



# OVERVIEW OF FISHERIES RESOURCES: MOZAMBIQUE\*

Maria Isabel Virgilio Omar

Head of Department of Aquaculture

Ministry of Fisheries, Mozambique



## Introduction

The fisheries sector plays an important role in Mozambique's economy, contributing for about 4% of GDP, 28% of foreign exchange earnings and 10% of the global national exports (2004). The sector provides employment to over 100,000 people directly and more than three to four times this number in support services.

## Characteristics of the Industrial Fisheries

An estimated **8,000** are employed in semi-industrial and industrial fisheries (comprising 192 vessels in 2005, mainly engaged in shrimp trawling).

Of these, **80 freezer trawlers** are approved to supply the EU market.

There are **20 fish processing establishments** (16 approved for the EU market and three of which are linked to shrimp aquaculture enterprises).

Inland fisheries are important on Lake Cahora Bassa, where semi-industrial fishing supplies the dried fish for regional export trade with about 12,000 tonnes/year of kapenta.



Figure 1. General map of Mozambique



## Main Marine Resources

Marine fish resources include important stocks of **shallow-water shrimp** predominantly white shrimp (*Penaeus indicus*) and brown shrimp (*Metapenaeus monoceros*), while other species are caught in much lesser quantities (*P. japonicus*, *P. latissulcatus*, and *P. monodon*). **Deep-water shrimp** (>200m) resources are also found, the main species are *Haliporoides triarthrus* and *Aristaeomorpha foliacea* (gamba vermelha), as well as other species such as *Aristeus antennatus*, *Aristaeopsis edwardsiana*, and *Penaeopsis balssi*. There are also commercially important stocks of **crayfish** (*Metanephrops mozambicus*, *Nephropsis stewarti*), **crab** (*Chaceon macphersoni*), and **deep-water lobster** (*Palinurus delagoa*).

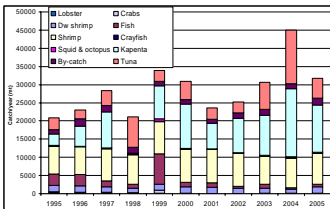


Figure 2. Marine industrial and semi-industrial fleet production data per commercial species



## Main Inland Fish Resources

Inland fish resources are dominated by **kapenta** in Lake Cahora Bassa. Kapenta is also called the Tanganyika sardine, which is actually two species (*Limnothrissa miodon* and *Stolothrissa tanganyicae*) both of which are small, planktivorous, pelagic, freshwater clupeid originating from Lake Tanganyika. However, there are also a wide variety of **demersal fish** found in Lake Cahora Bassa and Lake Nyassa, the two major lakes in Mozambique

## Summary

Mozambique has a well developed industrial and semi-industrial fishery, providing foreign markets with high-value shrimp and other valuable species. The majority of the stakeholders in the fisheries are the small-scale fishers in coastal communities. There is also a considerable production inland from inland fisheries. The fisheries sector is of strategic importance in poverty alleviation and food security in Mozambique as reflected in national policy and strategy.

## Artisanal Fishing

The main domestic fisheries stakeholders are some **90,000 subsistence and small scale fishers** in coastal communities.

Artisanal fishing takes place along the whole coast of Mozambique, although it is particularly important in the Sofala Bank area, employing relatively basic equipment and landings occurring on any accessible beach. An estimated 3% of these boats are motorized and 65% are canoes of various types. Thus, the capacity to effectively target tuna and large pelagic species appears to be very low in the Sofala Bank area.

A substantial number of handlines are licensed in the northern Cabo Delgado and Nampula provinces where tuna-like species constitute an important part of the catches.

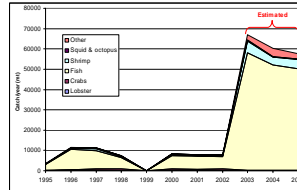


Figure 3. Artisanal fleet production data

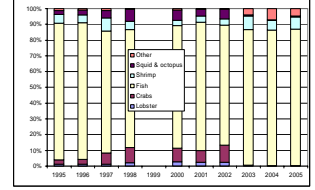


Figure 4. Species composition of Artisanal catches

## Institutional Structure

The Ministry of Fisheries has the following structure:

At central level:

- National Directorate of Fisheries Administration
- National Directorate of Fisheries Economics
- National Directorate of Human Resources
- Aquaculture Department
- International Co-operation Department
- Administration and Finance Department

At Local level:

Provincial Fisheries Directorates or Services

Institutions under the Ministry of Fisheries:

- Fisheries Research Institute - IIP
- Institute for Small scale Fisheries Development - IDPPE
- Fisheries School - EP
- Fisheries Development Fund - FFP
- National Institute of Fish Inspection - INIP



## Policy and Strategy

The fisheries sector **Master Plan** from 1994 is a tool for authorities to identify strategies to be followed to achieve medium and long-term development goals.

The master plan describes strategies at a detailed level for each sub-sector and these strategies have associated activities. The strategies on intermediate level include:

- Increasing the standard of living of the fishing communities by prioritizing sub-sectors which contribute to jobs and land in the fishing fleet.
- Making the fishing administration (the Ministry and its associated institutions) financially sustainable.
- To ensure a contribution from the fisheries sector to national economy by developing a fee system

In 1996 the **National Fisheries Policy** (Cabinet Resolution 11/96) was adopted and framed within the overall development objectives of national economy, which are to provide for food security, sustainable growth, increase the net foreign exchange earnings, reduce unemployment rate and poverty alleviation.

The legal basis of Mozambican fisheries is given by the **Fishery Law** (Cabinet Decree 3/90 of 26 September 1990). The law states that the Ministry of Fisheries is responsible for fishery matters including fisheries management policies and development of marine and freshwater aquaculture.

The main **management measures** employed to control fisheries in Mozambique include license limitation and quotas.

