
Non-Tariff Measures in Fish Trade

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In most circumstances apply to both foreign and domestic products

UNCTAD NTMs Classification (2012)

Imports		
Technical Measures	A	SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES
	B	TECHNICAL BARRIERS TO TRADE
	C	PRE-SHIPMENT INSPECTION AND OTHER FORMALITIES
Non-Technical Measures	D	CONTINGENT TRADE-PROTECTIVE MEASURES
	E	NON-AUTOMATIC LICENSING, QUOTAS, PROHIBITIONS AND QUANTITY-CONTROL MEASURES OTHER THAN FOR SPS OR TBT REASONS
	F	PRICE-CONTROL MEASURES, INCLUDING ADDITIONAL TAXES AND CHARGES
	G	FINANCE MEASURES
	H	MEASURES AFFECTING COMPETITION
	I	TRADE-RELATED INVESTMENT MEASURES
	J	DISTRIBUTION RESTRICTIONS
	K	RESTRICTIONS ON POST-SALES SERVICES
	L	SUBSIDIES (EXCLUDING EXPORT SUBSIDIES UNDER P7)
	M	GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT RESTRICTIONS
	N	INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
O	RULES OF ORIGIN	
Exports		
	P	EXPORT-RELATED MEASURES

NB: Procedural obstacles are not NTMs per se but affect compliance with these measures

Non Tariff Measures in the Fish Sector

- Products of the fish sector are mostly affected by technical regulations and in particular SPS measures
- Products of the fish sector are relatively more affected by NTMs and more intensively than products belonging to non-fish sectors: on average countries applied twice as many NTMs on fish products than on non-fish products
- No product (or type of product) of the fish sector appears to be more affected by NTMs (in particular Technical Regulations) than any other



Reporter-product (only fish products) pairs affected by an NTM, by NTMs type

fish products

NTMs Chapter	Number of Import Relationships	Share in Total	Share in Affected
A	5826	92.92	95.56
B	5112	81.53	83.84
C	2558	40.80	41.96
D	21	0.33	0.34
E	835	13.32	13.70
F	3129	49.90	51.32
G	746	11.90	12.24
H	122	1.95	2.00
None	173	2.76	

non-fish products

NTMs Chapter	Number of Import Relationships	Share in Total	Share in Affected
A	53621	24.63	33.06
B	112559	51.70	69.39
C	51751	23.77	31.90
D	2395	1.10	1.48
E	37137	17.06	22.89
F	92069	42.29	56.76
G	28668	13.17	17.67
H	5995	2.75	3.70
None	55519	25.50	

- Measures that affect more than 50% of all import relationships in the fish sector:

- A140: special authorization requirement for SPS reasons

- A820: testing requirement
- A830: certification requirement
- A840: inspection requirement

- A310: labelling requirements

- B310 : labelling requirements



NTMs impact firms: size is crucial

- Existing empirical evidence indicates that, in general, technical measures newly imposed by some partner country affect differently exporting firms of different size
- More precisely, larger firms are likely to benefit from the implementation of technical measures abroad while smaller are likely to lose
- Exports of smaller firms decrease and their exit rate increase and as a consequence their market share shrinks
- Moreover, it becomes even more difficult for non-exporters to enter these foreign markets
- The Fish sector is no exception



- Considering that about 90% of those employed in capture fisheries value chains are engaged in the small-scale sector (despite the fact the small-scale sector captures less than 35 per cent of global catch) an intensification of the implementation of SPS measures and TBTs on both international and domestic markets may have dramatic effects
- Small and artisanal fishers may see their export opportunities vanish and chances to reach target 14.b of SDG 14 could thus be jeopardized
- Moreover if more stringent SPS and TBTs are also implemented domestically their access to local markets could be severely compromised



- As a consequence, production in the small-scale sector would either shrink or turn unregistered possibly contrasting efforts towards meeting target 14.4 of SDG 14 : in both cases employment conditions would become even more precarious that they already are with earnings eventually falling
- This may activate a vicious circle leading to an increase in poverty incidence, nutritional deficiency and other related disruptions especially in LDCs and SIDS where the great majority of the labor force working for the fish sector lives
- In other words, technical regulations are crucial not only in framing market access conditions both internationally and domestically for the small-scale fish sector but also in determining the efficiency of policy actions directed towards other SDGs



Implications

- It is then fundamental to identify policies specifically dedicated to the small-scale sector:
 - access to crucial information concerning export requirements for specific products should be facilitated by all means
 - In addition to technical assistance and capacity building programs, private sector based initiatives could promote the participation of small and medium enterprises in export markets
 - support to artisanal fisheries will be most effective with enhanced coordinating and collaboration among all relevant international and regional organizations

Main References

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