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**AND WATER RESOURCES**

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**DRAFT**

**FISHERIES POLICY OF THE GAMBIA**

# **DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR FISHERIES AND WATER REOURCES**

## **Fisheries Department**

### **Mission Statement**

To plan, manage and develop the fisheries sector in The Gambia with the cooperation and collaboration of local, national and international institutions; formulate fisheries policy and legislations; provide advice, assistance and service to fisheries operators and businesses irrespective of gender or creed and to institutions at both national and international levels; protect and develop local fisheries industries ; develop aquaculture ; facilitate provision of credit, infrastructure machinery and equipment for operators in the sector; cater for research, technology development and technology transfer; promote training in fisheries management and development; promote joint venture agreements/arrangements; monitoring, control and surveillance of all fisheries related activities on land and within the fisheries waters of The Gambia with the ultimate objective of achieving significant reduction in poverty through increased food security, increased employment opportunities and enhanced revenue and foreign exchange earnings by way of sustainable management, exploitation and utilization of fisheries resources, having due regard for the protection and conservation of the biological diversity of species and preservation of the environment

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS**

ADB	-	African Development Bank
AFDP	-	Artisanal Fisheries Development Project
ATLAFCO	-	Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation Among African States Bordering The Atlantic Ocean
BADEA	-	Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa
CECAF	-	Committee for Eastern Central Atlantic Fisheries
CBO	-	Community Based Organization
CCRF	-	Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF)
DFID	-	United Kingdom Department for International Development
DOSFWR	-	Department of State for Fisheries and Water Resources
ECOWAS	-	Economic Community of West African States
EDF	-	European Development Fund
EEZ	-	Exclusive Economic Zone
ERP	-	Economic Recovery Programmes
EU	-	European Union
FAO	-	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
F.O.B	-	Free Onboard
GAMFIDA	-	Gambia Fisheries Development Agency
GN	-	Gambia Navy
HACCP	-	Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points
IUU	-	Illegal, Unregulated, Unreported
JICA	-	Japan International Cooperation Agency

MCS	-	Monitoring, Control and Surveillance
MFI	-	Micro - Finance Institution
MPAs	-	Marine Protected Areas
MTP	-	Medium Term Plan
NAAFO	-	National Association of Artisanal Fisheries Operators
NGO	-	Non-Governmental Organisation
PSD	-	Programme for Sustained Development
PRSP	-	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RMP	-	Residue Monitoring Plan
SFLP	-	Sustainable Fisheries Livelihoods Programme
SOS	-	Secretary of State
SRFC	-	Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission
SOCU	-	Surveillance Operations Coordinating Unit
TAGFC	-	The Association Gambian Fishing Companies
YAFSSE	-	Youth Action for Food Self-Sufficiency and Education

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b> .....	7
<b>SECTION I BACKGROUND</b> .....	10
1.1 Characteristics of the Sector .....	10
1.2 Fisheries Resources .....	10
1.3 Industrial Fishery .....	12
1.4 Artisanal Fishery .....	12
1.5 Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture .....	14
1.6 Processing and Marketing .....	14
1.7 Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) .....	15
1.8 Donor Intervention in Fisheries .....	16
1.9 Fisheries Management .....	16
1.9.1 Fisheries Institutions, Associations and NGOs .....	17-18
<b>SECTION II NATIONAL FISHERIES SECTOR</b>	
<b>GOAL AND OBJECTIVES</b> .....	19
2.1 Overall Fisheries Policy Objectives .....	19
2.2 Fisheries Sector Policy .....	19
<b>SECTION III GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR</b>	
<b>FISHERIES MANAGEMENT</b> .....	20
3.1.1 Conservation and Sustainable Resource Use .....	20
3.1.2 Global Responsibility .....	20
3.1.3 Responsible Fisheries Management .....	20
3.1.4 Collective Decision-Making .....	20
<b>SECTION IV FISHERIES POLICY AREAS AND</b>	
<b>IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES</b> .....	21
4.1 General Considerations .....	22
4.2 Policy on Marine Artisanal Fisheries .....	22
4.2.1 Objectives .....	22
4.2.2 Strategies .....	23

4.3	Policy on Monitoring, Control and Surveillance .....	24
4.3.1	Objectives .....	24
4.3.2	Strategies .....	25
4.4	Policy on Access to Financial Resources .....	25
4.4.1	Objectives .....	26
4.4.2	Strategies .....	26
4.5	Policy on Fisheries Research .....	26
4.5.1	Objectives .....	27
4.5.2	Strategies .....	27
4.6	Policy on Human Resources Development .....	28
4.6.1	Objectives .....	28
4.6.2	Strategies .....	29
4.7	Policy on Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture .....	30
4.7.1	Objectives .....	30
4.7.2	Strategies .....	30
4.8	Policy on Inter-Sectoral Linkages .....	31
4.8.1	Objectives .....	31
4.8.2	Strategies .....	31
4.9	Policy on Gender Youths and Fisheries Sector Development .....	32
4.9.1	Objectives .....	33
4.9.2	Strategies .....	33
4.10	Policy on Institutional Reforms .....	34
4.10.1	Objectives .....	34
4.10.2	Strategies .....	34
4.11	Policy on Fisheries Extension .....	35
4.11.1	Objectives .....	35
4.11.2	Strategies .....	35
4.12	Policy on Industrial Fisheries .....	36
4.12.1	Objectives .....	37
4.12.2	Strategies .....	37
4.13	Policy on Post Harvest and Quality Control .....	38
4.13.1	Objectives .....	39
4.13.2	Strategies .....	39
4.14	Policy on Fish Marketing .....	40
4.14.1	Objectives .....	41
4.14.2	Strategies .....	41
4.15	Policy on Sub-Regional and International Cooperation .....	42
4.15.1	Objectives .....	43
4.15.2	Strategies .....	43
4.16.	Policy on Sport Fishing .....	44
4.16.1	Objective .....	45
4.16.2.	Strategies .....	45

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Government of The Gambia, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), finalized the Medium Term Plan (MTP) for social and economic development in the Context of Vision 2020. Amongst other things, the Vision 2020 Programme promotes the rational exploitation and utilization of the country's natural resources, including fisheries, in a manner consistent with the overall goal of sustainable development. The MTP for the fisheries sector provides a strategic approach to address the constraints and challenges to The Gambia's development and attempts to chart the way forward for the period 2005 - 2009.

In the development of the MTP, a series of sector studies were commissioned, including a Sectoral Study on Fishing and Marine Resources Development. The Study outlined the physical, technical, economic, institutional and social constraints the fisheries sector is currently facing and also outlined the development objectives, management measures and strategies to be implemented for the period 2005 - 2009. The Study recommended a review process of the fisheries legislation which was finalized in June, 2005 and a Fisheries Policy be prepared to reflect present realities, address the needs and demands of responsible fisheries exploitation and utilization which would commensurate with resources management and conservation. The review process took account of and incorporated the principles of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) as well as other emerging trends in fisheries management.

