Dear Friends of the Oceans and Coasts,

Welcome to our 15th Ocean and Coasts Newsletter! This time we have 16 contributions from nine different countries and three continents. A few focus explicitly on issues regarding the pandemics, others are related to fish and fisheries, knowledge management, biodiversity conservation, management and climate issues. We would like to thank all the authors for their interesting and valuable contributions!

With everything going virtual in these strange times, most of us have become quite accustomed to video conferences and virtual meetings. However, they make it much more difficult to build up and maintain personal relationships, it always requires an extra effort. The pandemics have emphasized how precious it really is to be able to meet colleagues in person (with due distance, obviously!).

But virtual does work: the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development which is responsible for coordinating the review processes around the Agenda 2030 and the 17 SDGs, was held virtually from July 9-16th. 47 countries presented their voluntary national reviews, reporting on national SDG progress. The forum identified the tension between economic growth and sustainability in the context of the COVID 19 pandemic and the weakening of multilateral institutions and international solidarity as key challenges for the implementation of the SDGs. Achieving SDG 14 was going to be difficult in any case. We will keep discussing how our work can best help to reach the targets and goals of the Agenda 2030.

Enjoy the news and stay healthy!

Your 4D20 Oceans and Coasts Team

Mecki & Volker
Closing a gap in Malawi’s aquaculture value chain – The fingerling production

Lack of high-quality fingerlings has been a challenge to sustainable aquaculture in Malawi and governmental farms could not meet the demand. Correspondingly, fish farmers were unable to stock their ponds or harvest entirely at the end of the season in fear of failing to restock. Therefore, in 2019 the SEWOH project Aquaculture Value Chain for Higher Income and Food Security selected and trained 28 fish farmers in 13 districts across Malawi to become reliable producers and suppliers of fingerlings to regional fish farmers. Currently, the selected farmers can produce over 10,000,000 high-quality fingerlings per year at an affordable price with an anticipated reach out to over 4,500 fish farmers by 2023.

Contact: Madalitso Catherine Msyalie

Protection of environment and biodiversity in Algeria’s coastal regions

Forty percent of Algeria’s population lives on the 1622 km long coastline. This creates a high pressure to exploit the country’s biodiversity-rich coastal and marine ecosystems. The area of marine protected areas accounts for 1% of Algeria’s territorial waters. The three-year project “Protection of environment and biodiversity in Algeria’s coastal regions” that started on 1 January 2020, aims to improve integrated coastal zone management (ICZM) in selected areas. It supports sustainable valorization of terrestrial and marine ecosystem services and the
establishment and management of selected marine and coastal protected areas. An important field of action is promotion of sustainable artisanal fisheries and aquaculture as called for in the BMZ action plan for marine protection and sustainable fisheries.

Contact: Rolf Dietmar

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**MeerWissen webinar on effective marine and coastal conservation in Africa**

The 6th International Marine Conservation Congress organized by the Society for Conservation Biology

The MeerWissen Initiative is organizing a webinar at the 6th International Marine Conservation Congress (IMCC6) aiming at sharing experiences and expertise for improved knowledge generation and science-policy transfer in the field of marine and coastal conservation in Africa. After short presentations of a range of MeerWissen partnerships projects five best practice examples for the effective conservation and sustainable use of African coastal resources from Tanzania and Kenya to the Atlantic upwelling regions will be showcased. Finally, a moderated discussion on science-policy uptake in Africa will give all participants the possibility to share experiences and discuss the needs, challenges and successes of ocean and coastal conservation in Africa to achieve SDG14 and the Agenda 2030, as well as to improve the conditions for knowledge- and science-based policy-making. The webinar is on 21 August 2020, 11:00-13:00 (UTC)

**Additional information here** and **registration here**.

Contact person:

Sven Stöbener

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**Self-inspections in fish processing factories in Uganda**

Since 2006, fish stocks and catches of Nile perch in Lake Victoria have dwindled and factories accepted immature fish to compensate. To stop this, Uganda Fish Processors and Exporters Association (UFPEA) launched a self-inspections scheme to ensure that only legal-size fish is processed.

In 2018, the Responsible Fisheries Business Chains Project and UFPEA, reviewed self-inspection guidelines and trained 314 factory workers (88 women / 226 men) and 437 fish suppliers (106 women / 331 men) on the reviewed guidelines. By June 2020, 441 self-inspections had been carried out in 11 fish factories.

Undersized fishes processed in factories have reduced significantly and this adherence to international standards has widened UFPEA's market.

