

3. DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

Although the artisanal fishery development objectives are similar in all the countries of the region, there is a difference which lies much more in the means at the disposal of each country and the policies carried out for their achievement.

Incitement instruments are used by countries where the artisanal fishery production is an essential element of the national economy, as well as by those whose economic situation is above the average. For some years now, the artisanal fishery integrated development strategy is an important component part of development policies in many countries in the region.

It is also very highly appreciated by money lenders. Unfortunately, in the present economic context, governments' capacities to guarantee to administrative and research institutions, the financial and human means likely to enable them to play their role are seriously reduced.

3.1. Objectives and Priorities

The objectives assigned to the artisanal fishery sector by national authorities are generally identical in most of the region's countries. They are :

- The increase of production so as to ensure food self - sufficiency in animal proteins;
- The creation of jobs to fight against unemployment and rural exodus;
- The increase of fishermen's income and welfare.

The earning of currency through exportation is also parts and parcel of the sector's objectives but concerns industrial fishery in priority.

However, in a context of intensive exploitation of the resource, some of those objectives are incompatible. Thus the arrival of new operators in the fishery sector will cause, in the long run, a fall in the output and consequently in incomes.

Today a greater attention is given to the “sustainable development” aspect. This is particularly appropriate in the case of the exploitation of a resource which is both renewable and limited. It is henceforth an essential point when identifying and formulating projects. In a number of countries where the notion of liberalization of the economy has been introduced recently, incitement to create enterprises - namely by the youth - is also an important component of the sector’s development policy. This new priority given to the artisanal fishery almost everywhere is due to several factors: the failure of industrial fishery development policies (Angola), the low fishery potential (Togo, Benin, Zaïre), the limitation of financial resources and the emergency for all the countries to solve employment problems. All these led the region’s governments to favour artisanal fishery.

3.2. Development Policies

In many countries, the artisanal fishery sector benefits from a policy of fiscal advantages. Thus in Ghana, outboard motors’ fuel is not subject to tax, and imported motors and fishing nets are duty free. In Gabon, customs duties are reduced to 7% for imported fishery inputs and a 50% tax reduction on fuel is under study. In Côte d’Ivoire, the fuel and certain fishing materials are exempted from taxes. In Senegal, all fishing equipments are granted an exoneration system while the fishing fuel is subsidized. A subsidy policy exists in Nigeria as well. In Mauritania, fishing material and gears are exempted from tax. In Sao Tome and Principe, the fuel is subsidized within the framework of the IFAD project. Certain countries also have a policy of low - interest - credits (Nigeria).

However, the use of these fiscal instruments is more and more questioned by international financing bodies. Thus, in Gambia, under the pressure of the IMF, the supply of fishermen with subsidized fuel has been stopped until an analysis of the distribution and destination of that fuel is made. In Sierra Leone, the IMF and the World Bank have also imposed that subsidies to the sector stop.

In other countries no subsidy or tax exemption policy is applied. It is the case of Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Angola, Congo, and also Equatorial Guinea, Togo, Benin, and Zaïre.

An Orientation adopted recently by certain countries within the framework of the liberalization of their economy is the privatization of development projects at the end of the foreign assistance. This experience was made by countries like Gabon and Guinea Bissau.

The liberalization of the economy has definitely put an end to the system of fish price fixing by authorities at levels which generally discourage producers. One of the last countries to have practiced it is Guinea Bissau which has given it up now ¹⁴.

The development policy based on fisherfolk cooperatives is no longer in fashion in most countries. This grouping policy more or less imposed by the State has taken several forms none of which has given the expected results (Senegal ¹⁵, Benin ¹⁶, Angola). Exceptions are Guinea and Sierra Leone which keep on developing fisherfolk cooperatives. Instead, it seems that the integrated development strategy is more and more accepted in the region not only by governments but also by money lenders. The most involved countries in the implementation of this strategy are Benin, Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone ¹⁷.

3.3. National Institutions Supporting the Sector

In all the countries the artisanal fishery sector enjoys an institutional framework which can either be limited to a central administration or extended to research and training institutions.

3.3.1 Administrative institutions

In all the countries fisheries depend on a Department or a Ministry. A true technical specialized ministry exists only in Mauritania, Guinea Bissau and Angola. The financial, material and human means allocated to the administration are really low. This situation, which is not a new one, is worsening under the effects of Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). As in the other national administrations, there is a reduction in staff and running costs. Equally it is also almost impossible to make the least investment without the help of foreign partners.