Government has considered it necessary to specifically undertake a Fisheries Policy Review with a view to determining the nature and scope of current national priorities; the role and contribution of the Fisheries Sector to meet these priorities; the strengths; potentials and constraints of the sector; and the requirements to make the sector more responsive to the current demands on it.

The following policy objectives adopted by The Government are:-

- To effect a rational and long-term utilization of the marine and inland fisheries resources;
- To use fish as a means of improving nutritional standards of the population;

- To increase employment opportunities in the sector;
- To increase the net foreign exchange earnings;
- To increase and expand the participation of Gambians in the fisheries sector ;
- To develop aquaculture ; and,
- To improve the institutional capacity and legal framework for the management of the fisheries sector.

The Government shall take cognizance of a policy framework which would recognise that responsible fisheries management is essential for the sustained development of the fisheries sector and its economic benefits as well as the welfare of its stakeholders. To achieve this policy the following should be addressed:

- (i) National Fisheries Planning for economic development to be based on principles of responsible fisheries and sustainable livelihoods.
- (ii) Maintenance and enhancement of fisheries ecosystem, to conserve the variety and richness of the marine and fresh water resources.
- (iii) Conservation and enhancement of the quality of natural heritage of the country including wildlife, wetlands, biotic diversity, river, estuary, and beaches.
- (iv) Cooperating with international organizations for global protection of the marine and fresh water ecosystems.

Training facilities and research in fisheries matters including studies pertaining to socio-economic, cultural and legal aspects to provide adequately trained professionals and technical capacity.

- (v) Improvement of access to financial resources by promoting the review of financial and micro-finance policies/regulations to take into account the special characteristics of fisheries.

The policy framework has considered fifteen (15) critical areas fundamental to the development of the sector. Strategies necessary for effective implementation of activities to achieve the objectives mentioned earlier have also been identified.

## SECTION 1

## BACKGROUND

### 1.1 Characteristics of the Sector

The fisheries of the Republic of The Gambia is characterized by marine waters, brackish waters and freshwater regimes. The Gambia has a territorial sea extending to 12 nautical miles with an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of 200 nautical miles from the geographical baseline. The continental shelf area of The Gambia is approximately 4000 square kilometres and an EEZ of nearly 10,500 square kilometres. The River Gambia is an estuary with its source in the Fouta Djallon highlands in the Republic of Guinea (Conakry).

The responsibility for the management, development and conservation of the marine and inland fisheries resources currently rests with the The Department of State responsible for Fisheries with the Fisheries Department as its technical institution. The sector is divided into two sub-sectors: Artisanal Fishery sub-sector and Industrial Fishery sub-sector. Fish is an important part of the diet, supplying about 40% of the total animal protein consumed in The Gambia.

### 1.2 Fisheries Resources

The Gambia is endowed with considerable marine and riverine fish resources. The country is located within the Eastern Central Atlantic Ocean, an area classified as one of the richest fishing zones of the world. The marine fish resources are enhanced by the freshwater flows of the River Gambia with substantial nutrients that attract marine fish species for feeding and spawning purposes.

The first survey of fisheries potentials of Gambian waters conducted with the assistance of the FAO and UNDP in 1964 and 1965 indicated that the country is endowed with diverse demersal fish species, cephalopods, crustaceans and pelagics.

There are over 500 marine fish species which are usually classed as demersals and pelagics. The demersals include groupers, sea breams, grunts, croakers and snappers etc. The small pelagics group consists of the two sardinellas (*Sardinella aurita* and *Sardinella maderensis*), horse mackerels (*Trachurus trecae*, *Trachurus trachurus* and *Caranx rhoncus*) and mackerel

(*Scomber japonicus*). Biomass estimates of the demersal fish resources in 1986 conducted by the Spanish Institute of Oceanography, as reflected in Table 1, was 43,645 tonnes. The 1986 survey was the most comprehensive survey of demersal fish resources. Estimates provided in 1995 were obtained from a partial survey of demersals stocks conducted during a survey which was focused on pelagics fish species. The Gambia together with three coastal countries, namely; Morocco, Mauritania and Senegal have since 1995 been assisted with annual hydro-acoustic survey of small pelagic fish stocks under the project, GCP/INT/730/NOR. This project is jointly implemented by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Norwegian Institute of Marine Research (IMR). Biomass estimates of fish stocks from these surveys are shown below in table 1.

**Table 1.** Biomass estimates of fisheries resources

<b>Year</b>	<b>Biomass MT Demersals</b>	<b>Biomass MT Pelagics</b>
1986	43,645	
1992	30,000	160,000
1995	22,000	156,000
1996	-	122,000
1997	-	113,000
1998	-	173,000
1999		510,000
2000		213,000
2001Jun		217,000
2001Nov		165,000
2002Jun		470,000
2002Nov		242,000
2003Jun		62,000
2003Nov		285,000
2004Nov		212,700
2005Nov		284,000

In 2004, a study of fish resources in the River Gambia by the French Institute for Research and Development (IRD) in collaboration with the Fisheries Department revealed that the brackish and estuarine portions of the river are very rich in terms of species diversity and abundance. In fact, the study had identified about 70 fish species within the river system and several of them, especially those belonging to *Carangidae*, *Drepaneidae*,

*Clupidae, Haemulidae, Polynemidae, Cichlidae, Scianidae, Cynoglossidae,* etc, are of commercial significance. It is strongly believed that the fish resources of the River Gambia are still under exploited and improvements in fishing technology and techniques will allow for increased fish landings in the inland artisanal fishery.

### **1.3 Industrial Fishery**

There are about 20 locally registered companies in the industrial fisheries sub-sector and only 9 companies have made investments in on-shore processing factories but only 8 factories have so far been certified to export their products to European Union countries. The fishing companies are granted approval by Government to license industrial fishing vessels (trawlers) to fish in Gambian waters but because of the lack of a fisheries port in the Gambia, the majority of licensed fishing vessels land their catches in foreign ports where the fish is processed, packaged and labelled as products originating from those foreign countries. This represents a major economic loss for The Gambia.

About 2000 people are presently employed in the industrial sub-sector the majority of whom are factory workers (mainly women). The total catch by industrial fishing vessels in 2005 is estimated at 4,600 metric tonnes (Mendy, 2006, An Overview of The Fisheries Sector). About 31 trawlers were licensed to operate in Gambian waters during this period and most of them were granted access through the Senegalo-Gambian Agreement on Maritime Fisheries. It is important to note that foreign fishing vessels do not always spend the whole licensing period in Gambian waters because they usually target certain species which occur only seasonally while migrating within sub-regional waters.

### **1.4 Artisanal Fishery**

The artisanal fishery sub-sector is primarily engaged in relatively low-input fishing practices using both motorized and un-motorized fishing canoes. It is estimated that about 40% of these canoes are motorized. The artisanal fishermen employ diverse fishing gears, such as: entangling/ surround gill nets, and bottom gill nets, hand and long lines, cast nets and traps, and stow nets are use for shrimping operations in the tributaries.

