THE SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES LIVELIHOODS PROGRAMME (SFLP), A WAY FORWARD TO FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT IN LIBERIA
1.0 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND
The Fisheries of Liberia have come a long way. Fishing is an art that is as old as the existence of man himself. When man began to search food, hunting was one of the means of fining food. Fishing which is a part of hunting became major activity for existence.

Certainly Liberia is a part of the global world endured with numerous water bodies including lakes, rivers, lagoons and other smaller water bodies. In fact, more than half of the country is covered with water including marshes and swamps. Liberia also borders the Atlantic Ocean on its South.

The major fisheries resource-base over the years has been predominantly marine (ocean fishing activities) in nature with the Artisanal and Industrial components as active operators. The marine fisheries itself covers a coastline of about 550 kilometers or 74,000 sq. miles with an irregular continental shelf (narrow at some point and wilder at another) averaging 34 km in width, which affords an area of about 20,000 km of fishing ground suitable for artisanal fisheries. The fisheries also have a territorial jurisdiction of about 200 nautical miles of Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and shares common stocks with fisheries of the neighboring countries (La Cote d’Ivoire and the Republic of Sierra Leone).

The first recorded attempt at mechanized fishing in Liberia was in 1848, during his second term of office, when president Joseph Jenkins Roberts converted his yatch into a fishing boat\(^1\). Prior to this innovative undertaking, there were artisanal native fishermen along the Liberia coast using canoes and Weirs (stakes or fences erected in the swamps and inland waters) to capture fish. Between 1938 – 39, some German traders of the woerman company brought the first trawler. They were active between Monrovia, Cape Mount and Bassa coasts landing quite large quantities of fish daily. However, due to limited refrigerating facilities available at the time, the trawler had to make daily landings for disposal of its catch. No record of the catch was kept. The fact is that fishing was one of the activities despised by average Liberian. But as it is known, Leaders are good promoters of any given situation. So was the case of fishing in Liberia, which gained permanence as a result of the experiment by President Roberts.

Considering the potentials of the fish resources, the prospects and benefits for the country resulting from the 1840s within the fisheries sector, in 1952 the government of Liberia requested from the FAO and the USA government assistance to enable her develops her fisheries. In response to this request, FAO sent out two experts, a fishery engineer and a fishery technologist. From the USA came a Marine Biologist and fresh water specialist. After six months of investigation and conducting exploratory fishing along the Liberian coast in a 22-
foot Danish built boat, it was reliably established that a medium thriving fishing industry could be established in Liberia. Seemingly, the fresh water culture specialist decided to set up experimental fishponds in the hinterland around Suakoko, Bong County, which produced substantial quantities of edible fresh water fish.

As a result of these interventions, and other global concerns, the need to develop, regulate and regularize all fishing activities could not be overlooked. Hence, in 1956, the National Legislature enacted the establishment of a bureau responsible for the development and management of all fisheries resources within the territorial jurisdiction of the Republic of Liberia.

1.1 THE ESTABLISHED BUREAU OF FISHERIES (BF)

In 1956, the National Legislature enacted the establishment of the Bureau of Fisheries (BF) with mandates to develop and manage all fisheries resources within the territorial jurisdiction of the Republic of Liberia. It further charged the Bureau of Fisheries with the responsibility of ensuring the achievement of the following Policy Goals/Objectives:

1.1.1 To ensure (by enforcement of established rules and Regulations governing the fisheries), the conservation of the Nation’s cheapest and most natural animal protein resources, sea-foods as well as their recreational and economic values to the nation;

1.1.2 To promote maximum exploitation of marine-life that may be compatible with their perpetuity;

1.1.3 To make breeding grounds surveys and study (fish) periodic migration habits and other biological activities including the reaction to various methods of fishing, existing temperatures, salinity, marine traffic and for artificial and natural disturbances;

1.1.4 To do studies of the effects of obstructing dams, (if and when there are pollution and improper divisions of water from streams as well as devising means to control or off-set such adverse factors;

1.1.5 To provide for the regulation and control of injurious species of marine predator;

1.1.6 To provide assistance to and co-operate with national and or private agencies and organizations in the development, protection, rearing, and stocking of all species of aquatic life whenever needed;
1.1.7 To formulate and enforce fisheries rules and regulations so as to maintain a sustained yield of fish stocks of economic values and importance; and

1.1.8 To transfer or organize the small-scale (artisanal) fishers into fishing or fisher-folks cooperatives and have them exposed to the utilization of modern fishing vessels (crafts), gears and fishing techniques.

