

# Association of Takoradi Fishermen and Women

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## **This is your role:**

You are a member of the Association of Takoradi Fishermen and Women. As fishermen and women, your existence depends on a calm and clean sea. In the past, the amount of fish caught has already fallen very sharply because the Ghanaian government issued fishing licences to huge European vessels that fish the seas empty. If Takoradi becomes the oil capital of Ghana, it could threaten your livelihood. You are therefore vehemently opposed to oil production.

## **These are your group's tasks:**

1. Read all the documents your group has received.
2. Select a speaker from the work group. This person will represent the work group on the panel at the hearing.
3. All members of the group advise the speaker. You and your colleagues will consider convincing arguments for the hearing. Prepare a maximum 3-minute introductory statement. Also consider how the arguments of the ministries could be refuted.
4. Additionally, prepare a statement or critical question for each member of your organisation who will sit in the audience at the hearing.

## **Information for the Takoradi Fishermen and Women Association:**

The daily newspaper states that the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Economic Affairs are strongly committed to accepting the loan.

The Ministry of Finance advocates that an oil production law be passed as soon as possible. This law is intended to regulate how income is distributed. It provides the conditions for all people to benefit from oil and reduce poverty in the country:

1. The Oil Production Act stipulates that all payments made by the oil companies to the Ghanaian state are disclosed.
2. Three quarters of oil and gas revenues must flow into the state budget and be used primarily for agriculture, education, and road construction. The rest is to be saved in a sovereign wealth fund for future generations and a stabilisation fund for times of crisis if the price of oil falls.

Another bill stipulates that Ghanaian specialists must be trained and that 90 percent of contracts must be awarded to Ghanaian companies.

All in all, the ministries expect gigantic economic growth that will benefit all sections of the population.

The Association of Fishermen and Women is generally against oil production and therefore refuses to accept the Chinese loan offer. The following fears play a role here:

*Fishing is becoming more dangerous.*

According to the Ghanaian statistical authority, the livelihood of more than 2.4 million people in the coastal region is fishing - a job that is becoming increasingly dangerous: Many supply ships are off the coast, often colliding with the poorly secured fishing boats. The risk is especially high at night, when most fishermen and women are at sea. The fishermen and women's canoes mostly only have small lanterns that light wind or rain can put out. If huge oil tankers are also there, the situation will get worse.

*The fish are being driven out.*

Many new berths for oil tankers are to be added to the port. It has become known that fishing is no longer allowed within a radius of 500 metres around the oil rigs: the oil companies have apparently imposed a „restricted area for fishing activities“. Considering that there will be about 30 to 40 oil rigs on the coast off Takoradi alone, you can imagine what this means for the fishermen and women.

Some fishermen and women have also experienced exploration companies carrying out seismological surveys hindering fishermen and women from working in the middle of the tuna season.

*Pollution of the sea like in Nigeria.*

Nigeria, another country in West Africa, has taken a similar path that Ghana is planning. Oil was mined there on a large scale in the Niger Delta. Now the Niger Delta is widely contaminated. Fish can no longer live in such waters. Countless fishermen and women in Nigeria have lost their livelihoods. The Association of Fishermen and Women fears very similar developments in Ghana.

*Fishermen and women cannot profit from the oil boom.*

Many foreigners are already working in Ghana. They rarely buy from local fishermen and women because they don't trust the quality. They also prefer to buy the imported goods in the supermarkets. Some people have absolutely everything sent from abroad. The fishermen and women therefore will not earn more due to foreign workers.

At the same time, the Association of Fishermen and Women fears that everything in Takoradi will become more expensive if more foreigners come. They fear that rising prices will make them poorer and poorer.