

## ILLEGAL FISHERY IN AFRICA AND THE RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF TURKEY-AFRICA RELATIONS

### AFRİKA'DA YASADIŞI BALIKÇILIK VE TÜRKİYE-AFRİKA İLİŞKİLERİ BAĞLAMINDA ÖNERİLER

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#### ABSTRACT

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The fishery industry which is offering livelihood for approximately 820 million people in the World, has a significant importance for developing countries such as Turkey and African countries. However, illegal fishing, particularly in Africa, has a negative impact on security of African countries in various respects as well as on global trade. There is a need for co-operation at local, regional and global levels for the fight against illegal fisheries of African countries, which already have fragile structures and crises. Turkey, who is in developing relations with Africa in recent years, can be an important actor in the fight against illegal fishing and ensuring security in the region.

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#### MAKALE BİLGİSİ

#### ÖZET

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Dünyada yaklaşık 820 milyon kişiye geçim kaynağı sağlayan balıkçılık endüstrisi, Türkiye ve Afrika ülkeleri gibi gelişmekte olan ülkeler için önemli bir yere sahiptir. Bununla birlikte, özellikle Afrika'daki yasadışı balık avcılığının, Afrika ülkelerinin güvenliği ve küresel ticaret üzerindeki olumsuz etkileri mevcuttur. Zaten kırılgan yapıları ve krizleri olan Afrika ülkelerinin yasadışı balık avcılığıyla mücadelede yerel, bölgesel ve küresel düzeyde işbirliğine ihtiyaç duymaktadırlar. Son yıllarda Afrika ile ilişkilerini geliştiren Türkiye, yasadışı balıkçılık ile mücadelede ve bölgede güvenliği sağlamada önemli bir aktör olabilir.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Today, the fishing industry which is the livelihood of 820 million (FAO, 2018a) people globally and 25.4 million (Graaf and Garibaldi, 2014) people in the African continent has faced many dangers in recent years. Besides factors such as climate change, environmental pollution, fish species caused by unconscious and overfishing of fish and reduction in number, “illegal fishing” is also one of the factors that undermine the sector.

Only 16 of the 54 countries on the African continent do not have a seashore. However, these 16 countries host to rivers and lakes, which are important water and ecosystem resources at their borders, although they are not connected to the sea. Therefore, it is possible to say that many African countries are suitable for fishing activities.

Despite the lack of reliable statistical data, the fishing sector contributes at least 24 billion dollars to the African economy today. This corresponds to continent's 1.3% of the total gross national product. In addition, more than 12 million African are employed as registered in the fishing sector (The World Bank, 2018). In particular, with 59% majority of women's work in the processing departments is also an important development in terms of strengthening the social position of women in many African countries. Even these unclear numbers are enough to understand the importance of the fishing sector for the fragile African states.

Illegal fishing, which is the subject of the study, threatens the fishing sector and regional security in many aspects in African countries. In this context, considering the fact that only illegal fishing in West Africa caused an annual loss of 2.3 billion dollars, it is seen that the African countries in the economic downturn and facing many political and socioeconomic crises are deprived of an important source of income (Dahir, 2017). In addition, millions of people working in the fishing industry also come along in danger of losing their jobs. Besides the decrease in national income, illegal fishing also causes a decrease in the consumption of fish, which is an important food source for low-income people and triggers the existing food crisis. As a result, it is possible to say that illegal activities in the fishing sector cause political, economic and social problems for African states in many aspects.

In the study, this content will be elaborated in detail and a direct link between illegal fishing in Africa and regional security can be established. Many international organizations realized the danger. In recent years, in order to prevent illegal activities in Africa, it has been started to work on projects to develop the fishing sector, but no significant progress has been made yet. There is a need for a broad roadmap to solve the problem, including global and regional actors.

In the context of Emerging Turkey-Africa Relations, fishing industry and illegal fishing activities have now started to come on the agenda. Turkey in recent years has begun to develop its relations with African countries within the scope of the fisheries sector. These developments which will be beneficial for Turkey and African countries, are threatened by illegal fishing activities. This threat jeopardize not only Turkey's interests in the fisheries sector in Africa but also regional and international security. As a result, Turkey who aims to mode to a more advanced relations with Africa with activities in the fishery sector, should contribute to the fight against illegal fishing in the region.

### **1. What is Illegal Fishing?**

Fishing is one of the main livelihoods of the international community since human beings' existence, and on the other hand, it is an activity having international trade value. It is essential that fishing activity respects biodiversity internationally and regionally. Fishing activities that threaten biodiversity are prohibited by international norms and they are defined as illegal fishing. According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), illegal fishing is divided into three types. These are illegal fishing, unreported fishing and irregular fishing (FAO, 2016).

It is possible to say that illegal fishing, which is defined as a fishing activity that threatens biodiversity and violates international norms, causes 11 to 26 million tons of fish and 10 to 23 billion dollars of

economic loss per year according to FAO reports (FAO, 2018b). We can define illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing activities as illegal fishing types. In this context, illegal fishing includes the following activities (FAO, 2016):

- Fishing and fishing-related activities in violation of national, regional and international laws.
- Not reporting, misreporting or incomplete information on fishing operations and fish capture.
- Fishing with the "Stateless" vessels.
- Fishing in areas that belongs to Regional Fishing Management Organizations (RFMO) with impartial ships.
- Fishing activities that are not regulated by States and which cannot be easily monitored and accounted for.