Contact: Adolf Gerstl
Radio programmes against fish theft

In Madagascar, theft of broodstock, fingerlings and grown fish is one of the key impediments for the development of rice-fish farming. Fish is still often considered a common good and the regulatory framework concerning theft of fish is little-known.

To tackle this problem, the Global Programme Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture supported the recording of a 30-minute radio programme. Representatives of the police, the regional government and affected fish farmers inform the population about the impact of fish theft on farmers and about laws and sanctions.

The information campaign has been broadcasted 18 times via three radio stations in one of the highly affected regions, thereby reaching over 100,000 people.

Contact: Sabina Wolf

Digitalisation of first sale certificates of fish

Digitalisation of first sale certificates of fish to achieve better traceability and controls of fishery products in Mauritania, the National Office of Sanitary Inspection of Fishery and Aquaculture Products (ONISPA) introduced first sale certificates in 2019. They are issued at the four main landing sites Rosso, Nouakchott, Tanit and Nouadhibou and specify the species, product origin, seller information and destination.

For the transition from paper-based to digital certificates, SEWOH Promopêche supported ONISPA by developing a software and equipping ONISPA with tablets, portable printers and computers. The software and equipment are now used to register the above-mentioned information directly during the first sale of fish at the landing sites, hence enabling the digitalisation of the certificates and databank.

Contact: Mohamed Lemine Ehlебou
Hand washing fountains to fight the spread of COVID-19 in the fisheries sector

During the pandemic, the fisheries sector again proved to be essential for Mauritania, ensuring the supply of fresh and nutritious fish to the public, stimulating economic activity and trade, and securing jobs.

SEWOH Promopêche supports its partners in their efforts against COVID-19 through the donation of 50 locally produced hand washing fountains, soap and disinfectant. Workers at the port can use these fountains to better protect themselves against an infection, and thus prevent the spread of the virus.

The handover took place at the fish market of Nouakchott with representatives of the German Embassy, the Delegation of the European Union, the GIZ country office and local authorities and partners.

Contact: Alena Goebel

Launch of national control plan for consumer protection

To ensure safe consumption of small pelagic fish all over Mauritania, a hygiene and quality control plan was launched by the National Office of Sanitary Inspection of Fisheries and Aquaculture (ONISPA) in October 2019.

This plan, which is financed by GIZ, defines the standards as well as control and inspection procedures within the value chain. For the first time, the monitoring of sanitary quality of small pelagic fish covers the entire value chain, even non-coastal areas, improving food safety and security.

ONISPA oversees the implementation of the plan. 42 laboratory technicians and inspectors, including two women, have already been trained. In total, 27 trainings according to international standards are scheduled.

Contact: Mohamed Ehlebou
COVID-19 mitigation measures for the Sundarbans, Bangladesh

About 320,000 people are living in the narrow belt around the Sundarbans mangrove forest in Bangladesh. The poverty rate is at 32% and 35,000 households are directly dependent of resources in the Sundarbans, mainly fish, shrimps, woodcuttings and honey. COVID-19 is worsening the situation and there is an increasing threat of illegal fishing and poaching in the Sundarbans. With special funds of the BMZ, GIZ Bangladesh will provide direct aid to 7000 households, 2000 sets COVID-19 protection equipment and sanitation corners to 20 ranger stations of the Bangladesh Forest Department. In addition, there will be a school program on the Sundarbans to cheer up the students after the long term of isolation.

Contact: Dr. Stefan Alfred Groenewold

Super Cyclone Amphan hits Sundarbans, Bangladesh

The super cyclone “Amphan” was hitting the Sundarbans–world’s largest mangrove forest – on 20th of May 2020. Again, the UNESCO world heritage area could prove its function as a natural shield against wave actions and winds from the Bay of Bengal. While the mangrove forest itself withstood well, there was considerable damage of infrastructure of the Bangladesh Forest Department (BFD), especially embankments, outpost stations and freshwater ponds, sources of drinking water in the saline environment. Villages adjacent to the Sundarbans lost 1110 hectare of aquaculture land. The Sundarbans Management Project (SMP-II) will support the BFD to develop suitable parameter for monitoring and forecasting impacts of storms on the ecosystem.

