



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

Coastal Fisheries Initiative

Promoting sustainable
fisheries in coastal areas

CFI Talks 1 | Knowledge Sharing

Sustainable mangrove management
10 June 2022

Brief Report



1. INTRODUCTION

Event facilitator Xavier Chalen from Conservation International (Ecuador) introduced the webinar by emphasizing the importance of mangroves worldwide and their multiple roles in protecting coastlines, trapping carbon and providing nursery grounds for fish and shellfish.

In her opening remarks, Fatou Sock, Chief Technical Advisor of the CFI Global Partnership Project (CFI-GPP) introduced the CFI Talks webinar series and described its role in CFI's overall knowledge management and communication strategy. The Talks will provide an opportunity to share experience and increase collaboration between CFI Child Projects. Five CFI Talks covering different thematic areas are planned for this year and they are intended to create an opportunity to explore sets of issues that are of concern for coastal fisheries globally in more depth. More CFI Talks will be programmed in 2023. A maximum of 59 participants were recorded at the event.

2. COMMUNITY-DRIVEN SUSTAINABLE MANGROVE MANAGEMENT IN LATIN AMERICA (IYAFA 2022)

The first presentation was by Paula Barbeito Morandeira from Slow Food, who introduced participants to the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAFA 2022), to the work of Slow Food in mangrove areas and to the International Alliance for Marine Coastal Areas and Climate Change (ALMACC, in its Spanish acronym). IYAFA's key slogan "Small in scale, big in value" emphasizes that small-scale artisanal fisheries contribute to human well-being, healthy food systems, poverty eradication and sustainable use of fisheries resources. Slow Food, who are a member of the IYAFA steering committee, are a global network dedicated to promoting artisanal food production and the diversity of small-scale production systems through information, support with access to markets and networking among producers.

Ms Barbeito pointed out how support for artisanal producers places human rights and the importance of food as a cultural element at the center of all their actions. This approach is seen as contrasting with some of the initiatives relating to the Blue Economy that emphasize the investment opportunities presented by the protection of coastal and marine ecosystems. ALMACC is an example of how small-scale coastal fishers and fish workers can organize themselves and ensure that they have a greater voice in decision-making about coastal protection and development, including mangrove forests, an integral part of the socio-ecological systems on which many coastal communities depend. Recognizing the traditional rights of these communities to the use and preservation of mangrove forests is essential. The FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF), the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries (SSF Guidelines) and the Voluntary Guidelines for the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (VGRGF) all provide an essential framework for the support of the rights and livelihoods of artisanal fishers and fish workers.

3. LEGAL FRAMEWORKS FOR MANGROVE GOVERNANCE, CONSERVATION AND USE

Maeve Nightingale from the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Asia then made a presentation on the international and national legal and institutional frameworks that influence mangrove protection worldwide. The importance of mangrove ecosystems as carbon sinks has been widely recognized, but these ecosystems are still being degraded worldwide due to both direct and indirect impacts. The protection of mangroves is made more complicated by the fact that they cut across sectors, jurisdictions, and governance regimes. As a result, very few countries have specific laws on mangroves, rather, they are governed by a mixture of laws relating to forestry, fisheries, coastal areas, land use and freshwater resources.

Many countries have subscribed to various international instruments that relate to mangroves and promote their protection and management, but the implementation of these instruments on the ground is often limited by a range of obstacles. These include pluralistic legal systems that include national, local and customary systems of law, tenure and decision-making, involving a wide range of actors. This results in a situation where many international provisions relating to mangroves have not been fully domesticated. Although these instruments provide an essential framework for action in protecting mangrove areas, such as upholding the importance of environmental impact assessments for coastal development, the prevention of harm across international boundaries, precautionary principles for management, compensation mechanisms and intergenerational equity, they often have limited influence on ground-level realities.