To achieve these, the Bureau was then structured into two (2) major components (the Marine Fisheries and the Inland and Aquaculture Fishery Divisions). A Director heads these functionaries of the Bureau. The two functionaries are further divided into sub-sections (the Artisanal Fisheries development, Research, Statistics and Regulatory, and Inland and Aquaculture Development Sections), all of which are headed by Sectional Heads.

By 1962, with the successful establishment of mechanized fishing enterprises and real beginning of the Fisheries industry of Liberia focusing on the marine waters, the Bureau of Fisheries, for proper control and management of the marine resources, created the industrial and artisanal (small-scale) components of the fisheries.

1.2 Industrial Component (activities)

The industrial sub-sector gained prominence in the early 60s when the Mesurado Fishing Company began its operation, and became the most dominant fishing company in Liberia. In fact, the Mesurado Fishing Company until 1980 was one of the largest fishing entities in south Sahara Africa. It operated a fleet of about 25 to 30 fishing vessels including Shrimpers and double rigged Fishing Trawlers, and provided job opportunities for thousands of foreign nationals and Liberians. Fishing fleets within this sector ranged between 50HP to 3000HP and harvest finfish and crustaceans. Their operations are carried out along the coast of the country and locations within the Shebro Grounds, which border and extend onto Republic of Sierra Leone.

Although there existed other smaller entities, they were over-showered by the Mesurado Fishing Company to the extent that it was seen as a monopoly of the industry. This form of industrialization within the fisheries sector continued until the forceful change of government in 1980.
With the facing out of the Mesurado Fishing Company during the 80s, a total of about 7 fishing entities emerged within the sector and continued to operate and exist using about 30 rigged side and stern trawlers even under war and difficult conditions up till the present. Smaller cold stores with the capacities of about 300 to 500 ton freezers are used as storage facilities by these entities.

1.3 Artisanal Component (activities)

The artisanal fisheries sector is an open access with little or no control on entry and exploitation of resources. Even where laws that attempt to regulate exploitation of the resource exist, artisanal fishers tend to ignore these laws. The sector has many similarities with those of other countries of West Africa as follows:

- It is traditional in nature and in many respects is indigenous to Liberia
- It is also similar to others in West Africa in that it comprises fishermen from other neighboring countries (Ghana, Togo, etc.), which were welcomed into the sector as far back as the 1950s.

What are peculiar about the artisanal fisheries in Liberian and their types of fishing crafts, which are small dugout canoes. They accounts for over 60% of national catch landings, thus contribute highly to the food security of Liberia. The sector also provides means of livelihood for several thousands of people in the country and constitutes an important socio-economic activity of the people.

However, the artisanal fishery sector is rather complicated in nature and quite difficult to understand, especially as regards management of the fishery resources they exploit and their own socio-cultural aspects.

Though Artisanal fisher-folks utilize low technology in their fishing operations, some of the technologies are quite efficient and can be destructive. **Fishing fleets** in contrast, has made little changes within the sector. Indigenous Kru fishermen fish with 1-3 men teams from small dugout canoes of about 7 meters, which are powered by paddles or sail. Some are now powered by 7- horsepower outboard engine. Their gears are confined to hand or setlines but gillnets are occasionally used.

Fishermen of Ghanaian descent, residing in Liberia utilize larger canoes of about 12 meters and above and are powered by 25 - 50 hp outboard engines with crews as large as 15 or more persons. Their gears are more sophisticated. Ring and purse nets are used for small pelagic and large gillnets specifically adapted for different species and seasons are also employed. Within this group are beach seines using seines nets of about 200 to 800 meters in length.
The **fishing gears** are all types including gillnetting and entangling nets (set and drifting), seine nets, handlines (with single or multiple hooks), cast nets and traps that enable them to exploit almost all ecological niches in the waters. The fishing gears include There are several variations of each type of gear determined by the mesh sizes used and the mode of operation.

In Liberia artisanal fishers are generally illiterate and poor and are usually included in the poorest group. Their incomes are seasonal as the fish species that they catch. Many do not have any alternative means of livelihood and try to stay in fishing throughout the year by migrating to other areas when fishing is not lucrative in home waters and often live in poor conditions and are vulnerable to political and ethnic conflicts. Apart from fishing, some fishermen are also farmers. In fact, activities of this sector create conditions for family (wives, children and other relations) dependency.

