

# Sustainable management

## INTERVIEW WITH HON BERNARD ESAU

MINISTER OF FISHERIES AND MARINE RESOURCES, NAMIBIA



**BERNARD ESAU** studied at the University of Fort Hare, South Africa specialising in commerce, accounting and economics. On returning to Namibia he worked at the Rossing Uranium Mine as a procurement officer and became involved in the labour movement becoming Secretary General of the National Union of Namibian Workers (NUNW). In 1995 he was elected as a Member of Parliament and served in various capacities including Deputy Minister of Trade and & Industry and Deputy Minister of Mines & Energy until 2010.

### How would you define the mission and core values of your Ministry?

The Ministry defined its vision for Namibia to be a leading fishing nation with a well-developed aquaculture industry. This should be achieved through the Ministry mission, which is for the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) to manage responsibly the living aquatic resources to continuously ensure a conducive environment for the fishing and aquaculture sector to prosper. Therefore, the MFMR acknowledges that to achieve its mission, it is important to work within an acceptable behavioral framework, which is expressed through the Ministry's core values namely:

- Transparency
- Accountability
- Equity
- Honesty and Loyalty

### Namibia's marine and fisheries sector is amongst the most productive in the world. How will you maintain the competitive advantage of this industry? How important are your research programmes?

First of all, we try to manage our fish stocks in a sustainable manner. This we can do by enabling our scientists to undertake scientific research on our fish stocks and provide scientific advice to the government on how to manage these resources. So, our research programmes are very vital to the sustainable management of our marine resources and this concept is enshrined in our Constitution, Article 95.

Secondly, we would ensure that there is no overcapacity in our industry and that those granted

fishing rights are able to do their business on a profitable basis. Furthermore, the industry is always trying to keep the highest quality standard to remain competitive in the destined markets for Namibian products. This would also enable those who are employed in this industry to gain meaningful income and make a good living from their employment. Last, but not least, we would ensure that the harvesting of our fish stocks is done in accordance with the provisions of our Marine Resources Act 2000, this means that we should not allow any violations of our fishing regulations to be tolerated, as this would defeat the whole purpose of managing our resources on a sustainable basis.

### What are the key trends in fisheries economic indicators in terms of total catch volumes and value? What are the primary commercial species?

There are three value indicators that illustrate the performance of the fishery sector, namely:

- Landed value
- Final value and
- Export value

Let me start with landed value, which is the value of the fish in the form it is landed. During 2008 and 2009, landed value increased by 18.6% from N\$4,290.4 million to N\$5,087.4million respectively. Whilst, final value that is the value of fishery products in their final form at export prices. In 2009, final value was N\$4,789.3 million which, reduced by 15 per cent to N\$4,059.8 million in 2010. The reduction can be attributed to reduced landings coupled with reduced prices of some species such as lobster and crab. Export value gives an indication of the Namibian dollar parity of foreign currency earnings brought into Namibia due to the sale of fish and fishery products. In terms of foreign currency earning, the fishery sector's export value reduced by 0.2% between 2009 and 2010 from N\$4,637.3 million to N\$3,926.8 million respectively. Important to note that the Euro is becoming weak against the Namibian dollar/Rand this has a serious repercussion since 65 per cent of our sale is in Euro.

Commercial species: Out of the 20 fish species commercially exploited in Namibia, eight species are regulated through Total Allowable Catch (TAC). They are Pilchard, Horse Mackerel, Hake, Monk,

Landings and Value of Fish and Fish Products (N\$ millions)

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
<b>Landings</b>	504,382	412,671	372,222	405,516	363,216
<b>Landed Value</b>	3,154.5	3,769.1	4,290.4	5,087.4	3,749.4
<b>Final Value</b>	3,993.1	4,840.3	5,084.1	4,789.3	4,059.8
<b>Export Value</b>	3,890.9	4,708.0	4,934.5	4,637.3	3,926.8

Source: MFMR & MPC, 2010

Large Pelagic (Tuna), Crab, Rock Lobster, Seals and Orange Roughy.

**A significant proportion of Namibia's marine capture fishery production is exported. What are the current export trends and what is the geographic market split?**

Namibia exports more than 80 per cent of its fisheries production in various product forms, mainly to markets in the European Union (EU), United States of America (USA), the Far East and Africa. Exports make up approximately 80% of the total fishery production.

Species	Market Splits
Hake	EU (mainly Spain) and South Africa
Monk	Spain and Italy
Rock Lobster	USA and Asia (mainly Japan)
Orange Roughy	USA, Spain and China
Crab	Asia (mainly Japan)
Horse Mackerel	DR Congo, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe
Pilchard	South Africa and United Kingdom
Large Pelagic	Japan and Spain
Seals	Turkey and Hong Kong

Hake is mainly exported to the traditional European markets, with the bulk going to Spain, where it either enters the Spanish market or is distributed further to other markets on the European continent, including Portugal, France, Italy, Holland and Germany. Non European markets for Namibian hake includes Australia, Malaysia and USA. The global economic crisis and its effect on Spain, led to a decrease in export to Spain in favour of South Africa. During 2009, exports to Spain reduced further by 12%. Monkfish and sole are exported mainly to EU through Spain and Italy to France, Germany, Monaco, Netherlands and Portugal. Orange roughly and alfonso are sent to the USA, which accounts for about 95 per cent of exports of this species while 5 per cent go to China, Spain and France. Horse mackerel is mainly distributed in the African markets. Approximately 70 per cent goes to Democratic Republic of Congo, and the balance to South Africa, Mozambique and other SADC countries. Pilchard in the form of

canned product is exported to South Africa and to the UK through Glenryck UK. Tuna and large pilchard are shipped to Japan and Spain and a limited quantity of smaller fish goes to the USA. Deep – sea red crab goes entirely to Japan. Rock lobster goes to Japan and USA.

**What are the opportunities for foreign companies to participate in the development of Namibia's fishery sector?**


One of our key strategies in the Marine Resource Policy (2004) is to support domestic catching, processing and marketing of Namibia's fish and fish products thus creating employment and developing onshore infrastructure. In line with the Marine Resources Policy (2004), investments are encouraged not only to create employment opportunities to further value addition that increases the value of products.

However, the Namibian government continues to encourage foreign participation in the exploitation, processing and marketing of marine resources through mutual beneficial joint venture formation

There is great potential for investing in the fisheries manufacturing industry especially in the tuna like species sector, horse mackerel and seals. There are opportunities for investment in research & development, processing technology etc.

**How are you addressing the key challenge of maintaining the sustainable development of fishing in Namibia?**

We are creating a conducive environment for our fishing industry to operate their business on a profitable basis, eventually to achieve our goals. Similarly, Namibia is a signatory to international conventions; we are working together with the international community, in order to keep ourselves updated on new developments in fishing practices.

Namibia is a proud member of regional fisheries management organisations, such as Benguela Current Commission (BCC), International Commission for Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (SEAFO) and Commission for Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR). We also have bilateral co-operations in Fisheries with many countries, such as Spain, Norway, Mozambique, DRC and Indonesia, to mention but a few. Through these bilateral co-operations, as well as our membership to those international organisations, we are also able to get the much needed financial support to manage our fish resources according to international standards. Recently we received an award through FAO for managing our marine resources on a sustainable basis. Rebuilding the stock that was depleted before the onset of Namibia independence, still remains a government priority. 

**Namibia exports more than 80 per cent of its fisheries production**