

# ***YOUR GUIDE***

To Hosting Community  
Discussions on Overfishing



**NAME:**

# Tenkyu tumas

Tenkyu tumas to the local partners who have informed this guide and the accompanying *Local Guide to Bigger, Better Catches booklet*, especially Ailan Awareness, Lolieng Sustainable Program, West Coast Development Foundation and Wildlife Conservation Society.

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# What's in the guide?



<b>Purpose of this guide</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>What is Singaut Blo Solwara?</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Understanding your role</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Creating change in your community</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>The Toolkit</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Getting organised</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Section 1: What's the problem?</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Section 2: How do you know if you have an overfishing problem?</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Section 3: What can you do about overfishing in your community?</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Where to from here?</b>	<b>39</b>

# Purpose of *this* guide

This guide is for community mobilisers who are concerned about the decline of fishing grounds and who want to start community dialogues to help revive them.

The guide shares a simple approach to promoting community-based fisheries management through hosting community discussions. It is not technical and you will not need a scientific background to use it.

But successful use of this guide does require:

-  **Passion and commitment to supporting discussions over time**
-  **Time to read the guide and supporting information thoroughly**

Those who will be most successful in hosting discussions in communities will be the ones who meet these requirements.

If that's you, read on.



# First, what is Singaut Blo Solwara?

Singaut Blo Solwara is a grassroots campaign that is encouraging communities to come together through community dialogue with the goal of reviving our traditional ways of managing the sea.

The campaign is also sharing new research and information to support practical local actions to help increase what we catch and collect from the sea. As our lifestyles have changed, our needs have increased, and so to has fishing. Marrying the old with new ways of fishing can help.

We will explore ways, like protected areas, reducing harmful fishing practices, avoiding undersize catches, avoiding peak spawning seasons, and protecting key habitat. There are many things communities can do to help bring back bigger, better catches, year after year.

**But here's the catch:** We can't wait for someone from outside to solve these problems. We need to sit down together and discuss what can help, and decide what rules make sense to get bigger, better catches.

**We have to take ownership and make decisions that are best for our families and our communities. Singaut Blo Solwara is about doing it ourselves.**

For that to happen, we need people like you to host community discussions.





# Understanding your role

**It's important to always remember that your primary role is to create dialogue. The term for that is a facilitator. To facilitate means to make things easier for your audience.**


Your goal is to help people understand the changes they may experience everyday and to share information that can help address their concerns, and to find ways to share their feedback.





You want people to reflect on how fishing has changed and discuss practical actions that the community might take to improve catches. But if people are going to participate, they have to feel welcome and know that everyone's voice will be heard.


Your role is simply to provide access to information and support reflection and discussion. In other words, you do not need to be an expert in all the issues. You just need to bring people together.

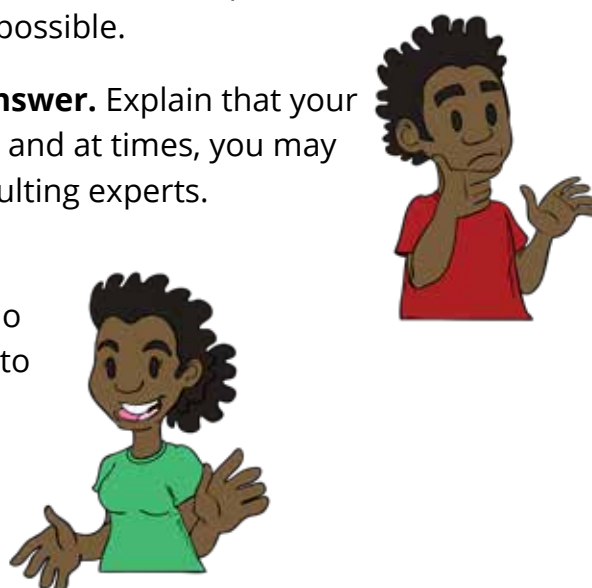
## Tips for good facilitators:

 **Make sure you are familiar with the material.** This means reading all the materials beforehand to a level where you can easily share the core content during talks and presentations.

 **Involve your audience in your presentations.** This means listening and encouraging people to share their ideas and experiences through sharing stories as much as possible.

 **Admit when you don't know an answer.** Explain that your role is to give access to information, and at times, you may need to get back to them after consulting experts.

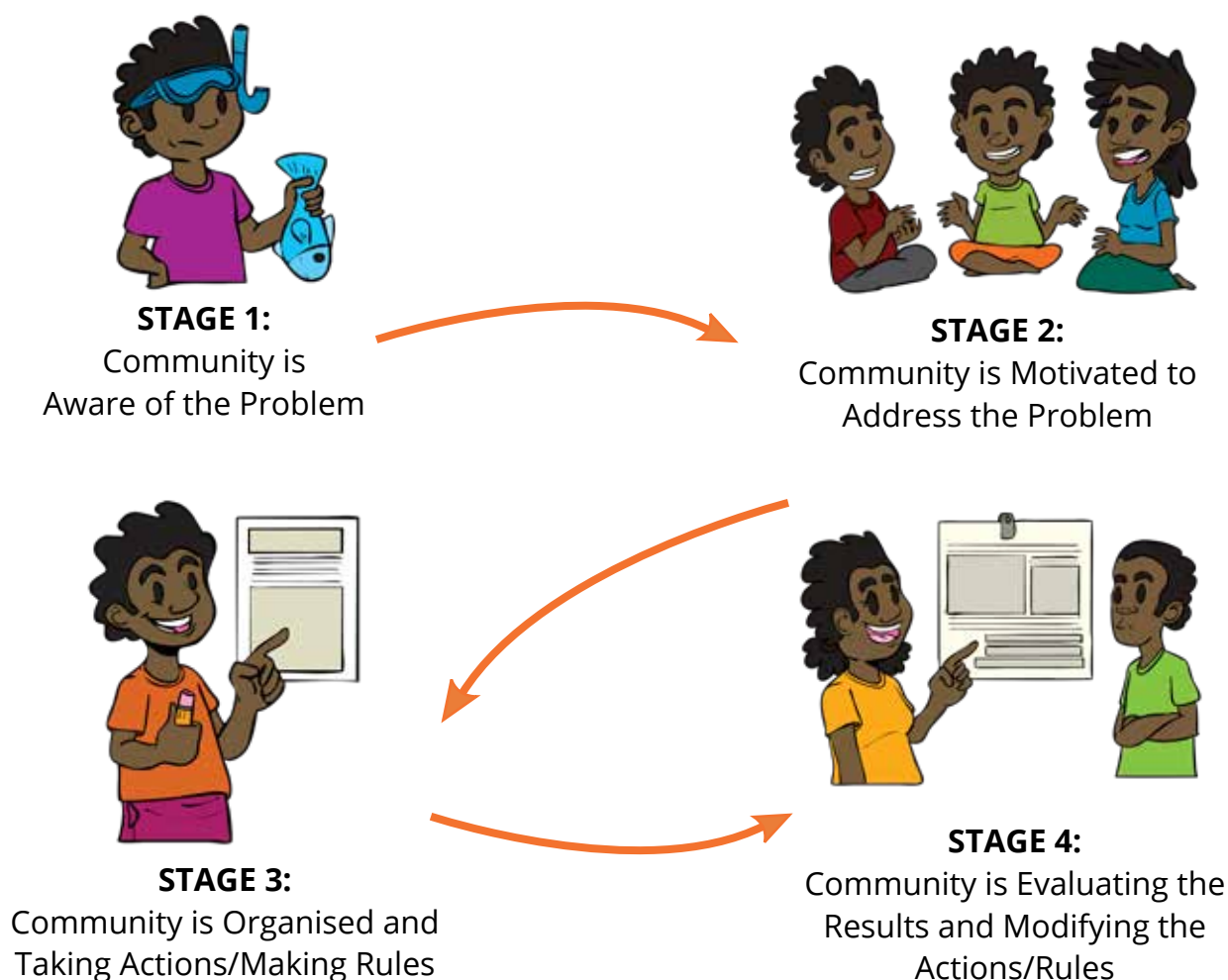
 **Be friendly, and inclusive.** This includes not arguing with people who disagree. Your role as a facilitator is to listen and encourage discussion.



