



Slow Food®

SLOW FISH ACTIVITY REPORT 2021

 LIGHTHOUSE FOUNDATION

Curated by
Paula Barbeito

Layout
Mattia Dedominici

Photo
© Archivio Slow Food

EVENTS

Europe

SLOW FISH GENOVA “THE WATER CYCLES”



For the Slow Fish network, it is very clear that fisheries are just one piece of a complex food system, all parts of which are affected by shared issues of ecological degradation and social injustice. “The Water Cycles” was the title of this edition and has been an attempt to reinforce the parallels between terrestrial and marine ecosystems and to highlight how interconnected everything is. The Slow Fish network has put together a rich program which content has been adapted to a variety of digital formats.

Webinars

The future of our oceans. The health of one sea also has an impact on all the others. This connectivity requires a vision of the oceans as global commons and it’s our duty to manage them sustainably, thinking of their future, which is our future too. However, these values are not the language of those driving the dominant trends we are seeing in ocean governance. On World Ocean Day, four members of the new Slow Fish advisory board have discussed these trends and the key issues in reversing them. Speakers: Didier Ranc (Prud’home and president of the small-scale fishers’ organization Union Intersyndicale, France); Yassine Skandrine (Advisor to the Minister of Agriculture, Hydraulic Resources and Fisheries of Tunisia in charge of Fisheries and Aquaculture, Tunisia); Marco Dadamo (Director of Palude la Vela nature reserve, Italy); Antonio García-Allut (Associate Professor of Social Anthropology at the University of La Coruña, Spain).

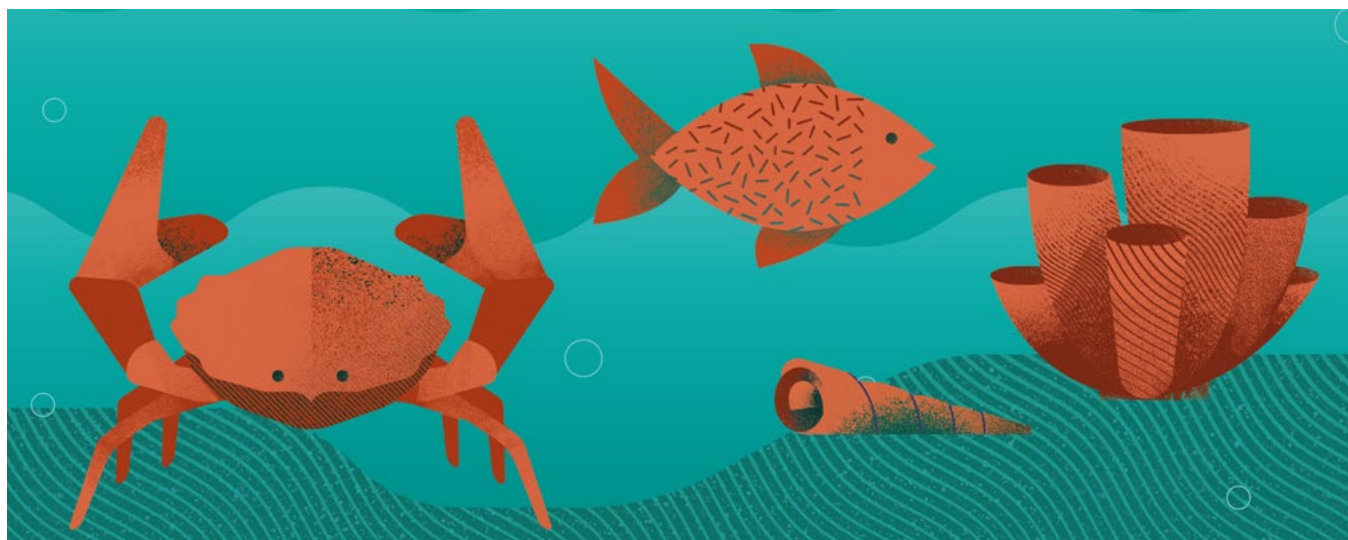
Submerged biodiversity. From plankton to coral reefs and river currents, a vital network connects everything. But this network of relationships can be broken easily when activities on land damage the balance of nature. Submerged biodiversity is at risk. Through stories from around the world, we have explored collective efforts on land to take care of the sea, and what happens when that collective effort does not exist. Speakers: Noboyuki Yagi (Japan); Jesús Escudero Gómez (Spain); Pisit Charnsnoh (Thailand). Moderator: Paula Barbeito

