do that. That would include trial fishery and education.

Tewelde: I think we could make some grouping. In the North, we have two villages which can make out one group. Our capacity is of course going to be stretched out. But I am thinking in terms of human, technical requirement. I am imagining a fisherman from Denmark may come. It might be very difficult to imagine five fishermen from Denmark coming to go into five groups. So how to make it possible that one or two fishermen from Denmark go into several groups?

Kurt: Yes – the overall aim should be that all the groups everywhere will benefit from the project. Especially the Northern area needs a lot of energy and input to get some results. If we are talking about a foot-fisherman, which is normal in the North, it is no problem to get success. But if we also want to have boats, with active fishery in the area, we would need to make it possible to take a boat from Massawa and go there – and to land the fish there would be very difficult. Around Massawa, we have a relatively nice infra structure. There are problems, but they are of a sort that are relatively easy to deal with. For me the Zula area, furthermore, is relatively easy to describe and implement with principles that are very likely to give success. There is some fishery, and food is needed. So, overall, there are three different regions with three very different sets of needs.

Tewelde: Maybe we can invite representatives from each village to participate in the pilot project. We might even do it in groups. Lets say in six weeks – the first three weeks, we can take one group, and in the second another. So we concentrate, but also broaden the number of participants. Of course, me and you are not deciding now – we are going to take it to the council. But the objective must be to identify the needs within the fishing system. To experiment with that, along with the fishermen, so that we can go along with that.

Kurt: Of course, the council has to make the decision. But it is our responsibility (Tewelde, Danish) to be aware of the risks of failure. So nevertheless, you cannot expect the council to take all of that into account. Each of them has a responsibility to make sure that his own people get so much as possible from the project.

Tewelde: Once we embark ourselves together with the fishermen, we will have to evaluate. Otherwise, we cannot proceed.

Kurt: And also, we must be careful not to be too ambitious.

Tewelde: When we say experiments – it will be with different systems?

Kurt: For instance, I have checked up on the method of using traps around the world. Apparently, it is a very big trend now almost everywhere. There is a whole variety of companies that are busy

developing new methods and tools. The council here was a little bit reluctant to this idea, but I think that is how fishermen will naturally react to such changes. Another suggestion could be to try and change in a hurry the outboard engine to another sort of engine. A limited experiment could be to compare another engine on one boat with an outboard engine on another. Then, you could say, that for instance queen fish is not very popular. But you could still have results, with nets, GPS, etc. Maybe the market is not yet available for the fish that will be caught. But it will come. New species are introduced.

Tewelde: Lets come back to the market later. But can we roughly identify what are the inputs needed for the trial fishery? How many experts can you supply for instance?

Kurt: Well, there will not be experts needed for each step. A lot of the work will be monitoring. How much is it possible to catch with this method – and with another?

Tewelde: I think, at first we must start with a demonstration. What should they do, how does it work, what are the ideas, So that, when I get the results, I will know how was it achieved. Maybe some of the inputs are not familiar to them, so we have to include some demonstration.

Kurt: If it is something which the fishermen don't know (GPS, bottom set nets, hauling machines), then yes. But all trial fishery should not be facilitated by Danish fishermen. The amount of trial fishery, we have to find out. But some of them can run rather without much involvement from Danish side. To change the infra structure on one boat, like Henning did for almost a month, takes a lot of involvement and time. It requires a whole change of thinking. The capacity of such a boat would go up a lot, without a lot of investments.

Tewelde: So, now we have enough fish. We produced a lot. But what do we do with it? What about the market? There is a problem of delivery. It is a combination of a lot of bottle necks. One is probably: Make efforts to popularize fish eating habit. How? You push fish into the mouths of people! (Laughter)

Kurt: The easy way to do it, is to put up a refrigerated container in Ejfele. And the fish from that area will go out into that local area. Food to the people.

Tewelde: So, market development can be divided into two: Local and national. Now, we have more or less a similar project with an Italian NGO, who are dealing the peninsula out of Zula. But their target is small pelagic fish – anchovies. It is nice project. We have the same problem. What we are trying to do there is to experiment with drying, processing, packing in small quantities - 250 g., 500 g., 1 kg. Whenever there is a festival or whatever, they will come with some kind of recipes for fish. Train the local community to learn new dishes. In the place, they will come with some equipment, including grinder for flour, soup. Then in packages, or dried. It has just started, this project.

Kurt: That is very interesting. We also had some discussions about the pelagic fish. Because the stock is very big and important. But if this is “taken care of” already, it is very nice. Will they take the fish by seine?

Tewelde, Mahmud: Yes.

Tewolde: We have trained 12 women and 16 men in repairing nets. Not the season is out, but next season they will be repaired. Meanwhile, they will be working in the processing factory. Local is ok. But nationally, delivery is a problem. I have two trucks, which are not functioning anymore, but I will take care of that myself.

Kurt: When they start to fish, you can calculate that 5 or 6 tons will be available per week, then I think a truck will also be available. But about local: What is the price for fish?

Mahmud: 15 Nakfa (different species). Meat would usually be around 80 Nakfa. In Asmara, maybe 100.

