NEW DIRECTIONS IN FISHERIES A SERIES OF POLICY BRIEFS ON DEVELOPMENT ISSUES



WORK FOR DEVELOPMENT AND LIVELIHOODS IN WEST AND CENTRAL A EDICA

POLICIES LINKING TRADE TO FISHERIES MANAGEMENT



MAKING FISH TRADE WORK FOR DEVELOPMENT AND LIVELIHOODS IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

The aim of this policy brief is to:

Highlight the main features of fish trade and identify linkages to development

Describe the contribution of fish trade to economies, livelihoods and food security

Identify major issues affecting fish trade and their potential impact

Offer recommendations to enhance the future contribution of fish trade to development

FISH TRADE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Fish is the most valuable food commodity traded internationally, reaching a record export value of US\$71.5 billion in 2004 – an increase of 51% since 1994¹. For many developing countries, the fisheries sector represents a major source of foreign exchange revenue through trade with developed countries and through foreign fishing licence agreements. Fish exports can strengthen income and employment opportunities for local people in domestic fisheries in coastal and inland regions.

However, in many countries, policy related to fish trade cannot keep pace with this rapidly growing and evolving sector. Inappropriate policy frameworks put at risk the benefits of increased trade for national development and local communities. Weak governance in the presence of expanding fish trade could aggravate overexploitation of vulnerable fish stocks and diminish access of local markets through traditional trading links and market chains.

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE CONTRIBUTION OF FISH TRADE TO DEVELOPMENT IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

Fish trade, in its connections with societies and economies, is affected by factors which mediate its contribution to development – negative or positive. This table highlights some of these key factors and issues.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- well-established local, national and international fish producing areas, markets and trade routes
- increasing demand for fish across most markets
- traditional trade between Africa and Europe
- Africa now a key supplier; Europe a key market but changing patterns

ACTORS

- wide range of stakeholders with evolving linkages and market power; usually highly competitive
- fish trade requires specific business skills and knowledge to deal with changes and manage risk

SUPPLY FACTORS

- raw material access, post-harvest quality and careful handling of perishable products
- basic infrastructure: roads, shipping, air transport
- adequate and timely flow of information on supply, demand and prices

TRADE MECHANISMS

- selling and buying goods (fish products) and services (fishing services) and adding value to them
- direct and indirect contribution to income, employment, food supply and distribution
- need effective and reliable financial and regulatory mechanisms

WEALTH/PROFIT

- attracts entrepreneurial activity and diverse investment at all operational levels
- reinvestment of generated income and profit can take place in the sector and the wider economy
- potential redistribution benefits through taxation and government investment
- negative aspects include rent-seeking by individuals/ groups; asymmetric information and access to capital

RISKS

- production sources and markets at all levels are subject to unpredictable changes and shocks (e.g. weather, fish stock productivity, market changes)
- risks can be reduced in more diverse trading conditions –
 e.g. multiple suppliers, stocks, markets, transport options

IMPACTS

- contribution to gross domestic product (GDP) and to wider trading options
- local 'winners' and 'losers' through effects of competition, power and economic redistribution
- unknown net impact of trade liberalization on developing countries
- globalization may be linked to 'food insecurity' by diverting essential local food to richer markets

REGULATION

- national and international laws; challenges of compliance
- leading role of the World Trade Organization (WTO)
- erosion of trade preferences for developing countries
- quality and certification are increasingly important

