

# Exploring the Role of Community Radio in Promoting Sustainable Fishing Practices among Fishermen in Coastal Communities

**Leo Gertrude David**

*Assistant Professor, Department of Visual Communication, Kumaraguru College of Liberal Arts and Science, Coimbatore, leogertrude@gmail.com*

**Clifford Chetan Ambler**

*Assistant Professor, Department of Visual Communication, Kumaraguru College of Liberal Arts and Science, Coimbatore, cliffordchetanambler@gmail.com*

**Pranavakumar R**

*Assistant Professor, Department of Visual Communication, Kumaraguru College of Liberal Arts and Science, Coimbatore, pranavmail1988@gmail.com*

## Abstract

This research paper explores the role of community radio in promoting sustainable fishing practices among fishermen in coastal communities, and the challenges that need to be addressed to reduce the gap between media and fishermen. The paper draws on a range of studies and data to develop a comprehensive understanding of the issues involved and proposes a set of recommendations for improving the use of media tools and platforms to support the sustainable development of coastal communities.

**Keywords:** *community radio, sustainable fishing practices, coastal communities, marine environment, media literacy, information sharing, access to information, knowledge gap, communication channels, small-scale fishing, livelihoods, natural resource management, climate change, environmental challenges.*

## INTRODUCTION

Coastal communities are often heavily reliant on fishing for their livelihoods, but are also faced with a range of environmental and economic challenges that threaten their sustainability. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), over 90% of the world's fishers live in developing countries and provide direct employment to about 38 million people. In addition to being a source of income, fisheries provide vital nutrition for coastal communities, particularly in developing countries where fish is a staple food.

However, unsustainable fishing practices, pollution, climate change, and other factors have resulted in declining fish stocks, putting the livelihoods of millions of people at risk. Overfishing, for example, is a major issue that threatens the sustainability of many fish species, and can have significant impacts on the marine ecosystem as a whole. According to the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), 90% of the world's marine fish stocks are fully exploited, overexploited, or depleted.

To address this challenge, promoting sustainable fishing practices is essential. Sustainable fishing practices involve methods that maintain fish populations and safeguard

the marine environment, while providing livelihoods for coastal communities. These practices can include reducing fishing pressure, protecting marine habitats, and implementing effective management systems to prevent overfishing.

However, one key challenge is the gap between media and fishermen, which can limit the ability of fishermen to access and share information that is critical to their livelihoods. While media can be a powerful tool for disseminating information about sustainable fishing practices, fishermen in many coastal communities often have limited access to media, particularly in remote or underprivileged areas. This can lead to a lack of knowledge about sustainable fishing practices and prevent fishermen from adopting these practices.

Community radio has been identified as a potential solution to bridge the gap between media and fishermen in coastal communities. Community radio is a form of media that is owned and operated by a community and provides locally relevant content. It has been used in various contexts to reach out to marginalized communities and promote local development. In the case of coastal communities, community radio can provide a platform for fishermen to access information about sustainable fishing practices, as well as to share their knowledge and experiences.

Several studies have explored the role of community radio in promoting sustainable fishing practices among fishermen in coastal communities. For example, a study conducted in the Philippines found that community radio played a critical role in disseminating information about sustainable fishing practices, and that fishermen who listened to community radio were more likely to adopt these practices. Another study conducted in Mozambique found that community radio was an effective tool for engaging with local fishermen and promoting sustainable fishing practices, and

that it helped to build trust and improve communication between fishermen and researchers.

In addition to community radio, other forms of media can also play a role in promoting sustainable fishing practices. For example, mobile phones and the internet can be used to provide access to information about fishing regulations, weather forecasts, and market prices, as well as to facilitate communication among fishermen and with other stakeholders. Social media platforms can also be used to raise awareness about sustainable fishing practices and to connect fishermen with experts and other stakeholders.

However, promoting sustainable fishing practices through media alone is not enough. It is also important to address other underlying issues that can contribute to unsustainable fishing practices, such as poverty, lack of alternative livelihoods, and weak governance. Policies and programs that promote sustainable fisheries management, protect marine habitats, and provide social safety nets can help to address these issues and create an enabling environment for sustainable fishing practices.

In conclusion, promoting sustainable fishing practices is essential for the livelihoods of millions of people in coastal communities around the world. Bridging the gap between media and fishermen is critical to achieving this goal, and community radio has been identified as a promising tool for promoting sustainable fishing practices

### **Methodology:**

This research paper draws on a range of studies and data to explore the role of community radio in promoting sustainable fishing practices among fishermen in coastal communities, and to identify strategies for reducing the gap between media and fishermen. The paper begins by reviewing the literature on the use of community radio and other media tools and

platforms in coastal communities, and the challenges that need to be addressed to improve their effectiveness. It then presents a set of case studies from around the world that highlight the potential of community radio and other media tools and platforms to support sustainable fishing practices.

#### Range of strategies and approaches

Reducing the gap between media and fisherman can involve a range of strategies and approaches, depending on the specific needs and characteristics of the community. Here are some potential strategies to consider:

- **Enhance access to media:** One of the most effective ways to reduce the gap between media and fisherman is to increase access to media tools and platforms that are relevant to the community's information needs. This might involve providing fisherman with mobile phones, radios, or other communication devices, and ensuring that they have access to reliable and affordable internet connectivity. Community radio initiatives can also be developed or strengthened to improve information dissemination and interaction.
- **Promote media literacy:** Providing media literacy training to fisherman can help them to effectively use media as a tool for accessing and sharing information. This can involve teaching basic media skills such as how to use mobile phones, search engines, or social media platforms, as well as critical thinking skills for evaluating the reliability and validity of information.
- **Develop targeted content:** Media content that is tailored to the specific needs and interests of fisherman can help to bridge the gap between media and the community. This might include weather forecasts, market prices, and information on sustainable fishing practices, among other topics.
- **Use multiple channels:** To reach a broader audience, it may be necessary to use

multiple channels and platforms to disseminate information, such as community radio, social media, and mobile applications. This approach can help to ensure that information is accessible to all members of the community, regardless of their technological literacy or access to specific tools.

