Fisheries in the ESA-IO Region: Profile and Trends
COUNTRY REVIEW
2014

SWAZILAND
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This document was prepared as part of the activities of the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) SmartFish Programme, under the FAO Fisheries management component, in the monitoring and analysis of major issues with implications for fisheries and aquaculture in the twenty countries from the Eastern Southern Africa-IOC region participating in the Programme. This has resulted in the preparation of twenty country baselines whose the purpose is to serve as easy-to-read and informative references for policy decision-makers, fishery managers, development partners and stakeholders. The baselines inventory and describe for each country the trends in status of fisheries, major social and economic dynamics of relevance to the fishery sector, policy, legal and administrative frameworks, and management regimes. The present document relates to the baseline for Swaziland.

The preparation mainly involved Mr Christophe Breuil and Mr Damien Grima, FAO consultants, who made essential contribution in drafting the text and developing infographic for publication on the basis of the analysis of official and grey literature and vast field experience in the region. Much gratitude is due to all SmartFish experts who act as reviser. In particular, Ms Clotilde Bodiguel Chief Technical Adviser of IOC SmartFish activities implemented by FAO, who provided the initiative, was instrumental in the editing and Mrs Florence Wallemacq, Outreach Consultant, assisted in the formatting for publication. Lastly, the editor would like to thank National and Regional Focal Points of the IOC SmartFish Programme for providing complementary data and information.
## CONTENTS

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Brief on the National Economy .......................................................... 6
2. Policy and Planning Framework ......................................................... 6
   2.1. General Framework ................................................................. 9
   2.2. Food Security Strategy ............................................................. 9
   2.3. Fisheries in Public Policies ........................................................ 9
3. Fishery Resources .............................................................................. 10

### KEY INFORMATION AND FIGURES ON THE FISHERY AND AQUACULTURE SECTOR

4. Fishery Sector .................................................................................. 11
   4.1. Status of Resources .................................................................. 11
   4.2. Major Fishery Dynamics in the Sector ......................................... 11
   4.3. Fish Utilization ........................................................................ 12
5. Aquaculture Sector ........................................................................... 12
6. Fish Import and Export ..................................................................... 13
7. Contribution of the Fishery and Aquaculture Sector to the Economy ... 15

### POLICY, INSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK OF RELEVANCE FOR THE FISHERY SECTOR

8. Fishery Policy and Planning ............................................................... 16
9. Institutional Framework ..................................................................... 16
   9.1. Fisheries Administration and Research ....................................... 16
   9.2. Other Public Institutions concerned by Fisheries ......................... 17
10. Legal Framework ............................................................................. 18
    10.1. Fisheries Legislation ............................................................... 18

### FOCUS ON FISHERIES MANAGEMENT AND RELATED ISSUES

11. Administrative Functions ................................................................. 19
12. Fisheries Monitoring ......................................................................... 19
13. Fisheries Management Systems ....................................................... 19
14. Major Issues relating to IUU Fishing ................................................ 20
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 : GDP (current billion US $) 8
Figure 2 : GDP per capita (current US $) 8
Figure 3 : Agriculture % of GDP 8
Figure 4 : Trade balance (current million US $) 8
Figure 5 : Human Development Index 8
Figure 6 : Fish Imports by category in Swaziland in value (% of $) 13
Figure 7 : Fish trade balance in Swaziland in volume (in tons) 14
Figure 8 : Fish trade balance in Swaziland in value (in '000 US $) 14
Figure 9 : Fish consumption in Swaziland (in live weight) 15
## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### 1 Brief on the National Economy

