



FEED SALONE

Strategy for the Fisheries and Marine Resources Sectors in Sierra Leone



THE WORLD BANK
IBRD • IDA | WORLD BANK GROUP

PROBLUE
HEALTHY OCEAN • HEALTHY ECONOMIES • HEALTHY COMMUNITIES



DISCLAIMER

© 2025 International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank

1818 H Street NW, Washington DC 20433

Telephone: 202-473-1000

Internet: www.worldbank.org

This work is a product of the staff of The World Bank with external contributions. The findings, interpretations, and conclusions expressed in this work do not necessarily reflect the views of The World Bank, its Board of Executive Directors, or the governments they represent.

The World Bank does not guarantee the accuracy, completeness, or currency of the data included in this work and does not assume responsibility for any errors, omissions, or discrepancies in the information, or liability with respect to the use of or failure to use the information, methods, processes, or conclusions set forth. The boundaries, colors, denominations, and other information shown on any map in this work do not imply any judgment on the part of The World Bank concerning the legal status of any territory or the endorsement or acceptance of such boundaries.

Nothing herein shall constitute or be construed or considered to be a limitation upon or waiver of the privileges and immunities of The World Bank, all of which are specifically reserved.

Rights and Permissions

The material in this work is subject to copyright. Because The World Bank encourages dissemination of its knowledge, this work may be reproduced, in whole or in part, for non-commercial purposes as long as full attribution to this work is given.

Any queries on rights and licenses, including subsidiary rights, should be addressed to World Bank Publications, The World Bank Group, 1818 H Street NW, Washington, DC 20433, USA; fax: 202-522-2625; e-mail: pubrights@worldbank.org.

ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

“Feed Salone Strategy for the Fisheries and Marine Resources Sectors in Sierra Leone” (the Strategy), presents a vision and 10-year strategy for Sierra Leone’s fisheries and aquaculture sectors.

The Strategy is owned by the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR). It was collaboratively developed by the MFMR with the support of The World Bank, the Government of Iceland, and diverse stakeholders who provided inputs during various consultations that took place across the country.

This Strategy is a foundational step towards reaching the nation’s goal of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture. It is the starting point from which to develop detailed implementation plans to deliver the identified priorities in an inclusive and transparent way. The scope of the Strategy includes fisheries and aquaculture in marine and freshwater environments.

CONTENTS

Acronyms and Abbreviations	iv
Acknowledgements	v
Foreword	vii
Executive Summary	viii
1 Introduction	1
2 Context and Situation Analysis	5
3 Policy and Legislative Framework	14
Alignment with the national legal framework	14
Alignment with regional frameworks	20
Alignment with global treaties and commitments	22
4 Vision, Mission, and Guiding Principles	24
5 Strategic Objectives and Supporting Activities	28
Strategic Objective 1. Assess Sierra Leone's fisheries and aquaculture resources and potential to benefit the nation	29
Strategic Objective 2. Manage and enforce Sierra Leone's fisheries and aquaculture sectors to ensure social, economic, and environmental sustainability and to prioritize national interests and benefits	31
Strategic Objective 3. Unlock the potential to increase national wealth from fisheries and aquaculture	33
6 Progressing Towards the Objectives	34
Developing a MEL framework for the strategy	35
Theory of change	36
Appointing a Chief Director of Fisheries and Marine Resources and establishing five directorates of the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources	38
7 Action Plan	41
Feed Salone Strategy for the Fisheries and Marine Resources Sectors in Sierra Leone Action Plan	42
8 Communications and Outreach	52

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Three strategic objectives for the fisheries and aquaculture sectors	x
Figure 2. Sierra Leone's inshore exclusion zone (boundary marked by a red line) and exclusive economic zone (boundary marked by a black line)	6
Figure 3. Breakdown of GDP by sector (bars) and growth rates of GDP and fishing sector (lines) in percent, 2018–2023	6
Figure 4. Annual nominal GDP (2018 constant) of fisheries sector in million Leones, 2018–2023	7
Figure 5. Locations of marine protected areas and community management associations, as identified by the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources in 2014 with support from the World Bank West Africa Regional Fisheries Program	16
Figure 6. Timeline of laws and regulations that apply to Sierra Leone's fisheries and marine sector	19
Figure 7. Strategic framework for Sierra Leone's fisheries sector	25
Figure 8. Causal pathway of a theory of change	36
Figure 9. Simplified theory of change framework	37

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Summary of opportunities and investment areas by theme	13
Table 2. Supporting activities under Objective 1	30
Table 3. Supporting activities under Objective 2	31
Table 4. Supporting activities under Objective 3	33
Table 5. Feed Salone Strategy for the Fisheries and Marine Resources Sectors in Sierra Leone Action Plan	42

LIST OF BOXES

Box 1. Key challenges to private sector investment in Sierra Leone	17
Box 2. How the blue economy can drive development and create jobs for the youth	26
Box 3. Enhancing artisanal fisheries by developing the role of community management associations in implementing territorial user rights for fisheries	40



ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AIM	Africa’s Integrated Maritime Strategy	MPA	Marine protected area
AIS	Automatic identification system	MTNDP	Medium-Term National Development Plan
CCRF	FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries	NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
CMA	Community management association	NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa’s Development
DoF	Directorate of Fisheries	NGO	Non-governmental organization
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States	NPOA-IUU	National Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter, and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing
EEZ	Exclusive economic zone	PFRS	Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa
EIMS	ECOWAS Integrated Maritime Strategy	PSMA	Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter, and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing
EU	European Union	SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	SLMARAD	International office of Sierra Leone Maritime Administration
FiTI	Fisheries Transparency Initiative	SMART	Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound
FSH	Food, safety, and hygiene	TAC	Total allowable catch
GDP	Gross domestic product	ToC	Theory of change
IEZ	Inshore exclusion zone	Tons	Metric tons
IMBO	Institute of Marine Biology and Oceanography	TURF	Territorial use rights to fisheries
ITQ	Individual transferable quota	UN	United Nations
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature	UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
IUU	Illegal, unregulated, and unreported	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
JMC	Joint Maritime Committee	VMS	Vessel monitoring system
kg	Kilogram	WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature
MCS	Monitoring, control, and surveillance		
MEL	Monitoring, evaluation, and learning		
MFMR	Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources		
MoU	Memorandum of understanding		

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This document has been prepared as part of a technical cooperation activity between Sierra Leone’s Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR), The World Bank, and the Government of Iceland. The document was prepared using a participatory approach consisting of consultations, workshops, and technical meetings with stakeholders from the MFMR, the Institute of Marine Biology and Oceanography (IMBO), and Sierra Leone’s Ministry of Finance. The document draws insights from the “Fisheries Vision and Roadmap Retreat”, which took place in Freetown, Sierra Leone, on October 23 and 24, 2024.

This work would not have been possible without the commitment of—and proactive engagement by—the MFMR’s team, which was composed of the heads of the four technical divisions: Mr Sheku Sei (Ag Director of Fisheries and Head of the Marine Artisanal Fisheries, Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Division); Mr Lahai Sesay (Head of the Monitoring and Compliance Division); Mr Victor Kargbo (Head of Fisheries Statistics, Policy, and Planning Division); and Mr Josephus Mamie (Head of Competent Authority for Fish Quality Assurance); Prof. Andrew Baio (Director, Institute of Marine Biology and Oceanography (IMBO), University of Sierra Leone) made various valuable contributions and suggestions. Finally, we extend our deepest gratitude to the Honorable Minister Mrs Princess Dugba and with her core team, including the Permanent Secretary and Director, for their leadership, motivation, and strategic direction.

The proposed strategic objectives and associated activities were developed through extensive consultations that took place in Goderich, Tombo, Shenge, Gbondapi, Konakridee, and Freetown between March 24 and April 8, 2025. The consultations were facilitated by Alhajie Lamin Dabo, Sheka Kargbo, Luseni Squire, Moseray Kabba, Michael Ngaiteh, Mariatu Sam Komagutu, Amara Johnson, and Ivorymae Coker (all MFMR); Ralph Augustine Bona and Salieu Sankoh (World Bank); and Maseray E. Sesay (Embassy of Iceland).

The consultations brought together a diverse range of stakeholders—including government officials, artisanal fishers, community leaders, aquaculture specialists, and civil society representatives—whose thoughtful feedback and firsthand perspectives significantly enriched the final document.

The document was peer reviewed by Karly Kelso (Environmental Defense Fund), Laura Chavez Anderson (Stanford Center for Ocean Solutions), and Tess Geers (Oceana) on behalf of the Aquatic Blue Food Coalition, as well as Julien Million (World Bank). Their reviews offered valuable technical guidance and helped ensure the document’s relevance and quality.

Inputs for this document were provided by a World Bank team led by Marcelo Acerbi (Senior Environmental Specialist) and Ralph Augustine Bona (Environmental Specialist). The team included Sabrina Sharmin Haque (Environmental Specialist), Julieta Calcopietro (Junior Professional Associate), Edward Willsteed (Fisheries Expert), Salieu Sankoh (Fisheries Expert), Gunnar Haraldsson (Fisheries Expert), and Thorsteinn Hilmarsson (Fisheries Governance Expert). The team worked under the guidance of Lia Sieghart (Regional Environmental Manager, World Bank), Abdu Muwonge (Country Manager for Sierra Leone, World Bank), and the Head of the Iceland Mission to Sierra Leone, Ásdís Bjarnadóttir, with the support of Steingrímur Sigurgeirsson (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Iceland). The document was edited by Jennifer Stastny.

“

The strategy outlines a vision and priority actions to promote the potential of fisheries and marine resources, including aquaculture, as a crucial contributor to the country's "Feed Salone" Agenda. It is designed to support economic growth, food security, and job opportunities. It addresses current and future challenges and charts a roadmap for opportunities in the sector, ensuring the responsible management of marine resources for both present and future generations.

”



FOREWORD

I am delighted to present the "Feed Salone Strategy for the Fisheries and Marine Resources Sectors in Sierra Leone" that illustrates the country's aspiration to achieve regional leadership in the sectors by 2035. It outlines a vision and priority actions to promote the potential of fisheries and marine resources, including aquaculture, as a crucial contributor to the country's "Feed Salone" Agenda. It is designed to support economic growth, food security, and job opportunities. It addresses current and future challenges and charts a roadmap for opportunities in the sector, ensuring the responsible management of marine resources for both present and future generations. It further adopts a sustainable and inclusive approach to the development of communities and citizens who depend on fisheries and aquaculture for their livelihoods and well-being. My Ministry is currently challenged by increased illegal and unsustainable fishing practices. This strategy has therefore received strong endorsement from the fishing communities and stakeholders, a testament to their interest and commitment to transforming the sector into a viable engine that drives sustainable economic growth. The strategy identifies three priority actions to achieve this vision. These include: **i) assessing Sierra Leone's fisheries and aquaculture resources and potential to benefit the nation; ii) managing and enforcing Sierra Leone's fisheries and aquaculture sectors to ensure social, economic, and environmental sustainability, and to prioritize national interests and benefits; and iii) unlocking the potential to increase national wealth from fisheries and aquaculture.** I am therefore of the strong conviction that, with improved collaboration, commitment, and participation of all stakeholders, we will be able to implement these actions and realize the vision. We therefore invite all parties to collaborate in securing a prosperous and sustainable future for the fisheries sector, fishing communities, and the nation as a whole.



Hon. Princess Dugba (Mrs)

Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources
Republic of Sierra Leone



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sierra Leone's marine waters are productive, diverse, and support extensive fisheries. Fished resources are foundational to the nation's economy, food security, and development: In addition to providing livelihoods to about 14 percent of the population, fisheries provide more than half of Sierra Leone's animal protein.

Fisheries are integral to the government's food security agenda. This is acknowledged in the "Feed Salone" strategy of the Medium-Term National Development Plan 2024–2030 (MTNDP 2024–2030). The MTNDP's Feed Salone strategy seeks to accelerate the productivity and sustainable management of the country's fisheries and marine sector.¹

About 45 percent of Sierra Leone's total annual fish production is sold in local markets. Sierra Leonians are among the region's highest consumers of fish, with an average consumption of about 25 kilograms (kg) per person per year, compared with the regional average of 11.2 kg. Sierra Leone's fisheries are currently thought to yield about 250,000 metric tons (tons) of fish per year, but there are clear indications that some resources are declining due to climate change and environmental degradation. This has serious implications for food and nutrition security, livelihoods, and state revenue. However, with early intervention and broad stakeholder commitment to long-term sustainability, Sierra Leone can reverse this trend and realize the full potential of its marine resources.

The benefits of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture sectors could be profoundly positive for the nation. Moreover, the country has the legal basis to transition to sustainability. Sierra Leone exercises full sovereign rights and jurisdiction over the fisheries and aquatic living resources in its marine waters. The nation is also a signatory to international treaties that create a legal responsibility to sustainably manage its fisheries and aquatic living resources. This gives the country the mandate to strengthen its current approach to fisheries and aquaculture management, and to respond to emerging sectoral challenges to deliver on a vision that supports community livelihoods while balancing social, economic, and environmental outcomes.

Aquaculture—an emerging sector in Sierra Leone—currently focuses primarily on the inland production of two species: Nile tilapia (*Oreochromis niloticus*) and African catfish (*Clarias gariepinus*). Based on the country's coastline and climate, there is potential for aquaculture to grow, thus supporting job creation and strengthening food security. Realizing this potential will require additional infrastructure and an enabling environment that attracts local and foreign direct investment. Strategic spatial planning is an important first step towards creating such an enabling environment and set Sierra Leone on a path of sustainable aquaculture development.

The release of this document, "Feed Salone Strategy for the Fisheries and Marine Resources Sectors in Sierra Leone" (the Strategy), signals the Government of Sierra Leone's commitment to developing sustainable fisheries and aquaculture for the benefit of the nation and its people. The Strategy outlines a sustainable approach to growing and managing fisheries and aquaculture in a way that considers economic development, ecosystem conservation, and community wellbeing. It aligns with national legislation, national development goals (particularly the MTNDP's "Feed Salone" objective), and international commitments, including the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the UN Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO's) Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, the FAO Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA), and the UN FAO National Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter, and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing (NPOA-IUU).

¹ Chapter 5.1 of Sierra Leone's Medium-Term National Development Plan 2024–2030, titled "Feed Salone", has a subsection titled "Accelerating productivity and sustainable management of fisheries and the marine sector".

VISION

This Strategy sets out the following Vision for the fisheries and aquaculture sectors:



By 2035, Sierra Leone will be a regional leader in sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, setting a benchmark for ecological stewardship, economic efficiency, and innovation while promoting a prosperous blue economy that directly benefits the people of Sierra Leone sustainable livelihoods, food security, and inclusive economic growth.

It also identifies a Mission, Guiding Principles, and Strategic Objectives—each of which addresses a key need identified by the Government of Sierra Leone—for the next 10 years.

In clarifying an intention and direction for Sierra Leone’s fisheries and aquaculture sectors, the Strategy acts as a guide for investors and funders and a roadmap for stakeholders, providing a foundation for collaboration

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The following three strategic objectives have been identified for the fisheries and aquaculture sectors:

- Assess Sierra Leone’s fisheries and aquaculture resources and potential to benefit the nation.
- Manage and enforce Sierra Leone’s fisheries and aquaculture sectors to ensure social, economic, and environmental sustainability, and to prioritize national interests and benefits.
- Unlock the potential to increase national wealth from fisheries and aquaculture.

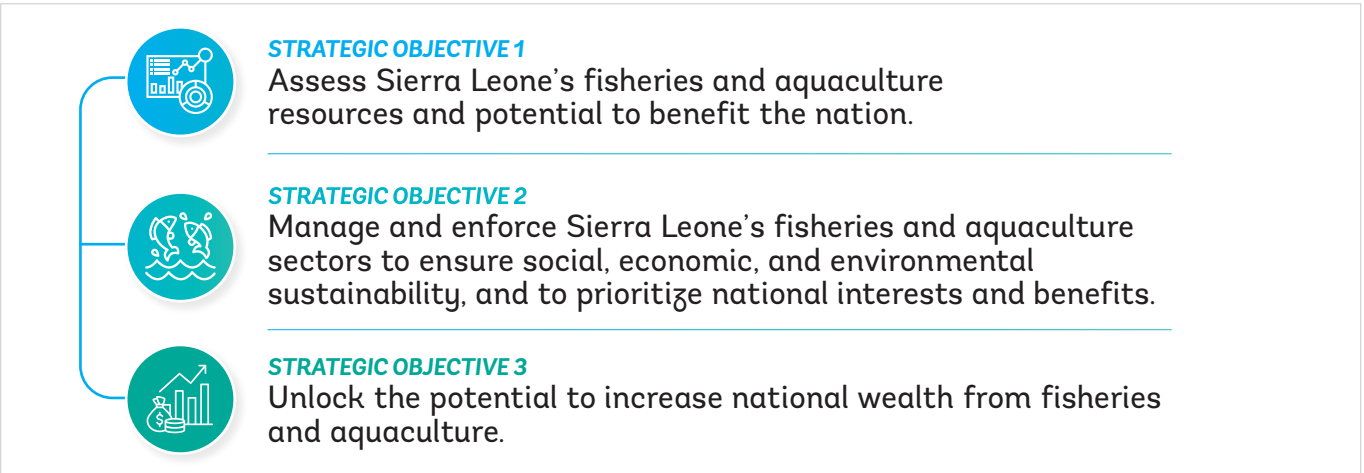
to progress the fisheries and aquaculture sectors and deliver on the Vision as set out by the Government of Sierra Leone. The Strategy recognizes that securing and unlocking the national wealth of Sierra Leone’s fisheries and aquaculture sectors will require trade-offs and include activities to start the process of a managed transition to sustainability.

NEXT STEPS

In addition to providing background and context, this Strategy outlines a detailed Action Plan—including priority activities, desired outcomes, and related indicators—to support the MFMR as it takes on the challenge of leading implementation of the Strategy.

The Strategy also enunciates a collaboratively developed theory of change (ToC), which will form the basis of a future monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) framework. A MEL framework will be essential for tracking progress towards achieving the Strategy’s objectives in a way that is focused while being able to respond to the changing context.

Figure 1. Three strategic objectives for the fisheries and aquaculture sectors



INTRODUCTION



BACKGROUND

“Feed Salone Strategy for the Fisheries and Marine Resources Sectors in Sierra Leone” (the Strategy) was developed as part of broader efforts to strengthen fisheries management in Sierra Leone; ensure the long-term sustainability of its marine fishery resources; and to prepare the foundation from which to unlock the potential of the country’s fisheries and aquaculture sectors. The Strategy is vital for addressing the fisheries sector’s development objectives (as highlighted in Sierra Leone’s Medium-Term National Development Plan 2024–2030 [MTNDP 2024–2030] and its Blue Economy Strategic Framework and National Action Plan) and challenges relating to overfishing, environmental degradation, state revenues, climate change resilience, food and nutrition insecurity, and the employment and livelihoods of fishing communities.

This Strategy provides an assessment of the current context and describes a new Vision for the sector, supported by a Mission Statement, Strategic Objectives with Supporting Activities, and an Action Plan. The Strategy serves as a framework to guide and monitor ongoing and future initiatives and investment opportunities.

STRATEGY FORMULATION PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY²

The Government of Sierra Leone, through the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR), approached the World Bank and the Government of Iceland to analyze the status of its fisheries sector with the aim of developing a strategic Vision and Roadmap for the sector for the next 10 to 20 years.

Drawing on existing policies, data, research, and stakeholder consultations, a team of experts—which comprised the four heads of technical units at the MFMR, two fisheries scientists from the World Bank, and a fisheries governance expert and an economist from Iceland’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs—identified challenges, opportunities, and success factors required to build a robust and sustainable fisheries sector.

The Strategy formulation process was divided into four key stages:

- **Stage 1: Inception.** This stage included: (i) clarifying the purpose and scope of the strategic vision being developed; (ii) identifying stakeholders; (iii) setting objectives; (iv) discussing methodology, data needs, and deliverables; (v) finalizing reporting requirements; and (vi) establishing timelines.

The Government of Sierra Leone and various stakeholders have committed to making the Strategy the foundation for developing the country’s fisheries and aquaculture sectors over the next 10 years, with the ultimate objective being to deliver sustainable economic diversification and growth and benefits to the people of Sierra Leone.