Tewolde: In Asmara, one kg. of fish can be at 80. Meat around 120. Anyway, the marketing is a national problem.

Kurt: If you can get 80 Nakfa per kg.,

Tewolde: I think the cooperatives can have a bazaar here in Massawa. One day, the fishermen can announce a bazaar to promote their fish. But to do that, they should have recipes ready. Maybe you could come up with some of them?

Kurt: You have a lot of celebration days – do you have one for fish or fishermen? (Tewolde: No.) Then you should have one!

Tewolde: That was my first idea, when I came here... I send Fatma out to ask all men and women to collect songs related to fishing and the sea, and cultural festivals related, tales. But she went around without much result.

Kurt: I have a campaign for you! “Bread and fish”. There is a campaign in the Baltic Sea now, where people are invited to taste the fish and discuss about the fish as food. It is a little bit religious, but it is a nice campaign. Let us introduce it to Eritrea!

Tewolde: My idea was to announce the starting of the fishing season with a festival. With women bidding their men “to go out there and catch some fish”. But maybe we can organize it with these perspectives, you mention. Today they dance and eat, or so, but the next day they will leave for fishery.

Kurt: This will also be very interesting for our donors. It is also a way to promote the project – what is going on. It is more visible, emotional, etc. than conferences. You could even include some discussions etc.

Tewolde: The seven villages could have each their stand, showing their own traditions, places. Etc. Can we include this in your/our project.

Kurt: Yes. We can include it in the program for 2007. October.

Tewolde: I will then continue with my collection of songs, tales, etc.

Knud: [Telling the story about Bønnerup Harbour Festival].

## Meeting in the council for development of artisanal fishery communities

Massawa, May 22

*Present: 8 fishery cooperative leaders: Hassan Mohamed Ali (Sembar-Zula), Idris Mahmoud Meh (Araffe), Idris Ali Ginjar (Gobub-Massawa), Hassan Meslani (Zula), Ali Mahmoud Mussa (Emberemi), Mohamed Omar Husein (Wakiro), Mohamed Osman Idris (Dissie), Mohamed Ibrahim Ali (Massawa), Hassan, Abdomar, Alim, Fatna, Mahmud, Saidna, Tewolde, Knud, Kurt, Henrik.*

Tewolde: [Introduces the meeting, explains the Living Sea understanding of “Mehzenet” and introduces fishermen to the members of the Danish delegation].

Saidna: [Translates to tigrina].

Tewolde: [Explains background of current visit. Expectation of Danish donor to work directly and only with NGO, and the practical obstacles to work in this way immediately. Introduces the staff of the artisanal division that will work for the project, and the procedures of money transfer for purchases of equipment. Explains the plan of the three-region-approach, and the expected start of the practical work in November 2006].

L4: The project is good, we have no problems, we have it discussed it agreed and earlier. About who should be part of the project: The beneficiaries should be the members of cooperatives only, since they have organized, paid fees, etc.

R3: The project is good, no problems. We have no problems with the division of artisanal fishery. They have handled similar problems earlier. Can you say something on your view of the project in a longer perspective – after the first two years?

L4: This project is clear. That is why we are not talking a lot. We have even discussed some specifics on material earlier. If there is anything to discuss, we are ready, but we have no reservations.

Kurt: Well, thank you all for coming here today. In January, we made a plan – and we have not made substantial changes to that plan. But when I came home to Denmark, I had some problems, because seen from the Danish side, we are not going directly into work with the fishermen. We are going through the ministerial division, and THEN to you, and that is a problem. So, we came here to solve this problem. And one very important thing here is this council. This council has the overall responsibility – not for fishery in Eritrea – but for this, our common, project. So, it is very important for me to emphasize this. The first two years will run, that is not a problem. But if we want to look in a longer perspective, we cannot work in the same frames as now. This council is very, very important, because it must work and function in order to establish the conditions for further perspectives. So, we have a common job – to develop the fishery materially is one part of this; another is to establish this council, to make it work. This is the main agenda for us on this meeting – so can you tell us – what do you need to make it work as good as possible? Do you need a secretary, how will you make protocols and pass information to other fishermen? Have you elected a chairman or will you do that? I hope we can make a description of the responsibilities of this council. We have pro-

duced a lot of papers, while we were here, and we will make sure that the summaries of our discussions and decisions will be passed to you. It is very important that we have a common understanding of the aims and the methods.

Hassan (R3): Thank you for your frankness. We were expecting like in all projects there will be some problems in the beginning. Countries don't immediately coincide. As for the duties of this council also, we must say the same. It takes time. We need to have more discussions about how to design the things. We have experience and we are ready. Even if we don't write, we know a lot, and we have experience also with previous projects. And we can assure you that we will be honest in our approach to the work and in electing representatives.

Kurt: Thank you. But how do you think – what do you need concretely to make this project work?

L3 (Wekiro): You are asking a difficult question. We might need some more time to decide on these issues. We could of course elect X or Y to be our representative, but we need to have a good talk about this and make sure that we agree.

Kurt: So maybe you need a secretary, who can take daily responsibility, make agenda for the meetings, call for meetings, etc.?