**Key figures on Macro economic data**

*2014 - Source World data Bank - Latest reported data*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Population</strong></td>
<td>1.23 Million</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employment to</strong></td>
<td>43.8 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>population ratio</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>141/187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HDI ranking</strong></td>
<td>141</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>External balance</strong></td>
<td>-321.1</td>
<td>-1.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GDP</strong></td>
<td>3.75 Billion US $</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GDP annual growth</strong></td>
<td>-1.5 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GDP per capita</strong></td>
<td>3,043.5 $</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agriculture % of GDP</strong></td>
<td>7.48 %</td>
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The Kingdom of Swaziland is a small landlocked country, with a surface area of 17,364 km², bordering to the north, south and west with South Africa, and to the east with Mozambique. Its economy is fairly diversified. Despite the population’s high dependence on the agricultural sector, contribution of this sector to the country’s GDP has been declining due to the limited availability of natural resources. Contribution of the agricultural sector was 7.4% in 2011 (OECD et al. 2013). The manufacturing sector (textiles and sugar-related processing), with a contribution of 43.5% to GDP in 2011, and services, including trade, play an increased role in the national economy. The mining sector’s contribution to GDP only averages 2% despite the fact that Swaziland is endowed with many minerals (OECD et al. 2013).

In recent years Swaziland’s economic growth has remained one of the weakest in Sub-Saharan Africa. In 2011, economic growth was just 0.7%. The overall low level of public and private investments and shortage of skills, pose major challenges to growth. Addressing structural weaknesses, characterizing slow growth, would therefore be critical in Swaziland, including improving the business environment and management of public resources (OECD et al. 2013).

In 2012, the total GDP in Swaziland was US $3.75 billion (World Bank). With a population of approximately 1.2 million (2012), Swaziland is a medium income developing country with a GDP per capita of US $3,043. However, a large part of the population lives below the national poverty line. Moreover, despite an estimated reduction in the incidence of poverty from 69% in 2007 to 63% in 2010, the UNDP’s 2012 rapid assessment suggest a possible reversal of these gains (OECD et al. 2013).

The business environment in Swaziland is improving. However, the country’s overall ranking in the World Bank’s ‘Doing Business’ report remained at 123 out of 183 economies in its ease of doing business in 2011 and 2012. Major factors affecting the business climate include increased risk to investing in the country, mainly due to macro-economic instability and a lack of transparency and accountability in concluding and implementing contracts involving foreign investors, and slow implementation of new procedures and processes required to start a business (OECD et al. 2013).

Furthermore, it should be noted that Swaziland is member in the Common Monetary Area (CMA). This implies that its monetary policy is closely tied to that of South Africa. However, inflation has been close to 10% for the last few years.

The trade balance has been negative in Swaziland since 2004. The deficit of the trade balance was US $322.1 million in 2012 (World Bank). The main export is textiles, sold to the US market. The main agricultural products imported by Swaziland are maize, wheat, vegetables, dairy products and other food commodities. In a normal year, roughly 60% of the food consumed in the country is imported (FAO. Ministry of Agriculture and Co-operatives, 2005).

In addition to the CMA, Swaziland is also a member of other regional trade bodies such as the Southern African Custom Union (SACU), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA).

The economically active population in Swaziland was an estimated 422,000 in 2012. In 2010, the rate of unemployment was estimated to be 29 percent of the labour force (Mehler A.; Melber H.; Van Walraven K. 2014). In the mid-2000’s, about 75 percent of the country’s population lived in rural areas, and approximately 35 percent of the population depended on agriculture as a livelihood (FAO. Ministry of Agriculture and Co-operatives. 2005).

Swaziland’s Human Development Index (HDI) puts the country in the ‘medium human development’ category. With an HDI score of 0.536, Swaziland ranked 141st out of 187 countries in 2012.
Trends

2014 - Figure 1-5 - Source World Data Bank - Last ten years

GDP (current billion US $)

GDP per capita (current US $)

Agriculture % of GDP

Trade balance (current million US $)

Human Development Index
2. Policy and Planning Framework

2.1. General Framework

Vision 2022 has served as a guide for the national development planning process for the last 15 years. The National Development Strategy 1997-2022 (NDS) aims to inspire and direct the long-term socio-economic development of the country. The goal of the NDS is that the Kingdom of Swaziland be in the top ten percent of the medium human development group of countries founded on sustainable economic development, social justice and political stability by 2022 (FAO, Ministry of Agriculture and Co-operatives, 2005). The NDS guides the development of various economic sectors including agriculture.