# Creating change in your community

Your goal when hosting community discussions is best described as changing mindsets. People are already facing challenges meeting daily needs from the sea. So changing the way they fish is often a hard discussion, and often it takes time, *a lot of time*, for people to come around to new ideas.

**It's best to think about changing mindsets in stages.**



Why this is important to understand is that often people move too fast through Stage 1 and Stage 2. Experts often want to share all the available science, but until a community is aware and motivated to address the problem, there will be little support for any actions or rules to increase catches.

**Remember, the process to change mindsets takes time. Time is needed to ensure everyone gets to talk through the issues on numerous occasions.**

**This is your biggest task and the focus of this guide.**

# The Toolkit

**So what exactly is the toolkit? Well first things first, there are no hammers or screwdrivers or fishing gear in this toolkit.**

The toolkit includes printed materials, videos and audio files to help you support community discussions. Each tool is intended to promote discussion.

In your work, you might find that you prefer to sit and talk without the booklets or videos. Perhaps just sitting down with fishers and talking informally is the best way for you to start. Others will find the booklet gives them an easy structure to cover the key points. Without the booklet, they might ramble and not ask enough questions to spur discussion.

This guide explains the thinking behind the illustrations and shares discussion activities.

We plan to keep adding to this toolkit as we get feedback from people like you to make hosting discussions on overfishing easier. For example, as the campaign grows, we hope to share more and more videos of communities talking about these issues and taking action, to help encourage more communities to join Singaut Blo Solwara.

Follow the Singaut Blo Solwara campaign on facebook and visit local partners in Kavieng and Namatanai for updates.











# Getting organised

So now you understand what Singaut Blo Solwara is about and your role as a facilitator, and the tools available to assist you to encourage community discussions, it's time to prepare for hosting community discussions.

To do that, we want you to get organised yourself and understand the steps you need to take. This also includes visualising the process for changing mindsets. By that, we mean visualise what actions you are going to take to take people through the stages of change from Page 6.

In the next few pages we share general recommendations. You can modify what is suggested to best suit the community's and your needs.

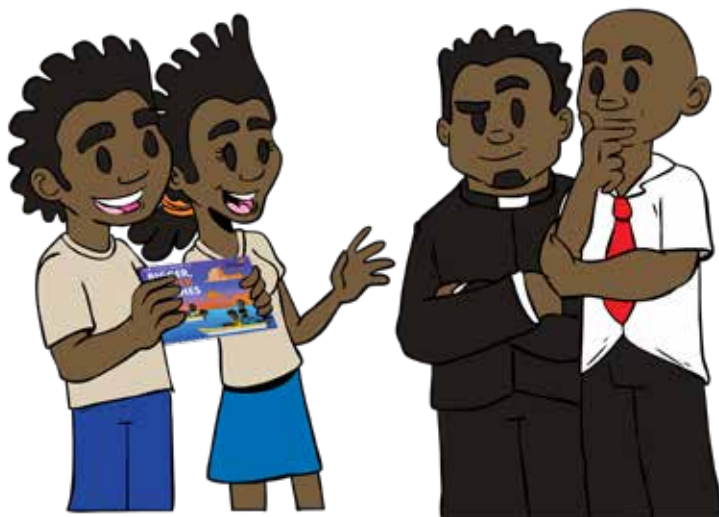
## Tips to get organised:

-  **Make sure you are familiar with the material.** This means getting access to all materials including booklet and videos and reading all the materials beforehand to a level where you can easily share the information during talks and presentations, and explain the Singaut Blo Solwara campaign.
-  **Get the right contacts from the start.** This means finding out who you need to talk with first to host discussions in a community.
-  **Learn about the different village committees.** Find out which committees will be most suitable to meet with when visiting communities. Can you meet with the village planning committee, women's committee, fisher's committee or youth committee, and ward council members?
-  **Plan your awareness for when people are available.** Can you host a discussion on a Monday during a Community Village Day and have your awareness planned in the village activity calendar so people can be prepared for your visit.
-  **Share information and videos.** If you have a smart phone, share what information tools you have access to via Share It.
-  **Report back on what happened.** This is important so we can learn together from your experience and better understand how to help you and any communities you are working with to manage their fishing grounds.

# Visualising *your* awareness

Now that you are getting organised for your awareness, let's visualise the process for changing mindsets. By that, we mean visualise what actions you are going to take to take people through the stages of change from Page 6.

Remember, it takes time to change mindsets.



**1. Engage community leaders,** such as the traditional leaders, to get approval to conduct community discussions.

Remember changing mindsets is a process that takes time ...



**2. Conduct lots of small group discussions,** to ensure everyone gets a chance to understand the issues and share their perspectives. This also includes finding out about the different committees in communities and ways to engage everyone.

Be sure during this stage to record the feedback from the different groups you engage. You will need this for Step 3.

Remember not to move too fast through this stage. You might consider revisiting people again to hear if they have thought more about the issues discussed. To help dig deeper into the issues you can also conduct discussion activities.



**3. Call for a village meeting** to report back on what was shared during your small discussion groups, and facilitate a larger discussion on whether the community wants to consider making new fishing rules or improving existing rules.

# Action plan: Planning *your* awareness

## Steps to prepare

Village name: \_\_\_\_\_

Engaging community leaders:

- ☐ Village headman name & number/otherwise \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Ward councillor name & number/otherwise \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Prepared entry letter

Date/s to host small group discussions:

- ☐ Family & friends group \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Village committees \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Fisher's group \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Women's group \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Youth group \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Church group \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Other (local teacher/healthcare worker) \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Date to host village-level meeting \_\_\_\_\_

**Yes / No** Is meeting scheduled in village planning calendar?

**Yes / No** Prepared booklets to share [*restock your supply is low*]

**Yes / No** If you have a smart phone, saved videos, radio shows, animations to share via Share It in village

## Steps to follow-up

- ☐ Send thank you to community leaders
- ☐ Arrange a follow up visit and remember it will take time to change mindsets.
- ☐ Share reports on what happened with the ward councillor/LLG fisheries officer/local partners/campaign
- ☐ Share an update on what you did on the WhatsApp group.
- ☐ Share your story with the campaign and NBC New Ireland.

