

# **“Empowerment of Fisherfolk in Saint Lucia for Effective Fisheries Co-management: A Case Study of the Soufriere Marine Management Area”**

**Monique S. Calderon**

**United Nations – The Nippon Foundation of Japan Fellowship Programme 2024**



**Disclaimer**

This thesis was developed as an independent research project by the Fellows during the second phase of their Fellowship Programme. While guidance, supervision, and access to bibliographic resources were provided throughout the Programme, the content, references, bibliographic materials, figures, and all related components, including their use, are the sole responsibility of the Fellows and do not necessarily reflect the views or endorsement of the academic supervisors, the United Nations, the Host Institution, the Nippon Foundation, or the Government or State of the Fellow's nationality.

# Academic Supervisor

Prof. Dr. Achim Schlüter

Programme Area Lead (PA 1 - Coastal Resources and Sustainable Blue Economy),

Working Group Leader,

Professor for Institutional Economics and Ocean Governance (University of Bremen).

## CO-SUPERVISORS

Valentina Germani

Senior Legal Officer and Programme Advisor

Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, Office of Legal Affairs

United Nations

Vanessa Arellano Rodriguez

Legal Officer

Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, Office of Legal Affairs

United Nations

# Abstract

Small Island Developing States (SIDS) often face challenges in marine resource management due to limited financial and human resources, which can hinder the effectiveness of top-down governance approaches. Co-management offers a potential solution by integrating local community participation into governance structures, leveraging local knowledge, and enhancing resource efficiency. This study examines how the fisherfolk community in Soufriere, Saint Lucia, can be empowered to participate more effectively in fisheries resource co-management. The research explores the concepts of co-management and empowerment, identifying key elements essential for fisherfolk empowerment. A stakeholder analysis, using a power-interest matrix, revealed that fisherfolk in Soufriere are low-power stakeholders, consistent with existing literature. To assess the empowerment of Soufriere's fisherfolk, the researcher developed a novel framework, combining an analysis of legislative, operational, and institutional frameworks with interviews of key fisheries sector stakeholders. This analysis addressed two primary questions: (i) how are fisherfolk currently empowered to engage in co-management within the Soufriere Marine Management Area (SMMA), and (ii) what gaps exist between governance frameworks and the lived experiences of fisherfolk. The findings were synthesized to propose mechanisms for enhancing fisherfolk empowerment, increasing their participation in co-management, and strengthening their role in decision-making and ocean governance. Recommendations are provided for sector managers to promote community involvement in the sustainable management of marine resources in Saint Lucia.

## Acknowledgments

I extend my deepest gratitude to my academic supervisor and co-supervisors for their unwavering support and guidance throughout the development of this thesis. Their insights and encouragement have been invaluable.

I am also sincerely grateful to Mrs. Sarita Williams-Peter, Chief Fisheries Officer of Saint Lucia, for her direction during the initial stages of my research. My heartfelt thanks go to Mrs. Margaret Rita Straughn-Mitchell, Fisheries Extension Officer for Soufriere, and Ms. Vilma Joseph, Manager of the Soufriere Fishermen's Co-operative Society Ltd., for their assistance in organizing the virtual interview with the Board of the Co-operative. I am especially thankful to the board members who generously made themselves available for this interview.

Additionally, I wish to acknowledge the valuable feedback and encouragement of my colleagues, who offered guidance and support throughout this process.

Finally, I express my profound gratitude to the United Nations Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (UN DOALOS) and the Nippon Foundation for granting me this opportunity and providing an avenue for the improvement of Saint Lucia's fisherfolk and fisheries sector.

# List of Acronyms

CANARI	Caribbean Natural Resources Institute
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
DOF	Department of Fisheries, Saint Lucia
FAD	Fish Aggregating Devices
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FPA	Fishing Priority Areas
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GOSL	Government of Saint Lucia
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
LMFA	Local Fisheries Management Area
MMA	Marine Managed Area
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Rural Development, Saint Lucia
MOT	Ministry of Tourism, Investment, Creative Industries, Culture and Information
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
ODCE	Organizational Domains of Community Empowerment
RSLPF	Royal Saint Lucia Police Force
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SLFCS	St. Lucia Fisherfolk Co-operative Society Ltd
SLASPA	Saint Lucia Air and Sea Ports Authority
SLHTA	Saint Lucia Hotel and Tourism Association
SMMA	Soufriere Marine Management Area
SMMA Inc.	Soufriere Marine Management Association
SRDF	Soufriere Regional Development Foundation
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee
TURF	Territorial Use Rights for Fisheries
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

# Table of Contents

**Introduction..... 1**

**Part one: Co-management and Empowerment..... 8**

Chapter 1: Empowerment of Small-Scale Fishers in Theory..... 8

*Section 1.1.A: An overview of co-management and empowerment.....9*

*Section 1.1.B: Key elements of empowerment for fisherfolk. .... 16*

**Chapter 2: Co-management and Empowerment Arrangements in the SMMA. .... 23**

*Section 1.2.A: Categorization of stakeholders in the SMMA and their power using a power/interest matrix..... 24*

*Section 1.2.B: Evaluating empowerment and an introduction of the framework to be used to assess the empowerment of fisherfolk within the SMMA.....30*

**Part two: Evaluation of Empowerment in the Soufriere Marine Managed Area. .... 35**

Chapter 1: Assessment of the degree of empowerment in the Soufriere Marine Management Area. .. 35

*Section 2.1.A: An overview of the legislative, operational and institutional frameworks governing co-management and empowerment in Soufriere. .... 36*

*Section 2.1.B: Results: Interview with the board of the Soufriere Fishermen’s Co-operative Society on the degree of Empowerment experienced by fisherfolk in the SMMA. .... 44*

Chapter 2: Analysis of the assessment results for the empowerment of fisherfolk in the Soufriere Marine Managed Area. .... 51

*Section 2.2.A: How are fisherfolk empowered in the SMMA? ..... 52*

*Section 2.2.B: What gaps exist between the enabling environment and the experience of the fisherfolk in Soufriere? ..... 58*

**Conclusion: Empowering local communities to participate more in co-management and ultimately ocean governance in the fisheries sector. .... 64**

**Bibliography ..... 70**

**Appendices..... 75**

Appendix A: List of Legislative, institutional and operational documents examined for the Elements of Empowerment. .... 75

Appendix B: Transcript of the virtual interview with the Board of the Soufriere Fisherman’s Co-operative Society Ltd., held on September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 4:30pm EST. .... 78

Appendix C: Presentation to the Board Members of the SFCS. .... 123

## List of Figures

Figure 1: Zoning map of the Soufriere Marine Managed Area. 3

Figure 2: Analysis of marine and coastal stakeholders in the Soufriere Marine Managed Area using a power - interest matrix. 27

Figure 3: Elements of empowerment. 31



## List of Tables

	<u>Page</u>
Table 1: Identification of marine and coastal stakeholders in the Soufriere Marine Management Area, Saint Lucia .....	27
Table 2: Interview questions for fisherfolk, aligned with the elements of empowerment. ....	34

# Introduction

The marine management capacity of governments in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) is often limited by a lack of financial resources, and human and technical capacity. This situation often leads to gaps in monitoring, control, and biodiversity conservation. The Government of Saint Lucia is no exception to this situation of resource limitation. To combat these challenges, the Department of Fisheries, responsible for managing the marine environment nationally, has emphasized the importance of co-management to the nine Registered Primary Fishers Consumer Co-operative Societies under the umbrella of the St. Lucia Fisherfolk Co-operative Society Ltd. To date, several projects have been implemented to promote co-management strategies and the concept of Satoumi. The concept of co-management has also been adopted by other stakeholders outside of the fisheries sector who utilise the marine space.

Co-management is the “sharing of responsibility and authority for resource management between the government and stakeholders”<sup>1</sup>. Effective co-management represents a shift from relying solely on prescriptive government regulations to more holistic, equitable, and inclusive governance. This approach allows for a broader pool of knowledge, increased human capacity, and more efficient resource use, benefiting the community and the governance system in numerous ways.

A prominent example of co-management in Saint Lucia is the establishment of the Soufriere Marine Managed Area in 1995. Soufriere was historically an agriculture and fishing dominated community, but over the last 20 years, this community has developed into the primary site for nature-based tourism in Saint Lucia. The creation of the SMMA was deemed necessary by stakeholders due to increasing degradation of the marine and coastal resources in the area, as well as the escalating conflict due to the shared use of resources, especially between fishing and the tourism industries.<sup>2</sup> The marine-managed area (MMA) was established after eighteen months of stakeholder negotiations and participatory planning, considering all resource users in the community.<sup>3</sup> While this effort was initiated by the Soufriere Regional Development

---

<sup>1</sup> McConney, P., Pomeroy, R. and Mahon, R. (2003) Guidelines for Coastal Resource Co-Management in the Caribbean: Communicating the Concepts and Conditions that Favour Success. Caribbean Coastal Co-Management Guidelines Project. Caribbean Conservation Association, Barbados, 7.

<sup>2</sup> Available from the Background section of the Soufriere Marine Management Area website (<https://www.smma.org.lc>)

<sup>3</sup> Yves Renard, “Case of the Soufriere Marine Management Area (SMMA), St. Lucia”, CANARI Technical Report N1 285, (2001).

Foundation (SRDF) and supported by the Department of Fisheries (DOF), and the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI), the establishment of the SMMA was a “fully independent and participatory” approach to resource management. In other words, the inputs of the various stakeholder groups were highly valued in this process. While at the time, this approach was considered novel and experimental in the region, to this day it is highly regarded as an important and useful exercise in stakeholder-led intervention in the region.<sup>4</sup>

The resulting MMA consists of over 12 km of coastline spanning from Anse Mamin in the north to Anse L’Ivrogne in the south, and the adjacent coastal waters, extending up to the 75m depth contour. Within this space, the SMMA is divided into five major zoning categories, selected through the agreement of stakeholders on certain key principles. These principles are stated in Article 2 of the “Agreement to Manage the Soufriere Marine Management Area” (2001) as follows<sup>5</sup>:

1. The development of people and communities must be based on the rational use of their natural and cultural capital. Soufriere is rich in such capital, which must be developed and enhanced for the benefit of present and future generations;
2. This process of development must be sustainable, and this cannot be achieved unless the use of renewable natural resources is managed with care and resources are allowed to renew themselves. Conservation must therefore be an integral objective and component of all management and development programmes;
3. The benefits derived from the use of the natural and cultural capital must be shared as equitably as possible, and must contribute to addressing the most pressing social and economic problems of society;
4. Development and natural resource management must be approached as complementary processes requiring integrated and multi-disciplinary structures and interventions;
5. The process of development must give all citizens an opportunity to participate fully in making and implementing decisions.”

Article 6 of the Agreement elaborates on the zoning arrangements as follows <sup>6</sup>:

---

<sup>4</sup> Available from the Background section of the Soufriere Marine Management Area website (<https://www.smma.org.lc>)

<sup>5</sup> Government of Saint Lucia, “Agreement to Manage the Soufriere Marine Management Area” (2001),3.

<sup>6</sup> Government of Saint Lucia, “Agreement to Manage the Soufriere Marine Management Area” (2001), 4.

1. **Marine Reserves:** as declared under the Fisheries Act, Cap. 7.15 of the Revised Laws of Saint Lucia, established for the protection of natural resources housing within. Extracting or destructive activities are not permitted, and this zone may only be used upon approval of the management authority.
2. **Fishing Priority Areas:** as declared under the Fisheries Act, Cap. 7.15 of the Revised Laws of Saint Lucia, established for the continuity and sustainability of fishing activities, which maintain the highest **priority** in the area.
3. **Multiple Use Areas:** retained their mixed-use status. Permitted activities in this zone include fishing, diving, snorkelling, and anchoring at designating mooring sites. These activities are regulated by existing legislation, including the Fisheries Act, Cap. 7.15 of the Revised Laws of Saint Lucia.
4. **Recreational Areas:** Terrestrial and marine areas reserved for public access and recreation activities. The land areas should be retained under public ownership and developed for recreational purposes. The marine areas are only open for bathing and snorkelling, except for seine fishing, provided that the activity does not interfere with recreational activities.
5. **Yacht Mooring Sites:** with an indication of the number of moorings to be installed in each area. This was deemed necessary as it was decided that no free anchoring is to be allowed in Soufriere.



Figure 1: Zoning map of the Soufriere Marine Managed Area.  
Source: Soufriere Marine Management Authority

In addition to the zoning, other provisions were agreed upon regarding the regulations for resource use, including fishing gear and techniques, dive operations' obligations and restrictions, yacht operations, and other water-based activities. (Article 7)<sup>7</sup>.

This agreement was initially to be implemented, and the area managed by the Soufriere Foundation (SRDF) through a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), comprising representatives of the main resource user groups and the management agencies with appropriate jurisdiction, along with the SRDF.<sup>8</sup>

However, in 2001 a new agreement was established that turned over the management responsibility of the SMMA to the newly created Soufriere Marine Management Authority Inc. or SMMA Inc., a not-for-profit company established under the Companies Act of St. Lucia 1996. The SMMA was established as a Local Fisheries Management Area (LFMA) and the Soufriere Marine Management Association Inc. was established as the Local Fisheries Management Authority for the management of the SMMA by Saint Lucia Gazette Notice, 29 April 2000. This was done in accordance with the provisions of Sections 18 and 19 of the Fisheries Act, Cap. 7.15 of the Revised Laws of Saint Lucia. The TAC was then re-established as the "Stakeholder Committee".

In 2022, the Fisheries Act, Cap 7.15 of the Revised Laws of Saint Lucia was amended to allow SMMA Inc. to create and enforce its byelaws. Bye-law No. 2 of the Soufriere Marine Management Association Inc. includes general information on the purpose of the establishment of SMMA Inc., the area to be managed and the objectives and principles of the company, in addition to covering matters related to membership, officers of the SMMA Inc., the Board of Directors, its meetings and committees, financial matters and reporting.

In addition to the overall management of the area by SMMA Inc. with assistance from the Department of Fisheries, several other community-based organisations utilise the SMMA for their operations and contribute to the management objectives. One such group is the Soufriere Fishermen's Co-operative Society Ltd., which sits on the Board of Directors of the SMMA Inc. This co-operative's membership consists of fishing vessel owners and fisherfolk who operate primarily in Soufriere. Other groups include the Soufriere Regional Development Foundation, focusing on community development, and the CLEAR Caribbean Ltd., a not-for-profit

---

<sup>7</sup> Government of Saint Lucia, "Agreement to Manage the Soufriere Marine Management Area" (2001),4-5.

<sup>8</sup> Available from the Background section of the Soufriere Marine Management Area website (<https://www.smma.org.lc>)

company that is currently implementing community-based coral restoration with youth from Soufriere and its environs.

Despite the continued promotion of co-management in the community by the DOF and related agencies, many members of the Soufriere Fishermen's Co-operative Society Ltd. have expressed feelings of marginalization and exclusion from the decision-making processes. These concerns have been voiced during stakeholder engagements with the Department of Fisheries and SMMA Inc.

Fisherfolk are crucial stakeholders in achieving effective ocean governance but are often characterised as being vulnerable, marginalised and having low power in decision-making concerning the affairs that they are affected by.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, the empowerment of community stakeholders through meaningful participation in decision-making processes and the allocation of responsibilities in the co-management of fisheries is both a fundamental condition for successful implementation of co-management, as well as an essential goal.<sup>10</sup>

Empowerment can be defined as “an interactive process through which people experience personal and social change, enabling them to take action to achieve influence over the organizations and institutions which affect their lives and the communities in which they live.”<sup>11</sup>

For the empowerment of these low-power stakeholders to be realised, empowerment-based engagement must be applied widely and without prejudice. This concept can be described as “the process through which low-power stakeholders acquire resources, knowledge and skills to gain influence over events and important matters.”<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, in fishery-based commons, management agencies must understand how empowerment initiatives may result in a reduction of the factors that restrict the participation of low-power stakeholders like

---

<sup>9</sup> Dawkins, C.E. (2014). The Principle of Good Faith: Toward Substantive Stakeholder Engagement. *J Bus Ethics* 121, p. 285. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-013-1697-z>

<sup>10</sup> Jentoft, S. (2005). Fisheries co-management as empowerment. *Marine policy*, 29(1), 1-7.

<sup>11</sup> Whitmore, E., & Kerans, P. (1988). Participation, Empowerment and Welfare. *Canadian Review of Social Policy*, 22, 51–60. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45407891>

<sup>12</sup> Freeman, E.R., Civera, C., Cortese, D. and Fiandrino, S. (2018), "Strategising stakeholder empowerment for effective co-management within fishery-based commons", *British Food Journal*, Vol. 120 No. 11, pp. 2632. <https://doi.org/10.1108/BFJ-01-2018-0041>

fisherfolk.<sup>13</sup> Prioritization of these strategies can therefore allow for the enjoyment of the benefits of successful and effective co-management.<sup>14</sup>

In this study, the researcher aims to explore how the empowerment of fisherfolk in Saint Lucia can be strengthened to allow these critical stakeholders to have greater participation in decision-making in ocean governance. To achieve this, the Soufriere Marine Managed Area will be used as a case study. The researcher seeks to evaluate how low-value stakeholders like fisherfolk are currently empowered to participate in co-management and decision-making. In addition, the researcher seeks to determine the gaps that currently exist in the empowerment of fisherfolk. Finally, the researcher aims to develop recommendations that fisheries sector managers can widely apply to improve the empowerment levels of fisherfolk, granting them the increased ability to engage in co-management.

Like many coastal and developing states, the Government of Saint Lucia is increasingly burdened by the impacts of climate change and other anthropogenic issues such as unsustainable land and sea-based practices. Adding to this situation, there are often gaps in monitoring, control, and conservation of biodiversity due to a lack of capacity for marine management. Co-management allows community members to play an integral role in marine management, aiming for equitable use of resources and alleviating tensions among stakeholders through mutual agreement on policies and regulations that promote environmental sustainability and protect livelihoods.

Currently in Saint Lucia, some co-management strategies are employed by the Department of Fisheries in marine resource management. These include the utilization of traditional and local knowledge for assessing ecosystem health and functioning during episodes of disease, distress, and natural disasters, assessing the health and population structure of reef-associated species such as the West Indian Sea Egg (*Tripneustes ventricosus*) to determine fisheries measures such as seasonal closures, and in the management of Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs) which are often deployed and maintained by fisherfolk themselves.

In practice, the use of these and similar strategies has allowed the Government of Saint Lucia (GOSL) and the DOF to effectively and efficiently streamline support, relief, and restoration

---

<sup>13</sup> McEwan, C. (2003), “‘Bringing government to the people’: women, local governance and community participation in South Africa”, *Geoforum*, Vol. 34 No. 4, pp. 469-481.

<sup>14</sup> Freeman, E.R., Civera, C., Cortese, D. and Fiandrino, S. (2018), "Strategising stakeholder empowerment for effective co-management within fishery-based commons", *British Food Journal*, Vol. 120 No. 11, pp. 2632. <https://doi.org/10.1108/BFJ-01-2018-0041>

initiatives, reducing the effort that must be made by the DOF and the GOSL in terms of financial and technical resource usage.

To continue reaping the benefits of co-management, the Government must seek to increase the degree of empowerment of low-power and marginalised stakeholders, like fisherfolk.

Expected challenges in completing this study include highly fragmented and limited data sources regarding the co-management and empowerment arrangements in the Soufriere Marine Management Area. It is also expected that conducting interviews from abroad may pose difficulty, and assistance from the appropriate individuals on the ground may be necessary to gather information in a timely fashion.



## **Part one: Co-management and Empowerment.**

*Part one of this thesis explores the concepts of co-management and empowerment, focusing on the elements critical for empowering small-scale fisherfolk communities. It examines the intersection of co-management and empowerment and reviews key literature to identify essential empowerment elements. Additionally, this part introduces stakeholder analysis as a tool for evaluating empowerment. It provides an overview of stakeholders in the Soufriere Marine Management Area and presents a framework for assessing the empowerment levels of Soufriere's fisherfolk community in Saint Lucia.*

### **Chapter 1: Empowerment of Small-Scale Fishers in Theory**

*This chapter introduces the concepts of co-management and empowerment, with a focus on the key elements required to empower small-scale fisherfolk communities. Section A explores the significance of co-management and empowerment for communities, delving into the intersection of these two vital concepts. Section B reviews relevant literature on empowerment to identify and prioritize common elements essential for fostering empowerment within fisherfolk communities.*

## Section 1.1.A: An overview of co-management and empowerment

In many coastal and developing states, the increased dependency on fishery resources for food security and livelihood support, in conjunction with the cumulative effects of unsustainable resource use and climate change impacts, have created a need for greater management of the fisheries sector.<sup>15</sup> Governments have attempted to tackle fisheries management through “top-down” approaches to governance, or prescriptive governance. This approach generally entails a narrow focus on resource issues and often prioritises the conservation, protection and preservation of marine resources, alongside other biological science-based arguments.<sup>16</sup>

Unfortunately, these attempts at prescriptive, government-led intervention, while well intentioned, can fail to adequately consider the priorities of fishing communities that rely on these resources, or leave fisherfolk out of the decision-making process entirely.<sup>17</sup> This regime may create distance between fisherfolk and fisheries managers, which can reduce the management system’s effectiveness.<sup>18</sup> These attempts at modern fisheries management often do not tackle the grievances faced by fisherfolk, consider the local context, or have buy-in from the community.<sup>19</sup> As a result, laws and policies set are often ineffective at curbing the overexploitation of fisheries resources.<sup>20</sup> These factors, as well as the negative impacts of globalisation and the growing competing use, unsustainable and often unequitable development of coastal spaces-have resulted in the marginalisation of fisherfolk<sup>21</sup>.

---

<sup>15</sup> Cochrane, K. L., & Garcia, S. M. (2009). *A Fishery Manager’s Guidebook*. John Wiley & Sons. (pp. 1)

<sup>16</sup> Degnbol, P. (2003). Science and the user perspective. In *Springer eBooks* (pp. 31).

[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-017-3323-6\\_3](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-017-3323-6_3)

<sup>17</sup> Nielsen, J. R., Degnbol, P., Viswanathan, K., Ahmed, M., Hara, M., & Abdullah, N. M. R. (2004). Fisheries co-management—an institutional innovation? Lessons from South East Asia and Southern Africa. *Marine Policy*, 28(2), 153. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0308-597x\(03\)00083-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0308-597x(03)00083-6)

<sup>18</sup> Nielsen, J. R., Degnbol, P., Viswanathan, K., Ahmed, M., Hara, M., & Abdullah, N. M. R. (2004). Fisheries co-management—an institutional innovation? Lessons from South East Asia and Southern Africa. *Marine Policy*, 28(2), 154. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0308-597x\(03\)00083-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0308-597x(03)00083-6)

<sup>19</sup> Nielsen, J. R., Degnbol, P., Viswanathan, K., Ahmed, M., Hara, M., & Abdullah, N. M. R. (2004). Fisheries co-management—an institutional innovation? Lessons from South East Asia and Southern Africa. *Marine Policy*, 28(2), 153. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0308-597x\(03\)00083-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0308-597x(03)00083-6)

<sup>20</sup> Nielsen, J. R., Degnbol, P., Viswanathan, K., Ahmed, M., Hara, M., & Abdullah, N. M. R. (2004). Fisheries co-management—an institutional innovation? Lessons from South East Asia and Southern Africa. *Marine Policy*, 28(2), 153. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0308-597x\(03\)00083-653](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0308-597x(03)00083-653)

<sup>21</sup> Nielsen, J. R., Degnbol, P., Viswanathan, K., Ahmed, M., Hara, M., & Abdullah, N. M. R. (2004). Fisheries co-management—an institutional innovation? Lessons from South East Asia and Southern Africa. *Marine Policy*, 28(2), 152. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0308-597x\(03\)00083-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0308-597x(03)00083-6)

To address the ineffectiveness of top-down approaches to fisheries management, many practitioners have turned to co-management<sup>22</sup>, a concept arising from the work of Elinor Ostrom. In short, co-management entails the government sharing the responsibility for resource and/or area management with the local community, sometimes including NGOs, research institutions and other relevant stakeholders.<sup>23</sup> In fisheries' co-management, this is the sharing of management responsibility for fisheries' resources, in particular. Co-management can further be considered as the “institutional and organisational arrangements, which define the cooperation among the fisheries administration and relevant fishing communities.”<sup>24</sup> Fisheries co-management allows for fisherfolk to play a central role in the development of laws and policies and builds on their knowledge and unique skillsets for the sustainable use of fisheries resources.<sup>25</sup>

Related to co-management in the marine realm is the concept of “Satoumi”, a Japanese coastal management concept which characterises the ideal relationship between people and the ocean. Satoumi can be more concretely defined as “a coastal area where biological productivity and biodiversity has increased through human interaction”, where “sato” means a local community or village where people live their life and “umi” is the most common word meaning the sea”.<sup>26</sup> Satoumi was borne from the land-based “Satoyama Initiative” in 1998 by Professor Tetsuo Yanagi<sup>27</sup>, as a way to ensure the continued access to seafood for fisherfolk and enhance fish production in coastal areas.<sup>28</sup> Both concepts, Satoyama and Satoumi, have been advocated for by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).<sup>29</sup> Satoumi combines the benefits of

---

<sup>22</sup> Ansell, C., & Gash, A. (2007). Collaborative governance in theory and practice. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 18(4), 544. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mum032>

<sup>23</sup> Cavallé, M., Said, A., ORiordan, B., (2020). Co-Management for Small-scale Fisheries: Principles, Practices and Challenges”. P.g. 5. Published by Low Impact Fishers of Europe.

<sup>24</sup> Nielsen JR, Vedsmand T. User participation and institutional change in fisheries management: a viable alternative to the failures of a top-down driven control? *Ocean and Coastal Management* 1999;42(1):21.

<sup>25</sup> Cavallé, M., Said, A., ORiordan, B., 2020. Co-Management for Small-scale Fisheries: Principles, Practices and Challenges”. P.g. 5. Published by Low Impact Fishers of Europe.

<sup>26</sup> [https://www.env.go.jp/water/heisa/satoumi/en/01\\_e.html](https://www.env.go.jp/water/heisa/satoumi/en/01_e.html)

<sup>27</sup> Takuro Uehara, Keito Mineo, (2017) Regional sustainability assessment framework for integrated coastal zone management: Satoumi, ecosystem services approach, and inclusive wealth, *Ecological Indicators* Volume 73, Page 717, ISSN 1470-160X, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolind.2016.10.031>.

<sup>28</sup> Uehara, Takuro & Sakurai, Ryo & Hidaka, Takeshi & Matsuda, Osamu & Yanagi, Tetsuo & Yoshioka, Taisuke. (2021). What is Satoumi? (English). 10.34382/00014171.

