Fish Trade for a Better Future will focus on 4 fish trade corridors in sub-Saharan Africa. These routes transverse 21 countries in Africa.

The goal of Fish Trade for a Better Future is to generate information and policy recommendations that can be utilized by all African countries.
Many African countries are endowed with fish resources in oceans, seas, lakes, rivers, floodplains, and fish farms, which generate a range of benefits, including food and nutrition security, livelihoods, exports, and ecological resilience. The value added by the fisheries sector as a whole in 2013 was estimated at more than US$24 billion, representing 1.26% of the gross domestic product (GDP) of all African countries. It is estimated that the fisheries sector directly employs 1.3 million people as full-time fishers, full-time processors or part-time processors. Additionally, the livelihoods of millions more are influenced by the fisheries sector.

Intra-regional fish trade in Africa is constrained by inadequate market and trade infrastructure and deficient policy and institutional frameworks. These lead to high transport costs, complex trade rules and inadequate market information, all of which prevent Africa from optimizing the social and economic benefits available from fish trade.

In the early stages of the program, Fish Trade for a Better Future will generate information on the structure, products and value of intra-regional fish trade and its contribution to food security in sub-Saharan Africa. Recommendations will be prepared on policies, fish certification guidelines, and quality and safety standards, as well as regulations.

In the later stages of the program, Fish Trade for a Better Future will focus on strengthening the trade capacities of private sector associations, in particular of women fish processors, women traders and all aquaculture producers, in order for them to make better use of expanding trade opportunities through competitive small- and medium-scale enterprises.

Jointly with continental, regional and national stakeholders, Fish Trade for a Better Future will support adoption and implementation of appropriate policies, fish certification procedures, standards and regulations by key stakeholders in intra-regional trade. Information generated by the program will be disseminated to relevant stakeholders through the African Fisheries Reform Mechanism (AFRM) and other appropriate channels.

What is Fish Trade for a Better Future?

Over the past 5 years, fish processors and traders, along with government leaders, have begun to demand a change in the way Africa trades its fish. In May 2014, the second Conference of African Ministers of Fisheries and Aquaculture (CAMPA) endorsed the African Union Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa, which prioritizes fish trade and aims to promote responsible and equitable fish trade and marketing by significantly harnessing the benefits of Africa’s fisheries and aquaculture.

In response to this growing demand, the European Union-funded Fish Trade for a Better Future has been established to facilitate the development of fish trade in Africa by focusing on conducting research to generate data that will inform crucial policy decisions. The project aims to improve food security and reduce poverty through intra-regional fish trade in sub-Saharan Africa.

Fish Trade for a Better Future is led by WorldFish, an international research organization that harnesses the potential of fisheries and aquaculture to reduce hunger and poverty, in partnership with the African Union Inter-Africa Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR) and the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA). Regional economic communities (RECs), regional fisheries bodies (RFBs) and national governments in Africa will collaborate in the implementation of Fish Trade for a Better Future by promoting intra-regional trade and providing an enabling environment to make it happen.