

MAURITIUS

NATIONAL EXPORT STRATEGY

RODRIGUES ISLAND

STRATEGY

2017-2021



Republic of Mauritius



International
Trade
Centre

This National Export Strategy (NES) is an official document of the Government of Mauritius. The NES was developed on the basis of the process, methodology and technical assistance of the International Trade Centre (ITC) within the framework of its Trade Development Strategy programme.

ITC is the joint agency of the World Trade Organization and the United Nations. As part of the ITC mandate of fostering sustainable development through increased trade opportunities, the Export Strategy section offers a suite of trade-related strategy solutions to maximize the development payoffs from trade. ITC-facilitated trade development strategies and road maps are oriented to the trade objectives of a country or region and can be tailored to high-level economic goals, specific development targets or particular sectors, allowing policymakers to choose their preferred level of engagement.

The views expressed herein do not reflect the official opinion of ITC. Mention of firms, products and product brands does not imply the endorsement of ITC. This document has not been formally edited by ITC.

The International Trade Centre (ITC)

Street address: ITC 54-56, rue de Montbrillant 1202 Geneva, Switzerland

Postal address: ITC Palais des Nations 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

Telephone: +41-22 730 0111

Fax: +41-22 733 4439

E-mail: itcreg@intracen.org

Internet: <http://www.intracen.org>

Layout: Jesús Alés – www.sputnix.es

**MAURITIUS
NATIONAL EXPORT STRATEGY
RODRIGUES ISLAND STRATEGY
2017-2021**



Republic of Mauritius



International
Trade
Centre

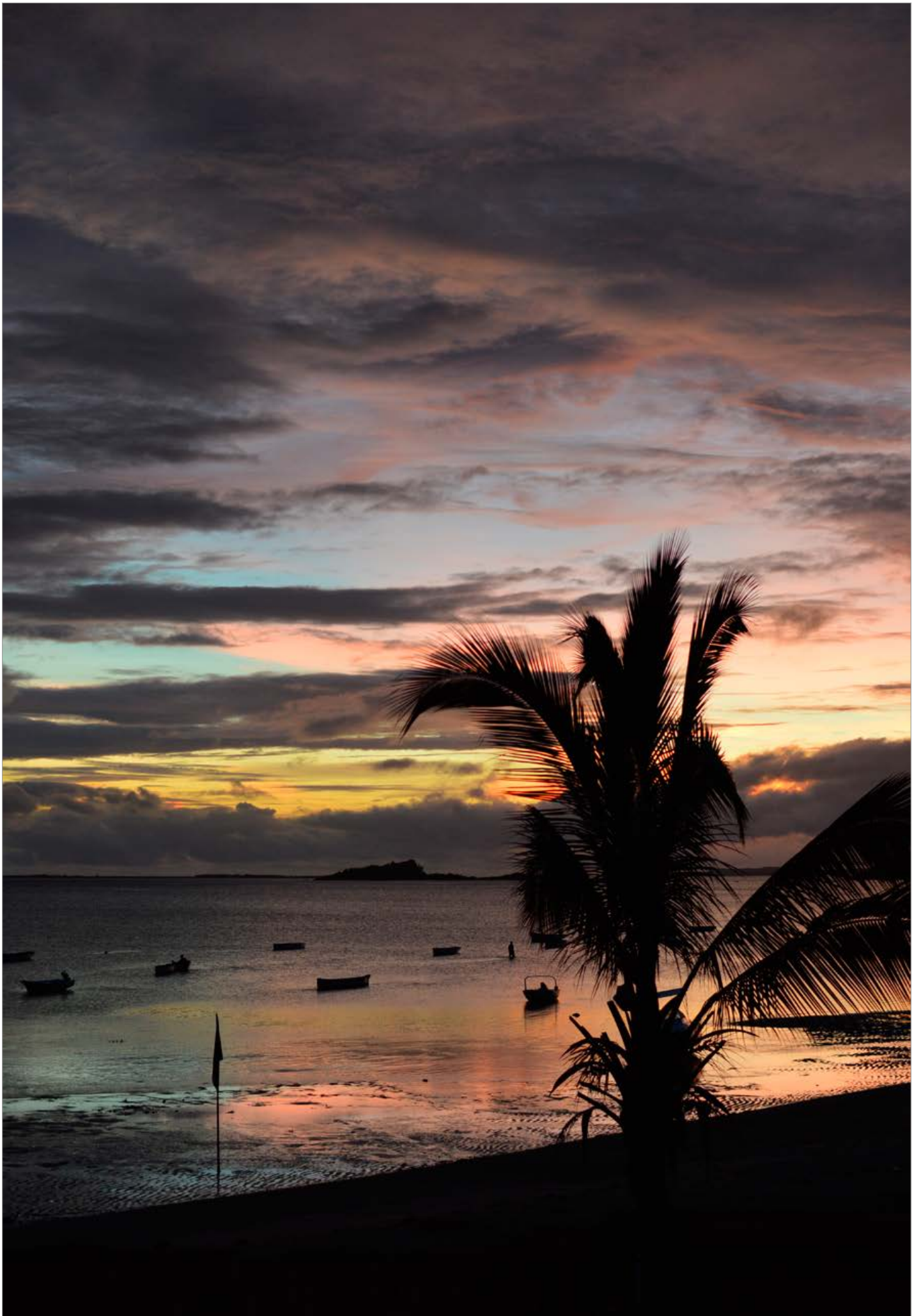


Photo: Alexandra Golovko (ITC)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The National Export Strategy (NES) was developed under the aegis of the Government of the Republic of Mauritius, the political leadership of the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection (MICCP) and with the operational support of the Enterprise Mauritius (EM). The NES document benefited particularly from the inputs and guidance provided by the members of the NES Core team.

List of participants of Consultative Meeting in connection with National Export Strategy held on Friday 12 February 2016 at 09.00 hrs, HRD Centre, Malabar.

Name	Organization
Mr. Sylvio PERRINE	FRTU
Mr. Jean Rex PIERRE LOUIS	South East Marine Protected Area
Mr. Hans COLLET	RAMCF
Mr. Rogers PHILIPPE	FACER
Mr. Jean Maurice RAVINA	Mauritius Research Council
Mrs. K. TEMPLIN	SMEDA
Mrs. HORTENSE	SMEDA
Mr. Laval SPEVILLE	Import/Export compagnies
M. Andeese RAVINA	Agro-processing SME
Mrs. Marie Lourdes ALLAS	Agro-processing SME
Mr. Paul DRAPER	CARECO
Mrs. Marielle LEVEQUE	Compagnies des Artisans Rodrigues Ltee
Mrs. Michele RAVINA	Ecolab – Handicraft SME
Mrs. Danielle MEUNIER	Handicraft SME
Mrs. Maité BEGUE	Jewellery SME
Mr. Gabriel MANAN	Handicraft SME
Mrs. Marie Chantale RABOUDE	Les Flamboyants
Mrs. Enella MOMUS	AGROD Federation
Mrs. Christelle BAPTISTE	Rodrigues Lime Juice Cooperative Society
Mrs. Anna Arlette HYPOLITE	Agro-processing SME
Mr. Joseph Livingstone RAVINA	Poultry Production SME
Mrs. Victoria DONZE	Honey Production SME
Mrs. Maryline LEGOFF	Agro-processing SME
Mrs. Marianne CASIMIR	Coffee SME
Mrs. Marie Anne Denise Félicité EVENOR	Agro-processing SME
Mrs. Delly MANAN	Agro-processing SME
Mrs. Marie Brinette RAVINA	Agro-processing SME

Name	Organization
M. Ivrese Claire	Sea Foods Processing SME
Mrs. Irenza Samoisy	Agro-processing SME
Mrs. Delores CLAIR	Sea Foods Processing SME
Mrs. Marie Michèle LERACE	Pastry SME
Mr. Manicon ANTHONY	Officer in Charge, Cooperative
Miss Corinna RABOUDE	RTMC
Mr. Gelino VOLBERT	Commission for Agriculture
Mr. Georges MANAN	Senior Technical Officer (Agriculture)
Mr. Margeot CUPIDON	Senior Technical Officer (Agriculture)
Mr. Jonathan BAPTISTE	STM Intern
Miss Aniella BAPTISTE	STM Intern
Mr. Rivelino FELICITE	Fishing Cooperative

Technical facilitation, guidance and support for the process were provided by the project team of the International Trade Centre (ITC).