CHANGE

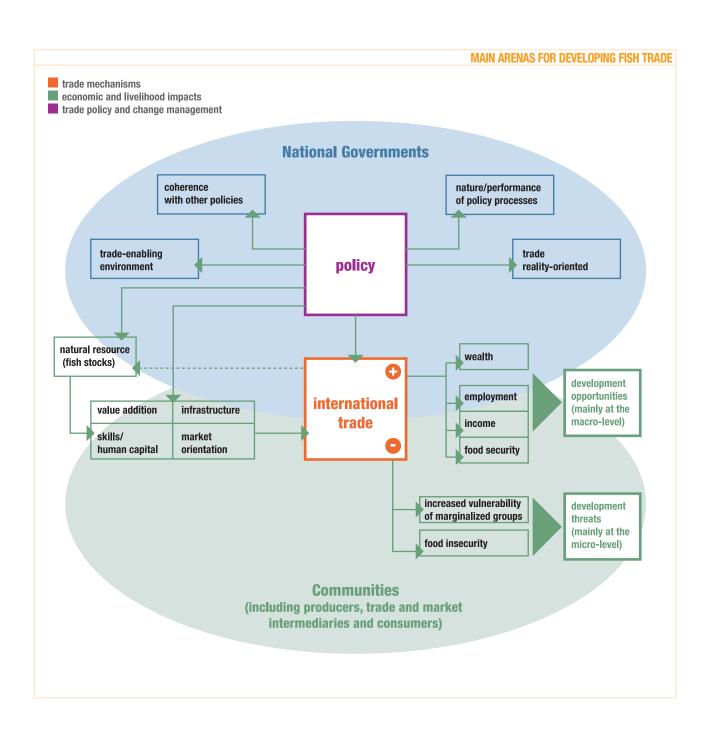
- rapidly changing trade patterns: new products, markets, participants and regulations with different impacts on different countries
- unknown impact of trade expansion on fish resource sustainability in conditions of weak fisheries management
- wider contexts of change in governance, resource base, skills, human resources and political influence.

POLICY

- vital for harnessing fish trade for development by encouraging wealth generation and widening opportunities (e.g. enabling trade and market access)
- opportunities to use wealth generated for positive development investments in and outside sector
- limit negative impacts, manage risks and ensure future opportunity and equitable benefit sharing

¹ FAO. (2006). The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA) 2006.

Within this overall context, there are three major areas in which to identify issues and prioritize policy interventions to maximize the contribution of fish trade to development and minimize potentially negative distributional and sustainability impacts. These cover trade mechanisms, economic and livelihood impacts and trade policy and change management.



FISH TRADE IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

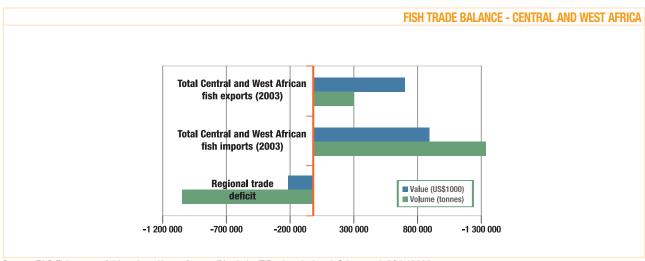
World fish trade is increasing annually – in 2004 nearly half of global fish exports originated from developing countries. Africa's share of fish export value doubled during the last decade to US\$3.2 billion in 2004. Fish trade is an important part of the economy in many of the twenty-five West and Central African countries participating in the Sustainable Fisheries Livelihoods Programme (SFLP).

The contribution of fish trade to national economies is often described in national statistics in terms of overall volume and value, normally based on nominal first-sale value supported by customs and catch data. Data on species composition is usually only indirect, e.g. if a major single stock is known to be the primary traded species.

How trade contributes to the livelihoods of specific groups within society is less known due to limited localized information, though it is clear that through employment, market margins and profits, trade can contribute positively to the livelihoods of people in both coastal and inland areas. However, there are deficits in volume as well as value for the region as a whole; i.e. import volumes considerably exceed exports but, due to the higher unit value of exports, the value deficit is less.

	SELP GUUNTRIES
Angola	Ghana
Benin	Guinea
Burkina Faso	Guinea-Bissau
Cameroon	Liberia
Cape Verde	Mali
Central African Rep.	Mauritania
Chad	Niger
Dem. Rep. Congo	Nigeria
Rep. Congo	Sao Tome and Principe
Côte d'Ivoire	Senegal
Equatorial Guinea	Sierra Leone
Gabon	Togo
Gambia	