Tewolde: I think we can agree that some responsibilities must be divided, chairman, project manager, treasurer, etc. Maybe the council should now continue with its own meeting – and decide for themselves, without our involvement, which functions are needed, and who will be filling the posts.

[Break – extended to one hour. Everybody is back. Meeting continues with agenda.]

Saidna: Goes through suggestion for the agenda.

L3 (Wekiro): Item no. 4: Closed or open meeting. What do you mean by this?

Kurt: You are a council with a mandate from many different fishermen. Sometimes it can be difficult to make common decisions on open meetings, with a lot of people around making pressure etc. On a closed meeting, you would make decisions and then afterwards go back to your places and discuss it with everyone. For instance: We don't have equipment for every last fisherman, so sometimes we will have to make decisions about who to give it to. "This guy is a strong fisherman, he will show results, he can be an example, etc." There will be many situations where you will have to make tough decisions.

Tewolde: For example. All of us, me, Fatna, and others are here, which makes it an open meeting. You can say that we should not take part in this meeting, but since you invited us, we are here. This, in other words, is an open meeting – including outsiders.

Kurt: So, when you have an open meeting, it is important that the reporter notes, who is present. So afterwards you can go back and say: "You were also part of this meeting, my friend – so you are also responsible of the decisions."

Hassan Mohamed Ali (R3): We assure you that we will not take decisions without grasping it at the root level. So when people come here, they will have mandate from talks with people. But one

question: What will be the criteria for the distribution of equipment, what should you fulfil to receive some?

Kurt: This question, eventually, you – the council – must decide. But objectively, there must be some concrete evaluations: who can perform the function, making a trial fishery for instance, in the best way. One example: We need two sambuks for one experiment. One of them must agree to continue his fishery as usual. Then another one, we change, with nets, hauling machines, GPS, etc. Then they fish for one season, and we monitor and compare very carefully the results. We from Danish side cannot decide on whom. We can say: “We like to do this and this”, but how we do it, will be your responsibility.

Hassan (division): Shall we go to the agenda?

Agenda approved.

**Item 1: Reporter.**

- Henrik elected.

**Item 2: Presentation of members.**

- pictures taken.

**Item 3: Frequency of meetings.**

Hassan (R3): In the break, we have already agreed on chairman, and deputy chairman. And we have agreed on an office, and on some material.

Chairman: Hassan Mohamed Ali.

Deputy chairman: Alli Mahmoud Mussa.

Kurt: Who will be the secretary, do reporting, keep protocols?

Hassan (R3): I suggest that Hassan (division) be the secretary.

Hassan (division): Ok, I would prefer to be a fisherman, but if you elected me...

Everyone agrees on this.

Tewelde: When we speak about the council, we speak about the entire council, including the Danish representatives. So, when we talk about how often to meet, then it should be considered that the Danish representatives might have problems to meet quarterly.

Kurt: Yes, indeed. We will not be able to be here every time, but we will then give suggestions for the agenda, and will wait for the report. But it is very important that the councils works and meets even without us.

Tewelde: Ok. There should be regular meetings – disregarding Danish attendance. And then we have extra meetings, when Kurt or another representative is here.

Ali Mahmoud Mussa: We agree to the idea of regular + additional meetings.

Tewelde: Instead of leaving it open, I think it better that we schedule the meetings: End of December, end of March, end of June, end of September. [Agreement]. In that thinking – I think this is the June meeting – which will make the next meeting end of September. How do we call meetings? I would suggest that the secretary, after discussing with the chairman and Denmark, calls for the meeting and prepares an agenda.

Hassan (R3): Who can the secretary decide on the agenda?

Mahmud: By conferring with the chairman, and with Denmark.

Tewelde: And if needed, with the other members.

#### **Item 4: Allowances.**

Hassan (R3): 120 to 150 per day including hotel.

Mohamed Omar Husein: It should be 200, because we have to leave our work.

Kurt: But how many days do you need for one council meeting?

Hassan: If there are four meetings per year, it should be enough with three days for each meeting. But it depends on the agenda.

Tewelde: With travelling. But the meeting itself should not last for more than one day.

- Conclusion: one day travelling here, one day for meeting, one day travelling home, four times per year. In all, 12 days per year.

Amount:

Kurt: In principle, we have no limitation for this. Because the more, we pay for your meetings, the more we will keep you responsible for working to implement the decisions on them. But we do not want to destroy local arrangements on such issues, so we will follow the custom.

Tewelde: I am not decision making member, however, I have a different view, which I think my colleagues know very well, and which I would just like to state as my point of view. You have been elected from among your fishing communities to serve them in a process of development of your individual communities. This demands a commitment from each one of you. A commitment is not paid for, but should come from the depths of your heart. I am sure that you will come for the meetings for whatever amount, you will receive. But I would like to see beyond that. It can be 100 or 200 – that is not the issue. The issue – are you committed to the aim – of developing your own communities?

Hassan Mohamed Ali: We are over-committed. We can even pay from our own pockets to come here. We are elected as volunteers. So have no doubt about our commitment to serve and commit.

Mohamed Omar Husein: We are fully responsible for developing our communities. We came here. When we said that allowances should be this or that, it is not because we care too much about this amount. But we should of course also be honest and say that when we come here we have such-and-such expenses.

