

German Cooperation

Lessons learned
from 30 years in Mauritania



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The Mauritanian fisheries sector - Generalities

- Coastline 720 km, EEZ 200 nm (declared in 1988), surface 234,000 km², shelf area 39,000 km²
- Canary current system, important upwelling zone (not homogeneous)
- Rich fisheries resources, mostly small pelagics
- Fish consumption 4 kg/head/y that means the country has enormous resources but doesn't need them itself
- Mauritania has signed a number of international conventions as UNCLOS, Convention for the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Species, FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries
- Mauritania is member of several regional and international bodies like CSRP, COMHAFAT, ICCAT



The Mauritanian fisheries sector - History

- Portuguese and Spanish (mostly from Canaries) vessels fished already in 15th century, first French vessels arrived in 16th century, Dutch vessels started in 17th century
- Since independence (1960) fishery was managed based on the merchant navy and fisheries law, the fishing rights were granted as free licences
- Till 70s almost no national fisheries (N'Diagolais, Imraguens)
- Due to severe draughts in the 70s/80s the fisheries sector became more important, a national fleet developed (artisanal and industrial)
- In 1970 the Ministry of Merchant Navy and Fisheries was created, the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Economy exists since 1982



The Mauritanian fisheries sector – History (cont.)

- First fisheries law in 1988, the present fisheries law dates from 2000 (modified in 2007)
- Several fishing policies served as strategic basis: 1979 (*New Fisheries Policy*), 1987 (*Political Declaration for the Development of the Fisheries Sector*), 1994 (*Letter on Sector Policy*), 1998 (*Strategy for Management and Development of the Fisheries Sector*), 2006 (*Strategy for a Sustainable Development of the Fisheries Sector and the Marine Economy*), 2008-12 (*Strategy for the Management of the Fisheries Sector and Aquaculture*), a new strategy is under discussion
- Fishing agreements signed with several countries like Russia (first in 1973), Korea, China, EU (first in 1987, new protocol not yet ratified), Senegal, Algeria etc. The most important is the FPA with EU



The Mauritanian fisheries sector – Today's situation

- In 2011 about 1.2 m tons of fish were caught in the Mauritanian EEZ (all fleets included) of which 1.0 m tons were caught by the industrial and 0.2 m tons by the artisanal fleet
- The industrial catches consist of
 - 940,000 tons small pelagics
 - 36,000 tons demersal fish
 - 18,000 tons octopus
 - 5,000 tons crustaceans (shrimps and crabs)
- The national industrial fleet lands about 20.000 tons only (octopus and demersal fish)
- Most fish is landed outside Mauritania or transhipped, local landings mostly exported frozen, little treatment, little value added



The Mauritanian fisheries sector – Today's situation (cont.)

- Mauritanian fleet:
 - About 115 industrial vessels of which 91 active (2011), mostly oriented towards octopus
 - About 7,000 artisanal crafts (2013)
- International fleet
 - 98 industrial vessels (2011) from EU and 57 from other countries (Russia, Ukraine, flags of convenience like St. Kitts & Nevis, Belize, etc.)
 - 300 crafts from Senegal
 - 5 vessels from Algeria
 - 5 vessels from China (under a convention with the company Poly-Hondone)



Project “Advice in the Fisheries Ministry” (GTZ/GIZ)

First period 1979 – 1998

- This period that started in December 1979 with a 18 moth pilot phase, and could be titled “Assistance in the organisation of the fisheries sector and the administrative structures”.
- In the first intergovernmental agreement the aims of the project were formulated as follows:
 - (i) organisation of the fisheries sector,
 - (ii) increase of the offer of fish products for the population and
 - (iii) setting up of a fisheries control system

These aims proved to be too ambitious as the administrative structures were by far not ready for implementing them.



Project “Advice in the Fisheries Ministry” (GTZ/GIZ)

First period 1979 – 1998 (cont.)