According to FAO illegal fishing is divided into three categories: illegal fishing, unreported fishing and irregular fishing (World Ocean Review, 2013):

<b>ILLEGAL FISHING</b>	<b>UNREPORTED FISHING</b>	<b>IRREGULAR (HUNTING) FISHING</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It states that it violates the fishing activities or fishing laws and regulations -for example, ignoring fishing times or the presence of protected areas of the state- made by foreign ships without permission in the waters under the jurisdiction of another State. For example, some illegal fishing vessels operate in waters under the jurisdiction of the states of West Africa. These countries often do not penalize these ships in many cases as they cannot afford to create effective fishing control structures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It refers to fishing activities which have not been notified to the national authority by ships. For example, some ships collect more tonnages than they qualify for under the official fishing quotas. For example, in 2006, several Spanish trawlers were inspected by the Norwegian Coast Guard near Svalbard (Spitsbergen). In this inspection, it was observed that trolls kept not only the headed and gouty cod but also the total 600 tonnes of cod fillets which were not reported to the Norwegian authorities. Because of this illegal fishing activity, the Norwegian authorities fined the Spanish trawler for 2 million euros.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expresses the fishing activities in the areas where the valid management measures are not regulated. This type of hunting is often encountered in the South Atlantic Sea.</li> <li>• At the same time, this term is also valid for hunting migratory species and certain types of sharks, which are not regulated by a Regional Fishing Management Organization (RFMO). Finally, the term in question also valid for fishing activities in international waters in contravention of regulations established by the relevant RFMO.</li> </ul>

When the reasons of illegal fishing are examined in historical process, it is observed that financial concerns come to the fore. According to the fishermen's point of view, illegal fishing is quite attractive because they do not pay any tax on the fish they catch. Another reason why illegal fishing is carried out on such a large scale is that it can be applied without punishment. Illegal fishing is often the situation in the exclusive economic zones of developing countries, which have failed to establish expensive and complex fishing control structures, such as territorial waters or European countries. In a comprehensive analysis of IUU fishing around the world, researchers have concluded that illegal fishing is often applied in countries that show signs of weak management, large-scale corruption, unstable regulations, and lack of volition or capacity to implement current national legislation (ISSF, 2018).

In this context, the Sub-Regional Fishing Commission (SRFC), which consists of seven member states in West Africa (Cape Verde, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Senegal and Sierra Leone), provides a detailed list of various causes of illegal fishing. These (World Ocean Review, 2013):

- There are insufficient and inadequately educated personnel in the relevant authorities.
- The authorities' motivation to invest in relevant personnel is poor. The financially weak states determine other priorities.
- Salaries are low, and owners use this situation to benefit from irregular payments (bribery) to cover up the activities of observers / fishing managers.
- Purchasing, maintenance and operating costs of patrol boats and aircrafts are very high. For effective control, there should be sufficient time spent on the sea or in the air. At the same time, in some states, although they are present, lack of fuel, proper maintenance regime, etc. they cannot work due to logistics problems.

Illegal fishing is active in undeveloped weak legislated countries while the illegal fishing activities in international waters are the most abundant in the West African coasts. The illegal fishing that took place here constitutes 40% of the total fishing activities. Similarly, illegal fishing is also seen in the Pacific Ocean around Indonesia. Such that the amount of illegal fishing is increasing 1.5 million tons per year. In this context, Indonesian experts report that it is extremely difficult to follow the illegal fishing vessels around the islands and archipelago of the country. The Arafura Sea, located between Australia and Indonesia, is also affected quite by illegal fishing. After West Africa, the Western Central Pacific Ocean is the region with the highest illegal fishing worldwide. Illegal fishing in the West Pacific close to illegal fishing in West Africa, accounts for 34% of the total amount of fishing. A similar situation exists in the Pacific Northwest Ocean, especially in the West Bering Sea. Here, illegal fishing is mostly implemented by China and Russia and corresponds to 33% of the hunt amount. Although the numbers for the Southwest Atlantic are not reliable, experts estimate that illegal fishing is 32% here (World Ocean Review, 2013).

## **2. Illegal fishing and its effects in Africa**

Illegal Fisheries is one of the important problems of the global world. One of the most intense illegal fishing activities in this area is the waters of African countries. It is useful to evaluate the fishing sector in Africa before examining illegal fishing activities in African countries.

### **2.1. Fishing Sector in Africa**

According to FAO data, the fishing sector, which is the source of income of approximately 820 million people in the world, has vital importance for African countries which are currently struggling with socio-economic crises. Sea, river and lakes in Africa are home to a large number of fish species. For fishing in the seas, the Atlantic coasts to the west of the continent and areas with rich planktons on the east coast of the Indian Ocean are the most suitable areas. For example, in the areas where there are plenty of planktons near Guinea, Benguela and Canary, many tuna, sardine, grouper, mackerel and shrimp live. In addition to sea fishing, in Africa, inland water fishing can be done near the river and lake. In Nigeria, Kenya, Congo, Ghana, Togo, Madagascar, Uganda and Sudan such fishing activities are found (Bossche and Bemacsek, 1990: 22-34). In these countries, places that can buy fresh water from rivers and lakes provide a suitable environment for farm fishing.