<sup>29</sup> Hsu, Kang, and Jyun-Long Chen. 2023. "The Coastal Future We Want: Implications of Coastal People's Perceptions on Satoumi Actions and Sustainable Development in Northeastern Taiwan" *Sustainability* 15, no. 10: 7919 p.g. 3 of 19. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15107919>

traditional knowledge, modern science and stakeholder input to achieve the goal of adaptive management and active conservation of biological diversity in coastal areas.<sup>3031</sup>

Satoumi or fisheries co-management has been promoted in the fisheries sector of Saint Lucia through many projects funded by the Government of Japan or the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and implemented through the Department of Fisheries and other relevant regional fisheries management bodies. These projects have sought to build the capacities of both fisherfolk organisations and fisheries management agencies to effectively implement co-management strategies. While these projects have been extremely useful to both stakeholder groups, the sustainability of the interventions has been a concern due to a lack of continued action after the completion of the projects.

Effective co-management has two main outcomes: democracy and efficacy. Democracy, in this case, refers to the involvement of stakeholders in decision-making regarding the use of resources and their associated livelihoods, whilst efficacy refers to the reduction of the cost of implementation while enjoying increased acceptance of and compliance with management measures.<sup>32</sup> These outcomes are equally important and mutually inclusive, as it is presumed that management measures are more likely to be accepted and deemed appropriate by resource users when their knowledge has been used in developing these measures.<sup>33</sup>

Despite its usefulness, co-management is not without its challenges. A major challenge in implementing co-management strategies is a lack of involvement of select stakeholder groups in decision-making. These vulnerable and marginalised stakeholder groups, often including fisherfolk, are considered “low-power” stakeholders. This term reflects their reduced capacity to participate in decision-making regarding the resources they use for their livelihoods, despite playing a critical role in sustaining coastal and marine biodiversity.<sup>34</sup>

---

<sup>30</sup> Hsu, Kang, and Jyun-Long Chen. 2023. "The Coastal Future We Want: Implications of Coastal People's Perceptions on Satoumi Actions and Sustainable Development in Northeastern Taiwan" *Sustainability* 15, no. 10: 7919 p.g. 3 of 19. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15107919>

<sup>31</sup> Berque, J.; Matsuda, O. Coastal biodiversity management in Japanese satoumi. *Mar. Pol.* **2013**, *39*, 192.

<sup>32</sup> Nielsen et al. (2004) Fisheries co-management—an institutional innovation? Lessons from Southeast Asia and Southern Africa pg 154

<sup>33</sup> Nielsen et al. (2004) Fisheries co-management—an institutional innovation? Lessons from Southeast Asia and Southern Africa pg 154

<sup>34</sup> Freeman, E.R., Civera, C., Cortese, D. and Fiandrino, S. (2018), "Strategising stakeholder empowerment for effective co-management within fishery-based commons", *British Food Journal*, Vol. 120 No. 11, pp. 2632. <https://doi.org/10.1108/BFJ-01-2018-0041>

This limited ability to contribute to decision-making and governance may stem from several “structural barriers” to participation. Structural barriers, as defined by van Wormer and Besthorn (2010), are “spaces, policies, practices, and attitudes that diminish the autonomy and choices available to individuals and communities as a result of their particular identities and experiences”.<sup>35</sup> Some of these barriers involve a lack of political will to devolve power to create an enabling environment, lack of understanding and capacity for co-management within stakeholder groups, a failure of governments to relate to and convey information to stakeholders by appropriate and effective means, and a lack of funding to invest in co-management strategies.<sup>36</sup> These issues all result in inadequate or ineffective empowerment of these stakeholders and must be addressed to allow full participation of low-power stakeholders in decision-making and co-management on a whole.

Empowerment, put simply, is “an interactive process through which people experience personal and social change, enabling them to take action to achieve influence over the organizations and institutions which affect their lives and the communities in which they live.”<sup>37</sup> According to Rappaport 1987, this concept concerns both an individual’s influence and control on their life, as well as the “democratic participation in the life of one’s community”.<sup>38</sup> Rappaport continues by supposing that empowerment “conveys both a psychological sense of personal control or influence and a concern with actual social influence, political power and legal rights”<sup>39</sup>. This illustrates that empowerment can and should be considered on three levels: individual or personal empowerment, group or collective empowerment, and the empowerment of the community.<sup>40 41</sup> These three levels are highly interrelated and difficult to separate.<sup>42</sup>

---

<sup>35</sup> Cameron Butler, Jan Adamowski, (2015) Empowering marginalized communities in water resources management: Addressing inequitable practices in Participatory Model Building, *Journal of Environmental Management*, Volume 153, Pages 154, ISSN 0301-4797, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvman.2015.02.010>.

<sup>36</sup> Cavallé, M., Said, A., ORiordan, B., 2020. Co-Management for Small-scale Fisheries: Principles, Practices and Challenges”. P.g. 43-44. Published by Low Impact Fishers of Europe.

<sup>37</sup> Whitmore, E., & Kerans, P. (1988). Participation, Empowerment and Welfare. *Canadian Review of Social Policy*, 22, 51. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45407891>

<sup>38</sup> Rappaport, J. (1987). Terms of empowerment/exemplars of prevention: Toward a theory for community psychology. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 15(2),121-148.

<sup>39</sup> Rappaport, J. (1987). Terms of empowerment/exemplars of prevention: Toward a theory for community psychology. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 15(2),121

<sup>40</sup> Lord, J., & Hutchison, P. (1993). The process of empowerment: Implications for theory and practice. *Canadian journal of community mental health*, 12, 4.

<sup>41</sup> Whitmore, E., & Kerans, P. (1988). Participation, Empowerment and Welfare. *Canadian Review of Social Policy*, 22, 51. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45407891>

<sup>42</sup> Lord, J., & Hutchison, P. (1993). The process of empowerment: Implications for theory and practice. *Canadian journal of community mental health*, 12, 5.

We cannot speak of empowerment, without examining the concept of power itself. The Cornell Empowerment Group defined Power as the "capacity of some persons and organizations to produce intended, foreseen and unforeseen effects on others".<sup>43</sup> Power distributions, therefore, impact the operation of community groups and the quality of lives of the individuals within them.<sup>44</sup> Furthermore, empowerment is not possible without acknowledgement of the inequitable distribution of power amongst stakeholders, with particular attention paid to that which restricts the participation of low-power stakeholders in decision-making.<sup>45</sup> In situations of marginalization, power must be redistributed equitably for low-power stakeholders to be able to make meaningful contributions to decision-making.<sup>46</sup> According to Whitmore (1998), "individuals are assumed to understand their own needs better than anyone else and therefore should have the power both to define and act upon them."<sup>47</sup> The caveat, however, is that even when power has been redistributed, those stakeholders who have been denied power for considerable periods may be reluctant to seize the emergent opportunity to participate in decision-making and must therefore "experience participation as an empowering process."<sup>48</sup> In these situations of long periods of perceived powerlessness, stakeholders may believe that their actions will not affect or change their current situation.<sup>49</sup> This confirms that whilst a major component of the empowerment process is participation, simultaneously, empowerment is required for effective participation.<sup>50</sup>

For the successful creation of an enabling environment for empowerment, stakeholders must perceive in themselves a certain level of self-efficacy. Perceived self-efficacy has been described as "as people's beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of

---

<sup>43</sup> Lord, J., & Hutchison, P. (1993). The process of empowerment: Implications for theory and practice. *Canadian journal of community mental health*, 12, 5-5.

<sup>44</sup> Pratto, Felicia. (2015). On power and empowerment. *The British journal of social psychology / the British Psychological Society*, 55. 10.1111/bjso.12135. P.g 1

<sup>45</sup> Greenwood, M., Van Buren III, H.J. (2010). Trust and Stakeholder Theory: Trustworthiness in the Organisation–Stakeholder Relationship. *J Bus Ethics* 95, 426. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-010-0414-4>

<sup>46</sup> Arnstein, S. R. (1969). A Ladder Of Citizen Participation. *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*, 35(4), 216–224. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01944366908977225>

<sup>47</sup> Whitmore, E. & Kerans, P. (1988). Participation, empowerment and welfare. *Canadian Review of Social Policy*, 22,51.

<sup>48</sup> Whitmore, E., & Kerans, P. (1988). Participation, Empowerment and Welfare. *Canadian Review of Social Policy*, 22, 53. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45407891>

<sup>49</sup> Kieffer, C. H. (1984). Citizen Empowerment: A Developmental Perspective. *Prevention in Human Services*, 3(2–3), 16. [https://doi.org/10.1300/J293v03n02\\_03](https://doi.org/10.1300/J293v03n02_03)

<sup>50</sup> Whitmore, E., & Kerans, P. (1988). Participation, Empowerment and Welfare. *Canadian Review of Social Policy*, 22, 51. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45407891>

performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives”.<sup>51</sup> For stakeholders to take power, it is imperative that they understand their needs and motives, their resources, and be open to cooperation with other stakeholder groups, including the government.<sup>52</sup> To encourage self-efficacy and empowerment, the strengths of low-power stakeholders must be built upon<sup>53</sup>, including those skills that will allow for a shift in power.

Another key element of empowerment is access to resources and knowledge regarding the resource base<sup>54</sup>. Low-power stakeholders often express feelings of marginalization regarding their access to resources, including both physical access and in terms of useful knowledge regarding the physical resources, particularly compared to the access enjoyed by “higher power” stakeholders.<sup>55</sup> This must be addressed by providing for equitable access to the resource base through the establishment of institutional and operational frameworks that allow for open and equitable access to valued resources and sharing of valuable information through the appropriate channels.<sup>56</sup> Furthermore, in addition to access to resources, people also need access to “valued social roles” for both individual and community empowerment.<sup>57</sup> This includes leadership positions, which may increase feelings of participation and inclusion in the individuals and the community that entrusts them to represent their group.

One method used commonly to increase empowerment of low-power stakeholders, is the use of participatory research methods<sup>58</sup>. In these processes, stakeholders are engaged equally, or primarily, in the development of research objectives, knowledge base creation and expansion, and the sharing of outcomes<sup>59</sup>. This approach includes the aforementioned elements of empowerment. Participatory research allows for the development of self-efficacy,

---

<sup>51</sup> Bandura, A. (1994). Self-efficacy. In V. S. Ramachandran (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of human behavior* (Vol. 4, pp. 71). New York: Academic Press. (Reprinted in H. Friedman [Ed.], *Encyclopedia of mental health*. San Diego: Academic Press, 1998).

<sup>52</sup> Banet, Anthony G Jr. (1976). BOOKS. *Group & Organization Studies (Pre-1986)*, 1(2), 252. <https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/books/docview/232430332/se-2/>

<sup>53</sup> Rappaport, J. (1987). Terms of empowerment/exemplars of prevention: Toward a theory for community psychology. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 15(2), 138. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00919275>

<sup>54</sup> Lord J. & Hutchison P. (1993). The Process of Empowerment: Implications for Theory and Practice. *Canadian Journal of Community Mental Health*. 12(1): 14. <https://doi.org/10.7870/cjcmh-1993-0001>

<sup>55</sup> <sup>55</sup> Lord J. & Hutchison P. (1993). The Process of Empowerment: Implications for Theory and Practice. *Canadian Journal of Community Mental Health*. 12(1): 14. <https://doi.org/10.7870/cjcmh-1993-0001>

<sup>56</sup> <sup>56</sup> Lord J. & Hutchison P. (1993). The Process of Empowerment: Implications for Theory and Practice. *Canadian Journal of Community Mental Health*. 12(1): 14. <https://doi.org/10.7870/cjcmh-1993-0001>

<sup>57</sup> Wolfensberger, W. (1983). Social role valorization: A proposed new term for the principle of normalization. *Mental Retardation*, 21(6), 234

<sup>58</sup> Whitmore, E., & Kerans, P. (1988). Participation, Empowerment and Welfare. *Canadian Review of Social Policy*, 22, 53. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45407891>

<sup>59</sup> Whitmore, E., & Kerans, P. (1988). Participation, Empowerment and Welfare. *Canadian Review of Social Policy*, 22, 54. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45407891>

understanding of needs and motives, and grants valuable social positions to the engaged individuals and groups. It has demonstrated that stakeholders that have experienced empowerment through participatory methods, are “likely to be individually more self-confident, more cohesive as a group, and take more responsible action to define and act on behalf of their own welfare.”<sup>60</sup> In fact, it has been identified that just the act of participation in itself can be considered a source of empowerment.<sup>61</sup>

From these findings, it is clear that empowerment of the local community must be at the heart of any co-management arrangements for successful implementation and sustained positive action.

---

<sup>60</sup> Whitmore, E., & Kerans, P. (1988). Participation, Empowerment and Welfare. *Canadian Review of Social Policy*, 22, 58. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45407891>

<sup>61</sup> Lord J. & Hutchison P. (1993). The Process of Empowerment: Implications for Theory and Practice. *Canadian Journal of Community Mental Health*. 12(1): 15. <https://doi.org/10.7870/cjcmh-1993-0001>



## Section 1.1.B: Key elements of empowerment for fisherfolk.

As we have seen, empowerment of fisherfolk is essential for effective fisheries co-management. It has been argued that for fisheries co-management to be sustainable, empowerment initiatives must be targeted to the individual, collective and community levels.<sup>62</sup> (While fisherfolk may be considered a collective, or one group in a wider community, for the purposes of this study, they are being considered as a community themselves.) Further to this, we must also consider the needs of different categories of fisherfolk, including that of women, and the elderly. It is also important to note that empowerment actions targeted towards the individual also impact the empowerment of the collective as well. Likewise, it can be assumed that that collective empowerment may also affect the empowerment of the individual. Moreover, community empowerment is largely intertwined with co-management.<sup>63</sup> Therefore, empowerment actions cannot be undertaken in a silo in this case, and fisheries management and its practitioners must consider the collective effects when implementing these actions.

Studies on the empowerment of fisherfolk are limited<sup>64,65</sup>, compared to the studies conducted in other fields such as health. However, the existing literature agrees on several action steps necessary for the realisation of effective empowerment, which can contribute to successful co-management of fisheries resources. These elements include capacity building and skill development, securing tenure and use rights, accessing funding, the use of participatory research methods, stakeholder engagement, and the delegation of responsibility to fisherfolk. These elements, when applied effectively, can result in the successful empowerment of fisherfolk, particularly within small-scale fisheries which are often characterised by limited access to these key elements and resources.

Capacity building, as defined by the United Nations, is “the process of developing and strengthening the skills, instincts, abilities, processes and resources that organizations and

---

<sup>62</sup> Jentoft, S. (2005). Fisheries co-management as empowerment. *Marine Policy*, 29(1), 2. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2004.01.003>

<sup>63</sup> Jentoft, S. (2005). Fisheries co-management as empowerment. *Marine Policy*, 29(1), 3. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2004.01.003>

<sup>64</sup> Jentoft, S. (2005). Fisheries co-management as empowerment. *Marine Policy*, 29(1), 1. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2004.01.003>

<sup>65</sup> Boiral, O., & Heras-Saizarbitoria, I. (2015). Managing biodiversity through stakeholder involvement: why, who, and for what initiatives? *Journal of Business Ethics*, 140(3), 404. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-015-2668-3>

communities need to survive, adapt, and thrive in a fast-changing world.”<sup>66</sup> In the case of fisherfolk, this can include training on fishing techniques and emerging technology, gear choice and design, post-harvest and marketing strategies (value addition). Capacity building may also include skill development in areas that are not directly related to fishing activity, such as financial and business management, interpersonal and literacy skills. By building on the skills of fisherfolk, feelings of self-efficacy and independence are fostered and fisherfolk may be able to increase the income garnered from fishing activity, as well as their ability to sustain themselves and their families through their livelihoods. In particular, training on financial literacy, business management, interpersonal and literacy skills may have a considerable impact on the ability of fisherfolk to sustain community fishing operations, i.e. coming together to purchase supplies and fuel, and build and/or maintain important infrastructure such as fish landing and storage facilities. In this way, capacity building can positively contribute to community empowerment and development.<sup>67</sup>

According to the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, “use rights” refer to “the rights held by fishers or fishing communities to use the fishery resources.”<sup>68</sup> Use rights systems can be generally split into two categories: access rights and withdrawal or harvest rights. Access rights “authorise entry into the fishery or into a specific fishing ground”, whilst withdrawal (harvest) rights “typically involve the right to a specific amount of fishing effort (e.g., to fish for a certain amount of time or with a certain amount of gear) or the right to take a specific catch.”<sup>69</sup> The concept of use rights is closely related to that of tenure rights, which can be defined as “restricting who can have access to the fishery, and potentially how much fishing activity (fishing effort) the participants are allowed, or how much catch each can take”.<sup>70</sup> Tenure and use rights systems being adequately and equitably developed and implemented, may result in the empowerment of fisherfolk, particularly those belonging to small scale fisheries. This benefit is achieved by ensuring that fisherfolk have sustained access

---

<sup>66</sup> United Nations. (n.d.). *Capacity-Building* | United Nations. <https://www.un.org/en/academic-impact/capacity-building>

<sup>67</sup> S, T. M. Z. T., Syahid, A., MA, Shaari, A. a. H., Noh, N. A., & Sulaiman, S. (2023). Capacity building planning for fishermen community’s empowerment. *Planning Malaysia*, 21, 396. <https://doi.org/10.21837/pm.v21i30.1409>

<sup>68</sup> Charles, Anthony. (2002). Use rights and responsible fisheries: Limiting access and harvesting through rights-based management. A fishery manager's guidebook: management measures and their application. 424, 131.

<sup>69</sup> Charles, Anthony. (2002). Use rights and responsible fisheries: Limiting access and harvesting through rights-based management. A fishery manager's guidebook: management measures and their application. 424, 132.

<sup>70</sup> Charles, Anthony T. (2013) *Governance of tenure in small-scale fisheries: Key considerations (Land tenure journal, July 2013)*. Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), Rome, 3.

to fishery resources, resulting in more secure livelihoods as well as ensuring the sustainability of the resource base.

Research has shown that small-scale fisherfolk are often among the most economically vulnerable populations.<sup>71</sup> A lack of access to financial resources often plays a large role in the inability of fisherfolk, especially in small scale fisheries, to build and maintain essential fisheries infrastructure, purchase fishing gear or transition to more sustainable fishing.<sup>72</sup> This lack of funding can result in the disregard of fisheries regulations and the use of unsustainable or unsavoury practices in favour of attempting to increase or sustain the income generated from fisheries. This may include the harvest of juvenile, endangered or otherwise unsuitable fish.<sup>73</sup> By having consistent access to funding, either through subsidies, grants or successful business operations, fisherfolk can purchase the appropriate fishing and safety gear, fund the upkeep of useful fisheries infrastructure like jetties, fish processing and storage sites and further invest into technology for the improvement of fishing outcomes such as GPS, fish finders or Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs), alongside other lifestyle benefits such as insurance for fishing vessels and/or infrastructure. This increases empowerment by improving working conditions and the quality of fishery products available to consumers and ultimately increasing the income generation potential of fisherfolk. Access to social security funds may also result in empowerment by ensuring that vulnerable fisherfolk have safety nets during times of natural disaster, fisheries closures or other shocks such as disease outbreaks.<sup>74</sup>

Participatory research involves the inclusion of stakeholders in crafting research projects and sharing results with relevant stakeholders and communities. When implemented appropriately, the stakeholders play an integral part in the selection of research topics and questions, and therefore can zone in on issues of concern to them and their community.<sup>75</sup> This represents a more inclusive approach in which government or NGO affiliated researchers are expected to step back and play more of an advisory role, simply guiding stakeholders in research development, rather than leading investigation efforts. This allows for stakeholders to gain

---

<sup>71</sup> Béné, C., & Friend, R. M. (2011). Poverty in small-scale fisheries. *Progress in Development Studies*, 11(2), 120. <https://doi.org/10.1177/146499341001100203>

<sup>72</sup> Pomeroy, R., Arango, C., Lomboy, C. G., & Box, S. (2020). Financial inclusion to build economic resilience in small-scale fisheries. *Marine Policy*, 118, 103982, 1. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2020.103982>

<sup>73</sup> Cinner, J. E. (2009). Poverty and the use of destructive fishing gear near east African marine protected areas. *Environmental Conservation*, 36(4), 324. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0376892910000123>

<sup>74</sup> *Enhancing Fishers Livelihoods through Social Protection*. (2023, November 7). Voluntary Guidelines. <https://www.fao.org/voluntary-guidelines-small-scale-fisheries/news/news-detail/Enhancing-Fishers-Livelihoods-through-Social-Protection/en>

<sup>75</sup> Whitmore, E., & Kerans, P. (1988). Participation, Empowerment and Welfare. *Canadian Review of Social Policy*, 22, 53. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45407891>

experience and capacity in conducting research, as well as a focus on the topics of priority to them. In the case of fisherfolk, this type of research often focuses on three main categories. The first is “practical livelihood concerns” such as fishing gear, spatial and temporal fishing trends and fishing effort. The second category of research is relating to social, political and economic activities, such as resource access rights, institutional arrangements and the allocation or equitable sharing of resources. The third category of research concerns the development of policy governing the sector, including choosing the appropriate framework for policy development and implementation for the community.<sup>76</sup>

Some benefits of participatory research to fisherfolk include capacity building in research methods, increased self-efficacy, and greater acceptance of policy and legislation governing the fisheries sector. This last point is of particular importance to fisheries managers and can be explained by greater trust in the results as the affected community members are directly involved in the investigation and can communicate their findings to the community directly. This method can however be derailed by a lack of funding to conduct the investigation. Another major challenge can be time. Fishing is often a full time, high effort job, and fisherfolk may not be able to allocate enough time to ensuring that the research is carried out to its full potential.<sup>77</sup>

Stakeholder engagement was defined by Greenwood (2007) as “practices the organisation undertakes to involve stakeholders in a positive manner in organisational activities.”<sup>78</sup> According to Uantchern Loh CEO, Black Sun Global Stakeholder Engagement (Asia Pacific), “Stakeholder engagement is about building and nurturing two-way relationships with anyone who has a stake in your organisation.”<sup>79</sup> Civera et al. (2018) argues that there are two sides to engagement, namely “engagement with stakeholders and engagement of stakeholders”.<sup>80</sup> Engagement with stakeholders grants an organisation or management entity the understanding of the expectations of its stakeholders and provides space for constructive dialogue between the parties. Engagement of stakeholders, on the other hand, speaks to stakeholders feeling

---

<sup>76</sup> Wiber, M., Berkes, F., Charles, A., & Kearney, J. (2004). Participatory research supporting community-based fishery management. *Marine Policy*, 28(6), 462. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2003.10.020>

<sup>77</sup> Wiber, M., Berkes, F., Charles, A., & Kearney, J. (2004). Participatory research supporting community-based fishery management. *Marine Policy*, 28(6), 462. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2003.10.020>

<sup>78</sup> Greenwood, M. R. (2007). Stakeholder engagement: beyond the myth of corporate responsibility. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 74(4), 315. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-007-9509-y>

<sup>79</sup> *Empowerment through engagement: Sparking inclusive conversations 2024 Stakeholder Engagement Research Report*. (2024, June 26). Blacksun Global Corporate. <https://www.blacksun-global.com/insights/research/engagement/sparking-inclusive-conversations>

<sup>80</sup> De Colle, S., Casalegno, C., & Civera, C. (2018). Stakeholder engagement through empowerment: The case of coffee farmers. *Business Ethics a European Review*, 28(2), 157. <https://doi.org/10.1111/beer.12208>

connected to the mission of the management entity. Therefore, it can be said that stakeholder engagement ultimately results in building trust and open dialogue between the agency and its stakeholders, allowing for the achievement of mutual benefits and solutions to challenges faced on both sides.<sup>81</sup> Furthermore, stakeholder engagement is a critical element needed for the successful realisation of both co-management and empowerment goals. In the context of the relationship between fisheries sector managers and fisherfolk, this may take many forms. Examples include hosting community meetings to discuss conservation and fishing industry issues, mutual knowledge sharing, involvement of fisherfolk in research, environmental assessments and policy decisions, and communicating the results of scientific studies or assessments on fisheries stocks. Stakeholder engagement of and with fisherfolk also must involve creating avenues for fisherfolk to share their knowledge as well as their challenges, allowing for feelings of inclusion, value and recognition of their contributions to the industry.

Delegation of rights and responsibility for management of a resource and empowerment are closely related, in that by granting more responsibility to disempowered stakeholders, these users gain power over their circumstances. Likewise, when stakeholders are empowered, they are more fit to take additional responsibility for the management of common pool/community resources. In order for fisherfolk to become adequately qualified to take up management responsibility or engage in successful co-management, the previously considered elements of empowerment are critically important. Fisherfolk must have considerable knowledge of fisheries resources and what is required for their healthy functioning and sustainability, as well as develop relevant management, interpersonal and enforcement capacity to ensure that the resource base is protected from harmful decision-making and action. Fisherfolk should also be able to access or create funds to ensure that management initiatives may be carried out, which requires financial literacy and business creation and management skills. Fisherfolk should also have beneficial research partnerships or have adequate research skills that allow for full understanding of the necessary actions and protections needed for the sustainability of the resource base. It is also important that fisherfolk are versed in stakeholder engagement with other stakeholders who are also interested in fisheries, marine and coastal resources, to ensure equitable use and conservation of said resources. When fisherfolk can successfully accept additional responsibility for the management of fisheries resources and infrastructure, it is expected that they increase their self-efficacy levels and in turn their degree of empowerment.

---

<sup>81</sup> De Colle, S., Casalegno, C., & Civera, C. (2018). Stakeholder engagement through empowerment: The case of coffee farmers. *Business Ethics a European Review*, 28(2), 157. <https://doi.org/10.1111/beer.12208>

A major barrier to be considered is the recognition that fisherfolk are often vulnerable stakeholders facing many other kinds of insecurity that exist outside of the fisheries sector. These challenges, such as poverty and food insecurity, mean that the affected community may not be willing or able to focus on fisheries sustainability challenges as their attentions are turned towards the fulfilment of their basic needs. In fact, their insecurity may be considered a cause of their lack of interest in conservation and sustainability. It is difficult for vulnerable populations to consider the future and sustainability of a fishery resource when in the present day they are limited in their ability to sustain themselves and their families. In this reality, fisherfolk may chose to ignore sustainability concerns in favour of income generation and stability, as the need to access basic resources would naturally be of higher priority to vulnerable populations. The ability to consider the future sustainability of a resource base can be said to be a privilege, and an indication that one's basic needs are satisfied. This satisfaction can free up mental space for more forward-thinking approaches like conservation and sustainability. It is not enough to assume that vulnerable communities of fisherfolk will be incentivised to consider sustainability and resource governance issues simply because they impact their livelihoods in the fisheries sector.<sup>82</sup> It is imperative to consider the external factors that influence the decision-making and economic motivations of fisherfolk.