Fishing is carried out in both marine, estuarine, brackish and freshwater.

Artisanal fishing was originally carried out on subsistence basis but nowadays operations are of commercial nature due to increasing market demands. Even though most of the fishermen are targeting fish for supplies to the local markets, a significant number of them are engaged in shrimping or fishing for high value finfish such as solefish and snappers, and cephalopods. High value species are supplied to Fish Processing Establishments for exports or to markets in the tourism industry. The results of the 2006 Frame Survey indicated that there are 1 410 head fishermen operating in all fish landing sites in the Gambia. Of these, 805 are Gambian nationals and 605 foreigners. Foreign nationals, mainly Senegalese, dominate the most productive Atlantic Coast Stratum with 249 head fishermen against 167 Gambians. These head fishermen provide employment to 4 694 assistant fishermen out of which 78 percent are paid and 22 percent are unpaid family members. Regarding the fishing status and habits, 1005 (71%) are fulltime fishers while the remaining 405 (29%) fish on part-time basis. There are 1061 (75 %) sedentary and 349 (25%) migratory fishermen operating in the country.

Most fishermen (74 %) are sole owners of the canoes they use in fishing operations followed by joint ownership (partnership) with 14 percent. The survey revealed that 1,329 (94%) fishermen use canoes for fishing and the most common type of canoe used is dug-out 696 (50%) followed by planked-dugout with 37 percent. There are 1 082 and 625 Un-motorized and motorized canoes respectively.

The sub-sector plays a significant role from a nutritional standpoint, being the main supplier of animal protein in the diets of most Gambians. The artisanal sub-sector in particular supplies fish to local consumers and shrimps, cephalopods and high value fish to processing establishments. It is estimated that annual artisanal fish production was 32,000 metric tonnes in 2005 with Shads (Bonga) (*Ethmalosa fimbriata*) constituting most of catch.

## **1.5 Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture**

The Inland artisanal fishery is not as vibrant as the coastal and operators often employ traditional methods. This includes both subsistence and traditional commercial fishers who sometimes sell to industrial companies their catch of shrimps, solefish and other high value species.

The riverine fishery resources are considered to be under exploited due to low level of fishing effort because fishermen are using inefficient implements and methods. There are 481 fishermen (Frame survey results, 2006) operating inland of which 253 are Gambians and are mostly fishing on part-time basis after the farming season. Some of the marine fish species caught in the river include Shad (*Ethmalosa fimbriata*), Threadfins (*Polynemidae spp.*), marine Catfish (*Arius spp.*) and Solefish (*Cynoglossidae spp.*) etc. These fish normally migrate up the river during the dry season. The area is also notable for shrimping, an activity that has now become increasingly important because of higher economic returns. The shrimps are caught by artisanal fishermen and sold to industrial companies for processing and export.

The middle and upper reaches of the river have a freshwater regime where *Tilapia nilotica* and *Clarias luzerra* and others are important fish species.

## **1.6 Processing and Marketing**

Artisanal fish processing is still traditional in nature and products are usually dried or smoked. The artisanal fish catch, apart from being processed (dried and/or smoked) is also transported fresh to the city, town and village markets within the coastal areas and in some of the major growth centers in the rural districts. Some of the processed fishery products (smoked or dried) are marketed within the country especially in the inland markets; some are exported to neighbouring West African countries where demand for fish is very high.

The artisanal catch of high value fish species (shrimps, sole fish, seabreams, lobsters and cephalopods) are purchased by industrial fishing companies for factory processing, adding value and export mainly to European Union countries.

Fish and fish products account for approximately 15% of merchandise export earnings (excluding re-exports). The bulk (about 80%) of fish and fish exports are sent to the markets of the European Union. Other export destinations include countries in Asia and Africa.

## **1.7 Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS)**

Responsibility for management of the fisheries resources is vested in the Department State responsible for Fisheries together with the Fisheries Department and governed by existing fisheries legislations. A Fisheries Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) Unit is assigned the coordination of this task in collaboration with the Gambia Navy (GN). The GN provides sea patrols and are solely responsible for enforcement. The Unit is empowered by the Fisheries Act. Several sections of the Fisheries ACT have empowered public officers to enforce management measures aimed at protecting and conserving the resources. The purpose for monitoring, control and surveillance in fisheries is essentially to enforce the existing management systems and protect the resources from illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing.

It should be noted that fisheries resources within the sub-region are generally shared. It is in recognition of this phenomenon that the seven countries, namely; The Gambia, Senegal, Mauritania, Guinea (Bissau), Guinea, Cape Verde and Sierra Leone decided to set up the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC) a regional body whose objectives are to reinforce cooperation and coordination of management of the fisheries resources among member states including, among others:

- Development of sub-regional cooperation with regard to surveillance;

To this effect, a Surveillance Operations Coordinating Unit (SOCU) has been established within the purview of the SRFC to which all the countries mentioned earlier are members so that occasional but effective patrols can be carried out within the entire sub-region to protect the resources.

## **1.8 Donor Interventions in Fisheries**

Government has benefited from a number of programmes supported by various donor agencies such as the JICA, EDF, ADB\BADEA, DFID, FAO, Republic of China – Taiwan and NGOs in the artisanal fisheries sub-sector. These programmes were mainly to improve capacity in the sector in fish handling, preservation (smoking & drying techniques), improve fish hygiene and sanitary practices, reduce post harvest losses and increase fish marketing. A considerable number of developmental advances were achieved in the artisanal fisheries sub-sector by various interventions such as the provision of ice plants and cold stores, improved fish smoking and drying facilities, stores for cured fish products, machinery and equipment in several fishing communities. Through such interventions micro-finance credit schemes have also been established for artisanal operators to procure needed implements easily.

## **1.9 Fisheries Management**

Government has recognized that fisheries management systems should encompass all operators in the sector and that sound management measures must be in place for sustainable exploitation and utilization of the resources. Reduction and regulation of fishing effort especially that of industrial operators, targeting demersal fish stocks which are reportedly declining has taken centre stage. Currently, much emphasis is being placed on the exploitation of pelagic stocks which are known to occur in abundance in Gambian waters and are grossly under-exploited. Private sector investments in this area in the form of large scale fishing, processing and marketing are therefore encouraged.

The use of harmful fishing gears and methods; fishing in marine protected areas; destruction of the mangrove ecosystem and aquatic habitats, illegal, unregulated, unreported fishing both in the industrial and artisanal sub-sectors; the application of inappropriate processing and storage techniques and facilities which cause post-harvest losses are among the many issues being addressed by formulating and implementing effective management measures.

In order to engage artisanal fisheries operators in the management of activities in exploitation of the resources and fish utilization in their communities a co-management approach involving the Fisheries Department

and community members has been introduced. Through this approach capacity building within these communities is being rigorously pursued in various fields of fisheries.