More recently, Swaziland’s policies are presented in the Poverty Reduction Strategy and Action Programme (PRSAP) covering the period 2007-2015. The overall objective of the PRSAP is to reduce the incidence of poverty in Swaziland from its current level to 30% by 2015, in line with the millennium development goals (MDGs) and eliminate it by 2022. Emphasis in the PRSAP is given to (a) macro-economic stability; (b) good governance; (c) equitable access to productive assets; (d) human capital development; (e) a policy and regulatory climate which stimulates the private sector in order to accelerate job creation, business development and income-generating opportunities; (f) rural development to stimulate agricultural and other non-agricultural activities; and (g) provision of infrastructure, extension services, technology, markets, social services, and financial services (Swaziland United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2011-2015).

According to Swaziland UNDAF 2011-2015, the Government Programme of Action 2008-2013 also exists and whose priorities can be grouped into five main areas, namely: (i) prudent management of the economy to ensure macro-economic stability and rapid, sustainable economic growth and development; (ii) poverty reduction, job creation and food security; (iii) efficient access to, and delivery of, basic social services (education, health, water, etc.); (iv) strengthening governance institutions for improved governance; and, (v) disaster risk reduction especially for vulnerable groups.

Furthermore, Swaziland started one of its most significant political reforms supporting the decentralization process in 2004. This included capacity building initiatives for various government officials, as well as training and sensitization activities.

2.2. Food Security Strategy

The long-term goal of the Swaziland Food Security Policy, 2005, is to ensure that “all people in Swaziland at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.” This goal is based on the four recognized pillars of food security, namely food availability, access to food, food utilization and nutritional requirements, and stability in equitable food provision.

The National Food Security Policy, 2005, acknowledges that sound policies and strategies on agriculture (including fisheries) are essential to food security, and recognizes that the contribution of fisheries and aquaculture to food security in the country is minimal.

2.3. Fisheries in Public Policies

The National Food Security Policy, 2005 states “fisheries and aquaculture can play an important role in food security through production of food of a high nutritional value.” This policy acknowledges and identifies a number of issues restricting the growth of the fisheries and aquaculture sector in Swaziland.

One of the policy principles is to respect and protect the rights of individuals over resources such
as fisheries. Fisheries and aquaculture are included under three of the four pillars of the policy, namely: (i) food availability; (ii) food access, and (iii) food utilization and nutritional requirements (Kurien John, Lopez Rios Javier. 2013).

The National Food Security Policy, 2005, adopted a policy statement on fisheries and aquaculture committing the Kingdom of Swaziland to stimulate the development of fisheries and aquaculture to improve food security. One of the objectives of this policy is to promote the development of a specific fisheries policy and to revise the current fisheries legislation, which dates from 1937. It is in this context that a Freshwater Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy (FFAP) was recently adopted (2011), and that a draft Freshwater Fisheries Bill was prepared in early 2013, both with the support of the ACP Fish II programme.

### 3. Fishery Resources

Swaziland is divided into four ecological zones, namely the Highveld, Midveld, Lowveld and the Lubombo Plateau. The country also has three significant river basin systems: the Nkomati, Mbuluzi and Usuthu river basins. Being a small, landlocked country, it is worthy to note that Swaziland has extremely limited access to suitable water bodies and that consequently there is minimal fishery resources in the country. According to the FAO country profile (FAO. 2008-2015), the estimated total water area is 160 km², but there are no natural lakes, swamps or floodplains of significant importance. The main fishing areas are in dams that have been constructed for hydropower and irrigation purposes, such as the Hendrick Van Eck, Luphohlo, Maguga, Mkimkomo, Mnjoli and Sand River Dams.

