

NATIONAL REPORT OF KENYA (2008)

FISHERIES DEPARTMENT (FID)

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NOVEMBER, 2008

1. GENERAL FISHERY STATISTICS

Tuna fishery in Kenya is exploited by artisanal, recreational and longlining.

1.1. Artisanal Fishery

The artisanal fleet targets tuna by use of Gillnets, Handline and Longlines. The three gears are mostly used by the artisanal fishers who exploit up to 10 nm miles when the sea is calm but remain inshore during the South Eastern monsoon winds when the sea is rough. The artisanal tuna catches have been decreasing for the past three years after the peak season in 2004. The table below shows how the tuna catches have been on the decline with 2007 being the lowest for the last five years.

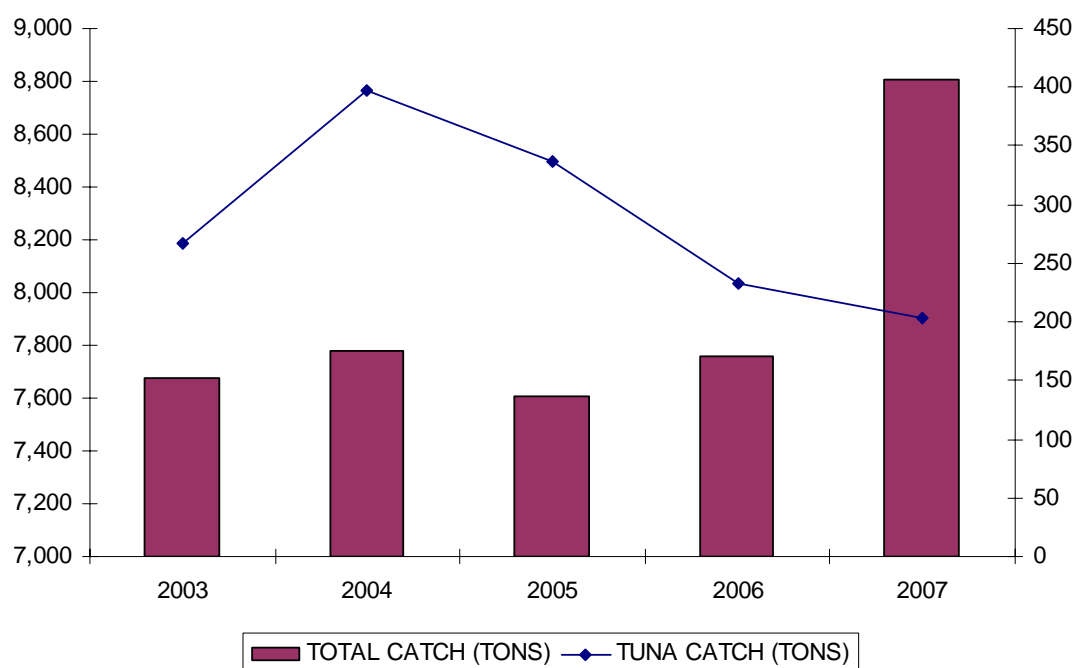


Figure 1: Comparison between total artisanal catches and tuna catches

As the above graph shows, the tuna catches have been on a decline despite the increase in catches by the artisanal fishers especially for the year 2007.

1.2. Recreational fishery

Most of the recreational fishery in Kenya is by the Big game fishery mostly targeting Sailfish, Marlins and Swordfishes. The landings are also composed of considerable amounts of tuna, mainly the yellowfin tuna. The department in conjunction with IOTC and OFCF computerized historical catch data for the two main sports fishing clubs in Kenya. This data was for a good part of this year undergoing cleanup and inputting into the database. The process is almost complete and during the following year, this data will be analysed to provide abundance index for the various species targeted by the sports fishing. The catches for the year 2007 and 2008 will also be input into the database directly by the department.

1.3. Longline fishery

In the year 2007, there was only one Kenyan flagged longliner. During the year 2008, another longliner has acquired a Kenyan flag bringing the total to two. The catches by the Kenyan longliner in 2007 was **445** tons compared to **357** tons landed during the previous year. The total landings are tabulated below below.