Contact: Dr. Stefan Alfred Groenewold

Global

International Day for the Conservation of Mangrove Ecosystems

On July 26, 2020, UNESCO celebrated the 6th International Day for the Conservation of Mangrove Ecosystems. You can find a message from Dr Shamila Nair-Bedouelle, the UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Natural Sciences here. Mangroves are unique ecosystems at the land-sea interface, hosting a huge diversity of species, storing more carbon per area unit than rainforests, providing fish and shellfish for local communities and protecting coastal ecosystems from the impacts of storms and floods. UNESCO aims to protect vulnerable mangrove ecosystems through their Biosphere Reserves, World Heritage sites and UNESCO Global Geoparks programs to improve the knowledge, management and conservation of mangrove ecosystems globally.

Contact: Volker Koch
In order to mitigate negative effects of health emergency caused by COVID-19 in the value chain of hydrobiological products, the Peruvian Ministry of Production has developed an innovative tool called “Rapipez”. This digital platform allows direct marketing and sale of products from artisanal fisheries to consumers. Additionally, an online live show called “Conscious Cooking” has been launched. It connects artisan fishermen with chef Luciano Mazzetti and focuses on raising awareness for responsible consumption encouraging to respect bans and minimum sizes, as well as for diversifying consumption during those periods of banning. The last show took place on July 31st on Luciano’s official Facebook account. For further information, click the links below:

• Conscious Cooking
• Sustainable fishery marketplace

Contact: Philine Oft ; Rosa Rodríguez
Costa Rica and Blue Solutions establish a cooperation alliance

Costa Rica and Blue Solutions will work together to foster a sustainable approach to face the current health and economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic through an innovative marine policy strategy. The essential concept will be to guarantee balance between protection and sustainable use of their oceans and coasts, in line with social, economic and environmental sustainability principles.

Costa Rica will promote marine spatial planning to develop consensual processes agreed upon by authorities, users and civil society. Blue Solutions will assist in the development of marine spatial planning initiatives complemented by sustainable ocean economy elements to foster blue nature-based solutions for the socioeconomic reconstruction of marine and coastal areas. Costa Rica and Blue Solutions will work together to foster a sustainable approach to face the current health and economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic through an innovative marine policy strategy. The essential concept will be to guarantee balance between protection and sustainable use of their oceans and coasts, in line with social, economic and environmental sustainability principles.

For further information please click here

Contact: Erick Ross Salazar

Recovery plans for endangered marine species in Bahia, Brazil

In cooperation with the Project TerraMar, the State of Bahia is developing Recovery Plans for thirteen endangered crustacean and fish species, with active participation of local fishing communities, state environmental institutions (Sema & Inema), protected area agencies (ICMBio), NGOs (Instituto Humana) and academia. The methodology integrates traditional and academic knowledge in the analysis of current status, in the identification of threats and in the development of guidelines.

The Recovery Plans aim to establish management practices and guidelines to recover and manage stocks of endangered species, to ensure the sustainable use of coastal and marine resources, biodiversity and ecosystems, and to guarantee the livelihoods of traditional fishing communities.

Contact: Ivana Lamas
Publications and Events

Study release and expert talk: Addressing climate-related risks in coastal zones and communities

The effects of climate change and increasing extreme weather events on the oceans are key challenges for small-scale fisheries. This study highlights some of the economic as well as non-economic losses and damages associated with these effects. It aims at developing a better understanding of the impacts of climate change on small-scale fisheries to identify suitable risk management solutions, and to show entry points for comprehensive climate risk management (CRM) in order to enhance resilience. The study synthesizes the results of three reviews of baseline information covering the Caribbean, the South Pacific and West Africa. The study will be published and shared in due course.

Insights from the study as well as on-the-ground experiences will be subject to discussion of an expert talk on the topic of Oceans, coastal zones and their communities and impacts of climate change scheduled to take place this autumn. Practitioners, experts and interested guests will be invited to join the talk, date and time will be announced shortly.

Contact: Solveig Schindler ; Nicola Hanke
Guidelines on Effective Science to Policy Interaction in the Western Indian Ocean Region

The report "Enhancing Science-to-Policy Uptake in the Western Indian Ocean Region" provides an overview of current thinking on the science-to-policy interface, with a focus on pragmatic, accessible examples, which are used to develop a set of guidelines on effective science to policy interactions. Nine case studies from the Western Indian Ocean region and six international case studies are presented, which seek to illustrate how principles of effective science-to-policy uptake have played out in real-world experiences. This report was commissioned by the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA) as part of the MeerWissen Initiative - a programme funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented with support from GIZ - and is published on the WIOMSA website.

Contact: Sven Stöbener, Janina Lobmüller