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## SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROJECT (SFMP)

### Accra Fisheries Communication

### Summit



SEPTEMBER, 2018

THE UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND GRADUATE SCHOOL OF OCEANOGRAPHY



Hɛn Mpoano



Friends of the Nation

SNV SMART DEVELOPMENT WORKS

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Development Action Association

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**Cover photo:** Kyei Yamoah, a Program officer with Friends of the National leading discussion at the summit in Accra, September 14, 2018

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SNV: <http://www.snvworld.org/en/countries/ghana>

## **ACRONYMS**

CDD	Ghana Center for Democratic Development
CEWEFIA	Central and Western Region Fishmongers Improvement Association
DAA	Development Action Association
FC	Fisheries Commission
FoN	Friends of the Nation
GITA	Ghana Inshore Trawlers Association
GNCFC	Ghana National Canoe Fishermen's Council
IEA	Ghana Institute of Economic Affairs
IMANI	Center for Policy and Education
MOFAD	Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development
NAFAG	National Fisheries Association of Ghana.
SNV	Netherlands Development Organization
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
SFMp	USAID/GHANA Sustainable Fisheries Management Project
SNV	Netherlands Development Organization

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Sustainable Fisheries Management Project (SFMP) organized Fisheries Communication summit in Accra on September 13-14, 2018. Key partners from the Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development, Fisheries Commission, Environmental Justice Foundation, CARE, CEWEFIA, Friends of the Nation, Resonance Global, Netherlands Development Agency (SNV), Hen Mpoano and Development Action Associate participated. Discussion at the summit were focused on issues of communication that bind together preparation for fisheries closed season next year and Supporting the effort of Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development/Fisheries Commission in the implementation of the National Fisheries Management Plan.

## **2. PURPOSE OF THE SUMMIT**

The purpose of the communication summit can broadly be seen from the following angles:

- Provide platform to review the called closed season and define communication action for closed season in 2019.
- Review broad communication functions for the implementation of National Fisheries management Plan.

## **3. DISCUSSIONS AROUND THE CLOSED SEASON:**

The following were discussions from the participants on why Government called off the 2018 fisheries closed season. The participants also provided recommendations to help make future closed season workable for all.

### **The Challenges/Issues**

- Timing was short, resulting in some level of unpreparedness of the fisher folks.
- The unresolved issues relating to the availability or non-availability of alternative livelihood by MOFAD/FC.
- Lack of a clear-cut road map and the absence of incentives.
- The term ‘closed season’ was not well understood hence misconstrued by the general public and some fisher folks.
- Facts communicated were unclear, especially reasons for closing the season was not well explained to some fisher folks.
- Media reportage was varied, hence lacking some level of cohesion.
- Wrong stakeholders were targeted for engagements (example, local chiefs), which resulted in the mounting of pressure on local chiefs because people felt the chiefs played a role in deciding the closed season.
- There were threats that came with the whole closed season brouhaha which caused some industry players to fall back on their efforts to implement the closed season.
- The entire closed season itinerary was not enlisted in the MOFAD/FC year plan.
- Political interference and the lack of political will.
- Science was placed ahead of socio-economic impact.
- All stakeholders (NGOs, MOFAD, FC) need to be blamed.

### **Addressing the Challenges/Issues:**

- Intensify public education on all issues regarding closed season.
- More NGO persons should engage in media discussions, considering that MOFAD/FC should remain the frontiers in this crusade.
- Boat owners should be incorporated into the target groups to be communicated to.

- Pay attention to the communication gap between all stakeholders and address them adequately, hence all stakeholders should be well abreast with developing issues bothering around the closed season.
- Communication should sink down well with regional and zonal directors and leadership of all the sector associations.
- Identify key stakeholders and the influence they have across all levels of audiences.
- Extra care be taken when dealing with small scale fishers due to the huge numbers, considering that they want to be recognized and respected.
- Closed season, according MOFAD/FC will be added to 2019 plan but concerns are with funding.
- Identify and come up with the best message that will sell to all Ghanaians at various levels.
- Sustain engagements that would lead to ownership of closed season by the fisher folks to achieve voluntary compliance.
- Discussions and decisions on alternative and/or diversified livelihood should reach a consensus while deciding to enroll the closed season.