However, the vision for the sectors is one in which fisheries and aquaculture livelihoods are secure and prosperous, and where the positive outcomes of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture sectors feed through to benefit the nation. However, it also recognizes that the fisheries sector will require reform to achieve and maintain the sustainable use of resources while ensuring economic returns. For example, transitioning open access fisheries to limited access fisheries may limit certain employment opportunities. Activities that aim to understand the scale of this transition and deliver a managed transition process are therefore included in the Strategy.

- **Stage 2: Diagnostics.** This stage sought to assess the current state of the fisheries sector to identify challenges and opportunities. Key objectives of this stage included: (i) analyzing the fisheries sector, including fish stocks and infrastructure; (ii) identifying key challenges (for example, overfishing and illegal fishing; (iii) evaluating the effectiveness of governance and institutional frameworks; (iv) analyzing the socioeconomic impacts of fisheries on communities; (v) reviewing the environmental sustainability of various fishing practices; (vi) conducting a stakeholder analysis for inclusive participation; (vii) gathering relevant data for informed decision-making; and (viii) identifying opportunities to improve the sector by, for example, using technologies or implementing governance reforms.

- **Stage 3: Formulate a strategic Vision.** This stage focused on creating a Vision that would inform a clear and sustainable roadmap for the future. Key objectives of this stage included: (i) articulating a long-term vision aligned with national priorities and sustainability goals; (ii) establishing specific, measurable goals for sustainability, economic growth, governance, and community wellbeing; (iii) identifying key areas for action, such as fisheries management, illegal fishing, and sustainable practices; (iv) involving stakeholders to ensure broad support and ownership; (v) using data from the diagnostics stage to inform decisions; and (vi) developing a framework that ensures resilience and sustainability in the sector. Many of these objectives were achieved during a “Fisheries Vision and Roadmap Retreat” that took place in Freetown, Sierra Leone, on October 23 and 24, 2024.
- **Stage 4: Develop an Action Plan.** The Action Plan outlines the actions, resources, timelines, and responsibilities needed to successfully execute the strategic Vision. Key components of the plan include: (i) defining specific actions needed to achieve the Vision; (ii) establishing a timeline with short, medium, and long-term milestones to guide progress; (iii) assigning roles and responsibilities to stakeholders from all sectors (government, communities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and research institutions) to ensure accountability; (iv) identifying the required financial, human, and technological resources;

(v) establishing a MEL framework to track progress and adjust actions as needed; (vi) identifying risks and proposing strategies to mitigate them; (vii) identifying mechanisms to continuously engage stakeholders to sustain support; and (viii) ensuring the long-term sustainability of the fisheries and aquaculture sectors through improved governance and adaptive strategies.

- **Stage 5: Consultation workshops and feedback collection.** This stage included: (i) validating the draft strategy through participatory consultations; (ii) ensuring alignment with stakeholder priorities and local realities; and (iii) strengthening ownership and support for implementation. Consultations were held across five coastal communities—Goderich, Tombo, Shenge, Gbondapi, and Konakridee—and culminated in a validation workshop in Freetown with key government agencies, fisheries institutions, development partners, and civil society. Facilitated by the MFMR, the process captured feedback on the strategic objectives and roadmap from a wide range of stakeholders, including fisherfolk, community leaders, and NGOs. The methodology and outcomes of these consultations are detailed in Section 8 of the Strategy. The draft was also peer reviewed by technical experts to enhance its quality and relevance.

ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

This document is organized into eight sections:

- 1 “Introduction” (this section)
- 2 “Context and Situation Analysis” provides a concise summary and analysis of various aspects of the current situation in Sierra Leone relative to the fisheries and aquaculture sectors.
- 3 “Policy and Legislative Framework” provides a summary of the relevant national and international policies and laws that have shaped the strategy, highlighting the commitments that will be supported through implementation of the strategy.
- 4 “Vision, Mission, and Guiding Principles” sets out the high-level strategic objectives for this Strategy.
- 5 “Strategic Objectives and Supporting Activities” outlines the Strategy’s objectives and how they are designed to deliver on the country’s vision of becoming a leader in sustainable fisheries and aquaculture. It also sets out the activities that will collectively support the achievement of these objectives.

- 6 “Progressing Towards the Objectives” discusses the importance of developing a monitoring, evaluation, and learning framework to track progress towards achieving the objectives, and of ensuring that the MFMR has the capacity to take a leading role in these activities.
- 7 “Action Plan” proposes outcomes, indicators, lead agencies, supporting legislation, indicative timeframes, and indicative costs for executing this Strategy.
- 8 “Communications and Outreach” summarizes outcomes of the stakeholder consultation workshops conducted to validate the Strategy and provides guidance on the dimensions and stakeholders that will need to be considered when implementing the Action Plan.

² The methodology section will be revised upon completion of the document to accurately reflect the final steps taken in its development.

CONTEXT AND SITUATION ANALYSIS

This section provides a concise summary and analysis of the current situation in Sierra Leone as it applies to the marine fisheries and aquaculture sectors, focusing on general trends because data about these sectors is limited and fragmented. For example, there are significant knowledge gaps about the fisheries sector including on the health of fish stocks.

Within these constraints, it nonetheless provides a relatively up-to-date overview of these sectors; their legislative and regulatory landscape; institutional delivery; broad trends in the status and economic performance of various fisheries resources; the effects of climate change and environmental degradation; and social development aspects of the fisheries sector. **Table 1** at the end of the section summarizes opportunities and potential areas for investment based on this assessment.

OVERVIEW OF FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE SECTORS

The fisheries sector consists of artisanal, semi-industrial, and industrial fishing fleets. There are also inland fisheries, and a nascent recreational fishing sector linked to tourism.

Fishing occurs throughout Sierra Leone's marine waters, though the distribution of fishing fleets differs. The country has an exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of about 160,000 square kilometers and a coastline of five coastal districts (**Figure 2**). Artisanal and semi-industrial fishers are allowed to fish within the country's inshore exclusion zone (IEZ), which extends six nautical miles out from the EEZ baseline, with semi-industrial vessels ranging out to 12 nautical miles. Industrial vessels are not allowed to fish in the IEZ, meaning they are only legally allowed to operate in the area between six nautical miles and two hundred nautical miles (the outer limit of the EEZ).

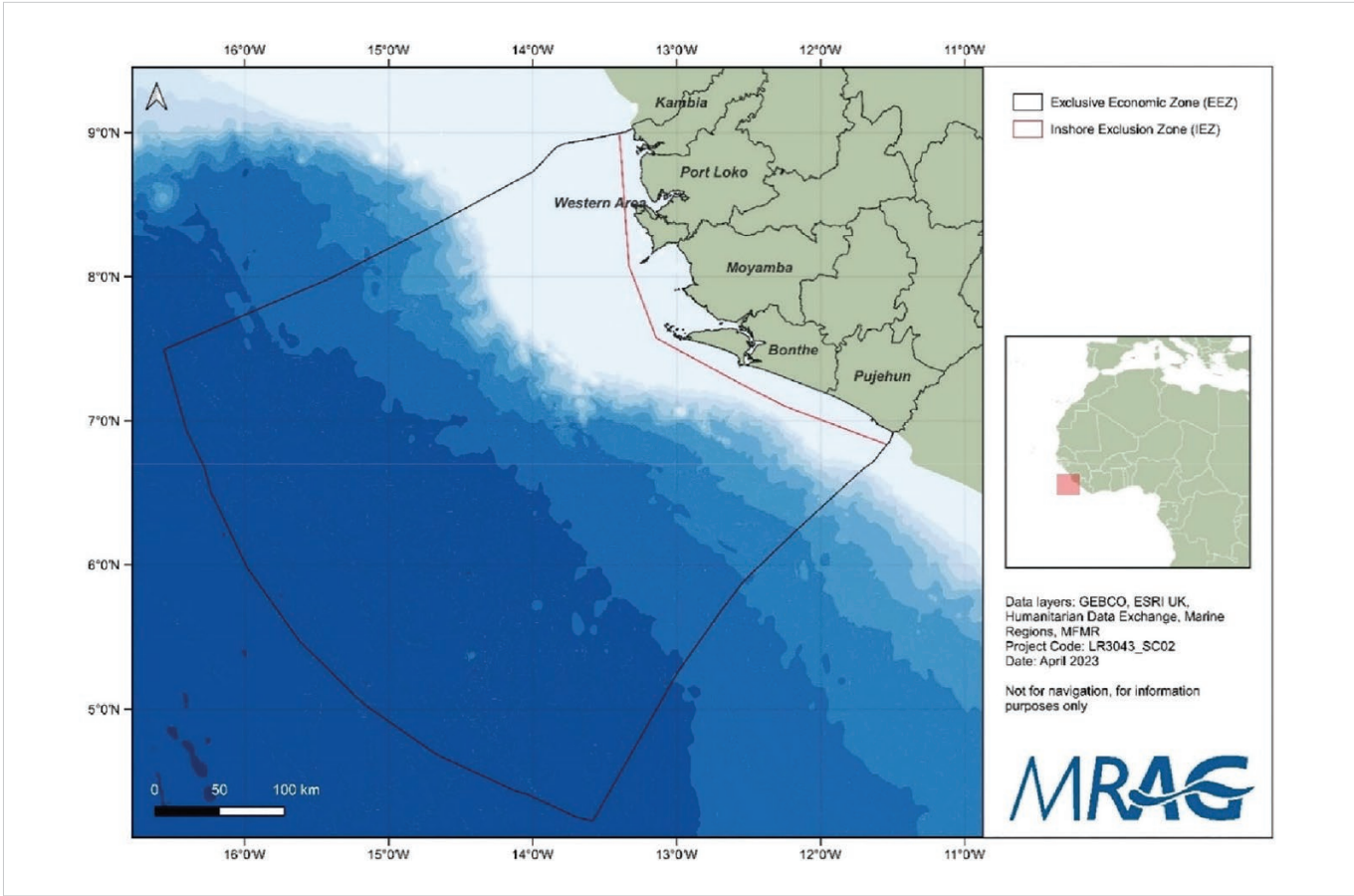
The fisheries sector is of great economic importance and provides livelihoods for about 14 percent of Sierra Leone's population, with women playing key roles in processing and trade. Between 2018 and 2023, the fisheries sector's contribution to GDP has fluctuated, averaging 8 percent despite a decline to 6 percent in 2023 (**Figure 3**). While nominal GDP from the fisheries sector has grown over time (**Figure 4**), its declining contribution as share of GDP reflects the faster growth of other sectors. However, its actual economic value may be underestimated due to a lack of recent information on the artisanal fleet's catches and productivity.

Opportunities to improve the economic contribution (and accounting) of the fisheries sector are also limited by a lack of recent data on industrial fisheries' productivity and by the current licensing system, which is based on fees linked to vessel tonnage rather than catches or the value of catches. Reporting by catch and enforcing reporting by the industrial fleet would result in more reliable data on catches and their value.

Past efforts such as the World Bank's West African Regional Fisheries Program (2011–2021) sought to strengthen governance, improve management, and strengthen the handling of targeted fisheries in Sierra Leone and other West African coastal countries. The program made progress in areas such as governance reforms; improved data systems; better management planning; the reduction of illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing; greater support for community management associations; and reform of the industrial fleet, contributing to increased national revenues. It also underscored the critical importance of community-led management, transparency, and performance-based approaches while highlighting persistent challenges in enforcement, infrastructure development, timeline management, and stakeholder coordination. These lessons emphasize the need for incremental reforms, realistic timeframes, and sustained investment to achieve sustainable fisheries management.

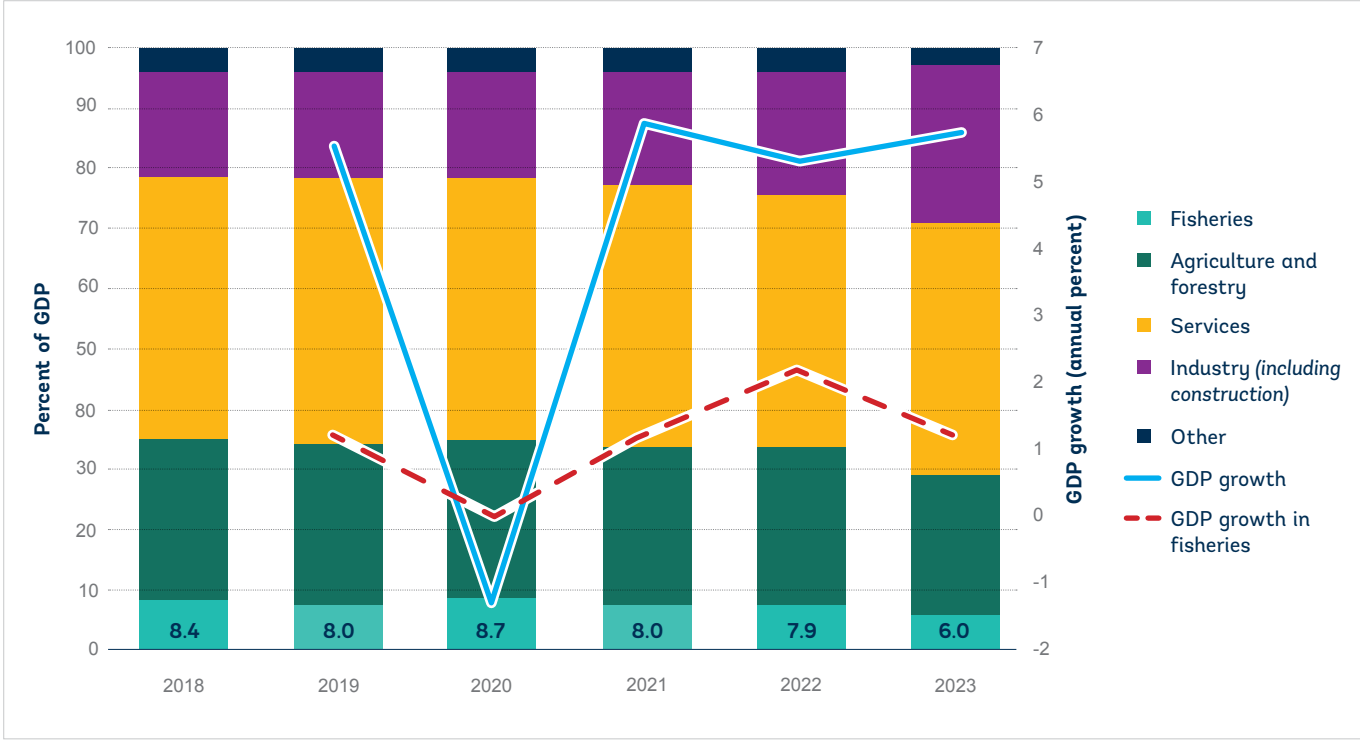
Aquaculture and inland fisheries are nascent in Sierra Leone, with production linked to inland aquaculture in earthen ponds and concrete tanks, and inland capture fisheries from lakes, rivers, streams, and flood plains. The FAO recorded an increase in aquaculture production (of tilapia and catfish) from 30 tons in 2000 to 115 tons in 2021. Fish production is gradually increasing through private sector investment and MFMR-led research, with the MFMR recording production totals of about 50 tons in 2023. Despite having an extensive coastal area, the country currently has no mariculture production apart from experimental oyster-growth enhancement trials in the Sherbro River estuary.

Figure 2. Sierra Leone's inshore exclusion zone (boundary marked by a red line) and exclusive economic zone (boundary marked by a black line)



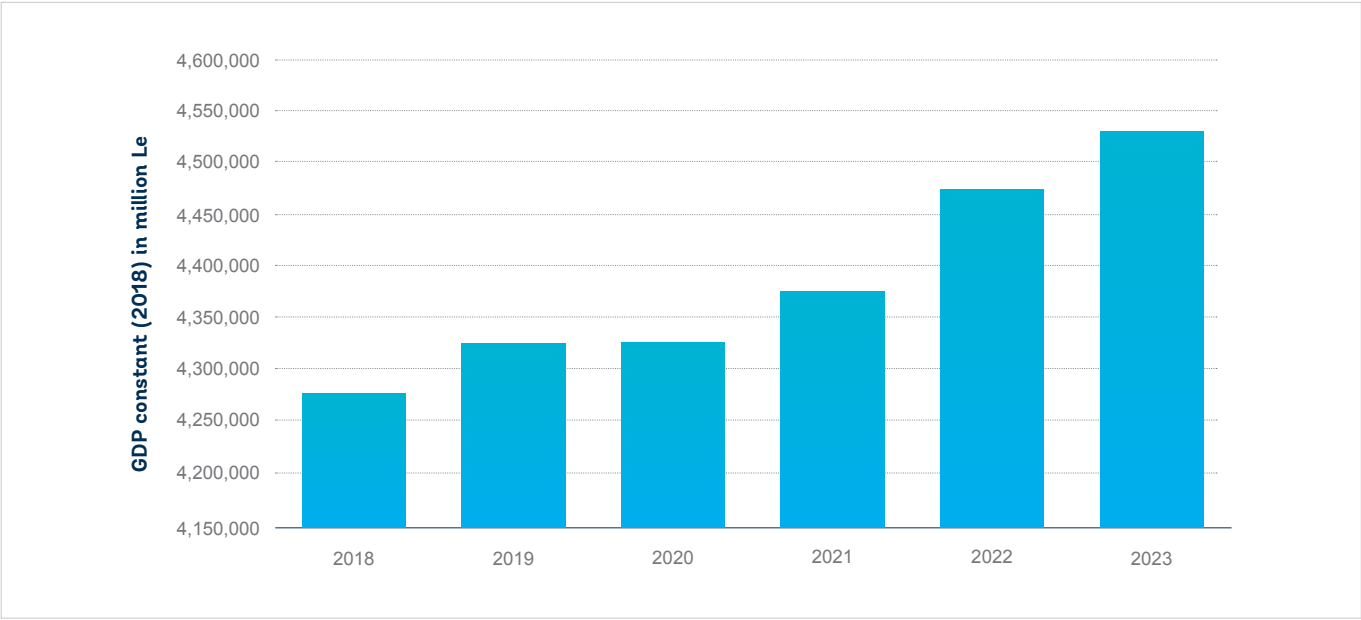
Source: World Bank 2023.³

Figure 3. Breakdown of GDP by sector (bars) and growth rates of GDP and fishing sector (lines) in percent, 2018–2023



Source: World Bank figure using 2024 data from Statistics Sierra Leone⁴

Figure 4. Annual nominal GDP (2018 constant) of fisheries sector in million Leones, 2018–2023



Source: World Bank figure using data from Statistics Sierra Leone⁵

LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY LANDSCAPE

This strategy has been designed to adhere to, and support the achievement of, the following national legislation and regulations, which set out the legal obligations for MFMR and fisheries and aquaculture operators:

- [Fisheries and Aquaculture Act \(No. 10 of 2018\)](#)
- [Fisheries and Aquaculture Regulations \(Statutory Instrument No. 6 of 2019\)](#)
- [Fisheries \(Fees\) Regulations \(Statutory Instrument No. 157 of 2017\)](#)
- [Fisheries \(Fees\) Regulations, 2006 \(Statutory Instrument No. 14 of 2006\)](#)
- [Fisheries Fees Regulations \(2019\)](#)
- [Fisheries \(Operation of Foreign Motor Fishing Vessels\) Regulations \(P.N. No. 1 of 1986\).](#)

This legislative framework:

- Defines Sierra Leone's commitment to achieve and maintain sustainable fisheries and aquaculture
- Sets out the administrative provisions, national obligations, and objectives relating to planning, management, and conservation of the fisheries and aquaculture sectors
- Specifies registration and licensing requirements, including those requiring industrial vessel operators to regularly and routinely submit reliable data on catches and landings
- Outlines monitoring, control, and surveillance (MCS) requirements

- Describes aquaculture development objectives
- Establishes a system for enforcing regulations, including fines and liabilities
- Establishes the inshore exclusion zone (IEZ) and reserves it for artisanal, semi-industrial, and recreational vessels
- Stipulates the promotion of artisanal fishers' associations through the formation of community management associations (CMAs) in multiple districts, thereby providing a vehicle through which to offer training and education, and to strengthen the participatory management capacities of fishing communities.

The existing licensing system considers category, fees, and operational requirements, and is largely applied to the industrial fleet. Industrial licensing fees are currently linked to vessel tonnage rather than cost-recovery or resource rent-based approaches, in which fees reflect catch volume or value. Such approaches would provide stronger incentives for sustainable fishing. Fees for small-scale fisheries are prescribed.

3 World Bank. 2023. "Supporting Sierra Leone's Fishery Management Improvement: Final Report." Washington, DC: World Bank (unpublished).