Therefore, governments must first work with fisherfolk to rectify these issues that cause insecurity and vulnerability in fisherfolk through improvements in the social, economic and political landscapes that impact the community. One must consider not only capacity building in fisheries related disciplines, but also in topics like financial literacy and business development for sustained income generation that would provide access to greater funding for community development. Likewise, when considering use rights, governments and managers must first consider human and labour rights issues, with special attention given to extra vulnerable sub-communities such as women, children, the elderly and disabled. Finally, vulnerable communities like fisherfolk cannot be expected to adequately shoulder the responsibility for resource management when they are unable or challenged in their ability to carry out their day-to-day responsibilities, such as childcare and the upkeep of the household. This shows that when their realities are unstable, it is difficult for fisherfolk to take on more important roles in governance. By reducing these basic insecurities, the communities affected

---

<sup>82</sup> Barratt, C., & Allison, E. H. (2014). Vulnerable people, vulnerable resources? Exploring the relationship between people's vulnerability and the sustainability of community-managed natural resources. *Development Studies Research*, 1(1), 16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21665095.2014.904079>

may be able to focus less on their current struggles and more on longer-term issues like conservation, sustainability, and other governance matters beyond just their livelihood security in the fishing industry.<sup>83</sup>

---

<sup>83</sup> Allison, E. H., Ratner, B. D., Åsgård, B., Willmann, R., Pomeroy, R., & Kurien, J. (2011). Rights-based fisheries governance: from fishing rights to human rights. *Fish and Fisheries*, 13(1), 18. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-2979.2011.00405.x>

## **Chapter 2: Co-management and Empowerment Arrangements in the SMMA.**

*This chapter introduces the concept of stakeholder analysis and its utility as a tool for evaluating empowerment. Section A highlights the importance of stakeholder analysis and provides a concise overview of the fisheries, marine, and coastal stakeholders within the Soufriere Marine Management Area. Section B presents the framework for assessing the empowerment levels of the fisherfolk community in Soufriere, Saint Lucia.*



## Section 1.2.A: Categorization of stakeholders in the SMMA and their power using a power/interest matrix.

According to Freeman (1984), a stakeholder is considered as “any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives.”<sup>84</sup> For the management objectives of a given organisation or entity to be achieved, the needs, interests and expectations of the affected stakeholders must be considered, if the organisation wants to keep stakeholders engaged.<sup>85</sup> Therefore, an organisation must be able to accurately identify its stakeholders to determine its priorities.<sup>86</sup> In the case of fisheries co-management, stakeholders include fisherfolk and their organisations, but also any other individuals, groups or entities with an interest in marine and coastal areas such as marine tourism operators, coastal communities, environmental/marine focused NGOs, and other agencies with an impact on marine and coastal policy, legislation or decision-making.<sup>87</sup>

All stakeholders are not considered equal, however, and particular groups may have a greater impact on the success of co-management strategies than others through their influence, power or participation.<sup>88,89</sup> The needs and expectations of such groups are typically prioritised, as their satisfaction would be expected to more strongly affect the outcome of co-management objectives. Noting this, it is useful for organisations to conduct stakeholder analyses. At the most basic level, stakeholder analysis is imperative in assisting fisheries managers determine two things: who their key stakeholders are, and how to satisfy them.<sup>90</sup> Stakeholder analysis is also critical in planning for stakeholder engagement and allows organisations to utilise tailored engagement strategies for varying categories of actors. This approach can often result in the development of positive relationships and trust between organisations and their stakeholders.

---

<sup>84</sup> Freeman, R. E. (1984). *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach*. Pitman Publishing.46

<sup>85</sup> Boiral, O., & Heras-Saizarbitoria, I. (2015b). Managing biodiversity through stakeholder involvement: why, who, and for what initiatives? *Journal of Business Ethics*, 140(3), 405. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-015-2668-3>

<sup>86</sup> Greenwood, M. R. (2007b). Stakeholder engagement: beyond the myth of corporate responsibility. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 74(4), 320. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-007-9509-y>

<sup>87</sup> Suharno, N., Arifin, A., & Yunanto, A. (2020). The Stakeholder Analysis for Fisheries Management. *SHS Web of Conferences*, 86, 01020, 2. <https://doi.org/10.1051/shsconf/20208601020>

<sup>88</sup> Mayers, James. (2005). Stakeholder power analysis. 10.13140/RG.2.2.22745.57446.

<sup>89</sup> Mitchell, R. K., Agle, B. R., & Wood, D. J. (1997). Toward a theory of stakeholder identification and salience: defining the principle of who and what really counts. *Academy of Management Review*, 22(4), 863. <https://doi.org/10.2307/259247>

<sup>90</sup> John M Bryson (2004) What to do when Stakeholders matter, *Public Management Review*, 6:1, 26, DOI: 10.1080/14719030410001675722

Modern stakeholder analysis theories often focus on the levels of participation, interest and influence of stakeholder groups for prioritisation. Even with these key elements considered, there are many methods for conducting stakeholder analyses, and their use may be determined by the interests of the management authority or entity conducting the analysis, the ease of applying the method, the breadth of information sought, or the purpose of the analysis.<sup>91</sup> In this study, the aim of analysing fisheries sector stakeholders in Soufriere is to succinctly determine their levels of empowerment. To achieve this a power-interest matrix will be used. This matrix, proposed by Eden and Ackermann (1998), is used to categorise stakeholders through examining their power and interest regarding a situation or organisation.<sup>92</sup>

Power has previously been broadly defined in this study as “capacity of some persons and organizations to produce intended, foreseen and unforeseen effects on others”<sup>93</sup>. In stakeholder analysis, power can be defined as a stakeholder’s influence over an entity or initiative<sup>94</sup>. In the context of fisheries co-management stakeholders, this refers to the degree of impact of an actor’s role or responsibilities or their influence on marine, coastal and fisheries resource management.<sup>95</sup> With respect to this paper, interest refers to the level of concern an actor has for marine, coastal, and fisheries co-management.

While the engagement of high-power stakeholders is typically prioritised due to their greater impact on outcomes, this study focuses on fisherfolk. Fisherfolk have been often identified as low-power stakeholders in the literature.<sup>96</sup> This section aims to confirm if this holds true for the fisherfolk of the community of Soufriere.

To do this, first the marine and coastal stakeholders of the Soufriere Marine Management Area must be identified. These stakeholders fall into several broad categories. These are: (1) agencies

---

<sup>91</sup> John M Bryson (2004) What to do when Stakeholders matter, Public Management Review, 6:1, 27, DOI: 10.1080/14719030410001675722

<sup>92</sup> Eden, C., & Ackermann, F. (1998). *Making Strategy: The Journey of Strategic Management*. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446217153>

<sup>93</sup> Lord, J., & Hutchison, P. (1993). The process of empowerment: Implications for theory and practice. *Canadian journal of community mental health*, 12, 5-5.

<sup>94</sup> Mitchell, R. K., Agle, B. R., & Wood, D. J. (1997). Toward a theory of stakeholder identification and salience: defining the principle of who and what really counts. *Academy of Management Review*, 22(4), 865. <https://doi.org/10.2307/259247>

<sup>95</sup> Guðlaugsson, B., Fazeli, R., Gunnarsdóttir, I., Davidsdóttir, B., & Stefansson, G. (2020). Classification of stakeholders of sustainable energy development in Iceland: Utilizing a power-interest matrix and fuzzy logic theory. *Energy Sustainable Development/Energy for Sustainable Development*, 57, 168–188. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esd.2020.06.006>

<sup>96</sup> Freeman, E. R., Civera, C., Cortese, D., & Fiandrino, S. (2018). Strategising stakeholder empowerment for effective co-management within fishery-based commons. *British Food Journal*, 120(11), 2632. <https://doi.org/10.1108/bfj-01-2018-0041>

with the responsibility for management and decision-making, (2) agencies with the responsibility for infrastructure and development, (3) enforcement agencies, (4) tourism operators (5) local community members, and of course (6) fisherfolk. It is important to note that some of the actors to be mentioned may fall under multiple categories, but for the purpose of this study, will be classed according to their primary role. In addition, as there are many stakeholders in the community, some stakeholders will be placed into representative sub-groups. Note: This list is inexhaustive.

<b>Stakeholder Class</b>	<b>Stakeholder Group(s)</b>
(1) Agencies with the responsibility for marine and coastal monitoring, management and decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Rural Development (MOA) (incl. Dept. of Fisheries, Water Resource Management Agency, Veterinary and Livestock Services)</li> <li>– Soufriere Marine Management Association (SMMA Inc.) (incl. Board of Directors)</li> <li>– Saint Lucia Air and Seaports Authority – Maritime Affairs Division (SLASPA-MA)</li> <li>– Minister for Education, Sustainable Development, Innovation, Science, Technology and Vocational Training</li> <li>– Ministry of Tourism, Investment, Creative Industries, Culture and Information</li> </ul>
(2) Agencies with the responsibility for marine and coastal infrastructure and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Ministry of Infrastructure, Ports, Transport, Physical Development and Urban Renewal (incl. Crown Lands Dept., Physical Planning, Survey and Mapping, Development Control Authority)</li> <li>– Soufriere Regional Development Foundation (SRDF)</li> <li>– Saint Lucia Air and Seaports Authority – Seaports Division (SLASPA – PD)</li> </ul>
(3) Enforcement agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Royal Saint Lucia Police Force (RSLPF) (incl. Marine Police Unit)</li> <li>– Saint Lucia Air and Seaports Authority – Port Police (SLASPA – PP)</li> </ul>
(4) Tourism operators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Hotels, Guest houses, Airbnb properties</li> <li>– SCUBA and snorkel operators</li> <li>– Boat charters and pleasure cruises</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Water Taxi Association</li> <li>– Soufriere Yacht Services Association</li> </ul>
(5) Local community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Saint Lucians residing in Soufriere</li> </ul>
(6) Fisherfolk (fishers, mongers, processors)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Soufriere Fishermen’s Co-operative Society Ltd. and its members</li> <li>– Fisherfolk who are not members of the Co-operative</li> </ul>

Table 1: Identification of marine and coastal stakeholders in the Soufriere Marine Management Area, Saint Lucia

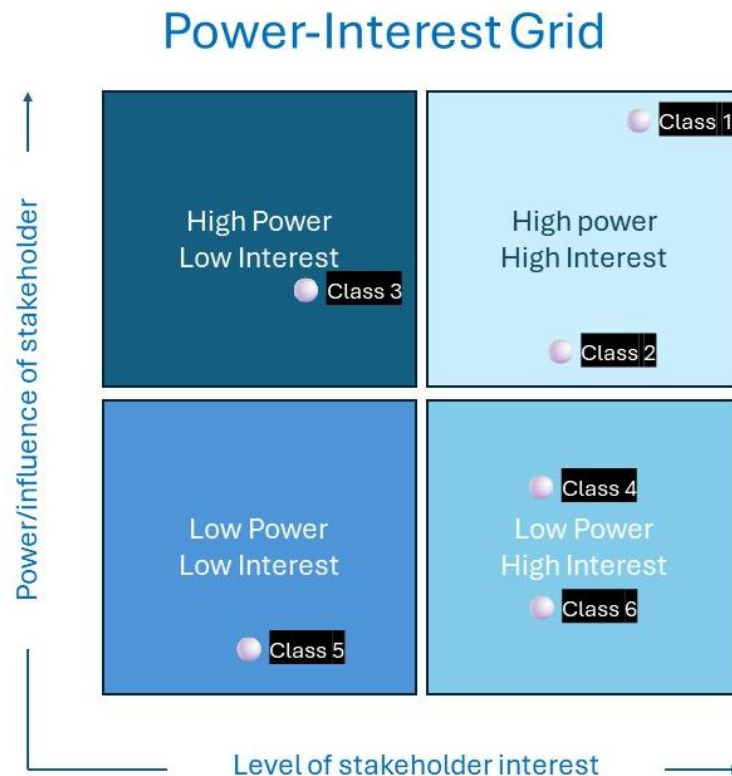


Figure 2: Analysis of marine and coastal stakeholders in the Soufriere Marine Managed Area using a power - interest matrix.

Now that the main stakeholders have been identified and sorted into classes, they will be examined to determine the intersection between their power and interest in marine and coastal management, and by extension, fisheries co-management.

Class 1: Agencies with the responsibility for marine and coastal monitoring, management and decision-making

The entities in Class 1 are considered high power and high interest stakeholders. These stakeholders have the responsibility for marine and coastal management by way of their mandates, legislation and regulations. They are considered high power, as they are primarily concerned with marine and coastal management, and therefore have the greatest impact on the management of fisheries resources. Likewise, they also have high interest in these topics due

to the nature and objectives of their organisations. The Ministry of Tourism poses a unique case in that whilst they are not explicitly engaged in marine and coastal management, the highly tourism-oriented nature of Soufriere garners much of their interest, while the tourism sectors' status as the largest contributor to Saint Lucia's GDP grants MOT a high level of power or influence over management and decision-making.

#### Class 2: Agencies with the responsibility for marine and coastal infrastructure and development

The entities in Class 2 are also considered high power and high interest stakeholders, however both their power and interest are limited as compared to Class 1. This is because the objectives and nature of these organisations is primarily concerning social and tourism development, as well as installation and upkeep of infrastructure, but they are not involved in coastal and marine resource management outside of this.

#### Class 3: Enforcement agencies

The entities in Class 3 are considered high power but low interest stakeholders. These agencies have a somewhat large degree of power or influence over marine and coastal management as they are primarily concerned with upkeeping the rule of law, which includes legislation concerning marine and coastal management such as fisheries, environmental and post state law and regulations. However, due to their focus on enforcement and not resource management, their interest is considerably lower than that of Class 1.

#### Class 4: Tourism operators

The entities in Class 4 are considered low power but high interest stakeholders. Class 4 entities are interested in marine and coastal management as they utilise these resources for income generation and livelihood security. Their power to influence resource management however is limited, but not completely negligible. This class contributes to the financing of marine and coastal resource management through the payment of legally mandated user and licensing fees to conduct marine and coastal activities. These payments are made to select management agencies.

#### Class 5: Local community

The entities in Class 5 are considered low power and low interest stakeholders. The average Saint Lucian citizen residing in Soufriere may only be concerned with their continued access

to fishery products and recreational locale such as beaches but may not be fundamentally interested in marine and coastal management beyond these concerns. Likewise, these individuals do not have high power over management concerns as this is limited to participation in political fora such as community meetings with parliamentary officials or management agencies.

#### Class 6: Fisherfolk

The entities in Class 6 are considered low power but high interest stakeholders. The interest of fisherfolk in marine and coastal management is high, as their access to fisheries resources as well as the sustainability of these resources directly impacts their livelihoods and social stability. However, these stakeholders are marginalised, having very low power to affect resource management at present as there are few avenues for them to wholly participate in and influence decision-making.

The categorization of stakeholders within the Soufriere Marine Management Area provides valuable insights into stakeholder dynamics and has determined that fisherfolk are low power stakeholders despite their reliance on marine and coastal resources. This situation is not ideal, as elements have been seen to lead to the typical challenges of non-compliance to regulations, user conflict and ultimately threatens the sustainability of fisheries resources. The low power status of fisherfolk restricts their ability to be full participants in fisheries co-management. Therefore, if marine and coastal managers seek to engage in effective co-management of fisheries resources, action must be taken to empower fisherfolk. This then requires an understanding of the current degree of empowerment of fisherfolk.

## Section 1.2.B: Evaluating empowerment and an introduction of the framework to be used to assess the empowerment of fisherfolk within the SMMA.

Understanding community empowerment is essential as it provides a baseline understanding of empowerment, which can then be built upon for improvement of the community's quality of life.<sup>97</sup> While the concept of empowerment has been a topic of much discussion since its inception in Julian Rappaport (1981) "In praise of paradox: A social policy of empowerment over prevention", the question of how to adequately and effectively measure empowerment has not had a concrete answer. This is true at all three levels of empowerment, but especially so at the community level where there has been no development of a universally accepted method of conducting empowerment evaluations.<sup>98</sup>

Laverack and Wallerstein (2001) have proposed several organizational elements that are tied to community members' empowerment and abilities to effect change. These have been designated as the 'Organizational Domains of Community Empowerment' (ODCE).<sup>99</sup> Many other scholars have determined their own ODCEs. It is interesting to note that several of the ODCE frameworks developed agree on a few elements. These core elements are capacity building, transfer of knowledge, resource access, and partnerships or community. The ODCE may serve as guides to communities in conducting evaluations but may allow for various interpretations as they are seen to be highly context dependant, adding to the difficulty of developing a universal method for evaluating empowerment.<sup>100</sup>

In this empowerment evaluation of fisherfolk in Soufriere these core elements will be considered through their alignment with the key elements of empowerment outlined in section 1.1.B and as follows:

---

<sup>97</sup> Kasmel, A., & Andersen, P. T. (2011). Measurement of community empowerment in three community programs in Rapla (Estonia). *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 8(3), 801. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph8030799>

<sup>98</sup> Kasmel, A., & Andersen, P. T. (2011). Measurement of community empowerment in three community programs in Rapla (Estonia). *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 8(3), 800. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph8030799>

<sup>99</sup> Laverack, G. (2001). Measuring community empowerment: a fresh look at organizational domains. *Health Promotion International*, 16(2), 181. <https://doi.org/10.1093/heapro/16.2.179>

<sup>100</sup> Kasmel, A., & Andersen, P. T. (2011). Measurement of community empowerment in three community programs in Rapla (Estonia). *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 8(3), 803. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph8030799>

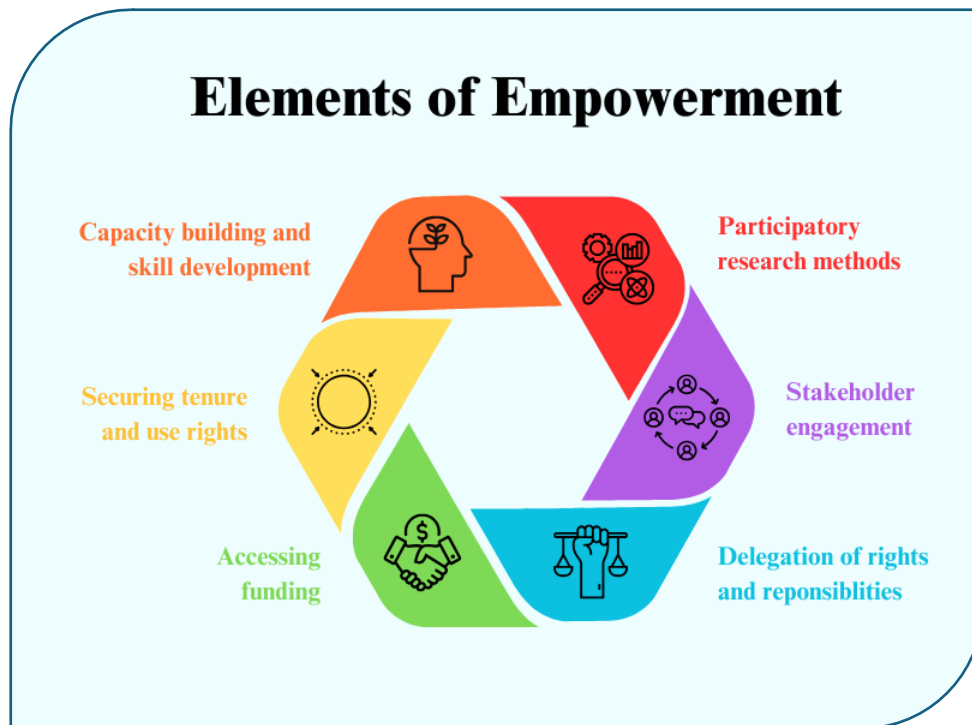


Figure 3: Elements of empowerment.

These elements will be evaluated for their current empowerment capacity for Soufriere's fisherfolk through two avenues.

The first will be an analysis of the legal, institutional and operational framework that creates an enabling environment for empowerment in the Soufriere Marine Managed Area, including local and some regional legislation, policies and agreements. This will also include a review of the frameworks governing the operation of the Soufriere Marine Managed Area, Soufriere Marine Management Authority, St. Lucia Fisher Folk Co-operative Society Ltd and by extension the Soufriere Fisherman's Cooperative Society Ltd. This analysis should elucidate the enabling environment for the empowerment of fisherfolk based on the key elements of empowerment identified, including an identification of any gaps that exist in these frameworks. This review will serve as the basis for the next step of the empowerment evaluation, which is an interview with key fisherfolk.

The second avenue for evaluating empowerment in Soufriere's fisherfolk will be an interview of five members of the Board of the Soufriere Fishermen's Co-operative Society. These Board Members are directly engaged in fishing activity and have knowledge of the development of the fisheries sector in Soufriere. This interview will aim to uncover how fisherfolk themselves



relate to the concept of empowerment and will contribute to the development of recommendations to improve empowerment potential in their community.

This framework has been crafted by the researcher, drawing inspiration from the frameworks on Freeman (2018) and Civera (2018), amongst others.<sup>101,102</sup> The interviews will be conducted by virtual means for the duration of at least 1 hour and will be recorded and transcribed by the researcher. Interviewees will be instructed to respond in English, but translations from Saint Lucian creole will be made available if necessary. The researcher will collect additional data on the age, gender, and number of years engaged in the fishing industry.

The suggested interview questions are tailored to gather responses relating to what fisherfolk believe they need to be empowered based on the key elements of empowerment identified. Before beginning the questions on an element, the researcher will first provide the definitions contained in this work. The suggested questions are as follows. The research will also leave room for any additional questions or topics that may come up during the interview.

Elements of Empowerment	Interview Questions
1) General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Do you believe fisherfolk in Soufriere are empowered?</li> <li>ii. Are you aware of any community initiatives aimed at empowerment?</li> <li>iii. What actions do you think are necessary for empowerment?</li> <li>iv. As the Board of Directors, do you think the Co-operative has a role in empowering fisherfolk, and if yes what do you think that is ?Is the SMMA Inc. taking action to increase empowerment (explain) and what else can be done in your view?</li> <li>v. Is the Department of Fisheries/Government of Saint Lucia taking action to increase empowerment (explain) and what else can be done in your view?</li> </ul>
2) Capacity building and skill development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Do you believe that capacity building and skill development are a key element of empowerment for your community? Explain.</li> <li>ii. Is there a benefit of capacity building in fisheries topics? Explain.</li> <li>iii. Are you aware of any capacity building/skill development initiatives targeting fisheries capacity?</li> <li>iv. Have you been a part of any such initiatives? Why or why not?</li> </ul>

<sup>101</sup> Freeman, E. R., Civera, C., Cortese, D., & Fiandrino, S. (2018b). Strategising stakeholder empowerment for effective co-management within fishery-based commons. *British Food Journal*, 120(11), 2631–2644. <https://doi.org/10.1108/bfj-01-2018-0041>

<sup>102</sup> De Colle, S., Casalegno, C., & Civera, C. (2018b). Stakeholder engagement through empowerment: The case of coffee farmers. *Business Ethics a European Review*, 28(2), 156–174. <https://doi.org/10.1111/beer.12208>

	v. What areas of capacity building and skill development do you think are necessary to achieve empowerment?
3) Securing tenure and use rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Do you believe that securing tenure and use rights is a key element of empowerment for your community? Explain.</li> <li>ii. Is there a benefit to your community of securing tenure and use rights? Explain.</li> <li>iii. Are you aware of any tenure or use rights issues in your community? Explain.</li> <li>iv. Do you think more needs to be done to secure tenure and use rights for fisherfolk in Soufriere? Give examples.</li> </ul>
4) Accessing funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Do you believe accessing funding is a key element of empowerment for your community? Explain.</li> <li>ii. Is there a benefit of securing funding for fisheries related activities? Explain.</li> <li>iii. Are you aware of any funding opportunities for fisherfolk?</li> <li>iv. Have you been a part of any such initiatives? Why or why not?</li> <li>v. What sustainable funding opportunities could be used to sustain the sector in Soufriere and can ultimately assist in achieving empowerment?</li> </ul>
5) The use of participatory research methods,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Do you believe that participatory research methods are a key element of empowerment for your community? Explain.</li> <li>ii. Is there a benefit of participatory research methods in fisheries topics? Explain.</li> <li>iii. Are you aware of any participatory research methods targeting fisherfolk?</li> <li>iv. Have you been a part of any such initiatives? Why or why not?</li> <li>v. What areas of research do you think are necessary to achieve empowerment?</li> </ul>
6) Stakeholder engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Do you believe that stakeholder engagement is a key element of empowerment for your community? Explain.</li> <li>ii. Is there a benefit of stakeholder engagement in fisheries topics? Explain.</li> <li>iii. Are you aware of any stakeholder engagements targeting fisherfolk?</li> <li>iv. Have you been a part of any such initiatives? Why or why not?</li> <li>v. Do you think previous stakeholder engagement processes have produced benefits for your community? Explain.</li> <li>vi. Where, or on what topics do you think stakeholder engagement can be better strategized to achieve empowerment? How?</li> </ul>
7) Delegation of rights and responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Do you believe that delegation of rights and responsibility is a key element of empowerment for your community? Explain.</li> <li>ii. Is there a benefit of delegation of rights and responsibility to fisherfolk? Explain.</li> <li>iii. Are you aware of any rights or responsibilities that have been delegated to fisherfolk by management authorities?</li> <li>iv. Have you or your community taken up any of these responsibilities? Why or why not?</li> </ul>

	v. Which rights and responsibilities do you think should be delegated to fisherfolk and why?
--	--

Table 2: Interview questions for fisherfolk, aligned with the elements of empowerment.

Scholars have argued that empowerment evaluations are most effective when conducted by the community themselves.<sup>103</sup> While this idea is salient and the reasoning understood, for the purpose of this brief work, the evaluation will be conducted primarily by outside means, noting that one of the recommendations proposed by the researcher at the end of this study may be that an in-depth empowerment evaluation by community members should be facilitated through participatory research or other suitable methods.

---

<sup>103</sup> Craig, G. (2002). Towards the Measurement of Empowerment: The Evaluation of Community Development. *Community Development Society Journal*, 33(1), 132. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15575330209490146>

## **Part two: Evaluation of Empowerment in the Soufriere Marine Managed Area.**

Part two evaluates the empowerment of the fisherfolk community in Soufriere, Saint Lucia. It begins by assessing the community's experienced level of empowerment, starting with an exploration of the enabling environment that supports community empowerment. This is followed by an analysis of an interview with key stakeholders in the fisheries sector. This part then discusses how the fisherfolk experience empowerment, integrating insights from both the enabling environment and their personal experiences. Finally, it identifies gaps between the provisions of the enabling environment and the reality faced by the fisherfolk.

### **Chapter 1: Assessment of the degree of empowerment in the Soufriere Marine Management Area.**

This chapter assesses the empowerment level of the fisherfolk community in Soufriere, Saint Lucia. The assessment begins with an overview of the enabling environment for fisherfolk empowerment, focusing on the laws, regulations, and policies governing the area (Section A). It is followed by an analysis based on an interview with key stakeholders in Soufriere's fisheries sector (Section B).

## Section 2.1.A: An overview of the legislative, operational and institutional frameworks governing co-management and empowerment in Soufriere.

