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# SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROJECT (SFMP)

## Western Regions Fisheries Working Group

May 2015



**Hɛn Mpoano**



**SNV SMART  
DEVELOPMENT  
WORKS**



**SPS | SPATIAL  
SOLUTIONS**

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## ACRONYMS

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| CEDECOM | Central Region Development Commission                          |
| CEWEFIA | Central and Western Region Fishmongers Improvement Association |
| CLaT    | Child Labour and Trafficking                                   |
| DAA     | Development Action Association                                 |
| DSW     | Department of Social Welfare                                   |
| FoN     | Friends of Nation  |
| SFMP    | Sustainable Fisheries Management Program                       |
| SNV     | Netherlands Development Organization                           |
| USAID   | United States Agency for International Development             |
| WFCL    | Worst Forms of Child Labour                                    |

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## **INTRODUCTION**

On Tuesday May 12, 2015, the members of the Western Regional Fisheries Working Group met at the Conference Room of the Fisheries Commission, Takoradi. This meeting sought to ensure a continued support for the Western Region Fisheries Working Group (W/R FWG). The W/R FWG was formed during the previous USAID supported 'Integrated Coastal Fisheries Governance (ICFG) Initiative' to serve an advisory role to the region's Fisheries Directorate.

Having chalked some successes with its mandate during the ICFG era, the Sustainable Fisheries Management Project (SFMP) deemed it fit to continue supporting the group.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The meeting used a mixture of methods including power-point presentations, experience sharing, interactive discussions, as well as question and answer segments. Both English and the local dialect (Fante) were used throughout the meeting to ensure active participation of all participants.

## **DETAILED SESSION**

The three-hour meeting started at 10:00 am and ended at 1:00 pm. The meeting started with an opening prayer by Mr. J.K. Ansah. A round of introductions flowed so that new members could familiarize with current members of the FWG. Afterwards, participants were informed of purpose for the meeting.

### **Purpose of meeting by Donkris Mevuta**

Mr. Mevuta, began his remarks by appreciating participants for making time to attend the meeting. He gave a brief overview to the formation of the FWG. He informed that the group was inaugurated in January 2011 by Hon. Mike Acheampong, the then Chairman of the Fisheries Commission (FC). The FWG was mandated to provide an advisory role to the Regional Directorate of the Fisheries Commission by advising the Director on pertinent issues.

He recalled how members of the FWG, led by the Chairman, Mr. Danny Kirk-Mensah, participated in several dialogue meetings, where they made relevant contributions. Mr. Mevuta again noted that there was however challenges about the sustainability of the group in case of exit of the ICFG initiative. To mitigate this challenge, he recalled how the Fisheries Commission, Friends of the Nation (FoN) and Hen Mpoano (HM) assisted the group to have three more successive meetings even after the exit of the ICFG initiative. By this, he added that, the FWG concept has been sustained over the years, and currently poised to continue the dialogue on the new SFMP.

Mr. Mevuta informed participants that as it stands in the current FWG, some member organizations have their representation reduced whereas that of others has increased. He added that the SFMP contributes to Government of Ghana's fisheries actions by contributing to rebuilding stocks of certain fish species and therefore a FWG in Central Region (C/R) will be established. To this effect, he noted that some members of the W/R FWG will assist the formation of the C/R FWG.



**Figure 1 Mr. Donkris Mevuta explaining purpose of the meeting to participants**

### **Introduction to SFMP by Mr. Kofi Agbogah**

Mr. Abgogah, having introduced his organisation and explained how it became part of the SFMP, noted that there are nine implementing partners on board the SFMP with the Coastal Resources Centre of the University of Rhode Island (CRC-URI) being the key implementing partner. He noted that the project is being funded by the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). He explained the main objective of the SFMP as 'to rebuild Ghana's marine fisheries stocks and catches through the adoption of responsible fishing practices. He hinted that the past ICFG initiative was a learning process which success led to the inception of the SFMP. The main purpose of the SFMP is to reverse the trend of decline in Ghana's fisheries, he added.

