INFOPÊCHE

DIAGNOSTIC STUDY OF THE PERFORMANCE OF THE CONTROL SYSTEMS IN PLACE GOVERNING THE EXPORT OF FISHERY PRODUCTS TO THE EUROPEAN UNION

INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION FOR MARKETING INFORMATION AND COOPERATION SERVICES FOR FISHERY PRODUCTS IN AFRICA (INFOPÊCHE)

CONTENTS

LISTE DES ABREVIATIONS

ABVT Azote basique volatile total

AC Autorité Compétente

AFNOR Association Française de Normalisation

BPF Bonnes pratiques de fabrication

BPH Bonnes pratiques d'hygiène

BPL Bonnes Pratiques de Laboratoire

CCP Critical Control Point

Cd Cadmium

CE Commission Economique

CEI Comité électrotechnique international

COFRAC Comité Français d'Accréditations

FAO Organisation des nations unis pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture

HACCP Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point

HAP Hydrocarbures aromatiques polycycliques

Hg Mercure

ISO International Standard Organisation

INFOPECHE Organisation intergouvernementale d'information et de coopération pour la commercialisation des produits de la pêche en Afrique

LMR Limite maximum de résidu

NF Norme Française.

EN Normes européennes

OAV Office Alimentaire et Vétérinaire

OMC Organisation mondial du commerce

Pb plomb

PCB Polychlorobiphényle

PIB Produit intérieur brut

PP Produits de la pêche

RASFF Rapide alerte system for Food and feed / Système d'alerte rapide pour L'alimentation humaine et animale

TDR Termes de références

TMA Triméthylamine

TMA-N Triméthylamine azote

UE Union Européenne

USD Dollar américain

SUMMARY

The fishery and aquaculture sectors are highly integrated into international trade. Africa supplies world markets with fish products. The main destination for african exports is the EU, which accounts for over 63%. INFOPÊECHE's member countries are among the leading exporters of fishery products, with considerable shares.

The EU is continuing to implement its legislation and regulations on food and feed hygiene, which came into force on 1 January 2006. A number of EU and non-EU countries have been visited by the Commission's veterinary experts, tasked with assessing the degree of harmonisation with EU requirements and ways of achieving greater harmonisation and compliance.

Countries exporting fishery products, particularly developing countries, including those covered by this study, have sometimes encountered difficulties to meet the requirements of the EU market, and many of them have had their access to this market restricted because of inadequacies in the system for monitoring the safety of fishery products.

This diagnostic study reviews the official control system for fishery products destined for the EU market in INFOPÊCHE's member countries and their performance with regard to Community requirements.

STUDY SUMMARY

The study focused upon the FVO's mission reports and RASFF one, supplemented by the results of the audit questionnaire submitted to the various competent authorities in charge of official control.

This approach enables to make review of :

The legal framework in place

The Competent Authority in charge of official controls

The system for producing and marketing fishery products

The control and inspection system for fishery products

The system for certifying fishery products

Official control laboratories

The legal framework

The regulatory texts are in place and describe the health requirements applicable to fishery products. However, there are still gaps in relation to EU regulations.

Competent Authority

The institutional system for monitoring and inspecting fishery products is in place. However, the lack of resources and staff has led to a multiplicity of players, resulting in a lack of coordination, deficiency in cooperation and poor communication;

The proper performance of inspections is hampered by a lack of training for inspectors, as well as a lack of appropriate resources and equipment.

Production and marketing of fishery products

In terms of primary production, small-scale fishing boats do generally not meet standard requirement. Freezer and cold- vessels more often have structural and functional defects. Landing sites do generally not meet the EU regulatory standards.

Land-based facilities have also structural and functional deficiencies, reflecting inadequate implementation of prerequisite programmes and application of the HACCP system.

Control and inspection arrangements for fishery products

Official controls on fishery products have been carried out. However, not all the parameters covered by regulatory criteria are taken into account or carried out in compliance with EU requirements.

Fishery products certification scheme

Certification procedures do not fully comply with provisions that are at least equivalent to European requirements.

Non-compliances are mainly observed in the certification of products from foreign vessels flying the flag of a third country.

There are deficiencies in the procedure for issuing additional certificates.

The analytical system

Official control laboratories are designated by the CA.

They suffer from a lack of financial resources, appropriate technical equipment and inadequate staff training.

Organisational deficiency and a poor quality approach are an obstacle to the reliability of test results.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Legal framework

Regulatory texts which are not equivalent should be subject to a general review to improve their consistency in order to meet the current EU health requirements.

Competent Authority

The institutional system records weaknesses that needs to be corrected by strengthening its organisational and operational capacities, and implementing the ISO 17020 standard.

Production and fishery products marketing system

There are structural and functional weaknesses in the upstream of the industry, as well as in shore-based facilities and approved vessels.

The technical upgrading and capacity building of the players must be addressed.

Control and inspection scheme for fishery products

There are gaps and weaknesses in the way official controls and inspections of fishery products are implemented.

Consideration should be given to strengthening the capacity of inspectors in charge of controls and inspections and providing them with appropriate resources and equipment to make controls and inspections more exhaustive and effective.

Fishery products certification scheme

There are a number of deficiencies in the certification procedures that need to be corrected in order to guarantee the conformity of certified products

Laboratories Official control

The analytical system records certain weaknesses linked to problems of resources, equipment, skills and organisation.

The accreditation of official control laboratories for parameters covered by regulatory criteria for the control of fishery products should be addressed.

Introduction

Fishery is a vital sector for Africa, accounting for 6% of world fish production. It is highly concentrated in several INFOPÊCHE's member countries.

Exploitation of the resource provides many benefits to African countries in terms of income, employment and overall contribution to food security, socio-economic growth and the creation of added value. The total value added of the fishery and aquaculture sector in Africa estimated by the FAO (2013) is USD 24.0 billion, which represents 1.25% of total GDP.

