**UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST**

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**Commentary on Data Policy of Movelle Fishries Ltd**

**Introduction**

This commentary presents an assessment of the data policy and practice of Movelle Fishries’ Ltd, a prominent organization in the Tema Fishing Harbour fisheries industry. The data management practices of the company are examined based on four important dimensions: data dissemination, data format, sharing protocols, and public visibility. These assessments are followed by a set of recommendations for enhancing the data curation processes of the company towards greater efficiency, transparency, and strategic significance.

**Part A: Analysis of Current Data Policy**

1. **Structure of Data Dissemination**

In Movelle Fishries Ltd, data dissemination architecture is primarily a vertical and horizontal flow between main departments and management. Data is regularly passed through institutional e-mails and formal and informal meetings. The system connects the Accounts, IT, and Management departments so that financial, technical, and strategic information is disseminated to stakeholders. For instance, the Accounts department would send financial performance data by way of email, and the IT department would provide system stability and data security reports during meetings. The data is then compiled by management for use in decision-making.

While this communication structure has internal alignment, it is largely based on direct communication channels rather than a centralized automatic system. Consequently, the flow of data will tend to be reactive rather than proactive, and it can be hard to monitor the entire life cycle of a piece of data from creation to its final consumption.

2. **Format of Data Dissemination**

The organization uses a combination of traditional and modern formats in the release of information. Logbooks are used on fishing boats for primary data gathering, with important information such as quantities of catch, species, and location. Such primary data is then typically replicated into spreadsheets for further analysis and reporting by the Accounts and Management functions. This blended-format has strengths and weaknesses. Logbooks provide a reliable, on-the-spot data collection technique, with spreadsheets offering analysis flexibility and easy reporting.

However, manual data copying from logbooks to spreadsheets is susceptible to human error. Furthermore, managing a collection of spreadsheets and maintaining data integrity in each of them is a time-consuming effort, with high chances of discrepancies and outdated data being used in decisions.

3. **Data Sharing Protocols and Procedures**

Movelle Fishries Ltd operates under a clear framework of internal and external data sharing arrangements. These are guided by major national and sectoral laws, including the Right to Information (RTI) Act (Act 989) and the National Data Sharing Policy. The company is also bound by elaborate industry guidelines, e.g., the Fisheries Commission (FC) Manual and data sharing guidelines on Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing fight. The important factors in these protocols are:

\* Transparency and Access: The organization balances the right of internal privacy with the public right to know certain information under the RTI Act provisions.

\* Data Quality: There are steps to assist in ensuring that data shared, particularly with external organisations like the Fisheries Commission, is accurate and reliable.

\* Sustainability: Sharing of data is also driven by the desire to promote sustainable fishing practices and combat illegal activities within the industry.

These robust protocols form a solid foundation of good data governance, ensuring the organization remains compliant and making a positive contribution to the industry.

4. **Data Visibility**

The company has a public face in the form of its website and social media. The public data available is corporate and strategic identity with customer interaction. The site provides required information about the company's location, contact details, and mission statement. It also has a significant link to a mobile application, through which the customers can make online orders for frozen foods.

Social media platforms are used for marketing products, community involvement, and updating company activity. This selective advertising policy secures the building of brand trust and direct sales without leaking sensitive operational information like volumes caught on a daily basis or financial performance, which are proprietary in nature.

**Part B: Suggestions for Improvement and Implementation**

To enhance the organization’s data curation processes, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Implementing a Centralized Data Management System (CDMS):**

To improve the data dissemination framework, the firm has to transition from an ad-hoc meeting and email-based system to a centralized data management system. A CDMS would act as one version of the truth for all organizational data, from vessel log entries to sales figures. This would integrate data flow between departments, reduce reliance on verbal communication, and provide a consolidated real-time view of operations to management. Implementation would involve the selection of a suitable software platform and training all relevant staff.

2. **Standardizing Data Formats and Automation:**

To evade the challenges of mixed data forms, the company ought to implement digital logbooks or cell phone applications for on-board collection of data on fishing boats. This would eliminate time spent on manual transcription, substantially reducing the risk of human intervention errors. Data from these electronic sources could be automatically entered into the new CDMS, instilling consistency and integrity from the outset. Even a reporting dashboard standard can be designed to automatically generate and distribute key performance indicators (KPIs) to the concerned departments.

3. **Establishing a Formal Data Governance Committee:**

While the organization has clear-cut protocols, the establishment of a formal Data Governance Committee would contribute to the strength of data sharing processes. This committee, comprising members from Management, IT, and other departments involved, would be responsible for creating and instituting internal data sharing policies, managing data access rights, and overseeing data security. This would allow for data to not only be shared in adherence to external regulations, but also with utmost precaution and security within the organization.

4. **Strategic Expansion of Data Visibility:**

The organization can increase its public image by enhancing its data visibility strategically. While proprietary information must remain confidential, making publicly available aggregate, non-sensitive data can build public trust and illustrate commitment to sustainability. Recommendations include:

\* Sustainability Reporting: Publishing a sustainability report annually on the website, detailing efforts to reduce environmental impact and support local communities.

\* Market Insights: Posting weekly or monthly market trends for particular fish species on social media, positioning the organization as an industry expert.

\* Interactive Content: Creating interactive infographics or maps on the website to show the journey of a product from sea to customer.

These activities would not just boost public image but also provide helpful, non-confidential information to the stakeholders and customers, reiterating the mission and values of the organization.

**Conclusion**

By implementing these recommendations, my organization is able to move from its current, effective yet fragmented data practices to a more unifying, secure, and strategically-focused system of data management. This will not only improve operational effectiveness but also enhance the reputation and value of the organization to a sustainable seafood industry.