Despite such an unfavorable context a certain number of institutional changes were noted in 1992, which aim at optimizing the use of the more and more limited resources. In Angola for example, the government has created an Institute for the artisanal Fishery Development, an Institute for Fishery research, and two Fishery Schools. All those institutions depend on the Fisheries Ministry which itself was reorganized in January 1992. In Cape Verde, the government has created the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development, on which depends henceforth the State Secretariat for Fisheries. In Cape Verde also, the Institute for the Promotion and Development of the Artisanal Fishery (IDEPE) and the National Institute for Fishery Research (INIP) have merged into one National Institute for Fisheries Development (NIFD). In Guinea, it is henceforth the new Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MAAR) which has inherited the attributions of the former State Secretariat for Fisheries.

¹⁴ It is however maintained for frozen fish landed by industrial fishery units.

¹⁵ Kébé, 1993

¹⁶ Lassisi, 1993

¹⁷ Horemans and Satia (ed), 1993

In Sierra Leone, the April 1992 coup provoked numerous changes among the Staff of the Fisheries Department. In Equatorial Guinea, since March 1992 the fisheries sector depends on the Ministry of Agriculture, Forests, Animal Husbandry and fisheries which is under the responsibility of the government's Vice Prime Minister. In Sao Tome and Principe the responsibility of the sector is passed from the Ministry of Agriculture and rural development on to the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Tourism and Fisheries.

3.3.2. Research Institutions

There is an important number of fisheries research Centers in the region. Among these we can mention.

- National Center for Oceanographic and Fisheries research (NCOFR), Nouhadibou, Mauritania.
- Oceanographic Research Center of Dakar Thiaroye (ORCDT), Dakar, Senagal.
- Institute of food technology (IFT) Dakar, Senegal.
- French Institute of Scientific Research for cooperation Development (ORSTOM) which has centers in Conakry, Guinea and Pointe Noire, Congo.
- Institute of Marine Biology and Oceanography (IMBO), Freetown, Sierra Leone.
- Oceanographic Research Center (ORC) Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire.
- Nigeria Institute for Oceanography and Marine Research (NIOMR), Lagos, Nigeria.
- Food Research Institute (FRI), Accra, Ghana.

Fishery Research Station of Limbe, Cameroon. There are also research capacities in Cape Verde (National Institute for Fisheries Development, NIFD), in Guinea Bissau (Center of Applied Research in Fisheries, CARF), in Angola (Fishery Research Center, FRC), and in Equatorial Guinea.

Unfortunately, in addition to the limited financial means - be it the investment or running budget - two main factors limit the scope of those research centers' works¹⁸. First of all, there is very little consultation and coordination with fisheries administrations in the definition of research priorities. This often limits the operational character of the results obtained. Moreover, it is noticed that there is a high concentration on the study of the biological aspects of the resource, thus neglecting the socio economic questions.

It is encouraging to see a certain number of research programmes develop in cooperation with foreign institutions. The bergen Institute of Fishery Research, Norway, has undertaken, in collaboration with FAO and the Coastal countries, a number of studies financed by the Norwegian agency of cooperation NORAD. France, through ORSTOM, cooperates with Mauritania, Senegal, Guinea and Cote d'Ivoire in the fields of population dynamics and coastal areas development. The Portuguese Research Institute (INIP) has undertaken some cooperation programmes with Guinea Bissau, Cape Verde, Sao Tome

¹⁸ World bank, Study of International Fishery Research, (SIFR), 1991

and Principe and Angola. As for the Russian Federation, it has some research programmes with Mauritania, Guinea Bissau, and Sierra Leone. Spain (IEO) and France (IFREMER) have signed some cooperation agreements with CNROP (Mauritania) . Concerning the International Center for the Management of living Aquatic Resource (ICMLAR), it has started cooperating with Sierra Leone.

3.4. Fisheries Legislation

All the countries of the region have a legislation, more or less well adapted, in the field of fishery. This legislation has been brought up to date in Ghana in 1991, in Nigeria and Angola in 1992, and it is under study in Sao Tome and Principe. Those legislations generally decide on an exclusive fishing area for artisanal fishery, forbid a certain number of fishing techniques (explosives, poison, but also beach Seine in Guinea), or define the norms of certain gears (minimum meshing, for example).

Unfortunately it is noticed that most of the region's countries do not have the means to enforce that legislation. However, there are two noteworthy exceptions Senegal which has a real and efficient system of Control and supervision, and Nigeria which benefits from the support of a monitoring, control and supervision project financed by the world Bank.

3.5. Regional Policies in Fisheries

A certain number of regional structures specific to the fishery sector have been set up since many years in some cases ¹⁹. Among these we can mention

The Fisheries Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic region (CECAF), created in 1967, includes the coastal countries from Morocco to Zaire and 10 non African countries. It has helped the region's countries to improve their information system and their knowledge of the resource. Unfortunately, with the lack of support project to the committee (1989), it is noticed that its role of area of exchange and experience has decreased. Those exchanges tend to be carried out among certain institutions more or less well equipped and which enjoy assistance programmes (3.3.2.) However, numerous countries of the region still do not have access to those information.