4 For more statistics on Sierra Leone or to obtain the data set, visit <https://www.statistics.sl/>.

5 For more statistics on Sierra Leone or to obtain the data set, visit <https://www.statistics.sl/>.

The legal framework prescribes an evidence-based approach to managing Sierra Leone's fisheries. In support of this, fishing fleets have a legal obligation to provide MFMR with reliable data on catches and landings. Reliable data is essential for ensuring transparency and effective management, both of which are attractive to responsible investors. Good data is also critical for accurate stock assessments, setting sustainable harvest limits, and ensuring the long-term health of the marine environment and its living resources.

Sierra Leone is a signatory to various international agreements and treaties that establish the country's sovereign rights and jurisdiction over marine resources and the fisheries within its waters. These rights and associated obligations are enshrined in Sierra Leone's [Maritime Zones \(Establishment\) Decree of 1996](#). These obligations, reflected in national law, require the Government of Sierra Leone to achieve and maintain the sustainable and equitable development of the fisheries and aquaculture sectors for the benefit of the nation. This Strategy supports Sierra Leone in meeting these international obligations.

Section 3 contains further details about the national and international policy and legislative framework.

INSTITUTIONAL DELIVERY

Several institutions play roles in delivering sustainable fisheries and aquaculture. The lead institution is the MFMR. The MFMR performs a dual political and administrative role, with the minister being politically appointed and the Director of Fisheries being responsible for managing and developing marine resources. The MFMR is responsible for meeting the legal obligations set out in the Fisheries and Aquaculture Act (2018) and related regulations (2019). It governs Sierra Leone's fisheries and aquaculture sectors and is organized into divisions, namely, Statistics; Policy and Planning; Fish Processing and Quality Management; Monitoring, Control, and Surveillance; Marine Artisanal Fisheries; and Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture. Other institutions directly involved in the sector are the International Office of Sierra Leone Maritime Administration (SLMARAD) and the Sierra Leone Navy. Relevant line ministries are the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security. The MFMR is currently collaborating with universities and research institutions (such as the Institute of Marine Biology and Oceanography) to strengthen its research and training functions, either through periodic consultancy contracts or through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

In support of the Sierra Leone Fisheries and Aquaculture Development Strategy (2016), which aims to improve multisectoral coordination mechanisms, the government had established the Joint Maritime Committee (JMC) and an Inter-ministerial Committee.

The JMC was established in 2009 by an MoU between the Office of National Security, the Ministry of Defence, the Sierra Leone Police, the MFMR, the Ministry of Finance, the National Revenue Authority, the SLMARAD, the Sierra Leone Ports and Harbours Authority, and the Immigration Department. This partnership was based on the understanding that protecting the ocean's natural resources and related food security are national security issues. The JMC supports operational activities including MCS and the MFMR's actions to counter IUU fishing. It runs a remote automatic identification system (AIS) and vessel monitoring system (VMS) for industrial fishing vessels, collecting log reports on fishing activities from industrial vessels by radio and from the MFMR's on-board observers.

In addition to national delivery, Sierra Leone is an active participant in transboundary fisheries management through regional fisheries organizations, including the Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic and the *Committee Sous-Regionale des Peches* (Subregional Fisheries Committee). Both regional institutions support the sustainable use of living marine resources within their areas of competence, and support information-sharing and cross-border management of stocks, including those that are important to Sierra Leone.

One of the key objectives of this Strategy is to strengthen institutional capacity to collect fisheries data, which is currently limited and unreliable. Poor data availability results in significant uncertainty about fish stock status and prevents robust insights into the economic, environmental, and social benefits and impacts of the country's fisheries. More complete and reliable data on fish populations, fleets, and catches would strengthen understanding of fisheries trends relating to climate change, overfishing, and habitat degradation.

This, in turn, would support more effective decision-making and conservation efforts, including the implementation of an ecosystem-based approach to fisheries that considers the broader ecosystem and not just targeted fish species.

Sierra Leone can further strengthen its institutional capacity by improving fisheries surveillance, enforcing fisheries regulations, and upgrading infrastructure for fish landing and processing. Stronger institutional capacity would support cost recovery, improving the financial sustainability of MFMR and supporting institutions. Improved capacity would also enable MFMR to work more effectively across ministries to align fisheries with the national Blue Economy Strategy and Action Plan and the Feed Salone strategy, and to engage with regional management organizations on transboundary stock management.

RESOURCE STATUS AND TRENDS

Sierra Leone's waters are endowed with an abundant range of species that include marine tropical finfish, mollusks, and crustaceans. Some 200 species of fish have been identified in the country's EEZ, about 100 of which are relatively common and commercially exploited.

Pelagic stocks (fish species that live in the water column as opposed to the bottom of the ocean) comprise the significant majority of biomass in Sierra Leone's waters. These species—which provide the domestic market with most of its fish—are largely caught by the artisanal fleet. In recent years the industrial fishing fleet has also targeted pelagic species, considerably increasing their catches. Besides freezing pelagic species, industrial fisheries supply the country's new canning industry. This increased fishing effort by industrial fleets for pelagic stocks has created direct competition with artisanal fishers. There is significant uncertainty about the status of key pelagic stocks, including *Sardinellas* and bonga shad (*Ethmalosa fimbriata*), although surveys by the research vessel *Dr Fridtjof Nansen* indicate declining biomass.

Resources of demersal finfish (fish stocks that live or feed on or near the sea floor) are caught by the artisanal, semi-industrial, and industrial fleets. These fish are often of high value and interest to the export market. Although information on demersal finfish stocks is out of date and incomplete, what data does exist strongly suggests that the stocks off the coast of Sierra Leone are under stress, with many species overexploited.

Shellfish stocks (invertebrate species including shrimp, crabs, lobsters, cuttlefish, squid, octopuses, bivalves, and gastropods) are caught by the artisanal, semi-industrial, and industrial fleets. Several such stocks are found in nearshore waters, which include sensitive habitats such as estuaries. Some species are of high value and are of interest to the export market. The status of shellfish stocks needs to be assessed more accurately.

The state of survey data and stock assessments points to a need for updated, more complete fisheries information. Surveys conducted in the 1980s found that the biomass of key commercial species was in decline. More recent assessments (between 2008 and 2011) also identified signs of overexploitation in important demersal stocks. In 2021, acoustic data analysis of pelagic stocks found that biomass had been declining for the previous 10 years. Exploitation trends have been increasing. The overall conclusion is that there is substantial uncertainty about stock statuses that requires further investigation to determine viable total allowable catches (TACs) for various fish species.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

Sierra Leone is extremely vulnerable to climate change due to a combination of heightened exposure and limited adaptive capacity. Rising temperatures and warming oceans are projected to continue in Sierra Leone (and indeed the entire West African region) under all future global emissions scenarios through to the end of the century.⁶

Sierra Leone's fisheries and aquaculture sectors face escalating climate risks due to rising sea levels, coastal erosion, increasing temperatures, altered rainfall, and more frequent and intense extreme weather events. Additional climate stressors include ocean acidification, salinity intrusion, deoxygenation, and altered ocean currents.

In addition to fishing pressures, climate change is forecast to be the greatest driver of change in the productivity and availability of fish and marine resources. Without adaptation, climate-related shifts are expected to: (i) drive significant changes in fish stock productivity and distribution, resulting in faster deterioration of catches; (ii) diminish the productivity of people working in the fisheries sector due to, for example, increasing heat stress and related health risks; (iii) damage fishing infrastructure; and (iv) drive the displacement of fishing communities, among other detrimental impacts.

Wetlands, including mangroves and estuarine ecosystems, provide critical ecosystem services (such as coastal protection, biodiversity support, and water filtration) while also helping to mitigate climate change by sequestering large amounts of carbon. However, environmental degradation—driven by pollution, sand mining, deforestation of mangroves, and the unregulated expansion of human settlements—is accelerating in Sierra Leone's marine and coastal areas, eroding the country's already limited climate and disaster resilience.

Sierra Leone would greatly benefit from improving the adaptation capacity and disaster response of coastal areas and remote islands. Upgrading early warning systems, building adequate infrastructure, and enhancing institutional coordination would enable fishing communities to better prepare for, and respond to, climate disasters. In addition, improving data relating to the status of fish stocks and fishing effort while addressing challenges relating to the open-access nature of artisanal fisheries will be key for strengthening the resilience of the fishing sector to climate change.

⁶ IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change). 2022. "Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability." Contribution of Working Group II to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Cambridge, UK, and New York, NY: Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/9781009325844. IPCC. 2023. "Climate Change 2023: Synthesis Report." Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Geneva: IPCC. doi:10.59327/IPCC/AR6-9789291691647.

ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE AND TRENDS

Sierra Leone’s fishing resources have substantial potential to deliver consistent, sustainable financial returns for the public and private sectors while improving food security for the nation. However, realizing this potential requires a commitment to sustainability, investments in effective fisheries management, and the creation of an attractive investment environment for responsible operators and lenders.

Industrial fishing in Sierra Leone’s waters consists of foreign fishing vessels with licenses provided by domestic agents who, in many cases, also operate processing plants and export the frozen products, primarily to Asian markets. In 2020, 137 foreign industrial fishing vessels were licensed and represented by Sierra Leonean fishing agencies. About 5,000 fishers are employed by industrial fishing operations and an estimated 250,000 people engaged in post-harvest handling and trade of fish on the local market.

License fees paid by these industrial fishing vessels account for the bulk of government revenues from the fisheries and aquaculture sectors. Overall revenues from the marine fisheries sector increased after the government—with the support of the World Bank West Africa Regional Fisheries Program, which ran from 2010 to 2022—intervened to reduce IUU fishing, establish the JMC and the use of a satellite-based VMS, and implement sectoral reforms (including governance changes).

Despite these improvements, accurate current economic performance and trends for the fisheries sector are poorly understood due to lack of transparent, complete, and accurate reporting on the productivity and performance of all fishing fleets—including artisanal and semi-industrial vessels. What is known is that the number of artisanal canoes rose from about 9,000 in 2012 to more than 12,000 in 2018. However, little is known about the artisanal catches; effort; distribution of effort; the number of artisanal fishers and vessels; or their associated value chains. It is estimated that about 50,000 artisanal and semi-industrial fishers are active, supporting an additional 700,000 upstream and downstream jobs.

Aquaculture is slowly emerging in Sierra Leone. Three commercial aquaculture operations are currently in operation—a hatchery, a local feed mill, and grow-out ponds. Aquaculture production is growing at a slower pace than regional and sub-regional averages, with the most recent World Bank World Development Indicators pointing to a yield of 147 tons in 2022.

However, the MFMR recorded production of only about 50 tons from commercial sites in 2023. The government’s Feed Salone strategy has introduced policy to support fishpond development in most districts to promote food security.

Sierra Leone’s fisheries products are traded on local, regional, and international markets. Exports are destined for sub-regional African countries (including Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria, Mali, and Senegal) and the international markets of Asia, Europe, and the United States.⁷ Fish is traded on the local market in fresh, frozen, chilled, or smoked forms.⁸

Sierra Leone is currently not listed as one of the countries allowed to directly export fish and fishery products to the European Union (EU) due to the country not meeting minimum EU hygiene and sanitary requirements. However, fish caught and processed by foreign fishing vessels, including tuna vessels, which are listed as compliant vessels, can be exported to EU markets. There is also evidence that fish caught illegally in Sierra Leone waters end up being sold on EU markets.

The export value of fish and fish products has been estimated at US\$11.3 million in 2022, while fish and fish product imports were estimated at US\$12 million. Based on these numbers, Sierra Leone is a net importer of fish and fish products.⁹

Accessing financing for fisheries or aquaculture in Sierra Leone is hindered by high interest rates, limited financial products, and lack of collateral, especially for small-scale producers. Enhancing legal frameworks and policies, as well as managing risks, can increase investor confidence. Other areas for improvement include market access, infrastructure, and access to modern technologies.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT ASPECTS

Fish and seafood consumption in Sierra Leone—estimated on average at about 25 kilograms (kg) per person per year—is among the highest in West Africa and the world, contributing more than half of the animal protein in Sierra Leoneans’ diets.¹⁰ At the same time, according to the 2021 National Nutrition Survey, about 26 percent of children under the age of five suffer from stunting¹¹ and severe food insecurity affects about 30 percent of the population. These challenges are likely to intensify as Sierra Leone’s population increases.¹²

Fish provide the population with high-quality protein and micronutrients (such as calcium, zinc, iron, vitamin A, vitamin B12, and fatty acids), making fisheries critical to national food and nutritional security. Fish consumed domestically are overwhelmingly marine fishes and mostly consist of small pelagic species such as *Sardinellas* and bonga shad, which are caught by the artisanal fishing fleet. These species are thought to be more nutrient-dense than larger fish because they are typically consumed whole and are more affordable and accessible. However, the consumption of pelagic fish and general fish and seafood consumption per capita has been declining in Sierra Leone in the past decade, reflecting the sector’s limited capacity to keep pace with rising demand driven by population growth.

Nutrition-sensitive fisheries and aquaculture management is an emerging area that seeks to align sector strategies with nutrition and food security objectives. Rather than focusing solely on increasing supply to assume food security benefits, it emphasizes designing fishery and aquaculture interventions that improve dietary quality and nutritional outcomes.

This includes interventions such as promoting nutrient-rich species and aquaculture practices, improving post-harvest handling and preservation, expanding access to fish in inland and underserved areas, and supporting behavior-change initiatives to encourage diverse and nutritious diets.¹³ These strategies should be grounded in clear theories of change that link production with the dimensions of food security—availability, access, utilization (including nutritional quality), and stability—especially for nutritionally vulnerable populations such as young children, pregnant and lactating women, and low-income households.

The roles of women in the fishing sector are especially important for household incomes, nutrition and health, and community wellbeing. Most commonly, women are involved in the processing and trade of fish landed by the artisanal fleet and bycatch associated with the industrial fleet.

To a lesser extent, women are involved in the catching sector as owners of fishing gear or boats. Actively involving women in aquaculture has been shown to improve household nutrition, given their role in food preparation and income decisions. However, women in the sector often face marginalization, are at risk of exploitation, and are generally in greater need of improved infrastructure and services for processing, preservation, transport, health, clean water, and education.¹⁴

While the industrial fishing fleet is subject to some controls, marine and inland artisanal fisheries are currently open access, meaning they remain open to new entrants—and the number of fishers and canoes are increasing. Despite artisanal fishing leaders issuing warnings about the sustainability of marine resources and conflicts with the industrial fleet, fishing continues to be seen as an attractive option for employment as the inland effects of climate change force more people to move towards the coast in search of livelihoods—despite evidence of declining returns.

Climate-induced changes are also exacerbating food insecurity and economic instability in coastal communities, where fish is a primary source of protein and income. Ecosystem-based, adaptive fisheries management; community participation; and increased adaptive capacity will be key for the wellbeing of Sierra Leone’s coastal communities.

Many fishing communities in Sierra Leone are hindered by inadequate infrastructure, which limits their ability to innovate and operate efficiently and safely. A lack of cold storage facilities means that fish can spoil quickly, while limited access to transportation and poor roads restrict fishers’ access to larger markets, including Freetown.

Investment is needed to upgrade landing sites and establish post-harvest infrastructure, which would, in turn, facilitate the creation of fishing hubs that concentrate skills and services. Similarly, improvements to road infrastructure between landing sites and markets would open opportunities for fishers and traders. Creating fishing hubs would also support better data collection.

In addition to the challenges mentioned above, fishers face health risks from unique occupational hazards, diseases, and pollution. Inadequate infrastructure and equipment increase their vulnerability to heat stress, boating accidents, and injuries.¹⁵

7 See: https://www.trademap.org/Country_SelProductCountry.aspx?nvpnm=1%7c694%7c%7c%7c03%7c%7c%7c2%7c1%7c2%7c2%7c1%7c%7c2%7c1%7c1%7c1
8 African Development Bank Group. 2024. “Sierra Leone – Country Diagnostic Note, February 2024.” <https://www.afdb.org/en/documents/sierra-leone-country-diagnostic-note-february-2024>
9 FAO. 2024. “Fisheries and Aquaculture Country Profiles: Sierra Leone.” <https://www.fao.org/fishery/en/facp/sle>

10 2019 FAO data. See: <https://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/FBS>
11 Ministry of Health and Sanitation Sierra Leone and UNICEF Sierra Leone. 2021. “Sierra Leone National Nutrition Survey 2021.” Freetown: UNICEF. https://mohs.gov.sl/download/43/publication/17237/sierra-leone-national-nutrition-survey-2021.pdf&ved=2ahUKEwjCspvJ0JOMAxU-Q0EAHc22AtoQFnoECBcQAQ&usq=AOvVaw3Lizyd89oIW_FM96NoMSW_
12 Access the FAO’s statistics on food security indicators here: www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/FS
13 FAO. 2023. “Small fish for food security and nutrition.” Rome: FAO. <https://www.fao.org/3/cc6229en/cc6229en.pdf>
14 Kamara KS. 2022. “Evaluating the roles of women in the artisanal fisheries sector of Sierra Leone: A case study of Tombo, Goderich, Shenge, Katta, Konakriddle and Yeliboya fishing communities.” GRÓ Fisheries Training Programme under the auspices of UNESCO, Iceland. <https://www.grocentre.is/static/gro/publication/1813/document/Kamara21prf.pdf>
15 Tatar V. 2019. “Evaluation of Occupational Health and Safety in the Global Fishing Sector.” The Online Journal of Science and Technology. April 2019. <https://tojsat.net/journals/tojsat/articles/v09i02/v09i02-09.pdf>
FAO. 2022. “Small fish for food security and nutrition.” <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/71b35cba-d525-4110-a272-2de889c2e36c>



Traditional fish-smoking methods are known to expose workers to high levels of air pollution, which increases respiratory and chronic health risks.¹⁶ They are also susceptible to skin infections, gastrointestinal diseases, and vector-borne illnesses such as malaria and schistosomiasis (a parasitic infection caused by blood flukes), which are prevalent near waterbodies.¹⁷

Poor water, sanitation, and hygiene conditions at landing sites and markets increase the spread of water- and foodborne illnesses. At the same time, industrial waste, agricultural runoff, and plastic pollution contaminate water bodies and marine life, increasing exposure risks and threatening food safety.

Despite the presence of CMAs, community engagement in fisheries management remains a challenge. Key issues include limited understanding of (and capacity to participate in) fisheries management; lack of adequate resources for effective fisheries management; weak local governance; insufficient training; and conflicting interests between stakeholders. Furthermore, migratory fishing driven by the movement of pelagic species is a long-standing practice in Sierra Leone and its neighboring countries. Over time, traditional systems have integrated migrant fishers into host communities. Currently, CMAs lack formal mechanisms to incorporate new entrants. In addition, industrial trawlers reaching the IEZ pose challenges, damaging artisanal gear. Table 1 provides a summary of potential opportunities for investments to address the challenges mentioned in this section.

SUMMARY OF OPPORTUNITIES AND INVESTMENT AREAS BY THEME

Table 1. Summary of opportunities and investment areas by theme

THEME	OPPORTUNITIES AND INVESTMENT AREAS
Fisheries and aquaculture sectors	• Improve data accuracy on catch volume and fish stock status • Enhance clarity of fleet composition and activities • Understand aquaculture potential and pathways for development
Legislative and regulatory landscape	• Update legislation to align with best practices in fisheries and aquaculture sector management • Develop clear regulatory frameworks to support accurate catch reporting and regulatory compliance • Implement a transparent, modernized industrial fisheries licensing system
Institutional delivery	• Improve institutional capacity and financial resources to develop and implement an effective fisheries and aquaculture policy and regulatory framework • Clarify roles and functions within the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources • Prioritize and improve coordination of the monitoring, control, and surveillance system • Improve reliability of data and close knowledge gaps relating to status of fish stocks and fishing activities • Address overfishing and illegal fishing • Implement transparency and accountability mechanisms in fisheries management
Resource status and trends	• Conduct comprehensive stock assessments • Use data to guide fisheries management decisions
Climate change and environmental degradation	• Understand the effects of climate on the productivity and availability of fish resources • Conduct a climate risk assessment of fisheries and aquaculture sectors and roll out weather forecasting and early disaster warning systems • Enforce environmental regulations across sectors and land-use planning • Invest in disaster response and resilient infrastructure
Economic performance and trends	• Gather reliable data on revenues and economic contributions • Improve fisheries infrastructure, practices, and equipment • Increase access to financing and improve investor confidence
Social development aspects	• Target poverty reduction and income growth for fishing-dependent communities, recognizing the specific roles and needs of women • Ensure artisanal and industrial fishers have balanced access to fisheries resources • Ensure community participation in fisheries management decision-making processes • Invest in improved food security and nutrition-sensitive management strategies and interventions that reduce health risks for fishing communities • Manage migratory fishing • Effectively enforce the inshore exclusion zone to protect small-scale fishers • Expand financial support to support innovation and sectoral development • Build resilient infrastructure to support fisheries-dependent communities.