Name	Function	Organization
Ms. Marion Jansen	Chief, Office of the Chief Economist and Export Strategy	ITC
Mr. Anton Said	Head, Trade Strategy Development Programme	ITC
Mr. Darius Kurek	Project manager	ITC
Ms. Alexandra Golovko	Project technical adviser	ITC
Mr. Victor Deleplancque	International consultant	ITC
Mr. Reg Ponniah	Technical editor	ITC

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	III
OVERVIEW OF THE PRODUCTIVE SECTORS IN RODRIGUES	3
AGRICULTURAL SECTOR OVERVIEW	4
THE VALUE CHAIN	5
KEY CONSTRAINTS	6
OPPORTUNITIES.....	7
FISHERIES SECTOR OVERVIEW	9
THE VALUE CHAIN	10
KEY CONSTRAINTS	11
OPPORTUNITIES.....	12
PLAN OF ACTION	13

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Employment by industrial group - Island of Rodrigues, 2015	3
Figure 2: Value chain of the agricultural sector.....	5
Figure 3: Fish caught in Rodrigues (2008-2014).....	9
Figure 4: Value chain of the fisheries sector.....	10



Photo: Giorgio Minguzzi (CC BY-SA 2.0), *Turtle, Rodrigues Island.*



Photo: Giorgio Minguzzi (CC BY-SA 2.0), *Cotton Bay Hotel shore, Rodrigues Island.*

Rodrigues Island Strategy – NES Mauritius

The export strategy document for Rodrigues is part and parcel of the National Export Strategy (NES) of Mauritius and strictly speaking is a subset of the Main Strategy Document, which is related to objectives and actions at the national level as opposed to any specific priority sector or cross-sector functions forming the NES. However, as an outer island, the Rodrigues' economy is a subset of the Mauritius national economy, very different to it in terms of size and relative shares of productive sectors. The Rodrigues strategy focuses therefore essentially on the agro-processed food sector and the fishery sector, the two biggest sectors in the local economy, which together with forestry account for some 38% of local employment.

This particular situation of Rodrigues required a diagnostics, objectives and actions that were specific to the island's economy. Stakeholders in the national strategy team during the 2nd consultation also felt that while Rodrigues would be comprised within the NES framework, it required a specific approach and treatment within the NES framework itself. It was suggested that the NES team carries out a separate stakeholder consultation in Rodrigues to cover the island's specificities and needs and allow for a set of recommendations and actions to be developed for Rodrigues. This said, Rodrigues will not only benefit from actions and support resulting from relevant actions under the Main NES document and the cross-sector functions.

In the present document, National Export Strategy priority sectors agro-processed foods and fisheries will be detailed for Rodrigues. For both sectors, the following key pieces of analysis were carried out:

- Value chain overview
- Competitiveness constraints
- Opportunities
- Based on these components, the document culminates with a detailed Plan of Action (PoA).

The priorities of the PoA can be summarized through the following four strategic objectives:

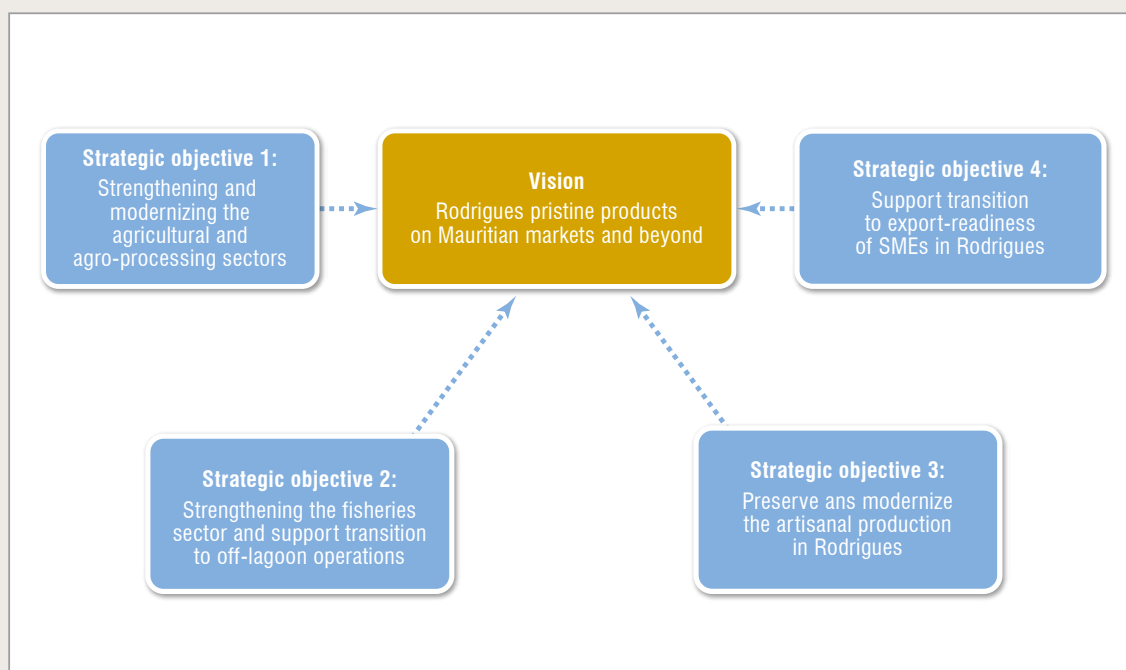




Photo: Giorgio Minguzzi (CC BY-SA 2.0), Fisherman's boats @ Ile aux Cocos, Rodrigues Isl.



Photo: Giorgio Minguzzi (CC BY-SA 2.0), Rodrigues Isl.

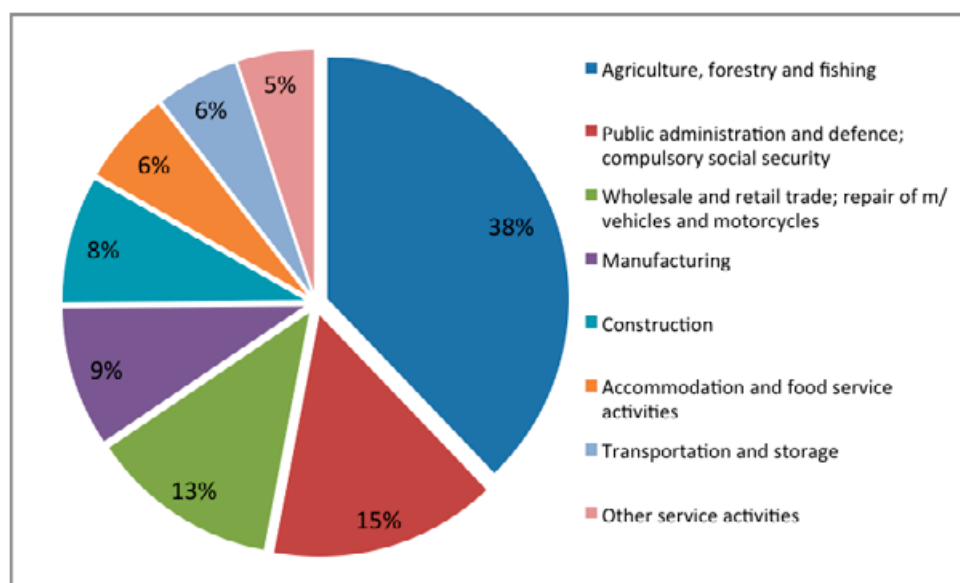
OVERVIEW OF THE PRODUCTIVE SECTORS IN RODRIGUES

The productive structure of Rodrigues is based on a traditional subsistence economy, which depends essentially on the agricultural, livestock, and fisheries sectors. The output from these primary products is predominantly intended for the local market with surplus being exported, exclusively, to the main island of Mauritius. In addition to the primary sector, handicraft products also represent another important source of income to many families in Rodrigues, especially as the tourism sector improved in recent years. The manufacturing sector is limited to a few enterprises and small agro-industries producing primarily for the local market.

Key products from Rodrigues include lime, chillies, red beans, honey, pickles (locally known as “achards”), octopus, as well as other agricultural products including onions, red beans and maize.

Rodrigues has a workforce of about 17,990, of whom 6,075, that is around 38%, are currently employed, in the agricultural and fisheries sectors (see Figure 1 below). The economy of the island is entirely reliant on micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

Figure 1: *Employment by industrial group - Island of Rodrigues, 2015*



Source: Statistics Mauritius



Photo: Giorgio Minguzzi (CC BY-SA 2.0), Rodrigues Isl.