To understand the empowerment level of Soufriere's fisherfolk, it is important to the researcher to understand how empowerment is mainstreamed nationally into relevant legislative, institutional and operational frameworks in Saint Lucia. To develop this understanding, several national, regional and international legal and policy documents, as well as those relating to the operation and/or regulation of fisheries co-operatives and marine management agencies in Saint Lucia, were examined for the six key elements of empowerment previously identified. In total, 18 local and regional legislative, institutional and operational documents were examined. These are listed in Appendix A, accompanied by a brief description of each. In this and the following sections, each element of empowerment is examined separately.

### 1. Capacity Building and Skill Development

Eleven of the eighteen documents examined contained articles or statements relating to capacity building and/or skill development. Whilst most of the named documents speak more generally to building the capacity of fisheries stakeholders in Saint Lucia and/or the Caribbean Region, four of them specify capacity building and skill development of fisherfolk.

Legislation/Policy Document	Relevance
1. St Lucia Fisherfolk Cooperative Society Ltd. By Laws:	These byelaws indicate clearly that capacity building is a crucial part of the operation of the NFO, and by extension, each individual fisherfolk co-operative under the NFO's umbrella, including Soufriere. In addition, this document further identifies the promotion of and engaging in educational and technical assistance activities that will benefit the members and operation of the Society.
2. National Policy for the Fisheries Sector 2020 – 2030	A key priority of this policy is “to strengthen stakeholder capacity for self-organisation and to effectively participate in and influence fisheries sector decision-making.” While this priority area considers fisheries stakeholders more generally, there are other areas which explicitly relate to building the capacity of stakeholders who are directly involved in the fishing industry through harvest or post-harvest activity.
3. Saint Lucia's Sectoral Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan for the Fisheries	In this document, there are two “prioritised adaptation measures” of relevance. The first calls for developing and implementing capacity building programmes for fisherfolk at all stages of the value chain to “facilitate holistic climate change adaptation planning and implementation.” as the second measure speaks to designing a training programme to assist fishers in identifying optimal fishing grounds,

Sector (Fisheries SASAP) 2018-2028	including training on the use of GPS, fish ground mapping and safe night fishing.
4. Agreement establishing the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy	There are two significant articles in this policy, one relates to promoting access to training for fisheries sector development, and the other relates to “relevant human, institutional and technological capacities, including the transfer and development of relevant technologies”; and “otherwise improve the management of fish-handling practices, marketing or trade in the Participating Parties.”
5. FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries	There are three significant articles in this voluntary Code. The first expresses the responsibility of States to provide education and training to fisherfolk for the promotion of responsible fisheries. Another article expresses the responsibility of States to enhance the education and skills of fisherfolk, including their professional qualifications. Finally, States should ensure that fisherfolk are kept current on the implementation of this and other relevant international conventions or standards through education and training.

## 2. Securing Tenure and Use Rights

Nine of the eighteen documents examined contained articles or statements relating to securing tenure and use rights for marine and coastal stakeholders.

Of these, six speak specifically to the rights of fisherfolk, namely:

<b>Legislation/Policy Document</b>	<b>Relevance</b>
1. Fisheries Act, Cap 7.15 of the Revised Laws of Saint Lucia (2013)	There are several articles that speak to the licensing of fishers, both local and foreign, the associated conditions and grounds of cancellation or suspension of licenses, as well as the potential of entering into fisheries access agreements with foreign States. Regarding the rights of local fishers, Part 2(11)(4) indicates that no application for a fishing license can be denied unless necessary for carrying out any licensing provisions specified by the fisheries plan, suspicions or expectations of non-compliance with fishing regulations, lack of a valid certificate of inspection or non-compliance of the vessel with regulations, or any other provisions or regulations under this Act. Local fishing licenses are issued yearly and are non-transferable, unless permission is given by the Minister. There are also four articles that speak to the declaration of Fishing Priority Areas (for the protection of fishing activity) and Marine Reserves (fishing prohibited), as well as prohibited fishing methods and fishing gear.

2. Fisheries (Amendment) Act, No. 3 of 2023 of the Revised Laws of Saint Lucia	The Fisheries Act has been recently amended to allow for the creation of byelaws by an authorised marine/fisheries management authority, which can include conditions on the access rights of fishers, for example, establishment of marine reserves or fishing priority areas (FPAs). [In the parent Act, it is stated that any local authority, fishermen’s cooperative or fishermen’s association or other appropriate body representing fishermen in the area can be designated as the local fisheries management authority for that area.]
3. Fisheries Regulations, Cap 7.15 of the Revised Laws of Saint Lucia (2013)	Within these regulations, there are articles regarding the protection of fishing in fishing priority areas (fishing activity cannot be hampered or impeded in these areas), and the prohibition against interfering with or disturbing fishing, which applies in all areas, including outside FPAs, apart from action by authorised officers identified by the Chief Fisheries Officer or Minister responsible for Fisheries. In addition, there are regulations concerning specific fisheries, including size limits, gear/harvest restrictions, fishery seasons and the protection of juveniles and/or nesting/egg-carrying animals.
4. Saint Lucia’s Sectoral Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan for the Fisheries Sector (Fisheries SASAP) 2018-2028	In this document there exists a “prioritised adaptation measure” focused on regulating entry into selected fisheries to improve opportunities for increasing economic yield and productivity. The intended outcome of this measure is the creation of legislation to regulate entry into selected fisheries [to improve opportunities for increasing economic yield and productivity developed and enforced.]
5. Agreement establishing the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy	There are two relevant articles. The first speaks to “Access to Fisheries Resources”, which allows for and encourages the formation of access agreements with Participating Parties or Third States or international organisations, considering the applicable provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), to allow access to fishing opportunities where surpluses exist. The second concerns Fisheries Sector Development requires that participating parties enhance the development of the sector by “supporting and protecting the rights of traditional, subsistence, artisanal and small-scale fishers.”
6. FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries	This voluntary Code has several articles which speak to the responsibility of States to ensure that fisheries interests and the rights of subsistence, artisanal and small-scale fisherfolk are considered, including in coastal area management, planning and development. This Code also refers to the responsibility of States to develop and promote fisheries in a manner that reduces conflicts amongst fisherfolk, and between various sectors and/or industries. Also included in this code is the responsibility of States to ensure that fishing activity is carried out legally within its jurisdiction,

	and that State fisherfolk do not conduct unauthorised fishing activity outside of the State’s jurisdiction.
--	---

### 3. Accessing Funding

Ten of the eighteen documents examined contained articles or statements relating to accessing funding for marine and coastal industries/ the Blue Economy.

Of these, eight speak specifically to the direct funding or funding assistance to be given to fisherfolk, namely:

<b>Legislation/Policy Document</b>	<b>Relevance</b>
1. Agriculture and Fisheries Incentives Act, Cap 7.18 of the Revised Laws of Saint Lucia (2014)	This Act does not speak to direct funding given to fisherfolk, but the provision of applicable incentives, cost reductions or reimbursements, including duty and tax exemptions including for the purchase of relevant equipment including vessels and/or vehicles, and income tax exemptions.
2. Agriculture and Fisheries Incentives (Amendment) Act, No. 8 of 2022 of the Revised Laws of Saint Lucia	This amendment act allows for changes to verbiage to include fisheries and aquaculture (seamoss) projects explicitly.
3. Fishing Industry (Assistance) Act of the Revised Laws of Saint Lucia (2021)	This Act contains articles related to the provision of payments to registered Co-operative Societies with respect to engines used for propelling fishing vessels, from the House of Assembly through the Chief Agricultural (Fisheries) Officer. This relates to fuel rebates for registered fishers and/or fishing vessel owners, through their respective Co-operative.
4. St Lucia Fisherfolk Cooperative Society Ltd. By Laws	One of the critical objectives of the SLFCS is to “raise capital, funds or loans for the objects of the Society”, which includes the development of the fisheries sector through the members of the SLFCS and its sub-organisations. The byelaws also contain several clauses or articles on the creation and maintenance of a training and institutional development fund, accessing loans from financial institutions as a co-operative, investment of co-operative funds into fisheries development, and dealing with surplus fundings through the creation of reserves and the payment of dividends to members (shareholders).



<p>5. Saint Lucia's Sectoral Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan for the Fisheries Sector (Fisheries SASAP) 2018-2028</p>	<p>This policy considers measures to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- increase the value of fisheries products by improving access to higher value markets;</li> <li>- reduce capital and operating costs for fishers through the promotion of fuel efficient and climate smart technology.</li> <li>- promote livelihood, market and product diversification to reduce the reliance on fisheries.</li> <li>- provide support for the development of new business opportunities.</li> <li>- leveraging private sector investment into the fisheries industry to improve access to business and financial support.</li> </ul>
<p>6. National Social Protection Policy</p>	<p>The relevant objective in this policy is to “develop sound and sustainable financial mechanisms for Social Protection”. This is further captured in key policy statements, generally speaking to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The protection of the poor and vulnerable during periods of economic contraction through appropriate safety net programmes</li> <li>- The provision of tax exemptions to applicable civil society organisations (to include fisherfolk co-operatives).</li> <li>- Strengthening existing social security regime and establishing comprehensive social security arrangements that will extend legal coverage to all workers, whether in the formal or informal sectors, and their dependants.</li> </ul>
<p>7. Agreement establishing Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy</p>	<p>The relevant articles of this policy consider adopting measures aimed at improving the welfare and socio-economic conditions of fishers and fishing communities, including by improving the business, financial and insurance environment, supporting capital investment, and facilitating or encouraging trade amongst Participating Parties.</p>
<p>8. FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries</p>	<p>The code dictates that States and subregional organisations or regional fisheries management organisations and arrangements should come to an agreement on how these organisations or arrangements are financed, taking into account the “relative benefits derived from the fishery, and the differing capacities of countries to provide financial and other contributions.” In addition, this code states that States should encourage financial intuitions to not require fishing vessels to be flagged in another jurisdiction as a condition for receipt of loans or mortgages, where this stipulation may lead to non-compliance with international conservation and management measures.</p>

#### 4. The use of participatory research methods.

Ten of the eighteen documents examined contained articles or statements relating to marine and coastal research.

Of these ten, four speak to the use of participatory research methods, namely:

<b>Legislation/Policy Document</b>	<b>Relevance</b>
1. Agreement to Manage the Soufriere Marine Management Area (2001) and Bye-Law No. 2 of the Soufriere Marine Management Association Inc.	The relevant objective of the SMMA's research and monitoring programme speaks to developing methods, approaches and tools for participatory planning and management. While this objective does not address participatory research with fisherfolk specifically, they are considered stakeholders of the SMMA Inc. In addition, the research and monitoring programme is to include the dissemination of information to all stakeholders, to increase awareness of research as well as the results of any research or studies conducted, as well as provide support to research activities conducted by external organisations.
2. St Lucia Fisherfolk Cooperative Society Ltd. By Laws	One of the important objectives of these byelaws is the promotion of research that will benefit the members and operation of the SLFCS and its sub-groups.
3. Saint Lucia's National Ocean Policy and Strategic Action Plan (NOP SAP) 2020–2035	Principle 3.2 on Ecosystem based management states: "Where possible, development should use ecosystem-based solutions as part of the overall approach, particularly at the coast. This approach must be participatory, accountable, transparent, equitable, and inclusive, in order to be responsive to present and future human uses and needs, including the needs of minorities and the most vulnerable groups in society." [Whilst this does not mention research explicitly, it is assumed that the use of participatory and inclusive ecosystem-based approaches may include fisherfolk in the design and conduct of research.]
4. FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries	This Code has several articles promoting research and the use of sound scientific evidence for decision making, particularly concerning the interests of small-scale fisherfolk and the preservation of traditional knowledge in small-scale fisheries. [Whilst this does not mention the use of participatory research explicitly, it is assumed that research done to preserve traditional knowledge and consider the interests of small-scale fisherfolk should include these fisherfolk in its design.]

## 5. Stakeholder Engagement

Eleven of the eighteen documents examined contained articles or statements explicitly referring to the engagement of marine and coastal stakeholders. Of these, four contain terms relating directly to fisherfolk.

<b>Legislation/Policy Document</b>	<b>Relevance</b>
1. Saint Lucia's National Ocean Policy and Strategic Action Plan (NOP SAP) 2020–2035	This policy speaks to stakeholder engagement that empowers stakeholders to participate in decision-making relevant to the sector, and to encourages co-management approaches where applicable.
2. Saint Lucia's Sectoral Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan for the Fisheries Sector (Fisheries SASAP) 2018-2028	This policy speaks specifically to the development and implementation of early warning systems for fisherfolk, as well as enhancing monitoring or alert networks through further engagement of stakeholders.
3. Agreement establishing Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy	This policy specifically speaks to the involvement of stakeholders in fisheries sector development by supporting the formation of and strengthening fisherfolk organisations. This policy also encourages public awareness through strengthening of regional institutions working with fisherfolk and their communities to conserve the marine environment.
4. FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries	This code contains several articles referencing States' obligations to facilitate stakeholder engagement. This includes ensuring that fisherfolk are involved in policy formation and implementation, transparency in the implementation of fisheries management measures and the decision-making process, and consultation of fisherfolk in matters of coastal area management planning and development.

## 6. The delegation of responsibility to fisherfolk.

Six of the eighteen documents examined contained articles or statements explicitly referring to the sharing responsibility for management of the fisheries industry with public or private partners, non-governmental organisations or regional agencies and organisations.

Of these, three documents explicitly consider the delegation of responsibility to fisherfolk, namely:

<b>Legislation/Policy Document</b>	<b>Relevance</b>
1. Fisheries Act, Cap 7.15 of the Revised Laws of Saint Lucia (2013)	This Act contains articles that allow for the transfer of responsibility for fisheries resource or fisheries infrastructure management, or the appointment of individuals or organisations to management or enforcement positions, as designated by the Chief Fisheries Officer or the Minister responsible for Fisheries. This Act also details the powers and immunities afforded to relevant individuals or organisations charged with management or enforcement, as well as charges to be leveraged against persons who may take undue or unprovoked negative action towards these authorised officers. [These authorised individual individuals or organisations may be suitably qualified fisherfolk or their organisations.]
2. Fisheries (Amendment) Act, No. 3 of 2023 of the Revised Laws of Saint Lucia	This amendment act further clarifies the designation of marine management authorities, as well as their ability to establish byelaws under the Fisheries Act.
3. Press Release: “Soufriere Fishermen’s co-op takes control of landing site”	This press release provides details of the handover of ownership of the fisheries facilities in Soufriere to the Soufriere Fishermen’s Cooperative Society Limited through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Government of Saint Lucia. This was supported by the Japan International Cooperation Agency, as this landing site was constructed by the Government of Japan and granted to the Government of Saint Lucia in 2003.

## Section 2.1.B: Results: Interview with the board of the Soufriere Fishermen's Co-operative Society on the degree of Empowerment experienced by fisherfolk in the SMMA.

To gather first-hand information on the level of empowerment experienced by fisherfolk in Soufriere, Saint Lucia, four members of the Board of Directors of the Soufriere Fishermen's Co-operative Society were interviewed. One joint interview was held virtually on September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 4:30pm EST, and lasted close to two hours. This interview was recorded and transcribed (Appendix B).

At the beginning of this interview, the scope and purpose of this research was clarified through a brief presentation of the research objectives, methodology and expected outcomes. Also, as previously stated in section 1.2.B, the definitions contained in this work for the various Elements of Empowerment were provided to the fisherfolk at the start of each set of questions.

The Board of Directors of the Co-operative was targeted for this interview session. Whilst only five fishers were available to be interviewed, it is assumed for the purposes of this study that these members most closely represent the interests of fisherfolk in the community of Soufriere. This decision is based on a few key assumptions regarding these individuals.

First, the members of the Board are nominated and elected by members of the Co-operative (fisherfolk in Soufriere). Thus, it is assumed that these board members most closely represent the interests of the Co-operative and its members.

Secondly, all members of the Board are currently fishers and have been involved in the fishing industry in Soufriere for over 30 years. Therefore, it can be assumed that these fishers have a wealth of knowledge regarding the development of the sector and past empowerment and/or co-management initiatives.

By virtue of their position as elected board members of the Soufriere Fishermen's Co-operative Society and their long tenure as fisherfolk in Soufriere, it is assumed that they serve as an adequate representative group of Soufriere's fisherfolk.

All respondents answered similarly, indicating shared sentiments amongst the Board of Directors. However, it can be inferred that these sentiments are also likely to be shared with most of Soufriere's fisherfolk. This final assumption is based on the election of the Board by fisherfolk, as well as previous first-hand evidence gathered during more in-depth stakeholder

engagements conducted with this community by the researcher and her colleagues at the Department of Fisheries in the last four years (2020 – 2024).

**The contents of the interview are detailed below.**

i. Empowerment:

First, empowerment was defined as “an interactive process through which people experience personal and social change, enabling them to take action to achieve influence over the organizations and institutions which affect their lives and the communities in which they live.”<sup>104</sup>

Regarding the concept of empowerment, the respondents collectively stated that they do not feel empowered as fisherfolk in Soufriere. They consider fisherfolk to be marginalised by large hotels in the community, which restrict their ability to fish in Fishing Priority Areas, due to issues of access to these areas, or by the presence of recreational dive groups (marine tourism). The respondents also stated that this issue is not being adequately addressed by the Soufriere Marine Management Association, with deference shown to tourism operators even in areas designated for fisherfolk, despite complaints to the SMMA Inc. The respondents were unaware of any community empowerment initiatives. One respondent stated that he considers the implementation of these initiatives to be a duty of the SMMA Inc. The group indicated that for empowerment of fisherfolk there should be better clarification of the regulations of the Soufriere Marine Management Area, as some regulations are seemingly interpreted differently by different groups. An example of this is the seaward extent of the SMMA, which is set at the 75m depth contour, however, some users believe this limit to be 75m away from shore. In addition, there is a discrepancy amongst some users of the SMMA of the locations of the zone boundaries. In addition, the fisherfolks called for improved enforcement of these regulations. They believe that unlawful actions from some stakeholders are being allowed to happen unchecked, whilst fisherfolk are not given these same freedoms. One interviewee stated that he believes that more legislation is needed to protect the interest of fishers. Another interviewee stated that some areas of the marine reserve zones should be returned to fishing priority areas.

The interviewees all agreed that the Co-operative can add to the empowerment of fisherfolk, however its ability is limited by financial constraints as member contributions are reduced

---

<sup>104</sup> Whitmore, E., & Kerans, P. (1988). Participation, Empowerment and Welfare. Canadian Review of Social Policy, 22, 51–60. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45407891>

when the sea conditions limit fishing activity and impact income generation. The respondents also agreed that not enough is being done by the GOSL to increase the empowerment of fisherfolk. They complained of a lack of support in times of distress and the inability to fix or replace fishing vessels damaged or lost due to hurricanes and storm events. They also stated that several initiatives they would like to be implemented towards their empowerment, including various areas of capacity building, resource acquisition and fishery development.

### 1. Capacity Building and Skill Development

Capacity building (and skill development) was defined to the group as “the process of developing and strengthening the skills, instincts, abilities, processes and resources that organizations and communities need to survive, adapt, and thrive in a fast-changing world.”<sup>105</sup>

With regard to capacity building and skill development, the interviewees agreed that these are necessary elements for empowerment of the fisherfolk community and that capacity building benefits the community, stating that “without knowledge, people perish”<sup>106</sup> and “having knowledge builds you up.”<sup>107</sup> They are aware of on-going or past capacity building activities such as Safety at Sea and Boat Master Training, and took part in these activities because they saw the benefit to themselves to gain these skills. The respondents also gave many examples of further capacity building and skill development initiatives they believe to be necessary for their community, including refreshers on those trainings previously received, as well as training in the business side of the fishing industry, financial literacy skills, retirement planning, and training specifically targeting the younger fishers coming into the industry.

### 2. Securing Tenure and Use Rights

Tenure and use rights were first defined as “restricting who can have access to the fishery, and potentially how much fishing activity (fishing effort) the participants are allowed, or how much catch each can take.”<sup>108</sup> Use rights were defined as “the rights held by fishers or fishing communities to use the fishery resources.”<sup>109</sup>

---

<sup>105</sup> United Nations. (n.d.). *Capacity-Building | United Nations*. <https://www.un.org/en/academic-impact/capacity-building>

<sup>106</sup> Board of Directors, Soufriere Fishermen’s Co-operative Society, Soufriere/Bremen (Virtual), 19 September 2024

<sup>107</sup> Board of Directors, Soufriere Fishermen’s Co-operative Society, Soufriere/Bremen (Virtual), 19 September 2024

<sup>108</sup> Charles, Anthony T. (2013) *Governance of tenure in small-scale fisheries: Key considerations (Land tenure journal, July 2013)*. Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), Rome, 3.

<sup>109</sup> Charles, Anthony. (2002). Use rights and responsible fisheries: Limiting access and harvesting through rights-based management. A fishery manager's guidebook: management measures and their application. 424, 131.

Concerning tenure and use rights, the fishers agreed that securing these rights is an important key for empowerment of the community. Interestingly, they were opposed to the idea of Territorial Use Rights for Fishing (TURF) but do believe that securing basic tenure and use rights is important for conserving biodiversity and ensuring safe access for fisherfolk, especially seine fishers. These fishers were opposed to a TURF system as Saint Lucia's fishing industry is largely opportunistic, meaning that fishing is rarely species specific, and fishers reserve the right to fish island wide. These fishers were opposed to their freedoms being further restricted by limitations on catch or fishing locations. This is particularly significant for Soufriere, owing to already existing restrictions on fishing in marine reserve zones. When asked about ongoing tenure and use rights issues, they identified a lack of recognition of the rights of fisherfolk as more areas are developed for the tourism industry. They also voiced concerns regarding the use of Fish Aggregating Devices by sport fishers, stating that they believe catch and release fishing negatively affects their harvest. Likewise, they cited issues of SCUBA divers in fishing priority areas purposely damaging their fishing pots to free the fish inside. They once again stated that greater enforcement of the zoning and fisheries regulations is needed for securing their rights.

### 3. Accessing Funding

To initiate this discussion, the researcher used a paragraph from section 1.1.B of this work, stating "Research has shown that small-scale fisherfolk are often among the most economically vulnerable populations. A lack of access to financial resources often plays a large role in the inability of fisherfolk, especially in small scale fisheries, to build and maintain essential fisheries infrastructure, purchase fishing gear or transition to more sustainable fishing."

Regarding accessing funding, the interviewees stated that they believe that it is key to empowerment of their community, as it enables them to purchase essentials such as boats and equipment. More specifically, with greater funding access they can purchase larger boats and better gear, fund training for fisherfolk, and invest in improved post-harvest processing of fish, better technology and business development. They believe that these improvements will "bring more fish to the community" as well as greater financial benefits. The respondents were able to list a few funding opportunities available to them, and interestingly these were all financing initiatives from regional banks or local credit unions. One board member in particular cited that he was able to purchase his boat through a development loan. Whilst they participate in



these initiatives, they were also very concerned with “bad interest rates” being offered by some larger financial institutions. When asked about sustainable financing options, they cited that many fishers are moving into the tourism industry, particular as water taxis, in order to supplement their income from fishing. However, they believe that trawlers or larger boats with cabins and specialised gear would allow them to stay out at sea longer and target underutilized species such as squid, therefore bringing in more income to the community. However, they lamented the lack of government support received during times of disaster, such as for the damage to vessels sustained during the recent Hurricane Beryl.

#### 4. The use of participatory research methods.

Participatory research methods were explained to the group as follows. “Participatory research involves including stakeholders in crafting research projects and sharing results with relevant stakeholders and communities.”

Concerning the use of participatory research methods, the interviewees agreed on this being a key element of empowerment as it would allow for the direct involvement of fishers and for targeting their interests. They identified FAD stock assessments, assessments of fishers, fishing techniques, gear and effort, and water quality assessments as areas of interest.

#### 5. Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement was defined to the group as “practices the organisation undertakes to involve stakeholders in a positive manner in organisational activities.”<sup>110</sup> This definition was accompanied by the statement “Stakeholder engagement is about building and nurturing two-way relationships with anyone who has a stake in your organisation.”<sup>111</sup>

The interviewees stated that stakeholder engagement is a key element of community empowerment for them. When asked why, they responded that it’s important for them to know what impacts fisherfolk and their livelihoods. One respondent stated that “without information you don’t have power, you don’t know what you’re about.” They were able to list several stakeholder engagements led by the Department of Fisheries, the parliamentary representative for Soufriere or agencies concerned with development. They believe the stakeholder engagement process have produced positive benefits such as clearing up some zoning and use

---

<sup>110</sup> Greenwood, M. R. (2007). Stakeholder engagement: beyond the myth of corporate responsibility. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 74(4), 315. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-007-9509-y>

<sup>111</sup> *Empowerment through engagement: Sparking inclusive conversations 2024 Stakeholder Engagement Research Report*. (2024, June 26). Blacksun Global Corporate. <https://www.blacksun-global.com/insights/research/engagement/sparking-inclusive-conversations>

issues and gives them a platform to speak up to air their grievances. However, they believe work still needs to be done regarding the recognition and understanding of zoning and use regulations amongst all stakeholders, especially tourism stakeholders.

#### 6. The delegation of rights and responsibility to fisherfolk.

Delegation of rights and responsibility was explained to the group as a situation where management authorities granting responsibility to stakeholders for some management activities.

On the concept of delegation of rights and responsibility, the fishers stated that this is a key element of empowerment, however there were clear limits to which types of responsibilities they would be willing to take on. For example, they were very opposed to the idea of acting as community marine rangers, or in other words, taking on the responsibility for enforcing fisheries regulations within their community. Their reluctance was further explained by their belief that trying to enforce the regulations themselves would cause discord and tension amongst the community. They believe that these actions should be left to the state agencies responsible for enforcement and marine and coastal management. However, they do believe it should be their responsibility to mentor young and new fishers, ensuring that rules and regulations are understood by all, and teaching specialised skills like fish pot (fish trap) building. They could not identify any responsibility that has been delegated to them by the Soufriere Marine Management Authority or the Department of Fisheries to date.

The members of the Board of the Soufriere Fishermen's Co-operative Society did not identify any other sources or elements of empowerment.

This research acknowledges the limitations associated with this interview process. Limitations include: i) the limited number of interviewees, which restricted the number and potentially the variety of responses received; ii) limited age range (47-65), which may also potentially restrict the variety of responses received as different generations of fishers may have different needs and mindsets; and iii) the lack of female respondents, which may restrict the type of responses received. With this third limitation it is important to note that most female fisherfolk in Saint Lucia act as fish mongers and retailers, with only a small number engaging in harvesting activity, whereas the members of the Board are primarily engaged in harvesting activity. This limitation may mean that the selected respondents may not be adequately knowledgeable of initiatives targeted towards women or fish mongers and retailers in the community. However, there have been limited gender specific empowerment or co-management initiatives in recent

years, and capacity building or training delivered on fish handling or post-harvest techniques has not been gender disaggregated to date.

