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SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROJECT (SFMP)

Meeting with Chiefs and Opinion
Leaders in Moree and Elmina on
the Role of Traditional Authorities in
Combating IUU Fishing



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Cover photo: A group picture of Elmina traditional authorities (Credit: CEWEFIA)

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Resonance Global: <https://resonanceglobal.com/>
SNV: <http://www.snvworld.org/en/countries/ghana>

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
ICFG	Integrated Coastal and Fisheries Governance
IUU	Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported fishing
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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACRONYMS.....	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	iv
LIST OF FIGURES	iv
LIST OF TABLES.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
BACKGROUND/ INTRODUCTION	2
Rationale	2
Attendance	2
Meeting Objectives	2
Expected outcomes	2
MEETING IN MOREE	3
The role of Traditional Authorities in sustaining the fisheries sector.....	4
The Economic Benefit of Fisheries Reforms.....	5
Closed season.....	5
Co-management	5
IUU Fishing and its Impact on the Economy.....	6
Effect of IUU On Post Harvest Value Chain:.....	6
The Benefits Of New Improved Fish Smoking Stove (Ahotor Stove):.....	6
Issues/ Observation on Ahotor Stove:.....	7
OUTCOMES.....	7
RECOMMENDATIONS	8
WAY FORWARD	8
CONCLUSIONS.....	8
REFERENCES	8

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. The Chief Fisherman (arrowed), CEWEFIA Facilitators and Opinion Leaders at the Meeting	3
Figure 2. A cross- section of opinion leaders at the meeting.....	4

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Participant attendance at meeting held at Moree	3
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We thank God for seeing us through these activities. CEWEFIA renders its sincere thanks to the Chief and his Elders and Opinion Leaders of Moree and the Paramount Chief of Edina Traditional Council, Queen mothers, Sub-chiefs, Elders, Chief Fishermen and Opinion Leaders of Elmina for making the two separate meetings a success. Many big thanks again go to USAID/ URI/ CRC for their financial support and guidelines. CEWEFIA appreciates the effort of all CEWEFIA Staff for making the meetings at last come through.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CEWEFIA under the Sustainable Fisheries Management Project and inline with Year Four (4) Work Plan organized a One- Day separate Meeting with the Chiefs and Opinion Leaders of Moree on Thursday, 23rd November, 2017 between 9:00am to 2:30pm at the residence of Nana Kweigya (VII) at Moree and with the Paramount Chief of Edina Traditional Council, Queen Mothers, Sub-chiefs, Chief Fishermen, Elders and Opinion Leaders of Elmina at the Chief's Palace on 28th November, 2017 at 10:30 a.m..

The Theme for the meeting was “The Roles of Traditional Authorities in Combating IUU”.

The objective of two separate meetings was to deliberate on the Traditional Authorities' role in sustaining the fisheries sector and also empower them to exercise their roles appropriately.

At Moree, twenty- four (24) people attended the meeting comprising of 22 males and 2 females. The participants constituted Konti Hene, Chief Fishermen, Canoe Owners, Assembly Members and Opinion Leaders. At Elmina, twenty-six (26) people made up 21 males and 5 females. Here too, the participants consisted of the Paramount Chief, Queen Mothers, Sub- Chiefs, Chief Fisherman, Konkohenemaa, and Opinion Leaders. The following topics were discussed at the meetings; the Role of Traditional Authorities in Sustaining the Fisheries Sector, Impact of IUU fishing on our Economy, Effects of IUU on Post Harvest Value Chain and lastly the Benefits of the New Improved Fish Smoking Stove (Ahotor Oven). The meeting was in the form of open forum where each participant shared his or her view on the issues at stake. The issues were thoroughly discussed with the participants sharing their challenges and experiences in fishing activities.

At the end of the meeting it was envisaged that the Chiefs, Elders, Queen Mothers and the Opinion Leaders of both towns understand their roles as Community Leaders. It was noted that lack of stringent implementation of fisheries laws and regulations on the part of government had resulted in all the irresponsible fishing practices on the sea. The Chiefs and Opinion Leaders agreed to put hands on deck in their little way to ensure responsible fishing practices in Moree and Elmina. They however pleaded with the government to strengthen the implementation of fisheries laws and regulations since IUU fishing was a nationwide issue and therefore needed the concerted effort of the whole nation to combat it. As a way forward the Chiefs, Elders, Queen Mothers, Chief Fishermen and the Opinion leaders will meet the women, watchmen at sea and the entire fisher folks to inform them of the outcome of the two meetings. Also the Traditional Authorities resolved meet to formulate fisheries bye-laws to govern fishing activities in Moree and in Elmina to save the fishing business which is the main source of livelihood for their people. In conclusion, the meeting was successful with its objective realized. It took a period of 5hours 30 minutes.