The main destination for African exports is the European Union (EU), which absorbs 63% of the volume.

The EU is the largest market for fish imports and has, by far, the most restrictive regulations. The complexity and extent of these regulations compel the adjustments that need to be made. The impact that EU legislation and regulations may have on the ability of african countries to maintain access to this market is, therefore, a particular concern.

In such a context of institutional, organisational and technical change, it seems appropriate to carry out a diagnostic of the official control system for fishery products intended for export to the European Union, in order to verify the conformity or equivalence of the legislation and system of third countries with the relevant European Union legislation.

This study investiguates the health control system for fishery products, identifies the major actions and constraints that compromise its effectiveness and formulates proposals for priority actions.

It is structured around the following aspects:

- Background and rationale, which provide general information on the shape of the fisheries sector in general and the processing industry in particular;

- The methodological approach, which sets out the objectives of the study and the consultant's terms of reference, the preparatory activities for the study, the conduct of field research, the compilation and processing of the data collected, and the drafting of the interim and final reports;

- Diagnosis of the health control system for fish products, covering the competent authority, analysis laboratories, fishing companies and production conditions upstream of the fishing industry.

I – BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

1.1 Background

Fishery is a vital sector for Africa, accounting for 6% of world fish production. It is highly concentrated in several INFOPECHE member countries.

Exploitation of the resource provides many benefits to African countries in terms of income, employment and overall contribution to food security, socio-economic growth and the creation of added value. The total value added of the fisheries and aquaculture sector in Africa estimated by the FAO (2013) is USD 24.0 billion, which represents 1.25% of total GDP.

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In a context marked by overexploitation of fishery resources, growth must be based on making the most of catches rather than increasing them as a result of the current crisis in the sector. Secondly, the resource should be managed according to the principles of sustainability of resources, with two important tools: fisheries management and management of access to the resource for all types of fishing. Lastly, all stakeholders must be brought up to health standards if they are to retain EU approval and place safe, high added-value products on the international market. Food safety therefore plays a decisive role in food trade. The World Trade Organisation (WTO) calls on member countries to comply with the standards and regulations of the Codex Alimentarius. The agreements on sanitary and phytosanitary measures (SPS) and on technical barriers to trade (TBT), which came into force with the establishment of the WTO, mean that countries must now rise to the challenge of quality. This context requires the government authorities responsible for control to make food safety, is a veritable credo in any vision of a development policy for the agri-food sector.

Almost all INFOPÊCHE's member countries are authorised to export fish products to the EU as third countries listed in Annexes I and II of implementing regulation (EU) 2019/626.

Morocco is on the list of countries (Annex I) from which the entry into the EU of live, chilled, frozen or processed bivalve molluscs, echinoderms, tunicates and marine gastropods intended for human consumption is authorised.

Angola, Côte d'Ivoire, Congo, the Gambia, Gabon, Guinea, Ghana, Morocco, Mozambique, Mauritania, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo are on the list of countries (Annex II) from which the entry into the Union of fishery products other than those referred to in (Annex I) is authorised.

Some of these countries are also authorised to export aquaculture products to the EU as third countries listed in the Annex to Decision 2011/163/EC. These countries are Morocco, Namibia and Nigeria.

To ensure the organisational and operational compliance of the control and production system for fishery products intended for export to the EU, audits are carried out as part of the planned programme of the Directorate-General for Food Safety (DG Health and Food Safety) by the EU Food and Veterinary Office (FVO).

The FVO carries out on-site inspections to assess the food control systems in place by the public authorities, both within EU Member States and in third countries. It is also responsible for monitoring the control procedures in place to ensure animal health and welfare and plant health.

The FVO is responsible for verifying that the competent authorities in exporting countries are able to comply with Community requirements for all products exported to the EU.

For certain products, the FVO inspects all production sites, of which almost 15,000 have received authorisation to export to the EU, and also monitors the operation of 290 inspection boards responsible for controlling imports of animals, foodstuffs and food of animal origin when they enter the European Community.

The new approach adopted following the Commission's amendment of Community hygiene legislation incorporates the three dimensions of control - i.e. ensuring that laws are transposed, receiving reports from the countries concerned and carrying out on-site inspections.

1.2. RATIONALE

For some years now, the sector has been facing difficulties both upstream and in the processing industries. In addition to those linked to the scarcity of resources, there is the problem of the conformity of fish products to the standard requirements of international markets, particularly the EU. Access to the EU market for fish products is subject to approval, which can be withdrawn in the event of major non-compliance. Significant investment has been made to improve sanitary quality in industrial production and in the fish trade, when European standards for exporters' facilities came into force. However, quality is an ongoing process that should involve all stakeholders : artisanal players, manufacturers, the competent authority and laboratories. There is significant potential for improving sanitary quality, but this cannot be achieved without a detailed and precise prior diagnosis of the control system in place at all stages of the industry. This diagnostic study investigautes the situation and will be justified by the need to bring all the stakeholders up to standard. It is therefore vital for third countries to bring their regulatory and operational context into compliance with international health standards, and more particularly EU standards, if they want to retain their EU approval in the long term. Withdrawing European approval would lead to social and economic disruption. INFOPECHE is aware of the importance of controls in any policy to control health quality and, in view of the current quality issues, has commissioned this diagnostic study of the entire health control system for fish products in the Member States with a view to adapting it to international requirements in general and those of Europe in particular.

1.3 INFOPÊCHE OVERVIEW

The intergovernmental Organization for Marketing Information and Cooperation services for fishery products in Africa (INFOPECHE), has eighteen (18) member countries, including :

- Angola,
- Congo,
- Cote d'Ivoire,
- Cameroon
- Gabon,
- The Gambia,
- Ghana,
- Guinea,
- Guinea Bissau,
- Liberia,
- Mauritania,
- Morocco,
- Mozambique
- Namibia,
- Nigeria,
- Senegal
- Sierra Leone
- Togo

Its objectives :

- to contribute to the development and modernisation of the fisheries sector of the Contracting Parties
- to contribute to more balanced supplies of fishery products to the Contracting Parties;
- to make the best use of export opportunities within and outside Africa; and
- to promote technical and economic cooperation among Contracting Parties

Its functions :

- marketing information on fishery products, including sales opportunities and supply prospects within and outside Africa;
- advice on technological developments, product specifications, processing methods and quality standards in accordance with market requirements
- assistance in identifying new products and promoting under-utilised species
- training of staff in governments, institutions and the fishing industry in marketing development.