## Chapter 2: Analysis of the assessment results for the empowerment of fisherfolk in the Soufriere Marine Managed Area.

*This chapter presents an analysis of the findings from the previous chapter. Section A examines how the fisherfolk community in Soufriere experiences empowerment by integrating insights from the enabling environment and their lived experiences within the community. Section B identifies and explores any gaps between the provisions of the enabling environment and the realities faced by the fisherfolk community.*

## Section 2.2.A: How are fisherfolk empowered in the SMMA?

This section seeks to analyse the investigation into the enabling environment for empowerment of fisherfolk in Soufriere (Section 2.1.A), alongside results of the interview with the Board of Directors of the Soufriere Fishermen's Co-operative Society Ltd. (Section 2.1.B). The researcher will examine these two sections concurrently and seek to understand the level of empowerment relative to each element of empowerment using the following terms:

- Totally empowered – indicating mainstreaming or inclusion of terms into all legislative, operational and institutional frameworks and a positive response from the interview with fishers.
- High level of empowerment - indicating mainstreaming or inclusion of terms into most legislative, operational and institutional frameworks, and a positive response from the interview with fishers.
- Medium level of empowerment - indicating mainstreaming or inclusion of terms into many legislative, operational and institutional frameworks, and a mixed response from the interview with fishers.
- Low level of empowerment - indicating mainstreaming or inclusion of terms into only some legislative, operational and institutional frameworks, and a negative response from the interview with fishers.
- Negligible level of empowerment - indicating mainstreaming or inclusion of terms into few/no legislative, operational and institutional frameworks, and a negative response from the interview with fishers.

### 1. Capacity Building and Skill Development

This study has shown that capacity building has been mainstreamed and prioritised into many core policies, laws and regulations governing the operation of the Soufriere Marine Managed Area, the Soufriere Fishermen's Co-operative Society, and the fisheries sector in Saint Lucia. Of all the elements of empowerment examined, capacity building and skill development specific to fisherfolk was the area with the most significant inclusion into national, regional and international law, policy and planning. This area is broad and allows for capacity building in skill development in many areas of relevance to fisherfolk, and/or deemed necessary by fisherfolk organisations and/or fisheries management agencies.

In addition, the fisherfolk in Soufriere recalled their involvement in several capacity building initiatives lead by the Department of Fisheries or the Soufriere Marine Management Association over the years. These initiatives have been generally directly related to fishing activity, such as harvest and post-harvest techniques, safety at sea, or gear building and deployment.

The importance placed on this element of empowerment by the fisherfolk can be seen by their beliefs that knowledge is power and is indicative of the general attitude promoted by managers of the fisheries sector. These sector managers encourage fisherfolk to learn and develop their skills whenever the opportunity is offered to them. This is a fact that can be corroborated by the researcher, as during her tenure with the Department of Fisheries, she has organised, observed, or has knowledge of the delivery of various training opportunities for fisherfolk, achieved through projects funded by the Government of Saint Lucia or other external funding bodies.

In the context of this study, it can be said that fisherfolk are highly empowered by capacity building and skill development in the areas of fishing activity that they currently directly engage in. However, for fisherfolk to be better able to participate in co-management and decision-making, more work must be done on building their capacity to engage in matters of ocean governance.

## 2. Securing Tenure and Use Rights

The concepts of use and tenure rights have been included in half of the documents examined. These laws, regulations, policies and plans all prioritise the rights of Saint Lucia citizens to utilise the country's marine space, ultimately guided by the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and all other international, regional and national instruments that abide by UNCLOS. However, of the nine instruments that include these concepts, six are directly related to the rights of fisherfolk. These documents mainly consider the rights of access to fisheries resources through licensing. However, tenure rights are also heavily embedded in the legislation through restrictions on foreign fleets to engage in fishing activity. In addition, these instruments ensure that the rights of fisherfolk are recognised and protected by establishing fishing priority zones and safeguarding fishing activity from disturbance by other sector actors or unauthorised individuals.

The interviewed fisherfolk consider their use and tenure rights of high importance, however despite the existing legislation that seeks to uphold these rights, the fisherfolk do not feel that their rights are being protected in actuality, and there appears to be a disconnect on how these regulations are applied in their day-to-day reality.

For these reasons the researcher has concluded that fisherfolk are somewhat empowered or have a medium degree of empowerment regarding use and tenure rights, however the existing discrepancies between the rules in form and the rules in use need to be dealt with for true empowerment to be experienced by the fisherfolk community.

### 3. Accessing Funding

The acquisition of funds for the development of marine and coastal industries or the Blue Economy was incorporated into ten of eighteen instruments, with eight being specific to fisherfolk. Of those that are not specific to fisherfolk, there are still measures aimed at increased socio-economic development of coastal communities and the nation through increased fisheries-generated revenue. These instruments grant fisherfolk the ability to benefit from or seek opportunities for funding through their own action, social security safeguards, and in some cases, benefit from the reduction of operation costs through rebates.

The fisherfolk of Soufriere have historically taken advantage of some funding opportunities offered to them, and boat owners regularly benefit from fuel rebates. However, despite these, the fisherfolk and their co-operative are still in need of assistance for achieving financial security.

As a result, this researcher has concluded that fisherfolk in Soufriere have a medium level of empowerment with regard to accessing funding for fisheries sector development and the development of their community.

### 4. The use of participatory research methods.

Marine and coastal research was mentioned in ten of the eighteen instruments examined, where in most cases it was stated, or can be implied, that the research can be conducted by the Government of Saint Lucia or authorised partner agencies, third-party research institutes or organisations including NGOs, or by any person(s) with authorisation by the Chief Fisheries Office or the Minister responsible for Fisheries. In this regime, any suitably qualified person(s) may request permission to conduct marine and/or fisheries research, including fisherfolk.

However, four instruments of note call for or allude to participatory research, in which all or most stakeholders, including fisherfolk, are included and considered into the design, exploration and conduct of research.

The fisherfolk of Soufriere stated that participatory research is important to them, though they were unclear if any such arrangements exist. The researcher, however, can confirm a few instances of this nature in other communities, conducted by the Department of Fisheries or project partners, for example, when testing the effectiveness of artificial reefs.

In this regard, the researcher believes that the fisherfolk of Soufriere have a medium level of empowerment regarding the use of participatory research methods, but there is room for greater involvement of Soufriere's fisherfolk in participatory research.

## 5. Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement of marine and coastal stakeholders has been mainstreamed into eleven of the eighteen instruments examined, with a major focus on the protection, preservation and conservation of the marine environment. The four documents which contain fisherfolk specific interventions are of particular relevance. The National Ocean Policy and Strategic Action Plan promotes co-management approaches explicitly, calling for greater involvement of stakeholders in decision-making. This instrument sets the basis for the existence of the National Ocean Governance Committee, which regularly invites and encourages the participation of fisherfolk in its meetings. Saint Lucia's Sectoral Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan for the Fisheries Sector (Fisheries SASAP) on the other hand considers the establishment of communication networks with stakeholders, which allow for direct and timely communication with fisherfolk in times of distress. Finally, the Agreement on the Establishment of the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy specifically endorses and promotes the establishment and strengthening of fisherfolk co-operatives, thereby setting the impetus for all Participating Parties, including Saint Lucia, to work with their fisherfolk co-operatives for the development of the sector. The FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries has many articles that make clear participating States' obligations for transparency and engagement of small-scale fishers in policy making and implementation, and coastal area management planning and development.

The fisherfolk have seen the benefit of stakeholder engagement for them and encourage continued engagement with their community in order to reduce conflicts and



misunderstandings and clarify legal and policy issues that the fisherfolk may be unclear on. While the fishers were able to identify several engagements, they do still believe there is room for more dialogue, particularly surrounding confusing or misunderstood legal or policy issues, particularly regarding the zoning and extent of the SMMA.

For these reasons, the researcher considers that there is a high level of empowerment in the fisherfolk of Soufriere with regard to stakeholder engagement.

#### 6. The delegation of rights and responsibility to fisherfolk.

Finally, six of eighteen instruments speak explicitly to the sharing responsibility for management of the fisheries industry with public or private partners, non-governmental organisations or regional agencies and organisations, however only three concern the delegation of responsibility for management of fisheries resources or infrastructure to fisherfolk. The Fisheries Act and its Amendment Act both concern the establishment of fisheries or marine management authorities, which may be made up of any suitably qualified individuals or organisations with authorisation from the Chief Fisheries Officer or the Minister responsible for Fisheries. In keeping with this, the next document details the handover of the fisheries facilities in Soufriere to the Soufriere Fishermen's Co-operative, from the Government of Saint Lucia. This represents one of many co-management initiatives arising from joint fisheries projects with the Japan International Cooperation Agency, the Government of Japan and the Government of Saint Lucia.

The fisherfolk interviewed agreed that some rights and responsibility should be conferred to them through their co-operative but were unable to state any such intentions to date. The researcher would like to acknowledge the items they have omitted, such as the previously mentioned handover of facilities, as well as the ability of fisherfolk to build and deploy Fish Aggregating Devices upon approval of the fabrication of said FAD and of the proposed coordinates by the appropriate authorities.

Given this the researcher believes that the empowerment of fisherfolk regarding then delegation of rights and responsibility for management of fisheries resources or infrastructure to be low.

Overall, it can be seen that the general empowerment level of fisherfolk in Soufriere is medium. While the national laws, policies, plans, and other instruments do set an enabling environment

for these key elements of empowerment, in reality, there seems to be a disconnect between legislation and policy and how it is enacted or implemented in Soufriere. For the interviews, it is clear that the fisherfolk do not experience the level of empowerment they should on paper. These gaps seem to restrict the level of empowerment experienced by Soufriere's fisherfolk, despite the clear opportunities for empowerment created by the legislative, institutional and operational frameworks.

The next section will explore these gaps and seek to explain their existence.

## Section 2.2.B: What gaps exist between the enabling environment and the experience of the fisherfolk in Soufriere?

As concluded in the previous section, the fisherfolk of Soufriere are determined to exhibit a medium level of empowerment. As a reminder, this means that there exists mainstreaming or inclusion of the elements of empowerment into many legislative, operational and institutional frameworks, and a mixed response from the interview with fishers on their experience of empowerment through these elements.

The enabling environment for the empowerment of fisherfolk has been established through national and regional legislative, institutional and operational frameworks. However, many gaps do exist, both in the legal and regulatory instruments used to govern or guide the fisheries sector, as well as in the implementation of these instruments and the operational structure of the fisheries and marine management authorities governing Soufriere and its fisherfolk. In this section, the researcher aims to explore these gaps by tackling each element of empowerment individually, as done in the previous section.

### 1. Capacity Building and Skill Development

Great strides have been made to mainstream the element of capacity building and skill development into legislation and policy. Likewise, the fisherfolk have continually benefitted from many capacity building and skill development initiatives over the years. This has been reflected in the determination that there exists a medium level of empowerment in this element.

However, little has been done to build the capacity of the fisherfolk to engage in decision-making. There are clear leaders in this community, who are commonly called upon for engagements with the government, SMMA, and other stakeholders. These leaders are respected in their community and are often quite knowledgeable of fisheries law and regulations, and the development of the sector in Soufriere. I believe that these persons, and others to be identified by the community, can benefit from capacity building to provide the community more effective representation and give them a greater role in decision-making and ocean governance.

## 2. Securing Tenure and Use Rights

Use and tenure rights have been embedded into many legislative and regulatory instruments for the fisheries sector, but most concern the basic access of fisheries stakeholders to fisheries resources, as well as demarcating priority areas for fishing activities. Over the years, the Department of Fisheries has received many complaints from Soufriere's fisherfolk regarding issues of access to fisheries resources as well as interference with fishing activity. Many of these complaints are aimed at the tourism industry in the area. For example, fishers have reported the inability to cast nets or lines within Fishing Priority Areas due to the presence of recreational SCUBA tour groups, issues with access to FPAs that fall along the coast utilised by a resort, and unlawful damage to submerged fishing gear (fish pots).

While the laws and regulations governing FPAs and fishing activity are clear on the rights of fishers, it is evident that these rights are not always upheld by other stakeholders. As a result of this marginalisation, the fisherfolk often become disgruntled, and conflict arises. In Soufriere, it is apparent to all the relevance of the tourism industry. In fact, tourism is consistently one of the largest contributors to the GDP of Saint Lucia, whereas the fishing industry is one of the lowest.<sup>112</sup> This knowledge, coupled with the often slow and/or limited action taken to remedy the complaints of the fisherfolk have resulted in a mistrust between the fisherfolk and the SMMA Inc. and/or tourism operators in Soufriere with regard to the rights of fisherfolk. This area needs to be adequately dealt with in order to increase the empowerment level of fisherfolk in Soufriere.

Also concerning tenure and use rights, is the proposed move to regulated entry into select fisheries. As Saint Lucia's fishing industry is largely opportunistic at present, there is currently no regulated entry into specific fisheries, outside of a special licensing system for spear fishers. That is, a general commercial license to fish grants the individual approval to fish for any species, if size and gear restrictions and fishery seasons are observed.

However, in the Saint Lucia's Sectoral Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan for the Fisheries Sector (Fisheries SASAP) there is a proposed adaptation measure to "regulate entry into selected fisheries to improve opportunities for increasing economic yield and productivity." The indicative outcome of this measure is the development and enforcement of legislation to regulate entry into selected fisheries, which is expected to improve opportunities for increasing

---

<sup>112</sup> Available from Data section of The Central Statistical Office of Saint Lucia's website (<https://stats.gov.lc>)

economic yield and productivity.<sup>113</sup> The measures in the Fisheries SASAP are aimed at climate change adaptation and are “deemed critical for building resilience in the country’s fisheries and fishery dependent livelihoods.”<sup>114</sup> Yet, the fisherfolk interviewed exhibited an aversion to the idea of a TURF system, due to an unwillingness to be restricted by species or fishing locations. This inconsistency between the views of the fisherfolk and that of the GOSL indicate that more engagement of these stakeholders must be done to explain why this proposed measure is deemed necessary, prior to any changes in the legal and regulatory framework. Fisherfolk should be fully engaged in the decision-making process regarding this proposed measure.

### 3. Accessing Funding

Access to funding is an area of concern to the fisherfolk of Soufriere. Many fishers have cited issues with access to loans for fish gear or vessel investment through financial agencies such as commercial banks. Some fisherfolk have been able to secure loans with smaller institutions such as credit unions but often complain about unsatisfactory interest rates. The GOSL and DOF often implement projects which provide funding for fisheries activities, however the agency responsible for project implementation is the one responsible for purchasing equipment or infrastructure. This agency may receive some guidance from the fisherfolk or their representatives through surveys or other engagements, but there are often limitations in what can be purchased.

On the other hand, fisherfolk co-operatives are legally allowed to “invest in or carry out allied economic activities that will serve the economic needs of its members.”<sup>115</sup> This means that the Soufriere Fishermen’s Co-operative may seek funding on behalf of their members through projects funds, grant funds or collective loans. This is an area that should be explored. To this end, the management of the Co-operative should be trained to independently seek funding for the development of their community as they see fit.

On the individual level, fishers in Soufriere primarily sell their catch as caught to other citizens of Soufriere or neighbouring districts in the landing site or market, or by using carts to go around the town. This limits the income generation of fishers as more money can be made by

---

<sup>113</sup> Government of Saint Lucia. (2018). Saint Lucia’s Sectoral Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan for the Fisheries Sector (Fisheries SASAP) 2018- 2028, under the National Adaptation Planning Process. Department of Sustainable Development, Ministry of Education, Innovation, Gender Relations and Sustainable Development and Department of Agriculture, Fisheries, Natural Resources and Cooperatives, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Physical Planning, Natural Resources and Cooperatives, 28

<sup>114</sup> Government of Saint Lucia. (2018). Fisheries SASAP 2018- 2028, 4

<sup>115</sup> Government of Saint Lucia, St Lucia Fisherfolk Cooperative Society Ltd. By Laws

these fisherfolk engaging in post-harvest value addition strategies, such as cleaning, packaging and sale to or through dedicated retailers. Some fishers in Soufriere also benefit from relationships with the kitchens of restaurants and resorts in Soufriere, however these relationships are limited in number and tend not to benefit the community at large.

#### 4. The use of participatory research methods.

At present, true participatory research involving fisherfolk is not conducted in Saint Lucia. There have been instances of involvement of fisherfolk in research and monitoring, for example spear fishers are typically approached for assistance by the DOF during sea urchin population assessments, or the involvement of pot fishers in the investigation of the effectiveness of artificial reefs. In these cases, the fisherfolk do learn some scientific principles through explanation of the goals and methodology of these studies, but their involvement is usually limited to in situ data collection. They rarely play a role in data analysis, or in crafting the research objectives. This may mean that the burning questions that the fisherfolk may have about their resources, gear or methods are not being prioritised, contributing to a lack of useful information and decreased empowerment of the community. More participatory research should be conducted alongside this community.

#### 5. Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement is another area in which significant work has been done by the DOF. The Department regularly updates the fisherfolk community and other stakeholders of research or interventions being conducted and seeks their input on various initiatives such as the demarcation of the SMMA.

The SMMA Inc. has previously been criticised by stakeholders in Soufriere of inadequate communication, but the organisation has recently been making a greater effort to engage the community. While fisherfolk have general knowledge of the Fisheries Act and its regulations, there has been some misunderstandings concerning the SMMA Agreement and the zoning structure and the extent of the SMMA. In particular, there is confusion regarding the seaward extent of the SMMA, due to a misunderstanding in the text. There is also some confusion regarding the locations of the beginning and end of the marine reserves and fishing priority areas due to the use of different physical landmarks by different stakeholder groups. These issues illustrate a need for further engagement of the fisherfolk and other concerned

stakeholders. This issue is currently being worked on and will be further expanded on throughout a process of physical demarcation and stakeholder engagements.

Another area that is lacking is open, effective dialogue amongst sector actors in the absence of the DOF or SMMA Inc., particularly between the fishing and tourism industry. Past incidents of poor communication between these sectors have created mistrust and broken the lines of communication. Given the power imbalance between these sectors, fisherfolk experience marginalisation and often reluctant to dialogue with the tourism sector due to the belief that nothing will change in their favour. This breakdown of communication and power imbalance must somehow be resolved in order to boost the empowerment of the fisherfolk in Soufriere.

#### 6. The delegation of rights and responsibility to fisherfolk.

The delegation of rights and responsibilities is an interesting concept that is very connected to the idea of co-management. For Soufriere's fisherfolk to adequately engage in the co-management of their resources and fisheries infrastructure, they must be empowered. Their feelings of self-efficacy must be developed. This can be achieved through capacity building, securing use and tenure rights, access to funds, knowledge of their resource base, and fruitful engagement of marine and coastal stakeholders.

The handover of the Soufriere fisheries facilities to the Soufriere Fishermen's Co-operative indicates that some degree of management capacity exists, as the Co-operative has accepted the responsibility to maintain these facilities. The interviewed fisherfolk also believe that they have the capacity to train each other in fishing techniques and fisheries regulations, particularly new fishers in the sector. The older fishers stated in their interview that they see mentoring new and inexperienced fishers as their responsibility, however, little work has been done by the management agencies or the Co-operative to formally train these veteran fishers as trainers in their own right. In addition, little has been done to formally preserve the traditional knowledge retained by these veterans, other than transfer by word of mouth.

There are many other responsibilities that remain with the DOF. One such example, is that the Department hires staff to collect data from the landing sites in lieu of the fisherfolk self-reporting their catches, as is done in other countries with more developed fisheries sectors. While this system does create opportunities for continued dialogue between the fisherfolk and the DOF, it is not the most effective, efficient or accurate method of fisheries data collection. There is typically only one data collector assigned to each landing site, which may be used by

many fishers in one day. Also, many of the fishers tend to come back to port around the same time and prefer to unload and begin processing their catch immediately. This means, it is unlikely that the catch of every fisher is adequately examined, and the data captured in depth. In addition, there have been cases where the data collectors were not be as well versed in fish species identification compared to the fisherfolk they serve, which limits the depth to which data is collected. On the other hand, the fisherfolk tend to be quite knowledgeable in this area and with adequate training, may be more suited for this role, if they choose to accept it.

This system has also created a situation where fisheries dependant data is housed solely with the DOF, and stakeholders may not be aware of fishery statistics that affect the sustainability of their resource base. This lack of knowledge restricts empowerment as the fisherfolk tend not to self-monitor or come up with alternative, sustainable methods of operation on their own. They are prescribed actions by the GOSL through laws and regulations, at times without full understanding of why these measures are put in place, and therefore are sometimes unwilling to abide by these regulations.

As previously mentioned, while these elements of empowerment for fisherfolk were chosen to be examined, there are many other circumstances that may restrict the empowerment of fisherfolk, including general livelihood instability and challenges in meeting basic responsibilities such as the upkeep of the household and child and elderly care. These basic socio-economic challenges must be acknowledged and rectified for true empowerment. However, these issues extend beyond the purview of the Department of Fisheries.

More work needs to be done with the fisherfolk of Soufriere to increase their level of empowerment at both the individual and community levels. This will be further explored in the conclusion of this paper.



## **Conclusion: Empowering local communities to participate more in co-management and ultimately ocean governance in the fisheries sector.**

Throughout this thesis, the concept of empowerment and its impact on the ability of the fisherfolk community of Soufriere to engage in co-management of the fisheries sector has been examined.

First, the relationship between co-management and empowerment was explored, and it was determined that empowerment is essential for the realisation of effective co-management of fisheries resources. Then, the key elements of empowerment needed for fisherfolk communities to engage in co-management were outlined. The six key elements of empowerment were determined to be: capacity building and skill development, securing tenure and use rights, accessing funding, the use of participatory research methods, stakeholder engagement and the delegation of responsibility.

Next, the power and interest relationships of the main marine and coastal stakeholders of the Soufriere Marine Managed Area were investigated. With this exercise, it was determined that the fisherfolk community of Soufriere are high interest but low power stakeholders. Once this was clear, a framework for assessing the empowerment level of these fisherfolk was developed. This framework consisted of two parts: an analysis of the enabling environment for empowerment of fisherfolk, and an interview with key fisherfolk to assess their actual experience of empowerment.

We then analysed the results of these assessments jointly and determined that Soufriere's fisherfolk are empowered to a median level. Finally, we analysed the results further to understand what gaps that may still exist between legislation and policy and the lived experience of Soufriere's fisherfolk and found some significant disparities.

Many of these disparities concern multiple elements of empowerment at once. One such disparity concerns capacity building and skill development, which is an element of empowerment itself, but builds empowerment in many of the other elements as well. Capacity building and skill development are priority areas for the Department of Fisheries, and many training opportunities have been made available to the fisherfolk in the areas of fishing

techniques, gear building, and safety at sea, among others. Yet, the current work can still be expounded on in key areas to increase the empowerment level of Soufriere's fisherfolk.

This researcher believes that there are individuals in the fisherfolk community of Soufriere that can serve as excellent community leaders. These leaders should be selected by the community to represent them. These leaders should be granted capacity building and training on negotiation skills, leadership, effective communication and stakeholder engagement, among other skills needed to adequately represent their community. These leaders can serve as a collective voice and representation for the community, especially concerning areas like the impendent of use and tenure rights of fisherfolk, conflicts with other stakeholder groups arising from shared resource use, decision making regarding fisheries legislation and policy, and other forms of stakeholder engagement concerning the fisherfolk. These community leaders should especially be trained in the ability to advocate for their fellow fisherfolk and to negotiate with the tourism industry to protect the interests and rights of Soufriere's fisherfolk, allow more fishers access to tourism markets, and ease tensions between the stakeholder groups. Having trusted, knowledgeable and well-equipped community leaders should grant the fisherfolk of Soufriere a greater role in decision-making and ultimately empower them and improve their co-management potential.

The researcher believes that these community leader or other interested members of the community should also receive training in ocean governance, conservation, sustainability and other related ocean affairs disciplines so that they can actively participate in discussions regarding the establishment of fisheries legislation, regulations and policies and convey this information accurately and succinctly to their community. Similarly, there should be an avenue created for these community leaders to act as liaisons, allowing them to convey the concerns of the community to the management authorities, and relay responses to the community. This can resolve issues relating to misunderstanding of fisheries law and regulations as well as the stipulations of the Soufriere Marine Managed Area.

However, participation in stakeholder engagements should not be limited to these community leaders but conducted in a way that allows full engagement of the community with these leaders working alongside the management authorities to gather the responses of the community. In this way, the fisherfolk community can be empowered to better engage in decision-making and ocean governance.

Capacity building and skill development in the areas of financial literacy, marketing, grant writing and project management should be prioritised for the managerial staff of the Soufriere Fishermen's Co-operative Society. This can increase the empowerment of the community by providing funds for fisheries sector development and expansion. In addition, there is need for greater access to capital through financial institutions, perhaps through the provision of better interest rates for fishers.

Access to collective funds may allow for investment in better fishing gear, vessels, and technology, as well as improved fisheries facilities for improved working conditions and post-harvest handling of fishery products. Technological advancements may provide access to under-utilised species that were not accessible before due to financial or technology constraints, such as Diamondback Squid. Investment in better facilities such as freezers, dryers, and processing and packaging equipment may improve the market value of fishery products and provide access to new markets locally as well as potentially stimulate increased trade with other countries. These advancements can increase the income of fisherfolk and the Co-operative, allowing for further investment in fisheries sector development and increased empowerment of the community.

Related to this, as the Co-operative improves its ability to access funding, a greater proportion of funds can be designated to research and data collection. Interested members of the fisherfolk community should be trained in the scientific method and in conducting fisheries research. These fisherfolk scientists can work closely with the management and scientific authorities to conduct research of relevance to the fisherfolk community. While it may not be practical for persons engaged in fishing activity to engage in research due to the time and energy consuming nature of fishing, the children or family of fishers may be interested in and well suited to conduct research. These individuals may not have a formal scientific education background but may possess qualities that make them scientists in their own right.

This can build community empowerment by granting them a trusted source of information and will hopefully trigger more mindfulness of sustainability and conservation issues as the results of this research is shared with the community. This action may also allow community leaders and the Co-operative to come from a more informed standpoint when negotiating for funding and/or the development of the sector, empowering them to serve as better representation for the community.

These interventions are closely linked to the delegation of rights and responsibility for managing fisheries resources. As community members are more confident in their ability to conduct fisheries research of relevance and able to access greater funding, they can also become empowered to take the responsibility for monitoring and managing their resources. Further capacity building in conducting in depth fisheries resource assessments and the analysis of fisheries-dependant landings data may be possible. This can lessen the burden for monitoring on the Department of Fisheries. This responsibility may not be totally devolved to the fisherfolk, but research conducted by fisherfolk can be used to supplement the research conducted by the DOF, other research institutions and project partners.

In line with this, the training of suitable veterans or community leaders in the community to train newcomers or less seasoned fishers in harvest and post-harvest skills, the use of life saving equipment such as GPS and VHF Radios, traditional fishing methods and other skills of relevance should also be prioritised. This can empower the community by decreasing their dependence of the DOF for basic training and grant these veteran fishers and community members valued positions in the community.