The fishing sector is able to offer a cheap and protein-rich food source to African societies through business, income and resources. In terms of employment, it is observed that in the African continent in 1970, 13 million people lived in fishery, while in 2004 this figure increased to 41 million. This sector, where African women can be employed in fishing and processing, makes a great contribution to the socio-economic development of continental states. According to a survey conducted, only 306,000

people can be provided with new jobs in the fishing industry with an effective planning in West African countries (Daniels, 2016).

Fishing is also important for increasing the trade incomes of African states, which have gained new independence and have political and socio-economic problems. Although global fish trade still has a small proportion of 4-5%, it has a significant impact on the local development of African societies (FAO, 2017). Africa is a net fish exporter since 1985. However, while most of these exports are made up of high-value fish and sea products, low-value fish have been imported by African countries in order to meet the nutritional needs of middle-class people in recent years. Often these low-value fish imports are made from foreign companies hunting in African waters. In other words, "foreign companies sell Africa's fish to African people". The most fish importing African countries are Nigeria, Ivory Coast, Egypt, South Africa, Ghana and Ivory Coast (Royal Swedish Academy of Agriculture and Forestry, 2019). 12 African countries can earn more than 1 billion dollar annually from fish exports. However, this export includes high value sea products such as tuna, sardinia and shrimp as mentioned above. In these countries, while mainly sea fishing, Uganda provides a significant export income from the Nile perch fillet grown in the Victorian Lake.

The fishing sector in Africa is divided into two branches that is small-scale and large-scale (Standing, 2017: 43-47). Small-scale fishing activities, also called coastal fishing, are more traditionally carried out by African local fishermen. Fish caught by local fishermen are subjected to operations such as salting or fumigation and are put on the market in the region. Small-scale fishing offers employment opportunities for about 12 million African men and women.

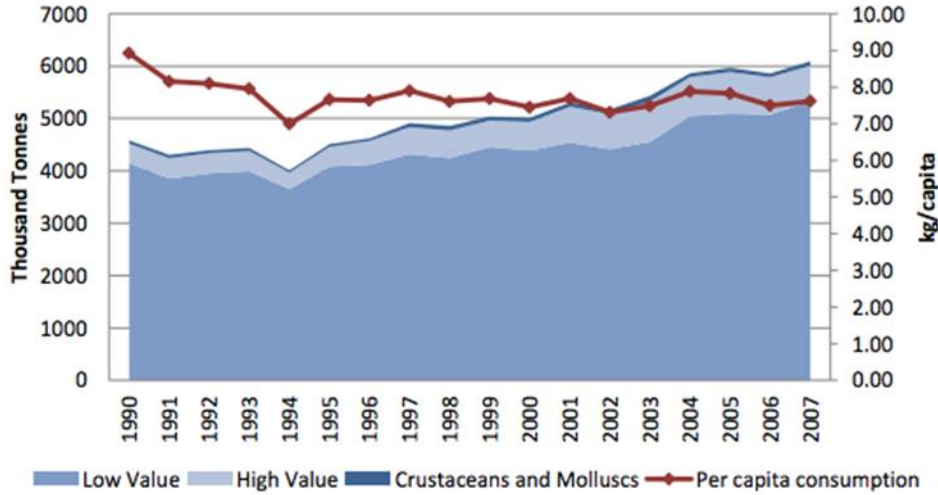
Coastal fishing is also effective in ensuring food safety as it supplies products that low-income individuals can purchase in local markets. In addition, fish can be used in a sustainable way because they can be caught by traditional methods in coastal fishing. On the other hand, large-scale fishing is carried out with modern methods by the ships of domestic and foreign companies as industrial for the export of a wider range of products. In the early 1960s, African industrial fishing companies, created by the initiatives of development agencies, and large-scale fishing by companies from various countries such as the EU, Russia, China, South Korea, Japan, offer significant income opportunities to large companies and African states rather than local fishermen.

In terms of the fishing sector, the EU, the largest commercial partner of African states, provides half of the annual 20 billion dollars global subsidy for fishing development. In this context, fishing vessels of EU countries developing "Sustainable Fishing Partnership" with 12 African countries are hunting in African waters by changing their flag or in the joint venture within local fishing rights holders. Another important actor, China, has provided African subsidies to approximately 6.5 billion dollars in 2013 (Standing, 2017: 43-47). As a result of these developments, important African fish markets such as Nigeria, which increased large-scale fish exports to China in recent years, started. Thus, while a significant income was obtained for companies and African states, fish decreased and prices increased in African markets and access to fish was restricted.

Recently, aquaculture has begun to be offered as an alternative to the solution of the problems caused by decreasing fish species and numbers in African waters. Around 92% of aquaculture in the world is carried out by Asian and Pacific countries, while the ratio of sub-Saharan Africa in this area is limited to 0.16% (Royal Swedish Academy of Agriculture of Forestry, 2019). Nonetheless, countries such as Nigeria and Ghana have begun to make efforts to develop aquaculture in order to meet the growing need for fish in cheap ways.

