



SEA FOOD EXPORTS FROM INDIA AND QUALITY ASSURANCE STANDARDS: CHALLENGES AHEAD

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ABSTRACT

The Fishing Industry in India is contributing significantly to the agricultural export of the country and thereby helping poverty alleviation and generating employment to millions of people in the coastal area. Marine products form an important group of primary commodity exported from India accounting for about 4 percent of the total export earnings. The international trading regulations are dynamic in nature due to increasing stringent quality measures of EU, US and other developed countries. This paper analyses the Quality Assurance Standards followed in various countries and examines the impact on marine fish exports from India. The Regression Analysis showed the effect of major trade barriers viz. international quality standards and anti-dumping duty on the marine product exports from India. The study showed that international quality assurance standards on marine product exports from India are important and have emerged as a major non-tariff trade barrier.

Key words: Marine Fish Export, International Seafood Quality Standards, Sanitary and Phytosanitary, Hazards in Seafood, Technical Barriers to Trade.

Introduction

The Fishing Industry in India is contributing significantly to the agricultural export of the country and thereby helping poverty alleviation and generating employment to millions of people in the coastal area. The agro climatic conditions and vast resource potential in the Exclusive Economic Zone of India make it a leading Marine Fish Producing and Exporting country in the world. The state of Kerala which is endowed with a rich fish fauna contributes a substantial proportion of the total production and export of marine product of the country. India's export of seafood was worth \$5.5 billion in 2014-2015. The US is the largest market for Indian seafood products with a share of 26.46 percent in dollar terms in 2014-15 followed by South East Asia (25.71 percent) and European Union (20.08 percent). International quality assurance standards and regulations are indeed requisite to cope with the ever demanding requirement of importing countries in the changing scenario. Export Inspection Council established its network throughout India so that the requirements of the importing countries are addressed in a timely manner and the need of the exporters is fulfilled without delays so as to facilitate exports.

The growth of export of marine fish products from developing countries has been regularly threatened by various non-tariff barriers from the developed countries. Non-tariff barriers relates to hygiene and food safety, in particular sanitary, traceability and quality control aspects. In order to cope up with the International quality standards, the challenges faced by export processing firms are to develop innovative technologies and efficient management to raise productivity to meet the growing demand for fish and fishery products at the lowest cost. An effective technology transfer inventions and innovation would play a crucial role in confronting a number of supply side obstructions and numerous demand side opportunities. It would greatly help in bridging the wide