These interventions can all contribute to greater empowerment of the fisherfolk community in Soufriere, including strengthening the Soufriere Fishermen's Co-operative Society Ltd. As this study has determined that empowerment is essential for effective co-management, these interventions may also lead to the realisation of the goal of effective fisheries co-management in the community of Soufriere. This may also ultimately lead to the resumption of the Soufriere Marine Managed Area's status as a shining example of stakeholder led co-management in the Caribbean region.

While this study focused on a subset of fisherfolk in Saint Lucia, these ideas can be expanded for use by all fisherfolk communities in Saint Lucia. There are many opportunities for advancement of the fisheries sector in Saint Lucia through the empowerment of fisherfolk to engage in effective co-management. Through sustained co-management of fisheries resources, the Government of Saint Lucia can expect to benefit greatly from improvements in the protection, preservation, conservation and sustainable use of the marine environment and its resources, translating to a plethora of achievements for Saint Lucia. The GOSL can expect increased revenue from both the fisheries and tourism industries, as well as other sustainable Blue Economy industries. There will also be improved food security and livelihoods leading to healthier citizens. The GOSL can also look forward to growth the knowledge base of the

nation regarding the marine environment, granting its representatives greater ability to engage in international fora relating to fisheries, ocean governance and other aspects of ocean affairs. Finally, the Government can expect to enjoy greater adherence to regional and international agreements such as the Caribbean Common Fisheries Policy and Convention on Biological Diversity. Realising the goal of effective fisheries co-management through the empowerment of local fisherfolk communities is a stepping stone to greater advancement of Saint Lucia as a nation.

A generalised summary of the recommendations for the empowerment of fisherfolk in Saint Lucia is presented below. These recommendations are targeted to the Department of Fisheries and the Government of Saint Lucia.

**Recommendations for the empowerment of fisherfolk in Saint Lucia:**

1. Determine empowerment needs by conducting an in-depth analysis of the degree of empowerment of communities (to engage in co-management.)
2. Develop and implement a community specific plan to increase empowerment, including but not limited to:
  - a. Strengthening fisherfolk co-operatives.
    - i. Capacity building in financial skills, project management and grant writing for managers and concerned staff.
    - ii. Provide support for funding requests made through financial institutions or other funding agencies.
    - iii. Grant assistance in establishing new avenues for the creation of higher value fishery products.
  - b. Delegation of responsibility to fisherfolk co-operatives.
    - i. Capacity building in data collection, monitoring and management of fisheries resources.
  - c. Support the appointment of community members to valued roles in the community
    - i. Community led appointment of “Community Leaders”
      1. Capacity building of these Community Leaders in leadership, negotiation skills, effective communication, stakeholder engagement and advocacy.
    - ii. Community led appointment of veteran fishers and/or Community Leaders as trainers.
      1. “Training of Trainers”; Capacity building of these individuals to be effective trainers.
    - iii. Promotion of citizen science or participatory research carried out by “community scientists”.
      1. Capacity building of “community scientists” in scientific method and conducting fisheries research of relevance.
  - d. Foster positive relationships amongst sector actors.

# Bibliography

- Allison, E.H., Ratner, B.D., Åsgård, B., Willmann, R., Pomeroy, R. and Kurien, J. (2012), Rights-based fisheries governance: from fishing rights to human rights. *Fish and Fisheries*, 13: 14-29. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-2979.2011.00405.x>
- Ansell, C., & Gash, A. (2007). Collaborative governance in theory and practice. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 18(4), 543–571. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mum032>
- Arnstein, S. R. (1969). A Ladder Of Citizen Participation. *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*, 35(4), 216–224. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01944366908977225>
- Bandura, A. (1994). Self-efficacy. In V. S. Ramachaudran (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of human behavior* (Vol. 4, pp. 71-81). New York: Academic Press. (Reprinted in H. Friedman [Ed.], *Encyclopedia of mental health*. San Diego: Academic Press, 1998).
- Banet, Anthony G Jr. (1976). BOOKS. *Group & Organization Studies (Pre-1986)*, 1(2), 252. <https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/books/docview/232430332/se-2/>
- Barratt, C., & Allison, E. H. (2014). Vulnerable people, vulnerable resources? Exploring the relationship between people's vulnerability and the sustainability of community-managed natural resources. *Development Studies Research*, 1(1), 16-27. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21665095.2014.904079>
- Béné, C., & Friend, R. M. (2011). Poverty in small-scale fisheries. *Progress in Development Studies*, 11(2), 119-144. <https://doi.org/10.1177/146499341001100203>
- Berque, Joannès & Matsuda, Osamu. (2013). Coastal biodiversity management in Japanese satoumi. *Marine Policy*. 39. 191–200. [10.1016/j.marpol.2012.10.013](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2012.10.013).
- Boiral, O., & Heras-Saizarbitoria, I. (2017). Managing Biodiversity Through Stakeholder Involvement: Why, Who, and for What Initiatives? *Journal of Business Ethics*, 140(3), 403–421. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44164302>
- Bryson, J. M. (2004). What to do when Stakeholders matter: Stakeholder Identification and Analysis Techniques. *Public Management Review*, 6(1), 21–53. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14719030410001675722>
- Butler, C., & Adamowski, J. (2015). Empowering marginalized communities in water resources management: addressing inequitable practices in Participatory Model Building. *Journal of environmental management*, 153, 153–162. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvman.2015.02.010>
- CARICOM, Agreement establishing the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy.
- Cavallé, M., Said, A., ORiordan, B., (2020). Co-Management for Small-scale Fisheries: Principles, Practices and Challenges”. Published by Low Impact Fishers of Europe.

- Charles, Anthony. (2002). Use rights and responsible fisheries: Limiting access and harvesting through rights-based management. *A fishery manager's guidebook: management measures and their application*. 424.
- Charles, Anthony T. (2013) *Governance of tenure in small-scale fisheries: Key considerations (Land tenure journal, July 2013)*. Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), Rome, 9-37.
- Cinner, J. E. (2009). Poverty and the use of destructive fishing gear near east African marine protected areas. *Environmental Conservation*, 36(4), 321–326.  
<https://doi.org/10.1017/s0376892910000123>
- Civera C, de Colle S, Casalegno C. Stakeholder engagement through empowerment: The case of coffee farmers. *Business Ethics: A Eur Rev*. 2019; 28: 156–174. <https://doi.org/10.1111/beer.12208>
- Cochrane, K. L., & Garcia, S. M. (2009). *A Fishery Manager's Guidebook*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Craig, G. (2002). Towards the Measurement of Empowerment: The Evaluation of Community Development. *Community Development Society Journal*, 33(1), 124-146.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/15575330209490146>
- Dawkins, C.E. (2014). The Principle of Good Faith: Toward Substantive Stakeholder Engagement. *J Bus Ethics* 121, 283–295. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-013-1697-z>
- Degnbol, P. (2003). Science and the user perspective. In *Springer eBooks* (pp. 31).  
[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-017-3323-6\\_3](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-017-3323-6_3)
- Eden, C., & Ackermann, F. (1998). *Making Strategy: The Journey of Strategic Management*.  
<https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446217153>
- Empowerment through engagement: Sparking inclusive conversations 2024 Stakeholder Engagement Research Report*. (2024, June 26). Blacksun Global Corporate. <https://www.blacksun-global.com/insights/research/engagement/sparking-inclusive-conversations>
- Enhancing Fishers Livelihoods through Social Protection. (2023, November 7). Voluntary Guidelines. <https://www.fao.org/voluntary-guidelines-small-scale-fisheries/news/news-detail/Enhancing-Fishers-Livelihoods-through-Social-Protection/en>
- Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.
- Freeman, R. E. (1984). *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach*. Pitman Publishing.
- Freeman, R.E., Civera, C., Cortese, D. and Fiandrino, S. (2018), "Strategising stakeholder empowerment for effective co-management within fishery-based commons", *British Food Journal*, Vol. 120 No. 11, 2631-2644. <https://doi.org/10.1108/BFJ-01-2018-0041>
- Government of Saint Lucia, Agriculture and Fisheries Incentives Act, Cap 7.18 of the Revised Laws of Saint Lucia (2014)
- Government of Saint Lucia, “Agreement to Manage the Soufriere Marine Management Area” (2001).



- Government of Saint Lucia, Fisheries Act, Cap 7.15 of the Revised Laws of Saint Lucia (2013).
- Government of Saint Lucia, Fisheries Regulations, Cap 7.15 of the Revised Laws of Saint Lucia (2013).
- Government of Saint Lucia, National Policy for the Fisheries Sector 2020 – 2030.
- Government of Saint Lucia, National Social Protection Policy, February 2015.
- Government of Saint Lucia. (2020). Saint Lucia's National Ocean Policy and Strategic Action Plan (NOP SAP) 2020–2035, Department of Sustainable Development, Ministry of Education, Innovation, Gender Relations and Sustainable Development.
- Government of Saint Lucia. (2018). Saint Lucia's Sectoral Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan for the Fisheries Sector (Fisheries SASAP) 2018- 2028, under the National Adaptation Planning Process. Department of Sustainable Development, Ministry of Education, Innovation, Gender Relations and Sustainable Development and Department of Agriculture, Fisheries, Natural Resources and Cooperatives, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Physical Planning, Natural Resources and Cooperatives, 28-29
- Government of Saint Lucia, St Lucia Fisherfolk Cooperative Society Ltd. By Laws.
- Greenwood, M. R. (2007). Stakeholder engagement: beyond the myth of corporate responsibility. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 74(4), 315-327. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-007-9509-y>
- Greenwood, M., Van Buren III, H.J. (2010). Trust and Stakeholder Theory: Trustworthiness in the Organisation–Stakeholder Relationship. *J Bus Ethics* 95,425–438. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-010-0414-4>
- Guðlaugsson, B., Fazeli, R., Gunnarsdóttir, I., Davidsdottir, B., & Stefansson, G. (2020). Classification of stakeholders of sustainable energy development in Iceland: Utilizing a power-interest matrix and fuzzy logic theory. *Energy Sustainable Development/Energy for Sustainable Development*, 57, 168–188. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esd.2020.06.006>
- Hsu, K., & Chen, J. -L. (2023). The Coastal Future We Want: Implications of Coastal People's Perceptions on Satoumi Actions and Sustainable Development in Northeastern Taiwan. *Sustainability*, 15(10), 7919. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15107919>
- Jentoft, S. (2005). Fisheries co-management as empowerment. *Marine policy*, 29(1), 1-7.
- Kasmel, A., & Andersen, P. T. (2011). Measurement of community empowerment in three community programs in Rapla (Estonia). *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 8(3), 799–817. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph8030799>
- Kieffer, C. H. (1984). Citizen Empowerment: A Developmental Perspective. *Prevention in Human Services*, 3(2–3), 9–36. [https://doi.org/10.1300/J293v03n02\\_03](https://doi.org/10.1300/J293v03n02_03)
- Laverack, G. (2001). Measuring community empowerment: a fresh look at organizational domains. *Health Promotion International*, 16(2), 179-185. <https://doi.org/10.1093/heapro/16.2.179>
- Lord, J. & Hutchison, P. (1993). The Process of Empowerment: Implications for Theory and Practice The Process of Empowerment: Implications for Theory and Practice INTRODUCTION. *Canadian Journal of Community Mental Health*. 12. 10.7870/cjcmh-1993-0001.

- Mayers, J. (2005). Stakeholder power analysis. 10.13140/RG.2.2.22745.57446
- McConney, P., Pomeroy, R. and Mahon, R. (2003) Guidelines for Coastal Resource Co-Management in the Caribbean: Communicating the Concepts and Conditions that Favour Success. Caribbean Coastal Co-Management Guidelines Project. Caribbean Conservation Association, Barbados, 1-56.
- McEwan, C. (2003), “‘Bringing government to the people’: women, local governance and community participation in South Africa”, *Geoforum*, Vol. 34 No. 4, 469-481.
- Mitchell, R. K., Agle, B. R., & Wood, D. J. (1997). Toward a Theory of Stakeholder Identification and Salience: Defining the Principle of Who and What Really Counts. *The Academy of Management Review*, 22(4), 853–886. <https://doi.org/10.2307/259247>
- Nielsen, J. R., Degnbol, P., Viswanathan, K., Ahmed, M., Hara, M., & Abdullah, N. M. R. (2004). Fisheries co-management—an institutional innovation? Lessons from South East Asia and Southern Africa. *Marine Policy*, 28(2), 151-160. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0308-597x\(03\)00083-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0308-597x(03)00083-6)
- Nielsen JR, Vedsmand T. User participation and institutional change in fisheries management: a viable alternative to the failures of a top-down driven control? *Ocean and Coastal Management* 1999;42(1), 19-37. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0964-5691\(98\)00085-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0964-5691(98)00085-4)
- Pomeroy, R., Arango, C., Lomboy, C. G., & Box, S. (2020). Financial inclusion to build economic resilience in small-scale fisheries. *Marine Policy*, 118, 103982, 1. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2020.103982>
- Pratto, F. (2016), On power and empowerment. *Br. J. Soc. Psychol.*, 55: 1 20. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjso.12135>
- Rappaport J. (1987). Terms of empowerment/exemplars of prevention: toward a theory for community psychology. *American journal of community psychology*, 15(2), 121–148. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00919275>
- S, Tuan & M.A, Adi & Shaari, Azahah & Awang Noh, Normah & Sulaiman, Sabri. (2023). CAPACITY BUILDING PLANNING FOR FISHERMEN COMMUNITY’S EMPOWERMENT. PLANNING MALAYSIA. 21. 10.21837/pm.v21i30.1409.
- Suharno, N., Arifin, A., & Yunanto, A. (2020). The Stakeholder Analysis for Fisheries Management. *SHS Web of Conferences*, 86, 01020, 2. <https://doi.org/10.1051/shsconf/20208601020>
- Takuro Uehara, Keito Mineo, (2017) Regional sustainability assessment framework for integrated coastal zone management: Satoumi, ecosystem services approach, and inclusive wealth, *Ecological Indicators* Volume 73, 716-725, ISSN 1470-160X, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolind.2016.10.031>.
- Uehara, Takuro & Sakurai, Ryo & Hidaka, Takeshi & Matsuda, Osamu & Yanagi, Tetsuo & Yoshioka, Taisuke. (2021). What is Satoumi? (English). 10.34382/00014171.
- United Nations. (n.d.). *Capacity-Building* | United Nations. <https://www.un.org/en/academic-impact/capacity-building>

- Whitmore, E., & Kerans, P. (1988). Participation, Empowerment and Welfare. *Canadian Review of Social Policy*, 22, 51–60. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45407891>
- Wiber, M., Berkes, F., Charles, A., & Kearney, J. (2004). Participatory research supporting community-based fishery management. *Marine Policy*, 28(6), 459-468. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2003.10.020>
- Wolfensberger, W. (1983). Social role valorization: A proposed new term for the principle of normalization. *Mental Retardation*, 21(6), 234–239.
- Yves Renard, “Case of the Soufriere Marine Management Area (SMMA), St. Lucia”, CANARI Technical Report N1 285, (2001).

## Appendices

### Appendix A: List of Legislative, institutional and operational documents examined for the Elements of Empowerment.

No.	Name	Brief description
1	Fisheries Act, Cap 7.15 of the Revised Laws of Saint Lucia (2013)	An Act to make provision for the promotion and regulation of fishing and fisheries in the fishery waters of Saint Lucia and for connected matters.
2	Fisheries (Amendment) Act, No. 3 of 2023 of the Revised Laws of Saint Lucia	This Act provides for amending the Fisheries Act of 1984 in its last consolidated version by inserting immediately after section 22 the new sections 22A and 22B, concerning marine management authority and its power to make by-Law regulating the conduct of activities within marine reserves, providing for fees and penalties in case of misconduct.
3	Fisheries Regulations, Cap 7.15 of the Revised Laws of Saint Lucia (2013)	Regulations applying to any fishing vessel or other vessel capable of being used for fishing within the fishery waters at a distance greater than 3 miles from the nearest land.
4	Agriculture and Fisheries Incentives Act, Cap 7.18 of the Revised Laws of Saint Lucia (2014)	This Act concerns assistance given to fisherfolk and farmers such as fuel rebates, and exemptions on particular taxes and import duties. This Act is more detailed than the Fisheries Industry (Assistance) Act.
5	Agriculture and Fisheries Incentives (Amendment) Act, No. 8 of 2022 of the Revised Laws of Saint Lucia	This instrument is an amendment to the Agriculture and Fisheries Incentives Act (2014), which adds definitions to particular terms, provides more context to particular sections and inserts paragraphs on novel fishing technology such as aquaponics.
6	Fishing Industry (Assistance) Act of the Revised Laws of Saint Lucia (2021)	This Act concerns assistance given to fisherfolk such as fuel subsidies and custom exemptions for the import of fishing gear.
7	St Lucia Fisherfolk Cooperative Society Ltd. By Laws	The registered By Laws made by the SLFCS in respect of any powers conferred by the Co-operative Societies Act No. 28 of 1999.
8	National Policy for the Fisheries Sector 2020 – 2030	The purpose of Saint Lucia's National Policy for the Fisheries Sector (NPFS) is to guide the planning and development of the fisheries sector for the period 2020 to 2030. The NPFS includes a vision, priorities and strategies to guide operational decision making in a manner that supports the sustainability of fisheries resources and contributes to the social and economic development of Saint Lucia.

9	Saint Lucia's National Ocean Policy and Strategic Action Plan (NOP SAP) 2020–2035	The purpose of this NOP is to establish a framework that can guide the planning and development of maritime activities in a rational and sustainable manner for the social and economic development of Saint Lucia. It provides a high-level planning document to guide operational decision making in order to pursue a Blue Economy through the effective coordination of all public bodies with responsibility for maritime and ocean affairs
10	Saint Lucia's Sectoral Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan for the Fisheries Sector (Fisheries SASAP) 2018-2028	“The SASAP consists of 31 adaptation measures deemed critical for building resilience in the country's fisheries and fishery dependent livelihoods. The measures, endorsed by relevant stakeholders, offer solutions to information, technical, institutional, financial, regulatory and policy limitations hampering adaptation in the sector.”
11	Agreement to Manage the Soufriere Marine Management Area (2001) and Bye-Law No. 2 of the Soufriere Marine Management Association Inc.	Whereas the purpose of this agreement is to establish and guide the management of the Soufriere Marine Management Area (hereinafter referred to as the SMMA), as the appropriate institutional arrangement for the management of marine and coastal resources in the Soufriere region, and as the mechanism to govern the relationship among governmental and non-governmental organisations involved. A Bye-law relating generally to the conduct of the Soufriere Marine Management Association Inc.
12	National Social Protection Policy	This Policy presents a multi-dimensional approach that considers the contribution of education, health, housing, legal aid, and social security to poverty reduction in Saint Lucia.
13	Press Release: “Soufriere Fishermen's co-op takes control of landing site”	This press release details the handover of the fisheries facilities in Soufriere to the Soufriere Fishermen's Society Ltd.
14	Eastern Caribbean Regional Ocean Policy (ECROP) 2019	This policy establishes a framework for the sustainable development, management and conservation of the marine environment within the Eastern Caribbean.
15	OECS Marine Research Strategy	The overall aim of the strategy is to support the implementation of ECROP by proposing the means to create a more integrated, better-funded, more efficient and more useful framework for marine research in the OECS region.
16	OECS Code of Conduct for Responsible Marine Research	This document sets out a regional Code of Conduct for Responsible Marine Research in the Eastern Caribbean region, as part of the Eastern

		Caribbean Regional Ocean Policy (ECROP) and the OECS Marine Research Strategy (MRS).
17	Agreement establishing Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy	This Agreement establishes the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy.
18	FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries	This Code sets out principles and international standards of behaviour for responsible practices with a view to ensuring the effective conservation, management and development of living aquatic resources, with due respect for the ecosystem and biodiversity.

## Appendix B: Transcript of the virtual interview with the Board of the Soufriere Fisherman's Co-operative Society Ltd., held on September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 4:30pm EST.

**BACKGROUND:** This interview was conducted by Ms. Monique S. Calderon (MSC) with assistance from Ms. Vilma Joseph (VJ), Manager of the Soufriere Fisherman's Co-operative Society Ltd ("the Co-operative"). Ms. Joseph contacted the Board Members, organized the meeting and provided clarification during the interview to both the interviewer and interviewees. Five members of the board were interviewed. They will remain anonymous and instead identified as BM 1-5 (Board Member 1-5). This interview was held virtually using Zoom and lasted just over 2 hours.

The Board Members were previously briefed on the purpose of the meeting. The researcher began by explaining the structure of her thesis. This introduction, as well as the explanation of the key elements of empowerment and their definitions were accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation (found in Appendix C.)

---

### Introduction:

00:02 - MSC:

Alright, so for my research, I have to write a paper, right? And the way the paper is set up, it's broken into two parts, and each part has two chapters. So, I'm just going to go over it briefly, so you can understand where I'm at in the process, why I'm bringing you in, and what I plan to do, essentially.

So, the first chapter, or the first part, is on co-management and empowerment. We know co-management is when the management authority shares the responsibility for management of fisheries or marine resources, etcetera. So that's like with the FAD [fish aggregating device] building that the Japanese are doing with y'all [referencing on going project being implemented by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (jica)]. That's one of those co-management activities.

So, my first chapter, I'm just going to go over first the concepts of co-management and empowerment, and then I'm going to look at the key elements of empowerment that I have

come up with based on what I've been researching so far. Now this, we're going to talk about these elements in the questions. That's what I'm going to be asking you questions about. So, we're going to go more in depth in that in a little bit, but just to say that those six elements that I found, they might not necessarily be what you think is the most important thing for you all to feel empowered as fisherfolk, right? And if you have an opposite opinion, you have any different opinion, feel free to let me know. That's the kind of valid information I would need for us to be able to get a good study out of it.

Okay, in the next section, we'll be looking at co-management and empowerment arrangements in the SMMA. So first I categorized all of the stakeholders in the SMMA. I put them into broad categories, like tourism, fisherfolk, management authorities, so that's like Fisheries [Department of.], SMMA [Soufriere Marine Management Association Ltd.], PMA [Pitons Management Agency], and then we have other agencies that deal with infrastructure and development, like SRDF [Soufriere Regional Development Foundation] , Ministry of Infrastructure, SLASPA [Saint Lucia Air and Seaports Authority] Ports Division, that kind of thing, right?

And then after the next section will look at the introduction of the framework that I'll be using to assess empowerment. I'm going to talk about that a little bit more on the next slide, but essentially what I'm doing now is part of that framework. So, in this section, I'm just explaining the whole process I'm going through.

Okay, now the second half. Just bear with me. I know this part is not that interesting. [laughs] But, yes, in the first chapter of the second part, I'm going to do the actual assessment of the degree of empowerment in the SMMA. This now is my framework. So first I'm going to look at all of the legal, operation and institutional frameworks, like the Fisheries Act, the SMMA agreement, if the Co-operative has some sort of agreement or something on like responsibilities, you know your rules and regulations and whatnot, if you have something like that, that would be useful for you to send me. I'm going to look at that against the elements of empowerment that I looked at to see how the elements of empowerment are embedded in the frameworks, so that we can then go forward with section B, which is now what I'm doing now the interviews with y'all as well, maybe I might reach out to some other key stakeholders. However, I think as the Board of Directors of the cooperative y'all should be a good representative group for the fisherfolk in Soufriere so that's why I'm reaching out to you, acknowledging the wealth of expertise and amount of time you've been in the area, the knowledge that you have, I think, is very important for this work going forward. Okay?



And then finally, I'm going to look at the results, and I'm going to look for two things. One, how are Fisherfolk empowered to participate in decision making in the fishery sector? And then also, not the second. I'm going to look at what limits fisherfolk from being able to play a greater role. So, these kinds of things would also be very important. So just keep them in mind as we're talking. We'll see what we can do. Cool, does that sound good to everybody so far?

05:24 Board Members:

[Collective agreement]

05:31 – MSC:

One second, let me just check this... Okay. [Troubleshooting transcription service]

05:46 – MSC:

Oh, yeah. And then finally, at the end. I want to come up with a series of recommendations which can, which can be then shown to Cabinet, and we can hopefully get some sort of useful feedback from that.

## On “Empowerment”:

06:00 – MSC:

Okay, so what is empowerment? Empowerment, just briefly, is a process through which people experience personal and social change, both at the individual level, but also at your community level, enabling them to take action to achieve influence over the organizations and institutions which affect their lives and the communities in which they live. So essentially, when we talk about empowerment, we're talking about the process in which people gain the ability to be able to make positive change to themselves and to the environment. So that's what we're looking at. So, the elements of empowerment that I'm looking at today with y'all are capacity building and skill development, securing tenure and access rights, accessing funding, participatory research methods, stakeholder, engagement and delegation of responsibility. So, we'll go over these a bit more in depth. I'm going to ask questions, but first I'm just going to start asking a couple of questions about empowerment.

What I'm going to do is I would ask a couple of questions, and after each question, I'll give a couple of seconds, for you guys to respond. You don't all have to respond, but ideally, if I could get two responses for each question, that would be great. Okay, if you have more to say, that's

perfect. If you don't have anything to say, I don't want you to feel like you know you're forced to say something, but you know, the responses would definitely help.

08:27 – MSC:

Okay, so the first question I'm going to ask: Do you believe that fisherfolk in Soufriere are empowered ?

08:46 - VJ

Meaning that they have the ability to cause change?

08:48 -MSC:

Yes, to themselves and to their community. And when I say community, I mean the community being fisherfolk, not just the whole community of Soufriere, but scaled down to fisherfolk in Soufriere.

09:09 – VJ [TO Board Members]:

Do you think you have the ability to change things within the fishing community in Soufriere?

09:20 - BM1:

That is something we're looking at, something we're working on, to try and change for better fishing for us because all we have now are the FADs [Fish Aggregating Devices], we can't catch anything from the fish nets. Even bottom fishing is a real problem for us. So, what we can do is try and change things around, like putting some more funds [towards fishing].

09:40 – BM2:

We have dolphin problem in the FADs. Sometimes you go to the FAD and if there are dolphins there you can't catch anything. You have to leave the fish for them because they eat all the fish.

10:12 – MSC:

Sorry, Rita, can you just take down a few notes for me, because I'm not hearing as clearly on my end, okay, but thank you so much. [Mrs. Rita Straughn-Mitchell, Fisheries Extension Officer for Soufriere assisted in organizing this meeting; MSC thought she was still in the room.]

VJ:

Rita left.

MSC:

Oh, she's not there anymore? Okay, no problem. That's fine. I'll go back over it tomorrow. That's okay, alright. So, any other responses? That was two separate people, right? I was writing notes. Sorry.

[Speakers confirm that it was two separate people]

10:46 – MSC:

Okay, anybody else?

10:52 – VJ:

What she's asking, if y'all think you have the power to be able to change.

[BM asked question to Vilma I could not hear]

VJ:

No, she's talking about you as a fisher, if you think you have a power to change things in the fishing community.

