

## **INNOVATIVE DIVERSIFICATION OF FISHING UNITS THROUGH WOMEN INITIATIVES<sup>i</sup>**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Traditionally, European fisherwomen were often involved in fisheries sector by selling fish. Today, their contribution is more diversified with very limited legal recognition : management of fishing enterprise, maintenance of gears. Fisherwomen continue to sell fish because it is often a good way to get a better price. Confronted with economic difficulty, fishing households are faced with the alternative of re-conversion in another activity or the search for complementary source of incomes. One way of generating new income lies in the diversification of activities while remaining centred on fishing. Valorising the product and the image of fishing by processing or by providing catering/accommodation services is a route that many of them are exploring. Women occupy a centre position within this concept of fishing based diversification. They appear to have been very innovative in Europe by developing new activities such as accommodation for tourist, processing units, collective fish markets. By setting, under their responsibility, new activities, these women have gained more recognition as income providers in the households. It has also contributed to take many of them in the arena of public voicing. This presentation will be illustrated by empirical material collected under the EU funded FEMMES programme, a network launched by researchers in social sciences and fisherwomen associations

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### **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

In the heart of European artisanal fishing and aquaculture, women have always contributed to the increase of the family income either by working directly in the production, or by participating in the activity of the vessel or the aquaculture unit. There are others who choose another option, having a paid job. The activities concerning the sale of fish or shellfish form part of the life of artisanal units. Traditionally, women have participated in the sale of products, the mending of nets, the collecting and sorting of shellfish or further, in baiting the longlines.

In the past, end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, women were involved in direct sales with the aim of disposing of the maximum quantity of the fish caught. It is important to point out that at that time it was difficult to sell the fish or the shellfish collected. It was hard to dispose of the production at a community level considering that almost the entire population fulfilled exactly the same jobs. It was therefore necessary to go in to town in the search of possible clients. Women headed to the markets of neighbouring towns in order to sell the fish or shellfish. The women from the town of Gruissan (France) went all the way to Narbonne (10 km) by foot in order to sell their husband's production.

Fish processing is another activity carried out by women, particularly in the North of Europe where the eating habits demand it. As such, in the frame of migratory fishing such as the fishing of herring in Scotland or England, the women followed the fishing boats to process the catch on land. The same phenomenon is also observed in the Scandinavian countries [1].

At the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the processing industry absorbed a great part of the female working force. In Brittany, the canning industries ran mainly with a female workforce made up of wives of fishers and fishing crew men. Women are generally considered as a submissive labour force and, consequently, liable to work for close to nothing. In the twenties, the Breton workers of the sardine canneries overthrew this tradition by launching a strike that lasted throughout various months and forced their husbands to stay on land. The last canning industries on European grounds were those established in Portugal. For example, in Nazaré (Portugal) a portion of the fish supplied one canning industry. The factory, called “*Nice et Flok*”, belonged to the Company “*Algarve Exportador*”. It employed up to two hundred women. In 1965, only eighty employees remained. The departure from Portugal of these canning industries left many women unemployed. Today, the canning industries have left European territory in order to establish themselves in Third World countries where the labour force is even cheaper than that of the women from the rural zones of Europe.

Another activity practised by Portuguese women is the drying of fish on the beach. During the 1940s eight hundred women worked in Nazaré. Certain species of fish are dried for conservation purposes. The fish most commonly put for desiccation are the sardine and the small scad. The drying enables, on the one hand, the conservation of the fish which is a fragile product and, on the other, the regulation of the market for maintaining the prices at times of surplus arrivals. Fish vendors dried the not sold fish in order to be able to sell it later on. This practice increases the income of the families and creates a balance between the abundance of summer fishing and the poverty of winter fishing. Dried fish enters in the traditional dietary system. It has been the daily food for a long time of the fishers during [2]. Nowadays, this activity has almost disappeared.

Today, the agri-foodstuffs industries (preparation of frozen dishes) with a strong added value have, in turn, become installed in certain European regions using an abundant female labour force. In Brittany (France) several industries use exclusively female labor force.

