

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

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Welcome to the

SFLP Info-Flash

This new means of communication will be forwarded monthly through Internet to the National Coordination Units, FAO Representations, DFID and to the Fisheries Department of FAO.

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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Chad – Preparation for Pilot Project planning workshop

The Chad National Coordinator organised a meeting for the members of the National Coordinating Unit (NCU) to give them feedback on the Pilot Project core country selection workshop, which had been held in Cotonou from 7 to 9 September 2002. Indeed, Chad had been selected to participate in the Pilot Project for "Post-harvest Issues and Livelihoods". It was also an opportunity for them to prepare for the forthcoming Pilot Project planning workshop in Cotonou from 5 to 7 November 2002. Further clarification was provided on the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) which will guide the Pilot Project design and implementation process. Other issues considered were the importance of establishing linkages with existing policies and institutions, the role of poverty profiling, gender balance, and co-management as a process of change to improve communities' livelihoods. Also discussed were the prospects for, and constraints on, the small-scale fisheries-based livelihoods in the country, and the expected outcomes and possible impacts of a Pilot Project oriented to the post harvest issues.

By the end of the meeting, a list of fisheries communities had been drawn up to participate in the poverty profiling exercise as a baseline for the Pilot Project. A national multi-disciplinary team of six people will attend the Pilot Project planning workshop.

They include representatives of the government departments in charge of decentralisation, the Ministry of Planning, Cooperation and Development, professional organisations, an NGO (APIBASE), and the National Coordinator.

NCU representatives visited the FAO Representation, UNDP and other development partners in N'djamena to brief them on the Pilot Project and explore potential collaboration in its implementation. These partners included the German technical cooperation service (GTZ), the FAO Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS), the project in support of agricultural services and producers organisations (*Projet d'Appui aux services agricoles et aux organisations des producteurs - PSAOP*), and the Local Development Programme (PRODEL). The last two are part of the Rural Development Action Plan (*Plan d'Intervention du Développement Rural - PIDR*).



Gabon

In response to a request from the Ebel-Abanga fisheries community, situated about 176km from Libreville, the Gabon NCU recently assisted them in a participatory appraisal of their livelihoods and opportunities. Ebel-Abanga covers an area of 5km² and has many small lakes and rivers. The diversity of fisheries resources and the network of waterways are major natural assets for the community, and they offer considerable potential on which to improve livelihoods. Furthermore, there is a good access road which links fishing sites to major markets. The obvious lack of organisation or any credit structure, however, constitutes a handicap for the fisherfolk.

A community action plan had been prepared by the end of the exercise and the community was able to propose a project to strengthen its organisational capacity, which in turn will help to improve its livelihoods and strategic partnerships with local institutions involved in the fisheries sector. The Regional Support Unit (RSU) looks forward to receiving the finalised proposal soon.

Mauritania – New Decree favours small-scale fisheries

Mauritania recently adopted Decree 2000/025 which provides for a new zoning system for small-scale fisheries, pushing the operating zone for industrial trawlers back beyond the 20 metres isobaths. Other provisions in the decree include the organisation of fisheries activities. Small-scale fishers now have the right to operate within an area three times larger than before. Heavy sanctions have been placed on illegal fishing by trawlers and more stringent measures for the control of fisheries activities have been introduced. A Fisheries Advisory Council has also been set up to ensure the participatory and precautionary approach in the fisheries sector, and the procedures for its operations and financing are currently being drawn up.

As a follow-up to the selection of Mauritania as a participant country in the Pilot Project on *Participatory Coastal Fisheries Management*, the NCU held a meeting at the Conference Hall of the Ministry of Fisheries on 7 October 2002. After a briefing by the National Coordinator, members discussed possible Pilot Project sites, the design process and elements of

the initial document to be presented at the Pilot Project planning workshop in Cotonou by a national Mauritanian team which was also nominated.

Mali

The efforts of the Mali NCU to influence policy- and decision-makers, concerning the importance of the fisheries sector in the national economy, have paid off. On 16 October 2002, the new Government of Mali announced its decision to create the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, which for the first time, placed the fisheries sector at such high level. The hard work of the NCU has certainly contributed to this achievement. An expected implication of this decision is that the fisheries sector will now receive even greater attention in the National Poverty Reduction Strategy.

This recognition is most timely since the SFLP Pilot Project on *Policy and Institutional Development for Co-management in inland fisheries livelihoods* in which Mali is involved is due to start in November 2002.