11:10 – MSC:

Or in the fisheries sector.

11:31 – VJ:

Yall don't think you have the ability to be able to say, "Yes, I don't want this in the fishing community, or no, I don't want this?"

11:41 – BM3:

But the SMMA [the Association] has that priority thing.

BM2:

Marine reserve ?

11:53 – VJ:

Monique, that includes Anse Chastanet [Resort] as well. Places that were fishing priority areas that now they're pushing the fishers out and they feel less power to cause any change, because these big places are taking over and the more, they [management authorities and fisherfolk] say this is a fishing priority area, it's still not respected.

12:26 – MSC:

Okay, and you feel like there's nothing you can do about it?

12:34 – VJ:

Well, they've gone to meetings and talked so many times. They think they've tried.

12:44 – MSC:

Yeah, okay, okay. Fair. Understood, okay.

Anybody else on this topic? Or should I move on to the next one?

[Interviewees agreed to move on]

13:08 – MSC:

Okay, so next question: What do you think is necessary for you to feel empowered, or for you to feel like you can make a change?

13:25 - BM1:

What I can suggest is to give us back some of the [marine] reserve so we can do our bottom fishing and trap fishing. Now, all the fish available are in the reserve. And there is another issue that [recreational SCUBA] divers come into our spots. It is a fishing priority area. These divers destroy our fish spot - our fish pot. Sorry.

BM2:

Yes, sometimes when you pull up your pot, it doesn't have any fish in it.

14:07 - BM1:

In the FISHING PRIORITY. They don't want us to come inside the marine reserve but they dive in the fishing priority and destroy our pots.

14:24 – MSC:

Okay, so what you're talking about is a little bit of the use rights, which we're going to get into in a little bit. So, keep that in mind for me. Okay, that's important. Thank you. Um, okay,

14:40 - VJ:

Also, Monique, I think the SMMA should do better enforcement so the fishers can feel like they're free to do what they want to do, because the SMMA allows a lot of things to happen, that they're not supposed to be allowing to happen.

For example, the Anse Chastanet [Resort] put a whole barrier ,buoys on it [the bay adjacent to the resort, called Anse Chastanet Beach], and nothing was done about that. I think there is legislation in place for all of these things. So, we're asking for more legislation so that we can be more empowered. Because even the SMMA that is supposed to manage the area and give fishers more empowerment to do what they have to do, they don't. They don't feel that backup from SMMA. So, the enforcing of the legislation that's already there is falling on deaf ears because it's not being done. The fishers, as soon as they see a buoy come up, to them, they feel like it's a barrier for them already. So they feel like they not they don't have any power to do anything, because it's a is one of those bigger boys that come and put a buoy, for example, the Anse Chastanet People [management of the Resort] say the fishers can always come and take out the barrier. But for a fisher, as soon as they see a buoy, an enclosure, they feel like they don't have any power to go in there. They've already had so many issues, especially with those big hotels like Anse Chastanet and Jalousie.

[Note: the buoys being referenced are typical specifically used to demarcate the marine reserve zones in the SMMA.]

16:41- BM1:

Sometimes if you take out that buoy on your own, marine police gets involved.

16:53 – MSC:

Yeah, okay, that makes sense. And so do you all feel like there are any community initiatives that are aimed at empowerment at all?

17:24 -VJ:

Well, that's what SMMA was supposed to be doing, giving fishers empowerment, freedom to go catch fish, freedom for them to be able to have fish that had been in the marine reserve, growing into big fish for them to catch later. And other people are going in there, and fishers are not allowed to go in the marine reserve. Other people come in and do coastline fishing in there. And the Marine Police, not Marine Police. The SMMA wouldn't tell them anything. People from out of the community would come in the marine reserve and do coastline fishing, and the fishers from Soufriere are not allowed to go in there. So better policing from SMMA [would help.].

18:20 – BM1:

Another thing, they tell you that you can fish 100 yards away -

VJ:

-75

BM1:

But the first time, it was 100 and they changed it to 75. You tell us we can fish 75 yards away from the reserve. And still, when you fish in there and the Marine Police pass, they chase you away.

18:55- MSC:

So, what you're saying is that the rules seem to be unclear [inconsistent]. They tell you something, but in reality, when you're out there trying to do something, they don't stick to the same rules that they're telling you.

BM1:

Yes, they chase you. If you don't want to leave, they even call for marine police.

Marine Police has already chased me out while I was not even in the marine reserve. I was in the fishing priority. They told me to go to fish where there is only sand. What can you catch there with your little fish pot ? You cannot catch anything in the sand.

[Note: Within the Soufriere Marine Managed Area, Fishing Priority Areas are typically located over sandy bottoms, whilst Marine Reserve zones contain select reef areas up to the 75m depth

contour. Fishers are allowed to fish using fishing pots, or other means, on reefs beyond the seaward extent of the SMMA.]

19:52 - BM2:

The divers, the hotel divers. A problem we have with them is that when they dive, they cut your fish pots. We have one of our fishers right here with us. He was fishing. He was right there.

19:56 – BM3:

I was looking at them with my mask. I could see the white people cutting my pots. And I called Rita right away. I wasn't even near the boundary.

20:15 – MSC:

Okay, um -

20:19 -VJ:

You were saying something, right?

20:23 – MSC:

Oh, no, I was just saying, um, I just want to be very clear, if I seem like I'm very neutral about your what y'all are saying or anything, it's because of the nature of what I'm doing. I cannot give too much opinion in this context. However, when I'm working, when I come back and I'm working fully for Fisheries, that's something else. Okay, I just want to clarify that.

Okay, alright, I have another question on empowerment - two more questions, and then we can move to starting on the in-depth elements.

Okay, so as the cooperative, I'm not sure if everybody here retained their position on the Co-operative Board [Elections were recently held.], but as a Co-operative, as the Soufriere Co-operative, do you think that there's more that the Co-operative can do to increase empowerment? Do you think that the Co-operative has the ability to do that?

21:56 – BM2:

I'd say yes, but these days I see it a bit hard, because we're not making much money to support fishers.

22:10 – MSC:

When you say you don't have much support, support from who? From fishers, from the government?

22:21 – BM2:

Fishers, because fishers don't have much money these days. Things are a little rough for them, because of the Blackfish [colloquial name for Pilot Whale and other small dolphin] and the sea is getting a little hard these days, very hard.

22:32 – BM3:

Particularly, the current. When the current is going it lasts for days. Either the FAD floats away or it sinks, submerges. The current stays for a while some days so you cannot go out [to sea].

23:02 – BM4:

We as a Co-operative cannot do enough to support fishers. These days it's a little bit rough, we have to try to wait until next year to try to pick up before we can do anything.

23:17 – MSC:

Okay, and what about Fisheries or the government? Do you think that the government is doing enough to increase empowerment, or what else can be done?

23:33 – BM4:

With that government? We're waiting to see if they will try to help. So, we'll see if the year ends and we haven't gotten anything because about four of us got damages. Our boats got damaged from (Hurricane) Beryl. So, we're just trying to wait to see when we can get something to repair our engine and boats. They say they have something for us, I don't know if its in a bag or something.

[Laughter]

24:18 – MSC:

Okay, I understand that completely. But what about, for example, projects like the COASTFISH project or CARIFICO or other things that try to train different skills or help with business development and things like that. Would you say that those things help with empowerment?



24:41 – VJ:

More training.

BM5:

More training.

24:43 – MSC:

You want more training. Okay,

24:49 – VJ:

More enforcement of the laws, the legislation.

25:00 – MSC:

Okay.

25:03 -VJ:

The re-establishment of the SMMA and putting it on the GPS, is that done because that world probably help the confusion that's going on, of whether a place is fishing priority area or not. Because [BM3] is saying that he's been in the fishing priority area and they chased him out of it. If the marine police, and everybody is on the same page as to what is fishing priority area and what is not fishing priority area, that would be great. Plotting [the zones] on the map, plotting it on the GPS, putting signage up different places, that's how the A started. They had signs everywhere, now they don't.

[Note: The Department of Fisheries embarked on a project to record the coordinates of the zone boundaries within the SMMA in 2021. This process is not meant to re-establish zones, but to provide digital demarcation and improve the physical demarcation of the area. This project is on-going.]

25:59 - BM5:

There are places where the SMMA had previously put up signs, and they were taken down. Then they put buoys further in [to shore] so you have less space to fish in the fishing priority.

[Note: This board member is again referring to the buoys used currently to demarcate the marine reserves. These particular buoys were placed away from the actual boundary between

the marine reserve and the fishing priority area because of the challenges posed by the topography of the sea floor and reef structure in the area. As a result, these buoys are inside of the fishing priority area and are a topic of concern to the fishers who are not aware of the reasoning for their placement.]

26:13 – BM1:

Some more training for the young folks that are coming in.

26:16 – MSC:

For the new fishers?

26:22 – BM1:

Yes, GPS training again, and also how to filet fish, types of fishing.

26:38 – MSC:

Sorry. What was the last thing you said ?

26:46 – BM1:

Types of fishing

26:53 – MSC:

Okay. Well, you're already answering questions on my next spot. Y'all are advanced. [Laughs]

27:02 – BM5:

We want a trawler because there's all those squid out there and we cannot do anything with it. All the big giant squid, and big tuna that's out there. But if we had a fishing trawler, all night long we could stay out there. Even fishing for two, three weeks, and then sell to the Fisheries Department.

27:29 – MSC:

Let me ask you, do you think there are fishers in Soufriere that want to do that kind of thing? Is there a lot of interest?

27:39 - BM5:

Yes, I think so. Because we don't have it, maybe they wouldn't want it [at first], but if we have the boat, it will change their minds. As a young man, I always had the intention to be on a trawler and spend days on the sea. And here we have enough fish, we can do that.

BM2:

That's a good one.

BM5:

Now I'll leave that for the young ones.

28:21- BM1:

The other day, my son dropped a lawyer on a fishing boat at Jalousie. [Sugar Beach Resort, located at Jalousie Beach.] Catch and release. Just out there by Saint Vincent there. That is a problem in our FADs too. When those fishing boats come to our FAD to fish, catch and release. When they catch the marlin and release it, the fish behave strangely. It does not take any more hooks.

BM2:

Some of them die. After they take the weight it's better that they sell that [fish] to the hotel or to Fisheries.

29:37 - VJ:

What about also teaching fishers how to deal with or create, I don't know, maybe an industry, a business with the Blackfish, or how to catch the Blackfish or means and ways to deal with the Blackfish or bring it in so that they can make some money out of it, or give them proper equipment to handle something like that, to handle the Blackfish.

30:00 - BM3:

And something to chase them away from the FADs.

30:10 - BM2:

Like a sounder to chase them away.

30:19 – VJ:

Right now, they're feeling powerless against those Blackfish.

30:21- MSC:

On the FADs?

30:24 - All

Yes.

## On “Capacity Building and Skill Development”:

30:53 – MSC:

So, we're going to move along to the next part. You already answered a lot of the questions that I would have asked you, so we can move through the part even faster. The first set of targeted questions on the different elements of empowerment is going to be on capacity building and skill development, for which y'all gave me a lot of great answers already.

So just a quick definition, capacity building is the process of developing and strengthening skills, instincts, abilities, processes and resources that organizations and communities need to survive, adapt and thrive in a fast, changing world. Okay, so all the things you all just said, like the fish handling, fishing techniques, how to use the GPS, all of that would count as capacity building. I've taken down a couple of the things that you all said that would be of interest to you. But outside of direct fishing capacity, building like building fishing skills. Do you think there's anything that the community can benefit from, like, for example, financial literacy skills, or how to develop a business and maintain a business, or, you know how to market products, things like that, that would take you a little bit further.

32:48 - BM4:

Yeah, definitely.

33:03 – MSC:

Okay you mentioned it briefly, but just to get a concrete yes or no, do you believe that capacity building is a key element of empowerment for your community,

33:22 – All:

Yes.

33:24 - MSC:

Okay, thank you very much. Okay, what do you believe is the benefit of capacity building in fisheries topics, or in whichever topics? Or do you how do you think that they help your community gain empowerment?

I know it seems straightforward, but an answer would be good.

34:06 – VJ:

Well, they say without knowledge that people perish, and to have something, to have knowledge of how to better yourself, that is always going to build you up. So if you're getting knowledge from Fisheries or the government or whoever is giving the knowledge and how to do things better, that is always good for the community.

34:33 – MSC:

Okay, yeah. Thank you. Anybody else?

[Headshakes and silence]

No, okay, okay. Are you aware of any capacity building or skill development initiatives that are targeting like the fishery sector?

35:10 – BM3:

Boat Master Training.

35:19 – MSC:

Anything else?

35:27 – VJ:

I think right now DOF is trying to train fishers in the VMS [vessel monitoring system], how to activate it. Yeah, that's great for them to know exactly where their boats are, and the ability to be able to track it by themselves. If they are out and they teach their families how to do it, then the family can actually tell Marine Police and Fisheries. "This is why I see the boat right now" and give them the GPS [co-ordinates], that would be better than searching the sea looking for them.

36:16 – MSC:

Yeah. Anything else? Any other initiatives that you know of past or present. It could be something that that happened before.

[No responses.]

36:30 – MSC:

No? Okay. Have you been a part of any of the initiatives that we mentioned before?

36:43 – BM3:

Well, we've done safety at sea already.

36:50 - BM2:

We've done classes for the GPS already.

36:57 – MSC:

Would you say that you chose to participate in those things, because you could see the benefit to yourself and to your income, generation, to your family, for your safety, etc.

All:

Yeah.

37:17 – BM2:

We'd still Like them to give another training on that topic.

37:19 – MSC:

on which one?

37:22 - BM2:

GPS, maps, and navigation.

37:35 - BM5:

Yes, a refresher.

37:40 - BM4:

And there are younger guys who would benefit and don't know how to use a GPS.

37:30 – MSC:

I'll keep that in mind for my list of recommendations. Thank you. And then, are there any other areas in capacity building that you think are necessary for empowerment? Now remember, empowerment is to create a change in your community. So, to basically make your community better able to participate in decision making about the resources. That's the fisheries resources that you all use. What do you think that the fisherfolk need to be able to be better managers of their resources?

38:43 – VJ:

Maybe, how to run

the fishing industry as a business, because I think that's lacking. The fishers just go out. A lot of them come back and they drink the money or put it towards other things, and it goes right away.

39:03 – MSC:

So like financial literacy and how to save and stuff like that.

39:11 - BM1:

Yeah because a lot of the boat owners don't really go out. It's more the crew members,

39:14 – BM2:

Yeah.

39:18 – VJ:

A lot of the crew come back thinking that they don't have much of an investment, because they're just crew. They're not important. So they go with their money to either drink or pay this one-time thing or something like that, instead of saving, instead of even investing for the future, pension plans and paying NIC. They need to be trained the importance of these things.

[NIC = National Insurance Corporation. Any employed resident or citizen can pay contributions to NIC towards a retirement plan.]

39:53 – BM5:

The young fishers need training on that very seriously You have to be serious on that [managing your money]. In My days we didn't have that, but right now, they're getting all of the opportunities, and they have to step up on it.

40:14 – MSC:

What about your health as a fisher, do you think that maybe whether it's government, whether it's SMMA, whether it's the Co-operative, whoever, should do more education about the health risks, health hazards that come with fishing, how to do basic first aid. So if you're out at sea and like, I don't know, you get stuck by a hook or something like that, you can you can help yourself until you get back to shore. Do you think that kind of thing is important as well?

40:49 – BM2:

I think it's very important. I did the first aid class already, but it is very important for the younger ones to do it.

[Unclear]

41:07 - MSC:

Can you repeat that?

41:10 – VJ:

I was telling him that they needed to repeat it every six months anyway,

41:19 -BM2:

They also need first aid kits on board their Vessels.

41:28 – VJ:

And equipment for safety at sea like life jackets and stuff.

41:35 - BM5:

They need to check if you have the proper things. And you must be very careful with these things. Must always check on it not to get wet, because don't mind, water is very [unclear] it can penetrate these barrels. I had my first aid kit in my boat, in my barrel, and I always check



in on it. When I check on it, I happen to check on it at the right time because it's getting wet. Sea water is a destroyer.

42:39 – MSC:

Yep, that salt water not easy at all.

## On “Securing tenure and use rights”:

42:50 – MSC:

Okay, alright, let's move along a little bit. I know y'all probably want to go and enjoy your afternoon, so let's try and speed up a little bit. Okay. So, the next element of empowerment we're going to look at is securing tenure and use rights. Okay? So let me just explain a little bit what I mean by that. When we say use rights, we mean the rights held by fishers or by fishing communities to use fisheries resources, right? So that's your fishing license, you know? Once you have your commercial license, you are allowed to go and fish, okay, yes, there are some restrictions, but, by virtue of your license, you're registered as a fisher, you're allowed to go and fish. Whereas tenure rights, we're talking about restricting who can have access to the fishery, how much fishing they can do, and how much they can take with them out of the water. Okay, so when we talk about tenure rights, I'm not suggesting this currently, but in some countries, we have certain systems where only certain fishers from a certain community are allowed to fish in a certain area, and they only allowed to take out a certain species. you know, that kind of thing. I'm not suggesting that. That's just an example.

VJ:

That's the case in the USA?

BM2:

It's not only in the USA.

44:34 – MSC:

No, they do that in Indonesia as well, in the Philippines, in different areas.

44:58 - BM3:

Yeah, there are certain places which when you bring in your net, if you have certain fish in your net you have to drop them before you reach the shore. Or you have to measure them.

45:00 – BM1:

In Saint Vincent, there's a size for jackfish and mackerel. Below that, you cannot of take them out of the water.

45:12 – MSC:

Yes, okay, so then you all understand what I mean. Exactly perfect.

45:19 - BM2:

About a few years ago, the size of the mesh had to be an inch and a half. The smallest is an inch and a quarter.

45:36 - BM3:

So, no small fish in there.

45:37 - BM2:

Even with the fish pot, two inches is the smallest the wire mesh can be.

45:41 – MSC:

Exactly. So, yes, that's what we're talking about now. these kind of things. This section will also include some things that y'all mentioned very often, the fishing priority areas versus marine reserves - these kind of things as well.

Okay, so my first question is whether or not you think that securing tenure and use rights is a key element of empowerment for fisherfolk in Soufriere? Just for clarification, when I say securing tenure and use rights, I mean ensuring that fisherfolk have access to fisheries resources and they are able to fish. They have access to the fishery. There maybe limits on how much fishing, or, you know, on size limits, these kind of things. Do you think that these things are important elements to make your community feel empowered?

46:55 - All:

Yes.

47:15 – BM1:

Sometimes when they pull in nets [seine fishers], you will see about three, four hundred small snapper - a thousand small snappers and all of them are dead. If you say they should drop them and let them live another three, four months, they say that the fish will move out of the shore and go deeper. Which means the seine is not able to take it. Because you know the seine might only go about a yard out. Once, there were some tourists, on the Soufriere side [Soufriere beach park] and when they saw snappers these people pulled up, they said “oh my god, next five years we're not going to get to eat snappers.” And it's not a one-day thing,

BM1:

Everyday.

BM2:

There also used to be a thing where in the early morning, when we used to go fishing for Flyingfish with a seine or filet. They would come and just drag [the net] on the bay. They don't have to see any fish, they will just cast the net and pull it, just to get bait for the fishers to go out. Those days Flyingfish was good, even bottom fishers would come to get bait. Now this man, the owner of SMMA [Manager at the time, not owner.] said to them but look at the small ones they killed. If they leave the net in the water choose what you want to get out of it, at least drop the rest. But some of them said oh no. We have a few now [seine fishers], but it's a little difficult, because they put a few things on beaches. They put hooks and anchors to tie up. [The resorts along the coast may have moorings or anchors along the coast that get caught on nets.] But I remember years ago when I saw all the snappers, the birds would come and eat them. Snappers that could have stayed there for years. In three or four months they go out [to sea].

49:48 - BM5:

Yeah, because fish grow fast. Very fast. Fish are not like humans. Humans take a few years to be in your teens, no, but fish grow fast.

50:06 – BM5:

There are some young folks that dive around the bay catching young lobsters. This is one thing I don't like, this must stop.

50:22 - BM3:

Even the nets. Because when the lobsters come around, the small ones, the net would catch them. They would not release them.

50:27 - VJ:

Now we barely have lobster.

50:29 - BM3:

If the government did not come and turtles lay, oh they'd have problems because before the turtles would come and lay, they would take it. If the turtle came to lay, they would hold it, kick the head and take the turtle.

50:55 – BM1:

They destroy.

50:57 – VJ:

A whole generation [of turtles.]

51:02 – BM2:

A few years ago, the government really put pressure on that, marine fisheries. If they catch you would have to pay a certain amount of money. But still, if the person feels there are too many turtles, they still take them. They hide it and bring it somewhere to kill it. One day I was going fishing last year, and I saw a guy taking the eggs after the big Piton. I was going up and down, long-lining. When I looked, I saw a turtle go and drop it eggs. The man was taking all of the eggs. Once you know a turtle, you can see when it goes up [on shore]. They can see it [the tracks]. There was one 20 years ago, 25 years ago, there was one right in [?]. There wasn't a barrier. It came right up in the dirt. That man father that take the eggs. [Pointed at another board member]. But nowadays you're not allowed. But they will still take it. At Anse Chastanet, when a turtle comes up, they will put sticks all around. Right now, Anse Chastanet ha two that came up, they put sticks all around.

[VJ brings us back on track.]

52:49 – VJ:

Okay, let's, continue in tenure and use rights. But I'm thinking when you said the rights of the of fishing communities to use the fishery resources. I'm also thinking of Soufriere especially being a hub for tourism, and the hotels, the GPH thing, and pushing all the fishers out of where they're supposed to be fishing. And this is slowly becoming, well it has been a problem, and I think it's becoming worse, where the rights of the fishers are not even being held. The power that the fishers have over where to fish and where not to fish is becoming less and less because of us being a tourist hub, and hotels being built up and different things like that, and causing the rights of the fishers to not in existence be anymore. I was looking at a documentary with Jamaica and so many of the fishers are crying because now their left without a place to fish. There's all the hotels coming up on the different beaches, and they telling the fishers they're not allowed to pass there. Some of them have to trek to go another place or to travel, to go and fish, because they're not allowed in their own community to fish, because they are hotels coming up in these places. So that's the flip side of it, where the rights of the fishers are not being upheld.

54:46 - BM4

Even the chemicals, they have in the water now. If you go by the jetty at Jalousie, you don't even see the coral.

[All talking over each other about the waste being released onto the reef.]

BM5:

There is a pipe under the jetty and all you see is waste water going into the sea.

55:36 – VJ:

Aren't these things already in legislation? Why is it not being upheld?

55:43 – MSC:

Well, the Fisheries Act specifically doesn't really speak to this kind of waste. It would be Solid Waste, and maybe Development Control Authority that's supposed to be doing the enforcement for these things. We know how these things go, but I'm making a note of it.

56:07 – BM4:

Sometimes they blame fishermen, but it's the divers damaging the coral reefs.

56:21 – VJ:

You mean, like the hotel divers?

56:30 – BM4:

They're walking on the coral reef, damaging the coral reef. I have seen that.

56:36 – MSC:

Is it the divers or the snorkelers

56:40 – BM4:

Yes, the snorkelers.

56:51 - BM2:

In Soufriere, we have a few boats. They do sportsfishing, and when they come back after fishing, when they come back to the jetty, the owner takes a chemical and washes the boat with a hose. All of it goes into the water, that chemical. There used to be a kind of [sea]grass outside the jetty. The fish would come right in there, eat it and lay eggs. Almost every day [redacted] washes his boat with the thing he's using. Everyone used to come and ask "you not seeing what [redacted] doing?" Almost every day that goes in the water and that pushed the fish away. Before, you would see sardines and these things run up and down the coastline. They would go down Cemetery Road, go down Baron's Drive and come back up. Nowadays they don't do that. Because of the liquid he put in the water. The chemical. Before we didn't have all these boats. Right now, the Soufriere jetty, the [?], on their own have 30-40 boats tied up there. And they wash with this chemical. And they don't care.

[The fishers continue discussing this and other similar instances in the past.]

1:00:09 – VJ:

Alright, next Monique. Okay, hey, we want to go.

On "Accessing funding":

1:00:24 – MSC:

Okay, we're finished with that section. Okay, so in the next section, we're talking about funding. That's money, we know that's important. Just something interesting that I found from my

research that you all may or may not know. Research has shown that small scale F]fisherfolk are often among the most economically vulnerable populations, and that means that the lack of access to financial resources often plays a big role in the inability of F]fisherfolk. Especially in small scale fisheries, to build and maintain essential fisheries infrastructure. That's your landing sites, your refrigerators, your tables for cleaning and also, purchasing fishing gear or transitioning to more sustainable fishing methods.

Given that, do you think that accessing funding is a key element of empowerment for your community? When I say accessing funding, I mean like, either getting money through different projects, or, the subsidies you get for fuel, well, the boat captain gets for fuel or things like that. Whether it's project money, or whether it's something that the Co-operative applies for like a grant, or something like that. Do you think being able to access funding is important for empowerment?

1:02:41 - BM3:

Yes, there are some fishers coming up that don't have the finance to get their own boat. If they can get somebody, a bank or something to help. That'd be good.

1:02:54 – BM2:

Well, they put Caribbean bank, Development Bank, that's the bank government put in place for that. My first boat I bought it from them. When the government [...] they said to write Fisheries. Anytime you're interested in something, you go to that bank, and they work it out with you. Recently I heard them talk about it again. I don't know how serious it is. The Caribbean bank, development bank.

1:03:32 - MSC:

So, it's important, being able to use these kind of things. Okay. Sorry, one second. This thing [the presentation] just went off for a second. Let me just put it back on. Okay, alright.

1:04:24 – MSC:

Is there a benefit- oh sorry one second, let me just - that thing is going to get annoying.[audio was echoing due to having two devices logged in to the meeting ]

1:04:52

Okay, do you think, well, we went over that a little bit. But do you think there's a benefit to securing funding for fisheries related activities? So yes, empowerment is important to the community. It would be beneficial. But can you think of any specific benefits?

[Two board members asked to repeat the question.]

1:05:24 - MSC

Can you think of any specific benefits that to the community that would come from being able to access funding?

1:05:44 – VJ:

When you get funding, you can invest more and get more fish for the community.

1:05:50 – BM4:

Where are we getting that? [Funding.]

1:05:59 – VJ:

She's asking, if y'all get the funding what it would do for the community?

1:06:00 - BM2:

It can do a lot for the community.

1:06:01 - BM5:

Try to buy some more boats and buy some freezers.

BM2:

Try to do some night fishing.

BM5:

Bigger boats. We can try and bring in bigger boats. Cabin boats.

VJ:

They can bring in more fish, the fish can stay cleaner.



1:06:12 - BM5:

Boats with cabins, so we can sleep at sea.

1:06:14 – BM2:

So, we don't have to get wet in the rain.

