

## **7. FISHERIES PLANNING**

### **7.1 Investment in the Seafood Sector**

An International Seafood Conference was organized on 2 and 3 March to promote the Seafood Hub and to attract potential investors in the sector. Investment in the seafood sector totalled Rs 3 billion, with around Rs 1.5 billion for the period 2004 to 2006. A cost competitiveness study of the Seafood Hub sector was undertaken by a South African Consultancy firm through funding from the Commonwealth Secretariat.

### **7.2 Fishing Agreement with the Federation of Japan Tuna Fisheries Cooperative Association**

The agreement with the Japan Tuna Fisheries Cooperative Association was renewed. The number of fishing vessel licences was increased from 20 to 30, the validity from 90 to 180 days. The duration of the fishing agreement is two years and is automatically renewable for a further period of two years.

### **7.3 Regional and International Cooperation**

#### **7.3.1 Cooperation with Greece**

In May, a Bilateral Cooperation Agreement between the Government of Greece and the Republic of Mauritius was signed. The agreement aims at providing financial assistance by the Hellenic authorities for the setting up of a Fish Auction Market at Trou Fanfaron, Port Louis and for the culture of fish in floating cages. The auction market will support the development of the Seafood Hub by providing a conducive environment for the efficient marketing of fish.

#### **7.3.2 Cooperation with the Overseas Fisheries Cooperation Foundation**

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed in July with the Overseas Fisheries Cooperation Foundation of Japan. The MoU relates to the rehabilitation of equipment at AFRC, the Fisheries Training and Extension Center (FiTEC) and the Agricultural Marketing Board (AMB) to the tune of Rs. 10 million.

#### **7.3.3 Cooperation with Australia**

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed with the Department of Fisheries of the Government of Western Australia in August for cooperation in the field of fisheries.

### 7.3.4 Cooperation with USA

A Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) was signed between the Republic of Mauritius and the United States of America. The TIFA also deals with trade in fish and fish products.

### 7.4 Socio-economic study

A contract was awarded to the University of Mauritius Consultancy Services to carry out a socio-economic study of the fishing community of Mauritius and Rodrigues. The study for Mauritius was funded by the FAO and the one for Rodrigues by the Ministry. The study will identify development strategies for the up-liftment of the socio-economic status of artisanal fishermen.

### 7.5 Fishermen Investment Trust

The aim of the Fishermen Investment Trust (FIT) is to democratise access to fishing grounds to fishermen and to develop fishing operations around St Brandon and the South Nazareth Bank. A business plan for the FIT was worked out by the FAO. The FIT bill was enacted in December.

### 7.6 Loan Schemes

In order to encourage fishermen to move away from the lagoon and operate in the outer reef areas, the Development Bank of Mauritius in collaboration with the Ministry is funding new projects through loan schemes.

The total amount disbursed was Rs 55 646 655, details of which are given in table 7.1.

**Table 7.1: Details of loans**

<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Amount (Rs)</b>
Small fishermen loan scheme (Normal)	123	2 362 745
Small fishermen loan scheme (AFS)	90	11 719 800
Loan to companies	4	41 564 110
<b>Total</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>55 646 655</b>

### 7.7 Fisheries sector policy study

The European Commission funded a study on the fisheries sector policy of Mauritius. The findings of the study will be used to provide short term technical assistance to the fisheries sector.

#### **7.8 Feasibility study for the development of a longline fishery for Mauritius**

Tenders for a feasibility study for the development of a longline fishery to be financed under the Kuwait Fund were launched.

#### **7.9 Mentoring Project**

Four mentors were recruited to implement the project which aims at improving fish handling/marketing and repayment of loans to the Development Bank of Mauritius. Thirty artisanal fishermen and two fishing companies in the chilled fish fishery were accordingly assisted as from April.

#### **7.10 Project appraisal**

Seven projects submitted for the fishing of demersal and pelagic fish were examined and found to be feasible. The promoters were issued Letters of