There are other smaller dams across the country but predominantly in the Lowveld - the ecological zone most prone to drought – providing water for human and livestock uses. These smaller dams are normally stocked with Tilapia species for food security at the local level. The Jozini Dam, in the south of the country, is shared between Swaziland and South Africa, however, more than 98% of it is in South Africa.

The main fish species that are exploited are tilapia (T. mossambicus and T. rendalli) and catfish (Clarias garipinus). A Fish and Fisheries Survey conducted by the fisheries administration in 2002/2003 indicated that Swaziland has approximately 60 species of fish located in various water bodies throughout the country.

Species targeted for sport fishing (angling) include the largemouth bass (Micropterus salmoides), rainbow trout (Salmo giardeneri) and tiger fish (Hydrocynus vittatus).
KEY INFORMATION AND FIGURES ON THE FISHERY AND AQUACULTURE SECTOR

4. Fishery Sector

The fishery sector in Swaziland is only composed of recreational or sport fishing and ‘subsistence fishing’ by Swazis seeking to supplement their daily dietary requirements. It should be noted however that subsistence fishing could also be considered as small-scale artisanal fishing since part of the catch could be sold on local markets.

4.1. Status of Resources

Due to the absence of relevant data, the status of fish stocks in Swaziland is not known.

4.2. Major Fishery Dynamics in the Sector

Sport fishing

Sport fishing mainly targets non-indigenous fish such as trout (Salmo trutta, Oncorhynchus mykiss) and black bass (Micropterus salmoides), particularly in the dams. According to current legislation (Fresh Water Fish Regulations, 1973), sport fishing requires a permit with no restrictions on harvesting, with the exception of black bass. To date, permits have been issued free of charge. A total of 144 sport fishing permits were issued in 2007 according to the FAO Fisheries Country Profile.

Most sport fishers in Swaziland are affiliated to established fishing clubs and bodies that regulate, control and enforce responsible fishing practices by their members. Sport fishers essentially implement a practice of ‘catch and release’ and therefore do not harvest any fish they catch both during and outside competitions.

Subsistence fishery sub-sector

Subsistence fishing is undertaken by Swazis who regularly catch fish for personal consumption. Such activity is recognized as being responsible for providing access to an important food source and a source of protein. Subsistence fishing however requires a permit, which can be issued free of charge.

Little information is available on the type of gear and techniques used by subsistence fishers. According to the current fishing regulations, promulgated in 1973, seine net fishing is illegal. Some subsistence fishers however use such nets of up to 400m in length.

There is no data on the number of fishers and statistics are almost inexistent.

During the course of the recent preparation of a new fisheries policy, it was found that the main weaknesses confronted by the subsistence fishery sub-sector, as identified during stakeholder workshops, included: an open access and often unregulated fishery; weak mechanisms for participation in fisheries management despite the willingness of local chiefs and communities to enter into co-management arrangements; a lack of fisheries staff (in relation to priority given by the administration to the aquaculture sub-sector); disorganization of subsistence fisheries (there are no fisher or community-based organisations to date in Swaziland).

The most recent global fish production data indicate an average catch of approximately 70 MT of fish per year (FFAP, 2011).
4.3. Fish Utilization

The bulk of Swaziland’s domestic fish production is for self-consumption.

On the other hand, the increased consumption of fish and the limited national production capacity has resulted in an increase of fish imports, particularly from South Africa. As indicated by figures on fish imports (see below), the idea that Swazis are not fish eaters is no longer valid. Indeed, there has been a major shift in consumption patterns with regards to fish consumption in the country, with more and fish and fishery products being consumed locally (FAO. 2008-2015).

Apart from cans of fishery products that are widely distributed throughout the country, most of the imported fresh or frozen fish end up in urban areas where there are better refrigeration facilities.

5. Aquaculture Sector

Aquaculture in Swaziland has so far been limited to small-scale subsistence farming in rural farm ponds stocked with tilapia fingerlings (mostly Oreochromis mossambicus) provided at no cost by the Ministry of Agriculture. The most common fish species that are cultured are tilapias (T. mossambicus and T. rendalli) and catfish (Clarias garipinus).