CELD COLINITALES



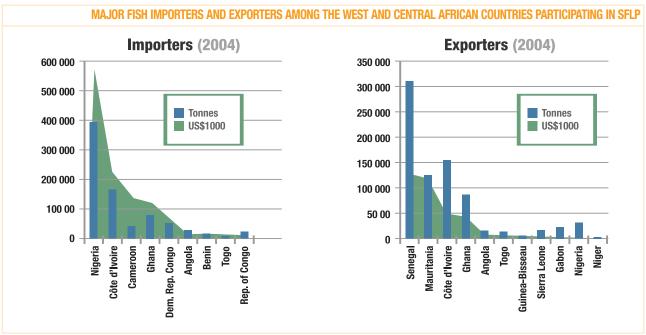
Source: FAO Fishstat, available at http://www.fao.org/fi/website/FIRetrieveAction.do?dom=topic&fid=16003

Commodities

In West and Central Africa, fish exports are dominated by Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritania, Morocco and Senegal which rank also among the African top ten fish exporters. The main trading partner is the European Union, to whom West and Central Africa supplies 12 percent of its total fish imports. Typically, high-value species (prawns, tuna, squid) are exported while cheaper fish (pelagics such as sardines, mackerel) are imported.

General trade data masks the complexities of trade routes and products: Senegal and Mauritania have an export surplus, while Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and the major regional market, Nigeria, import more than export. Moreover, internal trade and transshipments are also carried out, for which volume and value estimates – and their livelihood implications – are far less defined.

However, trade flows, regardless of direction and quantity, generate important indirect income and employment opportunities, including transportation and other services.

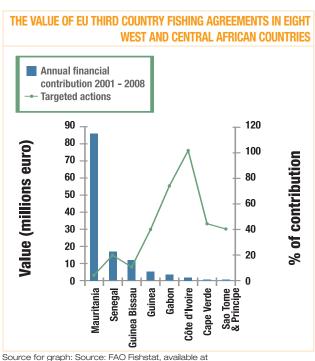


Source for graph: Source: FAO Fishstat, available at http://www.fao.org/fi/website/FIRetrieveAction.do?dom=topic&fid=16003

Trade in fishing opportunities

The European Union is the main trading partner in fishing opportunities, or 'trade in services', particularly for West Africa. Information on other partners for foreign fishing license agreements, including China and Korea, is sparse, although activities can be significant.

The current round of EU Third Country Fishing Agreements with eight West and Central African countries is worth euro 120 million annually – of which Mauritania receives 72 percent (euro 86 million). Part of this is intended to be used for the promotion of sectorally 'targeted actions', e.g. conservation of resources and sustainable development, and for the building up of national management capacity. Some of these agreements were recently renegotiated. One-hundred percent of the financial contribution for Côte d'Ivoire is dedicated to targeted actions (expires in June 2007); for Guinea the share is 41-44 percent (expires in December 2008).



Source for graph: Source: FAO Fishstat, available at http://www.fao.org/fi/website/FIRetrieveAction.do?dom=topic&fid=16003

Policy context and the importance of fish trade

National economies in West and Central Africa are characterized by high levels of poverty, reliance on primary exports, low economic diversification, an important agriculture sector, low levels of inward investment, weak currencies and high levels of international debt and borrowing. The institutional capacity in many states to promote pro-poor growth and sustainable development is limited.

Fish trade accounts for, on average, 27.8 percent of the total agricultural exports in West and Central Africa. However, for the regional consumer, fish represents a relatively inexpensive source of protein (especially marine pelagics) and provides over 30 percent of the average daily protein consumption. There are clearly important challenges in balancing resource access and economic opportunity, in retaining and adding value locally and regionally and in building the necessary capacity to do so.

Population West and Central Africa (2005) *1	357 million
Selected average gross domestic product (GDP) per capita in US\$ (2006) $^{\ast 2}$	Dem. Rep. of Congo – 119; Sierra Leone – 202
Human Development Index (HDI) of selected countries (2006) *3	Cape Verde – 106; Niger – 177
Population with less than 1 US \$/day (average) in West and Central Africa (1994-2004) \star4	(1996-2005*) 54%
Percentage of under-5s who are moderately or severely underweight in West and Central Africa (1996-2005*) *5	28%

- 1, 4 and 5 http://www.unicef.org/sowc07/docs/sowc07_fastfacts_wcaro.pdf 2 http://hdr.undp.org/hdr2006/statistics/indicators/132.html 3 http://hdr.undp.org/hdr2006/statistics



IMPROVING DEVELOPMENT IMPACT OF FISH TRADE IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

Based on background reviews and analyses conducted by SFLP National Coordination Units, and on stakeholder consultations and current international literature, five major policy themes emerge as key to the potential contribution of fish trade to sustainable development in West and Central Africa. These link with the three main development arenas: meeting regional fish consumption demand, contributing to employment and livelihoods and increasing national economies. These areas interconnect in aiming to make fish trade a contributor to pro-poor growth.