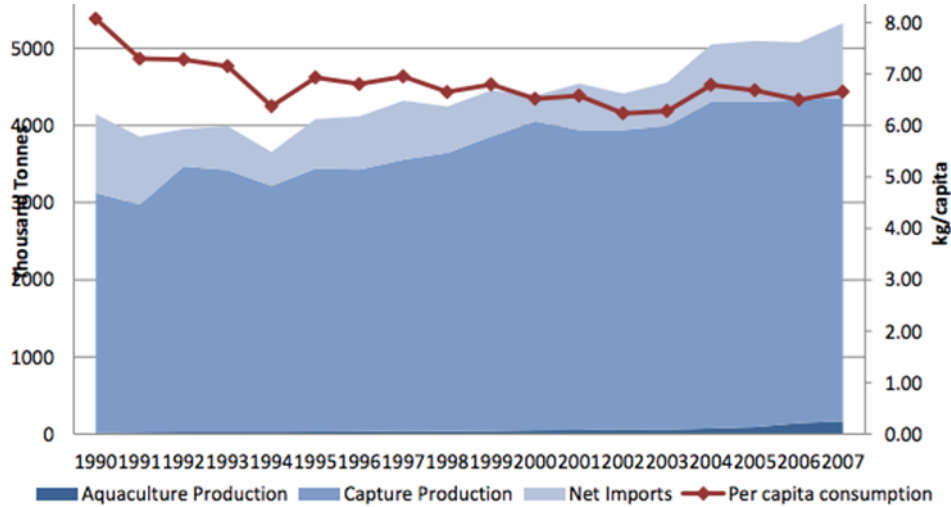
Fish is a rich source of protein and micronutrients for the peoples of developing countries with island countries and extensive coasts (sea, lake, and stream). For people who acquire more than half of the animal protein from fish, fishing is considered within the scope of food safety. Fish, which is 62% in Gambia, and 63% in Sierra Leone and Ghana, is considered to be a vital nutrient for a healthy population.

However, as a result of increasing large-scale fishing, declining fish species and numbers, and increasing population, fish consumption of low-income individuals in Africa is decreasing. According to a survey conducted by Tacon and Metian in 21 African countries in 2009, annual fish consumption in African countries is far below the world average. The following tables show the per capita fish consumption amounts in the African countries which were researched between 1990 and 2007 (Metian, 2009: 27-32).



**Figure 1:** Fish consumption in Sub-Saharan Africa by type between 1990-2007

**Source:** Fish Production, Consumption, and Trade in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Review Analysis, World Fish



**Figure 2:** low-valued fish consumption in Sub-Saharan Africa between 1990 and 2007

**Source:** Fish Production, Consumption, and Trade in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Review Analysis, World Fish

In summary, in recent years, the importance of the fishing sector is emphasized especially by the international organizations, to ensure the current account balance for African countries, to generate income for the state, to provide employment for the young population and to solve the food crises that are frequently coming to the agenda. In addition to the subsidy agreements signed by bilateral and multilateral agreements for the development of the fishing sector in African countries, large funds were created by international organizations such as FAO, World Trade Organization and World Bank. As a matter of fact, the subsidies provided by these agreements and funds benefit local and foreign companies that make large-scale hunting with boats and ships rather than coastal fishers.

## **2.2. Illegal Fishing in African Waters**

According to the data of FAO, in the last 50 years, two thirds of the fish in the seas, rivers and lakes have been hunted illegally. The number of fish species, such as tunny in the oceans, decreased by one third. According to the same report, 11-26 million tons of fish are hunted every year without reporting (FAO, 2016). The fish in African waters were also affected by this global level situation. In West Africa, more than half of the fishing areas from Senegal to Nigeria were exposed to overfishing. Particularly in the 1960s, with the expansion of industrial fishing developed by subsidies of development agencies and subsidies provided by bilateral and multilateral agreements, illegal fishing cases in the continental waters increased considerably. According to many sources, only West African countries experience an annual loss of about 1.5-2 billion dollars due to illegal fishing. Senegal, which employs a significant number of fishermen in 2012, lost about 300 million dollars which accounts for about 2% of its gross national product, due to illegal fishing. Similarly, Guinea deprived of 110 million dollars and Sierra Leone deprived of 29 million dollars, because of illegal fishing (Daniels et al., 2016).

The illegal fishing methods in African waters can be summarized as follows:

- Unlicensed hunting
- Hunting in protected areas
- Hunting protected species
- Hunting in prohibited seasons
- Hunting with prohibited equipment
- Hunting on given quotas
- Not reporting the hunting informations
- Change the name of the ship when it comes to regional seaports
- Transfer hunted catches to another vessel in the sea

The illegal fishing forms listed above can be given a large number of samples in African waters. An interesting example took part in a report published by Greenpeace (Greenpeace International, 2018). According to this report, Chinese fishing vessels hunting in West Africa was reported approximately 60% smaller in size by the fishermen. This provides a significant amount of profit for the license fee paid by Chinese fishermen. The illegal fishing cases of Chinese fishermen are not limited to this. For example, they were hunted unlicensed in the Libyan waters, during the civil war that began in the late 1980s with other European fishermen (Government of Liberia and FAO, 2012).