Common carp (Cyprinus carpio), as well as rainbow trout (Salmo giardeneri), could also be grown in some parts of the highlands.

Aquaculture is still in its infancy stage. There are currently about 1,000 fish ponds of an average size of 200 m², many of them managed by women. According to the Fisheries Policy 2011, each pond has the capacity to produce 400 kg annually, which would give a potential fish culture production of 400 MT per year. However, the most recent figures indicate an average fish production of 70 MT per year.

There is a good potential for the expansion of fish production in Swaziland, considering the country’s climate is conducive to the development of aquaculture (FAO. 2008-2015). However, the main constraints to aquaculture development include a lack of fingerlings, inadequate financing mechanisms, limited fisheries research, a shortage of extension staff and the obsolescence of the current fisheries legislation dated 1937.

At present, the Kingdom of Swaziland encourages the emergence of small-scale commercial aquaculture through the expansion of subsistence systems into pond-based tilapia fish farming. The FFAP 2011 states that “emerging small-scale commercial farmers will require significantly more technical support and perhaps access to micro finance mechanisms to fund investments to build larger or additional ponds, purchase pumps to ensure proper water circulation, source appropriate feed for the larger numbers of fish and manage possible fish-related viruses, diseases and parasites.”

Furthermore, it is the opinion of Swaziland that the relatively recent construction of dams may also be seen as an opportunity to promote intensive commercial fish farming including cage-based systems in a number of dams. According to the FFAP 2011, such dams could include: Driekoppies Dam on the Lomati River; Maguga Dam on the Komati River; Hawane Dam on the Mbuluzi River; Mnjoli Dam on the Mbuluzi River; and Luphohlo Dam on the Lusushwana River.
6. Fish Import and Export

Swaziland is a net importer of fish and fish products for local consumption. The country is not yet at any stage of development to contemplate any fish export (FAO, 2008-2015).

Almost all the fish sold on the Swazi market is imported from neighbouring countries. Imported fish come into the country already processed and/or ready to cook. Fish imports include fresh and chilled and/or frozen fish, fish fillets and other salted, dried and smoked fish products as well as fishmeal (FAO, 2008-2015). All fish and fishery products, except fishmeal (about 300 MT per year), are imported for human consumption. Fishmeal is exclusively used in animal feeds as a major source of protein.

Paradoxically, fish imports in Swaziland showed a significant and steady decrease between 2002 and 2009 according to official data. In 2009, Swaziland imported about 1,000 MT valued at US $2.9 million (FAO FishStat).

**Fish Imports by category in Swaziland in value (% of $)**

*2014 - Figure 6 - Source FAO FISHTAT J (2002-2009) - Average period*

![Fish Imports by category in Swaziland in value (% of $)](chart.png)
Fish trade balance in Swaziland in volume (in tons)
2014 - Figure 7 - Source FAO FISHTAT J (2002-2009)

Fish trade balance in Swaziland in value (in '000 US $)
2014 - Figure 8 - Source FAO FISHTAT J (2002-2009)
7. Contribution of the Fishery and Aquaculture Sector to the Economy

Due to the geographical context of Swaziland and the consequent limited access to fresh water bodies such as dams and rivers, domestic fish production has remained negligible. Consequently, the role of the fishery and aquaculture sector in the national economy has been marginal with regards to its contribution to GDP, budget revenue and employment. For instance, a survey carried out by the FAO estimated that the fisheries and aquaculture sector accounted for 0.01 percent of Swaziland’s GDP in 2011 (Kurien John, Lopez Rios Javier. 2013).

Fishery products accounted for 3 percent of food and agricultural imports in 2011 (Kurien John, Lopez Rios Javier. 2013).

Fish consumption per capita in Swaziland is low at 2.4 kg, far below the African average of 9.4 kg in 2009.

