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SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROJECT (SFMP)

Dialogue 1 – Post World Rural Women’s Day Follow-up Meeting with District Assemblies and Fisheries Commission



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Cover photo: Leadership of Fish Processors Association with Policy Makers of Efutu District Assembly (Credit: Development Action Association)

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ACRONYMS

CCM	Centre for Coastal Management
CEWEFIA	Central and Western Region Fishmongers Improvement Association
CRC	Coastal Resource Center
CSLP	Coastal Sustainable Landscape Project
DAA	Development Action Association
DFAS	Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Science
DMFS	Department of Marine Fisheries Sciences
DQF	Daasgift Quality Foundation
FtF	Feed the Future
GIFA	Ghana Inshore Fishermen's Association
GIS	Geographic Information System
GNCFC	Ghana National Canoe Fishermen's Council
HM	Hen Mpoano
IUU	Illegal, Unreported and unregulated
ICFG	Integrated Coastal and Fisheries Governance
MESTI	Ministry of Environment Science and Technology
MOFAD	Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development
NDPC	National Development Planning Commission
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
SFMP	Sustainable Fisheries Management Project
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
SNV	Netherlands Development Organization
SSG	SSG Advisors
STWG	Scientific and Technical Working Group
UCC	University of Cape Coast
URI	University of Rhode Island
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WARFP	West Africa Regional Fisheries Development Program

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SUMMARY

On 15th June 2017, there was dialogue between fisher folks and District Assemblies of Efutu Municipal and Gomoa West; and Fisheries Commission of both Landing Beaches to address the prevalence of IUU and District Bye-laws regulating fishing and fish processing activities in the Central Region of Ghana, especially Apam and Winneba. The weak enforcement and noncompliance had led to gradual decrease in fish stock within Ghana's marine waters due to increased fishing effort. The resource users as well as stakeholders, law enforcement and bye-law regulating bodies were brought to a venue to dialogue and come out with lasting solutions to solve the issue of IUU and noncompliance of Fisheries law in the country.

The District fisheries bye-laws were read and interpreted to the understanding of the fisher folks for them to abide by the laws. The chief fisherman of Winneba made a promise to sensitize fisher folks and regulate activities of fishermen to put an end to IUU fishing. Fishermen and fish processors realising the negative effects of IUU on their livelihood were in support of the Chief fisherman to stop IUU fishing at the Winneba Landing Beach and beyond. There were 23 stakeholders, of which 18 were males and 5 females.

1. INTRODUCTION

The rate of IUU fishing at the Winneba Landing Beach is beyond control. The fishermen at the Winneba Landing Beach use unapproved means and methods of fishing. This has contributed to the depletion and over exploitation of fish stock in the marine waters of Ghana. Due to prevalence of IUU Fishing in this Community, a dialogue was held with Efutu Municipal Assembly and Fisheries Commission at Winneba to verify if there were Bye-Laws regulating fishing activities at the landing beach.

The issue of IUU fishing at the landing beach of Winneba has created urgent attention. Thus, dialogue with the District Assembly and Fisheries Commission was held at the Conference Hall of the Assembly to help address the issue. There were 23 stakeholders at the dialogue of which 18 were males and 5 were females.

1.1 Objectives

- To ascertain if there are fisheries bye-laws at the District level to regulate fishing activities.
- To know if the District faces any challenges in combating IUU fishing
- To know the problems faced by the Fisheries Commission in regulating the activities of fishermen.

1.2 Expected Outcomes

- The District Assembly to enforce the fisheries bye-laws at the Winneba Landing Beach.
- District Fisheries Commission to regulate activities of fisher folks to prevent unapproved ways of fishing.
- Fisher folks through this dialogue will understand the negative effects of illegal fishing practices and put an end to them.



Figure 1. Efutu Municipal Assembly Coordinating Director briefing participants on Fisheries Bye-Laws

2. OUTCOMES OF THE DIALOGUE

After the dialogue, the stakeholders gained knowledge about the fishing industry in the country. The state of fishing in the community and how IUU Fishing had collapsed the sector were known. The dialogue also revealed that the District had bye-laws that regulate activities of fishermen at the landing beach.

The Bye-laws are to regulate activities of fisher folks at the District level. However, the stakeholders are not aware of the laws due to lack of sensitization and education of the fishermen. Weak enforcement and implementation of the laws led to prevalence of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing at the Winneba Landing Beach. It was assured that the Efutu District will embark on Winneba Beach Beautification project to include some fishermen and fish processors in the committee. The committee will deal with sanitation issues along the beach at Winneba, sensitize and educate fishermen on the District Fisheries Bye-laws. Under the Winneba Beach Beautification project, all the three public toilets along the Landing Beach of Winneba will be renovated to prevent open defaecation.



Figure 2. Winneba Landing Beach Chief Fisherman addressing the audience on his effort to stop light fishing

The fishermen at the Winneba Landing Beach had to rethink on the negative effects of illegal unreported and unregulated fishing. The dialogue between fishermen and fish processors was organized on 2nd June 2017 on sensitization on the Fisheries Management Plan to discuss issues and challenges affecting the fisheries sector. The participants understood the messages concerning bad fishing methods and use of unapproved fishing nets, i.e. monofilament nets, and the use of light in fishing. The sensitization and education empowered the chief fishermen at the landing beach to stop light fishing. During a dialogue with the Efutu Municipal Assembly and the Fisheries Commission at the Efutu Municipal Conference Hall, some fishermen and fish processors confirmed what the chief fisherman Nana Naahyr said. He therefore called on the District and other concerned organizations to support him fight against other fishermen who come to Winneba to engage in light fishing. He suggested a collaboration meeting among all chief fishermen under the Efutu Municipal Assembly to rally around him to totally stop IUU fishing in the Municipal. He advised that landing

beaches like Mankwadzie needed to educate and sensitize stakeholders on the negative effects of IUU fishing.

Weak enforcement of fisheries bye-laws had led to the increase in IUU fishing in the community. The District assistant coordinating director in response to the issue said that a Committee was formed by the District to enforce bye-laws at the landing beach, but due to lack of funds to support the committee members to carry out their duties, it failed. He therefore promised that the Assembly will revive and support the committee to carry out their work properly in order to regulate activities of fishermen and enforce the District fisheries bye-laws.

He used the platform to educate participants on the District Fisheries bye-laws by reading and explaining some sections of the laws to the gathering.



Figure 3. A member of the fish processors expressing an opinion during the dialogue

3. CHALLENGES

The chief fisherman of Apam (Nana Caico) said that he sensitized fishermen on the negative effects of IUU fishing but they disobeyed the orders, due to the lack of law enforcement agencies at the landing beaches.

The District Fisheries Commissioner (Isaac Anaman) also said that he had been reporting issues of IUU fishing, but nothing has been done to prevent such issues. He therefore suggested involving the law enforcement unit of the Fisheries Commission to help solve the problem.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were made:

- The District will work hand in hand with the Chief fisherman to revive the Committee so as to regulate activities of fishermen at the landing beach.
- It was also recommended that during dialogues pertaining to fishing, some key and influential fishermen should be invited.

5. CONCLUSION

The dialogue was a wake-up call to the District Assembly to focus and allocate resources to the fishing sector in the district. There was collaboration among stakeholders in combating IUU fishing at the landing beach at Apam.