AGRICULTURAL SECTOR OVERVIEW

Rodrigues has so far been dependent on agriculture and fisheries, its economy based on a subsistence type of agriculture, stock rearing and fishing¹. The sector, consisting almost exclusively of MSMEs, constitutes the main pillar of the economy and captures, together with the fisheries sector, about one third of the labour force (Figure 1).

Agriculture in Rodrigues is characterized mainly in the production of staple food, including red beans, lime, chillies, maize, cassava, breadfruits, potatoes and sweet potatoes. Other important food crops include onions, garlic, cabbage, tomatoes and creepers, including chayote (*chouchou*), zucchini, cucumber and pumpkins. The production of coffee has also started on a pilot basis since 2015.

The island has developed a unique agricultural identity specializing in products such as lemons, chillies and red beans and enjoys an established reputation for its traditional agro-processed products, notably pickles (*achards*), and other preparation such as sweet-and-sour chutney (*aigres doux*), candied fruits and chili pastes. Mostly women are engaged in agro-processing activities in Rodrigues.

As indicated earlier, the sector produces primarily for the local market, and once the local subsistence requirements are met, the surplus is exported to Mauritius. Main agricultural exports, in addition to livestock, include onions, lime, red beans and small chillies. Small volumes of traditionally-processed food items, such as pickled fruits, aigres doux and chili pastes are also exported to Mauritius.



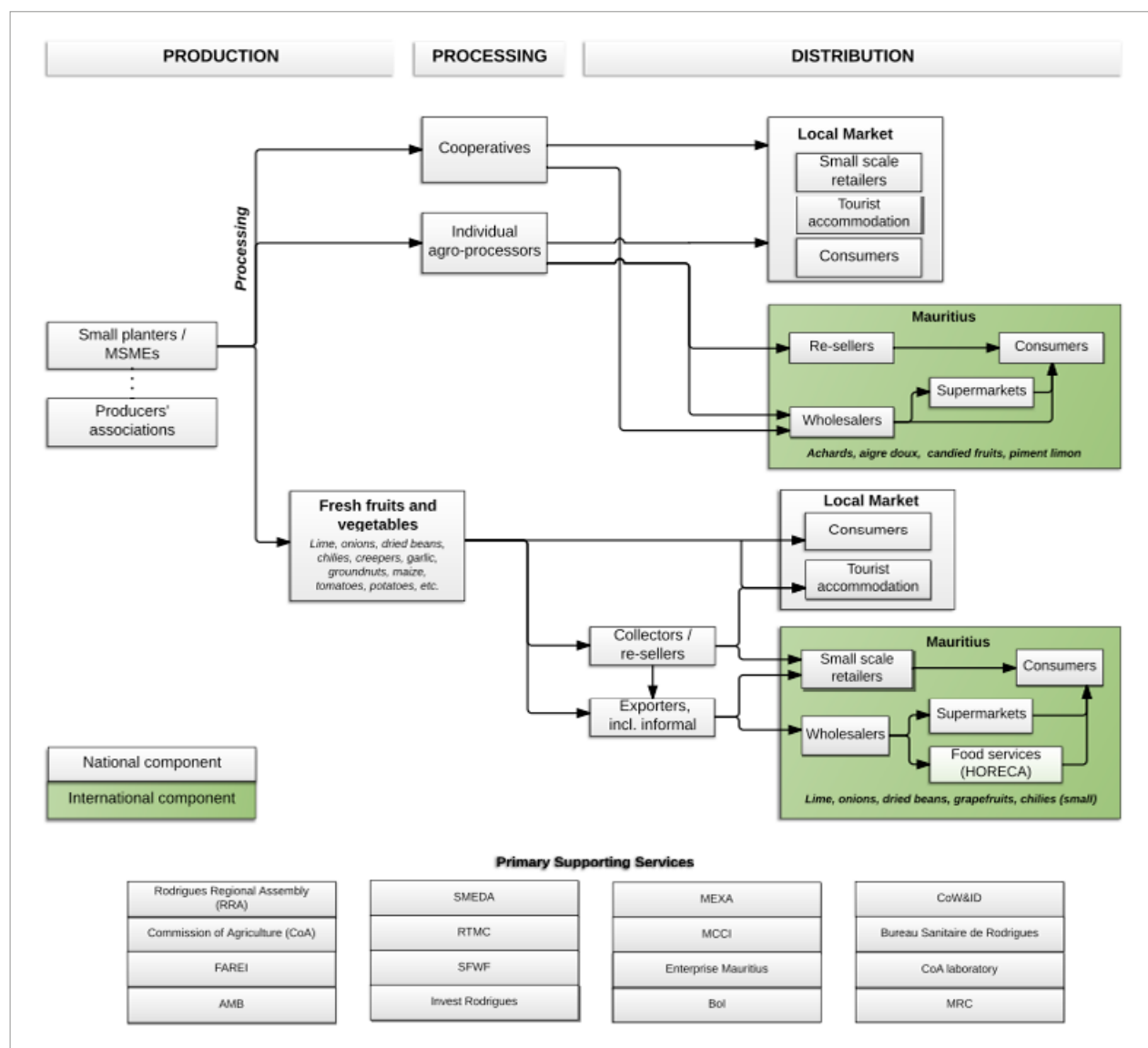
Photo: Alexandra Golovko (ITC)

Given its importance, the agricultural and agro-processing sectors are viewed as key segments contributing to the economic development of Rodrigues. The development of the agricultural sector is another important element of agricultural development strategy of Rodrigues.

1. From Investment guide to Rodrigues

THE VALUE CHAIN

Figure 2 : Value chain of the agricultural sector



The main actors involved in the agricultural value-chain

Production

To date, and for some specific products such as small chilies, lime and honey, the production of raw materials, i.e. fresh fruits and vegetables, is carried out entirely by smallholders' planters and producers, sometimes organized in producers' associations.

Processing

Traditional agro-processed products such as pickles (*achards*) and sweet-and-sour chutney (*aigres doux*) are generally produced in small quantities by individuals, mainly women, using their own kitchen for the transformation of the products.

A proportion of planters also sell their products to cooperatives which then transform the products (e.g. juice extraction from lime - the first shipment of 1.2 tons of frozen lime juice was made in September 2016 to Domaine du Labourdonnais Ltd. Following a request made for 3.0 tons per month) by using community kitchens when available.

The federation of cooperatives also plays a key role in processing and transforming raw materials.

Distribution

Processed products are mainly sold on the local market, either directly to consumers or to tourist accommodations, or through small-scale retailers. A small portion of the local production of processed food is shipped to Mauritius through Mauritian wholesalers or re-sellers, provided the products have been certified. The products are then sold either directly to the consumers or through supermarkets.

Similarly, fresh products, if not consumed locally are directly sold on the local market, including tourist accommodations, by the producers. For some specific products including lime, onions and small chilies, collectors and exporters also purchase them directly from farmers to be sold in the Mauritian market. Local collectors then sell the products either to Mauritian exporters or through a network of small re-sellers in Mauritius. On the other hand, registered (as opposed to informal) exporters work hand-in-hand with Mauritian wholesalers to reach HORECA (Hotel/Restaurant/Café) companies and supermarkets.

Another important actor in the agricultural value chain is the Agricultural Marketing Board. With a view to enhancing the income of planters in Rodrigues, the Board purchases the whole surplus production of onions, garlic, saffron, ginger and red beans at guaranteed prices for the Mauritian market.

KEY CONSTRAINTS

The agricultural and agro-processing sector in Rodrigues is facing major difficulties in its efforts to shift from subsistence to cash-crop farming, focusing on higher value-added products.

Poor quality of the local production

The major constraint preventing the agro-processing sector in exporting its products relates to the insufficient quality of both raw materials and processed products.

The sector is characterized by a low level of mechanization and the reliance on traditional agricultural practices with limited access to modern and mechanized equipment. Appropriate storage facilities also appear to be lacking, causing significant post-harvest loss and affecting the quality of the products.

Looking more specifically at the transformation process, notably for the production of pickles and sweet- and-sour chutney, it appears that the individual kitchens used by the majority of the agro-processors in Rodrigues often

do not meet Mauritian safety standards. Limited access to purified, chlorinated water in those kitchens affects the quality of the products greatly and prevents processors from obtaining certifications. There is also no systematic control of the products transformed in Rodrigues.