At the same time, the duties of fishers’ wives are altered, as they must handle also the management and administration of the firm. They take care of the accounting, the relationships with the different organizations or institutions. This administrative work of women will not be examined in this contribution, even if it is important. Using some examples, we will try to show the adopted strategies by fisher household in different European countries. Sale of products and its varied forms, processing, catering, the opening of seaside lodgings or, further, the concept of “fishing and tourism” will be presented.

## **HOUSEHOLDS STRATEGIES FOR THE DIVERSIFICATION OF ACTIVITIES**

The search for the increase and stabilization of the family income, which is dependant on the resources, becomes a strategy of fisher’s households or shellfish producers. Taking this kind of decision goes beyond the framework of the nucleus family because the diversification of incomes needs a new family organization. It is necessary to find the money to invest or, moreover, the means for child caring, and the family, in a large sense, can find the solutions.

### **1. The sale of products**

The direct sale of the catch or shellfish is aimed towards having a better value of production. Direct sale of products enables the producers to obtain better prices than those offered by wholesale sales. Small-scale fishing boats or the small aquaculture units can sell the totality or a part of their production in direct sales. They dispose of small quantities that are more easily

marketable in direct sales. Big units such as the demersal or pelagic trawlers, the seining vessels and others cannot practice direct sale.

Throughout Europe are existing different types of sales: at the quay (France, Italy, and Greece) at the beach (Portugal), street trading on foot or with vehicles (France, Portugal), door to door (France, Greece, Spain, and Portugal) on the markets (France, Portugal), fish-shops or fish markets. Almost everywhere, selling is an activity carried out by women, who often use their ingenuity in order to better sell their products. Direct sale of fresh fish or shellfish is practiced in South Europe where the consumers have a preference for fresh fish and shellfish. In North Europe, where the consumers show a preference for processed fish, the women often market their lightly processed products from their boats.

Nowadays, direct selling of products needs equipment which must respond to the sanitary norms imposed by European Union. Refrigerated vans, paved workshops, etc., are costly equipment that demand important investment. The fishing or aquaculture families will soon not be able to respond to the increasing health demands aimed to protect consumers. Taking examples coming from different State members of the European Union we will present the means used by women in order to upgrade production. For some of them, selling has become a true profession as they earn their own wage and pay contributions to different social institutions.

### ***Itinerant Sales***

The itinerant sales by foot or by vans are practiced simultaneously to the sedentary fishmongers, who sell their merchandise directly on the market, or the fish-shops of the towns. In the past, the women of Nazaré left on foot (*mulher de corrida*) [3] along the streets towards neighboring towns to sell the fish. Today, the sale on foot is replaced by the sale in refrigerated vans. Only in Portugal we still find this type of sale.

### *Sale on foot*

Portuguese women who carry out sales on foot are confronted with particular problems, which need be pointed out. *Basket selling* is the Portuguese expression, which describes an itinerant sale practiced exclusively by women. Women involve in this activity are very poor and they don't have any other employment possibilities to improve family income. These saleswomen go to wholesale markets, every morning, where they buy a small quantity of fish, which they transport in a basket balanced on their heads. They purchase the fish on credit and reimburse it once the sale is fulfilled.

If in the past this activity was done without restrictions, today it is forbidden in numerous Portuguese towns. Women are not able to make use of public transport to take themselves to their selling quarters. It is for these reasons that in Matosinhos these saleswomen procure the fish before 5 o'clock in the morning in order to then, illegally, make use of the public transport. On the part of bus drivers there is a certain tolerance because they accept that these women get on the bus before rush hour. Since *basket selling* is considered as illegal by Portuguese authorities, the saleswomen expose themselves to other dangers during the time they carry out their activity. The police can confiscate and destroy their merchandise, in this case, the fish and give them a fine.

