

There should be considerable scope for increased intra-regional trade in various fishery products.

Vessels of non-coastal States, with the exception of the fish meal factory ships, freeze most of their catch primarily at sea. Most of the production is destined for the vessels' home market, but about 100,000 tons of frozen fish, notably from Japanese, Polish, Spanish and Russian vessels, are delivered to West African ports for inland consumption.

Marketing development seems to play a crucial role for increased exploitation of the resources by African countries, as shortcomings in the marketing systems and inadequate processing techniques often act as major constraint to fishery development. Therefore, focussing on the utilization of fish both for domestic consumption and export markets, attention must be directed at improvements in the distribution, handling and processing of fish. The use of modern technology, methods, equipment and management can provide the essential link between an intensified exploitation of the resources and the expansion of markets.

In discussion arising from the information presented, the meeting emphasized that the fishery resources in the waters around Africa represented a rich heritage of African countries and one that had been too long neglected. Every effort should be made to ensure that in the future a full and proper use was made of this heritage.

It was emphasized that the development of fisheries had to be based on an adequate knowledge of the abundance and distribution of the resource. Without such knowledge there was a danger of depletion of the resource by excessive fishing, or of a waste of investment by the construction of large fleets or shore facilities in areas where there were not sufficient fish resources.

While a useful amount of knowledge had already been obtained concerning the stocks and their environment, this information needed continued up-dating, and the extension

to these areas and stocks, such as the coastal areas of the Indian Ocean, for which present information was at present very scanty. This would require an intensification of the current research efforts around Africa.

The meeting noted that several African countries, through lack of funds and facilities, and competing demands for a limited number of capable personnel, would find it difficult, in the immediate future, to set up effective independent national research institutes.

For this reason, and because of the opportunities for economy or improved efficiency offered by the pooling of facilities, emphasis should be placed on developing regional centres of fishery research. There was some discussion regarding the form of such regional centres. It was generally felt that it might be premature to set up regional research institutes and instead a more flexible arrangement was desirable. Existing national institutions should be strengthened to enable them to fulfil a regional role. In this regard the meeting emphasized its belief in the responsibility of all non-African countries fishing in the waters around Africa to assist in strengthening the research capabilities of African countries. This assistance, could take the form of training of scientists, both abroad and in the African countries themselves, as well as direct techniques and financial support to national and regional laboratories and supporting services in African countries.

The meeting also emphasized the need for close co-operation, not merely between African countries, but between all countries carrying out research on, or exploiting the resources in a particular region. All countries fishing a given stock should, as a minimum, collect and make available for joint studies, statistical data on catch and effort and on length composition of the catches. The more detailed surveys, monitoring and assessments of these resources and of related environmental conditions would also benefit greatly

from a planned regional, integrated approach.

In reviewing the status of the present fisheries the meeting noted with concern the small part Africa plays in the harvesting of the resources, and questioned what could be done to increase fish production by the coastal States. The reason for the situation was recognized to be one of a fishery with a lately emerging industrialisation hampered in its development by lack of vessels, equipment and facilities in general, with shortcomings in the marketing systems and processing technology as well as in skilled personnel. The meeting agreed that there was an urgent need to increase the opportunities for the coastal States to achieve a greater participation in the fishery. This would require considerable investments and technical assistance at all levels, and the discussion went on to examine possibilities to secure cooperation to this end.

The meeting emphasized its belief in the duty of the developed countries exploiting the fishery resources in the waters around Africa to assist African countries to develop their fisheries. Many possible forms that such cooperation and assistance should take were pointed out during the meeting.

It was also important that African countries should have access, for the purposes of more effective participation in the fisheries, to the results of all relevant research.

Technical assistance and training at all levels were also very important. This should be provided both through direct bilateral arrangements, as well as through multilateral agencies such as UNDP.

In order to make the most fruitful use of funds for investment, economic research in the form of pre-investment studies and feasibility studies was also required.

The meeting requested FAO to study ways by which investments could be guaranteed, taking into account both

the interest of investors and the country in which the investment would be made. The results of such studies should be made freely available.

The meeting also noted that in some cases entry by African countries into established fisheries was becoming increasingly difficult because of the low level of catch per unit resulting from the high intensities of fishing. It was stressed that arrangements for the conservation and management should be formulated in such a way as to facilitate the entry of African countries.

The over-riding need is, however, to develop these resources for the benefit of Africa as a whole. Account should therefore be taken of the differing needs and endowments of African countries. The most rational development policy in such a situation is one which considers jointly the question of access to fishing grounds, access to markets and opportunities for the use and development of share facilities as integral parts of the same problem. This approach would in general tend to more rational use of scarce investment funds.

So far as the regulation of fishing is concerned it was suggested that there already existed a framework in the shape of the regional commissions within which this could be negotiated.

The meeting strongly emphasized its belief in the responsibility of the more developed countries to cooperate in the development of African fisheries. To this end developed countries should be encouraged to lend and process in the African countries the fish caught off Africa. The African countries would, in their turn, need to provide some guarantee to foreign investors which might be given through some form of joint venture arrangement. Another process by which development could be brought about was through the chartering of vessels. Under this system a developing country could gradually acquire the skills of fishing and build

up the port and marketing infrastructure before making the costly investment in long-range vessels of its own.

The Consultation felt that fishery bodies set up within the framework of FAO constituted appropriate fora to discuss, formulate and recommend management measures. In this regard, it welcomed the progress already achieved by CECAF and noted with satisfaction the establishment of a Sub-Committee on Implementation of Management Measures and of a Working Party on Resources Evaluation. It also took note of the discussions held within the Indian Ocean Fishery Commission (IOFC) regarding the management of Indian Ocean tunas and expressed the hope that at its next session the IOFC would reach agreement on the steps required to put management measures for tuna into effect.

The Consultation requested FAO to take into account, when planning and implementing its programmes of work and field activities, the various recommendations embodied in this report. It urged individual African Governments to bear these recommendations in mind when defining their policy with regard to international cooperation in marine fisheries.

The Consultation agreed that one of the main conclusions to be drawn from the discussions was the need for African countries to increase their participation in the exploitation of fishery resources in waters around Africa. Fisheries could contribute significantly to the economic development of African countries; fish and fishery products were essential to meet the protein requirements of the population of African countries.

In view of the deterioration of the state of resources in some areas, the Consultation felt that African countries should consider what measures would best enable them to participate actively in the conservation of fisheries and the control of fishing off Africa. All delegations present indicated that in their view this should be done by establishing

zones in which coastal States would exercise exclusive rights with respect to fisheries and in which foreign vessels could operate only with the permission of the coastal State, obtained through negotiation. They added that preference should be granted in this respect to other African countries. As to the outer limit of the exclusive fishing zones, several delegates felt that, for technical and scientific reasons, it should coincide with the edge of the continental shelf, while others expressed a preference for a limit determined by a fixed depth. The Consultation fully realized that questions of jurisdiction were outside the competence of FAO and could not be dealt with by a meeting sponsored by the Organization. Noting that consideration of these questions would be beyond its terms of reference, the Consultation recalled that the Sixth FAO Regional Conference for Africa, which had recommended that it be convened had also agreed that the political and legal aspects of conservation and control of fishing would be more appropriately discussed by the OAU. It resolved, therefore, to recommend to the OAU to make the necessary arrangements for the holding of a special meeting to consider these aspects in preparation for the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, scheduled to be convened in 1973.

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\* As on 1st March, 1973