



**REPORT ON CONSULTATION MEETINGS HELD WITH THE
PEMBA CHANNEL CONSERVATION AREA
DISTRICT COMMITTEES ON ESTABLISHING NO-TAKE
*FISH BREEDING GROUNDS***

FEBRUARY 2016

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1. INTRODUCTION

This report describes a series of meetings held in Pemba Island, Zanzibar during November and December, 2015. There were four meetings, of each of the four Pemba Channel Conservation Area (PECCA) District Committees. There are about thirty five towns and villages within PECCA, which together are home to the majority of fishing people on the island. These thirty five are divided into four District Committees, made up of representatives from all the towns and villages. Representatives are drawn from locally-elected VFCs (Village Fishermen Committees – this is the original name, although they are now known as Shehia Fishermen Committees or SFCs).

SFCs are composed of active fishers, generally the most respected in their communities, so coupled with their wide membership this means the four PECCA District Committees can be regarded as representing the voice of Pemba's fishing people.

The purpose of the meetings was to discuss the idea of introducing a series of no-take-zones (or "Fish Breeding Grounds" -- "Mazalio ya Samaki" in Swahili), closed to fishing, distributed along Pemba's west coast within PECCA, and to gauge the level of acceptance such an initiative might receive at the village and community level. This is the first concrete step in an extensive program of community consultation and participation which the initiative is planned to include. The background is briefly described in Section 2.

Attendance at the meetings was extremely good, with sixty one attendees representing thirty three towns and villages (listed in Section 6), some of which sent multiple representatives. In addition, managers attended from the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries Pemba office, which has responsibility for oversight of PECCA: Ali Kassim Mohammed, PECCA manager; Sharif Mohammed Faki, Head of the Department of Fisheries Development and a former PECCA manager; and Ali Said Hamad, Head of Planning in the Department of Marine Resources, and the first manager when PECCA was set up in 2005. Ali Said facilitated all four meetings, including a presentation on no-take-zones. His report is presented in Section 3.

Observers from the Pemba Foundation were present at all four meetings, and a representative of Pemba's resort hotels was an observer at one meeting.

2. BACKGROUND

[Note: this background is drawn from a more detailed position paper produced by the Pemba Foundation and available on request.]

The Pemba Channel Conservation Area (PECCA) was established by Zanzibar government order in September, 2005. It is an area of about 1,000 square km, extending a little over 60 km along the full length of Pemba's west coast. This coast, on the Pemba Channel, is relatively sheltered and more geographically complex than the east coast, and contains most of Pemba's marine biodiversity. PECCA includes a tremendous variety of rich marine habitats which together comprise one of the most significant concentrations of marine biodiversity on the East African coast. Half of Tanzania's coral is in Pemba Island.

The comprehensive "Rapid Assessment" study¹ which preceded the establishment of PECCA had this to say: "...the island's highly diverse and productive marine habitats, including coral reefs, seagrass beds and extensive mangrove stands are generators of biodiversity and biomass that undoubtedly influence the entire region. Consequently Pemba Island has been classified as a regionally important site in the EAME (Eastern African Marine Ecoregion)." A World Wildlife Fund report² pointed out that the only reason Pemba's marine habitats have not been classified as globally important is simply that they've not been sufficiently studied.

The marine resources of Pemba's west coast are of vital importance to the people of Pemba. Every day thousands of subsistence and artisan fishers are at work within PECCA, and their catches find their way into every part of the island – they are a critical source of food and income.

There is both anecdotal and systematic evidence that the pressure on resources is taking its toll, and the abundance of everything from sea cucumbers to octopus, shellfish, reef fish and lobsters is diminishing.

¹ *Rapid Assessment of the Proposed Pemba Channel Conservation Area*
Government of Zanzibar Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources, Environment and Cooperatives, Marine and Coastal Environment Project, February 2005

² *Proceedings of the Eastern African Marine Ecoregion Visioning Workshop* WWF
Mombassa, Kenya, April 21st-24th 2001

A comprehensive study³ of fisheries in Tanzania by Dr. Narriman Jiddawi and a co-worker of the Institute of Marine Sciences, Zanzibar, concluded: "...there is a long-term trend of overharvested fishery resources." They reported universal declines in catches during the 1980s and 1990s, across all fisheries: reef fish, lobsters, small and large pelagics. Although good numbers were hard to get, they were able to estimate the total catch decline in Zanzibar in a single decade as 25% -- a catastrophic rate if even close to accurate.

Fishing pressure is increasing, while at the same time climate change looms, presenting a further threat to Pemba's marine systems. It's known that the healthier and more diverse the natural system, the more resilient it is in the face of change. But conversely, the weaker and more damaged the system, the more vulnerable it is.