The sub-regional Commission for Fisheries composed of Cape Verde, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mauritania and Senegal. It was created in 1985 and constitutes a cooperation basis in the field of fisheries management and development for those countries characterized by a geographical and biological interdependence of fish stocks. It allows, in the long run, the elaboration of joint policies and favors cooperation in the field of access to fishing areas between member states. However, its low financial means prevent it from organizing regularly the work meetings planned.

¹⁹ For more details see Dioh, 1991

The Ministerial Conference on fishery cooperation between the African States bordering on the Atlantic Ocean took place in Rabat in April 1989. On that occasion, the states of the region expressed their Common will to reinforce and develop their cooperation in the fields of resource evaluation and preservation, as well as in fishery production. For that purpose, they insisted on the development of Marine scientific research and the reinforcement of professional and technical training.

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). ECOWAS, created in 1975, includes, among the region's countries: Benin, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mauritania, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo. Though the treaty doesn't envisage any specific measure regarding fisheries, the UNDP, to reinforce economic cooperation and the integration of West African Countries, finances a project which has a fishery component. Within that framework a certain number of activities are undertaken which cannot be, properly speaking, considered as a regional policy.

The regional Committee for the Guinea Golf Fisheries (RCGGF) was created in 1984 by Congo, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Sao Tome and Principe and Zaire. This Committee aims at coordinating, harmonizing, and developing the exploitation of the Common stocks which are in the exclusive economic areas of member states and managing them. Up to now Equatorial Guinea has not ratified the convention, what reduces the Committee to four countries. For various reasons, the Committee is not yet really functional.

Note that there is no real regional policy in artisanal fishery development. The regional policies' objectives are often more orientated toward knowledge and the right access to resource mainly the one industrial fishery units can have access to.

3.6. Development Planning

3.6.1. Constraints

Apart from the constraints characteristic of administrative and research institutions (see 3.3), the operators themselves - fishermen, fishmongers, processors, retailers, as well as all the related professionals - are faced with a certain number of constraints which hinder the sector's development. Those constraints are twofold: national and sectorial.

At the national level there is a situation of shortage which prevails in most of the countries of the region: lack of credit on money markets, currency shortage in non CFA countries and input shortage in many countries (fishing material and equipments, fuel). Since it is difficult to expect those in charge of the sector to favorably influence that situation, the generally admitted solution is the intervention of projects financed with foreign funds. The latter compensate but only temporarily, what questions the "Sustainable" aspect of the intervention for the deficiencies of the national economy. This is done through the direct importation of fishing equipment and material, outboard motors, etc. so as to supply the market with currency purchased materials. Considering that the operators' financial means are low, those inputs are often sold on credit.

Artisanal fishermen as well as fishmongers or processors can, with difficulty, have access to the formal credit. When possible it is often at high rates. Thus, in Sao Tome and Principe for example, the rate at the People's Bank is 40%. This is generally due to high rates of inflation and an almost permanent devaluation of the national currency in the non CFA countries. Not only the credit - formal and informal - is expensive, but also investment, maintenance, and reparation costs increase highly. Now, as it has already been mentioned, it is impossible for the producer in the present circumstances to pass those rising prices on to the price of fish - Chiefly for the small pelagic and rural markets - what results in a fall of incomes. In such circumstances losses reduction after catches and a better valorization of the product, more than production increase are to be envisaged.

The lack of appropriate infrastructures is a real problem which limits the valorization of the product. The landlocking of fishing areas with regard to urban centers, the lack of drinking water and of cold storage equipments cause some losses after the catches which could be avoided.

Artisanal fishermen are particularly exposed to pollution effects. This pollution is caused by industrial and domestic wastes, fertilizers and pesticides used in agriculture which flow in coastal areas or it results from the exploitation of oil-bearing areas. Destroying mangroves to obtain firewood also causes the pollution of estuaries and lagoons.

The high disparity between local fishermen and migrant fishermen, too numerous in the region does not seem to decrease. It can be explained by three factors.

First of all the fishermen who migrate along West African coasts are generally professionals who have a good experience in fishing; their productivity is most of the time superior to that of natives. Secondly, in the countries where the supply in fishing inputs is a problem, they can import, legally or not, those inputs from their home countries. This can also be done when there is no Shortage but rather a comparative advantage in terms of price. Finally, relatively far from their native community, they probably have a greater saving capacity than the local fishermen.