16 Julius OO, Didlyn KM, George PG, and Yawa NGC. 2021. "Occupational hazards, risk and injuries of fish processors in Tombo, a coastal fish landing site, Sierra Leone, West Africa." International Journal of Fisheries and Aquaculture. Vol 13. <https://academicjournals.org/journal/IJFA/article-full-text/204609966979>

17 See: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/schistosomiasis>

POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

This section provides a summary of relevant national and international laws and policies that have shaped this Strategy, including the country's Medium-Term National Development Plan. It also highlights how implementing the Strategy will support progress towards achieving and maintaining national and international commitments.

Alignment with the national legal framework

As noted in Section 2, the following policies, Acts, and regulations apply to Sierra Leone's fisheries and aquaculture sectors:

- The Sierra Leone Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy (2016)
- The Fisheries and Aquaculture Act of 2018 and its accompanying Regulations of 2019
- The Government's Medium-Term National Development Plan (2024–2030) and its Feed Salone strategy (2023–2028)
- Sierra Leone's Blue Economy Strategy and Action Plan
- Sierra Leone's National Climate Change Policy and Nationally Determined Contributions.

These are discussed in greater detail below.

SIERRA LEONE FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE POLICY (2016)

The Sierra Leone *Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy* (2016) was developed through a 2010 review of the policy framework by the NEPAD Governance Working Group¹⁸ and the African Union Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources. The policy's goal is to achieve "ecologically sustainable and economically efficient fisheries in Sierra Leone" by providing a comprehensive guide to resource management. The policy aligns Sierra Leone's fisheries sector with the African Union's Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa (PFRS).¹⁹

The policy is structured around 10 areas: conservation and sustainable resource use; sustainable artisanal fisheries management; sustainable aquaculture development; competitive fish trade and marketing; fisheries on the high seas; food fish and nutrition security; institutional reform and intersectoral linkages; regional and sub-regional cooperation; human capital development in fisheries and aquaculture; and cross-cutting issues in fisheries and aquaculture.

The policy's focus on institutional reform and inter-sectoral linkages (policy area 7) addresses the diverse social, economic, political, and legal factors that influence fisheries governance and advocates for cross-sectoral coordination to ensure sustainable, profitable fisheries.

THE FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE ACT OF 2018 AND REGULATIONS OF 2019

The Fisheries and Aquaculture Act of 2018 and its accompanying Regulations of 2019 aim to ensure the sustainable use, management, and development of fisheries and aquaculture in Sierra Leone for long-term conservation and socioeconomic benefits. Key elements of the Act include:

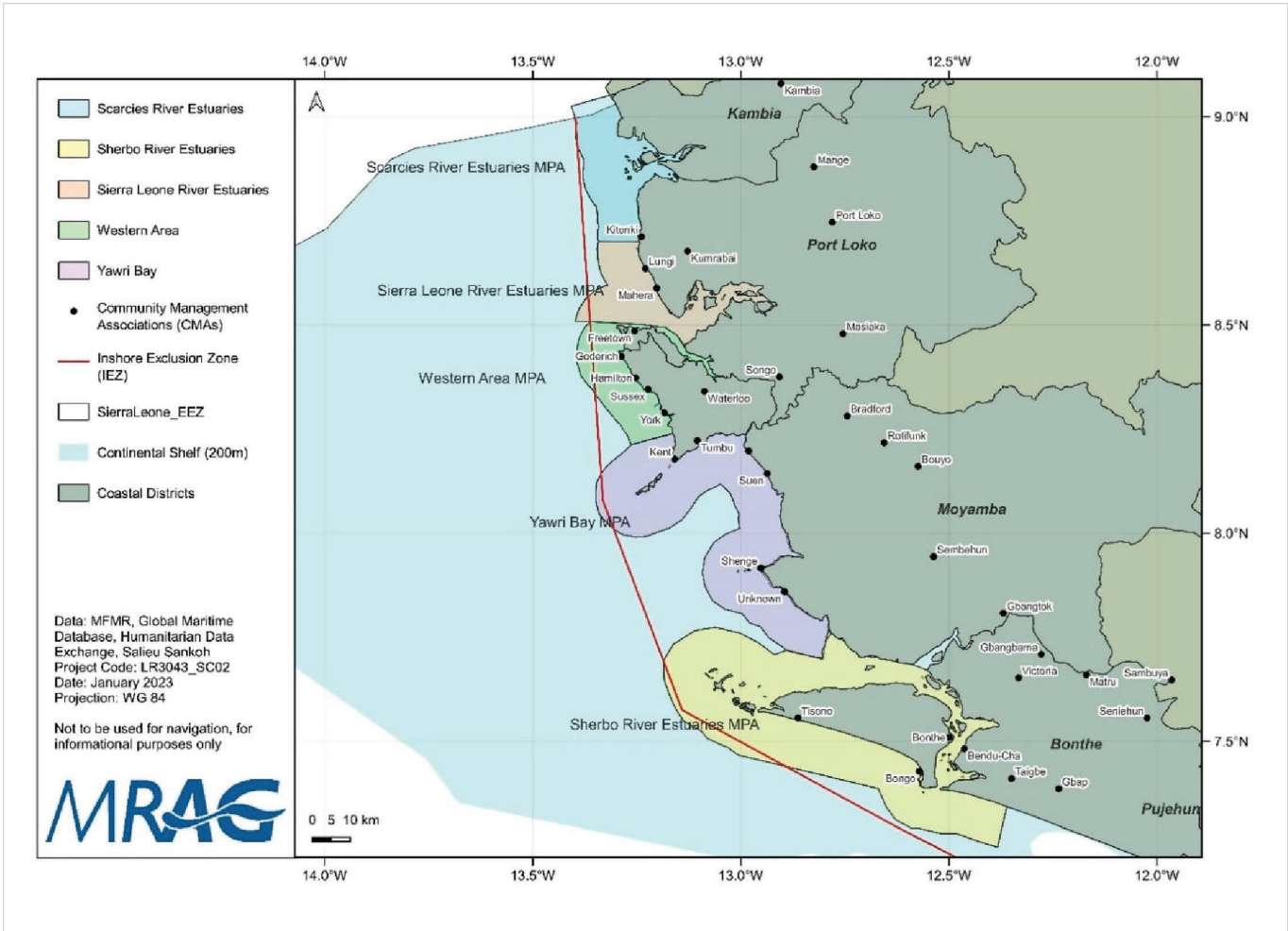
- **Governance and administration.** The Act establishes a Director of Fisheries and a Scientific, Economic, and Technical Committee to oversee the management and development of fisheries.
- **Management and conservation.** The Act sets objectives for sustainable fisheries management, conservation measures, and regional cooperation.
- **Licensing and artisanal fisheries.** The Act regulates vessel registration, licensing, and artisanal fishing, including buying, selling, and processing fish.
- **Monitoring and enforcement.** The Act defines powers for control, surveillance, entry, search, and enforcement actions, including the use of vessel monitoring systems.
- **Prohibitions.** The Act prohibits harmful practices such as fishing with explosives, the use of prohibited gear, pollution, and the fishing of turtles and juvenile sharks.
- **Aquaculture development.** The Act regulates aquaculture by specifying development plans, restrictions, and waste management guidelines.
- **Legal procedures and liabilities.** The Act outlines judicial and administrative proceedings, fines, and liabilities for offenses.

¹⁸ NEPAD is the New Partnership for Africa's Development, an African Union economic development program.

¹⁹ <https://au.int/en/documents/20140910/policy-framework-and-reform-strategy-fisheries-and-aquaculture-africa>

The Act also promotes stakeholder engagement in resource management, requiring communities to be involved in developing artisanal fishery plans and establishing the country's marine protected areas (MPAs) (Figure 5). The Regulations of 2019 outline conditions for issuing licenses, including stricter conditions for foreign vessels, ensuring surplus catch capacity and compliance with international fishing standards.

Figure 5. Locations of marine protected areas and community management associations, as identified by the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources in 2014 with support from the World Bank West Africa Regional Fisheries Program



Source: World Bank 2023.²⁰

While these regulations provide a foundation for responsible aquaculture, they are insufficient to support the commercial sector's growth. As a result, the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources has requested the FAO's support with developing a separate policy for inland fisheries and aquaculture, which could potentially lead to a standalone Act and regulations.

THE GOVERNMENT'S MEDIUM-TERM NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (2024–2030) AND ITS FEED SALONE STRATEGY (2023–2028)

The Government of Sierra Leone's Medium-Term National Development Plan for 2024 to 2030 (MTNDP 2024–2030) consolidates gains from the previous Medium-Term National Development Plan (2019–2023) and, through the MTNDP's Feed Salone strategy, sets the strategic direction for meeting food self-sufficiency and security by accelerating productivity and sustainably managing the fisheries and marine sector. The MTNDP 2024–2030 is being executed over a seven-year period, in line with the remaining period of the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Plan focuses on the government's "Big Five Game Changers", which together constitute the country's overarching agenda for 2030:

- **Big 1: Feed Salone** aims to boost agricultural productivity to ensure food security, inclusive economic growth, and social sustainability (further described later in this section)
- **Big 2: Human Capital Development** focuses on scaling up investment in the skills and health of Sierra Leone's people to meet the demands of the twenty-first century
- **Big 3: Youth Employment Scheme** aims to catalyze democratic sustainability, economic productivity, and national security by creating 500,000 jobs for the youth over the period leading up to 2030

- **Big 4: Technology and Infrastructure** focuses on increasing investment in infrastructure, technology, and digitalization
- **Big 5: Transforming the Public Service Architecture** aims to develop an efficient and professional public sector to achieve effective delivery of public services and maximize development results.

The agenda is linked to five goals, the first of which is "Sierra Leone will be food secure by 2030". Feed Salone, which relates to Big 1, is the government's flagship program and underpins the remaining Big Five Game Changers and related goals (as described later in this section). A macroeconomic framework to guide implementation of the MTNDP in the years leading up to 2030 has also been developed. This includes reforms to address the need to attract private sector investment.

BOX 1

Key challenges to private sector investment in Sierra Leone

Macroeconomic vulnerabilities, uncertainty, and various competitiveness challenges make it difficult for the private sector to make long-term investments in fisheries, aquaculture, and mariculture in Sierra Leone, in effect hindering the sectors' productivity and ability to grow.

Key obstacles to the sectors' competitiveness include:

- **Limited physical and digital connectivity**, with underdeveloped road networks and poor yet expensive internet access
- **Restrictions on key business inputs** such as electricity (which is costly and unreliable) and transportation
- **Poor access to finance** and digital finance for the private sector
- **A dearth of human capital and professional capacity** results in lack of business planning expertise amongst developers and operators seeking investment, so hindering development of aquaculture value chains
- **A lack of publicly available information** on potential investments and innovative advancements
- **A lack of standardized sustainability benchmarks and metrics** makes it challenging for investors to assess the financial, environmental, and social impacts of their investments
- **A lack of access, scalability, and transferability of high-potential innovations**
- **A shortage of publicly available, industry-driven data** from research institutions.

Sources: IFC 2019; Subasinghe, Siriwardena, and Sankoh 2022; PROBLUE World Bank 2024.



²⁰ World Bank. 2023. "Supporting Sierra Leone's Fishery Management Improvement: Final Report." Washington, DC: World Bank.



The **Feed Salone strategy (2023-2028)**, one of the MTNDP's "Big Five Game Changers", is a comprehensive strategy that aims to transform the nation's agricultural sector by improving productivity to achieve food security, fostering inclusive economic growth, and building resilient food systems. Feed Salone highlights the country's food insecurity problem and its negative implications for macroeconomic, social, and democratic stability.

Spearheaded by President Julius Maada Bio, the strategy focuses on increasing local food production, reducing dependence on food imports, and creating sustainable livelihoods. The Feed Salone strategy focuses on six strategic pillars, outlined below with their supporting actions:

- **Mechanization and irrigation:** Invest in modern farming equipment and irrigation systems to enhance productivity.
- **Seeds and input systems:** Develop robust seed distribution networks and ensure the availability of essential farming inputs.
- **Aggregation, processing, and marketing:** Establish facilities and systems to effectively process and market agricultural products.
- **Agricultural finance:** Provide financial support and services to farmers to facilitate investment in agriculture.
- **Agricultural technology and climate-smart agriculture:** Promote the adoption of innovative, environmentally sustainable technologies and practices.
- **Empowering women and youth:** Implement programs specifically designed to involve women and young people in agricultural activities.

Section 5.1.2 of the MTNDP, which is titled "Accelerating productivity and sustainable management of fisheries and the marine sector", lays the foundation for accelerating the marine and fisheries sector. The fisheries sector is also linked to the agendas for the Youth Employment Scheme and Human Capital Development, in that it is expected to create thousands of jobs for the nation's youth.

The overarching strategic objective for the sector, as set out in the MTNDP, is to "scale up production and industrial processing of fisheries and other marine products". Key targets under this objective include increasing industrial catch from a reported 122,000 metric tons (Mt) in 2023 to 150,000 Mt in 2030, increasing revenue generation from fisheries and marine products from 105 million New Leones (NLe) in 2023 to 150 million NLe in 2030. The third key target is to achieve certification to export fish to European Union and Chinese markets.

Key actions to support these objectives include:

- Improve surveillance and monitoring of industrial and artisanal fishing activities
- Support official control inspections for fish processing plants and customs border points
- Ensure fish biomass is maintained at not less than 400,000 Mt
- Scale up communication and sensitization on illegal fishing
- Improve data collection on, and management of, fisheries operations
- Mobilize private sector investors along the value chain to promote the market for fish and create fish-processing zones along the coast
- Review and amend the Fisheries and Aquaculture Act of 2018 and Regulations of 2019
- Support artisanal fishing operations, with an emphasis on the development of women and youth fish farmer groups across the country
- Support the construction of industrial fish harbor complexes at relevant locations across the country
- Incorporate practical fish farming activities in schools across the country.

This Strategy is well aligned with the MTNDP's Feed Salone strategy in that it presents a structured plan for achieving the strategy's objectives of achieving food self-sufficiency and security by accelerating productivity while supporting the sustainable management of fisheries and the marine sector.

SIERRA LEONE'S BLUE ECONOMY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

Sierra Leone's Blue Economy Strategy and Action Plan was developed by the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development with support from the UN Development Programme (UNDP), and was released in late 2024. It aims to foster a sustainable, inclusive, and integrated blue economy by focusing on economic transformation and leveraging science, technology, and innovation while emphasizing the conservation of the marine environment, security, governance, and climate change resilience.

The Blue Economy Strategy and Action Plan calls for coordinated governance that involves both national and international stakeholders to unlock the full potential of the country's marine resources while ensuring sustainability and environmental protection. The strategy's objectives include:

The inclusive and sustainable exploitation of Sierra Leone's marine and coastal resources to drive economic diversification.

Holistic governance architecture for managing blue economy resources, focusing on climate change and marine environmental degradation.

This Strategy will support the Blue Economy strategy, and the resulting strengthened capacity of MFMR will support cross-sectoral and cross-ministerial working. This will be important both to enable the sustainability of fished resources that are impacted by environmental conditions altered by other sectors, and to better the manage the co-existence of fisheries with other sectors and the impacts of fisheries on conservation objectives.

As aquaculture and other sectors develop, close coordination and planning, including through inclusive marine spatial planning, will be key for the achievement of both strategies.

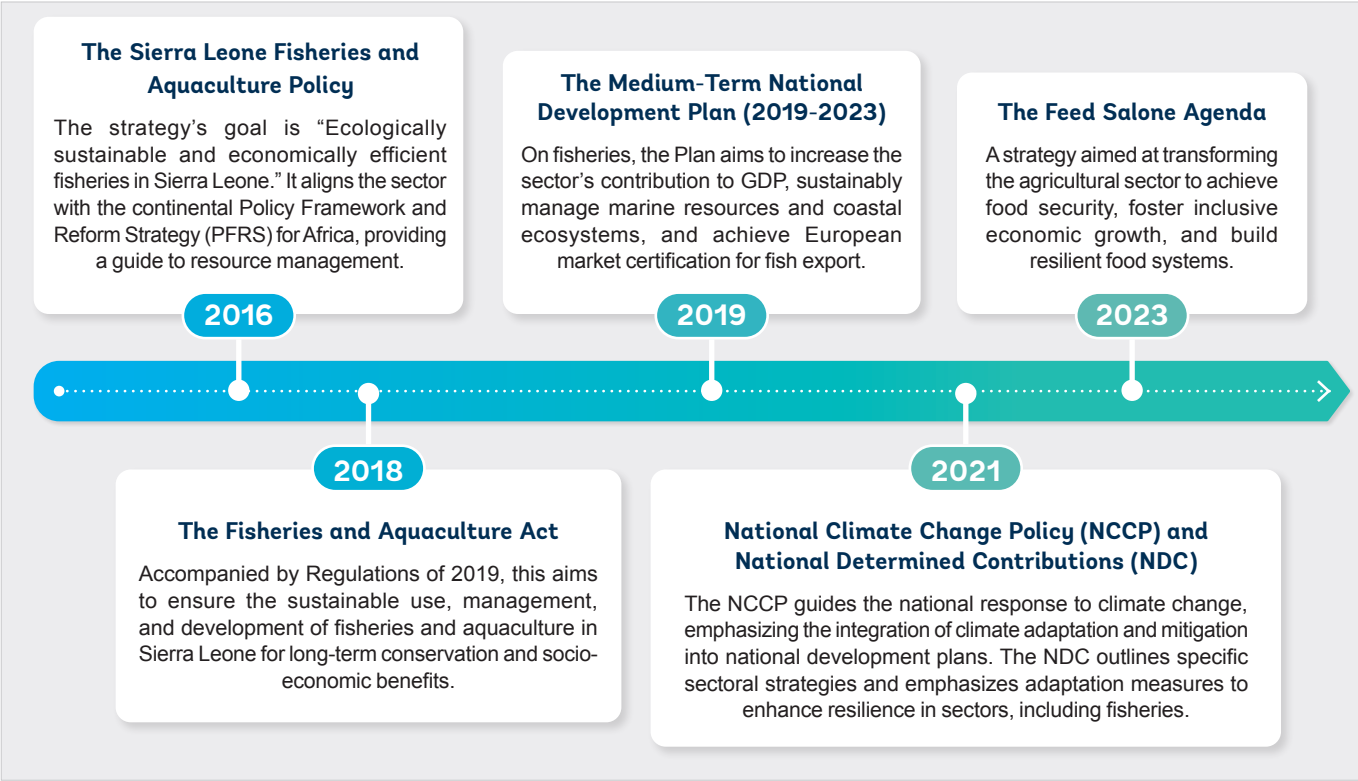
NATIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY AND NATIONAL DETERMINED CONTRIBUTIONS

Sierra Leone's National Climate Change Policy and National Determined Contributions (NDC), both published in 2021, articulate the nation's commitment to addressing climate change.

The National Climate Change Policy provides a comprehensive framework to guide Sierra Leone's response to climate change. It emphasizes integrating climate resilience into national development plans and outlines strategies to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate impacts. The policy focuses on the agriculture, water resources, energy, and infrastructure sectors, aiming to build adaptive capacity and reduce vulnerability. It also highlights the importance of public awareness and strengthening institutional capacity to effectively implement climate actions.

In its 2021 NDC submission, Sierra Leone set progressive targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions relative to 2005 levels, with a 10 percent reduction by 2030 and a 25 percent reduction by 2050. These targets are conditional upon receiving international support. The NDC outlines specific sectoral changes and emphasizes adaptation measures to enhance resilience and disaster risk management along coastal zones and in sectors such as agriculture, water resources, forestry, tourism, mining, infrastructure, and transport. By aligning these efforts with the Sustainable Development Goals, the NDC integrates climate action into broader national development objectives.