But – and it's a very important "but" -- the consensus is that the deterioration in PECCA has not yet reached a critical point, from which recovery is no longer practical (as might be the case in parts of the Caribbean, for example). Here's how the Rapid Assessment put it: "The impression of Pemba...is that the entire transition from mangrove to deep reef is in a healthy state, with full ecological function despite the large amount of fishing activities that are taking place from shallow to deep water. There are, however, clear signs that biodiversity on the Pemba Channel side is under threat from destructive fishing activities and over-exploitation of marine and coastal resources. These threats to the natural system underscore the need for effective community-based conservation and management."

Pemba is at a turning point: effective management of marine resources for sustainability has to be put in place within some limited period of time, or -- under increasing fishing pressure and mounting climatic change -- the current deterioration will inevitably accelerate until this gem of the East African coast, and vital source of sustenance and livelihoods for the Pemban people, is destroyed, or changed beyond recognition.

Happily, there is a history of marine conservation in Pemba, which this project seeks to build on. In the mid-1990s, a key development took place involving Misali, a small island off Pemba's west coast.

Misali's reefs contain probably the richest biodiversity of corals and fishes in Pemba, perhaps in all of Zanzibar, and they've always been a focus for Pemba's fishers. In 1998, after an energetic local campaign, the Misali Island Marine Conservation Area (MIMCA) was established in the waters around the

³ *Marine Fisheries in Tanzania* Narriman S. Jiddawi, Marcus C. Ohman, AMBIO, December 2002

island, including a small no-take-zone, with a larger zone in which fishing was regulated and patrolled by rangers.

MIMCA became a model for expanding marine conservation in Pemba, and in 2005 the much larger Pemba Channel Conservation Area (PECCA) was established, encompassing Pemba's entire west coast and with MIMCA absorbed into it. As the PECCA Rapid Assessment said: "It is important to note that the coastal inhabitants, including the fishers' population, are ready for the proposed intervention which is country-driven and comes at a very necessary time. Fishers have expressed strong interest in collaborating with the authorities and NGOs to implement PECCA."

So the purpose of the current project is to develop plans for, and then implement, a series of small marine protected areas -- no-take-zones -- distributed within PECCA. The baseline proposal is for five new areas about the size of the original Misali no-take-zone, which still remains -- although their number, placement and size are to be determined later during the project development phase. They will be patrolled on the water by a new cadre of marine rangers, drawn from the local fishing communities, who will need to be recruited, trained, equipped, paid and supported in the long term.

All the evidence suggests that if the zones are planned right, with full community involvement, and become established, then Pemba's marine biodiversity will flourish and its fishers will reap the benefits of healthy, sustainable harvests.

This project grew out of informal conversations with chairpersons of PECCA's SFCs, and with managers in the Fisheries and Marine Planning Departments' Pemba office. It cannot be overemphasised that in the design of a system of no-take-zones within PECCA it's essential that the fishers and communities who use PECCA all the time are fully consulted on, and involved in, planning and implementation. The purpose of the four PECCA District Committee meetings was to take the first step in community consultation: it's the beginning of a process that will take time and effort, but with vital goals.

3. REPORT OF THE FACILITATOR

The following report on the meetings was kindly provided by Ali Said Hamad, Head of Planning in the Department of Marine Resources, Pemba office. He was closely involved in the creation of the original Misali Island Marine Conservation Area, and then in setting up PECCA, of which he was the first manager. He is a familiar figure to most of Pemba's fishers, and his consistent aim of helping fishing communities is well-known.

Ali Said facilitated all four meetings, starting each one with a presentation systematically describing what no-take-zones are, and their potential benefits. In thinking about this project, one decision that was made was to refer to no-take-zones as "fish breeding grounds" (in Swahili "Mazalio ya Samaki"), not solely to emphasise the positive, but more importantly to focus on the key feature for fishers: that strong reproduction and growth inside closed areas allows fish to spill out and generate better catches outside, where fishing is allowed.

**PEMBA CHANNEL CONSERVATION AREA
(PECCA)
SUMMARY REPORT ON DISTRICT COMMITTEE
CONSULTATION AWARENESS ON ESTABLISHMENT OF
BREEDING GROUNDS
(FACILITATED BY ALI SAID HAMAD)**

INTRODUCTION

Basically, four District Committees Meetings were conducted in Wete, Micheweni , Chake Chake and Mkoani Districts. Each of the four meetings started with the facilitator presenting introductory remarks to facilitate discussion later.

Facilitator started by defining a Marine Protected Area (MPA), that is simply a space in the ocean where human activities (fishing and alike) are more strictly regulated than the surrounding waters. He noted that these places are given special protections to safeguard natural or historic marine resources in the area. However, he said there are many definitions of marine protected

areas, but the most standard definition was given by IUCN which is:

"A clearly defined geographical space, recognized, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values."