# Understanding the content

The booklet is something that people can read themselves. But some people may need to talk through the information to really understand the content and ask questions.

To make that easy for you to host community discussions, the booklet is broken into three sections that are designed to create community dialogue.

We will go through each of the three key sections of the booklet to help you host these discussions and provide discussion objectives, background on the illustrations, and simple ways to encourage dialogue.

## THE SECTIONS ARE AS FOLLOW:



### 1. What's the problem?



### 2. How do you know if you have an overfishing problem?



### 3. What can you do about overfishing?



# SECTION 1: What's the problem?



# How fishing has changed?



The first section, “What’s the problem?” is intended to create discussions and reflections on how fishing has changed and, if so, how it has impacted the community. This initial discussion is the foundation management discussions later.

Too often, outreach focuses on the solutions to a problem without asking the community if they believe they have a problem. Remember people need to see overfishing as an urgent problem before they will want to take action.

## SECTION LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

**By the end of this section, community members should understand and reflect on these key messages/issues:**

- ☒ It's our community that suffers when catches decline, so it's our community that needs to start talking about what we can do about it – to find ways to increase catches.
- ☒ It's important to start talking about what has changed – changes in what we catch and collect from the sea, and also understand other changes in our community that have led to increased fishing. We can't fix the problems if we don't know what's driving them.
- ☒ The best way to understand changes is to sit and talk with each other and reflect on how fishing has changed over the years:
  - Are we catching the same amount of fish and other marine species as before?
  - Are the size of fish and other marine species getting smaller?
  - Are we taking longer and going further to get a good catch?
- ☒ It is also important to understand why we are fishing more and at times overfishing:
  - Is it due to population increases?
  - Do we have more income needs?
  - Has our gear improved leaving too few fish behind?
  - Are there threats to habitat? Have any areas been harmed over time?
  - Have our traditions broken down, and are people fishing without concern and not leaving enough behind for everyone else?

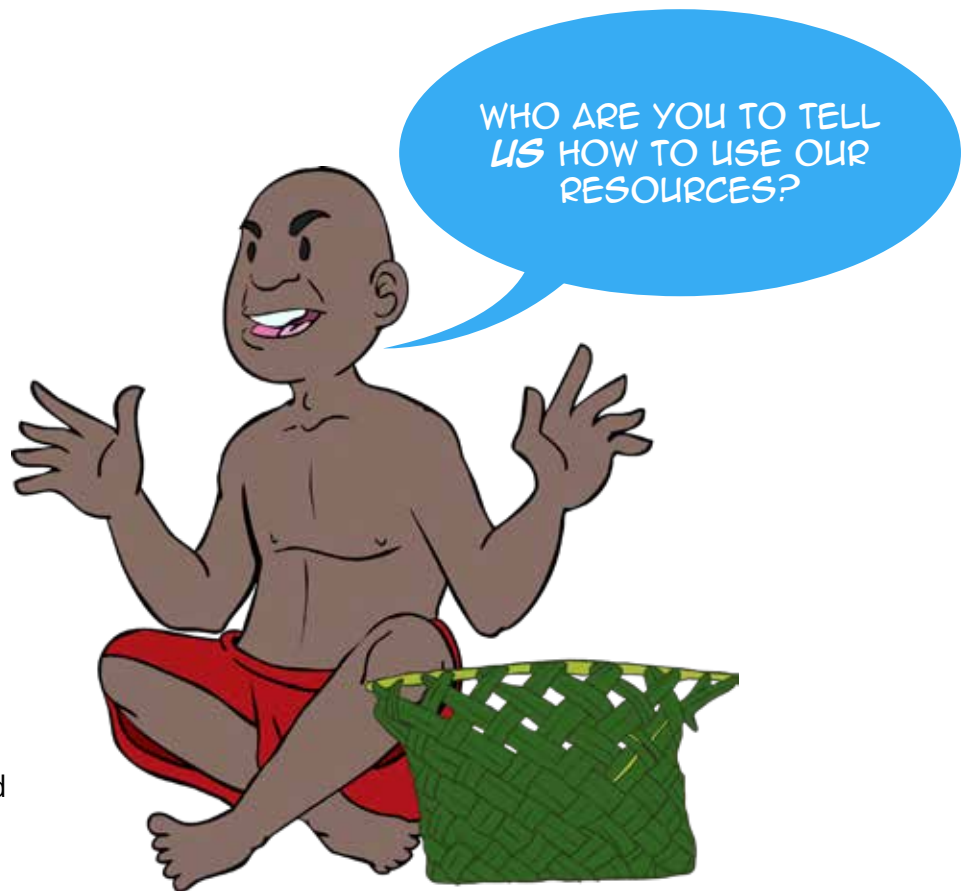
**These are the questions you should explore in your discussion groups.**

## REMEMBER TO LISTEN, LISTEN, LISTEN ...

Sometimes when we go to conduct outreach on fisheries or marine management, it is done in a way that assumes that no one has heard of it before.

But even in remote areas, it's rare to find anyone that has never heard of efforts to promote community-based fisheries management (CBFM) and does not have existing opinions.

Sometimes what they have heard was too technical and focused on scientific concepts and abstract benefits such as biodiversity conservation.



As a result, CBFM is perceived as outsiders trying to prevent them from using their resources, rather than more tangible benefits such as food security and livelihoods. Common responses are: "How will I feed my family?" "What alternative livelihoods do you offer?" and "Who are you to tell us how to use our resources?"

If people are going to have resistance to these discussions, it's best to get that out in the open straightaway. We recommend acknowledging from the start that people might have negative views of fisheries management or they likely won't trust the process.

**How do you do this? By listening and asking questions.** Ask them how they feel about fisheries management? What have they heard? Do they think it's worthwhile to help them meet their needs? Do they think it's an NGO initiative?

**Show this illustration and ASK and LISTEN respectfully to their answers:**

! Do you have similar opinions when you hear about fisheries management?

- Spend as much time as needed on this issue.**

**TIP:** Make clear that you are just looking to start a community discussion about how fishing

# REFLECTING ON HOW FISHING HAS CHANGED

The next few pages of illustrations are intended to help people reflect on the changes they have seen and experienced: How lifestyles have changed and how fishing has changed.