The Fisheries Act.1991 and Fisheries Regulations 1995 have recently been reviewed and several amendments made to provide a broad range of legal bases for effective implementation of management measures formulated in consonance with the principles of the F.A.O. Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF).

### **1.9.1. FISHERIES INSTITUTIONS, ASSOCIATIONS AND NGOs**

#### **(a) FISHERIES INSTITUTIONS**

The Department of State responsible for Fisheries is custodian of Government policy for the sector. The Fisheries Department is charged with the responsibility of planning, managing and developing strategies for the advancement of the sector. It is also responsible for research, providing scientific advice, assistance and service to fisheries operators and all stakeholders. The Department has four main structures (i.e. Administration and Directorate, Research and Development, Inspectorate and Quality Control and Extension) with 91 employees in the Upper, Middle and low level cadres including the secretarial staff. The MCS unit functions under the Directorate and Administration.

There has recently been a marked increase in activities due to the implementation of the Artisanal Fisheries Development Project (AFDP) which is jointly funded by the ADB, BADEA and The Gambia Government, and the Sustainable Fisheries Livelihood Programme (SFLP) being funded through the FAO, by DIFID. However, the Department is considered grossly understaffed in respect of its mandate and the numerous tasks to be undertaken.

#### **(b) ASSOCIATIONS**

In almost every fishing village along the Atlantic Coast and inland districts, associations, usually referred to as Community Based Organizations (CBOs) have been formed with a view to enabling members address their needs, problems and constraints collectively; enhance their bargaining powers and advocate the types of benefits that should accrue to them. A National

Association of Artisanal Fisheries Operators (NAAFO) has been formed to serve as an apex body and it is reported that over thirty (30) associations have already registered as affiliates to NAAFO. Efforts are being made to strengthen the administrative structure of the National Association with a view to empowering its members to influence decision making and participate effectively in co-management practices.

The Association of Gambian Fishing Companies (TAGFC) has also been formed to serve as a body which would address the needs, problems and constraints of operators in the industrial fishery sub-sector. However, there is much to be done to strengthen the Association and it is hoped that through partnership with relevant institutions (national and international) TAGFC will be better organized and be able to impact positively in the development of the fisheries sector.

#### © NGOs

Presently, there is only one (1) NGO in The Gambia involved in the fisheries sector (i.e. GAMFIDA). Its focus is mainly on the activities and concerns of operators in the artisanal sub-sectors but the Agency has several weaknesses and therefore needs support to be able to fulfill its objectives.

As an off-spring of the SFLP, an NGO which will specifically be composed of artisanal post-harvest fisheries operators (e.g. fish smokers, dryers vendors, fish un-loaders and oyster harvesters) is currently on the verge of being established. It is the intention of this organization to continue to address issues pertaining to post-harvest in fisheries with an aim to reducing losses, poverty and vulnerability in the sub-sector. The proposed NGO is pronouncedly gender sensitive as most of these post harvest operators are women.

Most recently, the Youth Action for Food Self Sufficiency and Education (YAFSSE), an NGO which has been engaged in the agriculture and water sectors, has started a programme in fisheries by training nationals in the North Bank Division, in collaboration with the Fisheries Department, in artisanal fishing, fish processing and marketing. The organization has already purchased two (2) fishing boats fully equipped with outboard engines and nets for use as a headstart in the programme.

## **SECTION II NATIONAL FISHERIES SECTOR GOAL AND OBJECTIVES**

### **2.1. Overall Fisheries Sector Policy Goal**

The overall goal of the National Fisheries Sector Policy is to promote a thriving fisheries sector, encourage responsible fishing and fish utilization practices, and sustainable development of fisheries for food security and poverty reduction in The Gambia.

### **2.2 Fisheries Sector Policy Objectives**

The policy objectives are:

- To effect a rational and long-term utilization of the marine and inland fisheries resources;
- To use fish as a means of improving nutritional standards of the population;
- To increase employment opportunities in the sector;
- To increase the net foreign exchange earnings;
- To increase and expand the participation of Gambian entrepreneurs in the fisheries sector ;
- To develop aquaculture ;
- To improve the institutional capacity and legal framework for the management of the fisheries sector ; and,
- Strengthen regional and international collaboration in the sustainable exploitation, management and conservation of shared stocks and shared water bodies, promote bio-diversity maintenance and enhancement and prevent environmental degradation.
- To strengthen institutional linkages with other relevant sectors

### **SECTION III. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR FISHERIES MANAGEMENT**

**3.1** The Government of The Gambia endorses the following guiding principles in the formulation and implementation of all fisheries policies, programmes and management of the resources.

#### **3.1.1 Conservation and Sustainable Resource Use**

The Government shall pursue conservation, ecosystem preservation and environmental quality goals by focusing on education, awareness creation, monitoring, managing and enhancing the fisheries.

The Government shall endeavor to maintain quality of natural resources (wetlands, mangroves, genetic diversity, oceans and atmosphere) in perpetuity as an obligation of the present generation to future generations.

#### **3.1.2 Global Responsibility**

The Government acknowledges that as many fisheries problems are trans-boundary and global in nature, it shall work cooperatively (regionally as well as internationally), to strengthen environmental conservation strategies and to develop and apply comprehensive and equitably just solutions.

#### **3.1.3 Responsible Fisheries Management**

The Government shall ensure that there exists a national fisheries policy consistent with the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) and that such a policy becomes an integral component of all economic, industrial and social policies

#### **3.1.4 Collective Decision-Making**

Managing the fisheries is a collective concern and challenge. Recognizing the inherent principle of co-management, the Government shall seek the participation of fishing industries,

fisherfolk, non-governmental organizations, professionals, socio-economic professional groups, cultural associations, and the public at large in fisheries planning, assessment, monitoring, control and management while minimizing conflict among various groups over contentious issues.

## **SECTION IV FISHERIES POLICY AREAS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

The multiple uses of fisheries resources are an integral part of modern fisheries management as it provides for a wider range of concerns and opportunities.

The overall goals may be pursued through management of the following critical areas within the framework of natural resource planning in the Context of Vision 2020. Policy implementation strategies are also discussed below:

- (1) Policy on Marine Artisanal Fisheries
- (2) Policy on Monitoring Control and Surveillance (MCS),
- (3) Policy on access to Financial Resources
- (4) Policy on Fisheries Research
- (5) Policy on Human Resource Development
- (6) Policy on Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture
- (7) Policy on Inter-sectoral linkages
- (8) Policy on Gender and Fisheries Sector Development
- (9) Policy on Institutional Reforms
- (10) Policy on Fisheries Extension
- (11) Policy on Industrial Fisheries

(12) Policy on Post Harvest and Quality Control

(13) Policy on Fish Marketing

(14) Policy on Sub-regional and International Cooperation

(15) Policy on Sport Fishing

#### 4.1 **GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS**

It is clear that Gambian participation in marine artisanal fishing is comparably low and fishing communities are not deriving maximum benefits from government interventions. The Atlantic Coast has the most productive fishing grounds but the off-shore pelagic stocks are under exploited due to lack of appropriate fishing technology, high cost of fuel and processing and the commercially low value of these species. Demersal species, crustaceans and other high value fish being caught by both artisanal and industrial fishermen are reportedly declining and activities should be regulated.