In certain fishing areas, Conflicts between artisanal fishery and industrial fishery increased recently. Those conflicts are often caused by the loss or destruction of artisanal fishery gears by industrial boats. This is due to the incursion of fishery units into areas legally reserved to the artisanal fishery because of, not only the over-exploitation of certain species in deep waters, but also the extension of canoes' field of action owing to motorization. The fact that states lack means justifies the absence of a system of monitoring, control and supervision of waters under national jurisdiction. In order to palliate this, the FAO/NORWAY Consultative Programme on fisheries development and legislation organized, in November 1992, a regional workshop on monitoring, control, and supervision aimed at African States bordering the Atlantic Ocean.

The new political philosophy of the region's States implies a high reduction of direct interventions. It is also noticed that the world economic crisis and the Eastern Europe Countries call for capitals reduce the means put at the disposal of developing countries. It is therefore essential in this context to check the hypothesis of international financial bodies which forecasts that the private Sector will, from now on, take over those activities formerly ensured by the State with the assistance of development partners.

Finally, in most of the region's countries, the administrators do not have or have few data that can enable them to ensure a biological but also socio-economic monitoring of the sector. In those conditions it is often difficult to suggest or set up policies which correspond effectively to needs.

3.6.2. Opportunities

Development opportunities in the short term will undoubtedly continue to be based on outside assistance (see 4). Because of the Constraints imposed on fisheries administration, some development strategies based on the identification of problems and solutions by the communities themselves have started to emerge. This corresponds to the wish to see the target populations really contribute to development activities in order to guarantee a sustainable and self maintained character.

When talking about development, an emphasis should be put on the rise in the productivity of the artisanal fishery units in order to improve fishermen's socio-economic profits. This will require the introduction of average size boats in some countries, as well as the improvement of on shore infrastructures for fish storage and processing which should be managed by the communities concerned. Given the low purchasing power of the majority of consumers to increase incomes there must necessarily be a fall in the production costs. Another possibility which is being put into practice in some countries is the exportation of high value fish caught by artisanal fishery. This will, However, require the setting up of appropriate infrastructures and a good management capacity. In this respect, a Programme on fishery technology and quality control at the artisanal level financed by the Danish Government is carried out by FAO. In 1992 it organized training workshops in Ghana, Nigeria, and Congo. But before, some workshops had been organized in Senegal, Cameroon and Cote d'Ivoire.

The withdrawal of the State from productive activities in some countries thus gives an opportunity to new private operators to assume some of those functions. This concerns in priority channels for the supply of producers in inputs and consumers in fishing products. Because of the Scarcity of the trees used for that purpose, the promotion of economically viable alternatives to replace big monoxylo canoes is a priority for many countries. Finally, the improvement of the fishermen's situation will also depend on the new development systems which associate them to their design, implementation and respect.

3.6.3. Planning Process

The planning process often amounts to a catalogue of incoherent projects and programmes proposed to outside funding. Very little effort is made to optimize national resources - financial, but also human - even, and perhaps mainly, when the latter are limited. Now, this is all the more necessary as governments give a greater and greater attention to the sustainable character of development actions' results. When the planning process is more well considered, two forums are generally held: the national seminar and the Money lenders Round Table.

The national seminar aims at defining a development strategy for the sector with the participation of representatives of the different groups of operators, but also the different administrations which interact with the fisheries sector (Guinea Bissau 1992, Cameroon 1991, Sierra Leone 1991, Guinea 1990). The Round Tables enable the Government and its development partners to obtain commitments and coordinate planned actions. The results of those forums generally lead to a fisheries guideline or action plan (Senegal) - Which seeks to take into account the basis operators' desiderata.

3.7. Fishery resources development

It is noticed that in most of the countries of the region development policies are not clearly defined. This can be partly explained by the lack of sufficient appreciation elements (biological and socio-economic data) necessary for their elaboration .

The measure generally in force in the whole of the countries is the delimitation of an area legally reserved for artisanal fishery, the limit adopted varying between 2 and 6 miles depending on countries. However, as already mentioned (3.6.1.) that measure is often ignored by industrial fishery units, what creates conflicts with artisanal activity. In certain countries (Senegal), there are also some inter trade conflicts inside artisanal fishery itself. It follows that the setting up of control mechanisms is a priority in the definition of future development policies for coastal fisheries.

Considering the high number of operators involved in the artisanal fishery activity, the social aspect cannot be ignored during the preparation of development measures.

It must equally be specified clearly that development policies for the region's fisheries will not have significant results without a sub-regional and/or bilateral cooperation. Only that cooperation will help to take into account (i) shared stocks (standardization of biostatic methods of study), (ii) fishermen's migration, (iii) environmental aspects such as coastal pollution and (iv) policies for the delivery of licence to non coastal countries.