



Far Dwuma Nkodo

Securing Sustainable Fisheries

ISSUE BRIEF

Project update: January to June 2020

Introduction

The Far Dwuma Nkodo project aims to secure greater environmental sustainability and social equity in Ghana's fisheries sector, by supporting efforts to reduce illegal fishing and building the capacity of fishing communities in the sustainable management of their resource. Welcome to our newsletter for January to June 2020, which provides updates on progress under the project and our upcoming work.

Landing site billboards erected in 15 communities

In the first half of 2020, a total of 15 landing site maps were displayed on billboards at landing sites in the Central, Greater Accra and Volta regions of Ghana. This follows the mapping of 118 landing sites in communities along the coasts of the Central region, Ada in the Greater Accra region, and Tsatsukope in the Volta region of Ghana, undertaken by the project.

The billboards were erected in the following communities: Gomoa Fetteh, Winneba, Mumford, Otuam, Ankaful, Agyaa No.2, Biriwa, Moree, Cape Coast, Ampenyi, British Komenda, Kafodzidzi, Kponkpo, Agorkpo and Tsatsukope. The main aim of the billboards is to support spatial planning and efforts to secure these landing sites in the context of competing land uses and coastal development.

Guidance for fishing communities on how to secure tenure, use and access rights to landing sites

Following the exercise to map 118 landing sites across the Central, Greater Accra and Volta regions of Ghana, the project worked with communities and traditional authorities to select one landing site as a case study to demonstrate how land ownership and documentation processes could be used to strengthen the tenure rights of fishing communities to their landing sites.

British Komenda was selected as the case study for this pilot project. The landing site at British Komenda is subject to potential threats arising from planned works under the Sea Defense and Erosion Project and associated tourism and other development, which may compete with existing uses of the beachfront. By taking steps to register the landing site at British Komenda for the benefit of the fishing community, the aim is to empower fisherfolk to advocate for the protection of their tenure rights in the face of competing interests.

The project began by engaging the chief fisherman and the landowners to seek authority to begin the process on behalf of the community. This resulted in the signing of a land lease agreement between the chief fisherman and the landowners, which also involved the final verification of the boundary of the landing site to be registered.

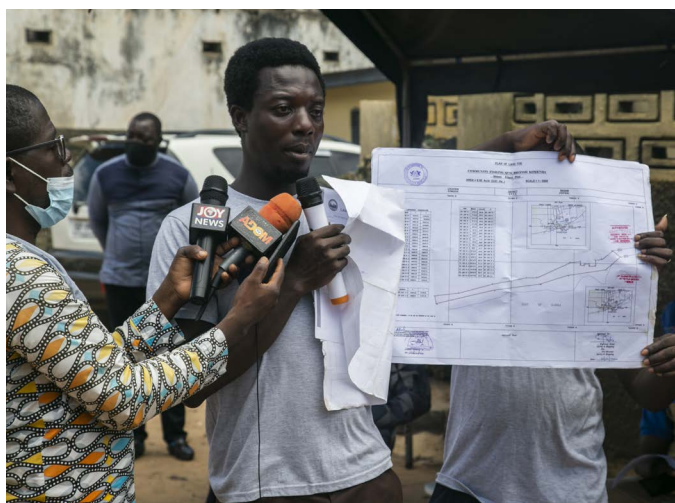


Billboard displaying the fish landing site at Ankaful Hasowodze in the Central region.

As a next step, a licensed land surveyor was commissioned to undertake a cadastral survey of the landing site to be endorsed by both the regional surveyor and the landowners. An indenture was prepared detailing the size and use of the land for fishing-related purposes, including fish landing, marketing and processing, and sale of fishing and fish processing equipment. The indenture was signed by the Lessors (the chief) and Lessees (the chief fisherman and council of elders) and sent to the law courts to be endorsed. The signed indenture is due to be handed over to the community/fishers as proof of ownership.

These steps will form the basis of a short guidance document to explain the registration process. Along with the landing site maps, the guidance will be disseminated to traditional authorities, chief fishermen and fisherfolk along the coast to support them in securing their landing sites through this process.

The main aim of this activity is to help support spatial planning and secure the landing sites for fishing communities in the context of coastal development. The Far Dwuma Nkodo project is promoting implementation of international best practices for securing tenure rights and access to resources for artisanal fishers enshrined in the UN FAO's Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT), along with the sister Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries (SSF Guidelines). These instruments address aspects of governance such as how to ensure access to fishing grounds and landing sites for small-scale fishers in the face of competing priorities and how to guarantee that decision-making is transparent and inclusive, involving marginalised groups.