The prevalence of illegal fishing in Africa is not always related to the activities of foreigners. In particular, some people in government stages may leave their country's fish reserves in the exploitation of foreign companies in accordance with their personal interests. As already known, according to the International Corruption Perceptions 2014 Index, nearly one-third of the African countries are at the bottom of the list in reliability (Transparency International, 2014). This situation is being used by many foreign promoters who are hunting in African waters and prone to illegal fishing activities. For example, in 2012, authorities in Mauritania have already signed a 25-year agreement with a Chinese company, despite over-consumed fish reserves (Standing, 2017: 43-47). Moreover, no public information was made during the preparation of this agreement and the fact that small-scale fishermen could be negatively affected was ignored. A similar example was seen in 2011 in Senegal. The fishing licenses, which were signed without public notice by the Senegalese authorities, and which allowed many international ships, especially Russia, caused great damage to coastal fishermen (Standing, 2017: 43-47).

Apart from government officials in African countries, experts in institutions that control fishing activities are sometimes involved in illegal fishing activities. In a time of limiting the hunting of rock lobsters due to their reduced numbers in South Africa, Mr. Shipping ship hunted huge amount of rock lobsters and sent them to the US. After the occurrence of the incident, it was revealed that bribes were paid to some auditors during the hunting and shipping process (Standing, 2017: 43-47). In addition to government officials and authorities in the fishing sector, some structural problems in African countries deepen the problem of illegal fishing.

It is possible to list the main problems of these structural problems as follows:

- Insufficient content of legislation regulating the fishing sector.
- Non-deterrent penalties related to illegal fishing activities
- Limited capacity for fishing management
- Inadequacy in inspection and control mechanisms
- Lack of a mechanism to prevent corruption in government institutions
- No consciousness can be created to ensure public awareness of the harms of excessive consumption of fish stocks
- Inadequate security units and equipment to control illegal fishing activities
- Many officials responsible for illegal fishing control and inspection are being tended to bribery due to the very low salaries
- Difficulty in obtaining information about the fishing sector and, data unreliability

Due to the factors listed above, the measures were taken by African countries unilateral or multilaterally to prevent illegal fishing, unfortunately, gave no results. Both the legislation and the inadequacy of the penalties against the crimes committed have failed to prevent the actions of industrial fishing companies and government officials. The words of Haydar El Ali, the Minister of Fisheries of Senegal, summarize the current situation: *“The ships we capture are paying the fine. They're doing the same thing again. We must be able to keep them when we catch them. This is the real punishment.”* Els (Daniels et al., 2016). In many African countries, control mechanisms that can monitor and control fishing activities are very weak. For example, Sierra Leone has only two coast guard boats to monitor fishing vessels in the waters around it. Likewise, the coast guard unit has only 3 boats, 22 observers and 18 inspectors in Madagascar where fishing is an important source of livelihood (Standing, 2017: 43-47). Some international organizations, such as the European Union, the African Union, the FAO, and the World Bank, have made a number of initiatives to improve the inspection and control mechanisms for the fishing sector in the continental countries, but these efforts are far from giving positive results. Because the overall subsidies and technical supports cover one or few countries and do not provide a general solution to the problem. In addition, the signed agreements often do not gain functionality in practice.

Some African states where fishing is an important source of livelihood have made some attempts to prevent illegal fishing in national and international waters. The fact that Senegal and Ivory Coast prohibit illegal fishing vessels from transferring their hunts to another vehicle at sea is an important example of these initiatives (Africa Europe Faith and Justice Network, 2016). As it is known, the illegal hunting of fish caught in the sea by means of illegal methods is difficult to observe and punish. In African waters, the fish trade with container ships has been developing in recent years. At the same time, the fish hunted on a ship transferring to another ship before reaching the seaport is quite easy to reach the market where it would be offered for sale for a long time in freezing containers. Although Senegal and Ivory Coast have developed a mechanism of prevention because of the increasing number of illegal fishing actions,



it is not possible to say that they have given successful results. Moreover, the European Union, one of Africa's largest trade partners in the fishing sector, has taken serious sanctions to prevent the fish hunt by illegal methods from being transferred to other vessels (European Parliament Policy Department Structural and Cohesion Policies, 2014). In practice, however, there are some shortcomings in the interest of the European parts. For example, some European vessels that trade in transit do not undergo any sanctions due to the ambiguity in the definition of fishing vessels.

### **2.3. The Effect of Illicit Fishing on African Security**

Illegal fishing affects the security of African countries in many ways. It is possible to list these situations as follows:

- Food safety
- The problem of employment in fishing communities
- Endangering the source of income and social security of African states
- Damage to international trade
- Preventing the sustainability of resources
- Socio-economic crises due to poverty
- Increasing xenophobia in communities who are earning their living with fishing
- Conflicts between local fishermen and industrial fishing promoters
- Involvement of Fishermen who lose their livelihoods in piracy and terrorist groups

According to many reports, illegal fishing in African waters has led to overfishing, prevents the sustainability of fish reserves in the region. In a survey of IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature), 1288 fish species from Mauritania to Angola in African waters were investigated and 37 species were facing the danger of extinction. It was stated that 14 fish species might be exposed to this danger after a very short period of time. In the same report, it was emphasized that 39 of these 51 fish species were important food sources of local African peoples and it was mentioned that the existing food crisis in the region could become even more difficult (IUCN, 2017).

The employment of approximately 24.5 million people, is endangered by the loss of fishing which is a vital sector many of the continental countries which have recently gained independence and have not yet stabilized their political and socio-economic structures. 59% of these people working in various stages of the fishing sector are being women also affect the situation both economically and socially. These women, who participate in the labor force, both contribute to their families' livelihoods and indirectly contribute to social development by becoming producers from being consumers. The poverty and food crisis that occurs when most individuals lose their jobs in a people living in fishing may increase the inclination to criminal cases in this society. As a result, it is possible to say that the fishing sector is closely related to the economic and social security of African societies.