Its challenges:

- offer more services to the industry sector (private sector)
- have access to real trade data from the major African markets
- make the collection of commercial information sustainable
- to have updated lists of importers and exporters of fishery products for each country
- to have access to all the regulatory data relating to the marketing of fishery products for each member state.
- to become the preferred tool for the exchange and dissemination of commercial information on fishery products in Africa.

This study is a contribution to the activities of the Intergovernmental Organisation for Marketing Information and Cooperation Services for Fishery Products in Africa (INFOPÊCHE). It investiguates he official control system for fishery products in compliance with the EU legislation and regulations, identifies the institutional, organisational and technical factors impacting on the system and, lastly, formalises development scenarios.

II- METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH AND WORK PLAN

2-1 REMINDING THE STUDY OBJECTIVES AND CHALLENGES

INFOPÊCHE wishes to recruit the services of an individual consultant to conduct a diagnostic study of all the stakeholders in the SCSPH (Health Control System for Fishery Products), in particular at the level of the central Competent Authority, laboratories (reference and self-control), decentralised services, establishments and vessels approved for export and upstream of the sector (pilot landing docks, transport vehicles, ice factories, pirogues, etc.). The mission is to take stock of the national system in place for the sanitary control of fish products intended for export to the EU, with a twofold objective :

- Firstly, to assess the system at the level of all stakeholders in terms of relevance and efficiency.
- Secondly, to formulate conclusions and recommendations with a view to reorienting and improving the system so as to increase the added value of Senegalese fish products by placing better quality products on the market and maintaining national approval on a long-term basis.

2-2 REMINDING THE CONSULTANT'S MISSIONS

The consultant is recruited to carry out a diagnostic of the stakeholders in the health control system for fish products in the INFOPECHE member states: CA, upstream (canoes, landing sites, iceplants, transport), laboratories, approved establishments on land and on board vessels. This diagnosis consists of :

- analysing and assessing the performance of these various parties with regard to compliance with health control requirements for fishery products;
- identifying the system's strengths and areas for improvement;
- Finally, formulating recommendations on the fishery product control system, recommending alternative choices in terms of organisation and investment to ensure that EU approval is maintained in the long term. To this end, the real needs of stakeholders in terms of support for managing the health safety of fishery products will be identified and an action plan for implementing the recommendations will be drawn up. The individual consultant will work under the responsibility of INFOPÊCHE. He will work in close collaboration with, on the one hand, the competent authorities and the decentralised services or structures and, on the other hand, with the shipping companies and industrial establishments on the national list of exporters, the inter-professional EIGs (Economic Interest Groupings) of the pilot quays, the professional export organisations, etc.

2-3 METHODOLOGICAL SYNOPSIS

PHASES	MEANS
PHASE 1 PREPARATION OF THE MISSION	➢ Information letter to the Competent Authorities of the different INFOPECHE's member countries ➢ Establishment of an exchange framework between the CAs and the consultant ➢ Drawing up and validation of a diagnostic checklist (investigation grid), reviewing governance of the control system, national legislation and regulations, official control of the production and marketing of CP, official control of CP, certification of CP and laboratories.
PHASE 2 MISSION IMPLEMENTATION	➢ Collection of the last two FVO mission reports ➢ Compendium of notifications from the Rapid Alert System (RASFF) ➢ Collection of legislative and regulatory texts describing the health requirements for the production of PF ➢ Collection of investigation grids ➢ Analysis and use of documentation
PHASE 3 Summary and Outlook analysis	➢ Taking stock and identifying the institutional, organisational and technical factors impacting the control system ➢ Formalisation of development scenarios

Table n°1 : Relevant EU provisions relating to the various control components

Control components contrôle	**Relevant EU provisions**	**Regulatory reference**
Legal regulatory framework	Commission experts may carry out official controls in third countries to verify the conformity or equivalence of third country legislation and systems with Community feed, food and animal health legislation. Official controls concern, in particular, the legislation of the third country When drawing up or updating the list (countries authorised to export PP to the EU), account is taken of the legislation of the third country concerning products of animal origin.	Article 46 of Regulation (EC) 882/2004 Article 11(4)(a)(1) of Regulation (EC) 854/2004
Competent Authority .	Official controls in third countries concern in particular : The organisation of the CA Training of staff to carry out official controls The resources, including diagnostic facilities, available to CAs The existence and implementation of documented control procedures and priority-based control systems The scope and operation of official controls on imports of animals, plants and products of animal or plant origin. The assurances that the third country can give concerning compliance or equivalence with Community requirements.	Article 46 (1) of Regulation (EC) 882/2004 paragraphs (b) to (e) and (g) to (h)