Fish preservation : A fish monger arranges ice blocks to cover her fish properly (Selingué, Mali)

Guinea Bissau – Training in SLA

The NCU and selected development officers in Guinea Bissau are currently undergoing training in the Sustainable Livelihoods (SL) participatory appraisal, using Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) tools. The training course is being facilitated by SLA Consultant, Y. N'djai, as part of the SFLP support. To help them put theory into practice, the consultant will work with the NCU to assist the Buba fisheries communities to draw up a Community Action Plan (CAP), and to identify and prepare community project proposals. The underlying objective of this work is to strengthen the NCU's capacities to assist other communities in future to identify and implement community projects using the SL guiding principles.

Guinea - Poverty reduction actions and MCS forum

In response to a request from the Guinea NCU the RSU is providing assistance in reviewing and completing the activities so far undertaken in the country to promote the integration of artisanal fisheries into national poverty reduction planning. The support has involved, in particular, a participatory analysis of the macro level policies and institutions that have an impact

on fisheries livelihoods, and the identification of partnership opportunities with other donors and institutions. The NCU will prepare a summary of the major outcomes and lessons learned by the Programme in the fisheries sector in Guinea before the end of the year. This will then be made available to decision makers, donors, including the African Development Bank (ADB), the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the European Union (EU) and the French cooperation (AFD). SFLP is expected to participate in a national programming seminar on the future use of European Development Funds (EDF) for poverty reduction in the rural sector in Guinea. This workshop which will be jointly organized by EU and AFD early in 2003, will be an opportunity for SFLP to share its experience and the lessons learned in improving small-scale fisheries dependent livelihoods.

The NCU will also organize a national forum early in 2003 on the participation of coastal communities in fisheries management and surveillance for improved livelihoods. It will be based on the outcomes of the community project on participatory monitoring, control and surveillance implemented in Koukoudé, Bongolon and Matakang. The lessons drawn during this forum will be invaluable for the Pilot Project on *Participatory management in coastal fisheries*, in which Guinea is involved.

Togo – Ban on fisheries on Lake Nangbeto lifted

The ban on fisheries on Lake Nangbeto has been lifted by a new decree promulgated by the Government. This is a positive result of strong lobbying by the NCU. Of particular interest, Article 1 states that this ban is lifted to allow the participation of all stakeholders in the management of the lake resources through the participatory identification and implementation of community projects which could be supported by SFLP. SLA training, particularly in participatory methods and community project formulation will enable stakeholders to take up this challenge. The NCU and RSU have planned that this training session in SLA using Participatory Rapid Appraisal (PRA) and other tools will take place during the first quarter of 2003. Fifteen participants have already been identified.

Nigeria – Update on Tiga Dam

During a field visit to Rurum community, primary beneficiaries (a fishermen's cooperative) briefed the mission on the achievements to date of the Tiga dam community project. The most striking of these are in the area of group cohesion and organisational skills, which have improved considerably. This in turn has facilitated the members' access to credit and fisheries resource management information, thus enabling them to purchase the appropriate size and mesh fishing nets, which are recommended in the resource management plan. The size of the cooperative has also grown, from 25 members in July 2001 to 75 in September 2002, making it a recognised pressure group in the community. The construction of a market-shelter for the women, with the assistance of local government authorities, is one of the outcomes of their efforts.

The project's primary beneficiaries are also keen to build on these positive results by requesting further assistance to improve their community action planning, participatory monitoring of changes in their livelihoods, as well as expanding their own capacities to seek new partnerships.



A fisherman with a fish trap
(Rurum, Nigeria)

Pilot Projects - progress

The first SFLP Pilot Project "*Policy and Institutional Development for Co-management in Inland Fisheries Livelihoods*" has been approved by FAO Rome and the signing of underpinning Letters of Agreement between FAO and the four countries, *Burkina Faso, Mali, Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire* is now going ahead for a prompt start to activities.

Meanwhile, at the end of October a successful and lively workshop involved multi-disciplinary teams from Congo, Gabon, Guinea and Mauritania, as well as the SFLP Regional Support Unit, the SFLP Coordinator and consultant Barry Blake, in debating and defining the outline framework for another Pilot Project "*Participatory Management in Coastal Artisanal Fisheries Livelihoods*".