In addition, the development of industrial fishing, African fishers who lost their livelihood due to overfishing, and the fact that they resorted to pirate activities due to their livelihood problems and contact with illegal organizations were also raised. For example, in Somalia, after the SiadBarre regime, it was stated that some coastal fishermen who endangered their livelihoods due to illegal fishing and overfishing participated in the pirate groups (Coelho, 2013). These groups sometimes try to justify themselves by defending their national resources, which the state cannot protect, from foreign fishing companies and by withdrawing their rights. However, according to many sources, these pirate groups are also attending illegal fishing activities, making the current situation even more complicated

(Schbley, 2013). For example, in 2006, a 30% decrease in tuna fishing was observed in the region due to the influence of Somali pirates (Coelho, 2013). The terrorist organizations that develop close relations with these pirate groups can also indirectly obtain financial gain from these illegal fishing incomes. It is known that some terrorist organizations in Al-Qaeda in Eastern Africa and the illegal fishing and fishing vessels gain significant profits through armed robberies with their pirate activities (Nincic, 2009).

Apart from this, some armed pirate groups in East Africa are trying to obtain a new source of income by claiming that they can provide the security of fishing vessels hunting in African waters for an average of 6,000 dollars (Coelho, 2013). Of course, the weakness of the coastal security units of the riparian states has a great impact. In recent years, after piracy activities taking part in the international agenda, especially international organizations such as the African Union, the United Nations are trying to develop various military, political and economic methods of the fight emphasizing that pirates are threatening regional and global security.

According to the data of the World Bank, the fishing sector achieved a profit of approximately 24 billion dollars in 2011 for African countries. This figure corresponds to a 11% of the total GDP of African countries that is being very significant rate. The fact that African countries are deprived of this gain due to illegal fishing will lead to various structural problems related to national economic security. Furthermore, it is foreseen that the negatively affected African fishing sector will harm the world trade. For this reason, the World Bank has been conducting "Fishing for Africa Program " in 2005 to prevent illegal fishing and to improve the fishing sector of African countries. In addition, international programs aiming at the development of the fishing sector such as PROFISH, WARF-P and SWIOFISH aim to eliminate the negative effects of illegal fishing on African societies (World Bank, 2018).

It has also been observed that xenophobia develops in some African societies which are engaged in fishing as a result of the increase of illegal fishing activities and the prevention of local fishing by industrial fishing. For example, local fishermen who have claimed that foreign industrial fishermen have deprived their sources of income in Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Mauritania and Senegal have engaged in a number of protests and acts of violence. On the other hand, some pirate groups and terrorist organizations are able to provide their own maneuver space by using this xenophobia.

### **3. The Possible Impact of Illegal Fishing to the Turkey-Africa Relations**

The history of Turks' interest in Africa dates back to the 9th century. However, during the Ottoman Empire, the Turkish presence on the continent was noticeably visible. The interest of the Ottomans, who settled in North Africa in 1516, soon turned to Sub-Saharan Africa (İpek, 2010). The attempt of the Algerian Beylerbeyi Salih Pasha to cross the Sahara Desert between 1551-1556 is the first sub-Saharan experience of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Empire, which reacted against the colonial movements in Africa in the 17th and 18th centuries, increased its influence in Eritrea, Djibouti, Somalia and Ethiopia in East Africa. In this period, the province of Habesh Eyalet was established within the scope of these developments (Hazar, 2008: 21).

Founded after the fall of the Ottoman Empire during the Republic of Turkey, it is not possible to say that completely cut ties with Africa. Turkey's relations with Africa, possibly in the post-1923 continued in different concepts and densities. For example, already has its own socio-economic problems in Turkey, in 1948 by the Organization of the Islamic Konferans made to the African continent has contributed \$10 million to help independence movements that took place in the continent since the late 1950s were supported by Turkish governments. From time to time, although the western-oriented Turkish foreign policy prevented active support for African independence struggles, as in the case of Algeria, Turkish governments have avoided a direct anti-independence attitude (United Nations, 1958: 119; Boztaş, 2011: 146).

Since 1998, a new dimension in the Turkey-Africa relations is possible to say that to begin. On this date, the "Government Action Plan for Africa" was adopted by the Turkish Government. The main objectives of this plan are (Tepebaş, 2010):

- Carrying out high level mutual visits with African countries
- Increasing contacts with African countries at the level of international and regional organizations,
- Intensifying economic aid to Africa, increasing the number of diplomatic representatives on the continent and signing economic-technical-scientific cooperation-trade agreements
- Encouraging mutual delegation visits
- Encouraging the activities of the relevant institutions of Turkey towards Africa

within the concept of this Action Plan, in 2003, the Republic of Turkey Undersecretariat of Foreign Trade, "Development Strategy of Economic Relations with African countries" has prepared document. In the course of the ongoing process, new commercial consultants were opened in various African countries (Turkey-Africa Cooperation Summit, 2010; Tepebaş, 2010).