It is crucial to develop the inland fisheries and introduce fish farming to increase production and availability of fish in rural areas. The regulation of fishing and processing activities and application of suitable methods of reducing post-harvest losses are among other issues important for the development and management of the entire fisheries sector.

#### 4.2 **Policy on Marine Artisanal Fisheries**

The marine artisanal fisheries have received much development through infrastructural and technological interventions. It is predominated by foreign operators but Gambian participation is steadily increasing through capacity building, provision of credit facilities, sensitization and mobilization of coastal communities.

##### 4.2.1 **Objectives**

The main objectives of policy on marine artisanal fisheries are to:

- Promote sustainable exploitation of fisheries resources;

- Reduce poverty in artisanal fishing communities by enhancing their livelihoods;
- Improve food security; and
- Increase production in coastal fishing areas;

#### **4.2.2 Strategies**

The main strategies to achieve these objectives will be to:

- Provide an enabling environment for diversification of artisanal fisheries into the harvesting of unexploited and under exploited stocks;
- Provide infrastructural facilities and promote sensitization campaigns to increase Gambian participation in marine artisanal fisheries.
- Regulate artisanal fishing by controlling entry of foreign fishermen and regulating open-access;
- Regulate estuarine shrimp fishery (increase net mesh size) and introduce closed fishing areas\ fishing seasons; limit entry of especially foreign fishermen);
- Identify and address socio-economic and technical problems\constraints associated with utilization and improved technologies;
- Maintain ban on beach seine net; ban the importation and use of monofilament nets which are non bio-degradable;
- Introduce mesh size limitations of all artisanal fishing nets;
- Promote integrated development and protection of coastal areas;
- Promote responsible fisheries (awareness and sensitization activities); provision of appropriate fishing nets.

- Introduce fish size limitations of the most common species being caught in marine waters;
- Develop and implement participatory artisanal fisheries management systems; and,
- Regulate oyster harvesting in collaboration with relevant institutions and organizations (closed seasons, spawning period etc.)
- Ensure that fishing canoes are registered marked and using internationally acceptable standards of marking.

### **4.3 Policy on Monitoring, Control and Surveillance**

The benefits from fisheries resources can only be guaranteed if an effective, comprehensive and integrated system of Monitoring Control and Surveillance – (MCS) - is in place. The protection of fisheries resources from IUU fishing cannot be over-emphasized and conservation measures adopted in respect of regeneration, bio-diversity and protection of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) should also be enforced through Monitoring Control and Surveillance operations.

#### **4.3.1 Objectives**

The main objectives for Monitoring, Control and Surveillance are:

- Protection, conservation of the resources and regulation of fishing operations; and,
- Development of the capacity of relevant national institutions to undertake appropriate MCS of our fisheries waters.

#### **4.3.2 Strategies**

The strategies for an effective MCS system will be to:

- Promote participation of fisheries communities in MCS within the artisanal sub-sector;
- Ensure adequate coverage/reporting and regulation of artisanal fish production and fishing effort;
- Ensure monitoring of movements of all types of industrial fishing vessels,
- Use modern technology (such as satellites, coastal radars, aerial surveillance, Vessel Monitoring System etc.) for fisheries protection and regulation;
- Impose strict penalties such as fines, withdrawal of licenses, etc. as a deterrence against harmful fishing practices and IUU fishing;
- Provide appropriate and adequate support for MCS operations (i.e. suitable patrol boats, communication equipment etc.);
- Improve monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) at sub-regional level, through the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC); and,
- Improve capacity building of MCS unit at the Fisheries Department and Gambia Navy and other relevant institutions.

#### **4.4 Policy on Access to Financial Resources**

The flow of private investment funds into the Fisheries sector is inadequate and needs to be enhanced for improved fisheries development. The artisanal sub-sector is constrained by lack of access to low interest micro-finance credit facilities and development in the industrial sub-sector is forestalled by lack of access to working capital and term lending and high interest rates on loans from commercial banks.

##### **4.4.1 Objective**

Government objective is to create an enabling environment whereby fisheries operators and investors can have access to adequate funds for investment in the sector.

#### **4.4.2 Strategies**

In pursuing this policy, the focus will be on promoting the development and adoption of financial and micro-financial policies that take into account the special characteristics of the fisheries sector, as well as the improvement of the business environment. Specifically:

- Government will facilitate access to credit and improve the business environment for the development of both artisanal and industrial fisheries;
- Concessionary tax rates and duty waivers on capital equipment and related items will be provided as incentives for potential investors in the sector;
- Collaborate with MFIs to assess the needs of artisanal fisheries operators;
- Contribute to developing appropriate micro-finance strategies incorporating the peculiarities of the artisanal fisheries sub sector; and,
- Sensitization of fisherfolk on credit facilities, access procedures and the management of loans for sustainability.
- Encourage the development of an artisanal fisheries insurance policy.

#### **4.5 Policy on Fisheries Research**

Fisheries research is an essential component of fisheries development and management. Fish stocks are renewable resources but could be depleted if exploitation levels are not controlled. It is therefore important to assess their status such as level of abundance, seasonal occurrence and level of exploitation through regular monitoring, collection and analysis of catch\effort data and periodic

surveys. Emphasis should also be given to research in other areas such as fish technology, fishing gear efficiency (catchability); marketing; fish hygiene and sanitation; aquaculture; anthropological, cultural and socio-economic studies.

#### **4.5.1 Objectives**

The main objectives of policy in research are to:

Generate scientific information for decision-making in management and development of the fisheries sector and improvement of fishing community livelihoods; and

- Adopt appropriate techniques/technologies to enhance production and productivity, reduce post harvest losses, improve the quality of products, products development and increase exports.

#### **4.5.2 Strategies**

The strategies for research shall be to:

- Facilitate the conduct of adaptive fisheries research within appropriate institutions in the country;
- Strengthen the fisheries database with proper equipment, capacity building and funding to attain applicable results in the analysis of such data;
- Enhance collaborative research and information exchange with national and international research institutions;
- Disseminate research findings to all stakeholders to enable them collaborate in formulating and implementing management measures and development plans;
- Collaborate with relevant agencies/institutions responsible for the monitoring and control of aquatic pollution, environmental degradation and sanitation, Coastal Protection, Marine Protection Areas, Mangrove Ecosystems and other related biotic ecosystems;

- Introduce adaptive aquaculture research activities with a view to breeding indigenous species and applying effective management of fish farms;
- Adopt appropriate techniques for disease control and feed formulation to suit local conditions in fish farms;
- Undertake periodic surveys to establish the potentials and biomass levels of the target fisheries (marine and inland); and
- Undertake cultural and socio-economic research studies in fisheries.