IFAD - CBNRMP Appraisal Mission in the Niger Delta, Nigeria

Representatives of several international development agencies (FAO, SFLP-FAO, WB, DFID, GTZ, Federal and State development agencies) and F. Turay, representing SFLP, participated in the IFAD appraisal mission of the Community-Based Natural Resource Management Programme (CBNRMP) in the Niger Delta on 27 August 2002. The participatory nature of the mission is indicative of IFAD's commitment to working in partnership to reduce rural poverty in the Niger Delta. The activity included meetings which brought together representatives of the three tiers of Government (Federal, State and Local Government) and development agencies to discuss CBNRMP issues. It also served as an opportunity to provide further clarification on the SLA, to build mutual trust and to strengthen working ties among participants.

The RSU Projects Officer took the opportunity to present the SFLP Community Project Preparation Guide. The IFAD country Portfolio Manager, P. Saint-Ange, noted its usefulness, and other possible areas of collaboration were identified during the discussion that followed. These included training in SLA for local IFAD consultants to be provided by

the RSU in close collaboration with the Nigeria NCU in Abuja, as well as regular SFLP participation in CBNRMP activities, especially as those related to capacity-building for fisheries communities in participatory monitoring, rural livelihoods analysis, community organizational planning and project formulation.

SFLP - IFAD working ties

Due to the current political instability in Côte d'Ivoire, a training workshop organised by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), originally scheduled to be held in Abidjan, was held in Cotonou from 29 October to 1 November 2002. At the request of M. Tounessi, IFAD Country Portfolio Manager, and J. Ouaké, NCU National Coordinator, who has also been appointed as the Coordinator of the IFAD Small Scale Fisheries Project in Benin, the Information and Communication Unit of the Regional Support Unit (RSU) provided support to the IFAD projects in Benin in the production of information and communication materials for the workshop.

The objective of the workshop was to review the implementation, impact and lessons of projects supported by IFAD in Central and West Africa. Special attention was given to problems encountered in the field during project implementation. About 120 participants drawn from a wide cross-section of society, including representatives of projects financed by or benefiting from IFAD support, relevant government ministries (Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries, Finance and Economy), cooperating institutions (ADB, BOAD, UNOPS), associated NGOs, professional agricultural organisations, micro-credit organisations and rural women's associations attended the workshop.

Since 2001, SFLP has built a strategic partnership with IFAD for the improvement of fisheries livelihoods in Benin, and more recently in Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire. In Benin, a Letter of Agreement will be signed to formalise this collaboration, in particular for training IFAD project staff in SLA and participatory monitoring. The workshop was an opportunity for the IFAD Assistant President, K. Van de Sand, and the IFAD Director of West and Central Africa Division, M. Béavogui, to visit the RSU office in Cotonou. The Programme Coordinator, R. Coutts, and the RSU Team Leader, B. Horemans gave a brief presentation of SFLP and its previous and potential future collaboration with IFAD. The ensuing discussions confirmed the similarity of the approaches followed by IFAD and SFLP for poverty reduction in fisheries dependent communities. In particular, IFAD representatives appreciated the practical experience gained by SFLP in putting SLA into practice with the fisheries communities throughout the region. A set of SFLP publications was provided to the visitors, including the Community Project Preparation Guide which attracted much interest.

16th Session of CECAF

RSU Team Leader, B. Horemans, and Aquatic Resources Officer, J-C. Njock, attended the 16th Session of the Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic (CECAF) held in Santa Cruz, Tenerife (Spain). The meeting was hosted by the Spanish Institute of Oceanography from 22 to 24 October

2002. The RSU officers presented a paper on *Poverty Reduction in Fisheries Communities in West Africa using SLA*. Other topics discussed included the strengthening of MCS in the region and the indicators to be used in assessing the

performance of Regional Fisheries Bodies. The recommendations of the CECAF Scientific Sub-Committee and ways to upgrade the Committee to the level of a Commission were also discussed.

Upcoming events

- SFLP Pilot Project design workshop "*Post Harvest Issues and Livelihoods*". Cotonou, Benin from 5-7 November 2002.
- SFLP Consultation on integrating small-scale fisheries in poverty reduction planning in West Africa. Cotonou, Benin 12-14 November 2002.
- 12th Session of the FAO Committee for Inland Fisheries in Africa (CIFA) in Yaoundé, Cameroon, from 2 to 5 December 2002.
- GTZ-SFLP Enhancement and Livelihoods in Inland Fisheries Seminar. Bobo Dioulasso, Burkina Faso, from 12 to 14 December 2002.