



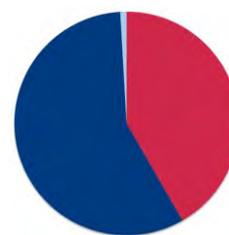
# The Importance of Wild Fisheries For Local Food Security: MOZAMBIQUE

*Mozambique's government recognizes the importance of wild fisheries to the country's food security, economic growth, poverty reduction, and gender equality. An estimated 334,000 people rely on small-scale fisheries for their livelihoods and fish provide almost 40% of dietary animal protein. Fisheries in Mozambique continue to face a number of challenges including declining stocks from poor management.*

**Food Security:** Although Mozambique has experienced significant economic growth in recent years, one-third of the population is estimated to be chronically food insecure [1]. Among children under age five, 44% suffer from stunting, 69% have vitamin A deficiency, and 74% have iron deficiency [1, 2]. Dietary diversity in Mozambique is the lowest in the region, with 80% of calories in the typical diet coming from cereals and starchy foods [3]. Fish is an important source of protein, providing about 40% of average animal protein intake [4]. Annual per capita fish and shellfish consumption is estimated to be 5.7 kg (12.6 lbs), among the lowest in the region, but a significant contributor to animal protein intake due to the relatively low content of animal protein in Mozambique's food supply [3, 5]. The World Health Organization's 2011-2014 Multisectoral Plan for Chronic Malnutrition Reduction in Mozambique emphasizes the need to improve dietary diversity through increased production of nutritious foods such as fish [2].

**National Development Priority:** In its National Agricultural Investment Plan 2014-2018, the Government of Mozambique recognizes the fisheries sector "as being of great importance in the country due to its ability to generate income and foreign exchange, create employment and livelihood [for] fishing communities" [6]. The government has developed a Fisheries Master Plan 2010-2019, with the goal of increasing the contribution of fish to food security, improving living conditions for fishing communities, and strengthening the contribution of fisheries to economic development [7]. Currently, the contribution of fisheries to the country's agricultural Gross Domestic Product is about 7% [8].

## COUNTRY PROFILE: MOZAMBIQUE



- Land Area
- Freshwater & Floodplains
- Marine Area/Exclusive Economic Zone

- **Average per capita annual fish/shellfish consumption: 5.7 kg (12.6 lbs)**
- **Provision of animal protein by fish: 40%**
- **Stunting: 44%**
- **Population experiencing food insecurity: 33%**

**Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper:** Mozambique's 2011-2014 Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper emphasizes the importance of increasing the productivity of the fisheries sector to reduce poverty. Specific strategies included strengthening fisheries administration and extension services, encouraging fishing activities in high fishery potential areas, and supporting the construction of fishing infrastructure to aid small-scale fishers [9].

**Job Security:** About 334,000 people in Mozambique rely on small-scale fisheries for their livelihoods including activities such as fishing, processing, distribution, and sales [10]. Around 85% of the annual catch is produced by small-scale fishers and consumed locally [6]. Women are primarily engaged in post-harvest activities, while men are

predominantly involved in harvesting the catch. A recent assessment found that women are under-represented in local fisheries management groups and have less access to credit compared to men [11]. The Ministry of Fisheries in Mozambique recently developed a gender strategy to help ensure that women have equal rights and opportunities within the fisheries sector [11].

**Fisheries Management:** Mozambique has relatively well developed fisheries management institutions, but small-scale fisheries still face a number of challenges, including decreasing stocks due to poor management and illegal fishing practices; pollution from extractive industries; conflicts between fishing communities and industrial vessels; and climate change [10]. A study involving interviews with coastal communities in Mozambique found that climate variability and degradation of fisheries are the two main stressors affecting their livelihoods [12]. A recent assessment prioritized the following strategies to improve small-scale fisheries management: decrease illegal fishing practices; increase financial support for marine conservation and fisheries co-management; improve cooperation, communication, and information sharing between marine park officials and fishing communities; develop strategies to help fishing communities adapt to climate change; and ensure effective information sharing and community engagement in environmental impact assessment processes related to the extractive industries and large-scale infrastructure projects [10].

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