## **4.6 Policy on Human Resources Development**

Human Resources Development in fisheries requires systematic training. In the past, there have been limited training programmes for both management and stakeholders (industrial and artisanal fisheries). In the 1970s and 1980s many Gambians were trained in different professional and technical disciplines. Most of these trained personnel either retired or left the profession, which aggravated the manpower shortfall. Generally, very few women in the past had the opportunity to be trained or recruited but recently many have been trained in various disciplines under the SFLP pilot project and the AFDP training component.

Fisheries Department officials have also benefited from the AFDP training component in advanced and middle level studies, and opportunities for others will soon be obtained.

### **4.6.1 Objectives**

The policy objectives in fisheries human resources development are to:

- Improve the capacity of fisheries administration for planning, developing and implementing policies, projects, research and management plans; and,

- Improve capacity of artisanal and industrial operators to better manage their undertakings and participate effectively in co-management systems.

#### **4.6.2 Strategies**

Strategies for human resource development shall be to:

- Assess the manpower and training needs of the institutions responsible for fisheries and related sectors;
- Train fisheries personnel from vocational to professional levels;
- Facilitate and support the training of auxiliary fisheries extension workers and data collectors to have general knowledge in fisheries management;
- Support and facilitate skills development and improved knowledge of women in the fisheries sector and other related sectors;
- Promote an appropriate incentive scheme in terms of remuneration and other conditions of service for fisheries personnel;
- Promote thematic training workshops and seminars on poverty reduction, fisheries planning, and management and appropriate technologies;
- Promote and support capacity building in the industrial fisheries sub-sector, particularly with regard to improving products quality hygiene and sanitation in fish processing establishments; and,
- Promote fisheries studies in the curricula of Lower Basic, Upper Basic, Secondary and Tertiary institutions.

#### **4.7 Policy on Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture**

Inland fisheries constitute a river ecosystem and floodplains. It is mainly capture fisheries and the use of some of the oldest hunting

practices. Its contribution should be significant in rural protein intake, but the level of fishing effort exclusively by artisanal operators is low primarily due to the use of poor implements and that many of these fishermen are part-time operators.

Modern aquaculture practices are recent in The Gambia. Aquaculture contribution to food security in The Gambia has great potentials because a considerable part of the River is within the freshwater regime.

#### **4.7.1 Objective**

The main policy objective for inland fisheries and aquaculture (including mariculture) development is to effect meaningful contribution to food security and livelihoods' improvement for the rural population.

#### **4.7.2 Strategies**

The main strategies for the enhancement of inland fisheries and aquaculture sub-sector are to:

- Promote the development of aquaculture (commercial and small-scale, and oyster culture);
- Assess the potentials of inland fisheries resources;
- Collaborate in river basin management systems with relevant institutions;
- Promote the production, preservation, processing and marketing of capture and cultured fish ;
- Formulate and implement a Residue Monitoring Plan for aquaculture systems and products;
- Facilitate the establishment of mariculture production systems of high value, exportable species (e.g. Crustaceans);
- Maintain the biodiversity of inland fisheries ecosystem.; and,

- Support the acquisition of fishing, processing, storage and transportation facilities for inland operators.

## **4.8 Policy on Inter-Sectoral Linkages**

The management of fisheries resources is directly linked to several institutions in other sectors with respect to planning, development, regulations, protection and conservation. Such linkages are interdependent, inherent and essential for overall national development.

### **4.8.1 Objectives**

The primary objective of policy in inter-sectoral linkages is to improve sustainable management of the sector and service delivery to fishing communities and the industry.

### **4.8.2 Strategies**

Government strategies for inter-sectoral linkages are to:

- Facilitate access of fishing communities to basic facilities, such as fishing and fish processing related equipment, machinery (ice plants etc.), means for fish distribution, potable water, health, schools, accessible roads and electricity;
- Collaborate with relevant institutions in establishing criteria for granting incentives to promote private sector investments in the sector;
- Sensitize the fishing communities on HIV/AIDS, malaria, poliomyelitis etc., in collaboration with relevant institutions;
- Promote the integration of fisheries in poverty reduction planning and implementation (PRSP) and in the decentralisation processes in collaboration with relevant institutions;
- Collaborate with relevant institutions in establishing export and import tariffs, sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) standards for

fishery products and fish processing establishments and monitoring exports of fish products; and managing fish waste.

- Collaborate with relevant institutions in developing and implementing a strategy for the rational use of fuel-wood, felling of trees for boat building and creation of wood lots for fish smoking and seek alternative materials suitable for fish smoking and boat building activities;
- Participate in management of The Gambia River Basin and coastal zones; and,
- Participate in the protection and conservation of wetlands, mangrove ecosystems, the marine and inland fishery and biodiversity in collaboration with other institutions

#### **4.9 Policy on Gender , Youths and Fisheries Sector Development**

In artisanal inland and marine fisheries, women are mainly involved in the post-harvest activities. Women spend long hours in activities related to fish processing and marketing and have considerable influence on business decisions in the artisanal sub-sector.

Gambian youths, particularly the males, are not significantly engaged in the fisheries sector due to several factors such as, lack of interest in fishing, insufficient sensitization and awareness of the potentials in the sector, difficulties in mobilizing the youth in fisheries activities because of their low regard for the profession, lack of training in fishing techniques and lack of access to credit facilities.

##### **4.9.1 Objective**

The policy objective is to enhance effective participation of women and youths at all levels in the fisheries sector, including fisheries management and administration, trade and investment.

## **4.9.2 Strategies**

Government strategies for gender shall be to:

- Support and facilitate skills development and improved knowledge of women and youths in fisheries sector;
- Increase the number of adequately trained youths and women in fisheries related activities such as management, handling, processing and marketing;
- Train personnel of the Department of State responsible for Fisheries and the Department of Fisheries in gender analysis and planning;
- Sensitize fishing communities on gender related issues and encourage participation of women in co-management systems;
- Facilitate the access to finance and appropriate technologies for use by youths and women operators and investors;
- Encourage and support Gambian youths to engage in both artisanal and industrial fishing operations;
- Facilitate and encourage youths and women in fish production by promoting ownership of fishing units, fish processing establishments and marketing outlets both in the artisanal and industrial fisheries; and,
- Encourage the formation of associations of youths and women fisheries operators to collectively enable them address issues that are particularly gender sensitive and relate to youths development.

## **4.10 Policy on Institutional Reforms**

The Fisheries Act of 1977 makes provision for the Management, Planning and Development of the Fisheries and Fishing Industries of The Gambia.

The Exclusive Management and Control of fisheries within Gambian waters is vested in the Department of State responsible for Fisheries. Management and control is exercised by directly or through the Secretary of State, the Director of Fisheries or any other authorized officer.

In order to adequately respond to the changing nature of the sector institutional reforms should be dynamic with a view to creating the enabling environment for the development and effective management of the artisanal and industrial sub-sectors.

#### **4.10.1 Objectives**

The policy objectives for institutional reforms are mainly to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Department of State responsible for Fisheries and the Fisheries Department in performing their mandates, including planning and implementing national fisheries policies, projects, management measures and statistical reporting and analysis.