Since 2005 is a significant development in relations with Turkey, a regional organization, the African Union has been observed in nature. In 2005, Turkey, having observer status with the African Union ordinary meeting, declared this year as "Year of Africa". There have been three important developments in Turkey-Africa Cooperation in 2008: African Union declared Turkey a strategic partner, Turkey's membership of the African Development Bank and the Turkey-Africa Cooperation Summit (Boztaş, 2011: 148-149).

Following these increasing interactions, an African Strategy Paper was prepared in 2010. From this period, Turkey, Africa devletlerl bilateral and multilateral relations with the political, military, rapidly increased the number of initiatives to develop economically and socially. According to the Anadolu Agency reported on April 25, 2019 Turkey has realized 179 billion dollar trade in last 10 years. Besides, in 2018 Foreign Economic Relations Board declared that Turkey had a \$ 25 billion trade volume with all countries in Africa (Horuz, 2019).

Besides commercial relations, in recent years between African countries and Turkey, several agreement were signed in various fields such as defense, agriculture, education, science and technology and several initiatives were carried out. These relations between Turkey and Africa, which are Win-win principle-based, and rising presence of Turkey in the region have attracted the attention of some global actors such as the former colonial Powers. The comments related to Turkey's increasing presence in the region has begun to take place in the in the Western media, especially after the each extensive visit carried by Turkey to the African countries .

Turkey and developments related to the fisheries sector within the scope of this growing relationship between Africa relations has experienced. Although the desired target has not yet been achieved in this sector, considerable initiatives have been taken. In November 2018, the Turkish Marine Research Foundation (TUDAV) organized a workshop on fisheries in Istanbul at the Istanbul Chamber of Shipping. Ath this meeting, Melih Er, Head of Hunting and Control Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, mentioned that ship engines and technologies of power in Turkey increase. Also he said that Turkish fishing vessels continue to work in other countries, especially in Africa. According to Mr. Er, Turkey signed the memorandum of understanding with the fishing are with Gambia, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea and the Republic of Conho. Within the scope of these agreements, cooperation will be made for the development of fishery and aquaculture in these countries. Melih Er added that Turkey's efforts go on to achieve realizing important initiatives in the field of fisheries and Nigeria. (Dörtkardeş, 2018a).

Mauritania is one of the countries in Africa have developed the strong relationship with Turkey in the fishing areas (Turkish Foreign Affairs, 2019). According to the latest data, in Mauritania, 52 boats and 1000 Turkish fishermen fish. In this country, the Turkish capital, which consists of fish flour and fish building factories, reaches 200 million dollars (Dörtkardeş, 2018a).

In Mauritania, which has abundant fishing resource, Turkish fishing fleet has trawler boats, which is mainly composed of purse seiners. It was recalled that as many as 1000 Turkish fishermen worked on these boats, the same number of Mauritanian fishermen worked on the same boats (Dörtkardeş, 2018a).

2017 Istanbul University Faculty of Fisheries in organized a workshop titled "Fishing Africa and Turkey Approach". Some scientists and fisheries officials were invited from Gabon, Guinea, Morocco, Mauritania, Senegal, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Togo and Cameroon to this meeting. Marine biologist Asseko, one of the participants of this meeting, said: "There are various fishes, especially tuna, in the deep waters of Gabon. We can not hunt enough to contribute to our economy is not enough. Our capacity will increase with the support of Turkish fishermen, businessmen and scientists. First, we need research and capacity building." (Karakas, 2017).

As is evident from these statements of Mr. Asseko, Turkey can contribute to the development of the fisheries sector in many parts of Africa. On the other hand, it can increase activities in Africa, which are still at very low levels. However, this situation, which can be evaluated within the scope of the win-win principle, is endangered with the news about that Turkish fishermen who illegally hunt in African waters. For example, a news published in August 2017 reported that 200 Turkish fishermen were detained in West Africa because of illegal fishing offenses. This situation, which left the Turkish Government in a very difficult position, was eliminated by paying big prices (Akşam, 2017). If the Turkish Government wants to improve its relations with Africa within the fishery sector, it should strive to prevent such exploits that may damage its image.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

38 of the 54 African countries recognized by the UN, have seashore. An important part of the 16 non-coastal countries have large lakes and rivers. These geographical features have placed vital importance in the fishing sector for most African countries, which have not reached enough employment with climatic, security and political problems, and where a significant portion of the population should have access to fish for food safety.

With the effect of industrial fishing, which developed globally after the 1960s, excessive and illegal hunting causes different problems at individual, national and international levels. As a result of overfishing, African people who have lost their fish reserves are faced with various socio-economic problems as well as losing important food resources. A large number of people who are already struggling with poverty are forced to buy fish that are hunted in their own waters at high prices from foreign promoters. In addition, millions of people in the fishing industry are also in danger of losing their livelihood. At the national level, illegal fishing prevents a significant income input from African states, and raises various security issues. At the international level, globalization is gaining momentum and the over-consumption of fish reserves endangers the future of the fishing sector. In addition, various transboundary crime and terrorist organizations that provide financing through illegal fishing activities can also threaten international security.