TRADE MECHANISMS

Trade realities as basis for policy design

'Trade realities' refer to 'what actually happens on the ground', e.g. at the micro-level, including the factors influencing trade impacts beyond the development or imposition of trade rules. The reality of fish trade in West and Central Africa is largely unknown and has to be analysed further to fully understand how fish trade policy can best support the contribution of fisheries to development. Trade policy is often founded on particular perceptions and policy narratives which may not be accurate or up-to-date due to poor information or misrepresentation by commercial interests.

Trade flows and impact analysis are usually limited to the macro-level. Impacts at the micro-level, for instance on the livelihoods of the poor, are a new area of investigation. The role of fish merchants and middlemen, for example, should be studied better. Through the right incentives and a 'win-win approach' supporting development, their knowledge, skills and social connections could contribute to include more people as trade beneficiaries.

THE REALITY OF THE INFORMAL REGIONAL FISH TRADE – THE LAKE CHAD BASIN



Photo courtesy of C. Béné

In West and Central Africa, informal regional trade in fish products receives scarce consideration by policy-makers and official statistics. In the Lake Chad Basin, informal regional trade in dried fish was recently estimated to be 100 000 tonnes valued at US\$50 million. The key issue is whether this informal trade, ignored by formal government accounts or plans, makes a positive contribution to regional development. The answer, based on empirical evidence, is mixed. Almost certainly powerful rent-seeking merchants control most of the wealth generated. But through the participation of local people in well-established market chains, there are benefits including employment, income and food supplies. The use of the wealth generated as a form of capital investment has not been investigated, but likely contributes to the regional economy, probably through investment in commercial agriculture, both crop production and cattle.

Source: Neiland, A.E. and Béné, C. (2004) Incorporating Fish Market and Trade Information into Policy-Making for Sustainable Livelihoods and Poverty Reduction: Methods and Lessons from the Lake Chad Basin. A Report for the DFID/FAO Sustainable Fisheries Livelihoods Programme (SFLP). Rome, FAO.

Creating an enabling environment

International fish exports from Africa face a challenging future, and performance of the fish trade mechanism will depend on the quality of the enabling environment. So far, West and Central African fish exports have benefited from preferential access to international markets through agreements such the European Union-African, Caribbean, Pacific State (EU-ACP) Trade Agreements. In the scope of trade liberalization, such agreements will be renegotiated to comply with World Trade Organization (WTO) provisions. A main outcome is likely to be more reciprocity, i.e. ACP countries will also have to make concessions to the EU. The competitive advantage of ACP countries will erode as other third-country suppliers – especially to the EU – will be subject to the same tariffs.

Major exporters such as Mauritania and Senegal have overcome some constraints, i.e. domestic supply, by investing in infrastructure and fishing fleets. Other countries still have unrealized fish trade potential (Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone).

TUNA TRADE COMPETITIVENESS – GHANA

The canned tuna industry is important for Ghana. Joint-venture and national companies export mainly to Europe. Trade contributes significantly to Ghana's agricultural gross domestic product (GDP) and provides much needed employment for local workers. The favorable trade conditions (Cotonou Agreement) that enabled this trade through zero tariffs on tuna for ACP countries are under threat from new WTO negotiations. WTO rules will increasingly open European markets to more competitive Asian canned-tuna supplies. The immediate outcome of the new rules is likely to be a reduction in trade and jobs in the industry. Policy-makers in Ghana will need to consider options for the future, which will undoubtedly involve diversifying markets, to avoid reducing the contribution of fish trade to national development.