Figure 6. Timeline of laws and regulations that apply to Sierra Leone's fisheries and marine sector



Alignment with regional frameworks

Sierra Leone is committed to various regional frameworks that aim to transform the sustainability and profitability of West Africa's fisheries, and to which this Strategy is aligned. These frameworks include the following:

- The Africa Union's 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy (2050 AIM Strategy)
- The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Integrated Maritime Strategy (EIMS)
- ECOWAS Blue Economy Strategic Framework
- The African Charter on Maritime Security, Safety and Development in Africa (Lomé Charter) and the Revised African Maritime Transport Charter
- The Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa (PFRS)

These are discussed in greater detail in this section.

2050: AFRICA'S INTEGRATED MARITIME STRATEGY

The 2050 AIM Strategy is a comprehensive framework that aims to ensure the sustainable development and management of Africa's maritime resources. It envisions a peaceful, secure, and prosperous maritime domain by 2050, achieved through integrated and cooperative approaches to address challenges and seize opportunities in the sector. Key objectives of the 2050 AIM Strategy include the following:

- Ensure the responsible use of marine resources for economic growth while preserving the environment
- Strengthen maritime security to combat piracy, illegal fishing, and other threats, so ensuring safe trade routes
- Support industries like shipping, fisheries, aquaculture, tourism, and oil and gas to drive job creation and economic development
- Enhance collaboration between African nations, regional bodies, and international partners to improve governance and capacity
- Focus on ecosystem conservation, by addressing climate change, pollution, and the overexploitation of resources
- Develop maritime infrastructure and leveraging technology for better management.

ECOWAS STRATEGIES

EIMS is a regional framework developed by ECOWAS to ensure the sustainable management, development, and security of maritime resources in West Africa. Aligned with broader African maritime strategies like AIMS 2050, the EIMS addresses regional and global maritime challenges. Key components of the EIMS include the following:

- Enhance cooperation to tackle piracy, illegal fishing, human trafficking, and smuggling for safer seas and trade
- Promote the responsible use of maritime resources (fisheries, oil, and gas) to support economic growth while preserving ecosystems
- Develop regional maritime industries to boost trade, create jobs, and support economic growth
- Safeguard marine and coastal environments from climate change, pollution, and unsustainable practices
- Improving regional maritime governance through coordination, capacity-building, and effective policy implementation
- Fostering collaboration between ECOWAS members, regional organizations, and international partners to better manage shared maritime resources
- Upgrading ports, logistics, and research facilities to enhance regional connectivity and the maritime economy.

The ECOWAS Blue Economy Strategic Framework is an ECOWAS plan to sustainably harness the region's marine, coastal, and inland water resources for economic growth, environmental protection, and improved livelihoods. Key objectives include the following:

- Promote the responsible exploitation of marine resources such as fisheries, aquaculture, and offshore oil, while protecting marine ecosystems
- Support industries such as fisheries, tourism, shipping, and renewable energy to diversify regional economies
- Conserve marine and coastal environments and address challenges like climate change and pollution
- Leverage the blue economy to generate jobs, especially in coastal and rural areas, and drive economic development
- Strengthen collaboration between ECOWAS states and regional bodies for better resource management and maritime security
- Enhance institutional frameworks and governance for effective blue economy management
- Invest in maritime infrastructure (such as ports and research facilities) to support blue economy sectors
- Encourage research and innovation to improve resource management and create sustainable industries.

THE AFRICAN CHARTER ON MARITIME SECURITY, SAFETY AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA (LOMÉ CHARTER) AND THE REVISED AFRICAN MARITIME TRANSPORT CHARTER

These two charters are key frameworks for improving Africa's maritime and transport sectors, focusing on security, sustainability, and regional cooperation for economic growth.

The Lomé Charter (2016) addresses maritime security challenges in the Gulf of Guinea. Key goals include the following:

- Combat piracy, illegal fishing, and human trafficking
- Ensure the responsible use of marine resources like fisheries and oil
- Improve collaboration and security coordination between Gulf of Guinea countries
- Leverage security for regional trade, tourism, and shipping development
- Address marine pollution and ecosystem degradation.

The Revised African Maritime Transport Charter (2010), an updated version of the 1976 African Maritime Transport Charter, focuses on strengthening Africa's maritime transport sector. Key objectives include:

- Enhance safety standards for ships and ports
- Improve connectivity and trade across African nations
- Strengthen skills and knowledge in the sector through training and research
- Promote African ownership of maritime assets
- Implement pollution control standards and protection of coastal areas
- Promote policy harmonization and improved infrastructure.

POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE IN AFRICA

Developed by the African Union, the PFRS aims to transform fisheries into a sustainable and profitable sector across Africa, so supporting food security, economic growth, and regional cooperation while addressing climate change, social inclusion, and gender equality. Key objectives of the PFRS are to:

- Promote responsible fishing practices, protect ecosystems, and reduce overfishing
- Ensure access to nutritious, affordable fish products for local communities
- Drive economic growth, create jobs, and reduce poverty, especially in coastal and rural areas
- Foster collaboration between African countries and regional organizations for shared water-body management and improved governance
- Improve the ability of national and regional institutions to effectively manage fisheries and aquaculture
- Encourage private investment to boost productivity, market access, and innovation
- Address the impacts of climate change on fisheries and aquaculture, including strategies for adaptation
- Promote gender equality, access to opportunities, and inclusive participation in decision-making, especially for women.

Strategic priorities of the PFRS are to:

- Improve productivity while ensuring ecosystem protection
- Enhance the competitiveness of Africa's fishery products by improving processing and reducing trade barriers
- Strengthen governance at the national, regional, and continental levels to align with best practices
- Promote research into sustainable practices and innovative technologies
- Foster resilience through climate adaptation and ecosystem preservation.

Alignment with global treaties and commitments

Sierra Leone is a State Party to multiple international treaties and agreements that demonstrate its commitment to sustainable development and the sustainable management of its fisheries and aquaculture sectors. These commitments below demonstrate Sierra Leone's dedication to sustainable development and environmental stewardship. The country has implemented various national laws and structures to effectively implement these agreements; for example, the Environment Protection Agency Act No. 15 of 2022 enhances the legal infrastructure for environmental management to work towards alignment with international standards, and the Environment Protection Agency of Sierra Leone has created the Multilateral Environmental Agreements Implementation Coordinating Committee to develop collaborative frameworks for national-level actions, especially those that strengthen adherence to international environmental standards.

UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF THE SEA

The country signed the **UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)** in 1982 and became a State Party in 1994. The country has incorporated the principles of UNCLOS into its Maritime Zones (Establishment) Decree of 1996 and has defined its maritime zones in accordance with the convention. UNCLOS establishes a legal framework for nations to govern the activities and uses of the seas within their jurisdiction. Article 56 of UNCLOS enshrines the sovereign right of countries to explore, exploit, conserve, and manage living marine resources within their EEZs. UNCLOS further mandates nations to sustainably manage their living marine resources by doing the following:

- Implement science-based conservation measures
- Promote cooperation with other states and regional organizations
- Ensure the protection of marine ecosystems
- Facilitate the equitable access to, and use of, marine resources.

These provisions aim to balance economic utilization with the long-term health and sustainability of marine ecosystems. Article 61 of UNCLOS is of particular relevance to this Strategy in that it requires states to determine the allowable catch of living resources within their EEZs, mandating them to consider the best available scientific evidence when implementing management measures to avoid overexploitation and maintain or restore fish populations to levels that produce maximum sustainable yield. UNCLOS further requires states to implement ecosystem-based management (Article 192) and to facilitate equitable access to, and use of, marine resources (Article 62). These requirements are incorporated in Sierra Leone's national legal framework and are reflected in this Strategy.

UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Sierra Leone has integrated the SDGs into its national policies and frameworks to address its most pressing developmental and sustainability challenges. In particular, its MTNDP—with its focus on inclusive growth, poverty reduction, and environmental sustainability—directly supports Sustainable Development Goal 1 (no poverty), Goal 2 (zero hunger), Goal 13 (climate action), and Goal 14 (life below water).



GLOBAL CONVENTIONS

Sierra Leone has committed to the Convention on Biological Diversity, which requires the conservation of biological diversity and to ensure its sustainable use, and to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change Paris Agreement, which requires the country to contribute to mitigating global climate change and commit to enhancing national adaptive capacities. This Strategy will support Sierra Leone as it pursues these commitments.

FAO CODE OF CONDUCT FOR RESPONSIBLE FISHERIES

Sierra Leone is a signatory to the 1995 FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF). The CCRF is a voluntary framework that establishes international principles and standards for responsible fishing practices. Its primary aim is to ensure the effective conservation, management, and development of living aquatic resources, with due respect for ecosystems and biodiversity. The code addresses various aspects of fisheries, including fishing operations, aquaculture, fisheries research, and the integration of fisheries into coastal area management. It emphasizes the nutritional, economic, social, environmental, and cultural importance of fisheries, and encourages all stakeholders to implement its guidelines to promote sustainable fisheries worldwide.²¹

AGREEMENT ON PORT STATE MEASURES AND NATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION TO PREVENT, DETER, AND ELIMINATE ILLEGAL, UNREPORTED, AND UNREGULATED FISHING

Sierra Leone is party to the Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA), which entered into force on June 5, 2016. The PSMA is a binding international agreement that targets IUU fishing by preventing vessels engaged in IUU fishing from using ports and landing their catches. Its provisions apply to fishing vessels that seek entry into the designated port of a state that is different to the vessel's flag state. Effective implementation of the PSMA contributes to the long-term conservation and sustainable use of living marine resources and marine ecosystems.

The National Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter, and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing (NPOA-IUU) is a strategy and action plan prepared in 2010 with support from FAO to address IUU fishing through policy reforms, institutional strengthening and capacity building, and international cooperation. It includes measures to: (i) monitor and control fishing activities in Sierra Leone's exclusive economic zone (EEZ); (ii) train and equip national institutions and local communities to report illegal fishing; and (iii) cooperate with other countries to combat IUU.

THE FISHERIES TRANSPARENCY INITIATIVE

The Fisheries Transparency Initiative (FiTI) is a voluntary global initiative that is country-centered and government-driven. FiTI contributes to the sustainability of marine fisheries by enhancing transparency and multistakeholder collaboration. Sierra Leone, recognizing the critical importance of making fisheries data and information publicly available, committed to join FiTI in September 2024. This involves implementing the FiTI standard, an internationally recognized framework with clear requirements regarding transparency of, among other information, fishing licenses, vessel registry, catch data, subsidies, and beneficial ownership. Activities set out in this Strategy will support Sierra Leone's intention to develop and strengthen systems for collecting and publishing fisheries information online in a way that is visible, usable, and that progressively improves over time—in keeping with the FiTI standard.



SUMMARY

In summary, a range of policy and legislative frameworks relates to the fisheries and aquaculture sectors in Sierra Leone. While there are divergences and overlaps between these instruments, they all share a common objective: to transition to strong, effective fisheries management that collaborates with stakeholders to deliver economic and social benefits that strengthen food security; enhance the resilience of jobs and the environment; and that can be sustained into the future. This Strategy—which comprises the Vision, Mission, Guiding Principles, Strategic Objectives, and Supporting Activities presented in the following section—sets out the Government of Sierra Leone's ambition for the fisheries and aquaculture sectors, to deliver on the nation's commitments to its people and broader legal obligations.

²¹ FAO. 1995. Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. FAO, Rome. <https://www.fao.org/responsible-fishing/resources/detail/en/c/1316854/>



4

VISION, MISSION, AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

VISION

By 2035, Sierra Leone will be a regional leader in sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, setting a benchmark for ecological stewardship, economic efficiency, and innovation while promoting a prosperous blue economy that directly benefits the people of Sierra Leone through sustainable livelihoods, food security, and inclusive economic growth.

MISSION

In support of the Vision, this Strategy has identified the following national priorities for the fisheries and aquaculture sector between 2025 and 2035:

- Sustainable fisheries and aquaculture development and management
- Stronger and more inclusive fisheries governance and transparency
- Increased state revenue from the fisheries and aquaculture sector
- Strengthened employment, livelihoods, and food security
- Enhanced climate resilience and ecosystem health.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

To secure these outcomes for the benefit of the nation and its people, the Strategic Objectives below—which address the three key needs as identified by the Government of Sierra Leone—will be pursued between 2025 and 2035:

- Assess Sierra Leone’s fisheries and aquaculture resources and potential to benefit the nation
- Manage and enforce Sierra Leone’s fisheries and aquaculture sectors to ensure social, economic, and environmental sustainability and to prioritize national interests and benefits
- Unlock the potential to increase national wealth from fisheries and aquaculture.

Figure 7 captures both these Strategic Objectives and their desired outcomes. The Government of Sierra Leone and key stakeholders will undertake a mid-term review of the Strategy and its progress in 2030 to confirm the approach for the remaining five years leading up to 2035.

Figure 7. Strategic framework for Sierra Leone’s fisheries sector



BOX 2

How the blue economy can drive development and create jobs for the youth

Global employment prospects for young people remain uncertain, with young adults being 3.2 times more likely to be unemployed than older adults. The blue economy can accelerate economic transformation and ensure growth that is sustained and inclusive for the benefit of these under-employed young people.

The blue economy can drive progress towards achieving both economic and environmental goals in four important ways:

- **The health of the world's oceans drives economic gains and is crucial for sustained prosperity.** Oceans are the lifeline for much commercial activity and are an important source of employment. Globally, more than 3 billion people depend on healthy oceans for their livelihoods, with oceans directly and indirectly responsible for creating more than 350 million jobs.
- **The blue economy can play a key role in initiating sustained structural transformation, facilitating the smooth transition of young people from education to employment.** As GDP per person rises, jobs become more specialized, productive, and urban. Economic production becomes increasingly company-centric, and individuals specialize in more complex tasks. As countries develop, employment in growing and harvesting food shifts from relatively low-productivity activities (such as harvesting crops and farming livestock) to relatively higher-productivity aquatic food activities (such as fisheries and aquaculture).
- **The blue economy provides critical opportunities for young people in developing countries.** On average, fisheries offer better compensation than agriculture and play a key role in creating employment in lower-income countries. Ocean-based economies provide productive employment opportunities for young people from rural and lower-skilled backgrounds, even during off-seasons, offering a pathway for more inclusive growth.
- **Coordinated action—guided by good data—is the key to unleashing the jobs potential of the blue economy while addressing emerging challenges** such as: (i) limited data and analysis on how the sector can create jobs and drive growth, (ii) low awareness of career pathways, and (iii) difficult business environments.

A multifaceted approach is important for fully realizing the blue economy's promise. Such an approach should feature policy interventions that: (i) deepen youth employment data analysis; (ii) close blue skills gaps; (iii) improve the attractiveness and awareness of blue careers among youth; and (iv) promote youth entrepreneurship and innovation in the blue economy.

Source: <https://blogs.worldbank.org/en/jobs/how-can-blue-economy-drive-development-and-jobs-youth>



Copyright: Arne Hoel / World Bank

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In keeping with the policy and legal framework discussed in **Section 3**, and in keeping with the vision for Sierra Leone to become a regional leader in sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, this Strategy is guided by principles that align with recognized international best practice. These principles are: (i) a transition to ecosystem-based adaptive management of fisheries and aquaculture; (ii) application of the precautionary approach; (iii) inclusive and participatory governance; and (iv) equity and transparency.

A transition to ecosystem-based, adaptive management of fisheries and aquaculture

Ecosystem-based management is an integrated approach that considers entire ecosystems, including human and ecological interactions, to ensure the sustainable use of marine and freshwater resources.²² It moves beyond traditional single-species management by incorporating ecosystem dynamics, habitat protection, and socioeconomic factors.

Adaptive management complements ecosystem-based management by using a structured, iterative decision-making process that continuously improves strategies based on monitoring and new scientific knowledge.²³ Together, these approaches strengthen the resilience of fisheries and aquaculture to environmental changes and human pressures.

Application of the precautionary approach

The precautionary approach, as described in the CCRF,²⁴ recognizes that uncertainty should not be a reason to delay conservation or management actions when there is a risk of serious or irreversible harm. This principle is embedded in international agreements such as the 1995 UN Fish Stocks Agreement²⁵ and the 1992 Rio Declaration on Environment and Development,²⁶ which emphasize the need to act conservatively when scientific knowledge is incomplete. In fisheries and aquaculture, this requires fisheries managers to implement measures to avoid overfishing, habitat degradation, and ecosystem imbalances—even in the absence of full scientific certainty.

Inclusive and participatory governance

Inclusive and participatory governance in fisheries and aquaculture ensures that decision-making processes involve all relevant stakeholders, including fishers, industry representatives, scientists, policymakers, and local communities.²⁷ This principle is rooted in international best practices, including the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication,²⁸ which emphasize that effective governance requires transparency, consultation, and shared responsibility. Participatory approaches enhance legitimacy, promote knowledge-sharing, and contribute to more equitable and sustainable outcomes. Inclusivity is key to the development of Sierra Leone's fisheries and aquaculture sectors, given the roles of women in contributing to family and community cohesion.

Equity and transparency

International frameworks like the CCRF emphasize that governance systems must prevent corruption, ensure fair access to resources, and consider the rights of all users, including Indigenous People and coastal communities. Equity in fisheries and aquaculture governance ensures that the benefits and responsibilities of these activities are fairly distributed between different groups, including marginalized and small-scale fishers.²⁹ Transparency is closely related to equity, requiring open access to decision-making processes, clear rules, and accountability to stakeholders.³⁰

22 FAO. 2003. The Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries: Issues, Terminology, Principles, Institutional Foundations, Implementation, and Outlook. FAO Technical Paper No. 443. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/94939764-7178-437f-a644-805aaf994a5e>

23 Walters CJ and Holling CS. 1990. "Large-Scale Management Experiments and Learning by Doing." *Ecology*, 71(6), 2060–2068. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1938620>

24 FAO. 1995. "Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries." Rome: FAO. <https://www.fao.org/responsible-fishing/resources/detail/en/c/1316854/>

25 UN. 1995. "Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks." https://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/fish_stocks_agreement/CONF164_37.htm

26 UN. 1992. "Rio Declaration on Environment and Development." Rio de Janeiro: UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_CONF.151_26_Vol.I_Declaration.pdf

27 Jentoft, S. 2005. "Fisheries Co-Management as Empowerment." *Marine Policy*, 29(1), 1–7. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0308597X04000132>

28 FAO. 2015. "Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication." Rome: FAO. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/edffbf8c-81e5-4208-a36f-334ff81ac10f/content>

29 Allison EH, Ratner BD, Åsgård B, Willmann R, Pomeroy R, and Kurien J. 2012. "Rights-Based Fisheries Governance: From Fishing Rights to Human Rights." *Fish and Fisheries*, 13(1), 14–29. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/229916505_Rights-based_Fisheries_Governance_From_fishing_rights_to_human_rights

30 FAO. 2019. "Increasing Transparency of Fisheries to Enhance Sustainability of Oceans and Ecosystem Management—GCP/GLO/595/EC." <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/4c2e27f5-28cc-4425-ad3e-48b05d1d81e8>

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES

These Strategic Objectives are designed to deliver Sierra Leone's vision of becoming a regional leader in sustainable fisheries and aquaculture. They are guided by the Strategy's stated Mission and Guiding Principles and align with the legal framework discussed in Section 3.

Three strategic objectives—each of which addresses a key need identified by the Government of Sierra Leone—have been identified for the fisheries and aquaculture sector:

- 1 Assess Sierra Leone's fisheries and aquaculture resources and potential to benefit the nation
- 2 Manage and enforce Sierra Leone's fisheries and aquaculture sectors to ensure social, economic, and environmental sustainability and to prioritize national interests and benefits
- 3 Unlock the potential to increase national wealth from fisheries and aquaculture.

The unifying goal that underpins these Strategic Objectives is to ensure that the benefits of fisheries and aquaculture development and management are equitably shared for the benefit of the nation.

Each Strategic Objective is accompanied by a set of supporting activities that have been developed to meet the Government of Sierra Leone's stated needs. They represent actionable steps toward achieving sustainability, increasing state revenues, improving livelihoods, enhancing food security, and strengthening governance and transparency.

Together, these activities create a roadmap for the effective management and growth of Sierra Leone's fisheries and aquaculture sector, ensuring that it remains resilient to challenges such as climate change and market volatility. An initial Action Plan—including the supporting activities, their desired outcomes, and related indicators—can be found in Section 7.



Strategic Objective 1

ASSESS SIERRA LEONE'S FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE RESOURCES AND POTENTIAL TO BENEFIT THE NATION

Achieving this Strategic Objective will establish a robust and sustainable system of data collection and analysis to provide decision-makers with evidence about the merits of different management strategies regarding capture fisheries and aquaculture production in Sierra Leone. The information generated by this system will be sufficient to support the determination of scientifically sound TACs, the management of a closed artisanal sector, and theory-driven strategies to improve food security and nutrition objectives. Table 2 outlines the activities that will support delivery of this objective, with priority/first-phase activities highlighted in blue.