Project GIS officer, Justice Mensah, presents the cadastral plan of the landing site at British Komenda.

Sheds constructed for clam fishers and processors

The project is promoting co-management of the clam fishery of the Volta estuary to improve sustainability and the livelihoods of clam fishers and their families. In addition to supporting the fisherfolk to form a co-management association and develop a management plan for the clam fishery, the project is constructing sheds at major landing sites (Tsatsukope, Agorkpo and Kponkpo). The purpose of the sheds is to provide a venue for fisherfolk associations to hold meetings and to organise themselves in the sustainable management of the clam resource.

The first among the three sheds under construction has been completed at Kponkpo which is the major clam market in the Ada East District. It has a waiting area of around 45 square feet with three rooms for offices and storage of documents and other materials of the clam association.



Shed construction in progress at Kponkpo, Ada.

Advocacy to end illegal saiko fishing

The first half of 2020 saw the continuation of advocacy against illegal saiko fishing with calls on government to end the practice. This started with regional dialogues across the Greater Accra, Volta and Western Regions between 19 and 24 February 2020. Following a bottom up approach, the regional dialogues discussed issues raised by fishing communities at screenings of the *Stolen at Sea* film on saiko with a view to encouraging key decision makers at the regional level to join the advocacy in ending saiko.

In attendance at all three regional dialogues were key stakeholders including representatives from the Fisheries Commission, Regional house of chiefs, Fisheries Enforcement Unit (FEU), Ghana National Canoe Fishermen Council (GNCFC), National Fish Processors and Traders Association (NAFPTA), Ghana Industrial Trawlers Association (GITA), Ghana Inshore Fishermen Association (GIFA), Marine Police, Navy, academia, media and artisanal fishers.



Paramount Chief of Lower Dixcove, Nana Akwasi Agyemang, addresses stakeholders at the regional dialogue in Western region.

In Greater Accra, all stakeholders expressed concern about the lack of enforcement of the fisheries laws and called for commitment, courage, fortitude and transparency from regulators, government and industry players in addressing saiko. Traditional authorities were urged to add their voice to the call for an end to saiko fishing which is denying artisanal fishers their livelihoods.

At the Volta Region dialogue, stakeholders called on the government and regulators to enforce the laws to halt the harvesting of juvenile fishes by industrial trawlers. They also suggested that the Marine Police, FEU and Fisheries Commission be allowed to conduct their work without political interference especially in punishing the culprits. The artisanal fishers urged chief fishermen across the four coastal regions to come together in the fight to end saiko.

In the Western Region, there were calls for local fishers to come together in the fight against saiko fishing. Participants urged the Ministry for Fisheries and Aquaculture Development (MoFAD) to refrain from issuing licences to vessels who fall foul of the law, to carry out routine inspections of fishing gears before vessels embark on their fishing expeditions, to resource the FEU and Marine Police to able to fight saiko fishing, and to act on the reports of fisheries observers concerning the activities of trawlers.

Preparations for the National Dialogue on 27 March 2020 were complete, however, the meeting had to be postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and imposition of restrictions on social gatherings by the government of Ghana. The National Dialogue was expected to provide an opportunity for the political parties to include measures aimed at ending saiko in their manifestos ahead of the 2020 elections.

Some news coverage of the joint advocacy to end saiko:

- <https://www.graphic.com.gh/news/general-news/illegal-fishing-by-foreign-vessels-state-loses-50-7m-year-artisanal-fishers-bear-brunt.html>
- <https://www.ghanaiantimes.com.gh/workshop-on-negative-impact-of-illegal-fishing-held-at-fijai/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RzGyNmtiNGs>

Engagement with senior journalists

In a bid to safeguard the livelihoods of local fishers and food security of Ghanaians, the Far Dwuma Nkodo project engaged editors and other senior journalists to help push the agenda of ending saiko fishing. In attendance at the meeting was the Vice Chair of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Food, Agriculture and Cocoa Affairs, Abraham Dwuma Odom, and the CEO of the Telcoms Chamber, Ing. Kenneth Ashigbey. A total of 17 editors and senior journalists were engaged at the meeting on the issue of saiko and the strategy to end the menace. After screening the saiko film and various presentations on the issue, the journalists appreciated the urgent need to end illegal saiko fishing. The Vice Chair of the Parliamentary Select Committee was convinced that even though the challenges are daunting, there is hope if the current pace in the advocacy is sustained.