Fishery Product (PP) production and marketing system	When lists are drawn up or updated (countries authorised to export CPs to the EU), the legislation of the third country is taken into account. An establishment may only be included on such a list if the CA of the third country of origin guarantees ; That the said establishment, as well as any establishment handling raw materials of animal origin concerned, complies with the relevant Community requirements That an official inspection service in that country monitors the establishments and makes available to the Commission, as necessary, any relevant information on the establishments supplying raw materials. That this service has the effective power to prevent establishments from exporting to the EU if they fail to comply with the requirements referred to in point (a). Public health attestation Animal health attestation for fish and shellfish from aquaculture.	Article 12 (2) of Regulation (EC) 854/2004 Points II.1 and II.2 of the model health certificate for the import of PF intended for human consumption Appendix IV of Annex VI to Regulation (EC) 2074/2005 Article 11 (4) of Regulation (EC) 854/2004
Fishery Product control and inspection system	Specific rules for the organisation of official controls on products of origin Public health certificate	Points II.1 and II.2 of the model health certificate for the import of PF intended for human consumption
Fishery Product certification scheme	A document meeting the requirements laid down in Annex VI shall accompany consignments of products of animal origin when	

	they are imported into the Community. The Commission must ensure that the rules and principles applied by the third country certifier offer guarantees at least equivalent to those provided for in Directive 96/93/EC.	Appendix IV of Annex VI to Regulation (EC) 2074/2005
System in relation to labortories	The official controls carried out by the commission concern in particular: The training of staff to carry out official controls The resources, including diagnostic facilities, available to CAs	

III-REVIEW

3 – 1 REVIEW REGARDING LEGISLATION AND REGLEMENTORY FRAMEWORK

3-1-1 REGARDING LEGISLATION AND REGMENETORY FRAMEWORK APPLIED TO FISHERY PRODUCTS

There are two main strands to the regulations governing PF:

texts laying down specific rules applicable to fishery products

Texts relating to the organisation of inspection and control services for fishery products.

3-1-2 EUROPEAN REQUIREMENT RELATED TO FISHERY PRODUCTS EXPORT

When it comes to consumer health and safety, the EU has a powerful legal framework of legislation for the food trade. From a food industry perspective, the health safety and quality of fish and fishery products are governed by a series of regulations governing their import into the big EU market;

Regulation (EC) n°178/2002

Regulation (EC) n°852/2004

Regulation (EC) n°853/2004

Regulation (EC) n°183/2002

Regulation (EU) n°2017/625

3 -1-3 EQUAL PRINCIPLES

Equivalence is enshrined in Community food law (Regulation (EC) No 178/2002).

Articles 11 and 12: Food and feed imported into the Community shall comply with the relevant requirements of food law or with conditions recognised by the Community to be at least equivalent to the requirements laid down therein.

3-1- 4 LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND EQUIVALENCE

Legal and regulatory requirements of the EU market mean that exporting countries have to include specific provisions in their legal framework that are at least equivalent to those of the EU.

The analysis and assessment of the legal and regulatory frameworks of INFOPÊCHE's member countries, based on the FVO and RASFF reports and supplemented by questionnaires, revealed the following:

Existence in all Member States of legal frameworks applicable to exports of fishery products to the EU.

Deficiencies noted in the provisions relating to the maximum permissible limit of environmental contaminants in fishery products in accordance with EU rules.

Deficiencies noted in the provisions on controls and maximum permissible levels of chemical contaminants (heavy metals) in fishery products in accordance with EU rules

Deficiencies noted on provisions for histamine controls and maximum permitted levels

Deficiencies noted in provisions relating to toxic fishery products

Deficiencies provisions on the production of live bivalve molluscs

Deficiencies provisions on aquaculture products.

3-1-5 RASFF NOTIFICATIONS

Regarding the widespread consumption of fishery products, their safety for consumers is of paramount importance.

In the European Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF), designed for the rapid exchange of information on foodstuffs presenting a risk to public health, notifications relating to fishery products account for up to 17% of all notifications. (1)

3-1-5-1 MAIN NOTIFICATIONS ON FISHERY PRODUCTS

Main notifications in order of frequency of occurrence;

- Heavy metals
- Pathogenic micro-organisms
- Parasitic infestation
- Cold chain
- Bio contaminant
- Compositional defects
- Industrial contamination
- Veterinary drug residues
- Organoleptic defect
- Chemical contamination
- Biotoxins

- Irradiation
- Pesticide residues

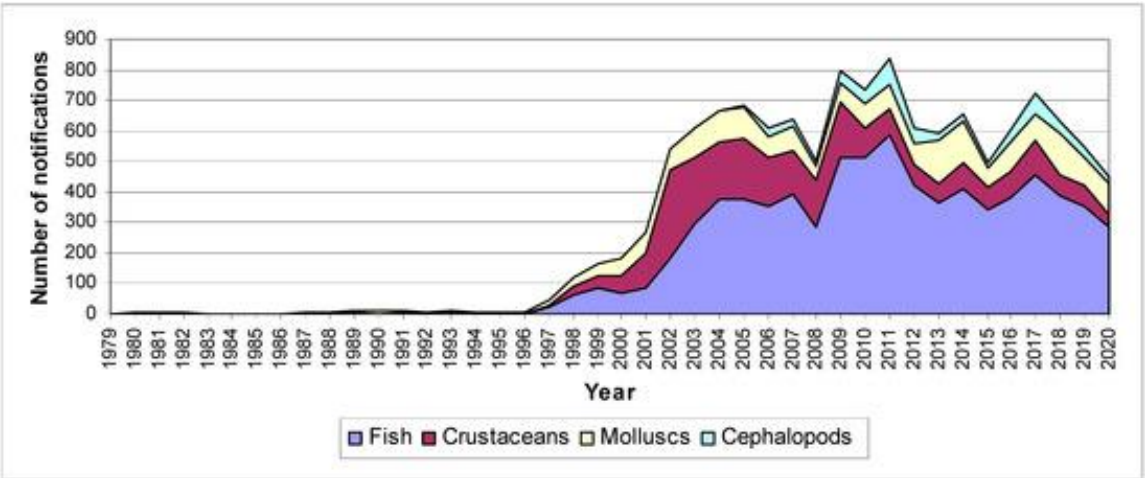
Foreign elements
Allergen
Lack of labelling

Marcin piglowski ; Hazard of fishery products notified in the RASFF from 1996-2020 (1)

Table 2: Number of notifications by fishery product group from 1979 to 2020
Source : *Marcin piglowski ; Hazard of fishery products notified in the RASFF from 1996-2020*