BM5:

Almost like Barbados.

BM2:

Yeah like Barbados' boats. Grenada too, Grenada's boats are bigger.

BM1:

Yeah, so try and train and get some money. Try to train the kids coming up.

BM3:

Fix our deep freezers so we could try and store our fish, sell it by bulk, bag them and sell them.

1:07:19 – VJ:

Bringing more value to fishing and for the people, because people don't want to clean fish anymore. So, if they get funding, they can invest more into their business, and then add more value to the fish. The community benefits from that. And I like to clean fish, but sometimes I have no time to clean fish.

1:08:09 – BM3:

Sometimes, you can hire people[to clean fish].

1:08:13 – VJ:

The people get benefit from it, because now they get a salary. Now the NIC is being paid. Yeah, the community benefits from that.

1:08:23 – BM4:

Look, , that fella does it, Gary. When Gary goes to fish, he puts it in the fridge, in the deep fridge, and you come and buy it. Buy it and sell it to hotels and restaurants. Its doing good. People buy it.

1:08:45 – MSC:

Okay. Are y'all aware of any funding opportunities that are going on, like whether it's projects, whether it's a bank giving out a certain grant for buying a boat or safety equipment, or anything like that?

1:09:00 – BM2:

Caribbean bank mentioned something about two weeks ago. They said they're going to reopen to help fishers- well not only fishermen - anyone who wants to develop, who wants to build. Caribbean Development Bank. That's the bank that is giving it.

1:09:20 – VJ:

I think I heard, I don't know if it was for the credit union that's giving a lower interest rate for fishers or something like that, but I don't know any other projects or funding or grants for fishers. I'm not aware.

BM4:

That would be good for fishers to get that.

VJ:

[Laughs] Fishers still waiting for help from Beryl and haven't gotten it yet, Monique.

MSC:

Really?

1:09:48 – BM5:

Even my boat, my engine got broken. Delbert lost his boat. Beryl took Delbert's boat.

[Side conversation about metal scraps from boats.]

1:10:30 – VJ:

Next one Monique. We have thunder and lightning outside, and we want to go home.

1:10:35 - MSC:

Okay, okay, so have you been part of any initiatives ? Was it [BM2], sorry, who said that he was he got his boat through one of the loans a couple years ago?

1:10:59 -BM2:

Yes, in 1988. I bought my boat. Caribbean Development Bank, for Saint Lucia. At that point Mr. LaForce was the manager. Saint Lucia Yacht Center and the Deveaux's and them used to bring in boats from Trinidad and I end up buying one from them for \$13,000 and I bought the engine for \$8000. I took a loan from Caribbean Development Bank. It was good. It was alright, because now, LaForce was the one in charge.. They give you lower interest and things like that. Although, if you have enough money in the credit union, sometimes the credit union can give you a low interest rate. Like right now Mon Repos said they're giving the lowest interest, five point something percent. Some banks give you 2%, one will give you 15% you know, Republic Bank gives you 2% or nothing. Bank of Saint Lucia does give you anything. And when you tell them you're leaving them, they tell you "oh no don't leave".

[Side conversation about interest rates at different financial institutions.]

1:13:20 – BM5:

Okay let's go ahead.

1:13:28 – MSC:

Alright, okay. Last question in this section, what sustainable funding options do you think would sustain the fishery sector in Soufriere and ultimately assist in achieving empowerment. So when I say sustainable funding opportunities, I mean something that will continuously make money, you know, like if you develop a good system for processing your fish and get consistent buyers. Maybe you can have a relationship with the hotels or restaurants or something like that, so that you know that there's always money flowing. Can you think of any other kind of sustainable funding opportunities? I know some fishers are going into like water taxi and stuff like that.

1:14:31 - BM3:

Most of them are going into water taxi.

[Agreement from room]

1:14:36 – VJ:

They were talking about trawlers earlier.

BM2:

Yes, to do some night fishing. With your cabin. You don't have to be in the rain.

1:14:50 – VJ:

Yeah, and you can stay there for more than one day.

1:15:08 – BM1:

Yes, so you can have your bed below.

BM2:

Yes, even if you don't have a bed, you don't have to stay in the water, you don't have to be wet. You can stay warm.

VJ:

You can get more fish, and not just go, waste fuel and come back.

BM2:

At nighttime, there is a special light you can put on, and the fishes come and see what's causing it. Just Like with the squid, when the Japanese came here and were doing squid fishing. They use this light, this blinking light. When I left minibus, my plan was to buy a boat. I went to America to buy boat, but I ran into a little problem. Who will bring it down with me. The man who was supposed to do it for me went to bring a boat to Europe and he never came back.

On “the use of participatory research”:

1:16:42 – MSC:

Alright. Let me move on to the next section. This one I'm just going to touch on very briefly. It's about participatory research, so that's research, but involving community members in the design of the research, helping to carrying out the research, things like that. Like the Japanese consultants, I don't know if you y'all know Aki, Hiroaki and Dr. Seko. There's also another girl with them. Saori. I'm not sure they did it in Soufriere, but they were doing some trials with the fish pots, and they involved some fishers in measuring fish and stuff like that.

1:17:35 - BM2:

That man even goes on the FADs and puts his tank on and go and tie it [the FAD] down. They're brave, these Japanese.

1:17:44 – MSC:

Yes, exactly, so that kind of stuff. Do you think that Fisherfolk being involved in research and helping to develop what the research is focusing on would empower the community?

VJ:

The community, the fishing community or like the whole community?

MSC:

The fishing community. Like directed research on maybe species that you all have interest in, or fishing gear you may have interest in...

1:18:17 – VJ:

I think so. She's [MSC] asking if when they're doing research, if you all think that research that involves y'all directly in getting things done how you think it should be done, would that be make you feel more empowered?

BM2:

Yes, of course.

BM5:

Yes, that would make more sense.

BM1,3,4:

Yes.

VJ:

Because they are designing it for themselves. They know what the thing is about, so they're the ones targeting the things that will interest them, or the things that would make it better for them, I think, it's a positive.

1:19:03 – MSC:

Do you think, given that fishing is such an intensive job, [recognizing that] you're out at sea for hours, do you think it's realistic for fisherfolk to carry out research? I'm not talking about in depth, in the lab, wearing a white coat kind of research, but like being involved in like when fisheries goes out and do assessments and things like that. Do you think that's something that's realistic, that fishers would actually take up?

All:

Yeah.

BM1:

Yeah, if we're benefitting, of course they will take advantage of it.

1:19:54 - MSC:

Okay, nice. Then, do you what areas of research would you be interested in

1:20:05 – VJ [to BM]:

What area of research do you think you would be interested in? What part of the research ?

BM4:

I think we'll have to do FAD research, to see what we have in the FAD, the numbers. [Population estimates and species composition]

BM2:

There are different types of fishers. So, we also have to consider the net fishers.

1:20:27 – VJ:

So, what type of research do y'all think you would be interested in doing?

1:20:35 – BM4

Sometimes, we want to know how much and what kind of fish we have available. Or [in the case of] marlin, how many people catch marlin, or how much there is out there. What's the biggest tuna...

1:20:47 – VJ:

What about the quality of water? Would y'all be interested in finding out the quality of the water?

1:21:06 – MSC:

For example, y'all mentioned the outtake pipe by Jalousie, would you be interested to know if the water is clean or not?

1:21:22 -BM3:

Yeah, something about the pollution. There's so much pollution in the water there.

1:21:26 – VJ:

Would y'all be interested in doing that kind of research?

1:21:34 – BM1:

Of course, because we don't want them to release that dirty water.

1:21:51 - BM2:

You see, the thing with the fishers on the call now, we don't have nets. We're more deep water fishers, you know deep sea. The people with the nets, they're the ones that really have the problem with the chemicals.

VJ:

Well, eventually it goes into all the water.

BM5:

Well, where we fish, on the FAD, the current will take that [the chemicals] first. Close to the shore sometimes it can stay for half an hour... [describes path of water depending on current direction]

## On “stakeholder engagement”:

1:22:18 – MSC:

Okay. Alright, this next one should be familiar to y'all. So, stakeholder engagement, that is essentially the practices and organization undertake to involve stakeholders in a positive manner in organizational activities. Or, as one person would say, it's about nurturing a two-way relationship with anybody who has a stake in your organization. So that would look like Fisheries coming to y'all to ask you all questions about a certain development. For example, when we came for the zoning of the SMMA, that kind of stuff. Okay, so do you believe that stakeholder engagement- Fisherfolk being the stakeholder do you think that's a key element of empowerment for fisherfolk?

1:23:49 - [all in agreement]

Yes, yes.

1:23:52 – MSC:

Why? What do you think is important about that?

1:23:57 – VJ:

Why do you think it was important for you to be part of that? [Clarifying to fishers] She was asking why do you think it was important for people to be part, for example, when the SMMA came to ask questions about the rezoning of the SMMA.

1:24:30 – VJ:

Monique, sorry, research as well?

1:24:38 – MSC:

Research? Yes.

1:24:41 – VJ:



Like, if they are part of, why do they think it's important to be part of, part of research? And like, for example, when they were rezoning the SMMA?

1:25:03 – VJ:

Monique? [Connection issues]

1:25:08 – MSC:

Yes, I'm listening.

1:25:11 – VJ:

I was asking you to repeat the question. You were saying that, why do they think it was important for them to be part of researching and being engaged in things like rezoning the SMMA, and that's what you're asking, right?

1:25:34 – MSC:

Yes, what I want to know is why you think it's important for like Fisheries or SMMA to engage you and let you know what they're doing, what's going on, what projects they have going on, that kind of stuff.

1:26:00 - BM3:

They never tell us anything like that. They just do what they want.

VJ:

She's talking about like when they were rezoning the SMMA, y'all were part of that. That's what she's talking about.

BM2:

Because fishermen need to know, it's their livelihood.

BM4:

I wasn't there. [Referring to the establishment of the SMMA in 1995.]

1:26:06

[VJ clears up some confusion regarding the initial establishment of the SMMA and the demarcation exercise that began more recently in 2021.]

1:26:55 – VJ:

It was really great being part of it, because it affects fishers. And if we're not part of it, it doesn't make sense, because it's affecting their livelihood. And if they're not part of doing it, or in the know of what's going on, that would be wrong.

1:27:21 – MSC:

So, would you say that having the information makes you empowered?

1:27:30 -BM4:

If you don't have information, you have no power. You don't know what you're about.

1:28:32 – MSC:

Mhm. Next question, are you aware of any specific stakeholder engagements that target Fisherfolk? So, we talked about the SMMA Re-zoning. Is there anything else you can think of?

1:28:53 - BM4:

Anse Chastanet hotel is a major problem for fishers.

1:29:00 – VJ:

She's asking if there are any other times when they have asked you to come and talk about fishing issues. Even the issue with Anse Chastanet, there was a meeting. The fishers were invited to that. Fishers were also invited to that Soufriere 2040 as well. Right Monique? [Confirming the name of an engagement hosted by the Soufriere Foundation for its stakeholders.]

MSC:

That was the vision discussion, right ?

VJ:

Yes, the vision for Soufriere 2040., Y'all were invited to that at the Soufriere Estate. Y'all went and talked about how the new development is going to affect Soufriere.

BM4:

I wasn't part of that

VJ:

You didn't go to any of the meetings the Foundation did at the Soufriere Estate?

BM4:

Never.

VJ:

That's what she's talking about. There were a lot of fishers there. They invited the entire Board to come.

1:32:26 – MSC:

Okay, so all of these things that you're mentioning, do you think they produce benefits for your community? Do you think there's a positive outcome for the community ?

1:35:01– VJ:

I was thinking, the other thing is that GPH thing, they [fisherfolk] are invited to the consultations. They [persons on the GPH port development project.] invited teachers to come in as well, to discuss what's going on and how it's going to affect them. We had to tell them which areas were fishing priority areas and all of that We had to inform them and tell them, nah, they cannot do that here and there, and it was good to be part of that as well.

1:37:31– MSC:

Would you say one of the benefits would just be letting your voice be heard and airing your grievances?

All:

Yes.

1:37:57– MSC:

Can you think of any instance where there was a stakeholder engagement, and y'all actually got what y'all wanted out of it, or not, maybe not exactly what you wanted, but some sort of compromise was reached?

1:38:18 - VJ:

Well for the Anse Chastanet thing. They said that we reached a compromise, but up to now, we haven't seen anything happening yet.

1:38:26

[Multiple persons agreed that nothing has happened.]

1:38:30 – MSC:

The swim line and all of that? I think they're working on it but I don't know exactly what's the hold up because I'm not in Saint Lucia . I will ask them to let y'all know what's going on.

## On “delegation of rights and responsibilities”:

1:39:00 – MSC:

Okay, now my last section, we're going to talk about delegation of responsibility. So basically, that refers to the management authorities giving some responsibility to Fisherfolk for management activities. For example, they could look at maybe some fishers acting, in a sense, like Rangers, where you have some sort of responsibility over maybe the new fishers who don't know the rules or something, You have a responsibility to train them. Or, reporting your catch, maybe directly to Fisheries or to your data collectors and stuff like that. Do you think that accepting more responsibility for resource management would help you or would make the community more empowered?

1:39:22 - BM4:

Some of the young fellas need training.

BM2:

Yeah, that's true. For the part about the marine ranger, the fellas need to know the rules.

1:39:43 – BM1:

I'll say yes to that.

1:39:44 – BM5:

Yes.

1:40:09 – MSC:

What about, like, checking your catch when you come in, and making sure you don't have anything under sized or any species you're not supposed to catch. Well, we don't really have that [many restrictions] in Saint Lucia but like, making sure that you report all your catches and all of that, and not a data collector having to come to each boat and doing it. Do you think that that's something that would empower the fisherfolk ? To be able to identify all catches and report them yourselves and use that to go back into monitoring the stocks and making sure that you're not overfishing or anything like that. Do you think that's a responsibility that fisherfolk would be willing to take up?

BM4:

Not yet.

BM2:

We don't even have enough fish in Soufriere for us to do that. Our catch sometimes is just a [wheel]barrow.

BM1:

That one is a no.

1:42:21 - BM2

Sometimes, if you catch the fish and it's already dead, they can still come to shore [with it]. So, the only way is if the government or police or security come and take it away from you. But you cannot do it like that. The ones that do the fishing along the shore, the beaches. To see somebody fishing and tell them "No, you cannot take that, you cannot take that". The government should have that about 20 years ago. They should have monitored that. The seine fishing. When they when they fish around the bay, when they fish around the shore, and they pull the net to see what they can take out of it and what they have to drop ...

1:43:07 – VJ:

She's asking if y'all would want to take the responsibility of doing that. Telling fishers when they come "This is not what you supposed to have ,this is not the amount you're supposed to

have.” She’s asking if y’all think y’all would feel more empowered if they gave y’all the power to do that.

[Garbled responses]

VJ:

They’re afraid of egg Monique. They’re afraid of Laborie eggs. [Tongue in cheek statement explaining that they’re afraid of negative consequences from policing other fishers.] [Laughs]

1:45:10 - BM5:

That one, I’ll say no. I don’t want anyone to hate me.

BM4:

They need to put security for that. That’s government.

MSC:

Okay that’s fair.

1:46:22 - BM2:

When the police tell them they can’t do something, they might hate the police, but they can’t do them anything.

BM4:

You can’t touch the police man.

BM1:

But with me, they can curse me, they can tell me what they want.

BM2:

They can come by my home and throw stones after me.

VJ:

They can put your name on eggs. [laughs]

BM1:

Mhmm okay!

1:52:37 – MSC:

Okay, okay, fair enough.

1:52:47 - BM4:

We used to go to meetings with the Department of Fisheries, and they used to tell us when we left the department to go and share what we learned. And when I used to go and do that in Baron's Drive, boy... [laughs]

BM4:

Miss, I don't want to die. [laughs]

1:53:20 – MSC:

[Laugh] I don't want you to die, either.

What about historically? Do you know any responsibilities that used to be with Fisheries or with SMMA that they allowed the fishers to take up? ,

BM1:

No, I've never heard of anything like that. I will never come across.

1:54:01 – MSC:

Okay, do you think if maybe people were more willing to follow instructions or whatnot, would there be a benefit to delegating responsibility to fisherfolk ? If you have the capacity to enforce?

BM2:

Yes, it would be good but.. [laughs]. Look at those selling fish. As a fisher when you come with the fish, though they gave us the market where we're supposed to sell the fish, people don't take the fish there. They will go roadside where there are more people passing. But if they stay in one place, people will come and look for the fish. But since they're going to town, if you do it, I can do it too. So, everybody goes to town. We had an AGM on Sunday, and our rep said they are looking forward to see if they can get a small place, right by the market, by the bus

terminal. If they put it in the law that all fishermen must sell the fish to the market, they will go to the market.

1:56:03 – MSC:

Okay y'all, I have one last question. Can you think of any responsibilities that Fisheries or SMMA may have that should be delegated to Fisherfolk or to the Co-operative? For example, doing training and stuff like that. Do you think Fisheries should maybe look for projects where they can train some of the more seasoned fishers to be able to train the younger fishers? Do you think that's your responsibility, that the Co-operative would be willing to take up?

BM2:

Yeah, that's a very good idea. And you what I think also? I feel that SMMA should teach the young people how to dive with the tanks.

1:59:55 – BM1:

Yes. scuba diving.

2:01:01 - BM1:

Yeah, because sometimes you lose your fish pot, and sometimes you have to go and check them [SMMA], and they tell you they're busy. So sometimes you could just run there. and ask them to borrow a tank. You have your fins , you have your mask, and you could go and do your own.

BM2:

And maybe, if you can even buy your own tank.

BM1:

Yeah, I think that's a good plan.

2:02:25 – MSC:

I see, okay, what about teaching traditional fishing methods, or like, how to build FADs, how to build fish pots?

2:03:38 – BM2:

Yeah!



BM3:

We have that training going on sometimes, the FAD training. We have a FAD team already.

2:04:49 - BM2:

But some fellas like the fish pots, sometimes it's good for a man to come, a couple of fellas and call a class and find out who's interested. Now, if you're interested, they can tell you what size, you know, now that will be very nice. Although they're trying to put away fish pots, in a way.

2:05:18 - BM3:

You know that fish pots are one of the best things for fisherman ?

BM2:

One of the best, yeah, one of the best.

BM3:

Because when we don't have the FAD and we don't have, the season going on [referring to seasonal species trends], pots can help fishers. Even me, because I just built some, and they work nicely for me. But they stole three already.

BM4:

Yeah, that's the problem with fish pots.

BM2:

Sometimes for your fish pot, on a Saturday you raise it and sometimes you do five, \$600 sometimes. \$1,000 plus when you get a nice catch.

2:06:56 – BM4:

Yeah, but in two weeks, you lose all of that already [the pots].

2:07:00 - BM2:

Another problem is the divers. Remember Soufriere is a tourist spot. We have a lot of tourists diving and a lot of them like to destroy the people thing. [Fish pots]

BM4:

Cutting the fish pot.

BM2:

To open to save the fish. Oh “you have it in captivity”.

BM2:

Even other fisherman will come and pull theirs and take yours. Pull yours up and take it out from point A and put it point B then when you come and look for it, you’ll say well, that’s where I put it. You’ll search all around. But they took it out there, put it 200 yards away, you know? Something recently there, a few years ago, in Laborie and Choiseul, they used to mark the pots. They used to give you different coloured buoys, but the people will still come and change it. Because while you’re on shore, if it’s on Tuesdays you pull and I pull on Wednesday, I can take yours once you’re not there, put a buoy on it and go and drop it somewhere else. So, when you come, you’re waiting, you’re saying the current has it submerged You wait, you wait, and yours was never there....

BM5:

Yeah, but training for the fish pot construction.

BM2:

That would be nice. Training on how to make the fish pot. How to cut it the wire

BM5:

How to scuba dive.

BM2:

Yes, scuba dive with tanks. If there was a class on diving that would be good.

MSC:

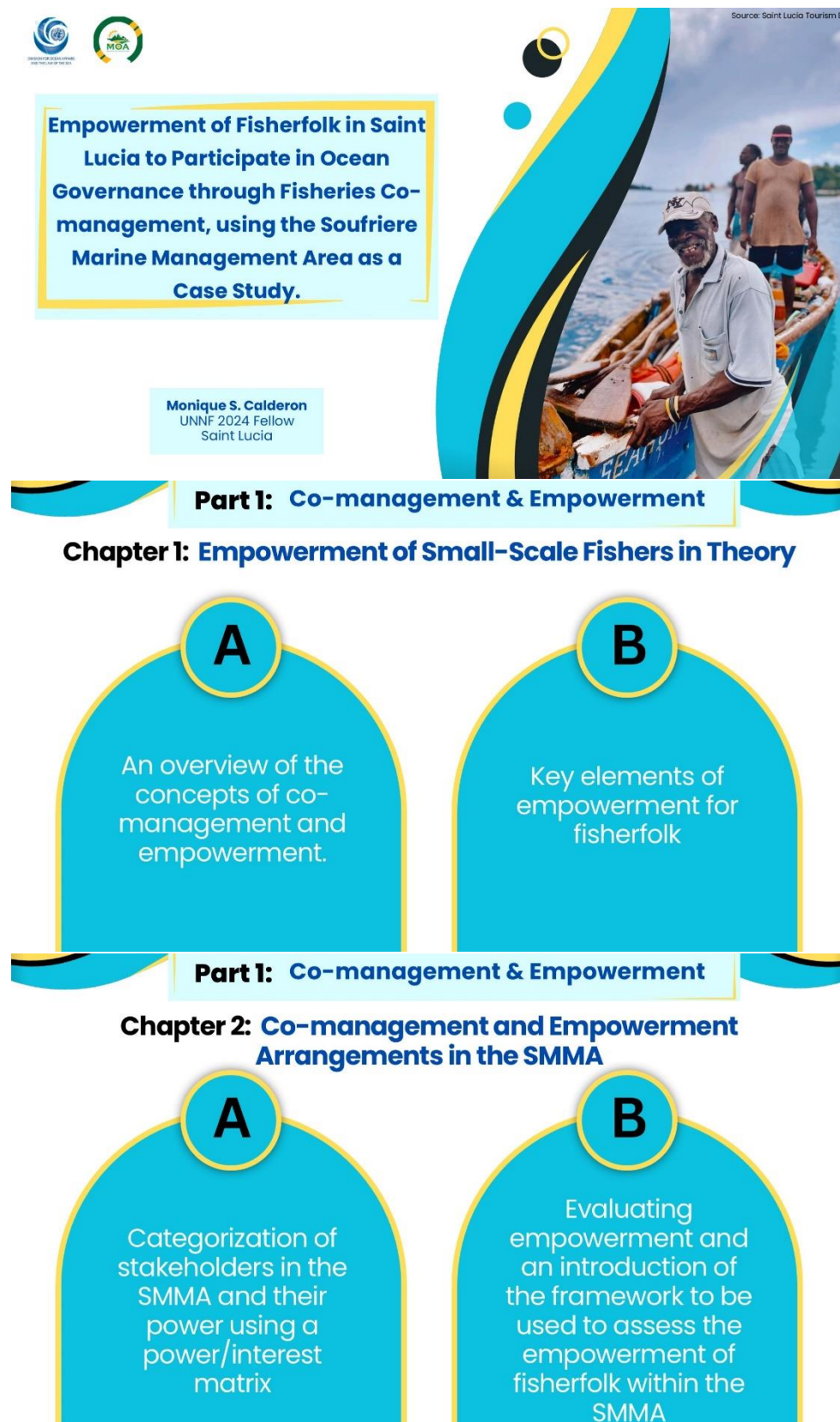
That’s the end of my questions. So, I just want to say, I’m very, very, very thankful that you took your time and came here. I really appreciate you making a time for me and sitting down with me. Just before you leave. Well, I’m sure Vilma knows everybody, but if you could just give Vilma your name and your contact information, just in case, I need to reach out to anything like that, I can do so, , but that’s it for this evening. I hope you all get home safe. And when I

get back home and I'm presenting my information to Fisheries and to the Cabinet, we'll see how maybe we can invite y'all, or if we do a presentation in Soufriere, I'll make sure I bring y'all out so.

2:11:47

[Everyone says their goodbyes.]

## Appendix C: Presentation to the Board Members of the SFCS.



## Part 2: Evaluation of Empowerment in SMMA

### Chapter 1: Assessment of the degree of empowerment in the Soufriere Marine Management Area.

**A**

An overview of the legal, operational and institutional frameworks governing co-management and empowerment.

**B**

Results of Interviews with Key Stakeholders on the degree of Empowerment in the SMMA.

## Part 2: Evaluation of Empowerment in SMMA

### Chapter 2: Analysis of the assessment results for the empowerment of fisherfolk in the Soufriere Marine Managed Area

**A**

How are community groups empowered to participate in joint management of the ocean space and decision-making in the fisheries sector in the SMMA?

**B**

What restricts low-power stakeholders from playing a more integral role in ocean governance and decision-making in the fisheries sector in Saint Lucia?

### Looking Forward:

**Empowering local communities to have greater participation in decision-making and ocean governance in the Fisheries sector.**



Source: Department of Fisheries, Saint Lucia





## **EMPOWERMENT**

**“an interactive process through which people experience personal and social change, enabling them to take action to achieve influence over the organizations and institutions which affect their lives and the communities in which they live.”**



## **ELEMENTS OF EMPOWERMENT**

- 1. Capacity building and skill development**
- 2. Securing tenure and use rights**
- 3. Accessing funding**
- 4. Participatory research methods**
- 5. Stakeholder engagement**
- 6. Delegation of responsibility**



## **CAPACITY BUILDING AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT**

**“the process of developing and strengthening the skills, instincts, abilities, processes and resources that organizations and communities need to survive, adapt, and thrive in a fast-changing world.”**





## **SECURING TENURE AND USE RIGHTS**

- **use rights: “the rights held by fishers or fishing communities to use the fishery resources.”**
- **tenure rights: “ restricting who can have access to the fishery, and potentially how much fishing activity (fishing effort) the participants are allowed, or how much catch each can take”**




## **ACCESSING FUNDING**

**“ Research has shown that small-scale fisherfolk are often among the most economically vulnerable populations. A lack of access to financial resources often plays a large role in the inability of fisherfolk, especially in small scale fisheries, to build and maintain essential fisheries infrastructure, purchase fishing gear or transition to more sustainable fishing.”**



## **PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH METHODS**

**“Participatory research involves including stakeholders in crafting research projects and sharing results with relevant stakeholders and communities.”**



## **STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

- **“practices the organisation undertakes to involve stakeholders in a positive manner in organisational activities.”**
- **“Stakeholder engagement is about building and nurturing two-way relationships with anyone who has a stake in your organisation.”**

## **DELEGATION OF RESPONSIBILITY**

**“Management authorities granting responsibility to stakeholders for some management activities.”**



**Thank You**

For Your Attention

**Monique S. Calderon**  
UNNF 2024 Fellow  
Saint Lucia



Source: Monique S. Calderon