BACKGROUND/ INTRODUCTION

In reference to the FAO code of Conduct , 6.16, “State recognizing the paramount importance to fishers and fish farmers of understanding the conservation and management of the fishery resources on which they depend, should promote awareness of responsible fisheries through education and training. They should ensure that fishers and fish farmers are involved in the policy formulation and implementation process”.

As part of the Sustainable Fisheries Management Project (SFMP) goal to rebuild the marine fish stock in Ghana, several interventions have been made. CEWEFIA being one of the Co - Partner for the project has undertaken several activities toward ensuring revamping of fisheries stock for sustainable fishing. In the CEWEFIA Year Four (4) Work Plan, one of the activities is to meet with the Traditional Authorities in its project communities (Elmina and Moree) to deliberate on some of the issues pertaining to fishing and identify their roles as authorities in combating the IUU fishing which is affecting the fishing industry.

On Thursday, 23rd November, CEWEFIA Team organized a meeting with Moree Traditional Authorities at 9:00 a.m. and on Tuesday, 28th November, 2017, another one was organized for the Elmina Traditional Authorities in Elmina at 10:30 a.m.

Rationale

Reference to the Fisheries and Aquaculture Management Policy, Traditional Authorities play a significant role in ensuring responsible fishing. It is envisaged that the Traditional Authorities are the very first point of contact at the communities who can ensure that a responsible fishing is practiced in their communities. Engaging them in meetings and planning will make them realize their responsibilities and will as well make them feel part of the management of fisheries resources.

Attendance

Fifty (50) people attended the meeting comprising of 43 males and 7 females. They comprise of Chiefs, Queen Mothers, Chief Fishermen, Konkohenemaa, Canoe Owners, Assembly members, Fishermen, Input dealers and others.

Meeting Objectives

- To identify the roles of the Traditional Authorities in combating IUU.
- To understand the impact of irresponsible fishing on fisheries resources
- To improve the traditional authorities knowledge on some of the fisheries legal laws, regulations and policies.

Expected outcomes

- The Traditional Authorities will be able to outline and understand their roles in sustaining the fisheries industries.
- They will be empowered to be able to exercise their role as leaders in the community.
- The knowledge base of the authorities on the fisheries laws and regulations improved.
- Bye-laws will be enacted to govern fishing in Moree and Elmina communities.

MEETING IN MOREE

The first meeting was held at Nana Kweigya (VII)' Residence at Moree whilst that of Elmina was convened at the Paramount Chief's Palace. The meeting at Moree commenced at 9:00am but the one at Elmina started at 10:30am. All the meetings were opened with a prayer. At Moree, the Chairman for the meeting was Nana Kweigya (VII), the Chief Fisherman- Moree and at Elmina, it was chaired by the Paramount Chief; Nana Kodwo Condua VI, the Paramount Chief of Edina Traditional Council. The meeting adopted open forum approach where each and every participant was allowed to share their views on the issues discussed.



Figure 1. The Chief Fisherman (arrowed), CEWEFIA Facilitators and Opinion Leaders at the Meeting

Table 1. Participant attendance at meeting held at Moree

Community	Number of attendance		Total
	male	female	
Moree	22	2	24
Total			24



Figure 2. A cross- section of opinion leaders at the meeting

The issues discussed included;

- The role of Traditional Authorities in sustaining the Fisheries Sector,
- The economic benefit of Fisheries Reforms with emphasis on Closed Season, Co Management Plan and Fisheries Laws,
- IUU fishing and its impact on Economy,
- Effect of IUU on Post Harvest Value Chain
- The benefit of using New Improved Fish Smoking Technology locally called Ahotor stove.

Mr. Takyi Michael, M&E Officer- CEWEFIA coordinated the meeting at Moree while the Project Officers coordinated the meeting at Elmina.

Below is the detail of the discussion.

The role of Traditional Authorities in sustaining the fisheries sector

All the participants strongly believed that the Traditional Authorities played a significant role in sustaining the fishing industry. According to Nana Kweigyia (VII), he emphasized that it was the Traditional Authorities' responsibility to ensure good practices with regards to fishing and its related activities were done in every coastal community. He further added that it was again the duty of Traditional Authorities to formulate bye-laws to govern their sea and lagoons in their various communities, sanction the illegal practitioners and last but not least co-operate with government to enforce and implement fisheries laws and regulations. Also they the Traditional Leaders especially the Chief Fishermen should serve as good examples for other fishermen to emulate by shunning all manner of illegalities in fishing and as well as frown on those activities.