- The planning has therefore been regularly adjusted over the years in order to respond to the changing demands of a slowly developing Ministry and a fast developing fisheries sector.
- Following main outputs of the project should be mentioned:
 - (i) Assistance in analysis, conception and elaboration of strategies
 - (ii) Establishment of stable working relationships with other donors as well as with regional and international organisations
 - (iii) Accompanying the negotiation process with regard to fishing agreements
 - (iv) Setting-up a specialized library in the Ministry



Project “Advice in the Fisheries Ministry” (GTZ/GIZ)

First period 1979 – 1998 (cont.)

- (v) Significant contributions in setting-up a new project aiming at strengthening the fisheries control agency
- (vi) Assistance in developing and updating the legal framework (fisheries and merchant navy)
- (vii) Edition and regular updating of a collection of legal texts on fisheries and marine law
- (viii) Elaboration and implementation of a handbook of administrative procedures
- (ix) Elaboration of an individual training program for all employees of the Ministry (from Director downwards)
- (x) Realisation of several training courses with local experts
- (xi) Setting up an IT-Division and an internal network



Project “Advice in the Fisheries Ministry” (GTZ/GIZ)

First period 1979 – 1998 (cont.)

- At the end of this first period:
 - The partner Ministry had improved its image and its standing
 - The fisheries policy, originally administered by an office of the Secretary of State, was now managed by a Sector Ministry
 - The first fisheries law was published and in most instances implemented showing that the Government had attached more importance to the sector
 - The sector had undergone a remarkable development although it had suffered also some major setbacks (excessive indebtedness leading to a severe banking crisis):



Project “Advice in the Fisheries Ministry” (GTZ/GIZ)

First period 1979 – 1998 (cont.)

- A national industrial fleet of about 100 vessels existed
- The artisanal fleet, quasi inexistent at the beginning of the 80s, consisted of more than 2000 crafts
- The human resource development made progress (young Mauritians returning from Morocco, Tunisia, USSR, Romania and France could be inserted in administration, research and private sector)
- **BUT:** The fishery sector was managed in a way to maximise the state’s revenues, the idea of resource preservation and sustainability of fisheries had not yet been adopted
- The project was closed in January 1999, after 19 years.



Project “Fisheries Control and Surveillance GTZ/KfW

A short overview

- In 1989 this project started with an 18-month pilot phase and was based in Nouadhibou, still the only fishing port in Mauritania
- The advisor project in Nouakchott had done a lot of preparatory work
- The project was implemented by GTZ with substantial financial contributions of KfW
- In 2003, BMZ decided to mandate the KfW to continue with it. The GTZ-advisor was transferred to the Ministry
- Main achievements of this project:
 - Hiring a patrol vessel which was later bought and some years later replaced by a new construction (Arguin)



Project “Fisheries Control and Surveillance GTZ/KfW

A short overview

- Incurring, in the first years, all the costs for maintenance and spare parts of the vessels
- Construction of small patrol vessels for the work in the port and in the PNBA
- Construction of the head quarters
- Introduction of a VMS system (first INMARSAT later ARGOS)
- Construction of several radar stations and supplying the necessary equipment
- Equipment of the agency (radio, computers, ...)
- Conception und implementation of a logbook system (1990) for the industrial fishery



Project “Fisheries Control and Surveillance GTZ/KfW

A short overview

- Assistance in the development of the agency from a simple Department of the ministry to a (now) Coast Guard
- Development of a database
- Conception und implementation of a logbook system (1990) for the industrial fishery
- Introduction of a MCS fee depending on type of fishery and size of vessel
- Training of 100s of staff
- This project continues with a new budget of 17 m € for the next phase starting in 2014



Project “Advice in the Fisheries Ministry” (GTZ/GIZ)

Second period 2003 – 2013

- The Strategy for Management and Development of the Fisheries Sector from 1998 and the new Fisheries Law from 2000 changed the focus of the fisheries policy from a revenue-orientation to an sustainable approach
- For the first time, the law stipulated that the stocks must be managed sustainable on the basis of management plans
- Consequently, the orientation of the project had to be fundamentally modified. In the 10 following years, the project aimed at assisting the Ministry in establishing a sustainable fishery.
- The major output of this second period are:
 - Assistance in creating and developing the National Consultative Council for the Management and the Development of the Fishery.