Lack of technical know-how

The importance of inculcating modern farm practices and quality control among farmers and planters in Rodrigues has been highlighted during the consultations.

Local planters and agro-processors currently lack the training and technical support to enable them to improve on the processing techniques of local products and to foster the adoption of new technologies in agro-processing. Particular areas of focus for monitoring and capacity-building on a continuous basis include harvesting and post-harvesting handling of commodities, quality management, production systems, food preservation techniques, processing equipment and business skills.

Poor marketability of the products made in Rodrigues

The lack of branding and the inadequate labelling of the products of Rodrigues contribute to the poor marketability of the local agro-products.

Compulsory indications that should appear on a product label are generally incomplete in Rodrigues, including information relating to the traceability and the obligatory indications of origin of a product, a prerequisite to export to Mauritius and to the European Union. Labels should also be improved from an aesthetic point of view to improve the marketability of Rodrigues' ethnic food. Given their uniqueness, there is also a need to improve on the branding of the products of Rodrigues to improve their commercialization. Initiatives are ongoing to tackle the issue, namely through the development of the label *Rodrigues Naturellement*. In addition, locally processed products suffer from defective, poor quality or untidy packaging, especially the jars.

Limited value addition and low level of diversification of the production

The agro-processing sector in Rodrigues currently proposes a limited range of low value-added products comprising several traditionally processed food items, including pickles (*achards*), sweet-and-sour chutney (*aïgres doux*), candied fruits and chili pastes. These products require minimum processing and fetch relatively low prices on the market.

This low level of diversification of the products (same ingredients, labelling, etc.) generates competition between the producers and contributes to driving the prices down. If initiatives are ongoing to identify new products derived from

lime and honey, additional efforts should be made for the promotion of higher value-added production and to enhance the marketability of the ethnic food made in Rodrigues.

OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities exist for the agricultural and agro-processing sectors in Rodrigues, opening the way for a shift from subsistence to cash-crop farming, and focusing on higher value-added products.

Adding value by targeting niche markets

Given the uniqueness of the traditionally processed food items of Rodrigues and the specific characteristics of some agricultural products, including small chillies, lime, honey, and more recently coffee, there is great potential for adding value in this sector. A first step towards achieving that goal is the identification of high value speciality products which can sustain local demand as well as having export potential, targeting niche markets for tropical and ethnic products.

Value addition can also be achieved by exploring the possibility of developing new products derived from the agricultural sector, leveraging on technology and agricultural sciences. Action has already been initiated in this regard as research activities are currently conducted for the lime and honey sub-sectors at the Centre International de Developpement Pharmaceutique (CIDP) in Mauritius for potential use in the cosmetics industry.

Create value through the development of organic farming

Environmental protection is a key element in Rodrigues' overall development strategy that needs to be capitalized upon, in particular, in the agricultural sector. With the rising demand for organic products, expanding into organic products value chains represent promising opportunities for the creation of value. Bio-farming should therefore be encouraged on a wider scale across the island and a special emphasis must be laid on investment in organic farming activities.

The PoA accordingly proposes means to develop the organic label of the Rodriguan agricultural produce, with emphasis on the development of its export opportunities. To achieve this objective, appropriate certifications should be obtained (ECOCERT, PGI) and natural farming techniques implemented.

Improved access to markets

Maritime and air access infrastructures are being developed to improve accessibility to the island.

The airport renovation due to start in 2017 will allow international flights and larger aircraft such as A319 airbuses to reach from Réunion and other regional centres. Since May 2015, Air Austral has been operating twice-weekly flights on the Reunion-Rodrigues route, hence offering increased trade opportunities for the island. The acquisition of an appropriate new vessel for both merchandise and passenger transport, replacing the Mauritius Pride, will also provide greater opportunities for local producers and agro-processors to export their products to Mauritius, provided the products have been certified.

Retaining value through the development of agro-processing activities locally

As stated earlier, the specific characteristics of some agricultural products such as chillies, lime, honey, and red beans offer a great potential for product diversification and to generate higher value-added.

In addition to the production of ethnic food items, some degree of processing locally produced commodities is already taking place in the main island of Mauritius, notably for canning and for the production of lime juice through partnerships with Mauritian companies Sarjua Conserverie and Les Vergers de Labourdonnais. At this stage the role of the local producers in the value chain is limited to providing the raw materials, capturing only a limited value. Opportunities, however, exist for the sector to move up the value chain and to retain higher value in Rodrigues, especially by attracting Mauritian and other foreign companies to establish processing units locally.

The Rodrigues Naturellement label

There is great opportunity for the agricultural and agro-processing sectors to add significant value to their products through the development of the umbrella brand Rodrigues Naturellement. This brand groups companies from the agro, fisheries, tourism and handicraft sectors.

Rodrigues Naturellement is a label that will allow various products from Rodrigues to be certified with an emphasis on Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) certification, organic production, fair trade and registered designation of origin. In addition to offering better guarantees for customer protection, the initiative will contribute greatly to increasing the visibility and marketability of the local products. The product certification component will allow producers to obtain pre-market certificates, ensuring that the products shipped to Mauritius are compliant with the Food Act/Food Regulations.

In addition it is to be noted that a label for honey has been worked out with CIRAD called "La Maison de Miel" and is operational since December 2016.



Photo: Giorgio Minguzzi (CC BY-SA 2.0), *Flowers, Rodrigues Island.*



Photo: Giorgio Minguzzi (CC BY-SA 2.0), *Rodrigues Isl.*



Photo: Pascal Guillaumet (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0).

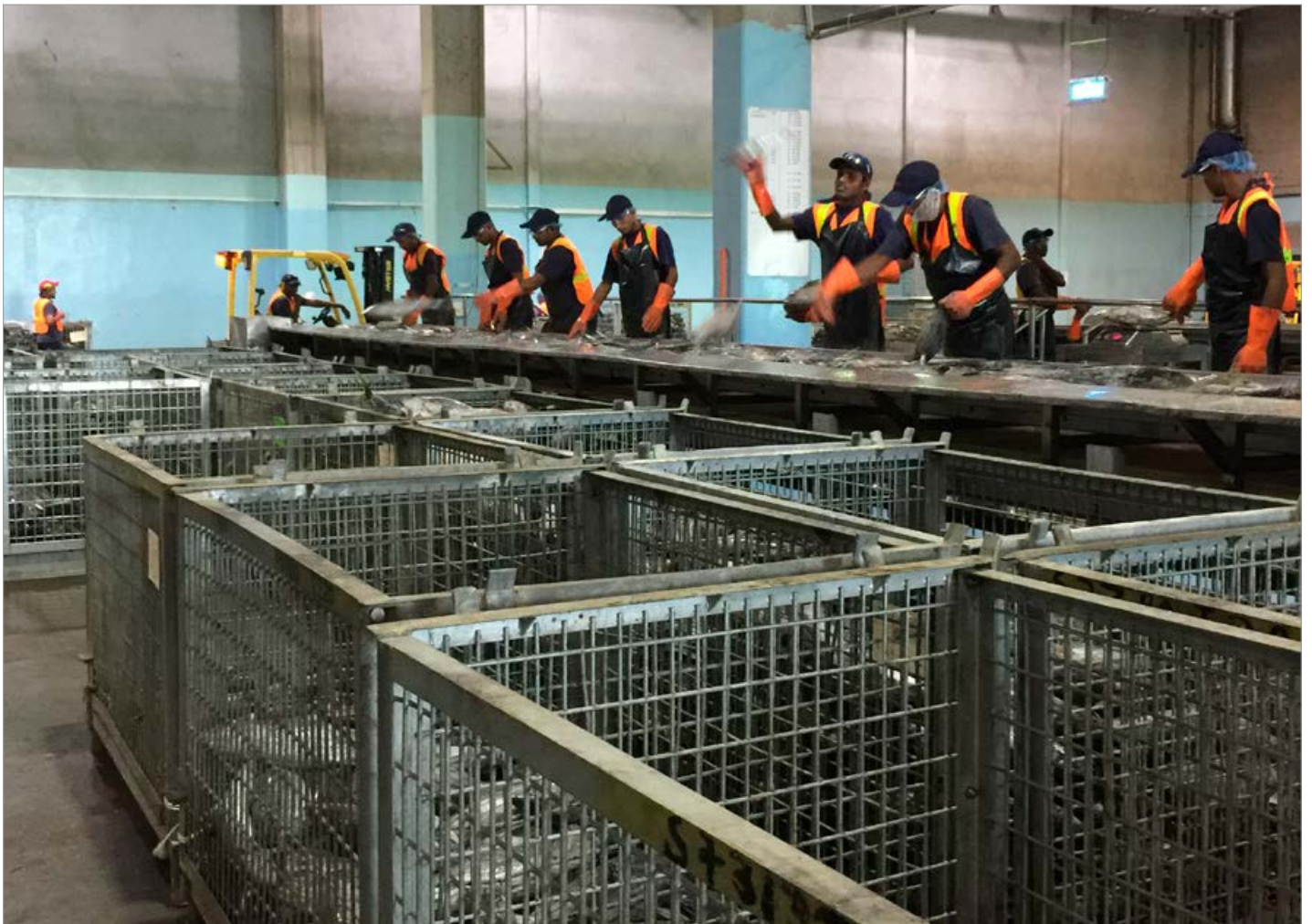


Photo: Alexandra Golovko (ITC)

FISHERIES SECTOR OVERVIEW

The fisheries sector in Rodrigues involves about 5,000 to 6,000 fishermen, of whom 1,221 were registered in 2014. Majority of the landed fish is captured in-lagoon with catches being mostly made of octopuses and lagoon fish.

