

Remarks by Ambassador Nosipho Nausca-Jean Jezile
Permanent Representative of the Republic of South Africa to FAO
UN Food Systems Summit +2 Stocktaking Moment
Panel Discussion on Blue Transformation in Action
25 July 2023, Rome

I thank you Moderator,

At the outset, I wish to express my appreciation for including South Africa on this panel discussion on Blue Transformation in action.

Africa, in general, and South Africa specifically, support FAO's Blue Transformation as a visionary step that will enlarge the contribution of fisheries and aquaculture to eradicate hunger, providing nutritional diets and protect coastal livelihoods.

Moderator,

In Africa, aquaculture production remains modest, in comparison to global aquaculture production, H.E. Josepha Sacko, the African Union's Commissioner, has explained the opportunities to expand the commercial aquaculture in her earlier intervention.

In the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region aquaculture production has increased significantly over the last 15 years, ranging in species and production systems that require different levels of expertise and technology.

Production is dominated by Zambia, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Malawi, attributed to the growth of commercial cage culture on Lake Kariba, and commercial, semi-intensive pond farming of tilapias. Lesotho and South Africa are important producers of rainbow trout.

South Africa's growth in Aquaculture, with fresh water species rainbow trout, tilapia, catfish, crocodiles, as well as marine species such as Abalone, Finfish (Kob), prawns, mussels, ocean trout, salmon, saltwater Tilapia, oysters, and seaweed. Aquaculture production in South Africa contributes only 0.01% of global production.

Major constraints to aquaculture development include: strengthening the enabling regulatory environment that facilitates private sector investments; limited human capacity in specialised skills ie fish disease management, water quality control, fish farming methods, site selection or planning and R&D.

Moderator,

Per capita fish consumption is below the global average. This can be attributed to availability, affordability, accessibility of fish products and competition with other cheaper animal-based protein sources such as chicken.

However, fish products are a health protein alternative with numerous nutritional benefits.

The South African government has identified aquaculture, as a potential contributor towards food security and nutrition, poverty alleviation, women and youth empowerment, and advancing environmental sustainability to prevent overexploitation of wild capture fisheries.

In advancing a Blue Transformation agenda South Africa has a strategic partnership with FAO to develop the aquaculture sector in South Africa and the region.

This development focuses on capacity building, legislative development, improving the performance of production systems, technology development and transfer, resource mobilisation and fish consumption awareness campaigns.

In conclusion,

South Africa is committed to the sustainable management of the World's aquatic natural resources, securing the health of ocean ecosystems through sustainable fisheries and aquaculture practices, and unlocking the Oceans economy.

I thank you.