

## Sampling Error and Its Implication for Capture Fisheries Management in Ghana

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**Abstract :** Capture fisheries in developing countries provide significant animal protein and directly supports the livelihoods of several communities. However, the misperception of biophysical dynamics owing to a lack of adequate scientific data has contributed to the suboptimal management in marine capture fisheries. This is because yield and catch potentials are sensitive to the quality of catch and effort data. Yet, studies on fisheries data collection practices in developing countries are hard to find. This study investigates the data collection methods utilized by fisheries technical officers within the four fishing regions of Ghana. We found that the officers employed data collection and sampling procedures which were not consistent with the technical guidelines curated by FAO. For example, 50 instead of 166 landing sites were sampled, while 290 instead of 372 canoes were sampled. We argue that such sampling errors could result in the over-capitalization of capture fish stocks and significant losses in resource rents.

**Keywords :** Fisheries data quality, fisheries management, Ghana, Sustainable Fisheries

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