Some of the key features of national legal contexts that are important in ensuring effective management of mangroves are the legal frameworks in place, the degree of transparency in decision-making processes, the level of recognition of customary and community rights and management systems, and, more generally, the extent to which the rule of law is enforced and recognized. Some of the practical tools that can be used as part of national legal frameworks include:

- Direct protection;
- Sectoral and integrated planning;
- Permits and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA);
- Environmental offsets – the balance between use and protection;
- Protected areas – types of Protected and Conserved Areas (PCAs);
- Sectoral laws and regulations – forest, coastal and marine, water, fisheries etc.;
- Market-based mechanisms and incentives – Payments for Environmental Services (PES), certification, carbon offsetting;
- Fiscal incentives and disincentives.

4. INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION

Mr Chalen, the facilitator, opened the discussion to participants. CFI West Africa colleagues mentioned that under the Abidjan Convention, West Africa has a series of internationally recognized and agreed protocols regarding mangrove protection and that this has facilitated efforts to improve mangrove management in the region. Ms Nightingale (IUCN) acknowledged that this example from West Africa holds important lessons for other parts of the world where international cooperation between countries within regions is often limited.

During a brief coffee break, a video illustrating work conducted by CFI Latin America in the Tumbes area, in northern Peru, was screened.

5. MANGROVE MANAGEMENT AND ECO-TOURISM

After the break, Marco Arenas from the Directorate of Management of Natural Protected Areas of Peru's national parks authority, SERNANP, started a presentation on successful community-based approaches to mangrove management in the 2 972-hectare Tumbes National Mangrove Sanctuary. Significantly, this approach's success is rooted in the political commitment to link conservation and the establishment of natural protected areas to efforts to address local communities' needs. Thus, a holistic approach to conservation is taken, firmly rooted in the local territory and subject to shared management by state and local government and local communities. The process involved in developing appropriate arrangements to facilitate this community-based management takes time and must be based on the negotiation of means of achieving the diverse goals of different stakeholder groups. This has often required significant capacity-building efforts to ensure that all stakeholders can contribute to the decision-making and management process. In the case of the Tumbes Sanctuary, SERNANP entered into a 20-year co-management contract with the Northeast Peru Mangrove Consortium, which is made up of six local associations of crab and shellfish harvesters and fishers. The state effectively delegated several responsibilities to the Consortium, which has taken on the key role in its management based on conservation agreements with the authorities in a genuinely inclusive approach to resource co-management.

Rosa Garcia, Head of the Tumbes National Mangrove Sanctuary, elaborated on the relationships between SERNANP, in its role as the agency responsible for the protection of natural resources in Peru and the Consortium. Under terms of the co-management contract, the overall objectives were developed by SERNANP and the Consortium together, ensuring that both ecological needs and the social and economic needs of the local communities are taken into account. The engagement of different stakeholders extends to local municipalities, associations, universities and researchers, private enterprises, and local NGOs.

Jhon Puse, Vice-President of the Consortium, reiterated the high level of engagement between local communities, SERNANP, and scientific researchers to promote greater understanding of the mangrove ecosystem. He illustrated some of the Consortium's activities. These include participatory efforts to repopulate black clams, a key species for local livelihoods, in conjunction with Incabiotec, a local biotechnology lab for sustainable development. The Consortium is also taking a lead role in communication and environmental education among local communities and more widely, running an eco-tourism business in the Sanctuary, and exploring funding opportunities under the Blue Carbon Initiative.

6. COMMUNITY-BASED MANGROVE MANAGEMENT IN MADAGASCAR

Chris Poonian, the Director of Community Centered Conservation (C3), a partner organization of the EU-funded ECOFISH initiative, presented experience from a pilot project in mangrove areas in Madagascar that emphasizes a community-based approach to conservation. It engages with local schools and youth groups, getting kids to act as junior eco-guards to monitor the mangrove areas and to take part in replanting efforts, and it also conducts awareness raising campaigns and

replanting schemes for the wider community. Education and awareness raising are key: the initiative has developed a mangrove storybook for schools and organizes community events to stimulate interest. The success of the organization's efforts in mangrove protection and rehabilitation have also been rooted in the close collaboration with village-based governance structures and the incorporation of local laws and traditional knowledge into the management arrangements for the mangrove areas. Opportunities for livelihood activities are also being pursued including duck farming, crab fattening and eco-tourism.

7. SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF MANGROVES AND FISHERIES: EXPERIENCES IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE AND SENEGAL

Dr Yacoub Issola, CFI West Africa sustainable mangrove management coordinator and a committee member of the Abidjan Convention, presented the results of a series of studies undertaken under the auspices of the CFI looking at linkages between mangrove areas and fisheries sustainability in Cote d'Ivoire and Senegal. He illustrated the key ecosystem services provided by mangrove forests including: their provisioning role (providing food, materials such as fibres and wood for artisanal activities and medicinal plants); their regulatory function (acting as carbon sinks, water filters and storm buffers, preventing coastal erosion and maintaining soil fertility); their cultural services (leisure and mental well-being, ecotourism, their cultural role and their contribution to science and education); and, critically, their role in the protection of biodiversity in coastal areas, providing nursery grounds for fish and shellfish and contributing to nutrients in estuarine and coastal areas.

The studies also highlighted the different state of mangroves in Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal. In Sassandra-Dagbégo, in Côte d'Ivoire, human activities such as wood-cutting and natural processes such as declining rainfall have led to a continuing decline in mangrove cover. By contrast, in Senegal's Saloum Delta Biosphere Reserve, mangrove cover has increased by 2.72% over the last 20 years. This is attributable largely to effective management within the Biosphere Reserve. Dr Issola also highlighted the importance of the Abidjan Convention in supporting national and regional efforts in West Africa for the protection of the environment, with efforts currently underway to address the problems of plastic pollution. Among the key challenges faced regionally are the need to develop alternative economic activities among people who depend on mangrove fortress for their livelihoods, the proper implementation of regulations, establishing both short, medium, and long-term mechanisms for monitoring rehabilitated mangrove sites, and engagement in international discussions and initiatives to support mangrove conservation.

8. INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION

In a brief discussion session, questions were asked about legal provisions relating to newly accreted land formed in areas where mangrove reforestation has been carried out.

9. WRAP UP AND LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEXT CFI TALK

CFI Science to Policy expert Philip Townsley provided a summary of the discussions and presentations during the day. He reminded participants of the emphasis given during the first presentation by Ms Barbeito of the centrality of human rights in any effort to conserve mangrove

forests, where the rights of local communities whose livelihoods depend on the mangroves need to be taken into consideration and preserved while engaging them in the management process.

Ms Nightingale's presentation on the legal and institutional frameworks around mangroves effectively emphasized this point by indicating how mangroves are often subject to pluralistic legal and administrative systems with overlaps between local, regional, and national government, between traditional or customary and formal systems, and between different sectors. While international conventions and agreements exist to encourage the management of mangrove areas, their application at the national and local levels depends ultimately on the extent to which the rule of law is respected and on the political will of governments to ensure that these conventions are applied.

The level of detail that the presentations from Peru offered regarding the actual mechanisms by which participatory management of mangroves can be implemented was much appreciated. It was emphasized how inclusive processes take time to develop, require significant long-term support and are by no means simple as illustrated by the presentations regarding co-management arrangements in the Tumbes National Mangrove Sanctuary. Significant lessons can be generated by this experience for other areas of the world.

The presentation from Madagascar highlighting engagement with schools and youth emphasized the importance of involving the next generation. They are the ones who will suffer the future effects of mangrove forest loss and degradation and, above all, have the inherent flexibility to be able to change their attitudes to the natural environment and to play an important role in influencing the behavior of adults and establishing new paradigms of conservation for the future.

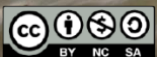
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