Table 2. Supporting activities under Objective 1

Priority or first phase activities are highlighted in blue.

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION
1.1	- Identify and collate existing data/evidence and document data-collection processes. - Collate datasets (including time series) and assess confidence in datasets (for example, check for consistency of collection method) to inform trends. - Evaluate knowledge gaps in conducting resource assessments. - Identify priority knowledge gaps to inform Activity 1.6.
1.2	- Assess international learnings on “good enough” stock assessment methodologies (such as catch-only methods, which require less data inputs) to determine the minimum data requirements and processing needs to deliver stock assessments for priority stocks. - Conduct a gap analysis based on Activity 1.1 to inform Activity 1.3.
1.3	- Evaluate existing Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) statistical and analytical capabilities. - Identify skills gaps and training needs for a stock assessment program informed by Activity 1.2 and targeted at priority stocks. - Establish a stock assessment program, ensuring that it is adaptive enough to use future data generated by subsequent data collection programs.
1.4	- Define a data collection process that directly supports the stock assessment program as well as any priority social, economic, or ecological information needs identified in Activity 1.2. - Define how data should be stored, managed, quality-assured, and analyzed to support the stock assessment program and address any additional fisheries-management reporting requirements. - Develop a centralized or cloud-based database to standardize and increase the efficiency of data collection and use by fisheries managers, regulators, and scientists. This database should also be accessible to the public. - Integrate current technological advances to automate and increase the consistency of analysis and reporting.
1.5	- Evaluate Sierra Leone’s aquaculture potential based on an assessment of: (i) biogeographical suitability, current capacity, and future training needs; (ii) its existing legislative, institutional, and investment environments, (iii) infrastructure requirements; and (iv) alignment with national objectives, including improved food and nutrition security outcomes. - Conduct a gap analysis relative to the Feed Salone strategy and aquaculture scenarios, including subsistence production (based on nutritional value), supplementary aquaculture production, and commercial production for domestic and export markets.
1.6	Conduct a frame survey of the artisanal fleet to deliver a robust baseline that can be used to monitor changes in the fleet’s structure and distribution. This activity should be informed by Activity 1.1 and the identification of existing data on artisanal fisheries.
1.7	Establish regular, reliable data collection from the artisanal sector that is linked to MFMR data processes (Activity 1.4) and is compatible with the MFMR’s stock assessment program (Activity 1.3).
1.8	Establish regular, reliable data collection from the industrial fishing sector that is (i) based on the strengthened reporting requirements from Activity 2.1; (ii) linked to MFMR data processes (Activity 1.4); and (iii) compatible with the MFMR’s stock assessment program (Activity 1.3).
1.9	- Build the capacity of community management associations (CMAs)—critical organizations capable of progressing inshore fisheries management—to support monitoring, control and enforcement of relevant laws and regulations governing fishing activities within zones and protected areas. This activity should be informed by Activity 2.3. - Integrate CMAs into the national monitoring, control, and surveillance (MCS) system to benefit from CMA participation in monitoring and surveillance. - Determine what MCS training CMAs need to ensure that the evidence they submit has legal weight and can be used by the MFMR to enforce fisheries regulations.
1.10	- Determine total allowable catches (TACs) for priority stocks of marine resources based on the stock assessment program (Activity 1.3). - Assess current exploitation of priority stocks—both overall and by various sectors—compared to their TACs.
1.11	Identify underexploited and nutritionally rich stocks and develop fisheries management plans for them (based on the precautionary principle and the ecosystem-based approach to fisheries management).
1.12	Identify sectors’ capacity limits relative to TACs and develop a just transition strategy to transfer excess effort out of capture fisheries.
1.13	Develop a monitoring, evaluation and learning framework to support implementation of this Strategy that uses an adaptive delivery approach. Such a framework will also contribute to the planned mid-term review.



 Strategic Objective 2

MANAGE AND ENFORCE SIERRA LEONE’S FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE SECTORS TO ENSURE SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND TO PRIORITIZE NATIONAL INTERESTS AND BENEFITS

Achieving this strategic objective will improve the climate resilience of Sierra Leone’s fisheries and aquaculture sectors by implementing fisheries management that is both climate smart and aligned with international best practice. Sierra Leone will be recognized as a regional leader in MCS and for its application of the PSMA.

Investors will have confidence that the fisheries and aquaculture sectors are supported by a robust management system. The social, economic, and environmental benefits of achieving this objective are reasonably expected to be sustained into the future, contributing to the Feed Salone strategy and the MTNDP.

Table3. Supporting activities under Objective 2

Priority or first phase activities are highlighted in blue.

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION
2.1	- Enforce industrial fishing vessels’ adherence to reporting requirements for the fisheries database (Activity 1.4) as a proviso for industrial vessel licenses. - Review reporting requirements, and strengthen them where necessary, to address data gaps identified in Activities 1.1 and 1.6.
2.2	Establish a regular MFMR data collection presence at landing sites in Freetown to verify reported catches and collect catch data from the industrial fleet.
2.3	- Review the capacity of community management associations (CMAs) to collect data and participate in fisheries management. - Identify and document the training needs and structural management changes to strengthen CMAs’ participation and data collection capacity.
2.4	Develop the capacity of CMAs to collect small-scale fisheries data, participate in fisheries management, and adopt low-impact fishing methods.

Table continues on next page →

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION
2.5	- Work alongside CMAs to transition artisanal fisheries from an open-access sector to a limited-access sector by implementing existing registration regulations and by closing the fishery to new entrants. This work should be guided by the just transition strategy (Activity 1.12). - Clarify, implement, and communicate (via an outreach program) a licensing system for artisanal vessels that sets out the license conditions for the fleet, the rights of artisanal fishers, regulatory requirements to support compliance, and fines for infractions. - Incentivize the removal of effort from the artisanal fishery sector through an exit strategy and incentivize the modernization of the fleet (for example, old vessels can be replaced with new vessels, provided the potential for effort creep through technology advances is considered). This transition should recognize the rights and benefits of small-scale fisheries and associated value chains and could include establishing territorial use rights to fisheries (TURFs) and providing incentives such as preferential access for best-practice operators.
2.6	- Implement an innovation program to support the artisanal fleet's transition towards a more modern inshore fleet with established cost-recovery mechanisms. This activity should be informed and guided by the assessment of sector capacity limits in Activity 1.12 and the transition plan to reduce overall fishing effort of Activity 2.5. - Drive innovations to support increased gains (including nutritional value) from existing catches by optimizing resource use (efficiency savings) or increasing value (for example, by undertaking value-adding post-harvest processing or by accessing novel markets). - Prevent capacity increases beyond sustainable levels by ensuring alignment with fisheries management measures.
2.7	Review Sierra Leone's ships registry to identify and revoke registrations of internationally blacklisted vessels.
2.8	Review, refine, and enforce requirements for vessel monitoring systems (VMS) and automatic identification systems (AIS) for all industrial and semi-industrial vessels operating in Sierra Leone marine waters and Sierra Leone-flagged vessels operating outside national waters while working alongside and strengthening the Joint Maritime Committee (JMC).
2.9	- Strengthen CMAs' capacity to support monitoring, control, and enforcement of relevant laws and regulations governing fishing activities within zones and protected areas. - Integrate CMAs into the national monitoring, control, and surveillance (MCS) system to benefit from CMA participation in monitoring and surveillance - Determine what MCS training the CMAs need to ensure that the evidence they submit has legal weight and can be used by the MFMR to enforce fisheries regulations.
2.10	Support collaboration between the MFMR and CMAs to enforce spatial and temporal closures within the inshore zone to enable stock recovery and protect habitats. This support will require coastal community outreach and will build on the work done in Activity 2.9.
2.11	- Review and reinforce the potential and efficiency of the judicial system to address fisheries infractions, including a review of processes surrounding fines, the confiscation of catches, and the suspension or removal of fishing licenses. - Amend regulations and legislation and conduct outreach where necessary to inform fisheries operators in all sectors of these changes.
2.12	Implement actions in the National Fisheries Inspection Plan and monitor effectiveness.
2.13	Develop marine spatial plans that include fishing zones and marine aquaculture development areas in line with Sierra Leone's Blue Economy Strategic Framework and National Action Plan and the MTNDP.



Strategic Objective 3

UNLOCK THE POTENTIAL TO INCREASE NATIONAL WEALTH FROM FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

Achieving this Strategic Objective will result in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors generating increased national wealth (including but not limited to increased state revenue, increased food and nutrition security, and more resilient coastal communities) through the application and delivery of good policies that are supported by good science.

Benefits are reasonably expected to be sustained into the future. The nation will also attract responsible investment and become a regional leader in enabling innovation in both sectors and the associated value chains. Jobs, livelihoods, and food security associated with the sectors will be resilient.

Table 4. Supporting activities under Objective 3

Priority or first phase activities are highlighted in blue.

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION
3.1	Review and revise the licensing system for industrial and semi-industrial fisheries to generate increased state revenues. This includes assessing options for legislative or regulatory changes (e.g. adopting a catch-based fee system or an auctioning quota system).
3.2	Work with fisheries stakeholders to identify the critical infrastructure needed to unlock the potential of the fisheries and aquaculture sectors. For the aquaculture sector, build on findings from Activity 1.5.
3.3	Evaluate where surplus stock resources exist that could support third-party access agreements to boost national revenues while adhering to recognized sustainability standards.
3.4	- Assess the feasibility of a fisheries development levy or fund to increase capital for MCS and fisheries innovation activities. This assessment should be conducted in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance and should build on license fee reforms from Activity 3.1. - Implement this fisheries development fund using principles of transparency and good governance.
3.5	Drive improvements in smoking ovens and methods. In direct collaboration with processors, especially women processors, to design and provide capacity building for, and access to, microfinancing to support the uptake of improved methods.
3.6	- In direct collaboration with potential beneficiaries, design and deliver activities to increase the quality and nutritional value of catches. This could include providing artisanal and industrial sectors with training on post-harvest handling and hygiene, as well as practices that preserve key nutrients. - Assess the potential for value chain development (for example, to supply domestic hotels and restaurants) based on higher-quality products. - Provide best-practice producers with training and support to achieve and maintain higher quality standards and support their access to higher-margin markets.
3.7	Develop landing-site facilities, including appropriate cold-chain technologies, and engage communities to maintain these facilities in terms of both functioning and cleanliness. This activity should be informed by Activity 3.2.
3.8	Develop a national marine aquaculture development program to create and maintain jobs and livelihoods and to support the Feed Salone strategy by promoting nutrition-sensitive aquaculture management and aquaculture production in areas with high vulnerability to food insecurity. This activity should be informed by Activity 1.5 and aligned with Activity 2.13.
3.9	Build SME capacity, with a focus on women and youth, by providing training and enhancing access to microfinance supported by the innovation program (initiated in Activity 2.6) and public-private initiatives. This activity should be informed by Activity 2.3 and aligned with Activity 2.6.
3.10	Design and finance an infrastructure development program tied to national priorities for the fisheries sector. This activity should build on Activity 3.2 and align with Activity 3.7.
3.11	Design and finance an infrastructure development program linked to national priorities for the aquaculture sector. This activity should build on Activity 1.5 and Activity 3.8.
3.12	Evaluate the feasibility and benefits of introducing community fishing quotas to support artisanal fishing communities. This activity should be informed by Activity 1.10 and Activity 1.12.
3.13	Develop a roadmap for an individual transferable quota (ITQ) system supported by an analysis of the institutional and legal implications of implementation.
3.14	Conduct feasibility and cost-benefit assessments of implementing traceability and quality improvements in Sierra Leone with the intention of gaining entry to higher-value export markets.

PROGRESSING TOWARDS THE OBJECTIVES

A monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) framework is essential for tracking progress, assessing effectiveness, and ensuring the adaptive management of this Strategy. For a MEL framework to be meaningful, it should be co-developed under the leadership of the MFMR using a collaborative development approach to ensure alignment with national priorities, institutional capacity, and stakeholder needs while fostering ownership and accountability.

A theory of change (ToC) can provide a backbone for a MEL framework, ensuring that monitoring, evaluation, and learning efforts are strategic, focused, and adaptive. By articulating how and why interventions are expected to lead to desired outcomes, a ToC helps stakeholders develop a MEL framework that can effectively measure progress, test assumptions, and guide decision-making for continuous improvement.

A dynamic, well organized MEL is essential for taking on the challenge of implementing this Strategy. The MFMR needs to be able to take the lead in responding to upcoming obstacles and ensuring continued progress towards the Strategy's intended goal.

Developing a MEL framework for the strategy

MEL systems are typically customizable, adaptable frameworks with processes, best practices, and tools that are strategically tailored for sector-specific objectives, such as sustainable fishing or climate adaptability. Adaptable MEL frameworks take a fluid approach. They regularly monitor and evaluate the progress of an initiative and incorporate learning and feedback at each implementation stage to facilitate adaptability and progress towards a Strategy's desired impacts.

A detailed MEL plan will be designed when planning the implementation of this Strategy. This plan will be guided by the understanding that a well-designed MEL framework:

- **Tracks progress** by measuring implementation progress against strategic goals and objectives.
- **Ensures accountability** by providing transparency in decision-making and resource allocation.
- **Supports adaptive management** by enabling learning and adjustments based on evidence.
- **Assesses impact** to evaluate whether the strategy is achieving its desired ecological, social, and economic outcomes.
- **Facilitates learning and institutional capacity-building** by embedding reflection and continuous improvement within the MEL review process.
- **Can be used to engage with stakeholders** by enabling fishers, communities, and industry actors to see progress and provide inputs for learning.

The MEL plan will build on the ToC's clearly defined goals, objectives and indicators. These indicators will be measurable, outcomes-oriented indicators that inform progress on national and international commitments. Further, indicators will be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound) and linked to the data collection activities under Strategic Objective 1 to avoid duplication of effort. A mixed-methods approach that combines scientific assessments with impact evaluations, participatory monitoring, socioeconomic data, and fisher knowledge will likely be a suitable approach to data collection.

A learning-oriented evaluation approach will facilitate adaptive fisheries management by using formative evaluation (ongoing monitoring) and summative evaluation (periodic assessments) to assess the effectiveness of Strategy implementation. Learning processes will need to be integrated into the MFMR's processes so that findings and feedback can inform decision-making.

Theory of change

A ToC describes how and why a change is expected to happen in a particular context. The Strategy’s long-term goal is for Sierra Leone to develop into a regional leader in sustainable fisheries and aquaculture that demonstrates best practice in ecological stewardship, food security, and inclusive growth. The ToC shows how and why various inputs and activities will help the nation achieve that vision.

CAUSAL PATHWAY OF A THEORY OF CHANGE

A simplified ToC framework has been developed for this Strategy (Figure 9). This ToC outlines the causal pathways between inputs, activities, and the outcomes needed to achieve Sierra Leone’s Vision for the fisheries sector (Figure 8). The activities listed in this ToC are high-level summaries of the more detailed supporting activities under the Strategic Objectives (as outlined in Section 5 and in this section). This version of the ToC can be expanded into a comprehensive outcomes framework with a more complete list of activities.

The ToC can be developed to support planning and coordination during implementation, helping the MFMR and its partners align activities to the causal pathways that drive progress toward achieving the national vision. The ToC can also support the monitoring and evaluation of programs to determine how much progress has been made towards achieving indicators on outputs, outcomes, and long-term impact.

The ToC aims to achieve the Strategic Objectives outlined in Section 5:

- 1. Assess Sierra Leone’s fisheries and aquaculture resources and potential to benefit the nation.
- 2. Manage and enforce Sierra Leone’s fisheries and aquaculture sectors to ensure social, economic, and environmental sustainability and to prioritize national interests and benefits.
- 3. Unlock the potential to increase national wealth from fisheries and aquaculture.

Figure 8. Causal pathway of a theory of change



The main inputs needed to achieve the Strategic Objectives by engaging in the activities outlined in section 5 are:

- 1. **Financial resources** (government budget, donor funding, or private sector investment).
- 2. **Technical expertise and technologies**, including research and innovation.
- 3. **Policy formulation and a revised legislative and regulatory framework.** This will require collaboration with the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, and the Sierra Leone Maritime Administration.
- 4. **Institutional restructuring** and better division of labor to support the JMC and CMAs.
- 5. **Community participation mechanisms and collaborative platforms** to foster regional partnerships between the private sector, research and academia, and communities.

These inputs are necessary, to varying degrees, for the success of activities in the ToC (Figure 9). The inputs that are most closely connected with the activities, outputs, and outcomes are listed by number in the “Inputs” column. Note that the activities listed in Column 2 of Figure 9 are high-level summaries of the more detailed activities outlined in Section 5.

Figure 9. Simplified theory of change framework

Input	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact	Connection to strategic objectives
2, 3	Assess fisheries potential Set up data collection and dissemination system(s)	• Reliable data on fisheries, fleets, catches, and stocks for decision making on meeting diverse objectives (e.g., sustainability, economic, food security/ nutrition, climate resilience, population well-being)	Reliable information on the fisheries to assess the potential for further development Basis laid for determining stock status and setting total allowable catch	Enhanced decision making and data-driven assessment of resource potential	1, 3
2, 3, 5	Evaluate potential for developing aquaculture Determine possible bottlenecks that inhibit growth in the field	• Reliable data on aquaculture potential for decision making and meeting diverse objectives (e.g., sustainability, economic, food security/ nutrition, climate resilience, population well-being)	Potential development of economically, environmentally, and socially sound aquaculture projects	Increased protein production and access, diversification, increased revenue	1, 3
5	Analyze current legal framework Form new policy and legislation meeting needs of the vision and strategic objectives	• Legal and regulatory framework enabling effective management of the fisheries based initially on precautionary principles and laying the basis for regulating through determining total allowable catch for economically important as well as environmentally sensitive stocks	New management system and institutional structures are in place, so ensuring development towards social, economic, and environmental sustainability	Enhanced governance and transparency	2
1, 2, 3, 4	Strengthen monitoring, control, and enforcement capabilities	• Implemented counter-IUU strategies and enforced spatial/temporal closures • Streamlined and targeted surveillance and enforcement capacity • Inspection system for food safety and quality control	Functioning MCS. Reduced illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing Increased food safety and higher quality catches and products	Improved insight into ongoing fisheries and ability to react to infringements through improved management systems Higher standard of wholesome products	2
3, 5	Transition of artisanal fleet to a closed fishery, fleet modernization, microfinance for small scale fisheries and production, gender-focused SMEs	• Increased fisheries blocked • Reduced likelihood of overfishing in coastal areas • Modernized artisanal fleet • Incentive programs for women in fisheries	Better managed and more economically, environmentally, and socially sound artisanal fisheries. Programs provide financing for value-chain infrastructure (e.g., landing sites, cold storage, vessels)	Strengthened livelihood, food security, and well-being Fishing communities have higher incomes, access to markets, and increased climate resilience	2
2, 3	Design tax/ fee/ license structures for the industrial, semi-industrial, and artisanal fisheries	• Establishment of tax/fee/ license regime/regulations and collection mechanisms	Revenues available for operation and functioning of fisheries ministry and agencies	Increased (optimal) revenue to appropriate government/ public agencies/ ministries	2
1, 4, 5	Analyze infrastructure gaps and implementation Develop enabling infrastructure and attract investment Determine needs for training and education for all parts of the fisheries sector	• Improved communal infrastructure (roads, hygiene, landing facilities); private-sector investments in cooling facilities, smoke ovens, and fisheries innovation programs • Diverse training and education programs set up	Infrastructure and framework that can increase national wealth, food security, and social benefits from fisheries	Diversification in fishing and production Improved quality along the value chain Better trained and educated workforce	3

Key assumptions

This ToC is based on the following assumptions:

- **Political will and resources.** The Government of Sierra Leone remains committed to funding and prioritizing fisheries and aquaculture reforms that enhance transparency and participation. In the short term, it is possible that state revenue from these sectors fluctuates while cost-recovery mechanisms are introduced and reforms face potential resistance from actors who are focused on maximizing short-term returns or who have marginal livelihoods and few alternatives. Sustained political will is essential to navigate these transitions.
- **Stakeholder buy-in.** Fishing communities, private sector actors, and civil society all actively support and commit to the Strategy—including to the objective of *sustainable* fisheries and aquaculture sectors—and are willing and able to constructively participate in evolving the fisheries management system to deliver its Vision. Identifying incentives for operators who commit to best practices, communicating these incentives, and increasing stakeholder participation will be instrumental in building stakeholder support.
- **Enforcement capacity.** Monitoring, control, and enforcement mechanisms are strengthened to address IUU fishing and ensure compliance.
- **Climate resilience investments.** Adequate resources are allocated to climate adaptation measures and ecosystem restoration.
- **Support.** Regional and international partners provide the country with the necessary technical and financial assistance.

