THE ROLE OF STANDARDS IN PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY IN AFRICA – 21ST ARSO GENERAL ASSEMBLY
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Contents

- Introduction
- Factors influencing the fish Quality during capture, handling and Processing
- Artisanal and Industrial Fishing activities
- Main constraints
- Present situations
- Food and Veterinary Mission in SL
- EU Requirements
- Legal and Regulatory Framework
- Recommendations of the FVO Mission
- Achievements
- Role of SLSB
- SLSB Conformity Assessment Systems
- Challenges in EU Certification Procedures
Introduction

Sierra Leone is located on the West Coast of West Africa;

It is bordered on West, North and Northeast by Republic of Guinea; and

Southeast by Republic of Liberia;

SL covers a total area of about 71,740km² with a coastline of about 560 km;
Coastland is characterized by extensive flora of mangrove plants,
A number of estuaries and rivers that are navigable for short distances
Fisheries sector has great potential to make significant contribution to food security;
Nutritional view: fish is a major source of animal protein for Sierra Leoneans;
Fish contributes 8% of SL GDP;
It is largest single source – supplying about 80% of total animal protein for consumption;
Factors influencing Quality of Fish during Capture, Handling and Processing

- Canoe registration,
- fishing methods and fish quality in standardization,
- The Fishing Gear - Nets, Line and traps,
- The fishing Time,
- Damage from the nets, hooks,
- Time spent in the fishing vessel,
- Equipments, Containers and Human contamination,
- Washing,
- and Packaging
SL practise a small scale:
- Artisanal fishery - source of employment;
- Industrial fishery - highly capital intensive venture;
Employ about 1000 people;
Contributes about 20% of total fish production;
Fish production is about 20,000 million tons and this comprises:
- shrimps, and other shellfish,
SLeonanean waters have rich fishing grounds for high value species- such as:
shrimps, lobsters, cuttlefish, breams and snappers.
ARTISANAL AND INDUSTRIAL FISHING ACTIVITIES
Main Constraints

- Inadequate fishing gear and craft,
- Inadequate extension services to fishermen,
- Poor handling and Processing,
- Management of fish products,
- Inadequate data and analyses on fishing catch,
- Inadequate infrastructural facilities and storage facilities,
- Lack of automatic temperature recording devices,
- Lack of official control system and
- Lack of monitoring plans for test of freshness & water/ice, etc.
Present Situations

- SL has a ban - not exporting fish and fisheries to EU and international markets,
- Reasons: - SL does not comply with EU Regulations,
  - Regulations relating to hygiene of food and feed and official controls,
- SL Fishing Company only fulfils the requirements,
- Food and Veterinary Office had a mission in 2009,
- The mission identify some lapses in the fish production chain,
- Lapses need to be corrected.
Food and Veterinary Office's (FVO) mission identified the following problems:

- Implementation of Official Inspection
  - Lack of procedures
  - Lack of Official Controls
  - Lack of training of inspectors
  - Lack of monitoring from the central body
  - Lack of monitoring of chemicals (heavy metals)
  - Documentation not sufficient
  - Laboratory analysis not sufficient
  - Existing laboratory not accredited
  - Organoleptic examination
EU Requirements

EU enacted fish legislation that applied to imports and export. These includes:

- Health conditions,
- Freshness;
- Restrictions on veterinary medicines,
- Introduce of Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point, (HACCP) in fish processing companies,
- Cooling facilities from catch to processing,
- Official controls systems
- Processing establishments and Cold rooms
- Monitoring plans for test of FP and Water/ice and vessels etc.
Govt. enacted Fisheries Policy

Fisheries Act and Product Regulations was also passed in Parliament,

Regulations is presently been reviewed by Ministry of Fisheries,

The Food Unit of the Ministry of Health and Sanitation identified as the Competent Authority for fish,

Govt. drafted a Food Safety Law and to establish a Authority.

The Standards Bureau has adopted the CODEX Standards that regulates the production of Food and Codes of Hygiene and Sanitary practices,
Draft National Standards for fish products will be published to meet the EU requirements.

Dutch Company: Precon’s support to facilitates the export of fish and fisheries product,

EU and UNIDO support to establish accredited Laboratories: - on going,

National Standards Laboratory to perform analyses,

Assessment of staff competency,
Recommendations Of The FVO Mission

Ensure official controls for fish products intended for the EU market includes:

- Organoleptic checks,
- Freshness indicators,
- Conduct histamine analysis,
- Conduct microbiological tests,
- Carry out analysis on contaminants including heavy metals, Dioxins, PCB’s and poisonous FP.
- Official controls for water and ice,
- Conduct appropriate training for water quality laboratory.
Recommendations Continues

