Progress of Implementation of the FishTrade Program in Western Corridor

Information Sharing with the Fisheries Commission for West-Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC),

Tema, Ghana. 6th July 2016,
Sloans Chimatiro - WorldFish
The FishTrade Program

• *FishTrade*, a European Commission funded project implemented by WorldFish, the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) and the African Union Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR)
Objectives of FishTrade Program

Title:
“Improving Food Security and Reducing Poverty through intra-regional Fish Trade in sub-Saharan Africa”

Aims:
to strengthen value chains and, with a focus on sustainability, give better access to intra-regional markets and subsequently improve food and nutritional security and income in sub-Saharan Africa

Result areas:

1. **Information on the structure, products and value** of intra-regional fish trade in food security in Sub Saharan Africa generated and made available to stakeholders

2. **Recommendations on policies, certification procedures, standards and regulations**, well embedded in national and regional fisheries, agricultural, trade and food security policy frameworks

3. **Increased capacities for trade amongst private sector associations**, in particular of women fish processors and traders and aquaculture producers, to access domestic and regional markets

4. **Adoption and implementation of appropriate policies, certification procedures, standards and regulations** by key stakeholders participating in intra-regional trade
Key Guiding Question for the FishTrade Program

What are the realistic options for ensuring fish supply in Africa?

– Will promoting intra-regional trade simply take fish away from consumers in one area to feed other in another”

– Should there be consideration for policy recommendations to encourage imports – rather than “import substitution”?

– What are the possibilities for increased production of small pelagic species in both inland and marine fisheries?

– What are the implications of using small-pelagics for fishmeal as opposed to being food for poor consumers;

– Exports are known to disrupt local trade routes and local markets, how can these be managed; and

– What impact will external or international demand play on intra-regional trade in the future?
Progress so far

• A total of three universities have been included in the partnership in the Western Corridor (ECOWAS):
  1. Université Félix Houphouët-Boigny, Institut de Géographie Tropicale (IGT), Abidjan, Cote d’Ivoire
  2. University of Ibadan, Nigeria
  3. University of Ghana, Department of Economics

• All universities have recruited students and/or interns and are implementing the cross-border trade monitoring (average of 3 students per university).
Progress so far on University Partnership

- Universities have been involved in collaborative research that is aligned to national and regional priorities within the framework of the African Union Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa.
- The program has helped create a platform for universities to share expertise on fish trade research and teaching.
- The FishTrade Program has enabled students to use the field data for their academic credits (Masters and Doctorate Degrees), helping to create a critical mass of scientists as well as practical degrees!
Key Findings the FishTrade Program

- Preliminary results from corridor analysis show massive movement of fish from country to country.
- The prominent species being traded across borders are the small pelagic species from both marine (sardinella, known locally as “εban” or “Amane”). Noting that these species are readily accessible to the urban and rural poor households.
- Farmed products are also being traded, and these are both from within the regions but also from outside Africa (mainly China).
- Informal fish exports/imports tend to be more important for the low income rural and urban traders and consumers.
What are the implications of using small-pelagics for fishmeal as opposed to being food for poor consumers?

If small pelagics are processed poorly, they are likely to be used as ingredients in animal feed. Therefore, value-addition will divert the fish back to human feed.
Informal fish exports/imports tend to be more important for the low income rural and urban traders and consumers
Domestic and regional fish product flow in Ghana
Assembly markets tend to be on the border, hence, important for informal cross-border trade.
Key Findings the FishTrade Program

- Market structures comprise (i) weekly rural markets, (ii) assembly markets (many tend to be on the border, hence, important for informal cross-border trade), (iv) urban markets, and (v) point-of-production or port

- Importance of **factors influencing fish consumption** are:
  - (i) accessibility (**convenience**) and freshness (**quality**), for urban consumers; and
  - (ii) selling type (per piece, not per kg - **divisibility**), freshness (**quality**), and price for rural consumers

- Is there evidence for efficiency of marketing channels?:
  - Market Efficiency Index are favourable for fish producers and processors if wholesalers (middlemen) are excluded.
  - Wholesalers and retailers reap the best returns in the value chain, but they don’t add value to the products; they depress profit for processors add value to the products (most of whom are women)

- Is there a case for aquaculture as a better source of traded fish products?
  - Farmed products have low market margins compared to captured products.
  - Therefore, it is **still cheaper to catch fish than to grow it** (implications for continued over-fishing, under-developed aquaculture and continued imports of farmed products)
Policy Options

• Over 130 policies have been identified; hence, the problem is “Policy Abstinence” and not “Absence”

• Known trade flows in and out of Africa is the **formal trade**, but this does not contribute to livelihood and food security of majority. However, **informal trade** is more prominent

• Given SADC’s commitment to free movement of goods, services and humans. What are the challenges to implementation of existing policy commitments?

• Through policy research a number of gaps have been identified and these support to highlight evidence for change and design of better mechanisms for implementation

• Therefore, key trade policy implementation, small steps are needed, and these should focus on operationalizing mechanism for product specification, through:
  - standards - technical standards, animal health or **“trade-related measures”** to sustainable production, consumption (SPC) to enable exchange of fish products (trade)
  - To facilitate Cross-border trade by creating **One-Stop-Border-Post (OSBPs)**
Recommendations

- There are more species and quantities of fish being traded informally in many countries than what is recorded in official statistics.
- In some countries, exports are overlooked completely, undermining importance in national economy and food security and nutrition.
- Therefore, it is necessary for informal trade figures to be captured and included in the national statistics.
- Noting that small pelagics are readily accessible to the urban and rural poor households, it is important for governments to facilitate speedy importation of these species in order to promote food and nutrition security.
- It is important to incorporate liberal trade measures and harmonize trade and food safety regulations to be consistent with the REC’s commitment to free trade. Key to this is possibility of One-Stop-Border-Post (OSBP) with Conformity Assessment Framework.
- Create awareness about the free trade measure among traders.
Recommendations

• Although **aquaculture** is emerging as an important source of fish in many countries in Africa, species from capture fisheries (especially small pelagics) are still prominent in the local diets.

• Therefore, policies aimed at aquaculture development should not be promoted at the expense of sustainable fisheries management.

• **Consumer studies** are critical in order to understand demand for fish.

• WorldFish as an international research organization has redefined our work in Africa through working with **African Union** Member States and African Universities;
Thank you for your attentions!