Source: Bennett, E. (2002). The Impact of Opening the EU Import Market for Canned Tuna on Seychelles, Mauritius, Ghana and Senegal. Report by IDDRA Ltd to the Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation (CTA). Wageningen: CTA.



ECONOMIC AND LIVELIHOOD IMPACTS

Benefiting from trade opportunities and minimizing negative impacts and threats

Fish trade policy in West and Central African countries must cope with the dynamic nature of global market opportunities and trade patterns. Declining domestic supplies, rising incomes and changing consumer preferences increase the gap in fish supplies in 'northern' countries. This situation generates new opportunities for 'southern' countries to successfully engage in international fish trade. Studies project an increase in demand in developing countries triggered by increased purchasing power and urbanization. Despite the guidance of international trade theory – indicating that any trade is better than no trade – concerns about increased trade persist, especially in situations where domestic food supplies are potentially threatened. The key question is whether emerging trade in fish with Asia is a threat to local people in West and Central Africa or an opportunity for benefits from free-trade and the globalization of fish markets.

COMPETITION FROM FOREIGN MARKETS FOR LOCAL FOOD FISH – WEST AFRICA



Photo courtesy of K. Holvoet

The impact of foreign competition on regional and local fish trade in West Africa is growing. Small pelagics (sardinellas) - an important fish for human consumption in the region, are traded through three routes: local, national and regional trade based on small-scale fisheries, regional trade from industrial fisheries and international trade based on distant water fleets under fishing agreements. Trade with Asia – particularly China – is increasing. This could affect fish supplies in local markets by reducing the supply of inexpensive fish in local markets. There are concerns that this would have negative impacts on the food security of poor people.

Source: Failler, P. and Samb, B. (2005) Present and Future Economic and Nutritional Consequences of the Exploitation of Small Pelagics (Sardinellas) in West and Central Africa. Position Paper. DFID/FAO Sustainable Fisheries Livelihoods Programme. Rome, FAO. www.sflp.org

ENHANCING THE CAPACITY OF SMALL-SCALE SHRIMP PRODUCERS TO BENEFIT FROM INTERNATIONAL TRADE – BENIN

In 2005, the EU restored Benin's export authorization for shrimp subject to the execution of further measures. Benin's shrimp fishery is extremely important in terms of employment and income generation as it provides the country's second most important export product. The Sustainable Fisheries Llivelihoods Programme has supported pilot initiatives to overcome some of the major constraints to international trade in production, quality traceability and marketing of shrimp. Project activities included:

- establishing internal quality control systems at community level, including capacity building for professional organizations and actors of these systems;
- extending texts and laws on trade-related issues; and
- testing a revolving fund to encourage investments in the sector.

TRADE POLICIES

Improving the nature and performance of the fish trade policy process

Fish trade can contribute to development, primarily through the trade mechanism for wealth generation. In turn, wealth contributes to economic growth, for example, through reinvestment in other parts of the economy. In order for this mechanism to function properly, an appropriate policy framework and policy process is required. In the national Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers of at least 12 West and Central African countries, the fisheries sector is considered important for foreign exchange generation, employment, income and food security – but only three countries (Ghana, Guinea, Senegal) have so far adopted sectoral mainstreaming. Policy-making processes for economic development and poverty reduction have overlooked the fisheries sector and fish trade, indicating a general weakness in the policy process.

Fisheries and trade-related government institutions often lack capacity, finances and support from central government to develop strong policy processes to support the contribution of fish trade to development, evaluate investment options and make appropriate decisions, including investments in new forms of trade.

SUPPORTING POLICY DECISION-MAKING – MAURITANIA

For Mauritania, an important question is: 'what kind of fish trade is most beneficial to meeting national development objectives?' The identification and evaluation of options for developing fish trade are often complicated. Mauritanian policy includes the objective of increasing value-added returns from local catches, which have declined in national economic importance compared to the value of fishing agreements with other countries, mainly the EU. It remains an open question if Mauritania has a 'comparative advantage' for value-added fish products. Therefore, investments present a high risk (e.g. fish canning factories and canned fish products). Appropriate analysis and information flows are needed to better support policy decision-making in order to increase performance through the choice of the right policy objectives and successful implementation.