This section is important for a few reasons:

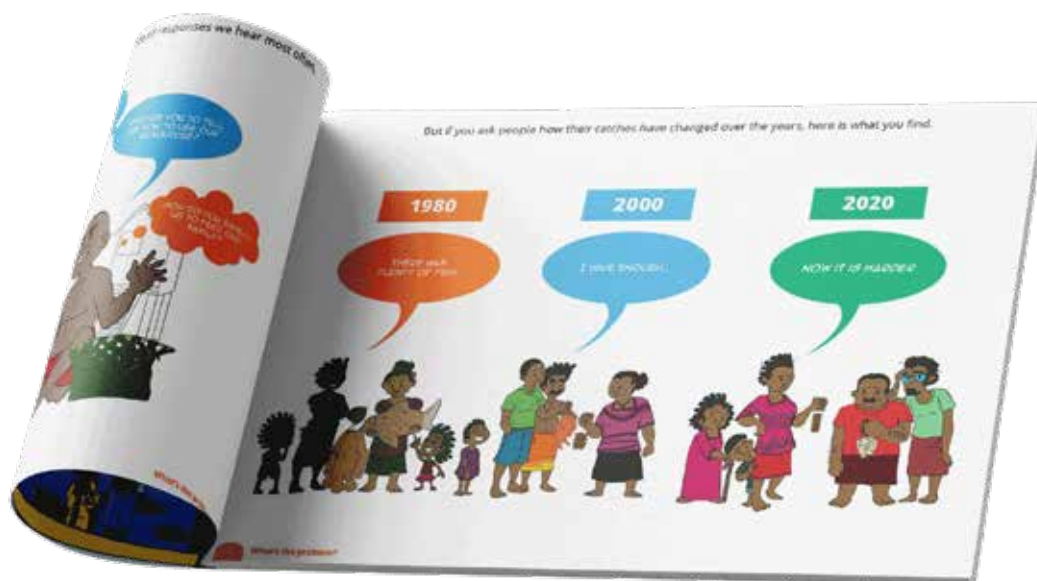
- 1. It's important to build urgency for action and to do that people have to clearly see the problem, in their own lives.**

Catch declines happen over time, sometimes over generations. Fishers may not notice the change immediately as they usually deal with fishing day to day. So maybe they just travelled a little further today. But if they reflect on how fishing has changed over years, or generations, they can see how different fishing is today.

By taking time to reflect on the changes over a longer period, attitudes can often change about how urgent the problem is.

That's why we ask these questions: Are your catches getting smaller over time? Are you going further to get a good catch?

**TIP:** Asking different members of the community about how fishing was in the past can provide different answers depending on how old they are. Be sure to encourage older fishers to share their experiences with younger ones.





## 2. It's important for people to acknowledge that life has changed over the years, and that these changes are part of the drivers of overfishing.

Today, we have more needs to pay for and there are more mouths to feed. Having better fishing gear is making fishing easier but sometimes fishers leave too few behind.

The point behind the illustrations about the reasons for why fishing has changed is to show change in (1) population growth, (2) lifestyle, and (3) fishing gear. Using these

illustrations as a guide, ask the participants if these changes have happened in their community. The

illustrations intend to present some ideas behind the reasons for declining catches. Let people talk about all the changes they have seen and experienced. **Let them tell their stories.**



**TIP:** Changing fishing practices often provides a lot of opportunity for reflection and discussion. It allows older fishers to share how they used to fish and how they fish now. Ask them if they can remember when they noticed catches declining, and if fishing practices also changed around that time. In many places, they remember such things as the introduction of torches to fish at night resulting in changes. Let them tell their stories as no one knows as much as they do about their fishing grounds.

## 3. It's also important to help communities understand that declines in catches can also be driven by non-fishing activities. These include habitat destruction, coral harvesting, land clearing, and coral bleaching from warming water.

This group of illustrations intend to help the community understand the different threats, beyond fishing. The community will later need to decide what are their biggest threats, both fishing and non-fishing. Remember if they have questions you can't answer, you can tell them you will get the answers.



**TIP:** There is almost always someone in an audience who wants to show how much they know and will ask tough questions to trip you up. Don't take the bait. Tell them if you don't know the answer. You do not have to be the expert and making up answers will hurt your credibility over time. If this happens, reach out to local partners or the campaign through text or social media. We can help.

**4. An issue that is shared again and again, and which almost any community will discuss at length, is how traditional culture is being lost. The loss of traditions can impact things like fishing, for instance, creating a situation where people take whatever they want, leaving too few or nothing for the next person.**

Give people space to talk about these changes, which are about more than just fishing. It's important to acknowledge that some changes are good, with increased access to things like education and health care. But we are also losing traditions that helped communities thrive for thousands of years.



**TIP:** If the discussion strays from fisheries management, remind them that you are there to talk about fishing today. To help focus the discussion, ask them why and how these changes have impacted fishing and fishing ground health. Discuss if the loss of traditions and changes in traditional practices have influenced how they fish today compared to the past. What do they do differently today that they didn't do before?

# DISCUSSION TIPS & CAPTURING INSIGHTS

For this section, we suggest using the illustrations on each page to host a short discussion. This helps clearly show that you are there to listen, learn and help the community think through the issues. Alternatively, you can present all the illustrations and use Page 13 to prompt the discussion.

**If possible, take notes on what the community discussed.** This can be helpful for you to have a record to present what was discussed to the whole community later. You can also share your notes with local partners and the campaign to help inform what other information might be needed.

If you are unable to both present and take notes, ask for help from the group to write down people's stories and opinions.

Documenting the discussion also helps show that you are listening, and the community have been heard.

**The following table offers an example of what to record for later use.**

Notes to capture: WHAT'S THE PROBLEM (SECTION 1)		
Date: Length of discussion: Phone / video consent: Y / N	Place:	Presenter:
Group name/meeting type:	No. of women:	
	No. of men:	
	No. of youth:	
What were the common opinions/experiences with fisheries management?	-	
Have catches declined? Are people going further?	-	
What is driving these changes? List all and rank.	1 2 3	
Are they interested in learning more about CBFM & ways to increase catches?	-	
Other comments?	-	

# Section 2: How do you know if you have an overfishing problem?








# Do you have an overfishing problem?

This section on “How do you know if you have an overfishing problem?” is intended to encourage people to reflect on their catches in more detail. It provides a few ways to assess fishing ground health so communities can work out how big of a problem they have or maybe they don’t have an overfishing problem.

Please note that this section presents a few different ways to look at fishing ground health. If some are too complicated skip them. But make sure by the end of this section, the community has discussed at the very least how catches have changed: the type of fish, the sizes and the amount of time it takes to get a good catch.