Kurt: So, let us begin and try to make this as fair as possible.

Mohamed Osman Idris: Please take our words that we will really do the best we can to fulfil this project. I came for instance from Dissie one day before the meeting, just to be sure to be at the meeting. But we of course expected Kurt to have brought some equipment with him this time (laughter)...

Kurt: Ah! It was expected to be November! But about the fees. Lets agree on 200. Living expenses have risen, etc.

Item 5:

#### **Item 6: Project initiatives.**

Kurt: Our work here now has been discussed and is being written along with the staff of the division. We will not go into great detail here, but you will make sure that you get more details, translated into Arabic. But here are the headlines. We have divided the area into three regions: South, Central and North. For the two years ahead, we have planned the following. Zula/Erefaile we will focus on the infra structure and to get fish to the local market. To fulfil this focus, we need cooling facilities, maybe an ice machine. Some of the vessels in Erefaile and Zula need more equipment, especially nets. But they will not get a big input in this respect. The fish will be taken to the market – that is the main agenda. To achieve this, it is needed that Erefaile will quickly be adopted as the landing site. Maybe establishment of the united Zula Bay Cooperative. When we start to see results, the landing facilities can be improved, and we have developed a small plan for starters (which we discussed with fishermen in Erefaile). We cannot say about the future, but if we succeed, maybe the government will build a jetty.

Hassan (R3): No objections on the technical selection of Erefaile. But some reservations. Whether we put relatively simple facilities in Erefaile or Zula, the problem is the same: the fishermen will have extra expenses travelling with the boat to land there. Land transportation will be an additional cost.

Kurt: Believe me, this problem we have thought about for years. We know that it is important. It is one important example that some conflicts will come. You see, it is a long line of description of why Erefaile is a better place: village near, buildings available, etc. In Zula, it will be placed “out of nowhere” – now we are trying to connect it to the people.

Hassan (R3): The problem is still there. The main market in Foro is about the same distance from Erefaile and Zula, but in Zula there are more boats, which makes it quite reasonable considering placing the landing site there.

Abdomar: Let us concentrate more on the production, than on whether it will be this site or that site.

Kurt: Of course it is our dilemma. But we have to make some decisions. Of course decisions can be changed, but let us now describe it, and if the council very strongly disagrees, then we must reconsider. But it is not a sudden decision. It has been considered since 2004 already. Hassan, look at it as an experiment. Zula is not excluded. If we have a strong resource, then why not Zula next time.

Hassan: This should be divided into two: Landing facilities in Zula and Erefaile. The problem is still there. If I would press through that it should be in Zula, then the people of Erefaile will have the same problem.

Hassan Mohamed Ali: Well, straight forward speaking, considering transportation, Erefaile will be the best. On the road from Massawa to Asab, you can relatively easily get to Erefaile, while to get out to Zula is very difficult. I agree with Hassan, it would not be bad to divide and have two places, but if we can have only one, then Erefaile is better.

Tewelde: So, we have a good example here. I think you as a council will face even bigger problems to decide in the future. I think we can't get much further here. Let us conclude that the Southern part will have some landing facilities and a cooling container. In the Zula Bay area. Whether it will be in Zula or Erefaile, is not finally decided still, but it will be. So, I think we should move on.

Hassan: I am still not convinced. But I can't object to that. I can only express my reservation. If they are in Erefaile, what I can say is, that certainly the Zula population will not benefit from it. Our fish is now being taken from Zula on our backs to the local market. A landing site of any capacity would make a difference.

Kurt: It is a strong statement, and of course we have to take that into consideration. We knew the problems in this, but we had to make some decisions. But we will take this statement into our consideration, so I will agree with Tewelde. Then the central approach: Massawa region. It can be made short. The infra structure is here already. We will make trial fisheries with sambuks and hurries. The details will follow. But in general we speak about infra structure on the boats – how to design and structure the tools, etc. Dissie Island we include in the Central region. The overall aim is to raise the capacity to get higher quality of fish for the national and international markets. Then the North part, which is very complicated. The whole agenda of the North is decided by the Halibai Station. All discussions we have had, are determined by that station. But everything that is needed to make that station function, incl. roads, piers, etc., is above our project. So, the aim of Halibai, we cannot fulfil. But maybe we can start with something. The situation now is that there are foot fishermen. Can we raise the capacity of the foot fishermen? Yes! They can have more and better nets. Maybe canoes or small boats. Then there is the transport and market problems. Camel transport – can we improve that? Yes – we can make better boxes, maybe we can improve them, e.g. with a natural cooling system. Of course the fish will have to be landed in the morning, and eaten before night. Lets imagine that the fishermen will raise their capacity and catch more than the market can take. Then why not try in that area with dried fish? Big dried fish. It is a good technology. If we do all this, and the fishermen organize themselves, and show results, what will happen in five years we cannot say yet. But we know that we need to show results from the fishery first of all. This is our proposal.

Abdomar: I know some people that work in the Northern area. [første forklaring fik jeg ikke]. And dry fish has a good market. They can supply the market in Massawa with dried fish. The problem is to get the gear.