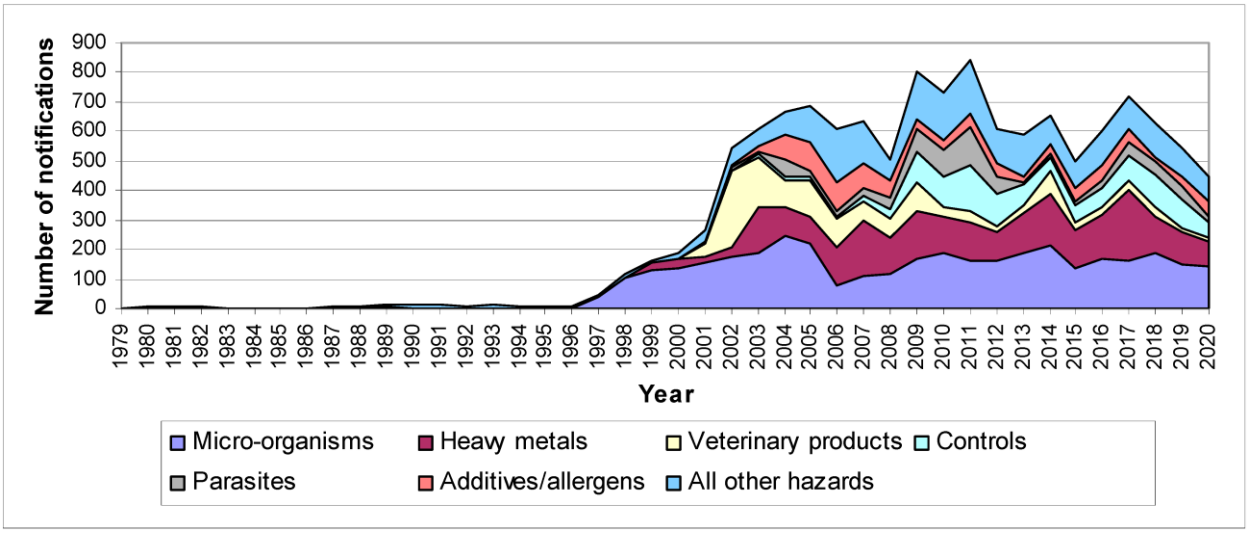
GROUP OF PRODUCT	NUMBER OF NOTIFICATION	PURCENTAGE
Fish	7637	10
crusteans	2625	3.4
Molluscs (bivalves)	1986	2.6
Cephalopods	561	0.7
Total	12809	16.8
Other foods	63475	83.2

Figure 1 : Number of RASFF notifications by fishery product group from 1979 to 2020



Source (1)

Figure 2 : Number of RASFF notifications on fishery products by type of hazard from 1979 to 2020



Source (1)

Table 3 : Reasons for RASFF notifications on fishery products from some INFOPÊCHE's member countries

PURSPOSE OF NOTIFICATION	COTE D'IVOIRE	MOROCCO	NAMIBIA	SENEGAL
Temperature				X
Organoleptic features	X			X
Heavy metals lourds		X		X
Histamine		X		
PAHS	X			
Sulphite		X		X
Parasitic infestation		X		
Pathogenic micro-organisms	X		X	X
Faulty packaging		X		
Foreign element		X		
Establishment approval				X

Table 4 : Number of notifications for food and feed from African countries in 2020

COUNTRIES	NUMBER OF NOTIFICATIONS
ANGOLA	1
CAMEROON	9
COTE D'IVOIRE	1
GAMBIA	2
GUINEA	35
MAURITANIA	3
MOROCCO	27
NAMIBIA	3
NIGERIA	36
SENEGAL	10
SOUTH AFRICA	11
TOGO	3

Source : rapport du RASFF 2020

As a result, border alerts for fishery products from INFOPÊCHE's member countries have remained very frequent from 1996 to 2020, despite the fact that for almost all of them, approval is limited to the export of just a few categories of simple fishery products. The checks that need to be carried out to ensure compliance with international regulations, particularly those of the EU, require enormous resources and proven expertise.

3-2 REVIEW OF THE INSTITUTIONAL CONTROL SYSTEM

3-2-1 STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION

Official control of fishery products intended for export to the EU is the core responsibility of a central competent authority (CA).

This is the centre through which all activities flow; the CA coordinates the control system, imposes a standardised approach and procedures, acts as a reference centre and establishes the regulatory framework to promote the safety of fishery products.

It has different legal status depending on the country: a government department, a semi-public organisation, an agency, an office or an authority under government control.

3-2-2 ORGANISATIONAL DIAGNOSIS

The diagnosis of control and inspection structures revealed a number of gaps;

Multiple players at institutional level.

control and inspection activities are not fully covered, especially upstream in the sector.

Lack of qualified and experienced staff with sufficient knowledge of the requirements of EU regulations applicable to exported fishery products.

Deficiencies in the scheduling of inspections, compliance with standard procedures and follow-up to inspections

Deficiencies in the management of FVO audit recommendations and RASFF alerts

Lack of appropriate transport and communications equipment.

Internal audit system is not always in place.

3-3 REVIEW OF MARKETING FISHERY PRODUCTS SYSTEM

3-3-1 OFFICIAL CONTROL

Official controls on the production and marketing of fishery products intended for export to the EU cover the whole production chain.

- Small-scale fishing vessels
- Ice fishing vessels
- Freezer fishing vessels
- Landing sites
- Ice factories
- Land-based facilities
- Cold stores
- Imports of fish products
- Means of transport for fishery products.

3-3-2 ASSESSMENT OF THE PERFORMANCE OF THE CONTROL AND INSPECTION SYSTEM

The diagnosis of the control system reveals numerous weaknesses, both structural and functional;

The vast majority of small-scale fishing vessels are structurally non-compliant.

