



North Atlantic Seafood Forum

Encouraging a paradigm shift in West Africa

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Bergen, Norway

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The Situation in West Africa:

- The 2022 FAO Report
- The 2023 Global Roundtable Report, commissioned to Partner Africa
- The FAO, Global Roundtable, Iceland Ocean Cluster Workshop in Accra, Ghana

The traditional value chain is losing out in a resource and consumer competition

Painting by Pavica Pirc



The situation in West Africa

Market competition and changing population preferences:

Global fish price increases over a long time. LIFD communities cannot compete for the fish.

Lowered prices of replacement protein food products, like imported chicken in Africa from Brazil. Fishermen and processors cannot pass on increased prices.

Changing consumer preferences due to socio-economic changes. Other protein available including other fish product possibly from aquaculture, Tilapia, Clarius catfish. etc.



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The Situation in West Africa

Developing industries, rules and regulations not applied, costs not internalised:

Low running costs of factories not fulfilling environmental and quality requirements, not internalising costs improves competitiveness of factories.

Low running costs of factories due to substandard working conditions, even human rights breaches, not internalising costs improves competitiveness of factories.



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The Situation in West Africa

Stock management:

Low stock status including effects of management reactions and possible climate change effects. Minor changes affect smaller boats more than larger vessels.



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The Situation in West Africa

Preferences of authorities:

Authorities generally favouring factory operations, easier to collect fees and taxes of various kind, and generate foreign currency revenues. Leads to rules and regulations not enforced, traditional tenure rights and fishing rights (socio-economic human rights to food) not protected.



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The Situation in West Africa

What can be done?



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Actions going forward

1. Improve stock management by improved regional cooperation and national implementation. Securing that enough mature stock spawns and that juveniles get a chance to grow to maturity before being caught. Increased research and stock evaluation. Enforce fisheries policies and regulations.
2. Enforce rules and regulations, regarding environment, quality and infrastructure, improve if needed, to bring factories up to international standards. Internalising costs and levelling playing fields.
3. Enforce rules and regulations, regarding working conditions and human rights, improve if needed, to bring factories and vessel operators up to international standards. Internalising costs and levelling playing fields.



Actions going forward 2

1. Alterations of catch strategies. Implementing a hierarchy of use and splitting quotas accordingly based on catch and processing histories. (Problem, possible data deficiency).
2. Transparent licence fee and resource tax collection and use. Use for managing trade-offs and to alleviate unavoidable socio-economic changes.
3. Put an effort in to increased utilisation of catch and increased value. Through less waste, better quality, new markets and new products.
4. Improved data gathering and processing to facilitate data driven fishery management.

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The situation in West Africa

The traditional value chain is losing out in a resource and consumer competition !

Summary of Actions Going Forward:

Improved governance, improved enforcement of rules and regulations, improved management.

Respecting rules, regulations and commitments!