Due to the earnestness of the situation outlined above, both African countries and international organizations have started to seek resolutions in order to prevent illegal fishing and overfishing. While states are reforming the fishing sector and coastal security legislation, international organizations, such as the African Union, the European Union and the United Nations, are attempting to change the perceptions and create a new coast guard strategy. Several international funds also provide subsidies for African countries to develop the fishing sector. However, these efforts do not give the desired results. Because the actors on the subject often do not go to a general solution by putting their interests at the

forefront. In addition, the inadequacy of control mechanisms in the implementation of the measures taken and the fact that the sanctions being light were also effective in failure of preventing illegal fishing and overfishing. Local units and international organizations can strengthen the dialogue channels between them and they can cooperate on these subjects:

- Admission of illegal fishing as a transboundary crime
- Reforming national legislation and penalties on fishing
- Fighting for the prevention of corruption and bribery
- Taking measures to ensure the sustainability of fish reserves
- Studies on the development of aquaculture in African countries
- Establishing regional and international strategies and action plans
- Strengthening mechanisms for monitoring and controlling illegal fishing
- Strengthening seaport control mechanisms
- Strengthening relations between local fishing communities
- Providing transparency, oversight and viability of bilateral and multilateral agreements
- Prohibition of the transfer of the hunts to the sea
- Formation of private security units to provide security services to foreign fishing vessels
- Set up a global fishing database and tracing system
- The closure of the legal gap, which makes it possible for illegal fishing to be carried out by container trade.
- Cancellation of licenses for fishing vessels blacklisted

It should be able to implement the measures to be taken by African countries in the fight against illegal fishing at the state level, firstly, in the framework of the decisions they will jointly take with their neighbors and then in coordination with all Continental States. Measures to be taken across the continent will be a much faster and healthier way with the African Union they have created, even if they are supported by international institutions.

Throughout history, Turks have approached African countries from the perspective of "brotherhood, unity and solidarity" instead of mentality of exploitation. Their relations with the continent date back to the 9th century when they were settled around Egypt in the Abbasid period for military purposes. Turks met with Africa, founded independent states in the region and continued their existence with Tolunogullari and Ihshid. In the 12th century, the Ayyubids and Mamluks established in Egypt were influential in the Black Continent (Hazar, 2008: 23-37).

In the near history although ottoman Empire was active in the Continent, After the founding of the Republic of Turkey, existing dialogues have been decreased because of the prevailing colonial process in Africa and Turkey's nation building process. Here it should be emphasized that Turkey did not completely cut its relations with Africa, but due to limited conditions Turkey-Africa relations were loosened. Indeed Turkey started to reform foreign policy after calmed the crisis in domestic politics. Within the context of these changes, African policy was also reviewed and new action plans were created by Turkish government.

The development of relations between Turkey and Africa that began following the Opening to Africa Action Plan announced in 1998 and gained momentum after the 2002 elections in the multi-dimensional foreign policy axis. This development was not only political and diplomatic, but also social, economic, military and cultural.

Such a rapid development after a long time interval has been followed by Europe amazemently, which has ties with all the countries of the world, especially its colonial past. The Turks, who are adopted by the people of the continent not with the exploitation order but with the hearth ties, use the advantage of their historical past.

In this context, today the development of bilateral relations with African countries and strategic partnerships, are one of Turkey's foreign policy and economic priorities. Thus surrounded on three sides by the sea, the fish export with 156.681 tons according to 2017 data and the use of vessel monitoring technology for fishing, inland water and marine fishing in the quality of hunt (Ministry of Food Agriculture and Livestock Ministry, 2018) Turkey has made important progress. Aquaculture in Turkey is growing by annual average of 8%. In last 10 years, total production have increased by 99% and almost doubled. The highest production increased in trout and seabass. In 2013, a total of 162,8 million tons of aquaculture products were produced including 92,6 million tons of hunting and 70,2 million tons of aquaculture in the World. Turkey was in 30s in the World and ranked 6th in Europe. The export-import ratio of foreign trade in fishery sector in Turkey increases every year and is developing in a positive direction (Sarıözkan, 2016: 12-19). For all of these reasons, Turkey should also take into account the fisheries sector in support of the African people and economic relations. Issues that need to stand on their relations about fishery sector between Turkey and African actors are as follows:

- Conducting mutual projects which include the exchange of instructors and students between sections for fishing in higher education institutions in Africa and Turkey
- Organising general education program with seminars in Turkey about fishing and mutual visits of state and government officials
- Set up consultanting agency for promoters working in fishing sector in Turkey for creation of detailed and reliable information about fishing in Africa
- Mutual cooperation and protocols on African fishing
- Facilitate transportation, shipping and cargo to support import and export to African countries in the fishing sector.
- Creation of platforms for African and Turkish fishermen to bring together international promoters in the sector and share their knowledge and experience and develop mutual projects.
- Sharing knowledge and experience with African authorities to support the establishment of NGO-based rooms on fishing and to ensure their control.
- Forming and controlling of commission about talking problems of fishing between African countries and Turkey
- Helping private security institutions to take necessary security measures on the sea coasts
- Transfer of financial and technical assistance to strengthen coastal security units
- Providing mechanisms to strengthen data sharing in fishing
- The import and export of reciprocal fish may be quota-free, duty-free and the application of discounted tariffs.

The issues which are given in summary above related to Turkey's interest for the fishing sector in Africa can be diversified and elaborated over time. In terms of our country's fishing industry has a very rich resources and market to improve bilateral relations with the African continent, with Turkey's continental states will give an important impetus to the comprehensive dialogue that tries to establish especially in recent years. However, the issue that needs to be emphasized here is trust, transparency, accountability and win-win principles. Another issue is to produce African solutions to African communities.

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