Mr. Agbogah further described the geographic focus of the project and explained that some interventions will be at the National level, while others will be at the regional and community levels. He elaborated that for the management of small pelagic stocks, the focus will be a national scale. For demersals, the focus will be on W/R, while community based plans will then be on the Pra and Ankobra estuaries.



**Figure 2 Mr. Kofi Agbogah introducing the SFMP to participants**

### **State of Ghana's Fisheries by Mr. Alex Sabah**

Mr. Alex Sabah, the Western Regional director of the Fisheries Commission indicated that Ghana's fisheries is in a critical condition, therefore needs collaborative approach in managing the resource and reversing the dwindling trend. He noted that the FWG has been very helpful to the Fisheries Commission since the last 4 years. He added that the members have been very active and have drawn attention of the FC to a lot of illegalities, and have

advised the Commission on several occasions which yielded better results. This, he indicated, is a very good collaboration between resource users and state regulators. He however pointed out that there is the challenge of finding some of the members of the group being involved in illegalities and therefore may have to be advised to desist from the acts or be expelled from the group.

### **Comments from participants**

*Nii Botchway (Ghana Inshore Fishers Association)*

We as fishermen need some scientific information which will inform us as to when and when not to fish the *Sardinella species*. We are always of the view that if we decide not to fish them, the fish will end up being fished somewhere anyway.

*Nana Kwesi Bin (Traditional Authority - Axim)*

I think this SFMP is a very good project and I believe through a gradual process, as has been noted by the resource persons, we can help bring back the *Sardinella*, so I crave the indulgence of everyone here to support this project for posterity.



**Figure 3 Stakeholders delivering their comments.**

*Top left: Thomas Suapim. Top right: Mrs. Emelia Abaka-Edu. Bottom left: Nana Kwesi Bin. Bottom right: L/Cpl. Agyemang Opambour.*

*Thomas Suapim (Chairman - W/R Fish Processors & Traders Association - Shama)* Most of the fish processors suffer a lot of aftermath effects on their hands anytime they smoke fish caught with dynamite. In addition, although fish caught with chemicals may look

very fresh when smoked anew, they tend to lose their beauty and good taste after a few hours. We learnt the Fisheries Commission has Fish Testing Devices, yet they do not utilise this at our beaches. I want to use this opportunity to encourage the project to consider some of these interventions.

*Emelia Abaka-Edu (National Vice President - Ghana Fish Processors & Traders Association)*

I was privileged to partake in the study tour organised by the ICFG Initiative to Tanzania. Over there, it was all the fishermen who agreed to stop dynamite fishing; and they received a lot of training such that even a child could identify fish caught by dynamite and report to the appropriate authorities without nepotism. This is possible here in Ghana; and this project may consider building capacity of the local populace to identify fish caught with chemicals.

*Lance Corporal Agyemang Opambour (Marine Unit of the Ghana Police Service)*



From previous interactions on the ICFG project, I learnt that fishermen use various strategies to make fish caught with chemicals look fresh. For instance, some fishermen dissolve "cow dung" and use it to wash the fish, freeze it with ice before they land. With this strategy, the fish does not break easily as it would have, when fished with chemicals. The chemical testing device is therefore a good initiative to be implemented.

### **Strengthening enabling conditions for marine governance by Kwadwo Kyei Yamoah**

Mr. Yamoah informed that as part of the SFMP activities, FoN will be engaging a lot of grassroots stakeholders to ensure they are part of every process relevant to the project. He specified some activities to include, but not limited to:

- Legislative reforms for co-management
- Stakeholder caucuses and hearings at some selected major landing sites (Tema, Elmina, Axim and Sekondi)
- Strengthening law enforcement

He talked briefly about the milestones and expected output of all the activities. He added that the FWG should be in a good position to make inputs into the outcomes of the participatory consultations and regional discussions. The group was advised that there should be some representatives, who would present consensus reached by the group on pertinent issues at national fisheries dialogue platforms that will be organized in the course of the year. Again, he informed participants about the projects interest in reducing



**Figure 4 Mr. Yamoah presenting on enabling conditions for marine governance**

Child Labour and Trafficking (CLaT) in fisheries.