#### **4. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS FOR 2019 CLOSED SEASON**

##### **Before the closed season:**

The 2018 closed season attempt should be reviewed, where an action plan for the 2019 closed season be developed and be ready by **mid-October, 2018**, during which MOFAD/FC should come up with timelines, roles and responsibilities(road map).

Scheduled meeting between MOFAD/FC and NGOs(SFMP, Hen Mpoano, SNV, Friends of the Nation, DAA, etc) to come up with a conclusive clear cut road map for 2019 closed season and declaration of support by NGOs.

Evidence gathering in the four coastal regions on the consequences of stopping the 2018 closed season.

Preparation of communication strategies and implementation measures to be used to engage stakeholders (NGOs, CSOs, chief fishermen, media, sector associations, etc) and the general public using the various media platforms.

Seek cabinet commitment by coming a memo to seek cabinet approval for 2019 closed season while broader stakeholder engagements between government and sector associations, commence in October, 2018.

Address the preconditions given by GNCFC (IUU, alternative/diversified livelihood, additional fishing holiday while GNCFC present their letter to the president in October, 2019 copying MOFAD and FC.

MOFAD/FC should embark on a broad educative campaign across all media platforms to the general public using facts and videos.

##### **During the closed season:**

- Develop strategies to manage and continuous sensitization of fisher folks on the expectations after the closed season.
- Educate fisher folks on the signs of the success of the closed season.
- Communication on how far the stocks have dwindled to appreciate the expectations hence not a one off impact.

- The success of the closed season depends much on voluntary compliance, therefore, ownership of the fisheries by the resource users should be promoted.
- Develop strategies for monitoring, implementation and compliance.
- Sensitization at the national, regional and community level on IUU should be sustained, discussions can occur in the form panel discussion, TV animation, etc.

**After the closed season:**

- The official announcement of the end to the closed season should be climaxed by a national event, with all the key stakeholders present.
- Amplify the success stories of the closed season through media engagements across all levels.
- Intensify and continue the education on good fishing practices.
- Identify and share challenges for resolutions.
- Develop a communication strategy that would feed into the following year's closed season discussions.

## **5. REQUIRED LEVELS OF COMMUNICATIONS**

**National level communications should target the following:**

- Government.
- Political parties.
- Parliamentary select committees.
- Coastal MPs caucus.
- Ministers.
- Media (online and print, social media, blogs).
- Council of State.
- Fisher associations (GNCFC, NAFAG, GITA, etc).
- The Presidential communication team.
- The Vice President.
- Senior minister.
- Chief of staff.
- First and Second Ladies.
- Director of communication at the presidency.
- Policy think tanks (IEA, IMANI, CDD, etc).
- Key media persons( Kweku Baako, Kwame Sefa Kayi, Albert Abeiku Aggrey Santana, Kwesi Pratt, Ben Empson, Ace Ankomah, etc).

**Regional and community level communications should target the following:**

- Traditional authorities.
- Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies.
- Ministers.
- Media.
- Fisher associations.
- Key media persons.
- Canoe owners.

**Personal Direct communications should target:**

- Key media persons( Kweku Baako, Kwame Sefa Kayi, Albert Abeiku Aggrey Santana, Kwesi Pratt, Ben Empson, Ace Ankomah, etc).



- Serial callers.

### **Canoe Registry and Moratorium**

- Without duration it is difficult to set moratorium.
- Policy road map should have exit and entry guidelines for canoes into fishery.

