

MENAKHEM BEN-YAMI, Dr h.c.

C.V.

Menakhem Ben-Yami, mainly self-taught fishing technologist and fishery ecologist, is a free-lance international fisheries development and management adviser and writer on fisheries matters. Following a naval service in Israel, in 1950 he started his career as a fisherman, then a fishing and naval skipper. He fished, commercially and experimentally, and conducted fishing surveys in the Mediterranean, Red Sea, the Central Atlantic Ocean, lakes and lagoons, using trawls, purse and beach seines, light-attraction, hooks and gillnets. In the late 1950s, when still a commercial fishing skipper, he was engaged by Israel's Sea Fisheries Research Station to carry out, jointly with FAO, a major study of the Mediterranean trawl gear.

From 1960 to 1963, M. Ben-Yami worked as a Masterfisherman and Fisheries adviser in Eritrea, where he organised fishermen's loan fund – a credit scheme based on mutual guaranty groups. From his next position of Chief of the Israeli Fisheries Technology Unit and, later, Director of the Fisheries Technology Division, he was called up in mid-1970s by the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation to become a Fishery Industry Officer based at its HQ in Rome where he worked for 7 years. His fields of responsibilities was fishing technology and development of small-scale fisheries and fishing communities. During that period he visited and advised fisheries in many African, Central American and South American countries, as well as in Sri Lanka, India, Burma, Thailand, and many Caribbean and other oceanic islands.

In 1966, while on a fellowship in the USA, at the Southwest Fishery Center at LaJolla, CA, he developed and model tested a fast-sinking tuna ("hybrid") purse seine. His design was then successfully tested by the Center in full-scale sea trials, and, reportedly, had a significant influence on the future California tuna purse seines, facilitating their use also for fishing skipjack on high seas.

In later years, he was called for consultations and meetings participation by the U.S. Academy of Science, Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission, the Smithsonian Institution, the Canadian Government's Fisheries and Oceans, the Yale University Center for Middle East Studies, and the Newfoundland and Labrador Institute of Fisheries and Marine Technology, was a keynote speaker and presented papers on several international meetings, delivered many occasional lectures at universities and research institutes in Israel, USA, Russia, and Poland, and was giving courses in marine ecology at the Galilee College (Israel).

Since his early retirement from both the FAO and the Israeli Dept. of Fisheries, M. Ben-Yami has carried out numerous missions to 3rd World countries as consultant to FAO, IFAD, UNDP, GTZ, the Commonwealth of Nations, and IDRC, associated with development of small-scale fisheries, credit schemes, and allocation of fishery resources between small and larger scale fishery sectors. He

traveled widely to visit fisheries also in many countries of Europe and both Americas.

M. Ben-Yami authored numerous technical reports, scientific papers, and articles* on various subjects of fishing technology and ecology, and fisheries development, as well as several FAO Fishing Manuals dealing with fishing with light, small-scale trawling and purse seining, FADs, tuna fishing with pole and line, and of FAO and IFAD manuals on development in fishing communities, co-operatives and other fisherfolk's organisations and credit schemes in developing countries. He translated for the U.S. Academy of Sciences and Bureau of Commercial Fisheries several Russian books and numerous papers in fisheries and marine science. He also designed and edited the PC-FISHELP - a computer expert program in fishing technology and vessel economics. Since 1994 he has been writing a personal column in the "World Fishing" magazine, and active on the FISHFOLK Internet discussion list. Most recently (1999) he prepared major working papers for ILO (Safety of small-scale fishing people - a world review), and FAO (Socio-cultural aspects of food security - E.Nigeria case study), and (2000-2001) travelled to visit and advise fisheries in Australia, Florida, and (for the 3rd time) Ecuador (Galapagos). His and A.Gelman's English-Russian/Russian-English Dictionary of Fishery and Related Marine Terms was published by EASTFISH in December, 2001. During the last two years he has been deeply involved in the campaign against major industrial polluters of the Kishon River and the Kishon Fishing Harbour (Israel) on behalf of fishing people whose health has been affected by toxic pollution.

In 1996, following the publication of his "Purse Seining Manual", the Kaliningrad State Technical University awarded M.Ben-Yami ***"the scientific title of Doctor Honoris Causa for substantial contribution to development of fisheries science and to training of specialists"***.

* - to view Publications