External factors

The following factors are beyond direct control but could influence success of the Strategy:

- **Global market trends.** Price fluctuations for fish products and international trade regulations could affect revenue potential. Global demand for seafood and animal feed is growing, which increases the value of Sierra Leone's marine resources and improves the likelihood of competition between sectors in the absence of strong planning and political leadership.
- **Climate change.** Changes in fish stock distribution and productivity could impact fisheries management plans.
- **Regional cooperation.** Effective collaboration with neighboring countries is needed to combat IUU fishing and improve the management of transboundary fish stocks, including small pelagic species that are essential for food security and economic development.
- **Economic stability.** National economic conditions may impact investment and community resilience programs.

Establishment of a Chief Director and Five Directorates of the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources. The MFMR has started implementing a Management and Functional Review framework to enhance service delivery, as recommended after a World Bank and NEPAD (New Partnership for Africa's Development) mission in 2012. This framework was updated by the MFMR in 2014 and has been adopted by the Government Civil Service Manpower Structure. This framework will establish a Chief Director of Fisheries and Marine Resources (Chief Director) and five directorates to support service delivery. The Chief Director position will be created after the Fisheries and Aquaculture Act of 2018 and Regulations of 2019 have been reviewed and amended to provide for the role.

The Chief Director who will act as the technical (professional) head of the Ministry, subject to the policy guidance of the Minister, shall be a competent office holder with the requisite experience and expertise. The person shall serve as the principal adviser to the Permanent Secretary and Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources on all matters relating to effective management, conservation, and the development of fisheries and marine resources in Sierra Leone.

The Chief Director will also serve as the Chief Licensing Officer, responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of a quota management licensing system. From time to time, the Chief Director will be responsible for other aspects relating to the functioning of the ministry and implementation of the Act (once revised).

The Chief Director shall be advised by the following five directorates, each led by a Director reporting directly to the Chief Director. These directorates are expected to be established under the Fisheries and Aquaculture Act and its regulations under review:

- The **Directorate of Marine Artisanal Fisheries Management**, the director of which will be responsible for assessing fish stocks and providing scientific advice to the Chief Director on the sustainable use, economic viability, and ecological balance and biodiversity of Sierra Leone's fisheries and marine resources. This role will also execute specific artisanal marine fisheries management functions as defined by the Act under review.
- The **Directorate of Policy, Research, and Statistics**, the director of which will serve as the fisheries policy advisor to the Chief Director and Minister, responsible for: (i) developing strategic policy priorities; (ii) provision of fisheries policy advice, including administration of the scientific fishery observer program in the fisheries water of Sierra Leone; and (iii) overseeing the preparation and submission of policy and legal recommendations relating to conservation and the management of fisheries, marine resources, and aquaculture. These priorities and policy or legal recommendations will be communicated to the Minister via the Chief Director. This Directorate shall undertake specific statistics, research and policy planning functions to be defined by the new Act under review.
- The **Directorate of Monitoring and Compliance**, the director of which will be responsible for: (i) developing and implementing monitoring and compliance measures and systems, including compliance strategies, surveillance planning objectives, and effective monitoring and enforcement of marine and fisheries laws and regulations (such as through participation in the quota management system; (ii) working with the JMC to plan and execute industrial fisheries surveillance patrols, including seaborne/aerial patrols and inspections at sea/harbors to ensure compliance with national and global regulatory frameworks such as the PSMA; (iv) working with the Director of Marine Artisanal Fisheries Management and the Sierra Leone Navy to implement and develop community surveillance of artisanal fisheries, including the proper use of electronic reporting and recording systems such as VMS; (v) working with the Director of Statistics to register all licensed fish receivers (buyers and sellers of fish and shellfish) within the quota management system; (vi) issuing penalty notices to the fishing industry for infractions fishing laws and regulations; (v) publishing statistics relating to fisheries compliance; and (vi) performing other fisheries monitoring and compliance functions, as defined by the Act (under review).

- The **Directorate of Aquaculture and Inland Fisheries**, the director of which shall be responsible for the management, regulation, and control of aquaculture practices, inland fisheries, and crosscutting issues in collaboration with the other directorates and government institutions involved in fisheries and aquaculture oversight. Specifically, this director will also be responsible for: (i) establishing and coordinating regulatory processes and developing the operational policies for aquaculture administration and inland fisheries; (ii) identifying key areas for aquaculture development and working with the Director of Policy, Research, and Statistics and the Director of Monitoring and Compliance to develop an aquaculture and inland fisheries policy framework (including the regulation and surveillance of antimicrobial use in commercial aquaculture to prevent antimicrobial resistance in aquaculture production systems and the regulation and surveillance of antimicrobial use in aquaculture food systems); (iii) developing standards, specifications, and recommend levies for the licensing and authorization of commercial and subsistence aquaculture practices implemented by the private sector (including those implemented by small and medium-sized enterprises); (iv) collaborating with the Director of Marine Artisanal Fisheries Management and the Director of Policy, Research, and Statistics for frame surveys and canoe registration for inland fisheries economic units, catch and effort data collection, and inland fishery stock assessments; and (v) conducting other functions for inland fisheries and aquaculture as defined by the Act (under review).
- The **Directorate of Competent Authority and Fish Quality**, the director of which will shall be responsible for implementing official controls for fish hygiene, quality assurance, and fish safety for human consumption. These controls include: (i) inspecting and monitoring fish-processing plants, fishing vessels, and the training of fish-quality inspectors; (ii) placing scientific fisheries observers in fishing companies and fishing communities to conduct quality assurance on fish caught and hazard analyses at critical control points; (iii) maintaining records relating to fish health export certification and the approval of fisheries infrastructure and processing plants; (iv) monitoring the innovative development in fish processing, the value addition and marketing, and women in fisheries programmes and value chain analysis initiatives; (v) developing environmental monitoring plans for fish pollutants and biochemical contaminants in fishery products (including antimicrobials in capture fisheries and aquaculture products); and (vi) other fish quality assurance functions as defined by the Act and Regulations (under review).



BOX 3

Enhancing artisanal fisheries by developing the role of community management associations in implementing territorial user rights for fisheries

The Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) supported the organization of community management associations (CMAs) to improve fisheries governance and implement four marine protected areas (MPAs). These CMAs are responsible for co-managing the MPAs, with the intention that these MPAs would, with the passing of additional bylaws, evolve into Territorial User Rights for Fisheries (TURF) areas.

A TURF is an area-based fishing rights system that allocates secure and exclusive privileges to a certain group to fish in a specific location. They are mostly used to transition traditional fishers to a regulated access system.

The following conditions need to be met for the TURF system to be successfully implemented:

- The territory/zone for each CMA is understood and complied with by all fisheries stakeholders
- There is an effective licensing system across the TURFs network
- Mechanisms for transfers and new entrants, including migrant fishers, are established
- Enhanced data is collected from artisanal fishers
- There is effective governance and monitoring in the IEZ
- Stakeholder awareness and engagement in CMAs and TURFs are improved, contributing to the effective management of fisheries and MPAs
- Specific committees are implementing TURFs
- CMAs actively run a TURF network in a way that ensures adequate funding to achieve and maintain management objectives.

Source: World Bank, MRAG. 2023. "Situational Analysis for Artisanal Fisheries Enhancement through the Functional Development of CMAs and their Roles in implementing TURFs." (unpublished)

7

ACTION PLAN



Feed Salone Strategy for the Fisheries and Marine Resources Sectors in Sierra Leone Action Plan

Table 5 presents the initial Action Plan structured around the Strategy’s three Objectives and their supporting activities, which aim to achieve specific goals and outcomes and can be tracked by the identified indicators. Table 6 also outlines whether the supporting activities are supported by existing national legislation and provides indicative timeframes and costs for their delivery. A fully costed and timebound Action Plan will be developed and refined during implementation planning to identify funding sources, define roles and responsibilities, and establish accountability for execution.

Table 5. Feed Salone Strategy for the Fisheries and Marine Resources Sectors in Sierra Leone Action Plan³¹

* Indicates national legislation support Priority or first phase activities are highlighted in blue.

Strategic Objective 1 Assess Sierra Leone’s fisheries and aquaculture resources and potential to benefit the nation  Goal - A robust and sustainable system of data collection and analysis has been established to provide decision-makers with evidence of the merits of different management strategies related to capture fisheries and aquaculture production in Sierra Leone. - Sufficient information is available to determine scientifically sound total allowable catches (TACs) and to support the management of a closed artisanal sector.				
ACTIVITY NUMBER	DESCRIPTION <i>Priority/first-phase activities are highlighted in blue.</i>	OUTCOME	INDICATORS	INDICATIVE COST AND TIMELINE
1.1*	- Identify and collate existing data/evidence and document data-collection processes. - Collate datasets (including time series) and assess confidence in datasets (for example, check for consistency of collection method) to inform trends. - Evaluate knowledge gaps in conducting resource assessments. - Identify priority knowledge gaps to inform Activity 1.6.	- Existing data and datasets are known, identified, categorized, and are ready for inclusion in the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources’ (MFMR’s) database (Activity 1.4). - Dataset reliability is known and there is a strong rationale for identifying knowledge gaps in relation to the Strategy’s objectives. - There is a transparency rationale for prioritizing specific knowledge gaps to support Activity 1.6.	- List of datasets and data confidence assessment to support MFMR database - List of knowledge gaps and prioritization assessment.	COST 50,000 USD TIMELINE 8 weeks
1.2	- Assess international learnings on “good enough” stock assessment methodologies (such as catch-only methods, which require less data inputs) to determine the minimum data requirements and processing needs to deliver stock assessments for priority stocks. - Conduct a gap analysis based on Activity 1.1 to inform Activity 1.3.	The design of data collection and analysis processes (Activity 1.4) are informed by a robust evaluation of the minimum essential data required for accurate stock assessments in data-deficient situations to enable rapid and pragmatic progress.	Report with clear data, process, and analytical requirements to deliver stock assessments for priority stocks targeted by industrial and artisanal fisheries.	COST 10,000 USD TIMELINE 4 weeks

ACTIVITY NUMBER	DESCRIPTION <i>Priority/first-phase activities are highlighted in blue.</i>	OUTCOME	INDICATORS	INDICATIVE COST AND TIMELINE
1.3	- Evaluate existing Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) statistical and analytical capabilities. - Identify skills gaps and training needs for a stock assessment program informed by Activity 1.2 and targeted at priority stocks. - Establish a stock assessment program, ensuring that it is adaptive enough to use future data generated by subsequent data collection programs.	- MFMR approves a capacity-appropriate stock assessment program that is pragmatic and feasible for priority stocks and is directly supported by MFMR data collection processes (Activity 1.4) and future data collection programs (Activities 1.6 and 1.7). - MFMR capacity-needs related to data collection, processing, management, and statistical analysis are clearly identified. - Training priorities are identified and clearly addressed by a costed training program that includes a training schedule, implementation partners, and an implementation plan on how MFMR staff will implement and maintain the stock assessment program.	- MFMR stock assessment program is documented, in operation, and linked to data collection programs - MFMR data and statistical training program is finalized and funded.	COST 100,000 USD TIMELINE 32 weeks
1.4	- Define a data collection process that directly supports the stock assessment program as well as any priority social, economic, or ecological information needs identified in Activity 1.2. - Define how data should be stored, managed, quality-assured, and analyzed to support the stock assessment program and address any additional fisheries-management reporting requirements. - Develop a centralized or cloud-based database to standardize and increase the efficiency of data collection and use by fisheries managers, regulators, and scientists. This database should also be accessible to the public. - Integrate current technological advances to automate and increase the consistency of analysis and reporting.	- MFMR has efficient, documented data processes that make clear to internal and external stakeholders the standard and format of data, how data is collected, collated, quality-assured, stored and made available for future analysis. - Data is stored in an accessible, robust database that is future-proofed, makes best use of interoperability, and that supports automated reporting to enable stock assessment and inform fisheries management.	- Documented data processes, from collection through to reporting - Centralized, robust database that contains interoperable datasets, is accessible for stock assessment, and can inform fisheries management.	COST 200,000 USD TIMELINE 32 weeks

Table continues on next page →

31 Some level of overlap between various activities and outcomes can be expected due to the interrelated nature of these activities, and the fact that the same activity might have different but related outcomes.

ACTIVITY NUMBER	DESCRIPTION <i>Priority/first-phase activities are highlighted in blue.</i>	OUTCOME	INDICATORS	INDICATIVE COST AND TIMELINE
1.5	- Evaluate Sierra Leone's aquaculture potential based on an assessment of: (i) biogeographical suitability, current capacity, and future training needs; (ii) its existing legislative, institutional, and investment environments, (iii) infrastructure requirements; and (iv) alignment with national objectives, including improved food and nutrition security outcomes. - Conduct a gap analysis relative to the Feed Salone strategy and aquaculture scenarios, including subsistence production (based on nutritional value), supplementary aquaculture production, and commercial production for domestic and export markets.	Decision-makers and investors have access to a credible assessment of aquaculture potential to support food security, nutrition, and commercial development, informed by an evaluation of infrastructure requirements and the different policy and implementation environments.	1. Aquaculture evaluation report	COST 100,000 USD TIMELINE 32 weeks
1.7*	Establish regular, reliable data collection from the artisanal sector that is linked to MFMR data processes (Activity 1.4) and is compatible with the MFMR's stock assessment program (Activity 1.3).	- In alignment with Activities 1.3 and 1.4, reliable data on artisanal fishing effort and catches is regularly collected to inform fisheries management and the MFMR's stock assessment program. - Statistical methods to deliver robust insights from a representative sample of artisanal vessels/sites are defined and documented as per Activity 1.4.	1. Percent of landing sites submitting regular data 2. Percent of priority stocks with supporting data.	COST 400,000 USD TIMELINE Ongoing
1.8*	Establish regular, reliable data collection from the industrial fishing sector that is (i) based on the strengthened reporting requirements from Activity 2.1; (ii) linked to MFMR data processes (Activity 1.4); and (iii) compatible with the MFMR's stock assessment program (Activity 1.3).	- In alignment with Activities 1.3 and 1.4, reliable data on industrial fishing effort and catches is regularly collected to inform fisheries management and the MFMR's stock assessment program. - Industrial vessel operators are consistently submitting effort and catch data in adherence with regulations and license conditions, as per Activities 2.1 and 2.2.	1. Percent of industrial vessels submitting regular data 2. Percent of priority stocks with supporting data.	COST 200,000 USD TIMELINE Ongoing

ACTIVITY NUMBER	DESCRIPTION <i>Priority/first-phase activities are highlighted in blue.</i>	OUTCOME	INDICATORS	INDICATIVE COST AND TIMELINE
1.9	- Build the capacity of community management associations (CMAs)—critical organizations capable of progressing inshore fisheries management—to support monitoring, control and enforcement of relevant laws and regulations governing fishing activities within zones and protected areas. This activity should be informed by Activity 2.3. - Integrate CMAs into the national monitoring, control, and surveillance (MCS) system to benefit from CMA participation in monitoring and surveillance. - Determine what MCS training CMAs need to ensure that the evidence they submit has legal weight and can be used by the MFMR to enforce fisheries regulations.	Fisheries are more effectively managed, as priority knowledge gaps are addressed and MCS information is integrated into policy and implementation.	1. Percent of priority knowledge gaps filled 2. Number of new datasets added to the MFMR database.	COST 200,000 USD TIMELINE 72 weeks
1.10*	- Determine total allowable catches (TACs) for priority stocks of marine resources based on the stock assessment program (Activity 1.3). - Assess current exploitation of priority stocks—both overall and by various sectors—compared to their TACs.	- TAC calculations are available for priority stocks. - Exploitation trends of priority stocks by sector are known.	1. Percent of priority stocks with calculated TACs 2. Percent of priority stocks with known exploitation rates	COST 200,000–500,000 USD TIMELINE 48 weeks
1.11*	Identify underexploited and nutritionally rich stocks and develop fisheries management plans for them (based on the precautionary principle and the ecosystem-based approach to fisheries management).	Underexploited and nutritionally rich resources are identified, and sustainable exploitation is enabled by robust fisheries management plans.	1. Number of underexploited and nutritionally rich stocks identified 2. Number of fisheries management plans for underexploited and nutritionally rich stocks.	COST 200,000 USD TIMELINE 48 weeks
1.12*	Identify sectors' capacity limits relative to TACs and develop a just transition strategy to transfer excess effort out of capture fisheries.	Sustainable fishing of priority stocks is clearly defined, and excess or shortfalls in sectors' capacity to reach the TACs is known. Where there is excess capacity, a clear strategy is co-developed to bring capacity limits in line with TACs.	1. Percent of fished stocks with identified capacity limits per sector 2. Just transition strategy.	COST 150,000 USD TIMELINE 48 weeks
1.13	Develop a monitoring, evaluation and learning framework to support implementation of this Strategy that uses an adaptive delivery approach. Such a framework will also contribute to the planned mid-term review.	- Progress against the Strategy's objectives is clearly defined, measured, and reported. - Learning is integrated into the Strategy's implementation, which enables an adaptive delivery approach that responds to new information and circumstances.	1. MEL framework 2. Percent evaluation questions addressed in datasets 3. Mid-term review report 4. Evidence of adaptive delivery approach through applied learning.	COST 50,000 USD TIMELINE 16 weeks
Total: US\$1,960,000 to US\$2,260,000				

Table continues on next page →

Strategic Objective 2 Manage and enforce Sierra Leone's fisheries and aquaculture sectors to ensure social, economic, and environmental sustainability and to prioritize national interests and benefits 				
Goal - Sierra Leone's fisheries and marine aquaculture sectors have increased climate resilience through climate smart fisheries management and are managed in alignment with international best practice. - Social, economic, and environmental benefits can be reasonably expected to be sustained into the future. - Sierra Leone is a regional leader in MCS and is recognized for its application of the FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA). - Investors have confidence that the fisheries and marine aquaculture sectors are supported by a robust management system.				
ACTIVITY NUMBER	DESCRIPTION <i>Priority/first-phase activities are highlighted in blue.</i>	OUTCOME	INDICATORS	INDICATIVE COST AND TIMELINE
2.1*	- Enforce industrial fishing vessels' adherence to reporting requirements for the fisheries database (Activity 1.4) as a proviso for industrial vessel licenses. - Review reporting requirements, and strengthen them where necessary, to address data gaps identified in Activities 1.1 and 1.6.	Industrial vessels consistently submit catch and effort data that is interoperable with the MFMR database and that informs stock assessments and fisheries management processes.	1. Percent industrial vessels consistently submitting data returns.	COST 30,000 USD TIMELINE Ongoing
2.2	Establish a regular MFMR data collection presence at landing sites in Freetown to verify reported catches and collect catch data from the industrial fleet.	Industrial vessels' data returns are verified and validated, assuring the reliability of the MFMR's data on industrial fishing effort and catches.	1. Percent of industrial vessels' data returns verified by MFMR.	COST 30,000 USD TIMELINE Ongoing
2.3	- Review the capacity of CMAs to collect data and participate in fisheries management. - Identify and document the training and structural management changes needed to strengthen CMAs' participation and data collection capacity.	- The participation capacity of CMAs is measured - CMAs' training needs are documented.	1. Percent of CMAs with participation capacity score 2. CMA training needs documented.	COST 50,000 USD TIMELINE 16 weeks
2.4*	Develop the capacity of CMAs to collect small-scale fisheries data, participate in fisheries management, and adopt low-impact fishing methods.	CMAs are willing and able to collect data, participate in fisheries management, and provide outreach services within their communities to increase the uptake of low-impact fishing methods.	1. Percent CMAs regularly participating in fisheries management with MFMR 2. Percent CMAs collecting and contributing data to MFMR 3. Percent uptake of low-impact fishing methods.	COST 500,000 USD TIMELINE 96 weeks