It was envisaged that the Government had formulated laws that govern fishing but its implementation had not been effective. Nana Kweigyia VII again added that some of the Chief Fishermen had been enthusiastically educated the fisher folks and as well informed them of some of the interventions of government to regulate fishing after they had been informed at several meetings they attended with the expectation that the intervention would

surely be administered as they told the fisher folks but the government authorities did otherwise. The behavior of Government had reduced the level of trust of the fisher folks in Traditional Authorities. Nana Kwamina Akyem of Moree suggested that the youth fisher folks should be thoroughly educated on responsible fishing to avoid illegal fishing practices since most of the fishing activities are done by the youth fishermen. He said this in response to the size of fish catch landed nowadays. Nana Mensah Bonsu also of Moree added that the fishermen should be educated on the effect of the chemicals used in fishing and the effects it had on human health. With this he believed they would understand and put a stop to fishing with poisonous chemicals.

It was indicated that the indigenous fishermen in Moree and Elmina were not practicing such illegal fishing but rather the fishermen from other communities who were fishing and bringing their fish-catch to Moree and Elmina landing sites.

It was suggested that community information centres and other information systems could be used to sensitize the community on responsible fishing practices to increase people's awareness, organize durbars and forums from time to time to educate the fisher folks, this according to Madam Gyasie and Michael Takyi could go a long way to reduce illegal fishing practices. She again suggested that if canoe owners could swear with schnapps to shun illegal fishing as it was done some years ago in Moree which helped put a stop to some illegalities in the sea for sometime.

Mr. Napoleon was of the assertion that the sustainability of fisheries resources largely depended on the effective implementation of fisheries laws and regulations as well as community bye-laws. He said that if there would be enforcement of fisheries law all these illegalities in fishing could be controlled if not totally eradicated.

Nana Abukuley urged all the traditional leaders to put hands on deck and lay stringent rules and sanction all illegal fishing practitioners despite the challenges.

The Economic Benefit of Fisheries Reforms

Closed season

Closed season is where fishing in the sea is halted for some time. This will help replenish the fish stocks. This is in line with one of the management objectives of the FAO code of conduct (code 7.2.2, pp 11) where it says, "depleted stocks are allowed to recover or where appropriate, are actively restored. The participants were made to be aware of the upcoming nationally recognized closed season which is yet to take effect. In line with this the participants were urged to practice culture of savings to depend on in future when closed season was effected. Nana Kweigya (VII) added that Closed Season was not a new thing to them and the entire fisher folks. He said previously the fishermen decided to stop fishing for a while to allow the fish to revamp. Also, currently some of the festivals such as Elmina Bakatue prohibited fishing in lagoons for a month. All these were traditionally recognized as closed season and therefore when the time was due, the fishermen would definitely have to comply with.

Co-management

Co-Management is where the fisher folks take active part in the planning and management of fisheries resources with the government. In reference to the fisheries and Aquaculture Policy, (2015-2019- five years policy), the fisher folks themselves have to manage their own sea and its resources for optimum benefit. According to the FAO Code of Conduct for responsible fisheries, the State and sub Regional and Regional Fisheries Management Organization should give publicity and ensure that laws, regulations and other legal rules and governing

their implementation are effectively disseminated. Hence: the purpose for this meeting, (code 7.1.10).

There are fisheries laws and policies that protect the fisheries resources. However, the implementation of the law is very poor. The Fisheries Commission is responsible for ensuring the fisheries laws and regulations are implemented effectively according to the Coordinator.

IUU Fishing and its Impact on the Economy

Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) fishing are going on at sea therefore measures should be put in place to halt it. Illegal fishing such as fishing with light, using chemicals like DDT, Dynamite, Carbide, Detergent, small- sized nets in fishing. Unregulated fishing means capturing under age fish or capturing prohibited fish, over fishing, fishing at closed areas. Unreported means not reporting the fish catch to the legal authorities.

The discussion centered mostly on how the IUU fishing affects our economy. During the discussion, Nana Bessaw attributed the illegal fishing activities at coastal areas partly to the weaknesses of some Chief Fishermen. Some of them were not courageous and fair enough to sanction those who were practicing illegal fishing any time they were arrested. He suggested that if the Chief Fishermen exercised the power vested in them per se then they could arrest and sanction these illegal fishing practitioners to serve as a deterrent to others. A fisherman in the person of Mr. Kobena Otoo cited an example of Liberia government who seized IUU fishing for three months when realized that the fish catch landed at shore was in a poor state. An advice was given that the chiefs and fishermen as well as fisher folks should not allow party politics to take over their zeal to combat IUU. Another fisherman who supported the idea suggested that the Chief Fishermen in all the coastal communities should be one in decision making, respect one another and unite to be able solve the numerous problems in the fishing business.

After a lengthy discussion, it came out that illegal fishing had a great impact on our economy. Some among them include;

- Destruction of fishing and its related work
- Destruction of other diversified livelihoods.
- Lost of positions as Chief Fishermen.
- Economic hardships
- Lack of data for informed decision for fisheries management.