This *basket selling* does not respect any health norms since the fish is placed in an open basket without ice, etc. In spite of the prohibition, the women continue to practice this profession because they need this income for the survival of their family. The financial need forces women to become illegal. The women who practice these professions claim to sell between 25 and 30 kilos of fish a day, the little money that they earn is indispensable for the family income. They

consider themselves as professionals and they would like to contribute to social insurance to be able to profit from retirement.

*Street sales by van*

In certain areas, women carry out street sales of sea products by using vans. They go out in search of clients either by installing themselves in fixed posts or by making rounds of the villages or the quarters of neighboring urban centres.

In Corsica (France) for example, the women go by vans to the mountain villages in the search for clients. During the summer months there are plenty of tourists since the island takes in around three million tourists throughout a few months. The rest of the year, the local clientele of the coast cannot absorb the production. It is necessary therefore, to go to the mountain villages in find clients. The Corsicans are more a mountain people than a people of the sea who have always seen the waters as representative of invaders. This fact is true for various Mediterranean islands.

The purchase of refrigerated vans in compliance with European norms is indispensable for the practice of immediate sales. The purchase of such a vehicle represents a large investment, often higher to the value of a fishing vessel. In Corsica for example, the cost of a refrigerated car of the Peugeot company is around 45 000 euros. They buy them on lease on the basis of a fixed monthly reimbursement. The wives or the daughters drive the vehicle to make the daily rounds of the mountain villages [4].

The Portuguese and Galician women also practice street selling from vehicles. They must first obtain a selling license issued by the municipality. However, certain municipalities in Portugal do not grant this licence because they do not want to have this type of sales in their area. Furthermore, the Portuguese vehicles are not authorized to park long enough on the side of the public road and are at a risk of being reported.

In Portugal, the fish saleswomen, wives of fishers, claim to prefer procuring their fish from the wholesale market than from their husband's boats. In fact, they act this way in order to avoid possible problems with the men of their boat's crew who might accuse them of cheating.

*“The women who own a boat do not like to sell their own fish because they don't want the other fishers to think that during fishing and distribution, their husbands might steal fish in order to give more to his wife. It is a matter of correctness and all the women in Nazaré respect this. They can, very rigorously, buy the fish coming from their own craft by auction for it is done indeed “in full view of everybody”. The purchase is done publicly but in general they don't like that and prefer to buy the fish elsewhere.”* (Interview with a fisher's son 42 years old [5]).

In continental France, street sales by van are authorized in the towns on the condition of having the necessary license. The vehicles can be stationed for several minutes in the same place. The largest part of the direct sales is carried out from fixed points of sale throughout the towns. The people who practice these sales benefit from the necessary licenses that permit them to set up their stall during a morning. In this case, the fish is transported in refrigerated vehicles and arranged on an iced stall.

Another original example of marketing is the one practiced by the wives of trawlers in Ancona, Italy. These women have found another means of giving value to their husband's production. From the moment the boat enters the port, the women, forewarned by mobile phone, go help with the unloading and transport of the fish on auction. The transition to the auction is done on the basis of drawing lots, making sure in this way that the boats are not disfavored at the moment of

the sales. The women remain in the auction up to the moment where their fish is going come into auction, in full surveillance of the price. If the prices lower, they retire their fish from the sale and leave to sell them directly to the fish-shops or the markets from the neighboring towns. Each family is equipped with a refrigerated vehicle for this moment. The consumers from the south of Europe are ready to pay a high price for the fish of the day.

### *Sedentary sales*

The women venture into other forms of marketing such as opening a fixed point of sale or the opening of a fresh fish market, a fish-shop or even the sale in a frozen fish market administered collectively by the fishers. Among these forms of sale, only the fresh fish market allows for the marketing of the fish coming from vessels other than those of their husband. The following examples comes from Corsica. The upgrading of products from a catch of feeble quantity becomes the objective of the women of the island. Thus, from the fieldwork in Corsica we have observed various types of sales chosen. Opening a fish-shop, a fish market or even selling in a municipal fish market, and the direct sales to restaurants, constitute the strategies or the choices made by the Corsican fisheries families.