#### **4.10.2 Strategies**

The main strategies to achieve these objectives are as follows:

- A decentralized organizational dispensation will be established within the purview of the Local Government Decentralization Act such that the Department of State responsible for Fisheries and the Fisheries Department would be capable of rapid, rational and consistent decision making and actions that would relate to the socio-economic environment in which the sector operates, in collaboration with relevant institutions, CBOs and NGOs.
- The existing legislations will be reviewed to make adequate provisions for management of industrial, artisanal marine and inland fisheries and aquaculture;
  - Promote the establishment of a fisheries training institution;  
and,

- Strengthen human resources and institutional capacity at the Fisheries Department.

#### **4.11 Policy on Fisheries Extension**

The Extension system entails the transfer of policies, management strategies and technological innovations to the operators in the sector. Government will therefore concentrate on the dissemination of information relating to fisheries, the application of such knowledge in harmony with traditional knowledge and the mobilization of operators and resources for the purpose of improving their welfare and developing the sector.

##### **4. 11.1 Objective**

The policy objective of the extension system is to enhance the capacity of fisherfolk to practice responsible fishing, improve utilization of fish and fishery products and for effective participation in decision-making affecting their livelihoods.

##### **4. 11.2 Strategies**

The strategies will take into cognizance the following:

- Facilitating the institutionalization of a national fisheries stakeholders forum (artisanal and industrial);
- Establishing a community based participatory extension system, making use of groups, associations and cooperatives of fisheries operators in collaboration with related NGOs and Local Government Authorities;
- Training fisherfolk to carry out MCS activities to support the efforts of the Fisheries Department, Navy and related institutions in collaboration with Local Government Authorities;
- 
- Encouraging fisherfolk to adopt appropriate fish handling and preservation and processing techniques;

- Promoting training programmes on integrated fisheries systems (marine, inland and aquaculture) for fisheries extension staff, CBOs, NGOs and Local Government Authorities;
- Developing appropriate extension packages for fisherfolk in business and financial management in collaboration with relevant institutions;
- Providing adequate logistic support to extension personnel to facilitate effective delivery of improved and adaptable technologies to fisherfolk in collaboration with Local Government Authorities NGOs and CBOs;
- Support communities to properly manage fisheries resources, fish landing sites and development projects in collaboration with Local Government Authorities; and,
- Establishing effective linkages between research, extension and application of successful research undertakings for development and management purposes.

## **4.12 Policy on Industrial Fisheries**

This fishery is dominated by foreign owned vessels, with nationals acting as agents and employing limited numbers of Gambians as deckhands. The catches of these vessels are not landed in the country. There are very few Gambian owned fishing vessels but all the Fish Processing Establishments are owned by Gambians. These factories are not operating optimally due to high cost of electricity and fuel and lack of sufficient raw materials. They rely on artisanal fishermen for supplies of high value fish, shrimps and cephalopods for processing and export but these are hardly enough to cater for all establishments.

### **4.12.1 Objectives**

The primary objectives of this policy are to ensure that:

- Production increases sustainably in the industrial sub-sector; through increased participation of private operators;

- Responsible fishing is practiced;
- Optimal fisheries resources rent (licenses etc) are obtained;
- Employment opportunities are created for nationals; and,
- The regulations governing industrial fishing, processing and export are adhered to.

#### **4.12.2 Strategies**

To achieve the objectives, Government shall:

- Create the enabling environment to facilitate the acquisition of fishing vessels for private operators;
- Enforce existing regulations in fishing operations and landing of catch, processing and marketing;
- Facilitate and encourage all industrial fishing companies to employ Gambians;
- Periodical review of the vessel licensing scheme to reflect the value of the catch and collection of resource rents and fees;
- Encourage entry into other types of fishing, such as purse seining and long lining etc., to ensure optimal exploitation of the pelagic fishery;
- Facilitate and encourage private sector/community participation in industrial fisheries development by promoting the incorporation of the special characteristics of fisheries in the national investment code; and provide other incentives.
- Emphasize the reduction of by-catches and promote utilization of by-catches;
- Undertake periodic surveys to review existing minimum fishing gear mesh size regulations and regulations on fishing zones limitations;

- Undertake periodic surveys to ascertain the level of industrial fishing effort on various aspects of the marine fishery, species biomass levels, regeneration trends and threats of depletion;
- Collaborate with relevant institutions to improve MCS of industrial fishing operators;
- Develop cooperation with sister countries for the management of shared stocks (straddling and migratory stocks);
- Encourage capacity building in Fish Processing Establishments to ensure compliances with international standards; and,
- Enforce regulations pertaining to fishery products health conditions and factory infrastructures, operations and maintenance to ensure compliance with international standards.

#### **4.13 Policy on Post Harvest and Quality Control**

Post-harvest activities are as important as those of production because fish is highly perishable, especially in tropical regions, and losses resulting from improper handling, preservation, processing and storage can be so significant that efforts made to catch the fish may appear worthless. It is estimated that (continuous observations by fisheries personnel based on experience) about 20-30% of losses are incurred in the artisanal sub-sector due to bacterial and biochemical action on fish tissue or infestation by beetles and maggots or both. Although losses may not be so high in the industrial sub-sector, however, as there exist a definite link between factories and artisanal operators for supplies of high value fish it can be assumed that considerable degree of losses do occur due to improper handling or insufficient icing and poor transportation facilities thereby reducing the quality of raw materials meant for processing and export.

Quality control is an indispensable aspect of management of pre-harvest and post-harvest fisheries and ensures that the wholesomeness of products for local consumption and export is adequately maintained.

#### **4.13.1 Objectives**

The main objectives of policy in post harvest and quality control are to:

- Reduce post harvest losses and increase shelf-life of fisheries products;
- Ensure adequate supply of fish and fish products by applying effective and sustainable preservation, processing and storage methods;
- Ensure prevalence of internationally accepted standards in infrastructure and operations of Fish Processing Establishments; and,
- Improve the quality of fish and fishery products and ensure compliance with international standards on SPS and quality assurance.

#### **4.13.2 Strategies**

The main strategies to achieve these objectives shall be:

- Develop and implement a comprehensive fish inspection and quality control system incorporating HACCP principles in collaboration with the Department of State for Health and other relevant institutions.
- Ban the use of hazardous chemicals in fishery products, artisanal processing facilities and Fish Processing Establishments in collaboration with the Department of State for Health and other relevant institutions.
- Facilitate access to potable water at artisanal fish landing and processing sites.
- Facilitate the adoption of improved smoke houses, ovens and packaging materials for artisanal operators;

- Enforce regulations, pertaining to international and national quality standards in fish handling and processing, factory operations, transportation, fishery products and export;
- Sensitization on diversification of packaging methods for smoked and dried products;
- Facilitate the establishment of cold stores in inland, coastal fishing communities and the availability of refrigeration trucks for distribution and marketing of fish and fisheries products;
- Facilitate the establishment of fish stores for smoked and dried fish at distant markets in urban and inland centres;
- Promote the establishment of central fish market infrastructure and shore-based facilities for both artisanal and industrial fisheries (ice making plants, cold rooms etc) at selected sites;
- Promote the establishment of a fishing harbour for use by artisanal and industrial operators; and,
- Undertake capacity building and institutional reforms at the Fisheries Department and in both the artisanal and industrial sub-sectors.