Facilitator also said MPAs (conservation areas) have two broad objectives:

(i) Ecological objectives:

- To ensure the long-term viability and maintain the genetic diversity of marine species and systems;
- To protect depleted, threatened, rare or endangered species and populations;
- To preserve habitats considered critical for the survival and/or lifecycles of species, including economically important species;
- To prevent outside activities from detrimentally affecting the marine protected areas.

(ii) Human objectives:

- To provide for the continued welfare of people affected by the creation of marine protected areas;
- To preserve, protect, and manage historical and cultural sites and natural aesthetic values of marine and estuarine areas, for present and future generations;
- To facilitate the interpretation of marine and estuarine systems for the purposes of conservation, education and tourism;
- To accommodate with appropriate management systems a broad spectrum of human activities compatible with the primary goal in marine and estuarine settings;
- To provide for research and training, and for monitoring the environmental effect of human activities, including the direct

and indirect effects of development and adjacent land-use practices.

ZONING FOR ESTABLISHING BREEDING GROUNDS

Regarding the zoning, the facilitator explained that there are three major benefits for establishment of breeding ground zones as follows:

(i) Biodiversity benefits:

- Improving marine biodiversity;
- Protecting and conserving endangered species;
- Protecting marine habitats and breeding areas (corals, sea grass beds, mangroves, beaches/sea shores) for different flora and fauna;
- Sustaining marine biodiversity.

(ii) Benefits to fisheries:

- Increasing size and quantity for different harvested species;
- Improving fish reproduction and production;
- Helping to sustain fishing activities.

(iii) Community benefits:

- Helping to conserve areas with ecological and cultural importance (like historical areas, caves etc.);
- Helping to increase community revenues from fishing, marine and coastal tourism activities;
- Providing opportunity for undertaking marine research, and opportunity for academic development;
- Providing opportunity for fishers to have sustainable fishing in the long term;
- Increase availability of nutritious food and animal protein to the growing population.

Initially, the areas proposed were: Manta reef, Njao Gap, Fundo Gap, Uvinje area, Misali and Meli mbovu (Panza Island).

During discussion with the district committees other areas were suggested by members in addition to above. These were: Dongoni

to Chanjaani (Ndagoni), Kwa Sharif to Hurunzi (Makoongwe), Mwamba Mkuu (Tundauwa-Kilindi), Kashani and Vijiwe Vitatu (dolphin area). I would recommend further discussion of these areas.

FACILITATOR'S OPINION

Interestingly, throughout the discussions of the four district committees there was no member who opposed the establishment of breeding grounds, and all were in favour.

Criticism and suggestions were focused on management and control of the areas. The majority of the members had the opinion that it is important for the project to solicit and secure sufficient funds for management of the breeding areas, otherwise they will be paper breeding areas only, which will not have any value.

It was also said that it is important to implement effective management of the areas from the beginning, otherwise they will not work.

Therefore the facilitator would recommend having thorough discussions on the issue of management of the proposed breeding areas. Generally, effective management of the proposed breeding grounds requires availability of:

1. Patrol boats with engines;
2. Sufficient fuel;
3. Communication equipment;
4. Ranger training;
5. Other operational cost like sea allowances and food for rangers during patrols.

Rangers who will be responsible for regular patrols in the areas should be highly motivated to facilitate commitment to proper management of the areas.

I personally wish to see the proposed breeding areas established and managed very effectively, and to become an example of effective management not only for the Pemba Channel Conservation Area, but also for Tanzania.

Ali Said Hamad
Wete-Pemba
19th January, 2016

4. OPINIONS OF SELECTED PARTICIPANTS

The following are excerpts from the discussions that grew out of Ali Said's initial presentations. We quote these comments at length, to help give an impression of the overall constructive tone of the meetings. The unanimity of opinion in favour of creating closed breeding zones was remarkable, and clearly deeply felt by these fishers, many of whom have spent a lifetime on the water in Pemba.

Khamis Makame Shaame

Tondooni, Micheweni District

Member of Tondooni SFC, former Secretary of the Misali Island Conservation Association

Citing his experience of the newly-created small closed area near Manta Resort :

The breeding zone is good, people are catching big fish and a huge amount of fish close to Manta, all because of the closed area. There are benefits now and for future generations. Breeding zones will protect the nature of the sea, and this will increase the number of tourists in the Island, but we have to educate other villages in order to have more breeding zones.

Mohammed Kombo Hamad

Wete, Wete District

Chairperson of Wete District Committee, Chairperson of Wete SFC

For a start I would be really happy to get investment in closed areas. We have been thinking for several years to have breeding zones, but we could not find a way to complete the dreams. For my part I have no reservations -- 100% is yes for breeding zones. The breeding zones will increase the number of fish, and we will get more and bigger fish.