Source: Steve Cunningham, IDDRA Ltd, Portsmouth Technopole, Kingston Crescent, Portsmouth, UK; pers.comm. (2006).

Coherence between fish trade and other policies

Trade policy and development-related policies often lack coherence. For instance, while free trade is promoted as a mechanism to generate wealth and economic growth based on empirical evidence from countries such as the 'Asian Tigers', there is also concern on the impact of liberalized trade in other countries. Free trade can have a negative impact on the livelihoods of marginalized and poor groups. The key question is whether liberalized trade can be pro-poor under conditions of weak governance and lack of policy coherence. A strategic long-term vision on the role of fish trade, supported by effective fisheries management systems, is needed.

A conflict exists between fish trade policy and fisheries management policy due to trade-offs and limitations of unilateral actions. Often there is a case for limiting fish trade development unless adequate fisheries management systems are in place to offset trade-driven overexploitation. In the short-term, it will be necessary to prioritize certain actions such as limiting trade in overexploited or vulnerable fish stocks.

COHERENCE BETWEEN TRADE POLICY AND FISHERIES POLICY - SENEGAL

The Senegalese fisheries sector has expanded rapidly in the past 20 years with government support and within the context of the EU-ACP Cotonou Agreement, providing tariff-free access to European markets. Now, the expansionist, technology-driven and market-led fisheries policy is facing problems threatening future fish trade. Lack of effective fisheries management is one. Senegal has struggled to establish a fisheries management system in the face of rapid expansion. Unfortunately, unless the fish catching subsector is better regulated, the sustainability of the fish trade subsector is increasingly threatened. At the same time, incentives created by international markets are increasing fishing pressure – and this is proving very difficult to control.

Source: Murray, A., and Faye, M.M. (2003). Impact of International Trade in Fishery Products on Food Security: Senegal. A Case-study in: Kurien, J. (2004) Responsible Fish Trade. Towards understanding the relationship between international fish trade and food security. Report of the study on the impact of international trade in fishery products on food security. FAO/Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Rome, FAO.

STRENGTHENING TRADE POLICY IN FISHERIES: WHO CAN DO WHAT?

To fully exploit the potential of fish trade to contribute to development in West and Central Africa at all levels, effective implementation of trade and fishery management policies will be decisive. If governance is weak, the 'losers' in fish trade are likely to be the poor and marginalized. Fish trade policies and actions which ignore this problem, e.g. by capitalizing on trade liberalization but failing to compensate with other livelihood inputs or opportunities, do not add effectively to pro-poor growth.

Faced with limited information on the fish trade and its economic and social impacts, specific policy prescriptions are inappropriate to the highly varied sectoral and national contexts in West Africa. Given these current information constraints, appropriate policy actions by governments, public and private-sector actors in trade, development and fisheries management can include:

Strengthening the policy process and improving policy performance by:

- conducting assessments to identify strengths and weaknesses of relevant institutions and the fish trade policy process;
- implementing measures to reform and strengthen institutional structures, to build relevant institutional capacity in policy formulation (based on trade information analysis), to effectively implement policies, and to consider how policy implementation budgets and policy tools are applied and could be improved;
- building capacity in policy analysis and design as well as on emerging issues such as WTO provisions at the national, regional and local level; and
- fostering regular consultation among all stakeholders to improve communication and information flows for targeted policy actions on specific national, regional and local fisheries needs and opportunities.

Informing policies with micro-level information on 'trade realities' by:

Upgrading research and information systems supporting decision-making – not only to improve knowledge on trade flows and their impacts, but also to provide a basis for identifying interventions and entry points.

This can be achieved by:

- using 'real-time' information on trade realities to increase effectiveness of policy decision-making in dynamic fish markets and fish trade systems, paying particular attention to gender implications;
- providing high level political support for a change of attitude towards the type of fisheries sector research considered relevant;
- reforming the research system to provide capacity to investigate the fish trade system at local level in addition to the existing macro-level analysis;
- paying special attention to the systems used for communicating research/monitoring information and needs to decision-makers.