Ageing industrial fishing vessels

Unsuitable landing facilities

Outdated and non-compliant means of transport

inadequate application of the control and inspection system for fishery products

Insufficient traceability of fishery products

deficiencies in monitoring the correction of identified deficiencies and deadlines for their correction.

Failure to respect the cold chain

Failure to use additives correctly

Failure to check and correctly implement HACCP plan procedures

Lack of training for those who are involved

3-4 REVIEW OF THE INSPECTION AND CONTROL SYSTEM FOR FISHERY PRODUCTS

Official inspection of fishery products is carried out in accordance with point II.1 of the model health certificate for imports of fishery products into the European Union.

The inspection covers ;

- Verification of product temperature

- organoleptic examinations and freshness indicators for fishery products

- Control of histamine, chemical contaminants and additives

- Microbiological testing of fish products, water and ice

- Parasite detection

- Toxic fish products

The parameters to be tested for and the quantities to be sampled for official controls are defined in the Competent Authority's (CA) quality manual..

Deficiencies were noted in the implementation of official controls concerning ;

- Parasites and toxic fish products in fresh product

- Histamine testing

- Permissible levels of certain chemical contaminants (heavy metals)

- Official sampling to monitor bivalve molluscs

- Official sampling to monitor dioxin and PCB levels in fish products

3-5 REVIEW OF FISHERY PRODUCTS CERTIFICATION SYSTEM

Third country certifiers must apply rules and principles offering the necessary guarantees at least equivalent to those provided for in Directive 96/93/EC.

Official certification procedures are in place for fishery products intended for export to the EU. Certification is carried out on the basis of a specific dossier to each fishery product.

However,deficiencies have been noted in terms of compliance with established procedures;

- Verification of certification dossiers

- Verification that the producer is registered on the European Commission's official list;

- The inclusion on the certificate of the storage warehouse for fishery products prior to export;

- Signing additional certificates without any analyses having been carried out.

3-6 REVIEW OF THE ANALYTICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The laboratories responsible for official analyses are approved by the competent authority. The laboratories are either public, university or private;

The assessment of approved laboratories focused on;

Management requirements (organisation, quality system, control of documentation)

Technical requirements (staff, facilities, test methods, calibration and equipment).

This assessment revealed the following weaknesses;

- Laboratories not upgraded due to lack of resources
- Organisational shortcomings and weaknesses in the quality system
- Lack of coverage of certain parameters used as regulatory criteria
- Lack of regulatory monitoring

- Analysis methods often different from the European reference method
- Lack of ISO 17025 accreditation for official fisheries product control laboratories;

IV- CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4-1- CONCLUSIONS

4-1-1 CONCLUSION ON THE LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The regulations of INFOPÊCHE's member countries generally reflect European health requirements for fishery products. However, certain weaknesses or deficiencies which are the same to all Member States have been noted;

- the obsolescence or inadequacy of certain regulatory provisions, especially as regards the health requirements applicable to small-scale fishing vessels
- Research and admissible levels of certain chemical contaminants in fishery products (heavy metals, dioxins, PAHs, PCBs, histamine).
- Toxic fish products
- Production of bivalve molluscs
- Production of aquaculture products

4-1-2 CONCLUSION REGARDING THE COMPETENT AUTHORITY

Analysis of the institutional arrangements shows that the structure, organisation and powers of the CA are well defined. However, the documented procedures used for official controls on fishery products intended for export to the European Union are not always properly implemented.

The number of control and inspection officers is insufficient, and their skills and professional experience need to be improved.

The equipment and logistics needed to carry out controls and inspections are sometimes non-existent.

4-1-3 CONCLUSION REGARDING PRODUCING AND MARKETING FISH PRODUCTS SYSTEM

Official controls on the production and marketing of fishery products intended for export to the European Union are in place, but do not always cover the entire production chain.

Health checks on pirogues have not yet been introduced in the vast majority of Member States.

The conditions of landing and first sale do not guarantee that the fishery products landed are protected from contamination. As a result, landing sites in most Member States are not fully compliant with European requirements, i.e. Regulation (EC) 853/2004, Annex III Section VIII Chapter II.

Inspection of approved establishments and vessels is not sufficient to ensure compliance with EU requirements.

4-1-4 CONCLUSION REGARDING THE CONTROL AND INSPECTION OF FISHERY PRODUCTS SYSTEM

The CA has set up a control and inspection system for fishery products intended for export. However, the deficiencies observed, relating to the presence of high levels of histamine, parasitic infestation, the presence of heavy metals, the presence of contamination germs and pathogenic germs, the presence of additives, marine biotoxins, during the assessment do not allow us to consider that the official control of fishery products described in Chapter II of Annex III of Regulation (EC) 854/2004 are all carried out satisfactorily.

4-1-5 CONCLUSION ON THE FISHERY PRODUCT CERTIFICATION SCHEME

Certification for the export of fishery products is implemented satisfactorily in accordance with the procedures in place.

However,deficiencies have been noted in the specific case of transhipments, approved vessels whose products are exported from cold stores, and the issue of additional certificates.

4-1-6 CONCLUSION REGARDING THE LABORATORIES

The laboratories responsible for official analyses of fishery products are designated by the CA.

Almost all laboratories are neither assessed nor accredited under officially recognised programmes to ensure that appropriate quality controls are in place to guarantee the reliability of analysis results;

Staff training and organisational and operational capacity are lacking.

4-2 RECOMMENDATIONS

4-2-1 RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The effects of national regulations on international trade have become more apparent than ever.

Institutional capacity-building to ensure that national legislation is fully compatible with EU requirements is an imperative.

4-2-2 RECOMMENDATION REGARDING THE PERFORMANCE OF THE COMPETENT AUTHORITY

The designated Competent Authority must be the only one competent for the control of fishery and aquaculture products at all levels of the production chain.

The Competent Authorities must undertake to implement quality assurance in accordance with the ISO 17020 standard (general criteria for the operation of inspection bodies) in order to prove that the inspection organisation is competent, reliable and impartial, and to harmonise inspection methods for all staff responsible for the inspection and certification of fishery products at national level.