Since the CECAF sub-committee is scientific and would be involved in research activities, it will be necessary to understand that artisanal fishing communities have functions which are centered around traditional set ups that need to be understood in order to obtain full cooperation of the community in any developmental or research activity.

Every artisanal fishing community has a head (chief fisherman) and a council of elders. Their cooperation and collaboration is essential in any kind of intervention in the community.

Because of the poverty nature of the sector, artisanal fishers and fishing community usually have a lot of expectations from government, both as citizens and as industrial operatives. Some of their expectations include subsidies on fishing inputs, provision of fishing inputs, credit, and exemption from the payment of taxes and levies and protection from industrial fishers.

Species Exploited by this sector include both pelagic and some demersal fish species. The Most important pelagic fish species exploited are the **sardinellas** (Sardinella aurita and Sardinella maderenensis), chub or Spanish mackerel (scomber japonicus), bonga (Ethmalosa fimbriata) and anchovy (Engraulis Encrasicolus). Others are some species of Carangidae and Thunidae. The most important pelagic occur seasonally. Sparidae, Pomadasidae, Scienidae, and Serranidae are the most important demersal fish groups exploited by marine artisanal fishers. The industrial sub-sector competes with the artisanal fishers for these coastal demersal species in their fishing operations.

**Women’s Role of in Artisanal Fisheries**
Women also have their own roles in the activities of this sector. In Liberia, their primary roles are the processing, marketing and distribution of fish. In addition to these, some women own canoes provide credit facilities to the fishers whenever the need arises. Their socio-economic importances brings them higher in the sector but are never well recognized.

1.4 Inland

Liberia is cut by six major rivers, which flow, from the Fouta Djallon Mountains of Guinea. The Lofa, St. Paul, St. John and cestos are within the country. The Mano River forms the border with Sierra Leone and the Cavalla runs along the southern border with Cote d’ Ivoire. In total, the country possesses 1,125 miles of river, nearly all of which are shallow, rocky and not navigable. There are also large swamp areas and numerous coastal lagoons including Lake Piso, one of West Africa’s larger lagoons. Estimates of production from these sources are not recorded, but serve as a major source of protein supply for rural dwellers and contribute about 23% of rural fish consumption for the country.

1.5 Aquaculture

In the mid 1970s, fishponds were constructed at the Central Agriculture Experiment Station in Suakoko to conduct research on Tilapias nilotica. US Peace Corps volunteers working as extensionists with small-scale farmers assisting the project. Fish Farmers over the years have tried to improve this sub-sector but yet there is not mush done.

This sector is implementing along with the LWS/WF Aquaculture hatchery rehabilitation projects supported by the European Commission (EC) at Klay, Bomi County, Salayea, Lofa County and Douyee Town, Grand Gedeh County. Other fish farmers have benefited for fish fingerling supplies at a very low cost.

2.0 DEVELOPMENT ASPECTS

Before the civil crisis, there was a high level of protein supplies to the Liberian diet. However, the post-war situation has proven different, in that there is a steady animal protein deficiency in the average Liberian’s diet as a result of the destructive nature of the war, which affecting all aspects of protein sources of the country. To help remedy this anomaly, the government of Liberia along with concerned donor agencies, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) for example, are responding in many ways to improve the situation.

The development of the fisheries sector of the economy is one aspect under consideration in this case.
2.1 An Overview Of The Fisheries Sector

The fishery sector is termed as “National Fisheries” and comprises two main components as follows:

- The Marine Fishery which has two specific operators, the artisanal (small-scale), operating in inshore waters from the continental shelf to 3 nautical miles, Industrial fishing vessels or entities, operating in Deep-sea from the 3 nautical miles into deep sea; and
- The Inland Aquaculture development which involves all rivers and other small water bodies

The Marine Sub-sector plays a vital role in the economic development of the country. It is concerned with ocean fishing activities and its importance lies in the following:

- The continental shelf of the country abounds in various species of editable fish to include (tuna, shrimp, lobsters and other fin fishes);
- Several people (almost 10,000) including Full-time Part-time, sport fishermen, fishmongers and others are employed in the industry;
- It is a potential source of some foreign exchange and generates revenue for government and income earnings of about 10 - 15 million United States Dollars for fishing businesses annually; and
- It provides about 65% of the protein needs of the country and contributes about 12% to Agriculture GDP.

