

Abstract

Impacts of changes in the Lake Victoria fishery on food security (FS) are analysed, focusing on the role that fish and the fish industry play in FS for local communities and national food policy goals. Food has become less available especially to local, non-fishing communities. Local communities have limited and declining access to fish, due to: the export of Nile perch; usage of fishing gear for industrial purposes rather than direct human consumption; and, dwindling fish catch. Factors that reduce the purchasing power of households include: declining household incomes from fishery and non-fishery sources; loss of employment in fish harvesting, artisanal trading and processing sectors; unemployment in non-fishery sectors; fishery management problems; entrenched poverty and lack of alternative income sources; and socio-cultural constraints to consumption of fish and other foods. The increasing industrial and domestic demand for fish has resulted in unsustainable fishing and fears of long-term food insecurity. Recommendations include: measures to lessen potential impacts of fishery development on the FS of vulnerable, local communities; options for non-conflicting fishery policy objectives; control on the expansion of industrial fish processing and exports; proper fishery management, including better surveillance; enforcement of the existing regulations; and, allocation of property rights to communities.