The training of inspection officers must be extended to cover all areas relating to the inspection of fishery and aquaculture products.

The number of staff must be sufficient to cover all controls and inspections.

Suitable resources and infrastructures must be in place to ensure that controls and inspections are carried out effectively.

4-2-3 RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING PRODUCING AND MARKETING FISH PRODUCTS SYSTEM

A wide-ranging programme to upgrade the system for marketing fishery products is needed to meet European requirements. The upgrading will be both structural and functional.

Thus, from a structural point of view ;

- Technical upgrading of land-based establishments and approved vessels
- Upgrading of small-scale fishing vessels
- Upgrading of landing sites
- Upgrading of means of transport for fishery products.

From a functional point of view;

- Setting up prerequisite programmes
- Introduction of the HACCP procedure
- Capacity-building for stakeholders.

4-2-4 RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE CONTROL AND INSPECTION OF FISHERY PRODUCTS SYSTEM

The official control system for fishery products must cover the entire production chain

Putting in place suitable infrastructures, equipment and resources to effectively carry out inspections and controls on fishery products

Carrying out monitoring of fishery products for all the parameters laid down as regulatory criteria by European Union legislation, i.e. ;

- organoleptic evaluation
- Freshness indicators (ABVT / TMA)
- Histamine
- Residues and contaminants (heavy metals, PCBs, dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs)
- Microbiological control
- Parasite detection
- Toxic fish products (toxic fish, fish products containing biotoxins and toxins found in bivalve molluscs and gastropods).
- Monitoring the production of bivalve molluscs.
- Monitoring residues in animal products derived from aquaculture.

4-2-5 RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING FISHERY PRODUCTS CERTIFICATION SCHEME

The certification procedure needs to be improved for freezer vessels flying the flag of a third country, so that the sanitary conditions under which fishery products are produced on board before certification are secured, and so ,that they are better identified and included on the list of approved vessels.

The certification procedure must also be improved with regard to additional certificates, validated without prior checks.

4-2-6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ANALYTICAL SYSTEM

The technical capabilities of official control laboratories need to be strengthened in order to cover the analysis of all the parameters that are subject to regulatory criteria in the control of fishery products.

Improving the organisational and operational capacity of laboratory staff by enhancing their knowledge of the ISO 17025 standard.

Undertake to upgrade and support official control laboratories in obtaining accreditation.

5 – ACTION PLAN

Regarding the results of this study, there is an urgent need to improve the current system of official inspection and control of fishery and aquaculture products in the INFOPÊCHE's member countries, for making it more effective. Improvements and guidelines are envisaged to enable these countries to comply with the requirements for easier access to export markets, particularly the EU.

Most of the issues raised are structural, functional, legislative and regulatory.

The upgrading will focus on ;

- Bringing regulations and legislation into line with the international context
- The Competent Authority
- The system for producing and marketing PF
- Analytical infrastructures.

The action plan will be structured around priority actions to be carried out in the short term and actions that can be carried out in the medium term.

5-1 ACTIONS TO BE CARRIED OUT IN THE SHORT TERM

5-1-1 COMPETENT AUTHORITY

Adapt the legal status of the ACSs to the scale of these missions by changing their status from that of a directorate to that of a more autonomous office or agency.

Centralise the entire inspection and control system at the level of the CA, for transparent, reliable and harmonised action.

Provide the CAs with the resources they need to carry out their tasks properly.

Supporting CAs in improving their organisation and operational procedures, so that they comply with the requirements of ISO 17020.

5-1-2 UPSTREAM OF THE FISHERY SECTOR

Development of landing sites in compliance with regulatory requirements

Structural and functional upgrading of small-scale fishing vessels

Bringing PP transport vehicles into compliance

5-1-3 THE LABORATORIES

Capacity building for official laboratories in charge of PP control

Assistance with upgrading public and private control laboratories

Accreditation of control laboratories to ISO 17025 standards.

5-1-4 SYSTEMS FOR PRODUCING AND MARKETING FISHERY PRODUCTS

Training for management in approved establishments on land and on board vessels; in the design and implementation of appropriate HACCP procedures

Training in good hygiene and manufacturing practices

Raising awareness of the quality issues regarding fishery products.

5-2 ACTIVITIES TO BE IMPLEMENTED IN THE SHORT TERM

5-2-1 AWARENESS-RAISING ACTIONS

CODE	ACTIVITIES TO BE IMPLEMENTED	TARGETS
AS1	Awareness campaign on the health and economic issues involved in controlling the quality of fishery and aquaculture products	CA agent Approved unit agents Professional organisation Fisherman Mareyeur carrier
AS2	Organisation of information seminars on SPS measures and European health legislation	CA agent Approved unit agents Professional organisation

5-2-2 TRAINGING ACTIONS

CODE	ACTIVITIES TO BE IMPLEMENTED	TARGETS
AF1	Training on the new regulations	CA agents Agents of approved units
AF2	Capacity-building for official export inspection and control bodies	CA agents Laboratory staff
AF3	Training on the mastery of prerequisite programmes and the implementation of the HACCP approach in approved establishments and vessels	CA agents Agents of approved units Laboratory staff
AF4	Training in the implementation of ISO 17020 standards for inspection bodies	CA Agents
AF5	Training in the implementation of ISO 17025 in control laboratories	The laboratories
AF6	Training workshop on controlling sanitary conditions upstream of the supply chain	CA Agent Agents of approved units Professional organisation Fisherman Fishmongers carrier

5-2-3 UPGRADING ACTIONS

CODE	ACTIVITIES TO BE IMPLEMENTED	TARGETS
AMN1	Adapting the legal status of ACSs to the scale of their missions	Institutional control system
AMN2	Centralisation and harmonisation of inspection and control activities	CA
AMN3	Improving the CA's organisation and operating procedures to comply with ISO 17020 requirements	CA
AMN4	Assistance in upgrading public and private control laboratories	The laboratories
AMN5	Accreditation of control laboratories to standard 17025	The laboratories
AMN6	Setting up a health monitoring organisation	CA
AMN7	Setting up a risk analysis body	CA