Other village people they will not refuse, I'm sure they will agree. I'm from Kojani and many Kojani people fish: I will do my level best to speak with them, even though they are difficult people. But for sure they will agree because there's no one who does not need this benefit. It's OK to be patient for some time, as long as in future we have success. I will speak with them and we will give them a little lecture in order to get a closed area.

(Note: Mohammed Kombo is originally from Kojani himself, so it might seem that his remark about Kojani people being difficult is a joke. But in fact fishers from Kojani have an island-wide reputation for toughness, so in effect he's

saying that if even those Kojani people are going to agree to this, then everyone will.)

Khamis Omar Iddi

Tumbe, Micheweni District

Member of Micheweni District Committee, former Committee Secretary

The breeding zones are good, and we have seen big fish in Misali. Villages get financial benefits from closing areas. I support the project, and I will do my best to speak with other village people in order to get agreement. They will agree without a doubt, and I will make sure they work together with the Pemba Foundation.

Ali Juma Ali

Mkoani, Mkoani District

Chairperson Mkoani District Committee

There is no other comment for a breeding zone but a total yes, because in our village we have been trying to make a closed area but we haven't succeeded. It was very difficult because we didn't have any resources, that was a big issue and that was why it didn't work. I'm their representative, and no one has any doubts, they are ready for this. I'm happy to hear about the [Pemba Foundation] support, this is good news and when I get home I will tell them what's happening and I'm sure they will be happy. I'm sure there will be no criticism from them. If it's possible even tomorrow we are ready to have a closed area, and we will be together with the supporter hand in hand. We have seen the effect in Misali – there is a large amount of fish, and I venture to say that if there is no Misali also there are no fish. The closed area of Misali is helping us all to get fish, because it's only there where fish can breed.

Sheha Kahtan Khamis

Ndagoni, Chake Chake District

Sheha of Ndagoni

Everybody knows that if you keep things protected always you will have success, and if we don't keep things protected then we don't have success. So as long as the breeding zone is protected for sure success will come. Everybody needs success, and from my village there are no adverse comments, because we have seen the success of Misali Island and we need the same in our village. Breeding zones are good and will benefit everybody in Pemba.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The very high level of support for creating closed areas within PECCA, as expressed by the broad sampling of community representatives attending the four meetings, has come as something of a surprise. It's hard to imagine people were simply being polite after hearing the facilitator's presentation on the value of breeding zones, and Pemba people normally have no hesitation in expressing their opinions. There were no formal votes taken at the meetings, but a show of hands in each case only confirmed the general approvals expressed during the discussion. This attitude is also entirely consistent with views expressed by experienced fishers in private.

In fact the only cautionary ideas expressed related to the manner in which breeding zones would be implemented. People were emphatic that if we're going to do this, we have to get it right, and from the start – they want solid enforcement, and well-equipped rangers with enough fuel for plenty of patrolling.

The Misali Island experience is clearly on people's minds: when first established, the closed area was well-patrolled and quickly began to show the benefits of protection – larger fish, greater numbers, leading to better catches outside the area. Fishers have always come from all around Pemba to fish at Misali, so many people have had first hand experience of these beneficial effects. After a few years, however, for a series of reasons funds for enforcement were reduced, patrolling was reduced, and the integrity of the closed area suffered. Now fishers say Misali is returning to how it was before the area was set up. They don't want history to repeat itself, which can only serve to emphasise how important it will be to move forward with this project with a clear path to maintaining the zones over the long term.

The fundamental message of these meetings, though, is that Pemba's fishing communities are ready to move ahead with no-take-zones within PECCA. It's now up to the rest of us to do all we can to help make that happen.

6. PARTICIPATING TOWNS AND VILLAGES

The following thirty three towns and villages were represented at the four district meetings. It's hard to make an exact count of the total number of communities in PECCA -- small villages can be part of a larger village or community, and may or may not be referred to by a separate name. Nevertheless, attendance by this number of communities comes close to full representation of PECCA's fishers.

WETE DISTRICT MEETING

26th November, 2015

Kojani (not within PECCA but an important fishing village)

Gando

Wete

Makangale

Mtambwe

Mujumbe

Fundo

Kigomasha

Kijjini

MICHEWENI DISTRICT MEETING

1st December, 2015

Kiuyu

Kiuyu-Mjuma

Maziwa Ngombe

Tumbe

Makangale

Micheweni

Kifundi

CHAKE CHAKE DISTRICT MEETING

2nd December, 2015

Chake Chake

Mgelema

Chonga

Kilindi

Kijili

Ndagoni

Wesha

MKOANI DISTRICT MEETING

3rd December, 2015

Michenzani

Shidi

Khangani

Mizingani

Mokoongwe

Michezani

Chokocho

Wambaa

Mkoani

Kisiwa Panza

7. CONTACTS

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