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VOICES ON SUSTAINABLE PORTS IN AFRICA
STORIES FROM TEMPA PORT, GHANA

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The Sustainable Ports in Africa program is a collaborative multidisciplinary NWO Urbanizing Deltas of the World research project

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DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE PORTS IN AFRICA

INTRODUCTION OF THE NWO-UDW RESEARCH PROJECT

Ports provide an essential link to the world market, enabling countries to trade, goods and strengthen their economies. However, the global and regional benefits of port developments do not always translate into benefits to local stakeholders. There is often a mismatch between the positive global and regional effects of port development and the impacts (dis-benefits) that can be experienced locally. Port development requires a paradigm shift from a conventional economic and engineering oriented approach to a stakeholder-inclusive and environmentally, economically and socially integrated approach to become sustainable.

The research project “Integrated and Sustainable Port Development in Ghana within an African Context” aims to learn how to develop integrated and sustainable African ports that meet economic, social and environmental needs now and in the future. The Port of Tema, which has evolved from a small fishing village to Ghana’s leading industrial centre and seaport in the last decades, forms the focal case study of the research.

The research project, funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research, is carried out by a consortium comprising the University of Ghana, Delft University of Technology, Wageningen University, Free University Amsterdam, UNESCO-IHE-Delft, and the Dutch Embassy in Accra. Stakeholders of the project are NGOs, and private sector companies. The project is characterized by:

- An interdisciplinary approach, combining the engineering, ecological, economic and governance aspects of port development
- A stakeholder-inclusive approach
- A bottom-up approach
- An ecosystem-based engineering design
- A local focus in Ghana and the aim to spread the message to other ports in Africa

Specifically, the research is organised into four connected sub-projects, each covering a different aspect of sustainable port development:
1. Integrated engineering design
2. Ecological change and opportunistic management
3. Ecosystem services
4. Governance

A specific objective of the governance component of the project is to find out what local stakeholders value as a sustainable port. This book is an outcome of this endeavor, seeking to present and share the voices of a range of stakeholders on Tema and its port.