#### **4.14 Policy on Fish Marketing**

The marketing of fish and fishery products is one of the critical determinants of economic benefits to be derived from the resources. It is estimated that about 80% of value-added fishery products are exported to countries in Europe, until recently. However, total exports have been dwindling since 1999 from 1,676.5 tonnes valued at D36.6 million to 405.4 tonnes valued at D7.7 million in 2004 (f.o.b values 1996). Market destinations change drastically in 2005 with more focus on exports to the sub-region amounting to 478.4 tonnes valued at D4.0 million and only 272.0 tonnes to EU countries and Asia but valued a D5.9 million. It is note worthy that, out of total exports of 751.0 tonnes in 2005 the amount sold to EU markets generated more financial returns because high value species were transformed into value-added products and exported.

Market diversification of exports should be explored in view of the fact that low-value pelagic fish are in abundance in Gambian waters and investments in the exploitation of this fishery are being encouraged.

Local marketing of fish and fishery products is primarily dominated by artisanal operators. Due to the traditional nature of these activities, involving fresh, smoked and dried products sold in dispersed markets countrywide, it is technically difficult to ascertain the amounts being marketed presently. The greater part of artisanal catches is marketed locally, particularly in the urban and peri-urban centres.

#### **4.14.1 Objectives**

The main objectives of policy in Fish Marketing are:-

- To increase the availability of fish and fishery products countrywide for local consumption;
- Increase revenue and foreign exchange earnings into the sector; and,
- Increase employment opportunities by way of creating adequate channels for marketing fish and fishery products locally and abroad.

#### **4.14.2 Strategies**

The strategies will be to :-

- Ensure Fish Processing Establishments adequately comply with international standards for continued exports to lucrative markets in EU countries, U.S.A. and Asia etc.;
- Encourage development of new products for unexplored markets worldwide;
- Encourage and support investments in the pelagic fishery;
- Encourage and support market diversification especially Intra-African trade with particular reference to ECOWAS;
- Create and support linkages with relevant national and international

Institutions/organizations for access to market information.

- Facilitate the creating of adequate and acceptable channels of marketing all types of fish and fishery products;
- Create incentives for exporters of fish and fishery products in collaboration with relevant institutions;
- Undertake periodic review of f.o.b values of fish and fishery products;
- Ensure that monies accrued from exports through incentive schemes are repatriated into the country via the banking system; and,
- Collaborate with relevant institutions in establishing export and import tariffs for fishery products.

#### **4.15 POLICY ON SUB-REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

The Gambia is one of the founding members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Sub-Region Fisheries Commission (SRFC). Apart from being a member of F.A.O\UN, CECAF and ATLAFCO it is also a signatory to several international conventions such, the Convention on Biodiversity, International Union for the Conservation of Nature, United Nations Convention on Law of the Sea etc.

Sustainable management of fisheries resources, especially when a considerable portion of the stocks are shared between neighboring countries, can only be implemented through cooperation and harmonization of strategies. It is in this vein that the primary objectives of the SRFC, as set out in the convention creating the commission, are; (a) long term harmonization of policies of member states regarding preservation, conservation and exploitation of their marine living resources, and (b) reinforcement of member states cooperation for the benefit of their respective populations.

Protecting fisheries resources and adhering to the F.O.A Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) together with the principles enshrined in

the conventions relating to fisheries are also key factors considered for establishing sub-regional and international cooperation.

#### **4.15.1 Objectives**

The policy objectives are:-

- To strengthen sub-regional and international cooperation in the management of fisheries resources with particular reference to shared stocks; and,
- To be able to formulate and implement national management measures in consonance with the current principles of sub-regional and international conventions regarding fisheries protection, preservation, exploitation and utilization.

#### **4.15.2 Strategies**

The strategies will be to:-

- Adopt resolutions made during sub-regional and international meetings, seminars and conferences pertaining to harmonization of fisheries policies and management strategies;
- Support the work of the SRFC, ECOWAS and other organizations to which The Gambia is a member;
- Exchange information and professional visits with countries who are also members of sub-regional and international organizations as The Gambia ;
- Disseminate information obtained from sub-regional and international organizations to national stakeholders to increase awareness and participation in fisheries matters ;
- Encourage joint surveillance patrols of sub-regional fisheries waters through the SRFC and bi-lateral agreements to enforce regulations and protect the resources ;

- Encourage and support joint research between neighbouring countries and international organizations to ascertain the status of sub-regional resources and the marine ecosystem at large ;
- Encourage sub-regional, regional and international trade in fish and fishery products ; and,
- Seek to acquire appropriate equipment, machinery, materials and transfer of technology for use by national fisheries institutions and operators through sub-regional and international cooperations to enhance capacity building and strengthen cooperation existing between The Gambia and member states of such organizations.

#### **4.16. Policy on Sport Fishing**

Sporting Fishing is generally regarded as an activity that falls within the purview of the Department of State for Tourism because almost all the operators are tourists. However, these activities should be regulated to ensure that fishing implements and methods being used are not harmful to the resources ; expeditions are not carried out fish in spawning and breeding areas, and that business establishments engaged in sport fishing are properly monitored.

In order to enable systematic management and regulate the inflow of operators in this sub-sector, it is also necessary to effect a licensing scheme for vessels being used in Sport Fishing operations, in collaboration with the Department of state for Tourism.

#### **4.16.1. Objectives**

The main policy objectives for Sport Fishing are to :

- Regulate fishing methods and implements to protect the juvenile stocks from harmful practices.
- Delimit areas along the coast, estuary and in the tributaries to prevent sport fishing in spawning and breeding grounds.
- Regulate the inflow of operators into the sub-sector and ensure that optimum revenue is obtained through an effective licensing scheme.

#### **4.16.2. Strategies**

The strategies will be to :

- Facilitate private sector investments in Sport Fishing to augment promotion of ventures in ecotourism in collaboration with the Department of State of Tourism ;
- Ensure that all fishing vessels used in these operations are seaworthy and registered in collaboration with the Gambia Ports Authority (GPA)
- Establish boundaries in collaboration with the GPA where Sport Fishing will not be permitted ;
- Ensure that operations comply with regulations pertaining to fishing gears and methods in collaboration with the Gambia, Navy ;
- Sensitise Operators on the need to be registered and licensed primarily as a tool to monitor and regulate their activities for management purposes.
- Maintain a register of all Sport Fishing Establishments in collaboration with the Department of State for Tourism.

- Enforce all fisheries regulations in collaboration with the Gambia Navy.