

Fishing for Tomorrow

Voice-over 1:

Age-old chants passed down from father to son encourage the fishermen with their haul. Their traditional fishing methods have changed little over the centuries along the coast of Senegal.

Voice-over 2:

Two months ago, we were fishing at night as we couldn't fish in the daytime as there weren't any fish. These days we've noticed there are far fewer.

Voice-over 1:

Amar has fished in these Atlantic waters for forty years. Together with his fellow fishermen he's after the fish called sardinella. Both flat and round sardinella are closely related to the herring, and are considered a local delicacy. Today's catch is not that great - once again there are too few fish and many are far too small.

Voice-over 2:

When we were young, we saw lots of different kinds of fish which these days we don't see anymore - it's a different era. We used to call some of these herrings "four-metre fish" as they were so big...but they've disappeared.

Voice-over 1:

Over-fishing along the Senegalese coast, both by local fishermen and big foreign factory ships, is driving the sardinellas and dozens of other species to the brink of extinction. These scientists want to know how to prevent such an outcome. Everyday they come down to the port to estimate the daily catch. By talking to the fishermen, they calculate how many boats sail, how much time they usually spend offshore and then they measure some of the specimens.

Voice-over 3:

With our research we are hoping to improve the management of resources...and to do that we must find out just how many fish are being caught and brought ashore. From this research we can estimate the extent of Senegal's fish stocks. After the catch is landed, I take a sample back to the laboratory to find out just when the fish would be likely to lay its eggs.

Voice-over 1:

In the lab, the fish are weighed and measured and then their internal organs are studied. The sex of the fish can then be established. Scientists claim that over-fishing of young, immature fish can drive a whole species to the brink of extinction. Mor Sylla wants to know if these fish were mature enough to have laid eggs at least once before being caught.

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