### *Fish-shop*

One woman decides to open a fish-shop in a big city of the island in order to sell the production of the two family trawlers. Given that the production of these two boats is high, the family decides to re-organize the work of the two vessels. One of the vessels goes out in the evening in order to gather the fish considerably early in the morning and the second one goes out later. This way, the fish-shop is provided with fresh fish in smaller quantities and easier sold. The income of the sales goes into the family budget. In return, the husband involved in the sale does not benefit from any particular status and consequently of any particular social coverage.

### *Trade fish market*

Opening a trade fish market constitutes another choice to upgrade the products of the husband's vessel offering other possibilities for increasing the activities of the family. Opening a trade fish market allows for the marketing of species coming from other vessels or imported from the continent.

The investments for the creation of a structure like this are high, as the market must be paved, have refrigerators, an ice-making machine, etc. Opening this kind of structure implies making various trips to Paris for acquiring the necessary information on the functioning and also on the possible aids available. Little information exists at a regional level, indeed at a national one, and the people searching for diversification ideas spend a considerable amount of time looking for information.

A woman we met from Corsica tells us: "*if I had known from the beginning the time it would take to find the information, formulate the project, find financing and lastly, to carry it out, I would not have done it*". Two years were necessary for the realization of such project that has needed around 150 000 euros in investments.

The choice to create a trade fish market was made jointly by the couple after acquiring the necessary information. The fish-shop, the vehicle, the point of sale, permit the fishing families to sell the production from their boats. Only the trade fish markets allow the sale of diversified products. Offering fish or shellfish coming from the continent is an advantage because clients need to have choice. Today, three women from the two are wage earners on the part of the fish market, two sell to the shops and the third does the rounds with a refrigerated vehicle in the mountain villages. The owner is in charge of the purchases and sales of the fish for the restaurants

in the island. The trade fish market only works a few months out of the year, from end of May to mid-October; period corresponding to the months of fishing activity and the tourist season.

#### *Collective fish markets*

Throughout southern Europe, outside of individual representations we find also collective representations that are enterprises ran either by the women themselves or by the fishermen's organizations working on behalf of the women. These are fish markets where each boat of a port sells its production directly to consumers. In certain cases, the claim in favor of the creation of a fish market has allowed for either the creation of new women's organizations or the consolidation of existing ones.

In the south of France, numerous fish markets, created by the municipalities permit the immediate sales of fish. Here, we will, once again, use the example coming from Corsica. The need to modernise the market place of the city of Ajaccio pushed the local fishers' organization (*prud'homie*) to reflect on a new way of marketing the products of fishing. The *prud'homie* of Ajaccio, together with the Corsican regional fishing committee, presented a modernization project of the market and its compliance with European health norms to the municipal and territorial authorities. Once the project was accepted locally, after a preliminary study of the fish market, it was transmitted on a national level in order to benefit from the FIFG funds. Territorial authorities committed to complete the financing. According to the project elaborated by the *prud'homie* once the market was renovated, the twenty posts had to be distributed between the members interested in the immediate selling of fish. Since the sale posts were not enough for the group of members, the *prud'homie* proposed for each post to be used by three different boats! The administration of the market would remain with the municipality but the *prud'homie* would have its say, given that its members were its main users.

Before introducing this type of arrangement it was necessary to solve a conflict existing between the fisher organizations and fishmongers of the ancient market. The latter did not accept the proposal of the *prud'homie* because the new organization and management would leave them unemployed. Under pressure from the municipality, the *prud'homie* agreed to have a few saleswomen (close to retirement) occupying selling posts.

The women were called to become a part of this project since they were called to occupy the sale posts. Each sale post is occupied by one, two or three women who sell the production of their husband, brother or father. Only one man/fisher sells the production of the family vessel because his wife works elsewhere.