After this presentation, he allowed questions and comments from participants, and then solicited proposals to inform the new membership of the FWG.

**Questions (Q), Comments (C), & Responses (R):**

**C:** *Alex Sabbah:* For the CLaT, I think it would be prudent to work with the GES to enforce FCUBE.

**Q:** *Emelia Abaka-Edu (Mrs.):* I want clarity on child labour and how it is defined.

**R:** We have initiated studies into the issue, and the outcome will inform us better.

**C:** *Nii Botchway:* Currently, I think the fines for infringements are too harsh, so let's try to make the law to suit the very people the law is made for

**C:** *Nana Kwadwo Bin:* As part of engaging fishermen to the right thing, we should be mindful of some nitty-gritty of the industry. For instance, fishermen use generators to help create reflectors for on-coming vessels. All the generators are not used for fishing, so if people are arrested for the wrong reasons, then we are not doing justice to the laws.

**C:** *Kirk Mensah:* I believe reflectors could be imported by the Commission to eradicate the ambiguity of light fishing as Nana Kwadwo Bin has stated.

**R:** Participants should not rely on the government for everything. The ambiguity in light fishing can be solved if some fishermen will take up the task of importing the reflectors and make a private business out of it as part of co-management practices.

**Q:** *Stella Cobbah (Ghana Maritime Authority - GMA):* I want to know whether the concept of co-management is now being introduced or it exists already.

**R:** Co-management exists already in several forms but has no legal backing.

**C:** *Ms. Pat Klinogo:* I believe it's very good to include the GMA in the FWG. I also think that we can take opportunity of the legislative reform process to get appropriate legal backing for the FWG. I believe the amendment of the Fisheries Laws did not consult the fishermen, in that the new fines are way beyond reality. I suggest that the members of FWG should educate their fishers to avoid illegal fishing because the amount is just too much (\$ 1 million). Having suggested these, Ms. Klinogo hinted on a challenge from her office, indicating that the Attorney General's (AG) department is understaffed, making it difficult for her to attend all meetings of the FWG.



**Figure 5 Ms. Pat Klinogo making her submissions**

### **Proposed Membership and Proposals**

On membership, the group noted that the inclusion of the GMA will go a long way to support the work of the FWG. They added that the membership is okay as it stands now.

### **CONCLUSION**

Before the meeting ended, Mr. Nii Botchway made a submission for the Fisheries Commission to modernise the inshore fisheries register since most of their vessels are not as big as some artisanal canoes. The participants were also informed of illegal construction of new vessels at Ngyeresia beach which needs to be discouraged. The FWG also showed strong interest in collaborating to deal with CLaT.

### **CLOSURE**

The meeting ended with a closing prayer said by Lance Corporal Agyemang Opambour of the Marine Unit of the Ghana Police Service.

## APPENDIX

*Slides of power-point presentations*



## Agenda-FWG Meeting 12<sup>th</sup> May 2015

- Introductory remarks (FWG under ICFG)
- State of fisheries in W/R
- Introduction to SFMP
- Identify priorities for FWG under SFMP
- Identify communication mechanism
  - Internal
  - District
  - Regional
  - National-STWG

