

# A follow up of the sacrifice made in Bam 23 May 2013 for productive fishing

Raymond OUEDRAOGO (PhD)  
Expert in fisheries and aquaculture  
Institute for Environment and Agriculture Research  
Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso  
National Coordinator of susfish ([www.susfish.boku.ac.at](http://www.susfish.boku.ac.at))  
Email: ouedray@yahoo.com  
Tel: (+226) 75886600

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## **The sacrifice**

23 May 2013, the fishermen of Lake Bam organised a sacrifice ceremony for productive fishing. I reported (<http://susfish.boku.ac.at/download.htm>) the ceremony that was illustrated by many photographs

As already explained in that report, during the sacrifice ceremony, the chicken that was slaughtered laid down on its back. According to the traditional religion, this shows that the fishermen wishes were accepted, meaning that fishing will be productive.

## **What happened later? Did fishing become more productive?**

During the rainy season that followed the sacrifice (July-September 2013), the fishermen of Bam were happy. Actually the landing of fish increased a lot but this was not measured. The fishermen and many other people I informally discussed with declared that they never saw such quantity of fish landed from Lake Bam and its surrounding waters. I personally saw bags of fish which prices were 2-3 times less than usual, showing that the lake provided *too much fish* this year. Therefore, the sacrifice was declared to be successful.

## **An attempt to give a scientific explanation**

Bissa Gold is a mining company that created a medium size reservoir (1000 ha large ?) some 20 km downstream Lake Bam 2-3 years ago. Name reservoir of Tibin, it aims at providing water for mining of gold in the area (fig. 1).

Fig 1: The new reservoir of Tibin is located 20 km downstream Bam Lake (From Google Earth, 16 April 2014)



As new body of water, it provides a new aquatic ecosystem that was colonised by fish. The relatively high density of trees and wood that are still remaining in the water (fig. 2) is much advantageous to fish. They are sources of food preys (directly and indirectly), shelter against fishing and other predators such as birds, spawning grounds and nurseries. This build up a prosperous fish community

Fig. 2: The high densities of trees and dead wood in the new reservoir protect fish provide food, protection, spawning grounds and nurseries to fish



During the rainy season, the water flows from Bam to Tibin. During the third rainy season (July-September 2013) that followed the creation of the reservoir, lots of fish migrated from Tibin to Bam (big fishes, many species ....). They were caught a lot when migrating into the lake or once in the lake. The new reservoir was also fished and produced a lot of fish. Consequently, fishing was exceptionally much productive the last rainy season.

But how will it be the next years?