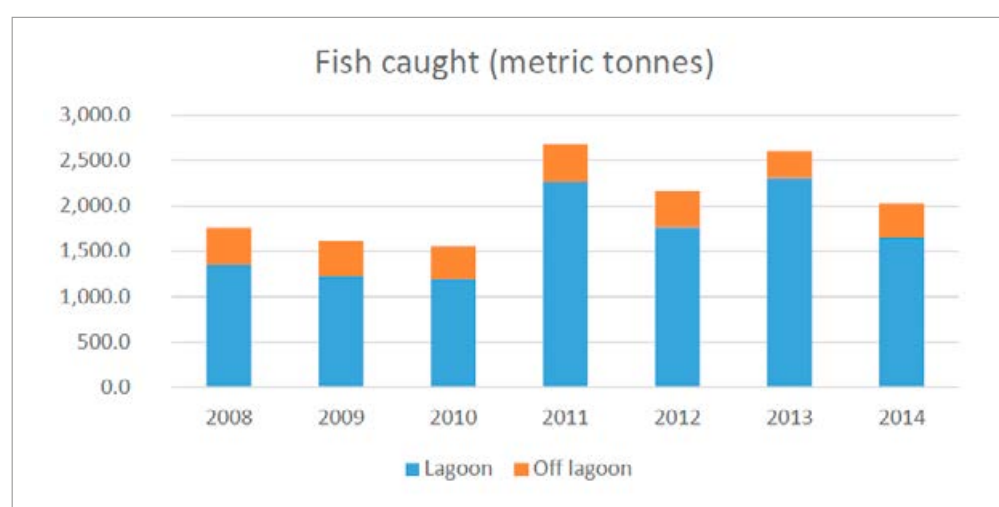
There are also five vessels operated by the Maison des Pêcheurs through fishers' cooperatives. They were formerly operated by the Rodrigues General Fishing Co. Ltd (RGF) in Port Mathurin that was fully owned by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (RRA). Vessels fish outside the lagoon for a maximum of 36 consecutive hours at sea. Owing to the impact of in-lagoon fishing on local fish stocks, the RRA has favoured off-lagoon fishing through this initiative, as resources appear sufficient in the area. The figure below illustrates proportion of in-lagoon and off-lagoon catch levels up until 2014.

In 2012, the Octopus Closed Season Regulations 2012 was adopted by the RRA to limit octopus fishing from mid-August to mid-October. For the first year the outcome appeared positive as the volume of octopus caught increased by 49% over 2011. Since then the seasonal closure was implemented four additional times.

Demand for fresh fish from Rodrigues is growing in Mauritius, especially in the tourism sector (hotels). A growing share of local catch is exported to this sector and, as a result, fish became quite expensive for local buyers.

As in the agro-sector, the fish and octopus landed in Rodrigues are subject to traditional processing which includes a variety of products such as dried fish and octopus, fish "Vindayé", grilled octopus or spicy preparations based on fish and octopus ("piment poisson" or "piment ourite").

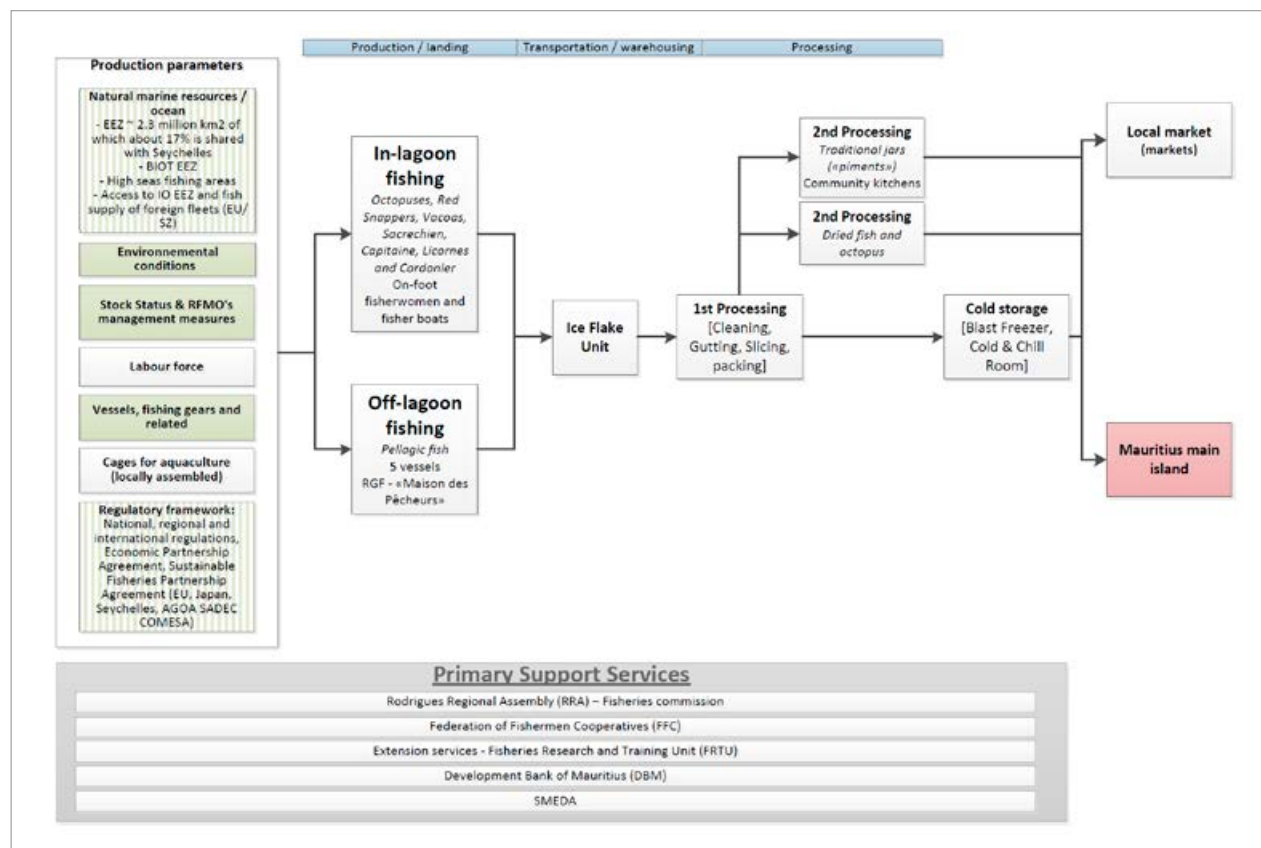
Figure 3 : Fish caught in Rodrigues (2008-2014)



Source: BOI.

THE VALUE CHAIN²

Figure 4 : Value chain of the fisheries sector



2. Smartfish, Value Chain Analysis of Fisheries Sector for Rodrigues, June 2012.

The main actors involved in the fisheries value-chain

Production

As mentioned earlier, landing is done either through traditional in-lagoon fishing, with fishermen operating in traditional wooden barks or walking on shores with nets, or through the newly developing off-lagoon fishing, encouraged by the RRA.

The in-lagoon fishing mostly targets octopuses, Capitaine, Licornes and Cordonier, whereas off-lagoon is focused on demersal and pelagic fish (which has the highest value).