## **6. DISCUSSION ON THE NEED FOR A THIRD PARTY COMMUNICATION SUPPORT FOR FISHERIES CLOSED SEASON**

- A third party (third eye) will serve as a mirror that reflects what is being done.
- Will create common grounds for MOFAD/FC and NGOs to cooperate.
- Third party participation should go beyond closed season into sustainable management of fishery resources.
- The third eye will identify the gap/weakness within both parties.

## **7. PROVIDING COMMUNICATION SUPPORT TO MOFAD/FC**

Information sharing and communication.

### **Information types**

- Scientific data (fish landings/catch data, cpue, etc).
- Progress of implementation management plan (closed season by Trawler, cancellation of licenses of offenders, etc).
- Information on arrest, prosecution, fines, observer reports (number of cases prosecuted, amount of fines/payments, number of canoes, monofilament nets, outboard motors and generators arrested/seized etc., name and license numbers of vessels involved in IUU, names of canoe/fishing vessel managers/owners, etc).
- Engaging university students in data collection by MOFAD/FC.

### **Communication**

- Major agreements made with fishers should be publicized.
- Associations should be encouraged to develop communication platforms at the local levels, etc.
- Make information and data available and easily accessible to everyone through the website, media (print and electronic), emails, newsletter, sharing on blogs etc.
- Institutionalize meetings with CSOs to create an avenue to discuss plans, provide feedback, etc. (quarterly).
- Address the factions within the GNCFC and generate a list of all chief fishermen and their secretaries in all regions and districts.
- Develop a decentralized and internal process/system of information dissemination within MOFAD/FC and Zonal Officers.
- Develop mechanism to ensure effective communication between MOFAD and their Public Relations Unit.

### **Identification of needs to improve the role and capacity needs for Zonal Officers**

- Develop strategies to make the fishers own these management policies and actions, and also ensure a collective effort to come up with strategies that make them improve communication.
- MOFAD/FC developing the right attitude and approach to fisher folks (respect, tone of language or voice, partnership, means of engagement to make them feel equally

important, undertake orientation training for MOFAD/FC staff on how to communicate and bond with fisher folks).

- Holding regular feedback meetings involving national, regional and zonal wings of the ministry.
- MOFAD/FC should come up with an improved information strategy to make known to the public the involvement of fisher folks in decision making.
- Public acknowledgment should be given fishing communities that enforce good fishing practices (media, pictures on calendar, video documentary, etc).

## **8. STRATEGIES IN MGT PLANS THAT SEEK TO TACKLE IUU (REFER TO THE NFMP)**

- Fishers from the Volta region have decided to add Saturday and Sunday to fishing holidays
- Prosecution of offenders becomes difficult because community sanctions are challengeable
- The current gazetted plan has closed season for trawlers but not artisanal fishermen
- Communication should address the concern that, canoe fishermen are not the only ones to be affected by closed season, all other fishery sectors would feel the impact

## **9. LEGACY DOCUMENTS**

The participants discussed processes for developing a legacy document on the implementation of the Sustainable Fisheries management Project. The following were some of the to do provided at the summit.

- Identify the main groups/teams responsible for these projects.
- Gather comments from the direct resource users.
- Timelines may vary due to roles played by teams/members.
- Provide an enabling environment and the necessary logistics needed to put these documents together.
- Document should be ready before June 15th, 2019.
- Content development for each box or general???
- Go by thematic areas or IRs?

## **10. CONCLUSION**

The two day summit provided a platform for stakeholders to discussed and come out with clear path for supporting the Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development in the implementation of the National Fisheries Management Plan especially the fisheries closed season effort.

## ANNEX: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

The table below presents names of participants and their respective organizations at the summit.

**Table 1. List of participants**

<b>NO</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>ORGANIZATION</b>
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13.	Rose Affel	CEWEFIA
14.	Hopeson Eli Estra	SNV
15.	Matilda Quist	FC
16.	Rebecca Sacky Mensah	FC
17.	Victoria Murdy	EJF
18.	Bernice Tetteh	FC
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