Creating and sustaining an enabling environment for fish trade through responsive and pro-active policy processes by:

- negotiating international trade rules to access domestic and international markets; requiring expert capacity and experience to handle the information and considerations involved;
- developing adequate institutional capacity in areas such as policy analysis, market and supply chain analysis, trade law and rules negotiation (particularly within the WTO framework);
- · identifying and prioritizing trade-enabling factors and the tools to be used for effective implementation within a coherent short- and long-term strategy, including trade incentives through tax reform and reduction of transaction costs through better infrastructure and communication systems;
- seeking external development assistance in situations where government lacks the institutional capacity to adopt such an approach; and
- · improving competitiveness, developing small- and medium-sized enterprises, investing in human capital in fishing communities, including in gender equity, and in relevant support service agencies (trade and fisheries governance and research systems).

Ensuring policy coherence between fish trade policy and other policies by:

- mainstreaming the fisheries sector and fish trade within a framework of major strategic goals for national development, such as sustainable development and the Millennium Development Goals, to avoid short-term unilateral actions driven by relatively simple goals (e.g. maximizing export revenues):
- prioritizing stronger resource management where trade

activity threatens resource sustainability.

Managing future opportunities and constraints relevant to fish trade by:

- changing aspects of the existing policy framework to yield different outcomes; for example by negotiating new trade agreements for new markets or establishing compensation mechanisms for vulnerable groups where fish export trade limits fish availability on local markets:
- including the monitoring and evaluation of policy performance in policy formulation and taking into consideration new opportunities and threats;
- including broader governmental and civil society consultation in managing international trade negotiations by the government with international actors:
- producing credible analysis and evidence on the relationship between fish trade and development to support an effective, coordinated and pro-poor, gender sensitive policy process for fish trade; and
- involving local government and traders in technical and market issues affecting fish trade mechanisms in a specific location (including the assessment of comparative advantage relevant to new products and associated investments);
- exploring opportunities for fair trade certification, ecolabelling and sustainability certification to strengthen resource governance and improving propoor economic performance of fish trade.

RESOURCES

TRADE POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT / POVERTY ADVICE – GENERAL PUBLICATIONS

DFID. (2006). Trade matters in the fight against world poverty. London: Department for International Development. Version for download at http://www.dfid.gov.uk/tradematters/default-old.asp

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Thorpe, A., Reid, C., Van Anrooy, R., and Brugère, C. (2005). African Poverty Reduction Strategy Programmes and the Fisheries Sector: Current Situation and Opportunities. Paper for DFID/FAO Sustainable Fisheries Livelihoods Programme (SFLP). Rome: FAO. www.sflp.org

Web sites

Commission for Africa - www.commissionforafrica.org

Coalition for Fair Fisheries Agreements - http://www.cape-cffa.org/

Ethical Trading Initiative - www.ethicaltrade.org

Fairtrade Foundation - www.fairtrade.org.uk

FAO - Globefish: http://www.globefish.org

FAO - Fish Trade: http://www.fao.org/fi/Trade.asp

Fish For All – NEPAD and WorldFish Center FISH FOR ALL SUMMIT – http://www.fishforall.org/ffasummit/africasummit.asp

Marine Stewardship Council - http://www.msc.org/

UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) - www.unctad.org

World Trade Organization (WTO) - www.wto.org

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This series of policy briefs, produced by the Sustainable Fisheries Livelihoods Programme, explores new directions and partnerships

in addressing fisheries and development issues

This brief was developed by

the DFID/FAO Sustainable Fisheries Livelihoods Programme (http://www.sflp.org) assisted by the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department (http://www.fao.org/fi/default.asp) and the Overseas Development Group, University of East Anglia, Norwich, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (www.uea.ac.uk/dev/odg) and IDDRA Ltd, Portsmouth, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (e-mail: neiland@iddra.org)

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To cite this publication:

FAO. 2007. Making fish trade work for development and livelihoods in west and central Africa. Policies linking trade to fisheries management. New Direction in Fisheries. – A Series of Policy Briefs on Development Issues, No. 10. Rome. 12 pp.

Also available from: http://www.sflp.org/briefs/eng/policybriefs.html