## SECTION LEARNING OBJECTIVES: -----

**By the end of this section, community members should understand and reflect on these key messages/issues:**

-  Overfishing means catching too many fish or other marine species in ways that too few are left behind to breed and restock fishing grounds year after year.
-  Communities should manage their fishing grounds so their fish and other marine species produce as much as possible each year.
-  Fisheries management is about getting bigger, better catches, today and tomorrow, and not about reducing catches.
-  Overfishing happens over years, not days, so sometimes people don’t notice how much has changed as their focus is to meet their daily needs. It’s important for the community to look at how their catches have changed over time to understand this:
  - One way to understand how overfishing happens is see what fish they are catching today, as compared to 5 or 10 years ago. The further down the food chain you are, the worse overfishing likely is.
  - Asking fishers how long it takes to catch the same amount of fish today, as compared to a few years ago is another way. If you keep asking the same questions, over period of months and years, fishers can track how fishing is changing.
-  Minimum sizes are another way to monitor fishing ground health. Unfortunately, there is not a lot of scientific information available in Papua New Guinea on what size fish need to be before they can breed. But there are ways fishers can work out when fish and other marine species are sexually mature (breeding) and immature (too young to breed and undersized).

**These are the questions you should explore in your discussion groups.**



## **SOMETHING WE FORGET TO TALK ABOUT: WHAT IS OVERFISHING?**

In our experience, because outreach can often be very technical and cover big ideas like ecosystem health, it often fails to focus on the basic problem people care about: declining catches.

So, what is overfishing? Overfishing happens when you have too few mature fish left to breed. Catches will decline and you will get less and smaller fish.

It happens when you catch too many fish and all that is left are fish that are immature and haven't had a chance to breed. And it happens when there are bad land-use practices harming critical habitat, and less fish survive and breed.

# **OVERFISHING**

*(verb)*

*Catches decline when too few mature fish are left to breed and restock fishing grounds.*

*It happens when you catch too many fish and the ones left are immature and haven't had a chance to breed to restock fishing grounds. And it happens when there are bad land-use practices harming critical habitat, and less fish survive and breed.*

**Take the time to define and discuss overfishing. It is important that this message sticks.**

We also recommend for you to use this time to define community-based fisheries management (CBFM) as an approach intended to ensure enough sexually mature fish live long enough to breed, so we have bigger, better catches year after year.

CBFM can often be perceived as a limitation on resource use rather than a strategy to increase catches. For instance, it is not uncommon for protected areas to be viewed as efforts driven by outside groups, such as NGOs or government, to restrict resource use. If this is the case, communities will inevitably ask: "What alternative livelihood can you offer if we have to stop fishing in part of our fishing grounds?"

The campaign is trying to present CBFM as the better alternative to overfishing. If communities want more fish, they need to find ways to balance today's needs and tomorrow's needs. There is no way around it.

## YOUR CATCHES CAN TELL YOU A LOT



**The next few pages of illustrations intend to help communities explore how to check the health of their fishing grounds with three simple activities.** Please note that these activities are intended to simply get people to reflect on the changes, and to take a good look at their catches in the future. It's not critical for them to do all of them perfectly. The activities offer a simple process for communities to reflect on how fishing has changed to sustain community dialogues.

We want as many people as possible to talk about their catches. The more the better. If it is simple enough, and gets people talking, over time they will most likely examine their own catches more and more and you will have done your job in bringing their attention to the problem, and support for action to address overfishing.

**Refer back to the Stages of Change to refresh your memory as to why this step is important.**

# REFLECTING ON WHETHER YOU HAVE AN OVERFISHING PROBLEM

**1. Overfishing happens over years and years, so most fishers don't notice the changes as they are focused on trying to get by day-to-day. But if they reflect on what fish they have lost over time they are far more likely to see the problem clearly.**

With overfishing, as noted earlier, we are at a disadvantage in that it happens over many years, if not generations.

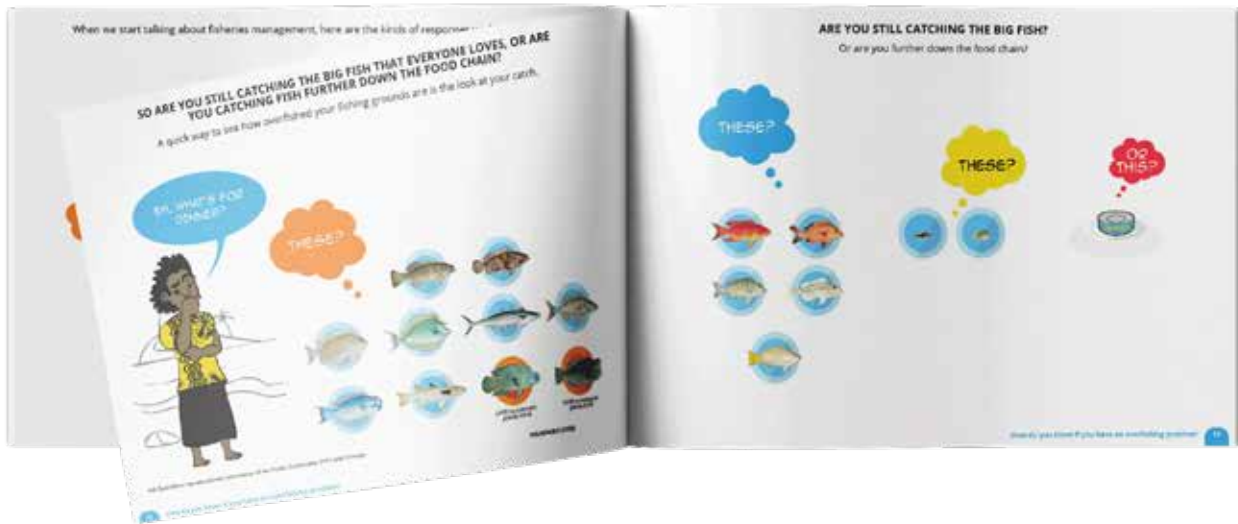
**Most fishers deal with overfishing challenges by thinking short-term, day-to-day: I need money for school fees, so where should I fish today?** The reality is that people are often more concerned about such things as education, health care and infrastructure that gives them better access to markets, than the health of fishing grounds which provides for all these things. So the question here is whether fishers want to think longer-term, and work to ensure their fishing grounds can keep providing for their needs.

A highly effective way to break through this challenge is asking fishers to reflect on what they have already lost. While it is useful to simplify overfishing as taking it longer to fish and catches are getting smaller, often people need more tangible messages.



**TIP:** Use this illustration to explain the concept of fishing down the food chain.

**ASK:** Are you still catching big fish like these? Or the next group, or the next group, across the page. Note, we are not showing all the fish they can catch, so ask if the fish they catch are not illustrated on these pages. Fishers should think through what fish are most sought after and if those are still being caught, or if they are catching different ones. Perhaps they are catching fish today that they used to avoid.



**Alternatively, you can ask the questions this way:**

1. What fish are you catching today?
2. What fish have you lost?
3. What fish are you worried about losing today?

Ideally, this discussion should include young and old fishers, and both male and female fishers, so that the community or group you are presenting to get a full picture of change.

**TIP:** These pages shows only fish. The exercise can also include non-fish species. For these non-fish species, more commonly the commercial valuable ones go first. These species can be part of this discussion by asking, What has been lost, or what fish are fishers worried about losing?