Classifying marine debris. The policies which aim to reduce the level of plastic in the sea, and more generally all marine debris, are a crucial part of the European Union's plan to achieve the objectives of the circular economy action plan by 2050. Despite this, the collection, recovery, processing, and disposal of marine waste gathered by fishers faces bureaucratic and operational difficulties. Speakers: Iain Shepherd (DG MARE); Donato Pentassuglia (Assessor for Agriculture and Fishing for the Puglia Region); Andrea di Stefano (Manager of Special Projects and Business Communication at Novamont); Gianfranco Grandaliano (Director of the Puglia Regions's Agency for Waste Management).

Gardens or monoculture? Through an ecologically precautionary lens, and with aspirations for an environmentally- and socially-just seaweed economy in mind, small-scale seaweed wild harvesters around the world have explore the ecological and cultural value of seaweed as well as the solutionist aquaculture narrative that dominates public discourse and the the role of wild harvested seaweed within the framework of the "blue economy". Speakers: Amanda Swinimer (harvester, BC, Canada); John Fitzgerald (harvester, Ireland); Paul Molyneaux (journalist, USA), Nanai Kaneakua (harvester, Hawaii); Severine von Tscharnner Flemming (harvester, USA).

Climate change in the Mediterranean. This webinar has explored the effects of climate change on the Mediterranean: reduction of biodiversity, arrival of alien species, health of waters and marine ecosystems were some of the topics discussed. Speakers: Federico Betti (advanced European scientific diver), Lorenzo Dasso (architect, fisher and chef); Maurizio Würz (professor emeritus of Biology, University of Genoa).

Fish at the time of the COVID - comparing cities. This three-part journey from north to south of Italy and involving local Slow Food chapters has touched on different cities - Milan and Genoa, Venice and Bologna, San Benedetto del Tronto and Palermo - to explore how the habits and consumption of fish products have changed in 2020 during the pandemic.



How it's made

We often buy the same types of fish because we don't feel confident exploring beyond the commonplace in the kitchen. It may be difficult to clean, or we may not know what to pair it with. This series of videos helped the public approach the world of seafood with curiosity, awareness, and ease.

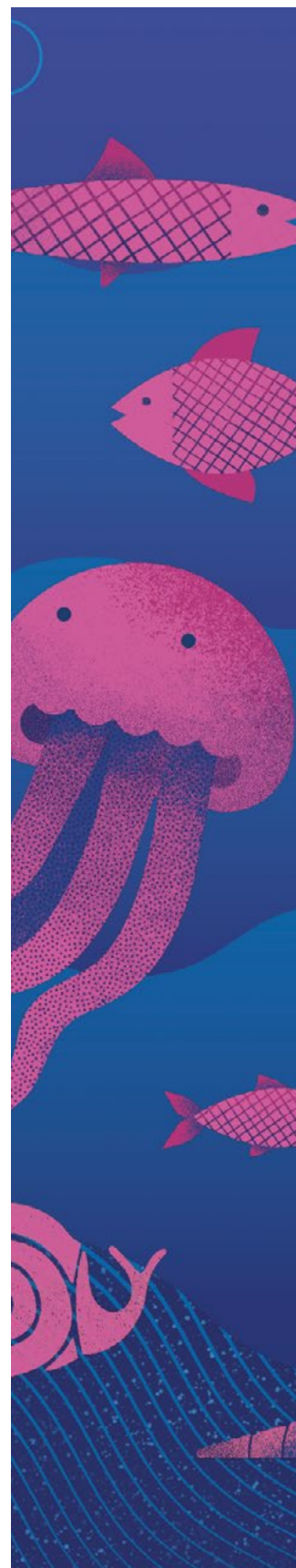
Providencia Black Crab with bami. Life on the island of San Andres is closely linked to the black crab, a Slow Food Presidium. The crabs have been harvested, cleaned, cooked, and sold here for generations, and they're an important element in the livelihood of local people. They generate an economy and guarantee that the island's youth can pay for school, for example. The black crab with bami is a recipe of crabmeat stew served in the animal's shell. Bami (or bammy in Jamaica) is a type of flatbread that accompanies the stew, made using cassava flour, butter and salt.

