

LECTURE NOTE

ON

FISHERIES ECONOMICS (2 UNITS)

FIS 506

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Major economic constraints in fisheries development

Aquaculture (Constraints)

In spite of the potentials of the potentials of aquaculture, there are lots of problems militating against its development. Some of the constraints are:

- *Poor quality fish seed
- *Lack of cost effective fish feed
- *Lack of capital
- * Security of Fish farms
- * Unstable government and defective government policies
- * Faculty data collection
- * Lack of environmental impact considerations and
- * Poor marketing structure.

1.Poor Quality Fish Seed

This is due to lack of functional fish hatcheries where farmers can purchase fingerlings of good quality to stock their farms. Often they travel far distance to collect or source from the wild or open waters. Some hatcheries sell advanced fry as fingerlings. Leading to poor survival, stunted growth and poor returns of investment .

- High Cost of Fish Feeding

The high cost of fish feed especially good quality fish feed pellets has led to the farmers using quality feed to sparingly feed their fish. The high cost of fish meal and its competitive use b y L/stock farmer have made it unaffordable to fish farmers.

- Lack of Capital

Most fish farmers lack adequate capital to either operate farms profitable or expand them. The situation is made more difficult by the unwillingness of banks to grant loans to the farmers. The number of operational farms have reduced drastically due to lack of funds, this has led to decrease in fish production.

- Unstable Government and Defective Government Policies

The instability and lack of continuity of governance in country has prevented successive governments from implementing national aquaculture policies and this has led to a haphazard pattern of development of aquaculture especially in Nigeria (Omitoyin, 2007).

Some programmes such as The National Accelerated Fish Production, Integrated Rural Fisheries Development Project, Fish seed multiplication Projects, pilot fish farms Project and Fresh water Fish Farming Demonstration and Development etc, however most of these programmes failed due to poor policy formulation, implementation and misplaced priority, financial mismanagement, lack of motivation among extension officers and lack of feasible time frame within which to accomplish stated policy objectives.

- Faulty data Collection

No adequate record keeping of aquaculture production in Nigeria. Most fish farmers do not keep the records of yearly production. Federal and State Fish Departments are not motivated to assist in collation of reliable and accurate data on aquaculture production.

- Lack of environmental Impact Consideration

Environmental impact Assessment of most farms on the neighbourhoods and on the farms are not done by most farms, the result is that farms are wrongly located where domestic effluents or those from industries enter directly into ponds leading to pollution, poor growth and mass mortality of fish.

- Marketing of Aquaculture Products

Marketing of aquaculture products to some extent has become a problem in Nigeria. This is not because the supply is in excess of demand but because of uncoordinated marketing programmes. Many fish farmers sell their fish in fresh forms to middle men at very low prices. This means there must be need for networking and marketing information among fish farmers, processors and consumers on availability of fish and current market prices all over the country to prevent the farmers from being ripped off. There is also need to add value to aquaculture products in order to increase profit margin. Modern fresh fish distribution chains should be developed in order to make fish available to consumers no matter where they are in the country.

- Poor road

Many roads leading to farm locations are generally bad and inaccessible due to poor state. This has made the movement of materials to and from the farm

difficult thus discouraging the farmers from this may lead to the fish venture being abandoned. Other constraints include:

- Erratic power supply
- Lack of adequate technical know-how

Capture fisheries

Free access fisheries

Free access or open access is the condition where access to the fishery for the purpose of harvesting fish is unrestricted, that is the right to catch fish is free and open to all.

The implementation of the rule of the United Nations of a 200 mile fishery conservation zone provided a striking illustration of the need for a common conservation policy for these new community resources. The principles of free access to the fishery zones of member states under the free access policy the total allowable catch should be shared out in accordance with the golden rule of the common market, that is, freedom from all form of discrimination. The amount to equality of access of vessels of member states. However there is a fact that fishermen consider fishing at the strip of coastal waters their exclusive rights and even cross carpet to fish in areas where the rule no longer covers which often lead to conflicts among member states. This conflicts led to the establishment of laws which include:

Selective conservation measures, Catch quotas and fishing licenses

Selective conservation measures include measures put in place to stop or restrict fishing at certain periods, to define types of fishing vessels, sets norms for the mesh sizes of fish nets or define the minimum size and weight for each species fished.

Catch quotas

This represents sharing out between the member states of total allowable catch

Fishing licenses refers to manner in which national quotas are shared out of national level with the registration and granting of a license to each fishing vessel.

Open access fishery however suffers from two fundamental problems

1. No way of controlling new comers in terms of extent of exploitation

2. Resource rents that supposed to accrue to resource owner is meager compare to what accrue to the resource user making exploitation artificially attractive and thus encourage overexploitation

These fundamental problems led to Economic and ecological consequence in free access fishery which are:

Overexploitation of two types:

Economic overexploitation in which fisheries become more vulnerable to fish prices, fishing cost or stock availability.

Fish exploited beyond optimal level.

Biological overexploitation: Increase in effort decrease the size of fish stock to the point where long term productivity declines.