Transportation/warehousing

In-lagoon fish landing is operated through coastal fisheries that provide a structure and basic amenities for cleaning and sorting of fish at landings before primary sale. Out

of 22 of such landing stations, only four are sheltered but do not operate currently.

Maison des Pêcheurs offers a cold storage facility and it is currently being used only for octopuses. There are also two corporate processors with their own facilities. Transportation is done through pick-up vans to collect the raw octopuses from the fish landing areas. Plug-in facilities at the landing ports do not exist.

Processing

Most of the in-lagoon fresh fish is sold whole (un-gutted) directly after landing or at the roadside. Owing to obvious conservation reasons the supply chain is short, geographically limited and products are usually sold in several hours. No handling and preservation are done in view of food safety and quality assurance. The unsold catch is either stored in domestic refrigerators or

is processed into dried salted fish or home-cooked into second level processing products such as fish “vindayé” or “piment poisons” jars.

With the octopus, 40% of the total catch is sold on the local market for direct consumption, through same channels as for the in-lagoon catch. About 10% is left for sun-drying. A part of this dried octopus is sold on the local and export markets while a small quantity is processed (home-cooked) into second level processing such as the “piment ourite” and other jars.

Distribution

About 50% of the total octopus catch is chilled and exported to Mauritius. Some corporate processors also continue to export their fish products to Mauritius through their own facilities.

The rest of the catch is sold on the local market.

Primary support services

In terms of support services, the fisheries sector is aided by the following institutions:

- The fisheries commission under the RRA that intervenes as the main regulating and policy support body;
- The Federation of Fishermen Cooperatives (FFC) which attempts to regroup the numerous cooperatives existing in Rodrigues;
- The Fisheries Research and Training Unit (FRTU) which is the main extension services body for the sector;
- The Development Bank of Mauritius (DBM) which is the main financial supporter to the sector;
- The Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA) which plays an important role in the sector by providing training and financial support to small fishermen.

KEY CONSTRAINTS

The fisheries sector of Rodrigues faces a number of constraints that does not allow it to develop further and transit to a mainly off-lagoon operation.

Supply side

- Costs of off-lagoon fishing are very high (cost of the licence, the cost of vessels maintenance and required reviews, etc.).
- No vessels maintenance technicians are available in Rodrigues. They have to come from Mauritius and it discourages fishermen to inspect their vessels regularly (and minimize intervention costs).

- Owing to the geographic isolation of Rodrigues and poor connections, procuring the appropriate equipment is more costly than on Mauritius (lines, hooks, etc.).
- Long liners are not available in Rodrigues and it is required to bring them from Mauritius to be able to use appropriate off-lagoon vessels.
- Insufficient cold equipment and only one ice-flake factory.
- Absence of handling and preservation practices for raw fish.
- Non-compliance to international sanitary and health standards and to HACCP.
- The diesel cost is very high in Rodrigues and small fishermen do not have efficient practices for navigating in high seas and locating the fish.
- Insufficient training coverage for high-seas navigation (upcoming fishing school project).
- Lack of entrepreneurial and management skills.
- The procedures to get fishing licences are not handled well by Rodriguan fishermen. The fishing service and the national coast guard deliver the clearance. Local fishermen have difficulties when planning their exit at sea (locating the fish, calculating itineraries, etc.). As a comparison, recreational/sportive fishermen are much more experienced and are able to get their licences in time. Local fishermen also lack knowledge on meteorological conditions.
- No use of existing Fishing Aggregating Devices (FADs).

Business environment

- Problems of access to finance for small fishermen. They lack understanding of loan procedures.
- Limited scale of the Fisheries Research and Training Unit (FRTU) which is not able to cover all training requirements on the island.
- Absence of out-bound logistics for export of chilled products to Mauritius.
- There is no coastal fisheries management responsible for monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS).
- No quality control infrastructure.
- No surveillance or regulation of the amateur fishing activities that have an impact on in-lagoon stocks.
- Lack of appropriate infrastructure for fish processing activities.

Market entry

- Restricted markets: only local consumers and visitors.
- Exports are only to Mauritius as the lack of logistics and connections, and the absence of quality management practices currently prevent exports to other centres.

OPPORTUNITIES

Improve visibility of the impact of fisheries on in-lagoon and off-lagoon stocks

- Establish coastal fisheries management to encompass effective monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS).
- Conduct a detailed stock assessment in the lagoon area of Rodrigues and on the fishing banks around the island.
- Compile existing data on pelagic fish stocks available in the EEZ.
- Establish a monitoring mechanism on the 16 FAD installations.

Systematize training provision to fishing cooperatives

- Establish a Fishing school and include its diploma as a requirement for obtaining a fishing license.
- Cover following areas:
 - Stocks preservation and catch monitoring: which species to fish/when.
 - Off-lagoon fishing: off-lagoon species, utilization of FADs, meteorological and oceanographic conditions analyses, use of off-lagoon fishing gear, navigation in high seas, etc.
 - Modern fishing techniques and technologies.
 - Fish handling, once landed, in view of certification for export to Reunion.
 - Business and financial management.
 - Marine Environment and Conservation.

Facilitate transition to off-lagoon fishing

- Establish support programmes for small-scale fisheries transiting to off-lagoon/open-sea tuna, tuna-like and large pelagic fishing and deep-sea fishing.

- Transfer of technologies and technical assistance and cooperation projects.
- Motorization of traditional crafts, use of more efficient fishing techniques, fish prediction data, application of GIS and remote sensing etc.
- Transfer of technology and capacity building in quality assurance.

Improve the operating environment for fisheries and fish processors

- Establish procedural cost rebates.
- Gradually upgrade infrastructure for fisheries operations and compliance with national and international standards (HACCP).
- Declassify the fisheries, aquaculture and fish processing sectors from “commercial electricity users” to “industrial electricity users”.
- Conduct a cost-benefit analysis to assess the relevance and feasibility of developing local maintenance/repair of fishing vessels in Rodrigues.

Pool and modernize fish processing activities

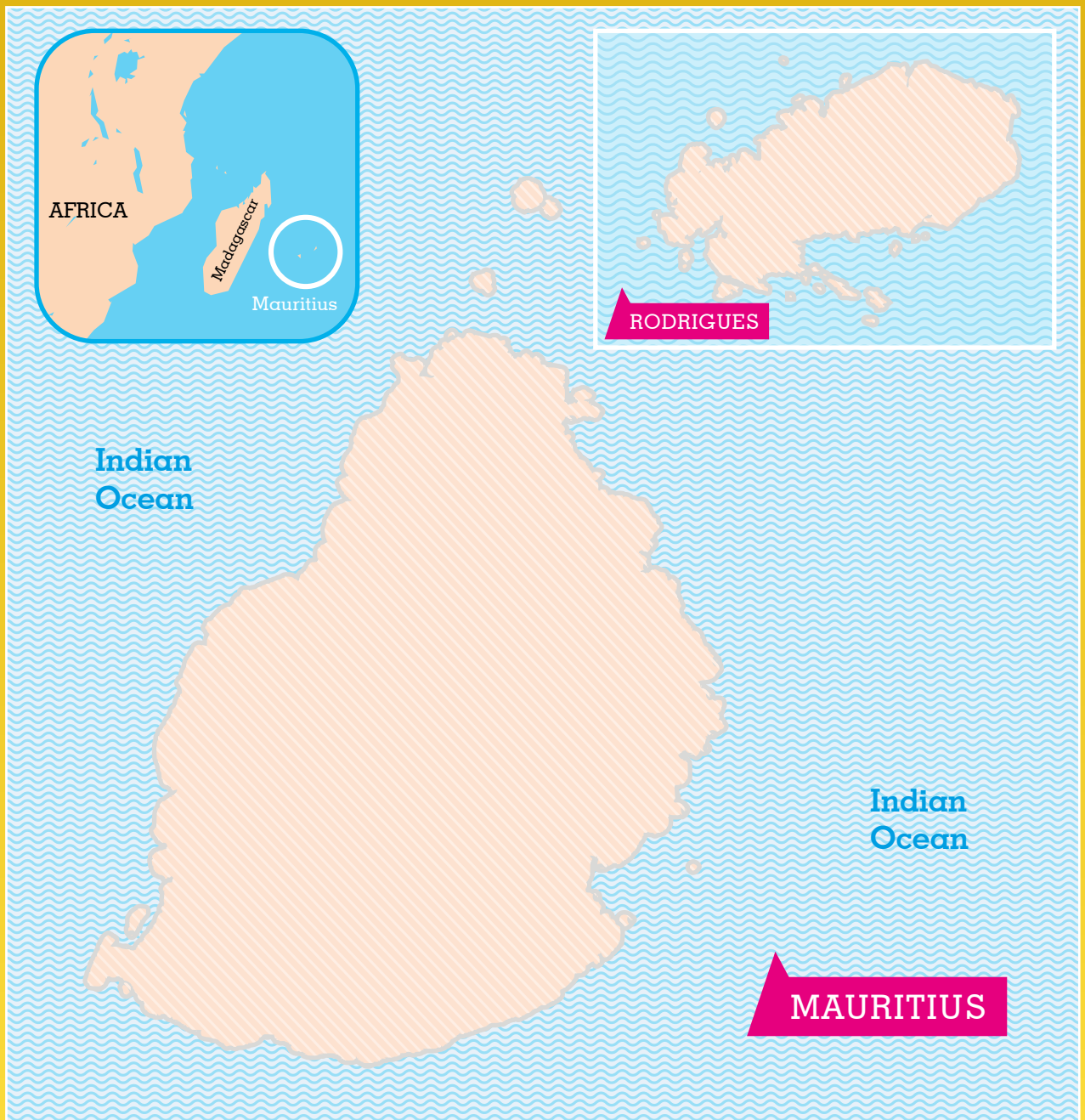
- Promote the development of first level of value addition on fisheries products through retention of a great part of the production of octopus and fish for processing (to prepare dried fish and octopus, as well as grilled and smoked octopus).
- Promote the development of shared facilities for smoking, drying and grilling.
- Promote the development of second level value addition through the usage of dried and smoked seafood in community kitchens for products such as “vindaye poisson”, “piment poisson” and “piment ourite”.
- The Fisheries Research and Training Unit to study traditionally processed fish products to identify ways for better conservation and packaging.