Thai fish si ma' or app pla. The Akha are an indigenous people spread across small villages in the mountain range that separates China, Laos, Burma and Thailand, one of the six most populous ethnic groups living in the area. Si Ma' is a fish dish cooked according to a recipe with some indigenous Thai ingredients.

Afromeridian fish. This Afroamerindian fish dish comes from Bahia and it is made of colourful ingredients and wonderful aromas – as well being practically impossible to find elsewhere – situated in that cultural crossroads which Bahian cuisine so perfectly represents.

Grapes in the sea. It seems almost crazy, yet the idea of putting grapes in the sea before making wine with them has an ancient history. Indeed, it was practiced by the Ancient Greeks, in particular on the island of Chios, over 2000 years ago. The wine of Chios had something which other wines didn't, a secret that the producers of the Aegean island guarded jealously, something that made the wine particularly aromatic and long-lasting: the presence in the wine of sea salt, after leaving the grapes in the sea in wicker baskets, with the objective of removing the bloom from the skins and accelerate the drying process while preserving the aroma of the fruit.

Fish cous-cous. In the region around Trapani, western Sicily, there's an old tradition of cooking cous-cous with fish. Guiding us in the preparation of this dish is Pino Maggiore, chef of Cantina Siciliana, who takes step by step through this Trapanese recipe for cùscusu, the emblematic dish of the city. After hours of preparation and together with a fish broth the semolina wheat of the cous-cous provides a symphony of flavours.





[The traditional stockfish of Bergen.](#) Bergen is home to proud stockfish traditions. The stockfish is produced in the North of Norway, where the climatic conditions are ideal for drying cod once they've been caught and cleaned. For over 800 years all the stockfish in Norway was sent to Bergen for quality control prior to export. The culinary tradition of lutefisk, or lye-treated stockfish, has been kept alive in Bergen, the city that made its fortune from stockfish. In this episode we observe some innovative ways of preparing this dish, but also the classic method.

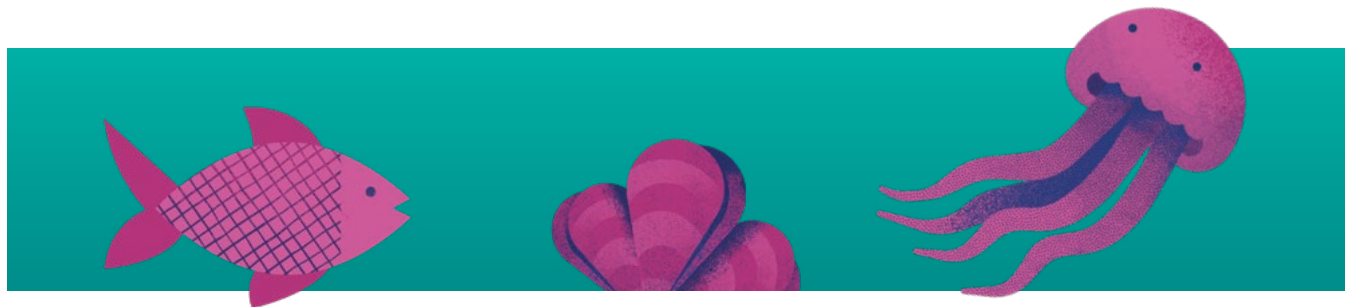
[Portonovowild mussel.](#) In Ancona, the wild mussel (Slow Food Presidium) or *Mytilus galloprovincialis* lives among the underwater rocks of the Conero riviera. The tools required to detach the mussels from the rocks are similar to pitchforks, and not particularly damaging. The fishers eat the mussels fresh off the boat, with their fragrant aroma of algae and the sea, opened and grilled without any condiment, or else with a marinara sauce, where they're opened in a pan with garlic, parsley, oil and pepper.