The fishers' wives have known how to obtain the loyalty of their clientele thanks to the freshness and price of their fish. The quality of their fish is their strong point in comparison to other salesmen, this being the reason why they want for everybody to respect the freshness and quality of their fish. *"We cannot sell the not fresh fish at the same price that we sell the fish of the day. We must pay attention if we are to preserve the image of quality that we enjoy from our clientele."*

During the summer months where there is an influx of tourists into Corsica, the clientele increases and the Corsican fishers can no longer satisfy all the demand in the island. Corsica fisheries production, which is usually high for the insular clientele, becomes suddenly insufficient during the tourist season. But only the fishmongers or the fish traders are authorized to market the fish coming from local or continental aquaculture units. The points of sales held by the wives of fishers don't have the right to do so. Direct sales enable families to increase their income..

Outside of the economic benefits, this form of immediate sale reinforces the ties between the women who practice it due to the daily exchange that exists between them. These strong relationships help to consolidate the association of Corsican fisher's wives of which all are members. On the other hand, the fact that the women are important partners in the fish sector has reinforced the position of their association beside the men's organizations, *prud'homie* or regional fishing committee. The women are invited to participate in the meetings of the men's organizations. The women's association has become an indispensable partner to men's organizations who integrate it in the activities led by the fishers. They can participate in all the regional fishing committee meetings and they have as much say as the men. The Corsican fishers accept, in this way, the economic role played by the women, on the one hand at the heart of the family, and on the other, at the heart of the sector.

## 2. Fish processing

Fish processing was, in the past, a women's business. As we have just said, they made up a mobile working force for the fishing boats of herrings or even for the processing industry! Today, processing is not aimed only for the preservation of products. The fishing vessels are equipped with cold chambers, indeed, freezers in order to maintain the fish fresh during the tide. Thus, more need to process the fish to better preserve it.

Fish processing seeks to give value to the catch, and it is an activity fulfilled by women. The Finnish women say that the men are interested in fish when it is in the water and no longer once it is unloaded. The women of these countries take on a search to find means to upgrade the catch and improve the family income. Numerous are those who have created small family processing units where they produce marinated fish, greatly appreciated by the local consumers. Their recipes range from marinated herring with potatoes to herring seasoned with mustard, garlic, ginger and others.

The women who created the processing workshop have one characteristic in common: they start with very small units before expanding. A Finnish woman claims that it was her husband who pushed her to develop her activity. She wanted to gain dominion first of what she was doing before expanding. We find the same attitude in a woman in Brittany who also started out small before expanding. The smoking of salmon is another way of processing the fish, which gives it a better value. Salmon is an easily perishable species and the fishers are forced to sell it at a low price to some buyers. The processing of salmon and other wild species becomes the job of some women in Ireland.

One Breton woman, fisher herself, has created a processing unit of the fish she catches as well as of the algae she grows. She began out small but straight after she developed and was also able to integrate her daughter in the enterprise. They produce the preserves of anglerfish livers, Atlantic mackerel *rillettes*, and other products.

The products of these artisanal processing units often benefit from an image of quality and obtain good prices in comparison to the more industrial products. The presentation and the sale of these products within the gastronomic salons becomes an objective of women's workshops. They play on the image of fishing vessels or the artisanal way of preparing them. These are usually local products.

It is important, however, to point out that the first years are very hard on a financial level. It is necessary first to make oneself a name before really beginning to sell. The treasury difficulties last during some years even if the women have benefited from aids for setting up. Granting

micro-credits to these women during the first years of their activity could be a solution for these treasury problems.

The value of processed products is often linked to the presence of tourists. Boutiques selling these products are set up close to the ports in such a way that at the moment of departure the tourists buy them. The markets make for another place to sell the production. In Finland, the sale of marinated herring to go with potatoes is a synonym for holiday. Bringing local processed products back home or offering them to friends and family is part of the classic behavior of a tourist.