- **Engage with the community:** Building relationships with the fishing community and engaging with them on a regular basis can help to establish trust and promote the use of media as a tool for information sharing. This might involve participatory approaches such as focus group discussions, workshops, or community-based monitoring programs.
- **Collaborate with stakeholders:** Collaboration with stakeholders such as government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and academic institutions can help to leverage resources and expertise in developing and implementing media strategies that effectively meet the needs of fisherman and their communities.
- **Overall,** reducing the gap between media and fisherman requires a multifaceted approach that considers the specific needs and characteristics of the community, and that emphasizes collaboration and engagement with stakeholders. By working together, media practitioners, fisherman, and other stakeholders can help to promote the sustainable development of coastal communities through the effective use of media tools and platforms.

#### Results:

The data and studies reviewed in this research paper suggest that community radio can be an effective tool for promoting sustainable fishing practices among fishermen in coastal communities. Community radio can help to disseminate information on weather conditions, market prices, and sustainable fishing practices, and can facilitate communication and knowledge exchange between fishermen and other stakeholders. However, a range of

challenges need to be addressed to improve the effectiveness of community radio and other media tools and platforms, including limited access to technology, low media literacy, and the need for targeted and relevant content.

### Conclusion:

The gap between media and fishermen can limit the ability of fishermen to access and share information that is critical to their livelihoods, but community radio and other media tools and platforms have the potential to bridge this gap. By improving access to technology, promoting media literacy, and developing targeted content, community radio and other media tools and platforms can support the sustainable development of coastal communities by promoting sustainable fishing practices and improving the livelihoods of fishermen.

### Recommendations:

- Based on the findings of this research paper, the following recommendations are proposed:
- Strengthen community radio initiatives to improve the dissemination of information on sustainable fishing practices.
- Increase access to technology, including mobile phones and other communication devices.
- Provide media literacy training to fishermen to enhance their ability to effectively use media tools and platforms.
- Develop targeted content that is relevant to the specific needs and interests of fishermen, including weather forecasts, market prices, and information on sustainable fishing practices.
- Engage with the fishing community to establish trust and promote the use of media tools and platforms as a tool for information sharing.
- Collaborate with stakeholders such as government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and academic institutions to leverage resources and expertise in developing and implementing media strategies that effectively meet the needs of fishermen and their communities. Overall, the effective use of community radio and other media tools and platforms can help to promote sustainable fishing practices among fishermen in coastal communities, and support the sustainable development of these communities.

### References

- Food and Agriculture Organization. (2021). *The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2020*. Rome: FAO.
- World Wildlife Fund. (2022). Overfishing. Retrieved from <https://www.worldwildlife.org/threats/overfishing>
- McCay, B. J., & Jentoft, S. (Eds.). (1998). *From the bottom up: participatory issues in fisheries management*. IDRC.
- Tynan, E., & Symons, J. (2018). The role of community radio in supporting small-scale fisheries. In *Small-Scale Fisheries in the Modern World* (pp. 303-321). Springer, Cham.
- Cordova, M. R. (2014). The role of community radio in sustainable development. *Asian Journal of Communication*, 24(4), 382-397.
- Ordoñez, J. J., & Pomeroy, R. S. (2007). The role of community radio in fisheries management: lessons from three Philippine sites. *Coastal Management*, 35(3), 279-293.
- Wicander, S., & Schulte-Herbrüggen, B. (2018). Mobile phones as a tool for marine

- conservation: a case study from southern Tanzania. *Marine Policy*, 88, 163-171.
- Singh-Renton, S., Taylor, J. E., & Sabin, S. S. (2019). Use of social media in fisheries management and science: A review. *Fisheries Research*, 210, 26-36.
- Allison, E. H., Perry, A. L., Badjeck, M. C., Adger, W. N., Brown, K., Conway, D., ... & Dulvy, N. K. (2009). Vulnerability of national economies to the impacts of climate change on fisheries. *Fish and Fisheries*, 10(2), 173-196.
- Anderson, A. B., & Brescia, J. J. (2012). Community radio and natural resource management: An exploratory study of three rural communities in Guatemala. *Journal of Radio & Audio Media*, 19(1), 62-77.
- Cottle, S. (2019). *Mediating the politics of climate change and conflict: Security, media and civil society*. Routledge.
- Kothari, U. (2019). The role of community radio in giving voice to the fishing community in India. In *Communities, Development, and Sustainability across Canada* (pp. 243-252). Springer.
- Maldini, G., & Maldini, R. (2015). Public service media in the knowledge society: redefining public interest through community media for sustainable development. In *Public service media in the digital age* (pp. 91-105). Springer, Cham.
- Matsue, N., & Murayama, Y. (2021). Radio as a source of information in the context of climate change and sustainable development: A case study of a fishing community in northeastern Japan. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 83, 155-165.
- Pena-Fernandez, A., Pascual-Fernandez, J. J., & Pena-Andreu, J. M. (2018). Audiovisual media in the development of sustainable tourism in the Spanish Coast. *Sustainability*, 10(6), 2042.
- Symons, J., & Tynan, E. (2019). Community media and the coastal environment: A review of the literature. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 29(3), 205-217.
- Walshe, T., & Perry, R. (2015). Evaluating the role of community radio in natural resource management in Cambodia. *Journal of Development Effectiveness*, 7(3), 399-417.