[Chitatap:](#) An Ainu fish dish. The Ainu are an indigenous people from the island of Hokkaido in Japan. They've lived there for thousands of years, but were only assimilated into Japanese society as recently as the 19th century. Though their language has almost become extinct, their food culture continues to thrive. As with all indigenous peoples of the Pacific, fish plays a vital role in Ainu gastronomy and culture. In this video, Ryoko Tahara shows us how to make Chitatap, which literally means "what we chop" in the Ainu language.

Food Talks

Food Talks are ten minutes videos on the environment, fishing and food: a collective framework of the future we want and need. The protagonists of the Food Talks are fishers who, together with anthropologists, ecologists and experts, offer their vision of the seas, their problems and potential solutions. A total of seven episodes were made during Slow Fish and are available here.

[The caribbean sea: fishers, piracy, resources.](#) Edgar Jay Stevens described how local communities in the Great Caribbean are threatened and denied their means of subsistence by the economic interests and expansionism of industry.



The pride of the local fishing community. When Fleur came to Moeraki, a small fishing village on the east coast of New Zealand's south island, she realized that its fishing boats were disappearing, and with them the way of life she had been searching for. But rather than accept this fate or move on, Fleur made a bold decision: she set up her eponymous restaurant: Fleur's Place, with the twin goals of providing greater revenue to local fishers and reducing the amount of food waste by taking the fish that wouldn't normally be sold or eaten.

Clams, abalone and kelp forests. People who've had the good fortune to grow up surrounded by biodiversity know only too well. As Jacquelyn Ross relates, our sea is being depopulated. Many of the species – the abalone, for example – she was used to seeing as a child are ever rarer. Jacquelyn Ross invites to think, and to contribute with some simple actions that we can all do: collecting the waste we find on the beach, for example. If the sea is a common good, and therefore belongs to everyone, then it's also everyone's responsibility.

The Beauty of seaweed. Amanda Swinimer, wild seaweed harvester, shows the peculiarities of different species, from the green sea lettuce to the red Pacific dulse, iridescent rainbow seaweed and kelp forests growing on the seafloor. Each one has a different colour, consistency, and flavour. Together, they play an important role in the life of the aquatic environment and produce oxygen as a by-product of photosynthesis.

The decline of the Atlantic salmon. Few know the plight of Atlantic salmon better than Michael Walsh, a traditional fisher on the Munster Blackwater River that flows through the counties of Kerry, Cork, and Waterford. Michael is one of the last fishers left on Blackwater, and his small operation is one of the only ones owned by an Irishman. In his own words, the over-exploitation of the fishery over the last 40 years has been the biggest disappointment in his life.

On the tide of small-scale fishers. The Congo River is the second-largest river by volume in the world, as well as the deepest, and provides a living to traditional fishing communities along its length. It's biodiversity rich and little-studied, with at least 800 fish species recorded and many more yet to be described. Victor Yemba is a member of a fishing community in Kisangani. As he explains, these fishers are victims of exclusion from decision-making processes that affect their livelihoods, and a lack of security exposes them to rebel attacks, especially those fishing on the edge of the lakes in the Congo's east, like Lake Kivu.

The Prud'homies of the Mediterranean. There are 33 Prud'homies along France's Mediterranean coast. The Prud'homies play an essential control and conservation role in marine zones, preserving a historic cultural model and participating in everyday port life. To introduce us to their work – and their evolution over the last year of the pandemic – is Didier Ranc, retired fisher, and President of the small-scale fisher organization Union Intersyndicale des petits métiers de la Pêche. Didier tells us how the economy of the Prud'homies has evolved over the last year, how consumption has changed and why direct sales represent a virtuous interconnection between fishers and eaters.

Sea tales

Sea Tales are short video clips enriched by the words and images of travel photographer Carla Milone to learn more about the lives and work of fishing communities from around the world.

[Brazil: Landing the catch of the Ceara Coast.](#) An ancient knowledge guides the work of these fishers, who study the flow of the currents and tides to work out the best time to sail out.