ACTIVITY NUMBER	DESCRIPTION <i>Priority/first-phase activities are highlighted in blue.</i>	OUTCOME	INDICATORS	INDICATIVE COST AND TIMELINE
2.5	- Work alongside CMAs to transition artisanal fisheries from an open-access sector to a limited-access sector by implementing existing registration regulations and by closing the fishery to new entrants. This work should be guided by the just transition strategy (Activity 1.12). - Clarify, implement, and communicate (via an outreach program) a licensing system for artisanal vessels that sets out the license conditions for the fleet, the rights of artisanal fishers, regulatory requirements to support compliance, and fines for infractions. - Incentivize the removal of effort from the artisanal fishery sector through an exit strategy and incentivize the modernization of the fleet. This transition should recognize the rights and benefits of small-scale fisheries and associated value chains and could include establishing territorial use rights to fisheries (TURFs) and providing incentives such as preferential access for best-practice operators.	- Artisanal fisheries are closed fisheries with good compliance and self-enforcement of regulations. - Licensed fishers' rights to fish within the inshore exclusive zone (IEZ) are established and recognized. - Excess capacity is strategically removed from the fishery.	1. Percent of artisanal vessels registered and licensed 2. Number of artisanal vessels operating in Sierra Leone's marine waters.	COST 500,000 USD TIMELINE 96 weeks
2.6	- Implement an innovation program to support the artisanal fleet's transition towards a more modern inshore fleet with established cost-recovery mechanisms. This activity should be informed and guided by the assessment of sector capacity limits in Activity 1.12 and the transition plan to reduce overall fishing effort of Activity 2.5. - Drive innovations to increase gains (including nutritional value) from existing catches by optimizing resource use (efficiency savings) or increasing value (for example, by undertaking value-adding post-harvest processing or by accessing novel markets). - Prevent capacity increases beyond sustainable levels by effectively implementing fisheries management measures.	- Profitability of licensed artisanal fisheries and associated value chains is increased by good management practices that take a longer-term view of the resource, are compliant with regulations; and sustain good working relationships with the MFMR. - A grant program is made available to support uptake of applied research (specifically in innovations, processes, and technologies) that enhances sector performance and food security and nutrition outcomes and, in turn, enables capacity building for knowledge transfer, extension services, and uptake of innovations.	1. Innovation program progress 2. Innovation grant uptake 3. Number of innovations for fisheries and value chains (including the number of fiberglass/improved artisanal vessels that are registered/licensed) 4. Percent value chains with increased profitability 5. Percent uptake of extension services.	COST 5,000,000–10,000,000 USD TIMELINE 240 weeks
2.7	Review Sierra Leone's ships registry to identify and revoke registrations of internationally blacklisted vessels.	Sierra Leone has demonstrated and articulated its application of PSMA, as well as its intention to be a regional leader in countering illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing.	1. # of blacklisted vessels on Sierra Leone's ships registry over time	COST 20,000 USD TIMELINE 8 weeks

Table continues on next page →

ACTIVITY NUMBER	DESCRIPTION <i>Priority/first-phase activities are highlighted in blue.</i>	OUTCOME	INDICATORS	INDICATIVE COST AND TIMELINE
2.8*	Review, refine, and enforce requirements for vessel monitoring systems (VMS) and automatic identification systems (AIS) for all industrial and semi-industrial vessels operating in Sierra Leone marine waters and Sierra Leone-flagged vessels operating outside national waters while working alongside and strengthening the Joint Maritime Committee (JMC).	- VMS and AIS requirements are up-to-date and collaboratively enforced by the JMC and MFMR. - Vessel operators are aware of the updated VMS and AIS requirements.	1. Percent industrial and semi-industrial vessels complying with VMS/AIS requirements.	COST 100,000 USD TIMELINE 24 weeks
2.9*	- Strengthen CMAs' capacity to support monitoring, control, and enforcement of relevant laws and regulations governing fishing activities within zones and protected areas. - Integrate CMAs into the national MCS system to benefit from CMA participation in monitoring and surveillance. - Determine what MCS training the CMAs need to ensure that the evidence they submit has legal weight and can be used by the MFMR to enforce fisheries regulations.	- CMAs are formally recognized and capacitated to support the national MCS system. - Evidence of infractions submitted by CMAs is admissible to support enforcement.	1. Percent CMAs trained in MCS and delivering evidence that can be used by MFMR 2. # infractions in IEZ.	COST 200,000–400,000 USD TIMELINE 96 weeks
2.10	Support collaboration between the MFMR and CMAs to enforce spatial and temporal closures within the inshore zone to enable stock recovery and protect habitats. This support will require coastal community outreach and will build on the work done in Activity 2.9.	- High compliance with regulations on spatial and temporal closures within inshore fishing zones. - Vulnerable stocks and habitats are protected and able to recover.	1. Number of infractions within closed areas or periods 2. Percent vulnerable stocks or habitats protected.	COST 200,000–400,000 USD TIMELINE 144 weeks
2.11*	- Review and reinforce the potential and efficiency of the judicial system to address fisheries infractions, including a review of the processes surrounding fines, the confiscation of catches, and the suspension or removal of fishing licenses. - Amend regulations and legislation where necessary and inform fisheries operators in all sectors of these changes.	- MFMR and supporting judicial processes are fair and efficient at enforcing fisheries regulations. - Compliance with fisheries regulations is high.	1. Review of MCS and enforcement with clear, actionable recommendations to improve 2. Number of actionable recommendations implemented 3. Outreach and information campaign on amended regulations and legislation.	COST 200,000 USD TIMELINE 48 weeks
2.12	Implement actions in the National Fisheries Inspection Plan and monitor effectiveness.	- Reduction in fisheries infractions. - Increased revenue for government.	1. Number of fishing vessels committing fisheries infraction 2. Increase in annual revenue generated by the government.	COST TBD TIMELINE TBD

ACTIVITY NUMBER	DESCRIPTION <i>Priority/first-phase activities are highlighted in blue.</i>	OUTCOME	INDICATORS	INDICATIVE COST AND TIMELINE
2.13	Develop marine spatial plans that include fishing zones and marine aquaculture development areas in line with Sierra Leone's Blue Economy Strategic Framework and National Action Plan and the MTNDP.	Fisheries and marine aquaculture sectors are clearly incorporated into the national Blue Economy Strategy and Action Plan by including spatial characteristics and recognizing fishers' rights.	1. Review of the incorporation of fisheries and marine aquaculture sectors in Sierra Leone's Blue Economy Strategy 2. Fisheries and marine aquaculture spatial characteristics incorporated into the national Blue Economy Strategy and marine spatial planning 3. The Blue Economy Strategy and marine spatial planning reflect future ambitions for fisheries and marine aquaculture sectors.	COST 50,000 USD TIMELINE 24 weeks
Total: US\$6,880,000 to US\$12,280,000				

Strategic Objective 3

Unlock the value of Sierra Leone's fisheries and marine aquaculture sectors



Goal

- By effectively implementing sound policies that are backed by science, state revenue from the fisheries and marine aquaculture sectors has increased and can be reasonably expected to be sustained into the future.
- The nation attracts responsible investment and is a regional leader in enabling innovation in both sectors and their associated value chains.
- Resilient fisheries and marine aquaculture sectors are reliably able to provide jobs, livelihoods, and food security.

ACTIVITY NUMBER	DESCRIPTION <i>Priority/first-phase activities are highlighted in blue.</i>	OUTCOME	INDICATORS	INDICATIVE COST AND TIMELINE
3.1	Review and revise the licensing system for industrial and semi-industrial fisheries to generate increased state revenues. This includes assessing options for legislative or regulatory changes (e.g. adopting a catch-based fee system or an auctioning quota system).	Revenues from industrial and semi-industrial fisheries fairly and accurately reflect the value of the marine resources being caught and landed.	1. Review of licensing system including clear actionable recommendations for reform 2. Number of actionable recommendations implemented 3. State revenue from licensing.	COST 200,000 USD TIMELINE 96 weeks
3.2	Work with fisheries stakeholders to identify the critical infrastructure needed to unlock the potential of the fisheries and aquaculture sectors. For the aquaculture sector, build on findings from Activity 1.5.	MFMR and investors have a clear understanding of the critical infrastructure developments to deliver fisheries and marine resources development strategies.	1. Report on required infrastructure developments to inform Activities 3.11 and 3.12 .	COST 100,000 USD TIMELINE 48 weeks
3.3	Evaluate where surplus stock resources exist that could support third-party access agreements to boost national revenues while adhering to recognized sustainability standards.	MFMR has a clear cost-benefit analysis of renting access to surplus stock resources to responsible external fishing fleets.	1. Cost-benefit analysis.	COST 30,000 USD TIMELINE 24 weeks

Table continues on next page →

ACTIVITY NUMBER	DESCRIPTION <i>Priority/first-phase activities are highlighted in blue.</i>	OUTCOME	INDICATORS	INDICATIVE COST AND TIMELINE
3.4	- Assess the feasibility of a fisheries development levy or fund to increase capital for MCS and fisheries innovation activities. This assessment should be conducted in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance and should build on license fee reforms from Activity 3.1. - Implement this fisheries development fund using principles of transparency and good governance.	MFMR has access to a fund for critical fisheries development and management projects, financed by revenues generated by the fishing sectors.	- Fisheries development fund - Fund governance and transparency rules - Disbursements to priority projects.	COST 60,000 USD TIMELINE Ongoing
3.5	Drive improvements in smoking ovens and methods. In direct collaboration with processors, especially women processors, design and provide capacity building for, and access to, microfinancing to support the uptake of improved methods.	Smoking ovens and methods are improved, benefiting human health and the environment.	- Percent improved smoking ovens versus old ovens - Capacity-building program - Uptake of micro-financing.	COST 1,000,000 USD TIMELINE 144 weeks
3.6	- In direct collaboration with potential beneficiaries, design and deliver activities to increase the quality and nutritional value of catches. This could include providing artisanal and industrial sectors with training on post-harvest handling and hygiene, as well as practices that preserve key nutrients. - Assess the potential for value chain development (for example, to supply domestic hotels and restaurants) based on higher-quality products. - Provide best-practice producers with training and support to achieve and maintain higher quality standards and support their access to higher-margin markets.	Artisanal and industrial fisheries' quality of catch is improved and can secure higher returns in domestic and export markets.	- Percent fishers (artisanal and industrial) receiving post-harvest training - Value chain development study - Number of best-practice producers accessing higher margin markets - Change in value per unit catch.	COST 5,000,000 USD TIMELINE 240 weeks
3.7	Develop landing site facilities, including appropriate cold chain technologies, and engage communities to maintain these facilities. This activity should be informed by Activity 3.2.	Landing sites have improved post-harvest facilities supported by communities that are capable and engaged to maintain them.	- Number of landing sites with improved post-harvest facilities - Number of landing sites with community capacity to maintain facilities.	COST 5,000,000 USD TIMELINE 240 weeks
3.8	Develop a national marine aquaculture development program to create and maintain jobs and livelihoods and to support the Feed Salone strategy by promoting nutrition-sensitive aquaculture management and aquaculture production in areas with high vulnerability to food insecurity. This activity should be informed by Activity 1.5 and aligned with Activity 2.13.	Marine aquaculture development in Sierra Leone is supported by a clear program that is linked to the need to increase food security and nutrition, jobs, and to transfer excess capacity out of capture fisheries.	A national marine aquaculture development program.	COST 200,000 USD TIMELINE 96 weeks

ACTIVITY NUMBER	DESCRIPTION <i>Priority/first-phase activities are highlighted in blue.</i>	OUTCOME	INDICATORS	INDICATIVE COST AND TIMELINE
3.9	Build SME capacity, with a focus on women and youth, by providing training and enhancing access to microfinance supported by the innovation program (initiated in Activity 2.6) and public-private initiatives. This activity should be informed by Activity 2.3 and aligned with Activity 2.6.	- SME capacity is increased. - SME actors can access finance to support innovation uptake and development. - Women and youth are at the forefront of innovations in the targeted sectors.	- Percent SMEs provided with training - Percent SMEs accessing microfinance - Percent women accessing finance to implement innovations - Percent youth accessing finance to implement innovations.	COST 300,000–450,000 USD TIMELINE N/A
3.10	Design and finance an infrastructure development program tied to national priorities for the fisheries sector. This activity should build on Activity 3.2 and align with Activity 3.7.	National fisheries development is supported by financed infrastructure development that responds to identified needs and priorities developed in collaboration with fisheries sectors and investors.	- Infrastructure development program - Number of development sites	COST 5,000,000 USD TIMELINE 240 weeks
3.11	Design and finance an infrastructure development program linked to national priorities for the aquaculture sector. This activity should build on Activity 1.5 and Activity 3.8.	The marine aquaculture sector and investors collaborate to develop the national marine aquaculture sector and its associated financed infrastructure in a way that responds to identified needs and priorities.	- Infrastructure development program - Number of development sites.	COST 2,000,000 USD TIMELINE 240 weeks
3.12	Evaluate the feasibility and benefits of introducing community fishing quotas to support artisanal fishing communities. This activity should be informed by Activity 1.10 and Activity 1.12.	MFMR informed by a robust cost-benefit analysis of implementing community fishing quotas in artisanal fisheries.	Cost-benefit analysis	COST 50,000 USD TIMELINE 24 weeks
3.13	Develop a roadmap for an individual transferable quota (ITQ) system supported by an analysis of the institutional and legal implications of implementation.	MFMR has a clear roadmap that sets out the steps and implications of introducing an ITQ system for Sierra Leone's fisheries.	ITQ roadmap	COST 50,000 USD TIMELINE 24 weeks
3.14	Conduct feasibility and cost-benefit assessments of implementing traceability and quality improvements in Sierra Leone with the intention of gaining entry to higher-value export markets.	Investment decisions are informed by a robust cost-benefit analysis of implementing improvements to diversify accessible markets.	Cost-benefit analysis	COST 50,000 USD TIMELINE 24 weeks
Total: US\$19,040,000 to US\$19,190,000				
Overall total: US\$27,880,000 to US\$33,730,000				



COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH

Effective communications and outreach are critical to foster engagement and feedback and to encourage stakeholders to participate in the Strategy's implementation. Prioritizing these two aspects will ensure that all relevant actors (fishers, policymakers, private sector stakeholders, civil society, and local communities) understand the role they play in advancing the Strategy's Vision and in contributing to refining and implementing its actions.

As an initial step to foster engagement with the Strategy, the draft document went through a consultative process across five coastal fishing communities—Goderich and Tombo in the Western Area, and Shenge, Gbondapi, and Konakridee in the Moyamba, Pujehun, and Port Loko districts. The consultations culminated in a validation workshop with key stakeholders from relevant ministries and agencies in Freetown.

This six-day consultation aimed to inform the Strategy and gather stakeholder perspectives on the Strategic Objectives and proposed roadmap. In Freetown, participants included officials from MFMR, the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, the Office of National Security, as well as representatives from NGOs active in the sector, fisheries experts, heads of key fisheries institutions such as IMBO, and financing partners including the World Bank and the Government of Iceland.

In the coastal communities, local consultations were led by MFMR fisheries officers, harbor masters, and heads of CMAs. Participants included fisherfolk, women's and youth leaders, traders, community leaders, and representatives from local NGOs.

Community-level engagements solicited feedback on the following key thematic areas:

- Open access fisheries versus restricted access fisheries
- Sustainable and reliable fisheries data collection in the artisanal and industrial fisheries
- TAC and quota allocation in the artisanal and industrial fisheries
- Fisheries co-management and the role of the fishers/CMAs
- Sequencing proposed strategic activities and alternative livelihood options/opportunities.

OUTCOMES OF THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

The consultations echoed many of the challenges identified in the draft Strategy, including destructive fishing practices linked to open access; conflicts between fisheries subsectors over fishing grounds (highlighting the need for TURFs); significant post-harvest losses and inadequate fish-processing infrastructure; lack of accurate data on fish stocks; declining fish populations; environmental degradation from climate change, mining, and deforestation; political interference in enforcing fisheries laws; overfishing and unsustainable practices; limited investment in aquaculture; and restricted access to finance, credit, and modern technology, which hampers the economic potential of fisherfolk.

Overall, there was overwhelming support for the Strategy, with stakeholders broadly aligned on its key directions and priorities. Fishing communities expressed a strong preference for **moving from an open-access regime to a more restricted access model**, recognizing that the latter offers a pathway to maximizing long-term benefits for the sector. Many attributed the prevalence of destructive and illegal fishing practices to limited awareness of fishing rules, appropriate gear, and methods.

On the role of CMAs, **participants agreed with the Strategy's emphasis on co-management** but highlighted the urgent need to strengthen capacities of CMAs through improved access to financing and a renewed mandate for their leadership. Fishers and harbormasters also showed strong interest in contributing to data collection, emphasizing their potential to lead catch data recording and submission efforts—provided they are trained, equipped, and incentivized with wages and gear.

Communities expressed openness to the **introduction of a TAC system and quota-based licensing**, particularly if it helps regulate the sector more effectively. However, they emphasized that fishers engaging in harmful or illegal practices should be excluded from quota allocations.

A representative from the Industrial Fishing Companies' Association noted that they had already been briefed on the government's intention to introduce such a system and are awaiting further guidance.

Finally, participants shared views on **the sequencing of strategic actions**, recommending a phased approach that begins with a nationwide documentation of fishers, boats, and methods, followed by improved catch data and stock assessments; introduction of restricted fisheries; efforts to reduce post-harvest losses; and a gradual rollout of the quota system, starting with the industrial sector and expanding to artisanal fisheries. They also stressed the importance of supporting alternative livelihoods to ease the transition and reduce pressure on fisheries resources.

Key recommendations from stakeholders include the following:

- Strengthen the enforcement of fisheries bylaws and regulations, and improve MCS of fishing activities
- Support the sustainable management of declared MPAs by enabling CMAs to enforce sustainable fishing practices through community-led initiatives and TURFs
- Promote aquaculture through targeted policies and investments aimed at job creation
- Provide technical training and promote research to strengthen the aquaculture sector
- Invest in fish-processing and -storage facilities to reduce post-harvest losses and improve value addition
- Develop climate change adaptation strategies for the fisheries and aquaculture sector.

Much of the feedback from the consultations has been incorporated into the Strategy, helping to refine its priorities, sequencing, and implementation approach. The recommendations provided by stakeholders are reflected across the Strategic Objectives and proposed actions.

As a next step, a detailed communications and outreach plan, along with supporting actions, will be developed during implementation planning. It will be designed with the following objectives and stakeholders in mind:

FOSTERING ENGAGEMENT AND FEEDBACK

The communications and outreach plan would benefit from including sustained engagement mechanisms to ensure that stakeholders have a shared understanding of the Strategy's goals and benefits and that they can contribute to shaping its implementation by providing feedback on emerging challenges and opportunities. Key engagement mechanisms include:

- Continued multistakeholder workshops and consultative meetings
- Participating in international forums
- Community-awareness campaigns
- Establishing advisory committees
- Stakeholder surveys/focus groups
- Dedicated feedback platforms
- Regular site and field visits

ENCOURAGING STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION

The Strategy's success requires active participation from stakeholders to ensure buy-in from all key actors and strengthen accountability. Efforts to encourage stakeholder participation include:

- Capacity-building and training initiatives
- Transparent monitoring and reporting (such as public reports and community consultations)
- Knowledge-exchange facilitation and establishing centers of excellence
- Business and investment forums
- Women- and youth-inclusion initiatives
- Community-driven monitoring programs.

SIERRA LEONE AQUACULTURE AND FISHERIES SECTORS' STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholder groups and sub-groups of these two sectors include:

Government agencies

- MFMR
- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Planning and Economic Development
- Ministry of Environment and Climate Change
- Sierra Leone Maritime Administration
- Environmental Protection Agency of Sierra Leone
- National Protected Area Authority
- Local government councils
- Marine Police and Navy of the Sierra Leone Armed Forces
- Universities and research institutions.

Local communities and fisherfolk

- Artisanal fishers
- Fishermen's unions and consortiums of the unions, including the Sierra Leone Artisanal Fishermen's Union, the Sierra Leone Amalgamated Artisanal Fishermen's Union, and various women in fisheries groups
- CMAs
- Local authorities in fishing villages, such as headmen and chiefs.

Private sector and commercial enterprises

- Industrial Fishing Companies Association
- Fish processing companies
- Aquaculture firms.

International organizations and development partners

- FAO
- World Bank Group
- UNDP
- IUCN, WWF, and Wetlands International.

Regional fisheries bodies

- Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea
- Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission
- ECOWAS
- African Union Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources
- International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas
- Convention for Cooperation in the Protection and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the West and Central African Region (Abidjan Convention).