In general, the contribution of fisheries to food security in Swaziland is low. According to FAO estimates, fishery products accounted for 4.4 percent of total animal protein intake, below the African average (19.1 percent) in 2009. This places Swaziland among those IOC-SmartFish participating countries where fish has a low importance in terms of animal protein intake. Fish protein intake reached a peak in 1997, and despite showing a hike in 2003, it has shown a sustained decrease, and was estimated at 0.76 grams per capita per day (Kurien John, Lopez Rios Javier. 2013).

However, the potential of the sector to contribute to food security is acknowledged in national policies. In particular, the development of small-scale aquaculture is considered as a way to contribute to the diversification of food sources for rural households and to reduce the risk of food insecurity and shortages in the short and medium term. The promotion of aquaculture is included as part of the food security priorities, as part of the strategy to diversify and intensify food production (Kurien John, Lopez Rios Javier. 2013).

Fish consumption in Swaziland (in live weight)

2014 - Figure 9 - Source FAO Fish and fishery product, world apparent consumption FAO STAT (2000 - 2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total fish supply quantity</th>
<th>Fish supply per capita</th>
<th>Fish protein per capita</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008 - 09</td>
<td>2,853 MT</td>
<td>2.5 kg/y</td>
<td>0.8 g/day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 - 07</td>
<td>5,737.75 MT</td>
<td>5.1 kg/y</td>
<td>1.5 g/day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000 - 03</td>
<td>6,473.5 MT</td>
<td>6 kg/y</td>
<td>1.6 g/day</td>
</tr>
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</table>
8. Fishery Policy and Planning

Currently, Burundi does not have a specific national fisheries policy document but the government. In 2009, the fisheries administration started the process of developing a national fisheries policy with its own limited resources. The draft policy document was further elaborated with technical and financial assistance from the ACP Fish II programme. The new policy document that is entitled “Fresh Water Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy in Swaziland” (FFAP) was adopted in 2011.

The overarching objective of the FFAP is to maximize the value and opportunities that Swaziland can sustainably and responsibly derive from its limited access to fresh water fish to decrease the levels of food insecurity and poverty and to support the growth of small-scale commercial and commercial fish farming in Swaziland. This Policy intends to give effect to the policy statement adopted under the National Food Security Policy of 2005.

The FFAP is underpinned by six pillars as follows: Institutional improvement; Regulation of sport fishing; Improvement of control and monitoring of subsistence fishing; Encouragement of subsistence aquaculture; Promotion of small-scale commercial aquaculture; Development of intensive commercial aquaculture.

Through the above pillars, the FFAP introduces a set of principles and policy orientations to support responsible fisheries and aquaculture development and management. Key principles and public orientations include, inter alia: capacity building of the fisheries and aquaculture administration; strengthening of key management services such as monitoring, control and surveillance; the promotion of participatory mechanisms for fisheries management; improved regulation of fish trade; the introduction of management measures aimed at regulating the type of species, gear and bag-limits and/or catch limits applicable to the subsistence fishing sector; introduction of measures aimed at ensuring the co-existence of the subsistence fishing sector with the sport fishing sector, including measures such as zoning.

Furthermore, it should be stressed that the FFAP also takes into account the main orientations included in the 2001 SADC Protocol on Fisheries and the Abuja Declaration 2005 on sustainable fisheries and aquaculture in Africa. These refer, in particular, to the need to establish a transboundary fisheries commission to include representatives from South Africa and Mozambique, and the promotion of sustainable aquaculture.

9. Institutional Framework

9.1. Fisheries Administration and Research

The administration and management of Swaziland’s fisheries and aquaculture vests in the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), particularly the Fisheries Section (FS) located within the Ministry. The mandate of the FS is to ensure an optimal and sustainable exploitation of the country’s fisheries resources and promote fish consumption at both household and national levels in order to enhance national food security. The FS reports annually to the Fisheries Sub-Committee of the Ministry, which reviews the policy and strategies of the FS and thereafter determines the annual budget allocations for the FS.