[Chad: the islands of Lake Fitri.](#) Lake Fitri is a shallow freshwater lake where there is a seasonal fishers' settlement. Strings of fish fillets are hung out to dry from the trees like necklaces: there are no refrigerators here, so the catch must be cleaned and left to dry immediately.

[Myanmar: The ice factory.](#) To catch fish in the village of Jalann fishers cross a rickety bridge which stretches out in the middle of the bay. An incredible conveyor belt, moved manually by pushing, brings great blocks of ice to the edge of the pier, where they fall into the fishing boats.

[India: The holy waters of the Ganges.](#) Life flows silently, magically, ever the same. We see a parade of villages clinging to the banks of the river and large, suspended fishing nets.

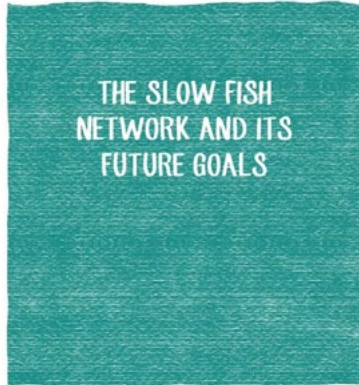
Fish out of water

This format aims to discover the innumerable connections and parallels between land and marine ecosystems. Nothing is truly isolated: what happens on land, in the fields, has profound consequences on the deltas, coasts and oceans.

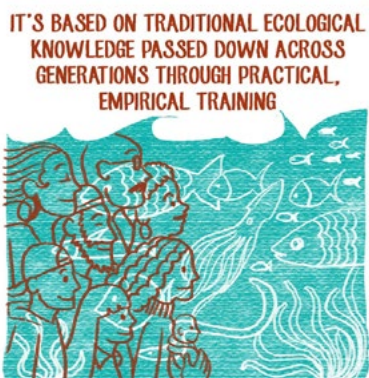
[The small world: comparing bees and plankton.](#) The protagonists of this double interview are Pierre Mollo, plankton expert, and Muriel Cathaud, beekeeper. Pierre tells us about underwater biodiversity and the importance of plankton in providing nourishment to most marine lifeforms, from coral to crustaceans, fish to whales. They're the base of the food chain in the ocean, regulating the entire ecosystem. They're also among the most sensitive organisms to temperature change, and global heating is impacting their equilibrium. Muriel brings us back to earth, with the analogous observation of the bees and other pollinators. They too play a fundamental role in the food chain, and they too are suffering enormous environmental stress.

[The virtues of neglected species and pulses.](#) We call it poor food because, historically, it was accessible to all classes of society. And there are lots of examples from land and sea. But to call it poor food is unfair, because eating the humblest pulses and ignored fish species are good for our health, the environment, as well as delivering delicious dishes! Two Tuscan chefs, Stefano Sorci and Elena Pardini, both members of the Slow Food Cooks' Alliance, have made space for these less-noble ingredients, like the beans at the centre of the Frantoiana soup or the largely unknown blue whiting fish in stocchetto di ficamaschia stew.

Besides, some promotional material has been done to be used in the Slow Food social media channels (Facebook, Instagram) with key messages introducing the network, what is artisanal fishing, the big challenges that coastal communities are facing nowadays, as well as what interconnection means for the network.



ARTISANAL FISHING IS PRACTICED BY BOATS THAT ARE LESS THAN 12 METERS LONG AND OPERATE LESS THAN 12 MILES FROM THE COAST



THE SLOW FISH NETWORK
THE BIG CHALLENGES

THE SLOW FISH NETWORK AND ITS FUTURE GOALS

TO PROMOTE FISH FROM ARTISANAL FISHING THAT'S CAUGHT USING TECHNIQUES AND TOOLS THAT DON'T PERMANENTLY DAMAGE THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT AND SEA FLOOR.