## SFMP Objective

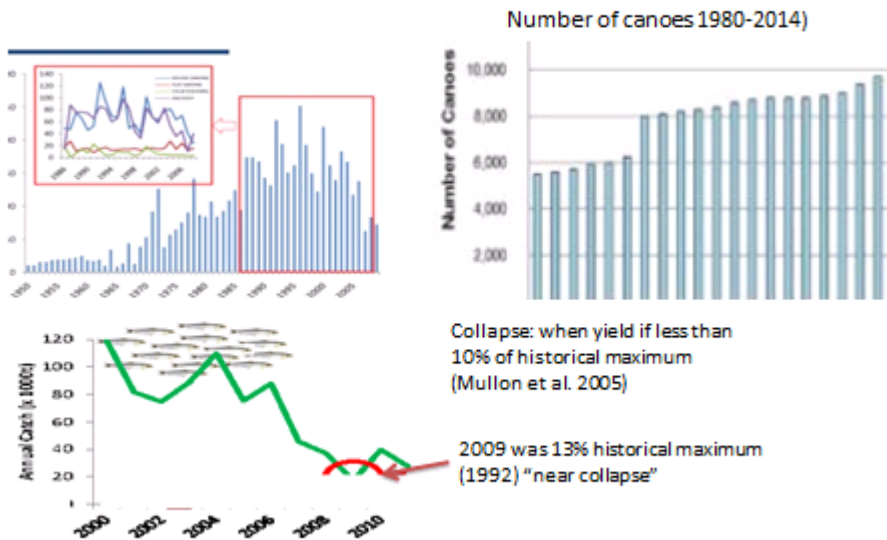
- Rebuild marine fisheries stocks and catchers through adoption of responsible fishing practices
- Contribute to the Government of Ghana's fisheries development objective and USAID Feed the Future



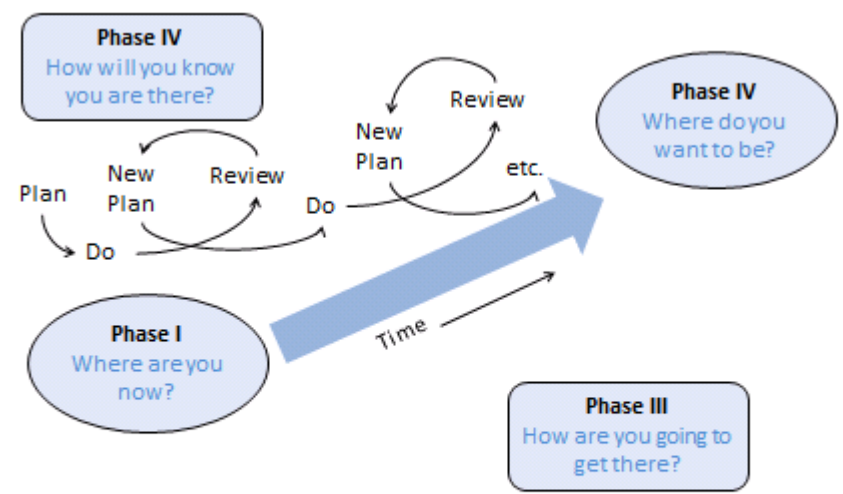
## Project Focus: Geographic



# Where are we now?



Collapse: when yield is less than 10% of historical maximum (Mullon et al. 2005)



The four main phases of a fishery management plan (Marine Resources Assessment Group, Centre for Environment Education, Ahmedabad Ltd., London, 2005).

## Where do we want to be?

- Increase food supply
- Increased profitability



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## How are we going to get there?

### Comprehensive Planning Process

- Stakeholder based processes
  - Semi-industrial, canoes, trawlers
  - Processors and marketers
  - CSOs and Government
- Fisheries profile and stock assessment
- Small Pelagics Management Plan

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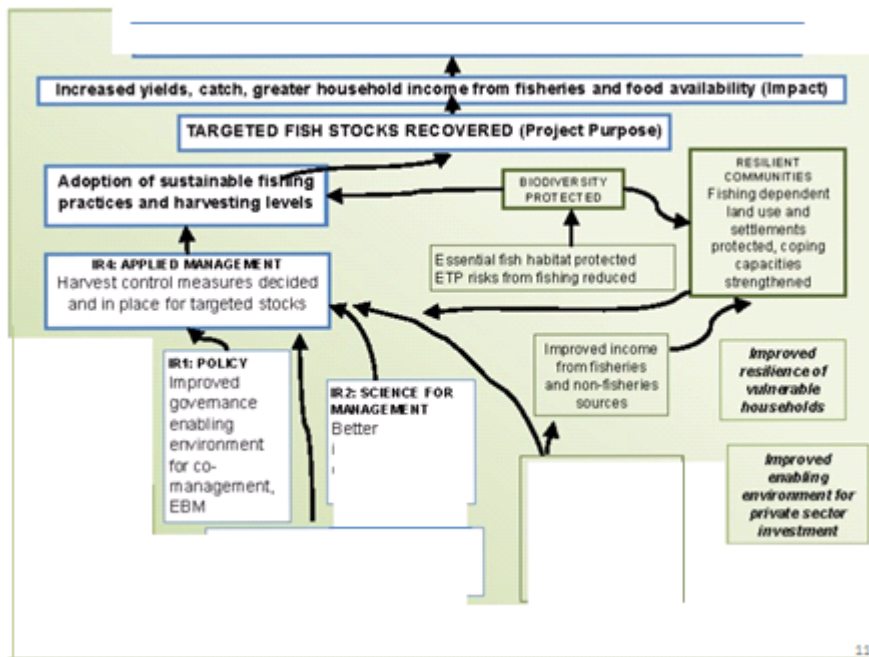
# How are we going to get there?