The FS is divided in two units: the Fisheries Management Unit (FMU) and the Aquaculture Unit (AU).
The FMU is responsible for administering and managing the sustainable exploitation of fisheries and fish species in national rivers and dams. The AU is responsible for promoting sustainable fish farming.

In 2012, the FS had a total of 7 technical staff, including 4 officers working on the four regions of Swaziland (Lubombo, Hhohho, Shysilweny and Manzini).

The FS has been faced with a significant lack of human and financial resources to be able to adequately managing the fishery and aquaculture sector. The current total operating budget for the FS would be less than about US $244,000 per year (Feike Ltd. 2013).

In addition to its administrative functions, the Fisheries Section of the MoA is in charge of research. Research is normally carried out through externally funded programmes and by students from the University of Swaziland for their dissertation projects.

9.2. Other Public Institutions concerned by Fisheries

The Department of Water Affairs of the Ministry of Natural Resources is responsible for the management and regulation of access and usage rights to Swaziland’s water resources whether these are found in rivers, dams or other water bodies located on public land. Management and regulation is undertaken in terms of the Swaziland Water Act of 2003.

A permit applied for and issued in terms of the Water Act is required for the use or extraction of water. The Department of Water Affairs has provided its support (in principle) for the establishment of cage-based fish farming ventures in dams under its authority and has provided support for the expansion of subsistence and small scale commercial pond-based fish farming, which will require the extraction of water from adjacent rivers and public water bodies.

The Environment Authority, which is a parastatal government body, is charged with implementing Swaziland’s Environment Management Act and related regulations, including the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations of 2000 and the Waste Regulations of 2000, which also concern some commercial fish farming ventures.

The Ministry of Commerce, through its Department of Licences, is responsible for licensing all business undertakings in Swaziland. In terms of the 1975 Trade Licence Order, a trade licence is required for any person wishing to undertake a commercial trade or business. Trade licences are valid for one calendar year and must be renewed annually.

The import and export of agricultural products requires permits, which are issued by an import and export committee located in the Ministry of Finance. These permits are valid for 12 months and are not consignment specific. The importation of fish from within the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) does not however require an import permit.

Furthermore, the FFAP, 2011, stresses the need to develop a legal framework to regulate the import, export and re-export of fish and fish products on a consignment specific basis. This is necessary not only to document and record the trade in legally produced and harvested fish and fish products but also to halt the illegal trade of fish and fish products such as the illegal trade of Abalone (Haliotis midae) in South African via Swaziland.
10. Legal Framework

10.1. Fisheries Legislation

The fisheries legislative and regulatory framework is outdated, with the main parts being the Protection of Fresh Water Fish Act, 1937 and the Fresh Water Regulations, 1937, the sole set of regulations promulgated under the 1937 Act. The fisheries regulations focus almost exclusively on regulating the fishing of black bass.

Other legislations relevant to fisheries are the Environmental Management Act of 2002 and the Water Act of 2003.

The Protection of Fresh Water Act, 1937, makes provisions for the Minister in charge of the fishery sector to regulate fishing by declaring closed seasons, prohibiting fishing and making regulations. The Minister is granted authority to make important regulations for the management of fisheries and fish farming. The Fresh Water Fish Act and its regulations do not however provide sufficient measures to adequately address fisheries management and IUU fishing. The FFAP also stressed the need to revise the fisheries legislation for several reasons, including the fact that under the current Act some intensive aquaculture systems, such as cage-based systems, are prohibited.

It is in this context that the ACP Fish II project provided technical assistance in 2012 to review the current fisheries and aquaculture laws and regulations and to align these with the FFAP and Swaziland’s broader obligations at both domestic and regional levels.

