



Project goals:

The project "Omali Vida Nón" ("Sea, our life" in creole language of Sao Tome and Principe) aims to promote better management of marine resources through the participation of those who are mainly affected – fishers and fish traders ("palaiês", an occupation mainly done by women).

"Omali Vida Nón" was designed to test and implement ways of producing benefits for both fishing communities and marine resources, focusing on the participatory management of natural resources and having strong research and community engagement components. By promoting collaborative efforts and decision-making by the several actors involved, we aim to contribute to addressing current challenges in the artisanal fisheries sector in Principe, including unsustainable fishing practices and potential conflicts with industrial fisheries.

This project started in July 2016 and ends in December 2018. Further information can be accessed online from the project's website: <https://omaliprincipeen.weebly.com/>

Project partners:

This project is the result of a partnership between institutions in Principe (Principe Trust Foundation, the Regional Directorate for Fisheries and the Biosphere Reserve) and the University of Exeter, UK. It is funded by the [Darwin Initiative](#), a UK government grants scheme that helps to protect biodiversity and the natural environment through locally based projects worldwide.

Main project activities undertaken in 2017:

- Mapping artisanal fishing areas: we gave GPS trackers to more than 30 artisanal fishers in order to map their fishing areas. Since February 2017, fishers have been carrying GPS trackers that record their location every time they go fishing. This information will allow us to identify the most important areas for the artisanal fishing communities in Principe and, for example, identify possible conflicts with industrial fishing.
- Fisheries landing and socio-economic surveys: since December 2016, we have been conducting fisheries landing surveys; this work is being done by six focal points from the project's fishing communities. Twice a week (every Tuesday and Friday), they get information about the number, weight and length of animals caught by fishers, as well as fishing gear and grounds used. In addition, during February and March 2016, we interviewed 880 adults in a total of 6 coastal fishing communities plus 5 rural island communities. This information will be essential for better understanding the social conditions of the several communities and their dependence on natural resources, as well as monitoring the impact of our project.
- Training and support for entrepreneurship: during August 2017, we worked together with Sonha, Faz e Acontece (Dream, Do and it Happens), a Portuguese voluntarism and social entrepreneurship association. In collaboration with our project, SFA brought their training and entrepreneurship support to a fishing community. Praia Burra acted as a pilot area for possible expansion to other communities. For five days, fish traders and fishers participated in entrepreneurship classes where they learned how to evaluate and grow their business in a sustainable way. In September, we selected the three winners whose business ideas are now being financially supported and monitored by our project.





- Community ideas: this project activity aims to promote community dynamism and support the implementation of interventions with a positive impact on the sustainability of artisanal fisheries through improved management of marine resources and benefits for fishers and fish traders. During October 2017, we received a total of 7 proposals that were presented by team representatives in an event at the Cultural Centre, Santo António, Príncipe. The selection panel was composed by Ana Nuno (University of Exeter, UK), Plácida Lima (Biosphere Reserve), Damião Matos (Regional Fisheries Department) and Jaconias Pereira (Príncipe Trust Foundation). The panel decided that, although with different levels of funding, 6 proposals deserved to be supported. Winning ideas include handmade soap from Abade, a crafts center at Burras Beach, the construction of a community headquarters in Lapa and Campanha, materials for conservation of fresh fish in Santo Antonio and materials for transformation of fish and agricultural product for the association of fish traders from Abade.

Main project activities planned for 2018:

- Implementation and follow-up of community ideas: after the production of implementation plans and budgets as well as participation in training sessions, the winning fishing communities will have their ideas up and running by March-April 2018. These initiatives will be closely monitored (e.g. revenue, community participation) throughout project duration.
- Mapping distribution and abundance of marine species using underwater cameras: After a very successful test phase during September 2017, we will collect information on marine species using BRUVS (Baited Remote Underwater Video Stations). This non-invasive technique consists in attracting different species of marine animals to the front of an underwater camera using a bait, which allows to record the presence, behaviour and abundance of different species. We will then be able to assess and compare marine resources in several marine areas of Príncipe.
- Strengthening capacity and performance of fisher and palaiês' associations: throughout the year, we will focus our efforts on improving the capacity of Príncipe's fisher and palaiês' associations in order to value their experiences and strengthen their power in the decisions for sound management of marine resources.
- Project results dissemination event: In order to share experiences and celebrate the results and lessons of the project, we will organize an event at the regional level.

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