Kurt: There is a lot of possibilities, but two main problems: It is a rough sea, and the roads are very bad. If you don't build jetties, then you have to build new boats. It is also possible. If you say that the dried fish has a good market, it is very nice. But fishermen are also required. Organization is needed, awareness and identity building. In these first two years, we need to show that.

Ali Mahmoud Mussa: I support Abdomar's idea. The main problem is the fishing gear. Another problem is ice, we can even do group fishing – share one boat to go from Halibai to Massawa, bring all the production there. I support Abdomar.

Kurt: This is also our idea. We just have to show results at first.

Tewolde: I think the three areas are complementary to each other. When the trial fisheries are going in Massawa, it does not mean that the results will be limited to Massawa. Other regions will inherit the results, and it can be transformed to fit other areas as well. Likewise, the experiences of the landing site in Erefaile/Zula it will be possible to benefit from in other areas. So, we should see it like a whole – we are getting different results from these three different approaches. But exactly with the main and common aim of benefiting from the results in all the regions. After these first two years, we will know much more and be able to benefit across the regions.

Osman: I share your idea that it is ONE project – whatever takes place in the centre also takes place in all the places. But I would like to emphasize the problem of transportation – easy access to markets. The fish can be consumed everywhere in the country. But if you put only these limited sites for landing, with ice, etc. it can be a problem.

Mohamed Omar Husein: We agree when you said that most complicated part is our. That is why we need your assistance. We agree with Abdomar, when he mentioned the guy car. I suggest that instead of looking at the foot fishermen, it would be better to improve the conditions for transportation.

Kurt: Everything will be taken into consideration. But we have been thinking a lot about this. I have been there several times, Henning, Knud have been there now also. When Abdomar tells about this transport, I immediately think: Ok, if it is so easy – then why doesn't everyone do that. I cannot see other ways now than achieving results now. And to do that, what you need is not another Halibai Station. It is to start working on the very concrete levels. If a foot fisherman had two nets before, of a very doubtful quality, now he will get three new of extremely high quality, which will most likely triple or quadruple his catches. This is results.

Tewolde: I think this is the starting point. Not the end. Exactly what we have done today, it will be the job of the council. To discuss in big detail. And then decide: This is the right way to go! So, let us go with this now, and start the process. There will always be lots of counterargument, a lot to consider, but finally: *one* decision.

Hassan (R3): With the general expressions we agree, we will benefit from the general results. But I would like to ask about the conditions more concretely for the first two years: Erefaile will get a station, foot fishermen nets, and Massawa trial fisheries. There will be nothing for Zula?

Kurt: That is how it looks. We have a very low budget. Our only possibility is to show results. The world demands results. Don't build big stations, but show that you can do something – make pilot

projects, etc., - but do it at first and then we will see. Forget about the period 1993-2000 when donors were crazy to go here and make very big projects very quickly – now it is very different.

Hassan: Yes, of course in the long run, the project is going to give results. But we were actually expecting a little bit more in the first phase.

Tewelde: I think there is something of a misunderstanding. What we have is a pilot project with three kinds of approaches, so that at the end of this process we can say this is the system, this is the requirements, etc. We are laying the ground in order to jump start the next phase. In fact, if we achieve something on the first year, I think we can expand on the second year.

Hassan: I understood everything. I know what a pilot project means. My point was that Zula is not getting anything.

Tewelde: That was the whole point! There is a reason for saying all this about the pilot project and the common identity.

[Discussion in Arabic follows]

Knud: I am fisherman. I was a skipper for 25 years. My home place is a little Danish fishing village with about 50 boats. I was ten years member of the board of the fishery society, and for six years I was member of the board of the harbour. And I understand very well that a man who represents his own village tries to get something for his people. So in that way I respect you [to Hassan]. I shall tell you a little story about our village. 100 years ago they were fishing off the shore, but it was very difficult and dangerous because of the storms, a lot of accidents. For 30 years they pressed and tried to get support for building a port. But the people in the society had no feelings for the fishermen. But then in the thirties we had a prime minister from the workers' party. He was sitting far away in Copenhagen and heard about this. There was not a lot of money, but he said: If half of you go fishing and half of you work on the harbour, and you then share the income, then I will support you with some money. And then the harbour was build up, and since then the fishermen have always been very proud for their harbour. This process, where the fishermen themselves worked together and pressed together, that is the reason why that area is now a rich area. Other localities, where the fishermen got the harbours from government, these harbours are going down now, but our harbour is still very strong. So, what we are doing in Living Sea is not to take money from our government and put it here. But we are colleagues. We want to work together to build something for the future. So we shall go slowly forward together, and then, when we know what course on the compass we shall go, we will find more money. But we shall fight together!

[Knud then gives as a symbol to all cooperative leaders the cap with the logo from Living Sea with a fish and a rising sun].

Kurt: Last item. All this inspiration we now have in our soul from Knud... it should also be brought out to the outside world. How do we do that? By making a festival. The day after tomorrow, there is Independence Day. Our suggestion is that every year, you will also have the day of the fish. So, if the council agrees, we suggest the we from Danish side will actively go in and arrange the first such festival in 2007. The aim of this of course should be to make campaigns for eating fish, and expand the markets. Every year people should be reminded about eating more fish and learn more. So, this will also be on the agenda on the council in the years to come. There must be a committee for this.