The marine waters over the years accounted for about 85% of the annual fish consumption of the country, while the inland waters provided about 15%. The total annual marine catch was about 12,000 to 15,000 metric tons for both local and international markets. Of this total production, the small-scale provided about 60%. Now, postwar catch has reduced and is recorded to range between 4,000 to 7,000 metric tons annually.

Post-harvest

It is anticipated that the population of Liberia estimated to be about 3.467 million people presently, will increase over the next 15 to 20 years by 3.4% annually. Considering that this increase in population will also increase the demand for fish since it is about the cheapest source of animal protein, and about 80% of the population directly depends on fish for animal protein, there is a need to improve the preservation and post-harvest conditions that will stabilize the food security situation of Liberia.
In meeting this increase, another factor that may affect the demand for fish is income. Hence Post-Harvest Activities for Food Security and Poverty alleviation in Liberia will depend on the efficiency of productivity and preservation, where women and men will have opportunities in play meaningful roles to increase their income generating capacities.

Post-catch activities in Liberia for each of these sub-sectors differ according to the type of fishery and methods of production as follows;

2.1 THE MARINE INDUSTRIAL FISHERIES POST-CATCH ACTIVITIES

Post-Catch (Post-harvest) activities within the industrial fisheries of Liberia involve processing on-board fishing vessels by:

- Icing - this process involves merging the fish into the ice for preservation; and

- Blasts Freezing - in this process, chemicals (calcium phosphate, Potassium Phosphate) are used to clean and wash fish and shrimps before freezing. These post-catch methods preserve the shell-life of fish or shrimps for a short period (about 4 to 6 weeks) before declining to a lower state. Table 2 annexed shows the process and capacities.

2.2 THE MARINE ARTISANAL FISHERY POST-CATCH ACTIVITIES

Post catch activities within the artisanal fishery sub-sector are poor and undeveloped. Because of lack of preservative equipment (cold storage, Blasts freezers and ice) within this sector, most of the catches are sold fresh at fishing sites upon landing either directly to consumers or to fishmongers otherwise they get rot before the day is over.

In this fishery, quick fresh preservation by freezing or icing is normally not carried out in Liberia as it is done by the industrial sub-sector. Since they do not have the means to do so, they use the following methods:

- Drying by sunlight;

- Salting; and

- Smoking by fuel wood.

Table 3 gives details of these methods.

2.3 CONSTRAINTS TO IMPROVED OPERATIONS OF THE SMALL-SCALE FISHERIES
The operators of the smell-scale fisheries have many constraints that have continue to prevent them from improving their operations.

- Training that would improve their fishing methodologies and post-catch activities;
- Credit opportunities to enable them acquire improved post-harvest equipment; and
- Proper infrastructure to manage their catch.

2.4 CURRENT AND POTENTIAL ROLE OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR INCLUDING MARKETING ASSOCIATIONS

Now in Liberia, there are no fish marketing associations existing. However, there are potentials for the roles of the private sector and marketing associations.

- There are already smaller individual fish mongering groups operating within fishing communities and markets under marketing corporations that could be transformed into associations;
- These groups have some marketing skills and only need funding and the infrastructures to motivate them;
- All fishmongers spoken to or interview showed the willingness and ability to be transformed into organizations that would improve their livelihoods;
- Empowering and building the capacities of these groups in terms of funding and infrastructure will lead to improved post-catch activities and thereby improving the food security and poverty alleviation situation in Liberia.
- There exist some private sector initiatives such as the industrial sub-sector. This sub-sector has the potentials to improve the post-catch activities of the fisheries sector by improving their own methods and facilities to absorb the would-be wasted product of the small-scale fishers after catch by transforming them into other value-added fish products.

2.5 FISH MARKET CHANNELS IN LIBERIA

Pre-war marketing channels were properly organized in that there were depots built around the country with preservation facilities to handle the sales of fish in every part of Liberia. A total 22 Fish Depots were located as follows:
- Tubmanburg – 2 fish depots
- Kakata – 2 fish depots
- Buchanan – 2 fish depots
- Gbanga – 3 fish depots
- Ghanta – 3 fish depots
- Sanquilleh – 2 fish depots
- Greenville – 2 fish depots
- Zwedru – 2 fish depots
- Harper – 3 fish depots
- Robertsport – 1 fish depot

With these depots and electricity all over the country at the time, the channels were properly organized and with marketing structure available. There were also international marketing channels.