Project “Advice in the Fisheries Ministry” (GTZ/GIZ)

Second period 2003 – 2013 (cont.)

The Council is a platform where all stakeholders discuss management and development issues in order to give an advice to the Ministry (co-management approach)

- Elaboration of the first management plan for the most valuable stock of the Mauritanian EEZ, the octopus. This plan was adopted by the Council of Ministers and came into force in 2006
- Assistance in creating a Monitoring and Evaluation Commission for the Octopus Management Plan
- Elaboration of the Shrimp Management Plan and the Management and Development Plan for the Artisanal Fishery
- Revision of the Mauritanian Fishing zones



Project “Advice in the Fisheries Ministry” (GTZ/GIZ)

Second period 2003 – 2013 (cont.)

- Elaboration of the functional specification (cahier de charge) for the development of a Fisheries Information System
- Evaluation and actualisation of the octopus Management Plan which had only a term of 4 years
- Establishment of a Private-Public Partnership (PPP) project testing, in the first phase, the possibilities of growing shellfish (clams, mussels, oysters) in the Bay of Nouadhibou. In a second phase the promising results were consolidated
- Elaboration of a feasibility study on the possibilities of mariculture in the Bay of Nouadhibou



Project “Advice in the Fisheries Ministry” (GTZ/GIZ)

Second period 2003 – 2013 (cont.)

- Elaboration of a Mariculture development Plan for the Bay of Nouadhibou
- Elaboration of a Management Plan for small pelagic species (sardine, sardinella, horse mackerel, mackerel)
- Installation of a Fisheries Information System in the Ministry that will serve to collect highly aggregated data from the different Directorates and other dependent unities
- At the end of this second period the Ministry:
 - Has a functional organisation chart, separating management and exploitation directorates



Project “Advice in the Fisheries Ministry” (GTZ/GIZ)

Second period 2003 – 2013 (cont.)

- disposes of a number of validated management plans (octopus, small pelagics, mullets, bluefish, meagre, shrimps, artisanal fisheries)
- has a recognized MCS-system (recently renamed as Coast Guard)
- Signed fishery agreements (Japan, EU) that guarantee high yearly revenues
- **BUT:** Although the sustainability of the fishery is, at least, officially the basis for the management, several stocks are overfished, licences are issued excessively, conventions are signed without taking in account their impact on the resource, the industrial fleet is over-aged, the sector is still seen as a cash cow!
- The project will be closed end of July 2013



Conclusions

After all this years of intervention of long-term personal as well as numerous national, regional and international consultants, after having organised various training courses in Mauritania and having sent uncounted numbers of ministerial staff to training courses in the region or in Europe, after having financed countless information trips to Europe or in the region, after having organised or co-financed seminars and workshops in the Ministry, the Research Institute, the Fisheries School, the MCS agency etc. - there are still a many problem unsolved the situation has even degraded in some points:

- Several stocks are over or fully fished (octopus, round sardinella, horse mackerel, mackerel)
- Most management plans are not officially adopted , the only plan adopted was only partially implemented



Conclusions (cont.)

- Licences are often allocated , authorisations for fish meal plants are distributed, fishing agreements are signed without taken care of the scientific advice
- The industrial fleet is overaged and many vessels don't comply with the minimal hygienic standards (EU is already threatening to ban the import of fresh fish)
- The famous Consultative Council has not met since 2008 etc.

Some reasons for this might be the following:

- The Government sees the sector still as generator of revenues and these revenues are not reinvested in sector, the Ministry and its dependant structures (research, hygiene, schools, MCS) are always underfinanced



Conclusions (cont.)

- Therefore, the Ministry depends on the few donors present in the country, but they are withdrawing:
 - France has stopped its cooperation already in 2011
 - Germany is doing it now (technical cooperation)
 - the EU is demotivated because more than 20 m € from the 65 m € provided as budget aid in the last protocol (2008-2012) have not yet been used and
 - the WARFP of the World Bank is already in the pipeline since at least 2008 and seems never to start
- The Ministry is understaffed, the staff is badly paid and highly demotivated
- And, last but not least, politics depend on the personality of the decision maker!



Thank you for your attention