# CATCH PER UNIT EFFORT

**2. Without much work, you can simply ask fishers how hard it is to catch fish over time, to show changes. The key is asking the same question over time, so you can compare answers.**

**This activity is very similar to some of the questions that you would have asked in the first section: What's the problem? But the difference here is that these questions are asked again and again over intervals of time, like every year.**

Catch Per Unit Effort is the term scientists use when measuring how much effort it takes to catch a fish.

In practice, fishers can assess how long it takes to catch fish and compare the answers over time. For example, you can ask "How long does it take to catch enough fish to feed your family for a week?" "Or how long does it take you to catch 10 kg of fish?" Or whatever fishers think is a good measure to consistently track time and resources for a fishing trip. You can ask fishers in the community to come up with a measurement that works for them and they can agree to use this as the unit of measure.

**The key is using the same questions every time.  
That way you can compare the answers.**



**TIP:** If fishers are also using fuel to catch fish, you can ask how much time and money they spend to catch this amount fish. In many places, because they have to travel so much further for fish, it means buying more petrol and spending more money to catch fish (i.e., how many jerry cans per trip?).

If you are doing these talks in small groups you can use the following report form to document what was discussed and found.



## SURVEY OPTION

You can conduct your own mini-surveys, with questions like these:

**1. How would you rate the health of your fishing ground? Healthy means fishers are catching plenty of fish and collecting plenty of things like crabs, lobsters? (Circle one response)**

EXCELLENT   GOOD   FAIR   POOR   FAILING   NOT SURE/DON'T KNOW

**2. Are you able to catch or collect enough from the sea to meet your needs? (Circle one response)**

MORE THAN I NEED   ENOUGH   LESS THAN I NEED   NOT SURE/DON'T KNOW

**3. Over the last few years, does it seem like the sizes of fish or other species you are catching are BIGGER, SMALLER or ABOUT THE SAME? (Circle one response)**

BIGGER   SMALLER   ABOUT THE SAME   NOT SURE/DON'T KNOW

**4. Over the last few years are you travelling farther and spending more time and money fishing? (Circle one response)**

MORE   LESS   ABOUT THE SAME   NOT SURE/DON'T KNOW

## And to do the sums ...

**Step 1: Add up the total hours it takes to catch the amount of fish you asked.** So let's say you interviewed 5 fishers to find out how long it takes to catch enough fish to feed their family for 1 week. 1 fisher said 6 hours, 2 said 12 hours, and 2 said 16 hours to catch enough fish for their family for one week.

**Step 2: Then divide the total by the number of fishers interviewed.** That's your average time. If you keep asking the same questions over 6 to 12 months, you will have a way to see if it's getting easier or harder to catch fish.

Fisher	Hours
1	6
2	12
3	12
4	16
5	16
Total hours	62
Average time	$62/5 = 12.4\text{hrs}$

## FISH SIZES

**3. All fish have different sizes they need to reach before they become sexually mature and able to reproduce. To have good catches year after year, enough fish need to get big enough to breed, before you catch them.**

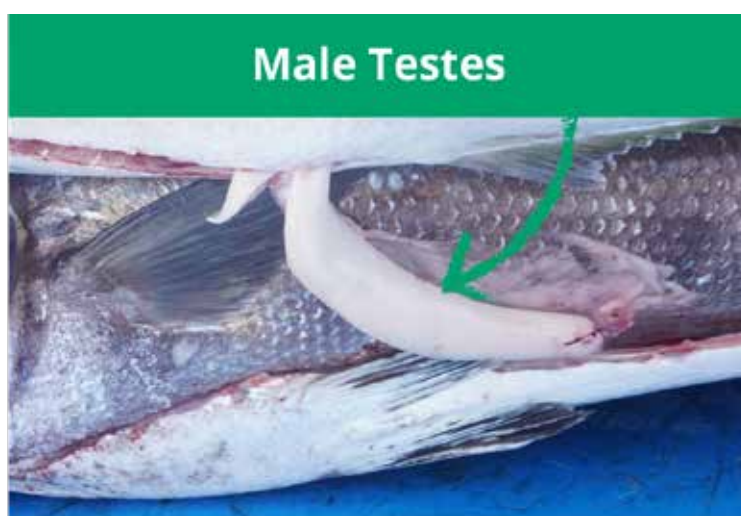
**Minimum sizes are another way to monitor fishing grounds health. Looking at sizes can be helpful to understand if enough fish are breeding and restocking your fishing grounds.**

If you know what size a fish becomes sexually mature, meaning it can reproduce, scientists can calculate a minimum size that will make sure you have enough fish reproducing. For example, you likely want at least 50 percent to 60 percent of the fish you catch to have reached minimum size and had at least one chance to breed.

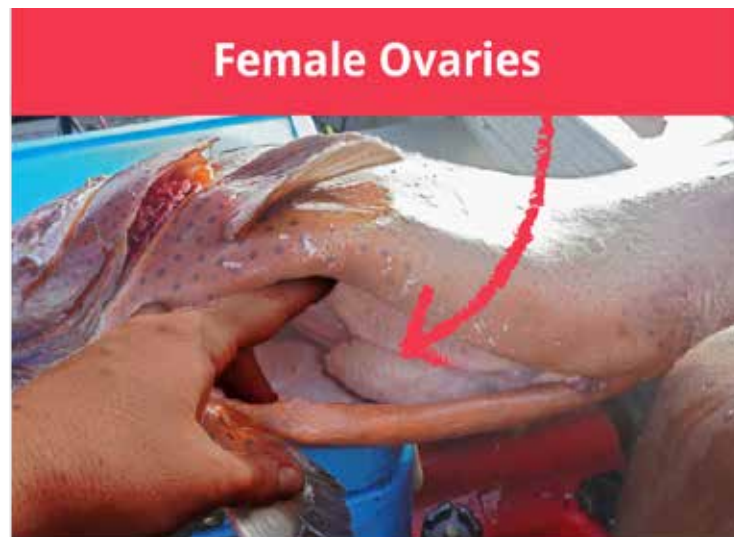
Unfortunately, there is not a lot of scientific information available on what size fish should be to ensure enough fish are breeding in Papua New Guinea.

In some communities, if fishers already know what size a fish they catch start breeding, they can use this method. For those who don't, you can also cut your catch open to figure out what the size is that they typically become sexually mature.

When fish are cleaned, you can see if they have developed gonads, which are testes for male fish and ovaries for female fish.



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It is advised that for any fish that fishers and communities are worried about losing, measuring that fish and then cutting them open to determine if they are mature or not. This will show you what size they are when they turn mature and you can start measuring catch to see how much of your catch is mature and immature.

Please note that measuring fish and cutting them open is a big commitment.

But even without minimum sizes, comparing fish sizes from the past to today and into the future can help communities understand how fishing is changing.

**The central goal in all the activities in this section is to elevate concern that there is a problem and action is needed. Sizes can help if people reflect on how catches have changed.**



## DISCUSSION TIPS & CAPTURING INSIGHTS

For this section, we suggest using each page illustration to host a short discussion. This will help to clearly show that you are there to listen, learn and help the community think through their issues and concerns.