Because of the devastation of these infrastructures and facilities, the post-war marketing channels are very limited, disorganized and no longer functional. There are more individual and round town sellers than structures now.

Fishmongers or sellers talked to or interviewed identified present marketing channels such as:

- Monrovia markets channels, which include, Point Four Beach in New Kru Town, Duala Market, Waterside, Red light, Logan Town, and Rally Time Markets, and many cold storage operated by the business entities;

- The major channel now is what is called the “round town market” which consists of just walking and selling around town and between markets on head crying out for sale. Despite its strenuous demanded this market has been identified as the bigger market and revenue valued. It also entails having one or more persons selling for someone else on heads where they report to their master at the end of the sales day.

- Robertsport, in Cape mount;

- Buchanan, Grand Bassa County;
• Greenville, Sinoe County; and

• Grand Kru County.

Except for Kakata, which has 2 fish depots, Gbanga with 2 depots Buchanan with 2 depots and Ganta 2 depots, which are operated by small generators of their own, there are none anywhere else now, and there is no electricity. Figure 1 annexed, shows these channels.

3. CURRENT SOURCES AND MARKETING CHANNELS FOR PRINCIPAL INPUTS

As post-catch activities require equipment and other structures, the sources and marketing channels for principal fishing inputs are very necessary now for easy access.

Pre-war sources of fishing inputs were four (4) major importers based in Monrovia. The Channels of distribution were opened throughout the country in every major city and accessible to all fishermen. Fishing inputs such as:

• Nets of different meshsizes

• Hooks

• Handlines

• Outboard Motors were identified imported into Liberia at the time.

There are no manufacturers of fishing input in Liberia. All fishing gears constructed and used by fishermen are from imported materials brought into Liberia. Some times already constructed or made nettings are brought in from Ghana.

3.1 PROCESSING EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

Processing equipment and materials can be locally procured and are available in local shops. Furthermore, there are trained and qualified fishers and technicians to construct and build the equipment locally.

3.2 EXTENSION SERVICES

The Bureau of National Fisheries of the Ministry of Agriculture has over the years provided technical and extension services to the sector geared towards the overall development of the fisheries of Liberia. Technicians are still available and the
services are still being provided through small projects implementation, training and soliciting support for the sector.

**3.3 IMPROVEMENT OF INPUT SUPPLIES AND DISTRIBUTION SERVICES**

Considering the present economic situation of the country, there can be short, medium and long terms solutions to improving the fishing inputs supplies and distribution services.

The short-term solution could be the introduction of a duty-free privilege to would-be importers if all fishing inputs that would make it affordable and available to fisher folks of registered community based organizations for a period of about 12 months; In the medium-term, this process would be reviewed, modified and extended to include the training and provision of micro-credits to local manufacturers of fishing gears and equipment; and

Within the long-term, the system will then be modified again to include the encouragement of more producers of gears, establishment of mini-industries for the manufacturing of fishing gears and equipment and government total support to the utilization of local materials in such industries.

**4 INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT STRUCTURE TO THE FISHERIES**

Institutional Support to Fisheries Infrastructure in Liberia has never been realized because of Government’s inability to make Clare-cut fisheries policies leading to a structured marketing system, regulating NGOs involvement within the sector, and other stakeholders’ roles as regards the development of the fisheries sector.

Post-catch (Post-harvest) Activities have had no role in any planning of the agricultural sector taking into consideration infrastructure support.

**4.1 CONDITIONS OF LIBERIA’S FISH MARKET INFRASTRUCTURES (COLD STORAGE, COMMUNITY OR PRIVATE STORES, MARKETPLACES AND ASSEMBLY POINTS)**

The fishing industry in Liberia is individualistic in nature where every one operates independently of the other. In this regard, it has been difficult to direct institutional support to the sector.

**4.2 Sources of Fish**

The primary sources of fresh fish are the landing sites along the beaches. Other sources of fresh fish include several other cold storage facilities in and around Monrovia. This is so because almost all fishing industries are concentrated in
and around Monrovia. These sources provide frozen fish for local marketers who do processing after sales.

In other parts of the country, the major sources of fish are the landing sites along beaches in coastal cities. These sites are also used as markets sites. Figure 2 annexed, indicates the sources of fish that are also used for direct sales to consumers.

