



Project News: The management of shared Sardinella stocks in The Gambia

January 2022 — Issue #1



Project Update (January- December 2021)

TEMP/GLO/721/MUL

Project Background

It is estimated Pelagic fish, especially Sardinellas are in high demand in the West African region. These species provide the majority of marine protein consumed in many countries in the region, thereby contributing to food security in both coastal and inland communities.

A large part of the Sardinella catches landed by artisanal and industrial fleets, which used to be destined for human consumption and bait, has been converted into fishmeal for some years now.

The Shared Sardinella project is made up of a regional framework along with specific national components. The national projects are part of the regional framework but have country-specific activities to address specific needs.

The national project component of the regional project aims that the stocks of sardinella are exploited by the principles of the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF). It seeks to achieve this through concerted national management plans with management measures harmonized with regional efforts.

This project news document highlights some of the achievements of the project.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Fisheries field staff trained on data collection and length-frequency measurement for small pelagic fish
- Fisheries staff trained on sampling of biological parameters
- Workshop to conduct a baseline assessment



Fisheries field staff during the training on data collection

Fisheries field staff trained on data collection for small pelagic fish

Sardinella SPP. (*S. aurita* and *S. maderensis*), constitute a greater portion of the annual small pelagic catches in the Gambia. Together with *Ethmalosa fibriata*, they are the largest source of animal protein, thereby contributing to food security in both coastal and inland communities in the Gambia.

In a move to develop and strengthen scientific knowledge on *Sardinella* to support the EAF management process, 20 data collectors were trained on data collection and length-frequency measurement.

The five-day training exercise was organized in July 2021. It constituted three days of theoretical and two days of practical/hands-on activities. In the theoretical aspect, participants were trained on sampling methodologies, ethics of data collection and proper ways of interaction with fishermen and fish vendors during data collection.

They were also trained on taxonomy/ identification of the two *Sardinella* species and how to use the Ichtyometer and electronic weighing scale to measure the length and weight of *Sardinella*. Additionally, participants were trained on how to properly fill the sampling form with length and weight information.

Fisheries staff trained on sampling of biological parameters

The Shared *Sardinella* Project in line with step two of the EAF Nansen Program's Fisheries Management Cycle, in August 2021 conducted training to strengthen the capacity of data collectors who are the primary source of data to ensure the generation of reliable and up-to-date data for sustainable management of the shared stock.

The five-day training which focused on the sampling of biological parameters was for ten junior and mid-level staff of the Fisheries Department. It included presentations and practical laboratory exercises. Ten participants were trained on how to measure the total length and weight of small pelagic fish, how to identify sex and determine gonad maturity, estimate stomach fullness, fat content, how to collect fin clips for genetic analysis and how to take photos for morphometric analysis.

For most of the participants, this was their first time taking part in such type of training. They expressed delight at the opportunity and the knowledge gained.

*"I am thankful for this initiative, because the skills acquired will go a long way in preparing us for conducting biological sampling for *Sardinella* within the framework of the shared *Sardinella* project," Buba Jahateh a participant said.*



Fisheries field staff during the training on sampling of biological parameters

Workshop to conduct a baseline assessment using EAF-IMT

A two-day technical workshop was organized on 20 and 21 September 2021 with the objective of conducting a baseline assessment of the *Sardinella* fishery in the Gambia using the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Implementation Monitoring Tool (EAF IMT). Among the participants were researchers, inspectors, fishermen, policymakers, fishery technicians, administrators (current and former directors of fisheries) and other actors in the fishery sector.

The outcome of the meeting was used to generate a baseline report for the *Sardinella* fishery in the Gambia. This is the first step towards the development of a management plan for the *Sardinella* fishery in the Gambia. The baseline scoring of the *sardinella* fishery in the Gambia allowed participants to familiarize themselves with this approach and to review all the components of the fishery to identify gaps, weaknesses and strengths in the process. This has made it possible to highlight deficiencies in the collection of data, assessment and information available on all the components of the fishery.



Contact information:

FAO Representation in the Gambia
FAO-GM@FAO.ORG
<http://www.fao.org/gambia/en>
Facebook: FAO Gambia; Twitter: @faogambia
Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations
Banjul, the Gambia



Some rights reserved. This work is available under a CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO licence