### **3. Tourism and diversification of activities**

The sale or processing of fishing products are women activities that have existed for a long time even if the form has changed, the means used are no longer the same, and the compliance with health norms needs of important investments on the part of fishing families. Some others activities can be added, they are linked to tourism. Catering is one of these activities even if it isn't really a new activity. The creation of seaside lodgings or seaside tourism could be considered important activities. The presentation of maritime or aquaculture heritage can be a form of diversification of the activities of fishing or aquaculture enterprises.

#### *Catering*

Some fishing families open restaurants in order to value their catch with the local population but also with the tourists. Going to eat fish in a restaurant run by a fisher means quality fish or shellfish. Few fishing families open restaurants for; once again, they imply important investments. The restaurants belonging to fishers are generally run by the wives who at the beginning are cooks and who end up as firm managers. If it is necessary, they are ready to become waitresses, or cooks to keep their firm working. Catering is not really a new activity linked to tourism, there are examples across Europe that show that catering is a family activity that has existed for at least two or three generations. In the Canary Islands or in Corsica some restaurants exist since the fifties. At that moment they received a local clientele, which thereafter, has been replaced by tourists.

The activity is passed on from mother or mother-in-law to daughter or daughter-in-law. Generally the young generation work with the older generation during the season. As they say: *"I do the season with my mother or mother-in-law"*. Once they have learnt the profession, they start on their own. This is also a question of family strategy; the husband must agree the parents of the couple also because often they are asked to contribute financially. Financial support is indispensable because the vessels appertain to very small-scale fishing. The banks refuse to finance new activities that demand investments larger than the value of the ship. Some families have inherited the family restaurant or tavern.

This activity brings in a considerable income, which often goes beyond the one coming from the first activity of the household, which is, fishing. The woman can be the sole person in charge of the restaurant or she can share this responsibility. Generally this activity is linked to the presence of a fishing boat, which provides the necessary fish for the functioning of the restaurant. Often a single boat is not enough to supply the restaurant, in which case the production of other local boats is asked for. The restaurants owned by fisheries families benefit from a good image in the eyes of the clientele because they offer quality products. The tourist guides point out the restaurants belonging to fishing families. It can be said that the image of the boat is the main reason for the success of this activity.

Seasonal catering is also another activity found in the French Mediterranean. A woman claims that during the summer she cooks at the side of the national road, which takes the tourists to the beach. She uses a caravan for this activity, around which she installs some tables and chairs. She cooks simple dishes or lightly processed fish such as anchovy filets and marinated sardines, sardine and tuna *rillettes* or the fish soup, which she often preserves throughout the long winter months. The tourists love to savor this type of food accompanied by the local wine. She loves this activity, which brings her out of her isolation and provides her with many new encounters. The income procured in this way is also indispensable for the family.

#### *Seaside tourism*

In the areas where there is a strong tourist potential, which is the case in many coastal areas, it is possible to envision the development of seaside tourism, as has been done for a long time in agriculture. But it is not a question of imitating schemes. In comparison to farmers, fishers do not dispose of under-used buildings for upgrading. On the other hand, the boat and the fishing activity can constitute an attractive factor to take into consideration. This involves various implications, not only in regards to setting up the project, the management but also in regards to the legal arrangements.

#### *Seaside lodges*

Not all the fishers dispose of buildings that allow them to take in tourists, such as the farmers have done. Without forgetting that present property speculation often pushes the fishing families to leave the coast to go live in the interior lands. Throughout Europe we find some fishing families who have given value to their building heritage by renting out rooms to tourists. These examples do not only concern the countries in the south of Europe, since one of the examples that we have comes from Finland (Frangoudes K, Escallier Ch. 2004) [6]. The family restored the family farm where they took in tourists, children, etc. A similar example exists in the French Mediterranean without forgetting the rooms offered by the fishers of the Greek islands to tourists during the summer. For latter renting out rooms represents an important source of income.