## Quick Action Strategy

- Local, regional, caucuses...national dialogue
- Communications strategy
- Discussion and choice of options
  - Business as usual
  - Closed season
  - Increased mesh size
  - Additional fishing holidays
  - Reduction in number of boats
- Plan roll out, communications, implementation
- Comprehensive planning







## IR 1: Strengthened enabling environment for marine resources governance

### 1.1 Legislative Reform

- FoN will take the lead in running the public engagement process to ensure fishers and the public are well informed and can voice their opinions and have inputs and say into the way co-management can best be implemented in Ghana, taking into consideration lessons learned from past efforts. Important in this process is the participation of women's groups as women play key roles in fish processing and marketing and many are also vessel owners.
- Legislative reforms on **co-management engagement** will acknowledge the role of women in fisheries and therefore formalize and ensure their role in co-management processes as well. Specifically this will involve Stakeholder caucuses and hearings at four major landing sites: Tema, Elmina, Axim, Sekondi.



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## IR 1: Strengthened enabling environment for marine resources governance

### 1.2 National Fisheries Dialogues

- FoN will be responsible for stakeholder preparatory meetings as part of the two scheduled National Policy Dialogues in Year 1. The initial two dialogues in Year 1 will focus on gaining support for high payoff short-term actions to quickly turn around the collapse of the small pelagics fishery, such as instituting a closed season and/or closed areas. This strategy is in addition to a longer term action described in IR4 concerning development of a comprehensive plan.
- In preparation of the national dialogues in Year 1, a series of grassroots input initiatives will be completed by FoN in all four regions.



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## IR 1: Strengthened enabling environment for marine resources governance

### 1.3 Strengthened Law Enforcement

| Activity Title               | Lead | Milestones and Outputs                                       | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|------------------------------|------|--|----|----|----|----|
| Strengthened Law Enforcement | FoN  | Two (2) Prosecutorial Chain Workshops for the Central Region |    |    | X  | X  |
|                              |      | Marine police, FEU and MCS training in the Central Region    |    |    | X  | X  |
|                              |      | Fisheries Working Group CR and WR                            |    | X  | X  | X  |

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## IR 1: Strengthened enabling environment for marine resources governance

### 1.7 Reducing child labor and trafficking in fisheries

- The child labor and trafficking component in the CR will be led by FoN. It will coordinate with livelihoods activities conducted by CEWEFIA – a women-focused organization that has an organizational mandate related to the fishing communities and social welfare – and SNV, which is also working in two eastern landing sites of the CR and will provide technical assistance on this task. The applied research tasks are an opportunity for collaboration between UCC-Center for Coastal Management (CCM) and CRC/URI. While these activities do not directly contribute to the overall project purpose to revitalize fisheries resources, they help build community resilience and capacity and are the right thing to do.
- FoN will conduct a comprehensive assessment of the problem in the CR and will identify communities and households most susceptible to such practices and root drivers of the problem, with collaboration with CRC/Accra and SNV. This work will involve a comprehensive literature review on the problem, identification of current actors involved in addressing this issue, and a number of community meetings as well as household surveys. FoN will develop a behavior-change communities initiative in the CR on the issue in an effort to make such practices socially unacceptable. Livelihood activities will be targeted at vulnerable households most likely to engage in such practices, under the premise that economic hardship is the root cause of the problem. FoN will work with social welfare agencies, the Department of Labor and District authorities to bring social services more forcefully to bear, such as reproductive health education and access to family planning services and commodities. It will engage the National Steering Committee on Child Labor in the design and roll out of the communities campaign.



