

## **Certification and eco-labelling: opportunities for African fisheries**

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### **Abstract**

Certification and eco-labelling programmes are widely recognised as a useful tool to bring about more effective management in fisheries. Evidence is also growing that real environmental benefits can result from these market based initiatives. Market benefits for certified fisheries range from better market access, price premiums for some products and access to niche markets. In some cases political and social benefits have also been reported for fishing communities after their fisheries have been certified. Compared to other parts of the world fewer fisheries in Africa have however been involved in and benefitted from certification programmes. The cost of certification, difficulty in meeting standards, lack of effective management in many fisheries and data poor environments have been given as potential barriers to access certification opportunities. There is however growing evidence that fisheries in developing countries, including small-scale fisheries, are benefitting from certification programmes such as that of the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), the most widely recognised of these programmes for capture fisheries. This paper will explore some of the success stories from Developing World fisheries engaging in the MSC programme. It will review the status of uptake of certification in African fisheries and look at growing market opportunities that eco-labelling potentially offers for these fisheries.