FISH	WEIGHT (Tons)	PERCENTAGE
Swordfish	210.8	47.33
Sharks	204.7	45.96
Marlins	0.5	0.11
Yellowfin tuna	11.1	2.49
Bigeye	16.7	3.75
Sailfish	0.2	0.04
Oilfish	1.4	0.31
Total	445.4	

Table 1: 2007 catches by the Kenyan longliner

As the table above shows, the major by-catch in the longline fishing is oilfish. The catches of sailfish and marlins are also relatively low. The main target for the longline is usually the swordfish and sharks.

Fleet Structure

According to the 2006 marine frame Survey there were 2,368 fishing crafts of which only 194 are motorized according to the 2006 Marine Frame survey. Most of the rest are propelled either by sail or by paddles and 8% of the fishermen fish for tuna as their main target species. There are two Kenyan flagged longliners with no purse seiner so far. During the year 2008, the third marine frame survey was carried out in the month of October and the results are not yet out.

Licencing

Although there is only one longliner, foreign fishing vessels have been fishing in the Kenyan EEZ. 33 purse seiners usually get annual licences while the longliners' have their licences either monthly, quarterly or annually. The number of long liners licences issued in 2006 was 59 compared to 49 during the year 2007. Although this number has been consistent over the years, the department is aware that there is a lot of illegal fishing in the waters, especially considering the proximity to Somalia waters. To reduce IUU activities in the EEZ, the Government is in the process of installing a Vessel monitoring system expected to be operational by mid February 2009. The longliners have also preferred to pay annual licences instead of the monthly or quarterly ones as had earlier on been the case.

Tuna landings at the cannery

The amount of tuna being received at the Kenyan tuna factory in 2007 decreased by 26% compared to 2006. This has led to a reduction in the operation time in the cannery there by leading to loss of jobs. Of more concern has been the low number of direct deliveries by the purse seiners. In the year 2005, all the

consignment brought to the factory was by purse seiners while in 2006, only about a quarter of the total landings was from the purse seiners. During the year 2007, the percentage of direct delivery by purse seiners was lowest at only 15% as tabulated below. The situation has been difficult for the factory in Kenya and is even getting worse considering the 2008 landings.

Year	Amount (tons)	Direct deliveries	% by purse seiners
2005	21,008	21,008	100
2006	23,500	5,656	24
2007	17,422	2,616	15

Table 2: Tuna landing at the Mombasa factory

Changes in the national data collection system

All along, the artisanal skipjack, yellowfin and bigeye tuna data has been collected as aggregated. The catches of Neritic tuna species has also been reported as mixed pelagic. So as to address this concern, the department will from the year 2009 carry out sampling programmes aimed at coming up with the actual catches per species for the tuna and other pelagics of commercial concern. This will also assist in disaggregating the catches for sharks that have been reported together with the rays.

2. Progress in the Implementation of Recommendations of Scientific Committee

2.1. National Plan of Action on Sharks

The department in the year 2007 started the National plan of action for the sharks which is still in the preparation. The action plans for the seabirds and turtles have not yet been formulated. This was because there was only one longline vessel. With the entry of a second longliner in the Kenyan list, the action plan for the two is something that should be carried out in the near future.

2.2. Observer program

It has been the intention of the department to set up an observer programme to monitor the operations of the local vessel. This idea has been hampered by logistical problems as the longliners take a long time before coming back to the port. This means that if an observer boards the vessel, the logistics of disembarking and bringing in a replacement complicates the planning. The possibility of this action is still being discussed by the authorities.

2.3. Introduction of the vessel monitoring system

The vessel monitoring system for vessels fishing in the Kenyan EEZ has already been procured and just awaits installation. It is hoped that the system will be operation as from February 2009. this will assist in the monitoring of the fishing in the Kenyan EEZ. It is well known that a VMS alone can not deter illegal fishing especially considering that the Kenyan EEZ neighbours the Somali where a lot of pirates are having a field day.

National research programmes

National research programs on pelagics have not been taking place in Kenya. This is mainly due to the logistical problems in undertaking the activity. However, with the entry of a second longliner in the country's fleet, the possibility of undertaking the same are getting higher.