Alternatively, you can present on all the content and illustrations and use the final page, Page 22, to spur discussion.

If possible, taking notes of the community discussion can be helpful for later on. It is always good to have a record to refer to over time and this is useful if you present the feedback to the whole community. You can also share the results with campaign partners to help inform further support.

If you are presenting using a flipchart or powerpoint presentation, ask for help from the group you are hosting discussions with to write down people's opinions. Recording what was said also shows that you are listening and will make the community feel that they have been heard.

The following table is designed to make it easier for you to keep a record of the discussions for use later.

# Notes to record:

Notes to capture: HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOU HAVE A FISHING PROBLEM (SECTION 2)		
Date: Length of meeting: Phone / video consent: Y / N	Place:	Presenter:
Group name/meeting type:	No. of women:	
	No. of men:	
	No. of youth:	
What fish are you catching today? Are there fish you hardly ever catch anymore?	-	
How long does it take you to catch enough fish to feed your family for a week?	-	
For fish you are worried about losing, have the sizes decreased? Do you catch big ones anymore?	-	
Are you able to catch or collect enough from the sea to meet your needs?	MORE THAN I NEED ENOUGH LESS THAN I NEED NOT SURE/ DON'T KNOW	
Other comments?	-	

# Section 3: What can you do about overfishing in your community?





# What can we do about overfishing?







Now it's time to start talking about what the community can do about their overfishing problem.

As we discussed in *Section 1: What's the problem?* there are a lot of existing views on fisheries management. Some are good, some not so good. If you made it to this section, hopefully you have had lots of thoughtful discussions about changes in fishing through reflecting on current catches.

The idea behind this section is to help people understand potential solutions and discuss what might make the most sense for each community.

## SECTION LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

**By the end of this section, community members should understand and reflect on these key messages/issues:**

-  Community-based fisheries management (CBFM) is an approach to ensure fish and other marine species are harvested at sustainable levels.
-  CBFM is not about stopping people from fishing or collecting. It is an approach to balance short-term needs with long-term needs for communities to thrive.
-  There are several local actions communities can take to improve fishing ground health to get bigger, better catches. These actions include:
  - ✓ **Spawning Season Bans**
  - ✓ **Marine Protected Areas**
  - ✓ **Harmful Fishing Bans**
  - ✓ **Limits On Fishers Catches**
  - ✓ **Bans On Endangered Species**
  - ✓ **Minimum Fish Sizes**
  - ✓ **Selective Harvesting Rules**
  - ✓ **Protection Of Key Habitats**
-  Fish Aggregation Devices, or FADs, are used to lessen pressure on inshore areas by making it easier for fishers to catch deep-water species.
-  Communities can set rules, but the rules should be chosen because they deal with local problems they have identified; most people will support them and they can be enforced.
-  National and provincial fishing rules are meant to help protect the most vulnerable species from collapse.

# BACKGROUND ON FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

This section shares the actions that communities can take in response to declining catches. By presenting all the actions that communities can potentially take, it can clear up what fisheries management is and help communities take ownership of the decisions.

For you, as the facilitator, there are a few things to understand when you host discussions on these actions.

## FISHERIES MANAGEMENT BASICS

Fisheries management is an approach to ensuring fish and other marine species are harvested at sustainable levels. It is not about stopping people from fishing or collecting. It is about balancing short-term needs with long-term needs for communities to thrive.

## GOVERNMENT VS COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT

Government agencies such as fisheries departments are mandated to manage coastal fisheries and large commercial fisheries such as those based on tuna. Government agencies also have scientific information to assist management, such as the minimum sizes at which different species reproduce.

However, local communities often have (1) legal rights to the resources, (2) broader traditional information on their fishing grounds, such as the knowledge of places and times where fish and other marine species reproduce, and (3) a better understanding of the impacts of imposing controls on different community groups.

In the Pacific Islands, government agencies have limited resources and face many challenges to reach all communities spread out over long coastlines and many islands.

Because of this fishers and communities can feel excluded from government decisions and so they are less likely to buy into management and respect restrictions and regulations that they have had no effective participation in devising.

So communities are often better placed to set rules that deal with local problems to manage their fishing grounds.

**This is the rationale behind Singaut Blo Solwara, to help communities manage their fishing grounds themselves.**



## DOES IT WORK?

In CBFM, rules and restrictions are often arrived at by common agreement and are more likely to be respected by communities. In addition, local rules, if backed by traditional, customary or religious structures, they are more likely to be respected. If all fishers – men, women, young and old – support communally-made decisions, enforcement is also less challenging.

However, sometimes communities struggle with issues like enforcement, particularly with poachers from outside their community.

Community fisheries management plans might also benefit from outside support at times.

In these scenarios, a government agency might help support community efforts.

The term co-management is often used to describe the situation where different stakeholders, such as government agencies and fishing communities work together to manage fisheries and marine resources. This is less common but it's good to know how government and communities can work together.

**Here's the bottom line:** Communities should not wait around for someone to turn up to start management. Communities need to take the lead, and seek support as needed, and if it is available.



# THE COMMUNITY TOOLBOX FOR BIGGER, BETTER CATCHES

Fisheries management is an approach to ensuring that fish and other marine species are harvested at sustainable levels. It is about balancing short-term needs with long-term needs for communities to thrive.

It's about smart fishing practices and rules and habitat protection that can provide bigger, better catches.

It is not about stopping people from fishing or collecting.

So, what actions can communities take through CBFM? The booklet shows the most common actions communities can take.

**Please review the booklet for short explanations of each action.**



## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For those who want to dig in a bit more on community-based fisheries management, and solutions for important groups of food fish, access to the CBFM starting kit, species by species here <https://cbfm.spc.int/which-marine-resource>

Or download the factheets here:

<https://cbfm.spc.int/resources/management/fishing-communities-toolkit>



## TIPS FOR CONSIDERING RULES

As the community considers the actions that make the most sense for them, they will likely need more information than what is in the booklet. We encourage you to reach out to local partners and the campaign as you become more organised and motivated hosting community discussions. The previous page also shares links to additional materials created by the LMMA Network and SPC.

For now, we want to share some basic background information to help you host discussions on these actions.

### **The choice of the action should depend on a few criteria, which you can discuss with the community:**

**1. Does it address the issues driving overfishing,** such as harmful gear, too many fishers, or perhaps habitat destruction. In other words, make sure the solution matches the problem.

**2. Will fishers and the community support the rule?** This is why hosting community discussions are so important, to ensure everyone is involved and can accept the decisions made. But some rules will limit current fishing practices more than others. Encouraging the community to talk through problems and solutions is critical to understanding how the rules may impact (all) fishers and what rules will be most supported.

**3. Can they enforce it, if people don't obey it?** If there are concerns about people not complying, this question is about assessing how hard it will be to enforce. For example, if you are banning catching a specific fish, perhaps you can check people's catches when you return to shore. But if you are establishing a protected area, can you monitor it, or is too far from the village?