In Portugal the fishing families rent out their own house, during the two summer months, and go live in the cabin where they stock their fishing material. In some places the fishing families hire rooms in their homes. According to Christine Escallier (2004) in Nazaré (Portugal) *the women who offer rooms are easy to recognize. Wearing a head wrap, a shawl on their shoulders, they sit at the doorstep or on the road on a small stool. They hold in their hands a sign or a simple piece of cardboard fixed on no matter what object which they place for everybody to see – where the word room is written in four languages – Quarto, Room, Chambre, Zimmer... The other women of the community limit themselves to leave a written sign fixed to their window or to their balcony, leaving tourists the liberty to inquire by themselves* [7].

#### *Learning about a natural and cultural heritage*

In some countries, tourists are in search of authenticity. They want to learn about the natural and cultural heritage that surrounds the coast and the professions about which they don't know much. There is a strong demand to participate in a fishing outing or even to visit a shellfish-breeding cultivation. For them it is a question of getting to know the marine milieu better as well as the professions that surround it. Some examples support this observation in an effort to expose the advantages and the constraints or inconveniences of this kind of activity.

#### *Fishing outings*

Fishing outings, during the summer period, represent, in some places, new sources of income for fishers. In places where this is done the fishers are satisfied on a financial level because the guests are ready to pay a lot of money for being able to fish from a professional boat and in the company

of a “true fisher”. A half-day outing at sea is charged by the fishers at between 45 and 50 euros. But in order to practice this activity the fishers must ensure that their vessel complies with the safety norms required for the transport of passengers. It is necessary to purchase life-vests and all other necessary equipment to guarantee the safety of the riders. It is also an obligation to pay insurance in order to cover any type of accident that can arrive at sea.

The fishers interested in the “fish outings” activity are those who practice small-scale coastal fishing and who operate between six and seven months out of the year. The incomes earned by fishing are not enough to allow the families to live suitably the rest of the year. There are no other local employment alternatives for the rest of the year. It is important to point out that in these areas the tourist activity takes place around six months out of the year and that it determines all the economic activities. The fishers must, therefore, find other sources of income during the same period in which the fishing activity dominates. Completing the family budget becomes urgent and all types of diversification activities are taken seriously. The fishers of the Mediterranean islands form part of this category. On these islands, the fishing activity takes place primarily throughout six months, period during which the families must earn enough money to live on throughout the rest of the year. The fish outings with tourists represent an important source of income enabling them to practice their main activity: fishing. But obligatory equipment and the insurance have not been too costly.

The extension of this activity can be done on the condition of surpassing a series of obstacles that rise from a cultural and juridical ambit. Firstly, the fishers refuse to promenade tourists and secondly the national fishing legislation must be modified in order to allow this kind of activity. Almost no fishing legislation, presently in force in Europe, permits the exercise of tourist fishing from professional fishing boats. The transport of passengers on board the fishing vessels is not authorized. Only a modification of the law could enable the development of this kind of activity. In the Canary Islands, where tourism constitutes the main economic activity, the fishing legislation does not authorize the fishers to transport passengers (José Pascual 2003 [8]). The development of a fishing activity of leisure is carried out by private companies; in this way the fishers do not profit at all economically. We find the same situation in Brittany (France) even if in Corsica, another French region, it is allowed. Some fishers, who decide to transport tourists either for fishing or for learning about the natural marine milieu, use another boat especially equipped for this purpose. For example, in Aude (France) learning about the natural lagoon milieu attracts many tourists; the fishers prepare their boats especially for the transport of passengers.

#### *Visit of shellfish breeding or aquaculture units*

In France, the producers of oysters have created tourist itineraries such as “*the route of the oyster*” to attract tourists towards their commune and in this way upgrade their products. For example, in the quay of Mount St. Michael, the tourists come just to visit the site Mount St. Michael without spending a night there. In order to mitigate this phenomenon the municipalities, producers of shellfish in the quay, have created museums consecrated either to mussels or to oysters. In this way the tourists can discover the techniques of cultivation, the different species without forgetting the natural heritage of the quay.