5-3 ACTIONS TO BE IMPLEMENTED IN MEDIUM TERMS

5-3-1 UPGRADING ACTIONS

CODE	ACTIVITIES TO BE IMPLEMENTED	TARGETS
AMM 1	Reviewing, adapting and extending regulatory texts	CA Government
AMM2	Renewal of small-scale fishing vessels	Fishermen
AMM3	Modernisation of PP transport vehicles	Transportor
AMM4	Technical upgrading of shore-based units and approved vessels	Approved units

5-4 IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

	ACTIVITIES TO BE IMPLEMENTED IN SHORT TERM											
ACIVITIES	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**
ASI	X											
AS2		X										
AF1			X									
AF2				X								
AF3					X							
AF4						X						
AF5							X					
AF6								X				
AMN1	X	X	X									
AMN2			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
AMN3	X	X	X	X								
AMN4			X	X	X	X						
AMN5					X	X	X					
AMN6								X	X	X	X	X
AMN7								X	X	X	X	X

ACTIVITIES TO BE IMPLEMENTED IN MEDIUM TERMS					
ACIVITIES	**12**	**24**	**32**	**44**	**54**
AMM1	X	X			
AMM2	X	X	X	X	X
AMM3	X	X	X		
AMM4	X	X	X		

VI- POTENTIAL PARTNERS

The various activities announced in the action plan show that there is a need for SPS capacity in both the public and private sectors, which is essential if market access is to be maintained and improved.

The Standard and Trade Development Facility (STDF) offers funding opportunities for the application of standards and trade development.

INFOPÊCHE, as a intergovernmental organisation, is eligible to support the various actions planned which will help to resolve the difficulties and problems in the SPS field, which hinder international trade in fishery and aquaculture products.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

The study shows that there is an urgent need to improve the current official control system for fishery products, in order to make it more effective.

The official control system suffers from regulatory, organisational, structural and functional problems.

With a view to improvement, action must be taken to upgrade ;

The competent authority, to make it more efficient

Upstream of the industry, to modernise small-scale fishing vessels and improve their level of compliance.

Landing sites, to improve hygiene conditions

Fishery Product transportation, to renew the fleet and bring it up to standard

Industrial fishing vessels and onshore facilities for structural and functional compliance

Official control laboratories for their accreditation

As part of the health safety policy, risk analysis and management, and the planning of surveillance players, must be effective and efficient.

ANNEXES

Audit Check list

Hygiene package regulations

INFOPECHE

CHECK LIST OF DIAGNOSTICS

A- GOVERNANCE OF THE CONTROL SYSTEM FOR FISHERY PRODUCTS				
INDICATORS	**YES**	**NO**	**NA**	**JUSTIFICATION/ CLARIFICATION**
1- the competent authority (CA) responsible for official controls on PP destined for the EU				
2- Mission and skills of the CA				
3- Organisation of the CA				
4- Health inspection manual for official control				
5- functional planning, monitoring and evaluation system				
6- Human resources				
7- CA Resources and Facilities				

B- NATIONAL LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS ON FISHERY PRODUCTS				
1- Organisation of official health controls regarding the fishery products				
2Technical and health provisions applicable on board fishing vessels and small craft				
3Technical and sanitary provisions relating to PP processing and packaging premises				
4- Provisions applicable to chilled, frozen PP. fish meat, processed fishery products				
5- Fishery products storage				
6- Traceability requirements for PP and aquaculture				
7- Fishery products transportation				
8- fishery products organoleptic tests				
9- Freshness indicators (ABVT, TMA-N)				
10 Sampling plan, analysis methods and permitted levels for mercury, lead, cadmium, tin, dioxins and PAHs in Fishery products				
11- Sampling plan, analysis methods and permitted levels for histamine				

12- Sampling plan and levels to be respected for sulphites				
13- Testing for residues and contaminants				
14Microbiological controls on fishery products				
15- Quality criteria for water used in the treatment of PF and aquaculture				
16- parasites detection				
17- Toxic fishery products				
18- Ice production conditions				
19- Food additives				
20- Provisions for registering and authorising operators producing PP destined for the EU				

C- OFFICIAL CONTROLS ON THE PRODUCTION AND MARKETING OF FISHERY PRODUCTS

INDICATORS	YES	NO	NA	JUSTIFICATION/ CLARIFICATION
1- Assessed and approved boats				
2- First market landing sites, auctions and wholesale markets assessed and approved				
3- Listed fishing boats				
4- listed land-based establishments				
5Listed cold stores				
6- Imported fish products				
D- OFFICIAL CONTROLS ON FISHERY PRODUCTS				
1- Organoleptic evaluation				
2- Freshness indicator (ABVT et TMA-N)				

3- Histamine				
4- Residues and contaminants (heavy metals, PCBs, dioxins, PAHs)				
5- Microbiological control				
6- parasites detection				
7- Toxic fish products				
8Monitoring bivalve mollusc production				
E- CERTIFICATION OF FISHERY PRODUCTS EXPORTED TO THE EU				
1- Certification procedure				
2- models of health certificate				
F- LABORATORIES				
1- Designation of accredited and/or assessed laboratories responsible for official analyses of fishery products				
2- Standardised analysis methods				

3Microbiological analyses carried out				
4- Chemical analyses carried out				
5- Diagnostic facilities for AC				

NOTA BENE :

In order to fill in the checklist in the most relevant way possible, so that it can be processed as quickly as possible, please follow the instructions below:

For each indicator, you will be asked a series of questions;

The questions may be closed (yes - no - NA) or open, requiring you to give a detailed answer.

In all cases (closed or open answers) you are asked to complete the fourth column for justifications and clarifications.