

Artisanal Fishing in Beira, Central Mozambique

Dan Darkey and Ruth Turatsinze

*Department of Geography, Geoinformatics and Meteorology, University of Pretoria,
Pretoria, South Africa*

KEYWORDS Fishing Gear. Over-exploitation. Marine Ecosystem. Mozambique

ABSTRACT The study focuses on artisanal fishing in Beira, located within the most important fishery area of Mozambique - the Sofala Bank in central Mozambique. The main aim is to establish the degree of compliance with artisanal fishing regulations by artisanal fishermen in light of an increasing concern for the impact of fishing on ecosystems and livelihoods. Qualitative research data was gathered through semi-structured interviews with fishermen, officials from the Department of Fisheries and major stakeholders from the Institute for the Development of Small Scale Fisheries (IDSSF), the National Institute for Fishery Research (NIFR) and the Community Fishing Centres (CFCs). Though a review of the regulations and policies for the management of artisanal fishing in Mozambique indicate that they are well formulated and relevant, there is little to no compliance by the practitioners of artisanal fishing. The data revealed that artisanal fishermen in Beira use types of fishing gear which catches immature and juvenile fish and poses a threat to the health of the marine ecosystems. The most dangerous of these fishing gears are the mosquito net traps (known as "*chicocota*") and the beach seine. It is clear that the application and enforcement of the relevant regulations under the right circumstances would lead to better management of the fisheries environment and ensure the sustainability of artisanal fishing.