Chairman: Thank you for coming, and for sharing your experience with us. We really believe that the bonds between our countries will be strengthened in the future. We realize that we are now at the beginning of the project. But we will work hard together to achieve our aims.

## **Red Sea Coastal Fishery Project – revision, May 2006**

*This document is the result of a two week re-negotiation of the conditions of the RSCFP in the period of 15<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> of May, 2006. The need for this re-negotiation was caused by a worry in the project donor that the fundamentally important fisher-to-fisher component of the project was not possible to carry through with the division of artisanal fishery as implementer on the Eritrean side. A three person delegation was sent from Denmark to Massawa to clarify eventual misunderstandings and establish a set of principles in cooperation with fishermen and government representatives in the division of artisanal fishery of Massawa to ensure and strengthen the cooperation in the two year project period to the benefit of all and in accordance with the conditions of fisher-to-fisher cooperation.*

Principles of two year implementation as agreed in Massawa, May 26, 2006:

### **1. Fisher-to-fisher cooperation**

- Mehzenet: We agree upon the principle of fisher-to-fisher cooperation. The aim of the project is to develop the artisanal fishery by using this approach to the full extent of what is possible. The approach of Living Sea in the fisher-to-fisher work has been adopted as the fundamental principle of the project. Our discussions have clarified that there is even a semantic overlap in the Danish and Tigrina language: “makkerskab” in Danish (which is Living Sea’s official approach to development projects) resembles the Eritrean concept of “Mehzenet” as a total commitment between people (different from friendship and partnership). The implementation of the project will take place on the firm background of this common understanding, and it consequently aims at increasingly strengthening the capacity of the Eritrean artisanal fishermen to partake in such cooperation on their own initiative in the future. However, we also accept the existing limitations in the capacity of the Eritrean fishermen, especially considering the current re-structuring of the fishery cooperatives. It is no longer realistic to undertake a project based on an expectation of independent initiative from an autonomous artisanal fishery NGO. Therefore, we agree that the division of artisanal fishery in the Eritrean Ministry of Fisheries should work to facilitate the fisher-to-fisher cooperation on fields, where the new fishery cooperatives are not yet able to assume

full responsibility. This facilitation should aim at a continuous strengthening of the independence and autonomy of the fishery cooperatives and the capacity among the fishermen to organize and take responsibility. The staff of the division of artisanal fishery does not have much experience in such an approach, but they actively show interest and conviction that this is the approach much needed in the present situation. The fisher-to-fisher approach is new in the development of fishery in Eritrea, and this does face the participants of the project with significant challenges.

- ➔ At the moment, the project budget allows three delegates from Denmark during the project period. The Danish partner will work to find additional funding to enable two more delegates to visit Eritrea.
  - ➔ The staff of the artisanal fishery division will continue its work to support the re-organization of the existing artisanal fishery cooperatives and to build capacity among the fishermen in organization, management and cooperation. The staff emphasizes its role as facilitators, rather than implementers. The artisanal fishery division contributes with the labour of four staff: the bookkeeper of the project, the coordinator, and a technologist expert on fishing gear. Furthermore, a fourth fishery expert will be included in the team. The project recognizes this work by contributing with an additional 20 % to the salary of these staff members. Material exists in the division from an interview investigation among women in the region on the life form and daily life of women in Eritrean fishery. The project would appreciate completion and analysis of these results in a report.
  - ➔ The three-region-approach (see below) has been developed to further ensure the fisher-to-fisher cooperation and a direct route from the project to the fishermen and the fishing communities.
- Bank account. A bank account will be opened with the Commercial Bank of Eritrea in the name of the project. The conditions of cash withdrawals in Eritrea have been specified. Three people of the Eritrean side must approve all withdrawals with signature: the chairman of the Project Council, the coordinator of the input from the division of artisanal fishery, and a member of the Project Council representing the division of artisanal fishery. Furthermore, on withdrawals above 5000 Nakfa, the Danish coordinator must give his approval, just as

the withdrawal must be presented to the general director of the fishery resources development department.

- The Project Council. The fishery cooperatives each elect one representative for the council. Furthermore, the director of the division of artisanal fishery is a member, as well as the representative of Living Sea. In all: 10 members. Chairman, Vice Chairman and secretary are elected by simple majority within the council. The task of the council is to be the overall responsible of the implementation of the project. Decisions about the implementation of the project within the frames of the three-region-approach as described below must be discussed and decided by the council. Accordingly, the council has, on its meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of May 2006, elected Hassan Mohamed Ali (fisherman from Semhar-Zula) as its chairman, Ali Mahmoud Mussa (fisherman from Wakiro) as its Vice Chairman, and Hassan Kerief (Director of the Artisanal Fishery Division) as its secretary. Meetings are agreed to be held quarterly. In 2006, meetings have been and will be held: *January, May, September, and December*. Four annual meetings are minimum, and there must be held at least one meeting when Danish partners visit. The agenda is prepared by the secretary, in agreement with chairman and Danish coordinator. Allowances for attendance at the meetings agreed at 200 Nakfa/day. Attendance at the meeting equals one day's allowance. For people with long transport additionally two days for transport (out and back).