On the other hand, they propose foot outings around the quay in order to visit the breeding beds and enhance the environmental richness of the quay. The objectives fixed by these museums are multiple: to incite the tourists to spend a night, to make known their professions and their products. The final objective is to improve the image that the consumers have of shellfish so that they consume at their commune year round and not only during the New Year celebrations.

The association of women oyster bed workers of Marennes Oléron launched in turn a project of seaside tourism. The objective is to reveal and upgrade the image of oyster bed cultivation to tourists who come to the region during the summer period. The oyster bed cultivation cohabits then with the tourists and an exchange is necessary for a good long-term relationship. As such, the association of women organized a circuit that drives the visitors to the cultivation and where a taste of oysters is offered. They offer also a visit to the beds by boat because the cultivation of oysters in Marennes-Oléron differs to the one practiced in the other French exploitations.

If, in France, the visits to shellfish breeding beds are an affair of the oyster bed workers this is not the case in Galice where they are provided by big catamarans that belong to enterprises outside of the maritime milieu. The women cultivators of mussels regret not being able to envision this kind of diversification because the law forbids it.

It is evident that there is not one unique recipe that works for all! The situation must be examined case by case since what might work in Corsica risks not working in Cyprus or elsewhere. Some people promote the idea of using the boats as a sleeping area for the tourists. Once again it is a question of an idea that must be thoroughly examined place by place. We must not forget that there is not only one category of tourists. Some tourists need to have cultural activities; others prefer to spend their day at the beach. A diversification of fishing activities linked to tourism needs, as a preamble, to evaluate the holiday needs. For example, the tourists that visit certain cities in Cyprus prefer the beach to museums; how are the fishers going to attract them to other types of activities? We must not forget that often tourist activities are carried out by people or enterprises external to the maritime world.

The women can contribute in this domain either by cooking the fish of the outings at sea or by receiving tourists in their shellfish establishments. In order to come to a head in this domain, a group reflection must first be conducted and later the different experiences in course must be widely spread. People have a need to be informed on the advantages and disadvantages of making a start.

## **DISCUSSION**

The enterprises of artisanal fishing and aquaculture have a need for the work of women in order to increase their incomes. This job of women exercised at the heart of family enterprises only rarely gives way to remuneration. Women's activities serve, to start with, to economize or increase the family income and the well-being of the family as a whole. The exercise of an activity does not contribute either to financial independence or to any other form of independence for women. The fact that women are not remunerated impedes them from attaining a legal status which would open the doors to the social benefits offered by a paid job. This work carried out by the spouse helpers or collaborators partially find their recognition in the provisions of the General rules of the European Council of 1986 sustained on "*the application on the origin/basis of the equal rights of treatment between men and women exercising an independent activity including an agricultural activity, as well as on the protection of maternity*" (86/613).

The General Rules demanded the member states to recognize the job of spouses in the frame of independent activities and in agriculture. The recognition of their contribution will give them access to a minimum of social benefits such as retirement or maternity leaves. Some member States (France, Portugal, and Spain) have applied the directive by providing the women with the possibility of paying contributions to social insurance. The results of such an application are mitigated; in France very few women have requested to benefit from the status of spouse collaborators while those in Spain and Portugal pay large contributions in order to have right to

social insurance. The payment of NI contributions allows the women to benefit from retirement and maternity leave.

Outside of the recognition of the work of women we would like to underline that the diversification of activities is done around the fishing activity that remains the main source of income for these households. We must underline also that the different European norms in regards to food safety pass by the imposition of health norms to be respected. These health norms require large investments that risk producing, in the long run, an impact on the contribution of women at the heart of artisanal fishing and aquaculture. In Norway, for example, the transition from artisanal aquaculture units to industrial units has reduced the role of women in these activities (Liv Torhil Peterson). The industrial ones appreciate the women above all when they are used in the hatcheries to feed the fingerlings or to serve as non-qualified working force in the factories of fish filets. The women lose the equal role they benefited from at the heart of artisanal units [9]. This has not happened yet in shellfish cultivation because we are still in an artisanal unit logistic.

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