Effect of IUU On Post Harvest Value Chain:

Miss. Josephine Opare Addo (Project Officer, Western Region- CEWEFIA) made a presentation on it.

In the presentation, Post harvest value change was defined as the processes or series of chains that fish go through from net to obtain final product till it gets to the market and finally to plate. When fish stock is depleted due to illegal fishing, all other chains or processes are affected. Some of the alternative livelihood activities will also be affected. She made the participants understand how IUU fishing affects livelihoods such as increased Poverty, encouraged divorce, or broken homes, increased armed robbery, affect other diversified livelihoods such as carpentry, trading, gari processing, livestock rearing, palm oil extraction, quarrying etc. In light of that the Traditional authorities were urged to guard against IUU.

The Benefits Of New Improved Fish Smoking Stove (Ahotor Stove):

Miss. Josephine Opare Addo, the Point Person on Ahotor Stove highlighted on some of the benefits of the new improved smoking stove (Ahotor stove) over the traditional fish smoking

oven (known as Chorkor oven). The new stove was designed by Food and Drugs Authority, Ghana Standard Authority and SNV (Netherlands Development Organisation),(the Architects of the technology)and has been tried and tested. It only needed the fish processors to adopt it. This gave rise for it to be introduced to the Traditional Authorities, Queen Mothers and Opinion Leaders to solicit their support in selling out the new stove. Some of the benefits include i. Saves firewood, produces quality fish for high income, reduces level of smoke and thereby reducing PAH level in fish and improve on the health of both end-users and the smoked fish consumers.

After the presentation, almost all the participants bought into the idea and promised to help promote it. Some of the Chiefs and Queen Mothers from Elmina expressed interest to adopt it.

Issues/ Observation on Ahotor Stove:

Some of the comments and complaints raised by the women fish processors are:

1. Women complain of Ahotor not being able to smoke large quantity of fish as compared to Chorkor oven.
2. Most of the Fish Processors construct their own oven by themselves with little or no cost.
3. They find it difficult to construct Ahotor stove since it is a new stove and very expensive, they therefore, pleaded for subsidy.

OUTCOMES

1. The participants understand their role and pledged to ensure responsible fishing in Moree and Elmina.
2. An Elder from Moree named Ebusuapanyin Kow Bosomafi perceived that the female fishmongers in Moree had more voice than their male fishermen since majority of them had more money than their co- men as such they were not paying heed to the men when they advised them to stop buying fish caught with light.
3. The Chief Fishermen already have made some efforts to sensitize the women fishmongers in Moree to refrain from buying illegal fish but to no avail since they need fish to process.
4. Lack of education also results in irresponsible fishing.
5. It was indicated that the insufficiency or limited fish catch landed at various landing sites sometimes compelled the women fisher folks to buy illegal fish (bad fish) from Elmina and other landing sites at high cost. The participants pledged not to allow politicians to negatively influence them on their effort to stopping illegal fishing activities.
6. Some of the Chief Fishermen, who own canoes, have crew who fish for them and they also engage in illegal fishing practices and because of that they cannot punish the other illegal practitioners.
7. The Chief Fishermen among them accepted the fact that their fishermen in their canoes were practicing it. They further said illegal fishing was a national issue so it called for national voice.
8. The Government, for that matter Fisheries Commission and Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development (MoFAD) were not putting the needed efforts toward ensuring responsible fishing, do not have the political to enforce the fisheries laws and regulations. Some Chief fishermen have become liars to their community members because what they communicate to their people is always diffused by the same government Officials from the FC and MoFAD.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. We should bridge the gap between educationist and fisher folks.
2. The Government and other NGOs into Fisheries should ensure they implement what they enforce.
3. There should be incentives for those who practice responsible fishing.
4. Establishment of marine police base at Moree and Elmina Landing Sites.
5. House to house education.
6. Regular patrol by Marine Police at all the sea shores.

WAY FORWARD

1. Chief fishermen would meet with women to sensitize them on the issues discussed at the meeting.
2. The chief fishermen will meet on Thursday, 30th Nov, 2017 at 2:00pm prior to meeting the women fisher folks and watchmen to deliberate on the need to implement bye-laws for responsible fishing in their jurisdiction.
3. Reformation of Canoe Owner for empowerment.
4. Shed to shed sensitization on responsible fishing.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion the meeting was very successful with the participants understanding their roles in ensuring sustainable fishing. Most of the irresponsible activities on sea are due to lack of implementation of fisheries laws and regulation and lack of severe punishment for illegal fishing practitioners. The participants agreed to unite to protect fishing activities in Moree to save the good reputation of Moree with or without government intervention or support.

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FAO Code of Conduct for responsible fisheries; FAO Corporate Document Repository. Pp. 6-14, code number 6.16- 7.7.2.