## **2. Three-region approach**

- Motivation. The three-region-approach has been developed to ensure a sensitive approach to the needs of fishermen on geographically and socio-economically different sites. This gives two main advantages: Firstly, it ensures the direct cooperation between fishermen from the Danish and Eritrean side, regardless of the role of the division of artisanal fishery, including that the equipment delivered and purchased will be transported to and taken into use on site. The fisher-to-fisher approach is thereby secured and strengthened. Secondly, it makes it possible to achieve more diverse results from the three regions, which can then be shared across the area – facilitated by the division of artisanal fishery and the project council. The common pool of knowledge will thus be build via specific inputs and approaches to the places that best fulfil the pre-conditions on the short term. The regions defined are: South (Zula

Bay – the villages Zula and Erefaile), Central (Massawa and Dissie Island), and North (Wakiro, Emberemi, Wedi-lelo).

- South: Overall, the aim of the efforts in South is to build up the capacity in the fishery and the landing site and provide the local and national markets with fish of high quality. The Zula Bay area will thereby function as the main focus area for capacity building within a local fishery community. The fishermen of Zula Bay must organize, take responsibility in the concrete efforts to establish a new and functional landing site and viable links to the markets. They will, in other words, be actively engaged in work and decision making in all steps from sea to table, entirely within the framework of their own fishery cooperatives.
- Time schedule: January 2007: One month visit from Danish delegate. Establishment of cooling facilities: container, generator, offices, work shops. Updating of fishing gear on vessels. Initiation of work on landing site. Autumn 2007: Landing site: Winch, wire, fleet. The staff of the division of artisanal fishery supports and reports about the work in the periods in between the visits from Denmark.
  - ➔ Material input from the project (Danish side): Cooling container, generator, electric equipment, boxes, batteries, ice machine (cooling facilities); tools for boat repair, nets, gloves, knives, lamps with rechargeable batteries (boats); winch, wire (landing site).
  - ➔ Material input from the local community: labour, foundation for container, local materials for landing site.
  - ➔ Material input from the Ministry of Fisheries: buildings at landing site for offices, generator house, toilets, and work shops. If the site chosen for the landing will be the location near the village Erefaile, we recommend that one good and suitable building will be provided for the fishermen from the village Zula for housing during weekly or seasonal fishery.
- Central: Overall, the Central region is focused on trial fisheries and improvement of design and work routines on individual vessels. Furthermore, the handling of fish – cleaning, washing, cooling – will be a focus area. On the decision of the project council, a number of vessels will be selected for these experiments. In each procedure, one vessel will be conducting its fishery according to new procedures and with new equipment, supported by one Danish

- fisherman, while another vessel volunteers for a comparative study, continuing its routines (which must of course be similar to the ones of the vessel selected for experiment). The co-operatives will be encouraged to follow and participate in the results of the experiments to the best of their ability. Examples of experiments: 1. Trial fishery with bottom set net. 2. Changing (in a hurri) from outboard gasoline engine to inboard diesel engine. 3. Upgrading of vessel in work routines and structure. 4. Quality handling of fish.
- Time schedule: January 2007: One month visit from Danish fisherman. Autumn 2007: One month visit from Danish fisherman. The staff of the division of artisanal fishery is responsible of monitoring and collection of results in the periods between the visits from Danish partners.
    - ➔ Material input from the project (Danish side): Nets, additional gear for nets, tools for traps, hauling machines, echo sounder, GPS, electrical generator, fittings, electrical tools and materials, gloves, knives, lamps with rechargeable batteries, ice boxes.
    - ➔ Material input from the local community: Boats and crew for experimental fishing.
  
  - North: Overall, the approach to the North is to a significant degree determined by the Halibai Station project. It is beyond the capacity of this project to complete the Halibai Station, and this inability cannot but appear as a very modest approach. However, the focus will be on the fishermen who already today catch fish from the sea shore with the available tools: foot fishery and fishery from small boats and canoes. The problems in these fisheries are mainly connected to nets and related equipment and the transportation of the catches to the local markets (the surrounding villages). The project will improve and strengthen these activities by providing the fishermen with nets and other equipment, and boxes for transportation with the best available natural cooling system. Means for transportation will be discussed and decided with the fishermen. The fishermen who wish to benefit from the project must organize. The project period must strengthen the identity as fishermen and the structures of cooperation, and show tangible results. Only in this way can the road be paved for more substantial improvements in the future.
  
  - Time schedule: January 2007: Division of nets and other gear from two Danish delegates. Autumn 2007: The improvement of nets, gear, organization, and transport should improve the level of the catches. If this exceeds the amounts that can be distributed within the day to

the local communities, an experiment of dried fish will be launched from the autumn 2007, employing the Halibai Station to the extent possible.

- ➔ Material input from the project (Danish side): Nets, related gear, gloves, knives, cooling equipment.
- ➔ Material input from local community: Means for transportation.
- ➔ Material input from the Ministry of Fisheries: In case of a successful outcome of the first season, the ministry will give access to the facilities at the Halibai Station for initiation of a production of dried fish.