- Compliance of fishing vessels.
- Establishments involved in the EU fish production chain.
- Supervision by Ministry of Fisheries & CA.
- CA is to provide guarantee:
  - establishments and fishing vessels
  - compliance with the EU Regulations
  - identified List of authorised establishments to export fish to the EU
Achievements

- Despite the ban: positives achievements:
  - Development of Standard Operating Procedures.
  - Development of Hygiene Guides.
  - Development of Quality assurance programmes for sustainable exports.
  - Hygiene conditions at landing sites improved.
  - Capacity to analyse fish/fish product samples has upgraded,
  - Environmental Monitoring Plans established.
  - Product testing conducted from different fishing grounds with a Traceability plan.
  - Collaborative approach in fish management and development with other Agencies sought.
Role of SLSB - NSB

SLSB- NSB- statutory body established by an Act of Parliament and operates on two (2) Acts,
- Standards Act No. 2 of 1996: provide for standardization of commodities and products,
- Weights and Measures Act 5 of 2010, repealed Weights & Measures Act, 1961- Authorise and validate the use of the Metric System (SI unit)

SLSB has an oversight shared responsibility between Minister-MTI and a Council – NSC

Memberships: - Codex, Codex Contact Point,
- Corresponding Member – ISO, OIML,
- Affiliate Member to IEC.
Activities

Responsibilities:

- Publication of all Sierra Leonean standards,
- Establishing and managing the National Metrology Institute;
- Provision of Testing and Certification services related to standards on request to industry and authorities.

- Demonstrating compliance; and
  - Provide conformity assessment services.

Development of NQP
- approval by Cabinet - October, 2012,
Activities Continue

Objective - NQP:

- Re-engineer the National Quality Infrastructure;
- Improve international competitiveness
- Ensure that goods and services are accepted;
- Raise the quality consciousness and
- Provide technical framework for the establishment of conformity assessment service providers;
- Implement technical regulation and SPS measures;

National Quality Infrastructure is in place,

- Limited in the services it can offer.
- Fragmented,
- Test reports and certificates not accepted internationally;
- S/L need a well established NQI in place,

NQI: is made up public and private sector, guided by NQP
Government Funding

Govt. Subvention & Development funds:
- Does not cover the total cost of the entity: (earmarked for specific activities). Membership subscriptions, Standards Development process, infrastructural Building etc).

Other Sources:
- import & export inspection;
- verification of weighing and measuring instruments for consumer protection.

Metrology Building: - Constructed,

- Improve competitiveness of the export sector and enhance international trade;
Standards: Technical Committees established, SLSB operates TCs - ISO/IEC Directives, WTO/TBT agreement and ECOSHAM;

Standards reviewed, withdrawn, adopted and published: 133 standards - 35 are mandatory while the others are voluntary.
SLSB Conformity Assessment Systems

Conformity Assessment Systems:(ISO/IEC 17000)
- National Standard Laboratory for Food products established:
  - Microbiology and Chemical Laboratories;
  - Technical Manuals & in accordance to ISO/IEC 17025;
  - systems and assurance established;
  - Personnel are partially trained in the use of the equipment, local and international;

Microbiology: Test parameters such as:
- Coliform, Salmonella, Total Plate Count, Yeast & Moulds, E-Coli and Staphylococcus
Chemical Laboratory

**Procurement of Two Scientific equipment:** High Pressure - Liquid Chromatograph (HPLC) & Atomic Absorption Spectrometer (AAS);

- HPLC, test Histamine in fish; vitamins, and Micro toxins: Aflatoxins, etc.
- AAS, test heavy metals in fish and waters (rivers, artificial lakes cause by mining companies – impact

**Aim:** Protect health and safety of the general public;
- Against unsafe and counterfeit products

Also Conduct tests: - Water Analysis, Food colours, Fats, Moisture, Ash and Protein etc.
HPLC, test Histamine in fish; vitamins, and Micro toxins: aflatoxin etc.
AAS, test heavy metals in fish and water.
Accreditation:
- Facilitate independent attestation of technical capabilities of service provider;
- Satisfy local and international markets in line with best practices;
- Certificate & Test Report issue recognise internationally;

Staff have been introduced to FAPAS – 2014 Proficiency Testing Scheme, based in United Kingdom;

Bureau to participate in this year 2014/15 scheme with known parameters for microbiology and chemical;
Challenges in EU Certification Procedures

Govt. has undertaken a number of initiatives to lift the ban,
- Get full (List 1) approval for the export of fish to the EU,
- Amendment of the legal and regulatory framework,
- Control procedures to be established for the approval of plants for export to the EU,
- Insurance of health certificates,
- Compliance of the code of hygiene practice: handling, processing, and storage of fish, (export and domestic market),
- Harmonization of SL hygiene requirements with EU,
- Implementation of Sanitary and Phytosanitary requirements.
I THANK YOU ALL