**4. Will fishers from outside the community obey the rule?** In some places, as gear and boats improve, poaching from outsiders has increased. Will this be an issue for this community? The community will lose support quickly if people see outsiders stealing the benefits while community fishers obey the rule. If outsiders poach, how can the community stop them?

### **Page 32 in the booklet shows some examples of community-made rules.**

The illustration shows management planning in a simple way and includes the key elements of management: The problem, the rule (or solution) and then the penalty for breaking the rule. This page is intended to help the community visualise the process of doing local management plans. If you get to this stage, you might need more support from local partners or the campaign. But we find this illustration helpful to understand where the community is headed.

And if people want to take action, it will be up to the community on how fast they want to move. If the community wants to move forward, move with them.



# WHAT ABOUT GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS?

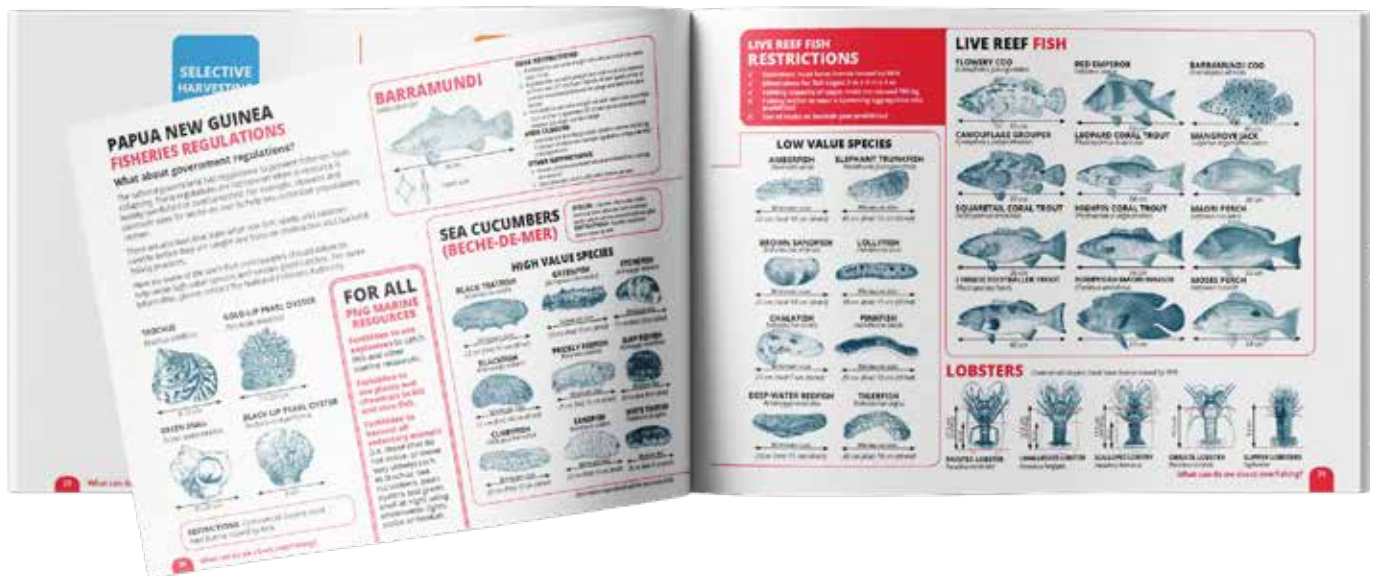
To help sustain coastal fisheries in PNG, the national government can establish laws that help protect critical resources. Typically, these laws are made to protect the most vulnerable species to overfishing and ones that are involved in commercial trade, often including export markets.

These rules are there to ensure communities don't lose access to these important resources, not to limit community use of them.

It's important for people to understand what's at risk from overfishing and the potential penalties, particularly for the commercial markets.

Share these and listen to feedback. Perhaps they agree with the rules. If they do not, ask them if they think any of these fisheries are declining and do they agree they do need special regulations?

Any feedback you receive can help the National Fisheries Authority and others to better understand the impact of government regulations.



## DISCUSSION TIPS AND CAPTURING INSIGHTS

For this section, we suggest using each page illustration to host a short discussion. This helps clearly show that you are there to listen, learn and help the community think through the issues.

Alternatively, you can present on the all the pages in this section, without opening any discussion, and use the final page, Page 33, to spur one large discussion on all the key points.

If possible, take notes of the community discussion for later use. It is always good to have a record to refer to over time and this is useful if you present the feedback to the whole community. You can also share the results with local partners and the campaign to help inform further support.

If you are presenting using a flipchart or powerpoint presentation, ask for help from the group you are hosting discussions with to write down people's opinions. Recording what was said also shows that you are listening and will make the community feel that they have been heard.

The following table is designed to make it easier for you to keep a record of the discussions for use later.

Notes to capture: MAKING RULES SUMMARY REPORT (SECTION 3)		
Date:	Place:	Presenter:
Length of meeting:		
Phone / video consent: Y / N		
Group name/meeting type:	No. of women:	
	No. of men:	
	No. of youth:	
Do you think it makes sense to consider new rules to improve our fishing groups? If not, what are your concerns?		
What rules, if any, do we have today? Are they helping?		
What rules do you think would be most effective for your community? (Rank list).		
What further information do you need to help decide on the best rules for your community?		
other comments?		

# Where to from *here*?



# JOIN THE CAMPAIGN!



The Singaut Blo Solwara campaign is about empowering communities and a big part of that is sharing their stories. We want to learn from each other. As you start to host discussions in communities, it is important to stay connected with the campaign and share what you are doing so the campaign can on-share your efforts to inspire more people like you to lead the way.

We want to share your stories on the radio, social media and through video, so communities can learn from each other. Keep in touch!

And reach out if you have any questions or comments or feedback! We want to learn from your experience so we can better support people like you to lead the way.

☐ SHARE THIS BOOKLET WITH YOUR FRIENDS, FAMILY & CHURCH GROUP



☐ TUNE INTO NBC RADIO TO LEARN MORE ON WHAT IS HAPPENING IN NEW IRELAND TO GET BIGGER, BETTER CATCHES



☐ JOIN THE WHATSAPP GROUP!



☐ SEND AN EMAIL:  
[SINGAUTBLOSOLWARA@GMAIL.COM](mailto:SINGAUTBLOSOLWARA@GMAIL.COM)



☐ FOLLOW THE CAMPAIGN:  
[FACEBOOK.COM/SINGAUTBLOSOLWARA](https://FACEBOOK.COM/SINGAUTBLOSOLWARA)  
[INSTAGRAM.COM/SINGAUTBLOSOLWARA](https://INSTAGRAM.COM/SINGAUTBLOSOLWARA)

☐ WATCH ON YOUTUBE:  
[TINYURL.COM/MRXXNSWS](https://TINYURL.COM/MRXXNSWS)



☐ SHARE IT... ON SHAREIT!





**YUMI OLGETA  
I KEN MEKIM  
WOK!**