An in-depth analysis of the current legislative and regulatory framework showed that the most significant challenges included a lack of provisions to adequately address conflicts between sport and subsistence fishers, to regulate fish farming, to control the harvesting of fish, to establish fishing license fees, and to determine administrative sanctions to deter illegal fishing (Feike Ltd. 2013).

A draft Freshwater and Aquaculture Bill for Swaziland and supporting regulations were prepared by the end of 2012 in the framework of the ACP Fish II project, based on a participatory process involving major stakeholders. The draft texts include major recent developments in relation to fisheries and aquaculture development and management, whilst taking into due consideration those principles promoted by the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and its Guidelines.
11. Administrative Functions

The only requirement to date to access fisheries is to get a permit (free of charge) from the FS of the MoA.

Should the recent draft Bill and Regulations, prepared with the assistance of the ACP Fish II project, be finalized and enacted, the FS will have to increase its capacities in terms of delivering administrative services such as issuing subsistence fishing licences, sport fishing licences, annual permits to exercise fishing licences, fish export and import permits, and aquaculture licences.

It should also be noted that the draft Bill requests the Principal Secretary to keep a register of all licenses and permits issued.

Furthermore, the draft Bill makes provision for the registration of vessels and the establishment of a system of fishing vessel permits for a period not exceeding one year and requests the Principal Secretary to keep a public register of fishing vessels.

12. Fisheries Monitoring

There are very few records being kept of capture fishery at present in Swaziland. Communities have been encouraged to form groups or identify a person who will fish and then sell to the communities in a few of the dams, however, even this exercise is not bearing much fruit and monitoring is almost non-existent (FAO 2008-2015).

13. Fisheries Management Systems

Fisheries management in Swaziland has been very weak until recently. The only management measure in place at the moment is the need to obtain a fishing permit from the FS of the MoA. However, it is believed that the adoption of a new fisheries policy (FFAP) in 2011 and the foreseen adoption of a new fisheries legislative and regulatory framework will considerably improve fisheries governance and management. Such major policy instruments were developed on the basis of the most recent international developments of relevance for Swaziland, including the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and its Technical Guidelines.

The draft Bill includes many provisions that should greatly improve fisheries governance and management in Swaziland. In particular, the Bill gives the Minister the possibility to engage in regular dialogue with officially recognized sectoral organizations and associations. The Minister also has the possibility to appoint voluntary fishery enforcement officers, with a view to consolidating the current MCS system. Interestingly, the Bill creates a Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund to be administered by the Principal Secretary in consultation with the Minister.

With regards specifically to fisheries management, the Bill clearly encourages the regulation of access to fisheries through the creation of a system of licences and permits, as described in Section 11 above. It also introduces measures to support catch and effort limitations and gives the possibility to establish management plans in specific fisheries management zones. Finally, it gives the Minister the possibility to declare any national water body or part of a water body to be a
14. Major Issues relating to IUU Fishing

The fisheries control and surveillance system is very weak in Swaziland, as a result of the lack of human, financial and logistical means of the FS and the obsolescence of the current legislative and regulatory framework.

It is stated in the FAO Fisheries Countries Profile 2008, that some illegal and uncoordinated fishing occurs in the country’s rivers and dams and that people have also been observed using unregulated and non-selective netting material for fishing.

The FFAP says that Swaziland’s fisheries continue to be illegally fished using nets as opposed to lines, and that due to the size of the fish biomass in Swaziland’s water bodies, such net fishing will decimate stocks. In this context, the FFAP advocates a combination of preventive educational strategies and regular law enforcement to curb the use of nets and encourage the use of lines instead to harvest fish.

The draft Bill and Regulations that was recently prepared with the assistance of the ACP Fish II project makes provisions to support the appointment of fishery enforcement officers. The draft Bill also allows for voluntary fishery enforcement officers to be appointed, as mentioned above.

Furthermore, in terms of perspective, enforcement officials employed by the civil service, including local police and inspectors appointed under the Environment Management Act of 2002 could be co-opted to also serve as fishery enforcement officers (Feike Ltd. 2013).
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