5.0 KNOWLEDGE ON INFORMATION OF MARKET PRICES AND OTHER BY FISHER FOLKS AND RELIANCE ON THE SOURCES OF INFORMATION

There are lots of relevant and reliable fisheries information relating to market prices, catch and others that could be utilized by fisher folks to improve their situations and livelihoods.

The ability of fisher folks to fully utilize information available within the sector is limited. Hence, there is a need to make use of the participatory approaches in the utilization and dissemination of fisheries information necessary for the development of the marketing sector.

5.1 SIGNIFICANT CURRENT AND PROJECTED GOVERNMENT AND DONOR RESOURCES ALLOCATED TO MARKETING AND POST-CATCH ACTIVITIES

Government now does not have a marketing policy and as such has never made allocation or projection in support of the marketing system or post-catch activities. In fact, it is difficult to make any allocation in the absence of a Clare-cut government policy on marketing or post-harvest (catch).

Since government, which should be regulator of activities within the country does not have policies guiding all agricultural sectors including fisheries, makes it difficult for donors to specifically allocate their resources to any sector in the form of marketing or post-harvest (catch).

According to information gathered, other local and international NGOs operating in Liberia, except for smaller allocations upon requests to assist small groups improve their processing methods through training, nothing significant has been allocated specifically for marketing and post-catch activities.

6.0 ANALYSIS AND RECOMMEND

Taking into account the findings above through interviews with stakeholders (fish marketing groups, and private traders), post-catch activities of fisheries are high-priority areas for fisher-folks in Liberia, and a number of cost-effective technology
packages can be identified for the improvement of Processing, Storage and Marketing of fish in Liberia.

Hence, the improvement of Processing, Storage and Marketing of fish in Liberia can be undertaken through some cost-effective technologies by:

- Proper Government agriculture policies, which take into account marketing, storage and processing of fish and fish products;
- Properly organizing marketing associations, co-operatives, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or other community-based organizations (CBOs), and other farmers’ groups to effectively participate in agricultural produce processing, storage and marketing;

Parties or groups who could make effective use of the packages to make them sustainable include, the Government of Liberia, International and Local Egos and the Private Sector (fishing businesses themselves) through workshops or donor meetings, projects proposals and planned national post-catch documents. These methods would be some effective means of delivering the technical packages in a way to minimize physical funds transfers;

There are possibilities, nature and scope of linkages between small-scale fish marketing and processing groups with the larger processing and marketing enterprises in the country sustaining one another in the process.

- There must be a larger organization under which small-scale fish marketing and processing groups will operate along side larger processing and marketing enterprises in the country to create a common link with the market system. By this, there will be understanding, a common goal will be set, and sustainability will be realized for achieve food security and alleviate poverty in its end.

**Utilization of the Catch**

Nearly all crustaceans are processed and frozen for export to the UK, Belgium, the USA and Greece. The Liberia Government encourages the reservation of finfish for the domestic market but small quantities are exported. Most industrial facilities are adequately equipped to produce export quality shrimp and seafood. In addition, such company imports large quantities of whole frozen fish.

**State of the Industry**

The industrial sector distributed fish to the interior through a system of “depots” and agents. At the moment, this system is non-existence as a result of bad roads. In Monrovia, fish is sold directly to retailers. Frozen fish prices are
generally fixed, while prices of fish produced by the artisanal fisheries fluctuate
to reflect supply and demand.

In both instance retailing is controlled by traditional market women. Initially fish
is sold fresh or thawed, but if not sold on a given day, it is dried and/or smoked
and often peppered to extend its shelf life and facilitate distribution to the
interior. In these forms, it is impossible to detect whether the fish had been
imported or domestically produced.

The artisanal sector remains as the largest producer of fish for domestic
consumption but registrations by the Bureau of Fisheries indicate a recant
decline in the number of Fanti and other indigenous canoes fishing in Liberian
waters as a result of destruction caused by the 7 years civil crisis.

During the period under review, January to December 31, 1999 the Industrial
Component provided about 65% of the fish supply to the local markets.

which are primarily used in catching silverfish (Trichiurus lepturus) and sole
(syacum). In all instances, fishing is restricted within 5 miles of shore. Species
most commonly harvested are round sardine (Sardinella spp.), croaker
(Pseudotolithus spp.) and sea bream (Dentex spp.). Artisanal landings in 1999
are reported to be 7,078 ton.