



# agriculture, forestry & fisheries

Department:  
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## **BACKGROUND ON SMALE SCALE FISHERIES**

All along the South African coastline, men, woman and children have been living in coastal communities for thousands of years harvesting marine resource for consumption, livelihoods, medicinal purposes, and as part of cultural and spiritual practices. Due to historic governance systems in the country, small-scale fishers were marginalized as they were not recognised as the rightful people to gain access to marine living resources. This was reflected in the type of legislation and management approaches that favoured few white-male owned industrial companies in fisheries.

Fishery management practices within the democratic dispensation have also unintentionally marginalized traditional fishers in fishing communities in all four coastal provinces. As a result many fishers were not successful in obtaining fishing rights to access marine resources, which they have traditionally been dependant on for their livelihoods along the coastline of South Africa. Disgruntled fisher communities took the Department to court in 2005 and in 2007 the Equality Court ruled in favour of the fishers and the department was served a court order to redress the inequalities suffered by the traditional fishers.

A lengthy process on consultation ensued to develop the Small-Scale Fishing Policy (SSFP) in order to provide the guidelines for a new fishery sector that would accommodate traditional fishers from communities in all coastal provinces. This policy was also tabled at NEDLAC before it was adopted in June 2012. The objectives of this policy are to:

- Create a sustainable, equitable, small-scale fishing sector
- Secure the well-being and livelihood of small-scale fishing communities
- Maintain the health of marine ecosystems
- Uplift fishing communities by providing appropriate support mechanisms, education and training, infrastructure and participatory management practices.
- Communities and Government co-manages near-shore marine living resources

- Takes fundamental human rights, MLRA principles and international obligations into account
- Give due regard to promoting interests of women, disabled and child-headed households

This policy marked the paradigm shift in Fisheries Management as it advocates for modern fisheries management approaches such as community-based rights holding, co-management approach to fisheries management, Multi-species approach to fisheries management, and Human dimensions on Ecosystems Approach to Fisheries Management (EAF).

The SSFP is regarded by FAO as the most progressive policy on small-scale fisheries in the world as it is in line with The Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (the SSF Guidelines) and are eagerly awaiting the implementation thereof. The Small-Scale Fishing Implementation Plan (SSFIP) was drafted in 2013 to provide a high-level overview of the implementation process and sought to implement the new sector within 5 years taking into account the complexity of the policy, and limited government capacity and funding.

As the small-scale fishing sector was not legally recognised by the Marine Living Resources Act of 1998, a process began in 2013 to amend the Act so that it would make provision for the small-scale fishing sector. Extensive consultation was conducted on the Amendment Act, which was finally signed into law in May 2014. The Amended Act could not be operationalized as yet because it required the Small-Scale Fishing Regulations to be drafted and approved. These regulations were needed in order to prescribe the process of implementation and management of the small-scale fishing sector. Work began in 2014 in drafting the regulations. Once again extensive consultation was conducted with interested and affected parties. The final Regulations were approved and signed into law on the 8th of March 2016.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

The President signed the Amended Marine Living Resources Act into operation on the 24 February 2016. The proclamation and approved Small-Scale Fishing Regulations was gazetted on the 8 March 2016. This effectively meant that the full legal framework was in place that not only legally recognises the small-scale fishing sector, but also prescribes its implementation and management of the sector.

This has been a huge milestone not only for the fishers, but for the country as well, as this would be the first time in South Africa's history that this sector would take its rightful place in the fishing industry. South Africa is indeed pioneering the way forward for the world to see and this is very timely when considering that internationally small-scale fisheries considerations are taking centre stage in order to meet global food security demands while addressing socio-economic upliftment of fishers.

After a rigorous process that began almost 12 months ago, the Department of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (DAFF) and its Directorate Small-Scale Fisheries Management, has had an opportunity to visit 316 communities in the four coastal provinces to verify small-scale fishers as per the regulations relating to small-scale fishing. From these visits, an overwhelming total of just under 23 000 individuals responded to the call for verification. A well-detailed database which includes socio-economic baseline of each and every community visited has been generated to better understand this new sector.