The meeting provided the necessary platform to engage consumers and amplify engagements at the various levels. It also provided an opportunity to involve media stakeholders in the preparations for the National Dialogue and other visibility actions.

Crucial reportage came out of this meeting, with Kofi Agbogah, Director of Hen Mpoano, appearing on Joy News TV's current affairs show UpFront, with a screening of the *Stolen at Sea* film and associated discussions. This was followed by an interview with the Deputy Minister, Hon. Francis Kingsley Ato Codjoe, on Joy News TV on the topic of saiko and how to end the practice.

News items arising from the meeting included:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QME4fgqGyHA>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zR08oqUQvVo&t=45s>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=adVtFQ0NFfs&t=794s>



Meeting with media editors and senior journalists in Accra in February 2020.

Production of monthly radio programmes

2020 saw the continuation of our monthly radio shows on ATL FM in Cape Coast to give a voice to fisherfolk to speak on issues that affect the sector and their livelihoods.

The January radio programme discussed the documentary by Mary Ama Bawa of ATL FM, which examined illegal saiko fishing and how it has become a major factor in the decline of the artisanal fishery. The radio programmes for February and March were postponed to make way for the regional dialogues and other activities in line with the saiko advocacy strategy.

The April radio programme looked at the COVID-19 pandemic and how the Ghana National Canoe Fishermen Council (GNCFC) could educate artisanal fishers to ensure they follow the COVID-19 protocols and how to engage in self-isolation/quarantine when others enter their communities illegally at the various landing beaches. The radio programmes were produced on a number of national radio stations including Radio Ghana, Radio Central, and Adom FM.



Mary Ama Bawa speaks about her documentary on illegal saiko fishing and how it has become a major factor in the decline of the artisanal fishery during the January radio show on ATL FM.

Links to news coverage on the radio programmes:

- <https://www.gbcghanaonline.com/travel-and-tour/gncfc-calls-for-intensive-monitoring-of-coastal-fishing-areas/2020/>
- <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Coronavirus-Tighten-surveillance-on-the-sea-GNC-to-Marine-Police-919405>
- <https://www.myjoyonline.com/news/report-illegal-migrants-who-arrive-at-the-various-landing-beaches-ghana-national-canoe-fishermen-council/>

Journalist grant programme for reporting on fisheries

A documentary on the fisheries observer who went missing from an industrial trawler in 2019 was produced and aired as part of the project's story grant programme which offers grants to journalists for reporting on fisheries issues.

The documentary by Nancy Emefa Dzradosi entitled, "Saiko –the observers are missing" was aired on Joy News TV and published online via myjoyonline.com. Another documentary aired on Ghana Television (GTV) by Kingsley Buadu looked at the possible collapse of the artisanal fisheries due to the illegal activities of industrial trawlers. The next story to be aired will focus on the clam fisheries in Ada. There are plans to issue more story grants in the second half of 2020.

Link to the feature article on the missing observer:

- <https://www.myjoyonline.com/features/saiko-the-observers-are-missing/>

Open letter to the President calling for an end to illegal saiko fishing

In June 2020, the Ghana National Canoe Fishermen Council (GNCFC), together with eight civil society organisations in the fisheries sector, called on the President of Ghana, in an open letter, to issue an urgent directive to end illegal saiko fishing. The letter emphasised that if the saiko menace is not urgently addressed and measures instituted to permanently eradicate it, the source of income for over 2.7 million Ghanaians that depend on the fisheries sector for their livelihoods will be lost. This will have large-scale, widespread negative impacts on food security, nutrition, incomes and livelihoods, while presenting a threat to national security. The other signatories to the letter were Care International Ghana, CEMLAWS Africa, Cerath Development Organization, Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF), Friends of the Nation, Hen Mpoano, Livestock and Fisheries Chamber and Oxfam in Ghana.

Links to the open letter and coverage in the press:

- <https://www.graphic.com.gh/features/features/call-for-urgent-action-to-end-saiko-to-save-the-livelihoods-of-over-2-7-million-ghanaians.html>
- <https://ejfoundation.org/reports/call-for-urgent-action-to-end-saiko-to-save-the-livelihoods-of-over-2-7-million-ghanaians>

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