

# Ghana and Norway cooperate at sea

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*Ghana has been a partner in the Nansen programme since 1981 for development of sustainable fisheries. A few years ago, rich oil resources were found on Ghana's continental shelf. Based on the experience from Norwegian waters, a cooperation with Ghana was initiated – to establish baselines for the environmental conditions in the oceans prior to the start of the offshore oil exploitation in Ghana.*



The first survey focusing on environmental issues was conducted with the research vessel Dr. Fridtjof Nansen in 2009 and followed up in 2010 and 2011.

Ghana has a long coastline and productive oceans. The traditional fishery is the main source of income for many coastal communities. The Jubilee-field, where rich oil resources were found, is estimated to be of the same size as the Statfjord-field in Norway, and is planned to be in production at the end of 2011.

#### **AFRAID OF THE CONSEQUENCES**

An intensive trawl fishery is going on in Ghanaian waters. People in Ghana are concerned that the oil industry will have a negative impact on fish resources, occupying area and increase of ship traffic. Norway has gained a lot of knowledge about the co-existence between fishing and the oil industry. These experiences will be shared with Ghana through dialogue and cooperation with Norwegian institutions.

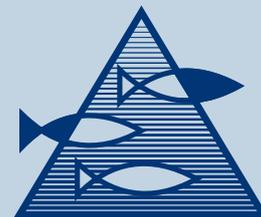
#### **UNIQUE BASELINE STUDIES**

Using the RV “Dr. Fridtjof Nansen”, samples of water quality, sediments and bottom fauna (benthos) have been collected. The Norwegian regulations for the Petroleum industry and OSPARs guidelines for environmental monitoring has been the basis for sampling and analyses. Since the oil production still has not started in Ghana, there was a rare opportunity to conduct baseline studies. We have gained knowledge about the environmental conditions before the start of the oil production which enables us to monitor how the environment may be affected in the future.

#### **ABOUT DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION**

Norway has cooperated with developing countries to contribute to sustainable development of their fisheries since 1975. “Dr. Fridtjof Nansen” has been an important tool for development and monitoring of fisheries in cooperating countries. During the first period,





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the vessel was used to find new fish resources for coastal states. In the middle of the 1980s, the strategy changed and the vessel started monitoring of the fish resources for improved fisheries management and avoid overfishing.

When Namibia became independent in 1990, the vessel became a part of a broad support for building up research and management in an area where the resources were depleted after years of overfishing by foreign fleets. During this period, when South-Africa had its plural government, the vessel and programme was also used to stimulate regional cooperation towards a management of common fish resources in southern Africa.

The experiences were transferred into a new global programme focusing on ecosystem based fisheries management from 2007. The programme takes a regional approach, mainly in four regions in Africa. As in Norway, fish resources in Africa to a large extent are common resources that migrates between the countries. It is therefore important that the migration patterns are monitored and that the states cooperates on regulations of the fisheries towards a responsible and sustainable harvesting.

### INTERNATIONAL ANCHORING

UN's Food and Agriculture Organization FAO has always been an important partner. Since 2007, the management of the programme has been in FAO in Rome, whilst IMR is responsible for the operation of the research vessel and fulfilling the scientific part of the programme, including the field operations, maintenance of databases, advisory and education. Norad is the main source of funding, however significant support has come from UNDP and GEF.

The Nansen programme has cooperated with Angola on the rebuilding of fisheries research and management since 1985. Angola

had already then a big offshore oil industry, and there were numerous conflicts between fishery- and oil interests. The environmental consequences of the oil exploitation were poorly mapped and the monitoring of the ocean environment was at a low level. In 2007, "Dr. Fridtjof Nansen" was used in a pilot project to monitor the environment in the areas of oil production. This was a success, and resulted in the development of a systematic surveillance programme that now will be financed by incomes from the oil industry. The Norwegian programme Oil for Development has played a key role to establish this programme.

### THE FUTURE

The demand for "Dr. Fridtjof Nansen" as a platform for environmental surveys is increasing. Nigeria and Sao Tome are cooperating on a common management of their deep water areas, and in May, "Dr. Fridtjof Nansen" will monitor both the environment and the fish resources in this area.

This phase of the Nansen programme terminates in 2011. Norad's advice is to continue the programme and extend the field work to include climate monitoring. With a global warming, developing countries are facing big challenges both on land and at sea. Many developing countries will not have sufficient capacity to monitor the environmental status in their oceans when it comes to the effects of global warming. To avoid blank sheets in the global warming surveillance system, Norway is considering to contribute to a surveillance system together with GEF. FAO will continue to manage the programme, however other parts of UN as IOC and UNEP will play a stronger part to utilise "Dr. Fridtjof Nansen" better as a platform for collecting resource- and environmental data during the next decades.

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