### **3. The festival “In Honour of the Fish”**

- Motivation: The purpose of the festival is to promote the fish of the region on the national market. In relation to the fishermen, the aim is to strengthen the professional identity and relations between the fishermen from various cooperatives and geographical sites, while the status of the fisherman should be strengthened among the population in general. Furthermore, the festival should promote the value of eating fish – in terms of health, economy, and gastronomic quality. The people should have the opportunity to come to appreciate species that are currently not considered to be of any significant value (and are thus often discarded in the traditional fishery). The festival should encourage women and the families in the trade practically and in terms of consciousness. Gathering and exchange of old and new recipes for preparation of fish dishes, collection of songs and tales from the fishery, and performance, singing and promotion of the local communities during the festival will involve women to a high degree and families in general. The festival will also attract the mass media and the decision makers in Eritrea, which means that the fishery at large will be promoted on all levels. A work shop will be arranged to attract fish mongers and sales people and enable them to meet fishermen, as well as other links of the business, and make connections.
- Time schedule and tasks. The festival takes place in the autumn of 2007. Songs, tales, and recipes will be gathered by employees in the division of artisanal fishery. Living Sea will prepare banners, streamers, t-shirts and other material for propaganda. A committee for the festival will be established within the frames of the project council.

### **4. Biological monitoring**

- Current situation. The biological consequences of the commercial fisheries in the Eritrean waters are mainly connected to the by-catches of species like dolphins, turtles, and others. Especially the trawls influence on the habitats. A UNDP-GEF office in cooperation with the National Fishery Corporation is doing the existing biological monitoring (the ECMIB programme). It is estimated that the commercial fishery can catch up to 80,000 tons of different species of fish (300 commercial species). In 2005, the total catches amounted to less than 10,000 tons (6,808 tons according to the official statistics of the Ministry of Fisheries).
- Action of the project. The project will establish contacts with the UNDP-GEF office for promotion of a biological programme of monitoring of the influence of artisanal fishery on the fish stocks in general and some particularly vulnerable species. In cooperation with the Marine College in Massawa, courses will be arranged to train fishermen on marine ecology and awareness of biological sustainability in connection with the trial fisheries.

## **5. Expected results and perspectives**

- Parameters of evaluation. Overall: I. Fulfilment of the planned activities. II. Re-organization of the cooperatives and empowerment of the fishermen. III. Cooperation between the three parties: Eritrean fishermen, Danish fishermen, and division of artisanal fishery. South: I. Significant increase in the amount of fish on the local and national markets. II. Improved economy among the fishermen. Central: I. Each pilot project includes a survey before its beginning of the expectations of the fishermen, and after the finalization of the evaluation of the fishermen. Aim: A noticeable improvement of procedures on board and in potential catches. North: I. Significant increase in the amount of fish on the local markets. II. Fishermen are interviewed as to their expectations before the initiation of the project, and as to their evaluation of the results at the end.
- Further expected outcomes. I. Women. At present, the role of women in Eritrean artisanal fishery is mostly related to the household. They take care of house and family, when the husband is at sea. Children and mothers often catch fish for the household consumption. Some smaller trades exist: collection of snail shells, pearls, mussels. The project should contribute to a clarification of the role of women and the perspectives for their more direct involvement in trades within the fisheries. The qualitative interviews conducted by women at the division of artisanal fishery will throw light on these matters, and the project strongly recommends the completion of the report, and is ready to provide some funds to satisfy this

demand if needed. Furthermore, it will support further steps to be taken according to the conclusions of the investigation. II. Sustainability. An evaluation will be given by the Danish side of the sustainability of the project in terms of the future perspectives: Which results of the present project are likely to be sustained in the following years on local initiative? How will the results benefit fishermen across the three-region-division? Will the effects on the markets be lasting and will fish as a valuable addition to the food resources be sustained?

Massawa, Friday 26<sup>th</sup> of May 2006,

---

Tewolde Tewoldemikael  
Fishery Resources Development Department  
Ministry of Fishery  
Eritrea

---

Kurt Christensen  
Project coordinator  
Living Sea  
Denmark

### **References:**

#### Red Sea Coastal Fishery Project revision, Massawa, May 2006.

- Protocols from meetings, 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, and 19<sup>th</sup> of May, 2006, between the Danish delegation and representatives of the division of artisanal fishery of the Ministry of Fisheries of Eritrea.
- Summaries of the same meetings.
- Brief summary of field study, 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> of May, 2006.
- Protocol from and summary of the meeting in the Project Council, 22<sup>nd</sup> of May, 2006.

#### Further references.

- “Vedr. Minipulljebevilling: Titel “RSCFP – Red Sea Coastal Fishery Project”, J.nr.: 05-221-MP-jul” (Projektrådgivningen, Aarhus, Denmark, April 6, 2006).
- Application Form for the project (Living Sea, Lemvig, Denmark, June 28, 2005).
- *Annual report of year 2005* (Ministry of Fisheries, Fisheries Resources Development Department, Artisanal Fisheries Division, Eritrea, December 2005).

- *Annual Report 2005* (Ministry of Fisheries, Fisheries Resource Regulatory Service Department, Industrial Liaison Division, Eritrea, December 2005).