In KwaZulu-Natal, a total of 48 fishing communities expressed their interest in being recognized as Small-Scale Fishing communities. From the 48 fishing communities in KZN, a total of 4085 individual people were registered and verified against the following criteria which is outlined in the regulations relating to Small-Scale Fisheries:

- South African citizen;
- 18 years or older;
- Resides in the community of registration;
- Has 10 years or more accumulated traditional fishing history and/or associated history such as processing and marketing of traditionally caught fish;
- Is currently dependent on marine resources for their livelihood.

A provisional successful list of Small-Scale Fishers in KwaZulu-Natal was announced in all the 48 communities that were involved in the registration process. SMS notifications were used to update people on the progress and 3 physical visits were done from May to August in each and every community for the purpose of assisting those who were provisionally unsuccessful to appeal the provisional decision as it is outlined in the regulations relating to small-scale fisheries. Currently, the department is in the process of assessing all the appeals submitted by individuals who have been deemed not to meet the criteria.

## **WAY FORWARD**

Once small-scale fishers have been recognised and declared per small-scale fishing community by the Minister, Department will mobilize the fishers to form one co-operative per community. Fishers will also be assisted with the registration of the co-operative with CIPC and will be given basic training on the functioning of a co-operative, including roles and responsibilities. This process is envisaged to take place between November 2017 and February 2018. The recognised fishers will also be required to provide input to complete the alternative livelihood study per district municipality.

Registered co-operatives will then be assisted to apply for a small-scale fishing right in between March and May 2018 and these rights will be valid for a period of 15 years. As part of this process the Department will solicit input from the co-operatives regarding the fishing areas, utilization of marine resources, and conduct a needs analysis in order to draft a co-operative-specific management plan. Small-Scale Fishing rights are envisaged to be allocated thereafter and co-operatives would then be able to apply for their respective fishing permits to fish.

Post the allocation of rights the Department will mobilize co-operatives into a co-management structure and will facilitate support programmes for the training and capacitation of the co-operative members.

The department has been working tirelessly in facilitating support programs that will be offered to these fishing communities. These support programs will be based on the socio-economic profile of the communities, various possible alternative livelihoods and what the fishing co-operative will indicate to be a shortfall.

It is hoped that through support and leadership of all the Kings that have jurisdiction over these fishing communities, community's lives will change for the better and the plight of poverty, unemployment and other social challenges that this current government faces will be scaled down tremendously.

## **STATUS OF AQUACULTURE IN KWAZULU-NATAL**

Kwa-Zulu Natal has an environmental advantage in terms of aquaculture development as it has an environment that suits both marine and freshwater aquaculture and warm water temperatures reduce costs for farming warm water species.

In 2015, the Kwa-Zulu Natal province recorded a total of seventeen (17) farms which comprises of two (2) marine farms and fifteen (15) freshwater farms which consisted of marine kob, trout, tilapia, koi and ornamental farms. The total production for Kwa-Zulu Natal was 412.94 tons, contributing 7.60% to the overall aquaculture production.

The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) and the Agribusiness Development Agency (ADA) together with the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) are collaboratively putting efforts towards aquaculture sector development in the Province. This is being achieved through various engagements including the following:

- Establishment of a Provincial Aquaculture Working Group which is coordinated by ADA. The working group aims to leverage provision of guidance towards aquaculture initiatives by valued stakeholders. The working group also links new entrants to industry and government authorities.
- Capacity building and training through coordinating short term training courses in China for about eight (8) candidates as well as awareness campaigns facilitated by DAFF
- provision of technical support to both commercial and small scale farmers through Operation Phakisa, Aquaculture Development Enhancement Programme (ADEP), the Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme(CASP), and
- Continuous provision of advisory services when needed.

Aquaculture skills and needs analysis is being conducted nationally and includes the skills and capacity requirements of the KZN province. The potential for aquaculture training is also being assessed at the various Agricultural Colleges.

The primary focus of the work done on aquaculture within the Province is mainly around the Ugu District Municipality where the previous DAFF Imbizo's held in December 2016 and in June 2017 enlightened communities about aquaculture as an alternative high protein food source. During the December 2016 Imbizo, about nine private and public owned sites potential sites were assessed for their suitability for aquaculture in Umzumbe and Ray Nkonyeni Local Municipalities.

Further feasibility studies are being conducted for four of the nine sites, following physical site assessments. The provincial Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs has, since January 2017, commissioned a study to assess feasibility of catfish farming in the province. The study is aimed to obtain and assess prima facie evidence that would either support or refute the viability of farming of catfish in the Province.