## IR 3: Creating Constituencies and Stakeholder Engagement

### 3.1 A National Communications Strategy for Fisheries Management

### 3.2 Executive level communications

### 3.3 Contact management and capacity building



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## IR 3: Creating Constituencies and Stakeholder Engagement

### 3.1.1 Corporate and Internal Communications

- FoN will for part of the SFMP project Communications Team which will be organized in the first quarter as part of a work plan preparation. The National Communications Strategy will be prepared during the first months of the SFMP in conjunction with the Fisheries Commission and the WARFP communication team, with FoN a co-author.
- The team will seek out contacts and collaboration with the Fisheries Commission and WARFP communications advisors to carefully coordinate and collaborate throughout the year. After an orientation retreat in February, 2015 for partners, where FoN will participate in the presentation and discussion of the strategy, the Communications Team will confer with FC and WARFP to get inputs for the communications strategy.
- FoN will also produce specific communications products as part of implementing the communication strategy.

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## IR 4: Applied Management: improve management of marine resources to reduce over-exploitation, to conserve biodiversity & provide other benefits.

- 4.1 Small Pelagic Fisheries Management
- 4.2 National Marine Protected Area (MPA) Working Group
- 4.3 Fishing Capacity Assessment and Reduction Strategy
- 4.4 The Western Regional Demersal Fishers Management Initiative [Year 2]
- 4.5 Integrated Community Fisheries Management and Resilience Plans for the Ankobra River Estuarine and Mangrove Ecosystem
- 4.6 Integrated Community Fisheries Management and Resilience Plans for the Pra River Estuarine and Mangrove Ecosystem [Year 2]
- 4.7 Sustainable financing of co-management institutions
- 4.8 Central and Western Region Fishing Community Livelihood Development Value Chain and Post-harvest Improvements



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## IR 4: Applied Management: improve management of marine resources to reduce over-exploitation, to conserve biodiversity & provide other benefits.

### 4.1 Small Pelagic Fisheries Management

- In Year 1, the SFMP will develop a baseline fisheries profile addressing ecological, socio-economic, and governance components. This study will be conducted by Hen Mpoano and will be focused on small pelagics at the national level. The goal of the study is intended to be used at the first national dialogue to guide policies and management decisions related to
  1. Various fishery management strategies
  2. Potential industry's capacity reduction plans
  3. Economic development initiatives
  4. Infrastructure investments
  5. Community and marine spatial planning
- FoN will follow the progress of this profile, promote stakeholder cooperation, and incorporate materials generated into the stakeholder meetings related to the fishery plan.
- The SFMP will establish an ad-hoc national and regional advisory groups consisting of artisanal and semi-industrial fisherman, women processors, dealers, and FC representatives. This framework will be consistent with existing laws and coordinate with WARP management units.

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**IR 4: Applied Management: improve management of marine resources to reduce over-exploitation, to conserve biodiversity & provide other benefits.**

**4.6 Integrated Community Fisheries Management and Resilience Plans for the Pra River Estuarine and Mangrove Ecosystem**

- During Year 1, estuary characterization and planning will take place for the Ankobra River, with the aim of working out the methods for stakeholder engagement, information collection, and planning that will be applied beginning in Year 2 to the Pra, which will be led by FoN.
- FoN staff will track the progress and approach of the Ankobra effort in order to develop a methodology and program of work for the Pra River, which builds upon ongoing FoN work in this area.

| Activity Title  | Lead | Milestones and Outputs   | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|---|------|--|----|----|----|----|
| Integrated Community Fisheries Management and Resilience Plans for the Pra River Estuarine and Mangrove Ecosystem | FoN  | Develop Year Two work plan design for Pra, based on experiences in Ankobra |    |    | X  | X  |

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