Title: A human rights approach to fisheries and fisheries-management

Author(s): Chandrika Sharma

Abstract: Millions of people across the world, and particularly in Asia, depend on small-scale fisheries for a livelihood. Small-scale fisheries contribute in significant ways to employment, income and food security, and in many parts of the world small-scale fisheries constitute the backbone of remote, rural economies. However, several problems, within and outside the fisheries, continue to plague the sector. Apart from those related to overexploitation and depletion of resources, the small-scale sector in several regions faces poverty, lack of basic services and infrastructure, poor returns to producers and processors, and conflicts with industrial fisheries. This presentation suggests that adopting a human rights perspective in fisheries provides the framework to address issues related to both sustainable management of resources and the livelihoods of those dependent on the sector. It also suggests that rights-based approaches to fisheries that are justified on the grounds of economic efficiency, and that, in effect, lead to privatization of fisheries resources, could lead to the violation of basic human rights of those dependent on the sector for a livelihood.