From strategic directions to concrete actions

The following implementation plan details the comprehensive set of activities to be undertaken, grouped along strategic objectives and operational objectives, covering the agricultural, fisheries and artisanal sectors in Rodrigues. The PoA takes into account all specific competitiveness constraints and opportunities identified in order to improve the competitiveness of SMEs in Rodrigues. It also provides a clear and detailed framework for the implementation of the Rodrigues component of the NES Mauritius.

MAURITIUS NATIONAL EXPORT STRATEGY RODRIGUES ISLAND STRATEGY

PLAN OF ACTION



Strategic objective 1 : Strengthening and modernizing the agricultural and agro-processing sectors

Operational objective	Activities	Priority 1=high 2=med 3=low	Implementation period					Beneficiaries	Targets	Lead implementer	Supporting implementers	Possible funding source
			2017	2018	2019	2020	2021					
1.1. Obtain a clear picture of the sector and develop the production of vegetables and fruits	<p>1.1.1. Building on the on-going data collection exercise conducted by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (RRA), undertake a comprehensive mapping study to identify, in each region:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The varieties of fruits and vegetables produced, including the quantity and quality produced » The number of producers / processors of fruits and vegetables, their level of qualification and access to farming and processing equipment » The existing physical infrastructure, including storage facilities <p>1.1.2. Explore, through feasibility studies, the possibility to develop some specific products that have been identified as having much for value addition such as the traditional lime, chilies, red beans, garlic and honey but also looking at less common crops such as banana, papaya, pitaya, noni, and breadfruit.</p> <p>1.1.3. Elaborate a development plan for the extension of the area under cultivation in Rodrigues, including the creation of orchards for smallholder farmers. The initiative should provide sufficient guarantees for the protection of the environment.</p>	1					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » RRA » Agricultural sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Mapping study completed by the end of 2017 	CoA		RRA / donor agencies (UNDP?)	
	<p>1.1.2. Explore, through feasibility studies, the possibility to develop some specific products that have been identified as having much for value addition such as the traditional lime, chilies, red beans, garlic and honey but also looking at less common crops such as banana, papaya, pitaya, noni, and breadfruit.</p>	2					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Planters » Agricultural sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Feasibility studies completed by mid-2018 	CoA	CoA	RRA CIRAD?	
	<p>1.1.3. Elaborate a development plan for the extension of the area under cultivation in Rodrigues, including the creation of orchards for smallholder farmers. The initiative should provide sufficient guarantees for the protection of the environment.</p>	2					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Small farmers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Development plan established by the end of 2018 	CoA		CIRAD?	
	<p>1.1.4. Set up mechanisms to ensure that the potential surplus generated in various crops (including bananas, mangos, papayas, etc.) do not go to waste by finding outlets for domestic surplus and by encouraging agro-processing activities (such as lime juice).</p> <p>Note: Currently, to enhance the income of planters in Rodrigues, the Agricultural Marketing Board (AMB) purchases the surplus production of onion, garlic, saffron, turmeric, ginger and red beans at guaranteed prices.</p>	1					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Agricultural sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Mechanism set by mid-2018 » Surplus production entirely sold for the main crops by 2019 	CoA	AMB	Government Private sector	
	<p>1.1.5. Improve the availability of quality seeds for planters in some sub-sectors, in the production of onions in particular, through the creation of a seed farm.</p>	2					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Agricultural sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Seed farm established by early 2019 	CoA	FAREI	Donor agencies	
1.2. Improve the technical know-how and natural farming techniques	<p>1.2.1. Building on on-going initiatives, provide continuous agricultural training for planters and agro-processors to improve the quality of the production, also promoting organic farming.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Planting techniques » Harvesting and post-harvesting handling techniques, including storage » Efficient production systems » Crop protection » Seed management and seeds selection » Diseases and pests management <p>1.2.2. Develop training courses and conduct training and technical support to enable local farmers to improve on the processing techniques of local products, including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Appropriate technologies and latest techniques » Food preservation techniques » Basic processing equipment, including maintenance » Food packaging 	1					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Agro-processors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Four training courses (groups of 20 people per batch), starting 2018 	SMEDA	CoA	Switch Africa Green Programme (funded by UNOPS / EU)	
	<p>1.2.2. Develop training courses and conduct training and technical support to enable local farmers to improve on the processing techniques of local products, including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Appropriate technologies and latest techniques » Food preservation techniques » Basic processing equipment, including maintenance » Food packaging 	1					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Agro-processors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Four training courses (groups of 20 people per batch), starting 2018 	SMEDA	CoA	Switch Africa Green Programme (funded by UNOPS / EU)	

Strategic objective 1 : Strengthening and modernizing the agricultural and agro-processing sectors

