



# Global Programme “Sustainable Aquatic Food” in the Southern African Development Community

Small-scale producers of sustainable aquatic foods have successfully contributed to the transformation of agricultural and food systems

## Background

Sustainable fisheries are a key component to support food security and provide an income to vulnerable groups. Despite the importance for nutrition and economic contribution, the role of fish and other aquatic foods are only slowly recognized as key factors in the transformation of agricultural and food systems.

The global fish stocks are under high pressure and overfished in many regions. The overfishing threatens food security, particularly in the least developed countries where fish is an essential food source. Sub-Saharan African countries already have a much lower per capita consumption of fish (10 kg in 2022) compared to the global average (20.5 kg/annuum). However, aquatic products are an important source of animal protein for around 400 million people in the region.

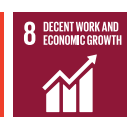
Additionally, many fisheries struggle to implement a sustainable and evidence-based management approach which often excludes the rights and interests of small-scale fisheries. Since fish stocks move across different regions, it is important to manage stock at a

## Global Programme “Sustainable Aquatic Food” in the SADC



Project name	Global Programme “Sustainable Aquatic Food” in the SADC
Co-funded by	The programme is co-funded by the European Union and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Government partner	SADC Secretariat, Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources (FANR) Directorate
Partner countries	Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe
Volume	1.2 Mio. EUR
Duration	January 2025 to December 2028
Implementing partner	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



regional level to produce sustainably for regional and local markets. The SADC member states have taken an important step in the right direction by establishing a regional [Fisheries Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Coordination Centre \(MCSCC\)](#). Furthermore, the importance of including small-scale fisheries organisations like fishermen's groups and women's cooperatives has been recognized and further supported at a regional level, but the advocacy power and platforms for lobbying for their needs require further strengthening.

SADC has policy frameworks that provide policy direction and create an enabling environment which supports inclusive fisheries management, such as the [Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan 2020–2030](#) and the [SADC Protocol on Fisheries \(2001\)](#), as well as the Non-State Actors Toolkit.

The Global Programme “Sustainable Aquatic Food” contributes to a positive change of the aquatic food system. Respecting planetary boundaries leads to sustainable production. Building technical and economic capacities, strengthening small scale fisheries organizations and the support of equitable policies are core targets.



## Our approach

The project supports the SADC secretariat to strengthen the sustainable fisheries management in the region.

- 1. Regional dialogue and development of policy documents:** Small-scale fishermen organisations with a focus on women-led groups actively participate during regional dialogue platforms on SADC level. Through the dialogue new policy documents for an inclusive fisheries management are developed, such as a regional plan of action for the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries.

- 2. Capacity building and advocacy training of 10 small-scale fisheries organisations, of which at least 5 are women-led,** to improve their internal organisational and their lobbying capacities to ensure a better inclusion in management decisions.

- 3. Support 4 key functions of the MCSCC:** To fight illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing at regional level, the newly established MCS Coordination Centre will be capacitated to carry out 4 of its key functions.

## Expected outcomes

The inclusive, regional fisheries management has been strengthened and the role of small-scale fisheries organisations has been acknowledged. Through a functional MCSCC the IUU fishing has been reduced, which improves the availability of fish stocks. Through a better inclusion of women's groups and other small-scale fisheries organisations, local communities are able to co-manage their fish stocks. Overall, the measures contribute to healthier and more resilient fish stocks to provide healthy and affordable animal protein to local communities in the whole region.

## Results in figures



Publication of a **regional policy document** for an inclusive fisheries management



**10 small-scale fisheries organisations** (of which 5 are women-led) are included in fisheries management **decisions**



**4 key functions** of the MCSCC are operational

<b>Published by</b>	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
<b>Registered offices</b>	Bonn and Eschborn, Germany
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**Design / Layout** W4 Büro für Gestaltung, Frankfurt, Germany

**Photo credits** © BCC/Katrina Hilundwa

The programme is co-funded by the European Union and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

GIZ is responsible for the content of this publication.

**As at** March 2025