

"Info-Flash" the SFLP ... on the move ...

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Welcome to the **SFLP Info-Flash**

This means of communication is forwarded monthly through Internet to the National Coordinating Units, FAO Representations, DFID, FAO Fisheries Department and any person interested in the work of SFLP

The overriding objective of this **SFLP Info-Flash** is to provide the 25 member countries with the most up to date information on the Programme.

Please feel free to contact SFLP at any time you have any information on events in your country.

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Congo (Brazzaville) and the Democratic Republic of Congo – Exploring field and network possibilities

The National Coordinator of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) accepted an invitation to attend a feedback meeting organised in Brazzaville from 29th to 30th April 2002 to discuss the outcomes of the workshop on the SFLP communication strategy for communities held in Cotonou in March 2002.

He took the opportunity of his stay to discuss some common issues relating to fisheries practices in the area. Afterwards, the National Coordinator participated in a seminar on the production and utilisation of fisheries statistics organized by the FAO-financed Fisheries Statistics Project, the objective of which is to put in place a standard fisheries statistics data collection and processing system. A similar project is to be undertaken in the Democratic Republic of Congo in the next month.

Cameroon - making things happen

The National Coordinating Unit (NCU) of Cameroon participated in a feedback seminar on the contribution of research to the sustainability of the livelihoods of fisheries communities organised in Yaoundé from 4th to 5th April 2002 by the Fisheries Research Centre of the Agricultural Development Institute. One of the proposed strategies to improve the contribution of fisheries research to policies, institutions and processes (PIP) and the sustainable livelihoods of fisheries communities is to make fisheries communities' representative structures more efficient (e.g. Agricultural Chamber). The NCU plans to identify

socio-professional associations that could benefit from an organisational support.

The NCU undertook a field mission to the Youpwé fisheries community in Douala and the Bonabéri fish traders and processors' association (*Les fumés*), from 8th to 9th April 2002 to sensitise them on the SFLP and its objectives. The communities seized the opportunity of the visit to discuss their different problems and possible solutions with the NCU mission. A participatory diagnostic exercise is envisaged in the communities to identify activities based on their strengths and assets.

Benin, Togo, Ghana and Mauritania - Training manual validation and workshop assessment

The SFLP Training Manual has been distributed to the 25 SFLP countries with the request to organise workshops using national trainers to spread lessons and carry the training to organisations and field officers involved in the design, implementation and monitoring of community projects.

In March/April, NGO consultant, J. Monan, and M. Kuyateh (RSU Community organisation Officer) attended and evaluated 4 workshops (Benin, Ghana, Mauritania, Togo). The consultant estimated that the workshops were very

successful as they helped participants gain a better understanding of SLA principles and processes. Generally, there was open acceptance that better gender dimension had to be built into SFLP project formulation, and lively discussions were held on the place of gender relations in the West African context.

Selected trainers from all SFLP countries are to meet in Cotonou from 8th to 13th July 2002 to review the first experiences and lessons learnt in national training and to prepare a twelve-month (January - December 2003) in-country training plan.



A fish seller and her children sort out fish at the Agip Base in Pointe Noire, Congo

Nigeria - a visit to Cotonou

The new National Coordinator of NCU-Nigeria, G.N. Shimang visited the Regional Support Unit (RSU) from 23rd to 24th April 2002 for general briefing, and to obtain some advice on the implementation of planned activities. He discussed some possible community project proposals with RSU Project Officer, F. Turay and obtained the information required to revise the NCU work plan for the rest of the year. High among priorities retained is the establishment of partnership with other national programmes working for poverty alleviation. The NCU also plans an expansion of its stakeholder base to include representatives from non-fisheries sectors to adopt a more holistic approach.

The discussion with the Information and Communication (I/C) Unit centred on the urgent need for the NCU to be connected to the Internet to facilitate communication. Also discussed was how the NCU can contribute more effectively to the Sustainable Fisheries Livelihoods Programme (SFLP) communication tools (Quarterly Liaison Bulletin, Info-Flash, SFLP web site). The workshop on the SFLP communication strategy for communities to be organised for Anglophone countries in August was also briefly discussed.

Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Mali - Pilot Project in-country planning

The Pilot Project design team (R. Gillet and B. Tournier) returned to Cotonou on 17th May to brief the RSU on results of their mission to the four countries and



Ice blocks on sale (Sélingué - Mali)

to prepare a draft of the pilot project document. They were accompanied on the mission by RSU Officers, M. Kébé (Monitoring – in Burkina Faso) and J-C Njock (Aquatic Resources – in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana). During their visit, they worked closely with the national design teams in each country on the details, considering both national and regional priorities. Also discussed were the budget of the Pilot Project, and the terms of reference of the Regional Coordinator and the National Project Managers. More discussions will take place between SFLP and the 4 NCUs to consolidate the document and ensure its regional coherence before its submission to the Programme Steering Committee end July.

Benin - SFLP retreat seminar

The RSU team plus Programme Coordinator, R. Coutts, and Administrative and Finance Officer, M. Verbanck participated in team improvement retreat from 29th April through to 3rd May 2002. The main objective of this seminar was to improve the participatory organisation of the RSU, its relationship and communication with the PCU as well as identify ways to enhance SFLP service delivery and improve working

relationship with NCUs. The seminar also discussed the kind of support that the RSU could provide in the implementation of pilot projects. The seminar was efficiently facilitated in a friendly atmosphere by consultant, P. Pelletier.

Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission briefs RSU

Following up on the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC) Action Plan, and subsequent to the February 2002 workshop organised in Dakar on the contribution of fisheries to poverty reduction in West Africa, and the European Commission Working Group meeting held in Brussels in March 2002 to discuss major development issues in West Africa, the Executive Secretary of SRFC, N.S. Bangoura, and FAO adviser, G. Dasylyva, undertook a mission to Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest-Africaine (UEMOA) headquarters in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. The mission, which was financially supported by SFLP, aimed to: (i) establish a forum of exchange in fisheries and (ii) inquire about the place of the fisheries sector in the regional programming process between UEMOA, the Economic Community for West African States (ECOWAS), and the European Union.

After a courtesy visit to M-N. Koyara, the FAO Representative in Ouagadougou, the mission held a series of meetings with the UEMOA executives from 14th to 17th April 2002. Discussions at the meetings highlighted the importance of fisheries in the economies and poverty reduction programmes of the sub-region. Also emphasised was the strategic role of the SRFC in fisheries cooperation, as well as the need to adopt a regional approach to fisheries management issues. One of the recommendations of the meetings was that UEMOA should examine the possibilities of working more closely with the SRFC in the short and medium term. At the end of their mission, they visited Cotonou for a 2-day debriefing session with the SFLP-RSU. This provided the two parties the opportunity to share experiences on their activities.

Imminent events

- A validation workshop on the SFLP study on Research-Policies-Stakeholders linkages in the fisheries sector is scheduled from 10th to 14th June 2002 in Cotonou, Benin.
- Selected trainers from SFLP National Coordinating Units will be attending a Consolidation Workshop on SFLP Training Manual in Cotonou from 8th to 13th July 2002.
- A workshop on SFLP communication strategy for communities for SFLP Anglophone countries will take place in August 2002.

New community projects

- **Central African Republic:** Support in the sustainable development of fisheries in Lake Mbali.
- **Niger:** Support in the creation of a women fish traders cooperative in Niamey
- **Chad:** Support in the development of fisheries activities in Logone
- **Cameroon:** Building up the organisational skills of women fish smokers in Maga, sensitising them on nutritional and health aspects, and providing support in the diversification of income-generating activities.