TO SHORTEN THE VALUE CHAINS OF FISH PRODUCTS TO SUPPORT FISHERS AND HELP IMPROVE THEIR WORKING CONDITIONS, INCOME, AND PREVENT THEM FROM HAVING TO ABANDON THE PROFESSION

ALL SPECIES ARE PRECIOUS! REDISCOVERING THEM, WE CAN LOWER DEMAND FOR, AND PRESSURE ON, OVER-EXPLOITED SPECIES AND ALLOW FISHERS TO SELL ALL THEIR CATCH AT A FAIR PRICE

TO OPPOSE INTENSIVE AQUACULTURE, ABOVE ALL OF CARNIVOROUS FISH SPECIES, AND THE FISHING OF SPECIES WHO ARE THEN USED TO FEED THEM

TO SUPPORT TRADITIONAL SMALL-SCALE FARMING OF HERBIVOROUS FISH, ABOVE ALL IN INLAND WATERS AND IN A WAY THAT IS INTEGRATED WITH LOCAL ECOSYSTEMS

TO PROMOTE AN ALTERNATIVE GOVERNANCE MODEL: CO-MANAGEMENT, WHEREBY FISHING COMMUNITIES CAN HAVE A VOICE AND CONTRIBUTE TO GOVERNMENT DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES

EVERYTHING IS INTERCONNECTED. EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENS ON LAND, IN THE FIELDS, HAS AN IMPACT ON THE SEA & VICE VERSA.

FROM THE SMALLEST PLANKTON TO HUMAN BEINGS, WE ALL PLAY A PART.

RESPECTING THE NATURAL EQUILIBRIUM IS ESSENTIAL FOR A HEALTHY FUTURE.

Latin America

ISLAND OF PROVIDENCE, COLOMBIA. III TRADITIONAL SAILING FESTIVAL OF THE INSULAR CARIBBEAN: CONNECTING SEAS, ISLANDS AND COASTS

The festival seeks to create an annual space with a selection of cultural, recreational and academic activities, aimed at a diverse audience, reclaiming the sea as a fundamental component of the history, memory and daily life of the Raizal people, and at the same time, to promote intergenerational and intercultural dialogues with other traditions in the Caribbean region and the world.



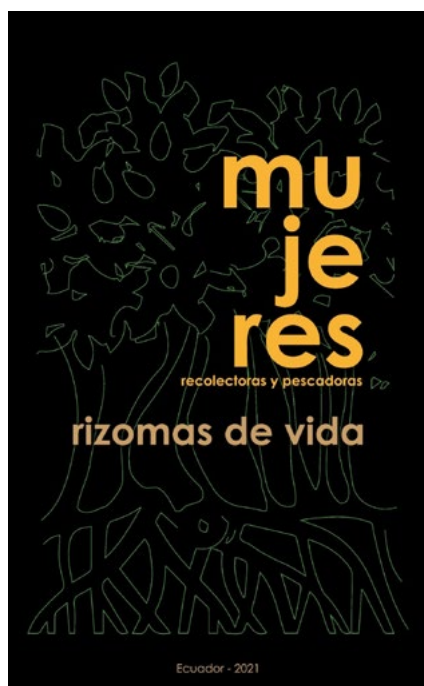
During September 2021, a mix of virtual and face-to-face activities took place: dialogues with national and international experts from different parts of the Caribbean; creative writing and oral storytelling for early childhood, children, and youth; underwater listening workshops; cotton boat races; a tribute to a representative expert of the Raizal maritime culture; and activities with various local cultural manifestations, including music and food (Fare&Dance)

Slow Food local communities' involvement in the organization of the festival has been key, particularly in the Fare&Food activities - where traditional recipes from the local gastronomy were prepared by local women cooks. In addition, speakers from Senegal have virtually contributed to some of the discussions about artisanal fisheries.

Despite being a very young event, this festival has many possibilities to continue growing and linking diverse actors and cultural manifestations of the Raizal people, including, in an important way, artisanal fishing and traditional cuisines.



COMMUNICATION



MUJERES RIZOMAS DE VIDA

During the year 2021, the Covid-19 pandemic has given no respite to humanity, especially to the most vulnerable populations. For the inhabitants of the marginalized coastal territories of Latin America and the Greater Caribbean, sanitary conditions determine little or no access to drinking water; the economies of sectors of mainly self-employed popular workers, who are energized by daily activities, suffer a breakdown from which it is difficult to recover, as it is the case of shellfish harvesting and artisanal fishing.

