THE NATIONAL FISHERIES

AND

AQUATIC RESOURCES POLICY

Ministry of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
Sri Lanka

2006

The Vision

Sri Lanka becomes a leader in the South Asian Region in sustainable utilization of fisheries and aquatic resources.

The Mission

Directing the process of utilization of fisheries and aquatic resources for the benefit of the current and future generations

Policy Objectives

- To improve nutritional status and food security of the people by increasing the national fish production.

- To minimize post-harvest losses and improve quality and safety of fish products to acceptable standards.

- To increase employment opportunities in fisheries and aquatic resources related industries, and improve the socio-economic status of the fisher community.

- To increase foreign exchange earnings from fish and aquatic product exports.

- To conserve the aquatic environment.

The Policy

Responsibility of implementation of the national fisheries and aquatic resources policy lies with the ministry in charge of the subject of fisheries and aquatic resources.

A precautionary approach is followed in the management of resources.

Marine and Inland Fisheries

1. Promote the principles of responsible fisheries as stipulated in international conventions and treaties.
2. Give priority for surveys on fisheries and aquatic resources, stock assessments and exploratory fishing.
3. Introduce appropriate technology to harvest currently non-harvested fish.
4. Prevent the use of undesirable and destructive fishing gear and methods.
5. Promote the use of resource friendly fishing gear in place of gillnet.
6. Give priority to management of coastal fisheries in order to prevent the decline of resources considering their high contribution of such fisheries to fish production and employment generation.
7. In coastal fisheries with excessive fishing effort, reduce fishing pressure by diverting the excessive fishing effort to under-exploited fisheries or generating alternative employment activities.
8. Protect the rights of the traditional fishers in coastal fisheries.
9. Promote selected commercial activities like marine eco-tourism and angling without disturbing fishing activities and affecting the coastal communities.
10. Promote designing of multi-day fishing vessels in accordance with adopted standards to increase safety and efficiency.
11. Promote long-line fisheries in order to scale down gillnet fisheries in accordance with international obligations.
12. Install a vessel monitoring system and enhance monitoring, control and surveillance activities with the participation of fishers for the purpose of preventing unauthorized fishing activities.
13. Encourage local multi-day fishing vessels to fish in high seas.
14. Develop co-operation with regional fishery management organizations and follow international conventions and treaties in management of fisheries in high seas.
15. Promote local and foreign private sector investments in high-seas fisheries.
16. Obtain participation of all stakeholders in developing inland fisheries.
17. Protect the right of inland fishers to fish in irrigation reservoirs.

Aquaculture

18. Develop aquaculture as an environmentally friendly, socially acceptable and market-driven industry.
19. Promote local and foreign private sector investments on development of aquaculture.

20. Encourage private sector investors to commence aquaculture projects with community participation.
21. Promote development of shrimp farms in accordance with zonal plans and provide common infrastructure facilities to such farms.
22. Give priority to rehabilitate the environment affected by the shrimp farming activities.
23. Introduce best management practices to shrimp farmers and encourage shrimp farmer associations to induce shrimp farmers to follow such best management practices.
24. For the purpose of reducing pressure on natural fish stocks encourage the private sector to engage in culture of marine and freshwater fish including ornamental fish.
25. Encourage the private sector to undertake ornamental fish aquaculture projects using out-grower systems with buy-back arrangements.
26. Promote stock enhancement in perennial and seasonal water bodies to enhance fish production in capture and culture fisheries

Infrastructure Facilities

27. Involve all stakeholders in planning, establishment and operation of infrastructure facilities such as fishery harbours, anchorages, minor fish-landing sites, coast protection structures, etc.
28. Develop public-private partnerships to obtain the participation of the private sector for provision of services such as cold-storage, ice supply, water supply, slipway facilities, fish transport facilities, etc.
29. Encourage the local and foreign private sector to establish infrastructure facilities like fishery harbours on "built, operate and transfer" terms.
30. Promote local and foreign private sector investments in establishing fish processing and canning facilities.

Marketing

31. Make the background for fishers to sell their produce at competitive producer prices and consumers to purchase products at reasonable consumer prices.
32. Popularize consumption of freshwater fish in urban areas where the consumer preference is for marine fish, with a view to increasing the incomes of inland fishermen.
33. Promote production and consumption of value-added fish products.
34. Promote the export of value-added fish products.
35. Maintain safety and hygienic standards for the local fish supply.

Research

36. Give priority for applied research leading to development of fisheries and aquatic resources while paying adequate attention to exploration of non-living resources.

Non-living Aquatic Resources

37. Promote local and foreign investments in the utilization of non-living aquatic resources and harnessing ocean energy.

Extension and Training

38. Strengthen the network of extension services in order to disseminate information and technology among the fisher community and other stakeholders.
39. Obtain assistance from national and international organizations for man-power development.

Up-lifting of the Socio-economic Status of the Fisher Community

40. Strengthen community-based fisher organizations.
41. Develop skills of the fisher community to face natural disasters.
42. Strengthen rescue services and relief services in regard to marine accidents.
43. Enhance women's participation in the sector.
44. Promote income management, and thrift and savings in the fisher community.

Rehabilitation of Fisheries affected by the Conflict and the Tsunami

45. Give priority for rehabilitation of conflict-affected fisheries in the North and East.
46. Make arrangements for re-location of the displaced fishers in their own villages and support them to resume their livelihoods.
47. Rehabilitate the tsunami affected fisheries on the "build-back better" principle.

Institutional and Legal Framework

48. Restructure the state agencies in the fisheries sector to suit the needs.
49. Review the discrepant provisions in other laws and make appropriate amendments.

International Co-operation

50. Enter into bilateral, multilateral and regional co-operation agreements with other countries for the purpose of development of the sector.

Environment

51. Conserve and enhance the coastal environment.
52. Apply the "cleaner production concept" to all activities in the sector.
53. Give priority to the need of protection of the environment in all activities in the sector.