

DECLARATION AGAINST INDUSTRIAL SHRIMP AQUACULTURE

September, 2007

Lampung, Indonesia

We, representatives of local communities, NGOs, social movements and researchers from 17 countries of Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and North America, had a meeting in Lampung, Indonesia, on 4-6 September 2007 to address the continuing expansion and associated impacts of industrial shrimp aquaculture.

Despite the overwhelming evidence of its devastating effects, the industry continues to increase and spread into new lands and countries while leaving behind degraded land and impoverished communities.

The continued conversion of wetlands, especially mangroves, into shrimp ponds contributes to climate change by releasing stored carbon in the soil into the atmosphere and by nullifying the mangrove's function to sequester carbon. Shrimp farming is also responsible for removing green belts, which protect coastal communities from disasters such as hurricanes, storm surges, tsunami, etc.

The recent expansion of the industry into salt flats, mud flats, and lagoons, which are part of a coastal ecosystem, is equally destructive.

We are concerned that farmed shrimps are promoted as healthy food while consumers are not provided with full information of the dangers to their health that may be caused as the result of antibiotics, hormones, pesticides and other chemicals that are used in the various phases of shrimp production.

We call upon people in consuming countries to greatly reduce their consumption of imported farmed shrimps, all of which are produced at the expense of environmental degradation, loss of biodiversity, loss of peoples' livelihoods, cultural diversity and security, and violation of human rights including murder.

We demand that governments take cognizance of these issues and implement the 1999 Ramsar Convention Resolution VII.21, which calls on governments to suspend the promotion, creation of new facilities and expansion of unsustainable aquaculture activities harmful to coastal wetlands.

We further demand that retailers also take the responsibility of limiting consumption of farmed shrimp, instead of the current practice of promoting it.

We urge the International Financial Institutions, such as the World Bank, ADB and the IDB, and Intergovernmental Agencies to stop the promotion and funding of industrial shrimp aquaculture.

Presently, the industry, with the support of certain international NGOs, is trying to improve its public image by developing certification processes and misleading labels such as "Ethical Shrimp" and "Organic Shrimp" to mask ecological damage, human rights violation, widening income gap, loss of jobs and other real problems caused by the industry. Such schemes ignore the rights to food security and sovereignty of the communities where shrimp is produced and do not provide space for local communities.

We therefore urge consumers, retailers, NGOs and governments to reject all the certification schemes developed thus far and those currently in development.