It is against this backdrop that "Mujeres Rizomas de Vida", a network of women shellfish harvesters and fisherwomen from marine-coastal territories in Latin America and the Greater Caribbean, was born within Slow Fish. Connected like the roots of a mangrove, these women walk intertwined in their dreams and hopes towards the reconstruction of community ties, sowing collective action for the care of the commons.

In the words of Marianelli Torres Benavides, who has been facilitating the creation of this network, *"caring for the weakest, ensuring that biosafety standards are met, taking care of the family's food, caring for those who have fallen ill, taking care of work so that there is no lack of income, making sure that water is clean and not in short supply... these women's work triples with the pandemic. From a political perspective, this care is part of a historical denial of the priority of being women. The question posed by Mujeres Rizomas de Vida network is: Who takes care of us?"*



Following a series of trainings on the construction of visual narratives, seven women from Peru, Ecuador, Mexico, Colombia, and Honduras have photographed and written about their perceptions of their own lives, their territory, and their community. The result of this process has led to the creation of the book *"Rizomas de Vida. Mujeres recolectoras y pescadoras de territorios marino-costeros de América Latina y el Gran Caribe. Narrativas resilientes desde los cuidados, en el marco de la pandemia de la Covid-19"*.



Additionally, the book “Recetas del Manglar” has been also published where each of these seven women introduces a recipe that represents themselves and their cultures through the typical ingredients from their respective territories.



DOCUMENTARY “MANGLAR: VIDA Y LUCHA DE LA NATURALEZA Y SUS PUEBLOS”

Since the mid-1980s, fishers and shellfish harvesters from the mangrove estuaries of the Ecuadorian coast have been engaged in a process of struggle and resistance to the implementation of industrial shrimp aquaculture, which illegally occupies this ecosystem inhabited by peoples of ancestral origin, affecting their food sovereignty, their work, and their ability to reproduce socially and culturally.

Directed by the world-renowned director Pocho Alvarez Wandenberg, and in collaboration with C-CONDEM, Greenpeace International, Why Hunger and MISEREOR Germany, Slow Food supports the making of the documentary “MANGLAR: VIDA Y LUCHA DE LA NATURALEZA Y SUS PUEBLOS”. The film will show the contradictions and conflicts over access and control of this territory during 30 years of resistance, highlighting the role of women shell and crab gatherers.

NETWORK

Latin America

ALIANZA INTERNACIONAL POR LOS TERRITORIOS MARINO COSTEROS Y EL CAMBIO CLIMÁTICO (ALMACC INTERNACIONAL)

Through the Slow Fish network, Slow Food has participated in some meetings organized by ALMACC international, a call from Latin America for cooperation, solidarity and transparency in international governance that impacts coastal marine territories and their peoples. This alliance defends human and nature rights, the strengthening of regional and global processes between social organizations and communities, and calls for environmental justice and a climate response that guarantees human existence on the planet in conditions of dignity.



Alianza Internacional por los Territorios
Marino Costeros y el Cambio Climático



North America

In order to maintain the integrity and accountability of the collaborative process of the various Slow Fish events in the USA, and to focus the team's efforts on Slow Fish and Slow Food values, an Oversight Team has been created, composed of members of the Slow Fish network in Canada, the US and the international component.

Following the success of the Slow Fish Summit 2021 held during the last edition of Terra Madre, this oversight team held a digital retreat where three sessions were dedicated to discuss action, governance and logistics, respectively, in order to more effectively coordinate the activities of the Slow Fish network in Canada and the United States.

ADVOCACY

North America

Slow Fish Canada is part of Fisheries for Communities, a network of Indigenous and non-Indigenous fish harvesters, small businesses, fishmongers, chefs, restaurateurs, fishing families, community organizations, and citizens who have grown tired and frustrated watching the many social, cultural, and economic benefits of our fisheries increasingly flowing to outside investors and large-scale global corporations at the cost of local fishing families and communities. As this trend continues, Canadians are also losing their capacity for local management and stewardship of their marine environment and their long-standing connections to the sea.

Following Fisheries for Communities gathering on February 2020, the network is pushing the Canadian Government and the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans to review the 20 recommendations from the House of Commons Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans, which addresses BC fisheries licensing policy and how that affects who receives the benefits.



