

Appendix 2- Information letter for pond and cage fish farmers

Are you interested in taking part in the research project

"Sustainability of pond and cage fish farming systems in the Ashanti, Bono, Eastern and Volta regions in Ghana "?

This is an inquiry about participation in a research project where the main purpose is to discuss the sustainability of the pond and cage aquaculture systems in the Ashanti, Bono, Eastern and Volta regions in Ghana. In this letter, we will give you information about the purpose of the project and what your participation will involve.

Purpose of the project

This is for a master's thesis which aims to highlight and discuss sustainable best practices in pond and cage aquaculture developments in Ghana, notably in the study areas. The reason for choosing these areas of study is based on three main criteria: type of fish cultivated, access to a reliable water source, and the number of fish farming activities observed in these areas.

I am particularly interested in the interaction between the various actors and stakeholders in the aquaculture value chain (production, processing, distribution and consumption) in Bono and the Volta lake in Ghana.

I also seek to discuss the industry's main challenges and highlight possible solutions proposed by the participants and governing bodies in line with adaptive policy frameworks involving the participation of major stakeholders in the industry.

Data will be collected through online interviews via zoom or skype using a semi-structured questionnaire format. A personalised link to the zoom meeting shall be sent to selected participant (s) via email, and only those invited shall be admitted to the meeting room.

Who is responsible for the research project?

The University of Life Sciences, NMBU is responsible for the project.

Why are you being asked to participate?

You are being asked to participate in this research study because someone in the aquaculture industry or academia recommended you. We look forward to getting information from fish farmers, governing bodies, academia, major aquaculture industry players such as feed producers/manufacturers, processing industries, customers/retailers, NGOs, or diplomatic representatives in Ghana who may be coordinating projects in the fish industry.

Your participation is highly valued and appreciated as it will contribute to the analysis of policies regarding the aquaculture industry and add to the discourse on the sustainability of aquaculture: benefits, challenges/vulnerabilities, threats, prospects.

Your personal views and perspectives are sought to better guide recommendations for the sustainability of the aquaculture industry.

The purpose of this study is as stated above, to assess the sustainability of the pond and cage aquaculture industry. This study will contribute to completing my master's thesis by August 2021.

This is a voluntary exercise, and should you decide, with your free will to participate in this research study. You will be asked to sign the consent form below once all your questions have been answered to

your satisfaction.

What does participation involve for you?

If you choose to take part in the project, this will involve you attending an online interview with the student researcher Belinda Pascaline Agyei. Confirmation of attendance shall be sent via email, and a personal meeting shall be created via zoom, allowing the invited participant(s) access. It will take approx. 1 hour for the online interviews. The interview is centred around questions about the governance and management of fish farms; Fish health and welfare; government policies and interventions for sustainable aquaculture systems in Ghana; education and training; perspectives about the future of aquaculture, among others. Your answers will be recorded electronically, and your personal views are very important to the study.

Participation is voluntary

Participation in the project is voluntary. If you choose not to participate, you can withdraw your consent at any time without giving a reason. All information about you will then be made anonymous. There will be no negative consequences for you if you chose not to participate or later decide to withdraw.

Your privacy – how we will store and use your personal data

We will only use your personal data for the purpose(s) specified in this information letter. We will process your personal data confidentially and in accordance with data protection legislation (the General Data Protection Regulation and Personal Data Act).

- The researcher, Belinda Pascaline Agyei (Student) and thesis supervisor Ian Bryceson from the Norwegian University of Life sciences, NMBU will have access to the personal data
- No unauthorised persons can access personal data. «I will replace your name and contact details with a code. The list of names, contact details and respective codes will be stored separately from the rest of the collected data"
- The data shall be stored on Nettskjema research server for the online surveys and zoom is used for the audio-visual interviews which shall be locked away/encrypted and stored safely.
- The interviews shall be recorded and ethics regarding data protection and anonymity shall be adhered to.

What will happen to your personal data at the end of the research project?

The project is scheduled to end on 15 August 2021. Personal data, including any digital recordings shall be kept no longer than 6months after submission of the project for verification, follow up or future research, after which it shall be deleted.

Your rights

So long as you can be identified in the collected data, you have the right to:

- access the personal data that is being processed about you
- request that your personal data is deleted
- request that incorrect personal data about you is corrected/rectified
- receive a copy of your personal data (data portability), and

- send a complaint to the Data Protection Officer or The Norwegian Data Protection Authority regarding the processing of your personal data

What gives us the right to process your personal data?

We will process your personal data based on your consent.

Based on an agreement with the Norwegian University of Life Sciences, NSD – The Norwegian Centre for Research Data AS has assessed that the processing of personal data in this project is in accordance with data protection legislation.

Where can I find out more?

If you have questions about the project, or want to exercise your rights, contact:

- *Norwegian University of Life Sciences, NMBU* via Belinda Pascaline Agyei (Student) or Ian Bryceson (project supervisor)
- NSD – The Norwegian Centre for Research Data AS, by email: (personverntjenester@nsd.no) or by telephone: +47 55 58 21 17.

Yours sincerely,

Belinda Pascaline Agyei
(Student)
Tel: +4797383325
Email: beow@nmbu.no

Consent form

I have received and understood information about the project *Sustainability of pond and cage fish farming systems in Bono and the Volta Lake in Ghana* and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give consent:

- To participate in:

- Online Survey
- Interview via zoom

- For information about me/myself i.e., my name, business name, location to be published in a way that I may be recognised
- For my personal data to be stored after the end of the project for verification, future research purposes

I give consent for my personal data to be processed until the end date of the project

(Signed by participant, date)