Operational objective	Activities	Priority 1=high 2=med 3=low	Implementation period					Beneficiaries	Targets	Lead implementer	Supporting implementers	Possible funding source
			2017	2018	2019	2020	2021					
1.2. Improve the technical know-how and natural farming techniques	<p>1.2.3. Building on the on-going "Business Plan Write-up " initiative, launch training programmes in business skills on specific topics relevant to the development of the agro-processing sector, including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Business management » Innovation management » Leadership » Business Plan preparation » Cash preparation » Marketing strategy » Opportunity recognition 	2					» Agro-processors	» Four training courses conducted per year (groups of 20 people per batch), starting 2017	SMEDA/ Invest Rodrigues	CoA		
	<p>1.2.4. Develop a pilot orchard initiative – as a demonstrator – for the production of previously identified fruit and vegetable varieties.</p> <p>Specifics of the assistance also include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Build capacities and knowledge on production, including soil analysis and water management, and protection from diseases; » Training on farming, harvesting and post-harvest techniques (cleaning, sorting, grading, storage, etc.); » Showcase the different fruit and vegetable varieties and the existing production technologies through pilot farms 	2					» Agro-processors	» Pilot orchard to be ready by the end of 2018	CoA		UNDP?	
1.3. Provide farmers with the required equipment and access to basic commodities and infrastructures	<p>1.3.1. Building on the scheme for the "modernization of SMEs" in Rodrigues2, enhance farmers' and processors' access to farming and processing equipment by encouraging pooling of equipment through community kitchens, cooperatives and incubators.</p> <p>This will enhance access to basic processing equipment and facilities and improve the level of mechanization of the sector.</p> <p>1.3.2. Support the RRA's initiative to set up an SME Park for entrepreneurs involved in agro-processing and handicraft. Playing both role of a cluster and an incubator. "the park will provide the necessary logistics and infrastructure for the production of high quality value-added products under norms and required standard"</p> <p>1.3.3. Ensure a greater supply of distilled water, i.e. purified, chlorinated water, to agro-processors and cooperatives, a prerequisite to comply with the Food Act regulations and to obtain the Pre-Market Certificate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Installation of small and affordable UV-treatment unit to agro-processors <p>1.3.4. Establish irrigation facilities for planters such as pump sets, canals and drainage wherever irrigation water is available.</p> <p>Disseminate knowledge of efficient use of irrigation systems</p> <p>1.3.5. Provide technical assistance to maximize the use of the recently created seawater desalination facilities to tackle the issue of water availability in the island. The facilities are operational but are not working at full capacity yet.</p>	1					» Agro-processors	» 50% increase compared to the 2017 baseline	SMEDA	CoA	/ donor agencies	
	<p>1.3.2. Support the RRA's initiative to set up an SME Park for entrepreneurs involved in agro-processing and handicraft. Playing both role of a cluster and an incubator. "the park will provide the necessary logistics and infrastructure for the production of high quality value-added products under norms and required standard"</p> <p>1.3.3. Ensure a greater supply of distilled water, i.e. purified, chlorinated water, to agro-processors and cooperatives, a prerequisite to comply with the Food Act regulations and to obtain the Pre-Market Certificate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Installation of small and affordable UV-treatment unit to agro-processors <p>1.3.4. Establish irrigation facilities for planters such as pump sets, canals and drainage wherever irrigation water is available.</p> <p>Disseminate knowledge of efficient use of irrigation systems</p> <p>1.3.5. Provide technical assistance to maximize the use of the recently created seawater desalination facilities to tackle the issue of water availability in the island. The facilities are operational but are not working at full capacity yet.</p>	1					» Agro-processors	» SME park set-up and operational in 2017	CoA	SMEDA, Invest Rodrigues	/ donor agencies (EU?)	
	<p>1.3.3. Ensure a greater supply of distilled water, i.e. purified, chlorinated water, to agro-processors and cooperatives, a prerequisite to comply with the Food Act regulations and to obtain the Pre-Market Certificate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Installation of small and affordable UV-treatment unit to agro-processors <p>1.3.4. Establish irrigation facilities for planters such as pump sets, canals and drainage wherever irrigation water is available.</p> <p>Disseminate knowledge of efficient use of irrigation systems</p> <p>1.3.5. Provide technical assistance to maximize the use of the recently created seawater desalination facilities to tackle the issue of water availability in the island. The facilities are operational but are not working at full capacity yet.</p>	1					» Agro-processors	» 100% of the kitchens have access to distilled water by 2019	Commission of Public Infrastructure	Irrigation Authority / CWA / Water Resources Unit	/ donor agencies (UNEP?)	
	<p>1.3.4. Establish irrigation facilities for planters such as pump sets, canals and drainage wherever irrigation water is available.</p> <p>Disseminate knowledge of efficient use of irrigation systems</p> <p>1.3.5. Provide technical assistance to maximize the use of the recently created seawater desalination facilities to tackle the issue of water availability in the island. The facilities are operational but are not working at full capacity yet.</p>	1					» Farmers	» 50% of the cultivated area is equipped for irrigation by 2021	CoA	Irrigation Authority / CWA / Water Resources Unit	/ donor agencies (UNEP?)	
	<p>1.3.5. Provide technical assistance to maximize the use of the recently created seawater desalination facilities to tackle the issue of water availability in the island. The facilities are operational but are not working at full capacity yet.</p>	2					» Entire population	» Seawater desalination facilities used at their full capacity by the end of 2018	Commission of Public Infrastructure	Irrigation Authority / CWA / Water Resources Unit	/ donor agencies (UNEP?)	

Strategic objective 2: Strengthening the fisheries sector and support transition to off-lagoon operations

Operational objective	Activities	Priority 1=high 2=med 3=low	Implementation period					Beneficiaries	Targets	Lead implementer	Supporting implementers	Possible funding source
			2017	2018	2019	2020	2021					
2.1. Improve visibility of fisheries on in-lagoon and off-lagoon stocks	<p>2.1.1. In connection with the national EEZ non-pelagic stock assessment, conduct a detailed stock assessment in the lagoon area of Rodrigues.</p> <p>The study should particularly focus on the stocks of local lagoon shrimps, and octopuses, as well as other frequently captured fish such as Red Snappers, Vacocas, Sacrechien, Capitaine, Licorne and Cordonier (Signatus Sutor). The following specific considerations need to be taken into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Concerning the shrimps, the study should focus on possibilities to tap into existing stocks to initiate an aquaculture activity and the level of adaptability of the local species for cultivation. Results of the study to be used to orient further investment in aquaculture. » Concerning octopuses, the study should focus on the effects of the "closed season" regulation of 2012 on the stocks' levels in view of a possible adjustment of the regulation to limit further the catch of octopuses for an additional month. <p>2.1.2. Establish coastal fisheries management to encompass effective monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) measures.</p> <p>In addition to the coastal management, complement the current data collection exercise conducted by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly with a detailed census of fisheries and their catch levels.</p>	1					» Fisheries sector	» Resource mapping finalized in the entire EEZ at the end of the five years of implementation, and by end 2018 for the Rodrigues component.	Ministry of Ocean Economy (MoOE) & fisheries commission	Fisheries Research and Training Unit (FRTU), International fisheries expertise, PMO (Rodrigues Division)		
	<p>2.1.3. Compile existing data on pelagic fish stocks available in the EEZ for small-scale off-lagoon fishing in the Rodrigues area.</p> <p>2.1.4. Establish a monitoring mechanism on the 16 FAD installations next to Rodrigues to have a better understanding of the fish availability and to proceed with the required maintenance.</p> <p>The monitoring should also limit the amateur and leisure fisheries using the FADs.</p>	2					» Fisheries	» Pelagic fish stocks off-lagoon are documented	Fisheries commission	MoOE		
	<p>2.2.1. Establish a Fishing school, and include its diploma as a requirement for obtaining a fishing licence.</p> <p>Affiliate all fishermen cooperatives to the fisheries school.</p> <p>Equip the Fisheries Research and Training Unit with appropriate equipment and infrastructure for better conducting research in view of better and more sustainable management of fisheries and marine resources.</p>	1					» Fisheries	» FAD installations' monitoring mechanism in place	Fisheries commission	RPF, ROFCF		
2.2. Systematize training provision to fishing cooperatives	<p>2.2.1. Establish a Fishing school, and include its diploma as a requirement for obtaining a fishing licence.</p> <p>Affiliate all fishermen cooperatives to the fisheries school.</p> <p>Equip the Fisheries Research and Training Unit with appropriate equipment and infrastructure for better conducting research in view of better and more sustainable management of fisheries and marine resources.</p> <p>2.2.2. The school to provide specific training on the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Stocks preservation and catch monitoring : which species to fish/when » Off-lagoon fishing: off-lagoon species, utilization of FADs, meteorological and oceanographic conditions' analysis, use of off-lagoon fishing gear, navigation in high seas, etc. » Modern fishing techniques and technologies. » Fish handling, once landed, in view of certification for export to Reunion. » Business and financial management. » Develop easy-to-use training materials and handouts for these topics that would be shared through the cooperatives. 	1					» Fisheries	» Fisheries school established » A formal network is established between the school and all cooperatives	Fisheries commission	FRTU		
							» Fisheries	» Fisheries school is providing required training » At least one handout per topic developed	Fishing school	FRTU, Fisheries commission		

Strategic objective 2: Strengthening the fisheries sector and support transition to off-lagoon operations

Operational objective	Activities	Priority 1=high 2=med 3=low	Implementation period					Beneficiaries	Targets	Lead implementer	Supporting implementers	Possible funding source
			2017	2018	2019	2020	2021					
2.3. Facilitate transition to off-lagoon fishing	<p>2.3.1. Establish support programmes for small-scale fisheries transiting to off-lagoon/open-sea tuna, tuna-like and large pelagic fishing and deep-sea demersal fishing through ad hoc technical support and provision of expertise.</p> <p>Connect small-scale fishermen to existing leisure pelagic fish enterprises to share practices.</p> <p>Compile existing data on pelagic and demersal fish stocks available in the EEZ for small-scale off-lagoon fishing in the Rodrigues area. (N.B: Most pelagics are migratory so its more difficult to assess the stock as compared to demersal stock.)</p> <p>2.3.2. Support the development of off-lagoon fisheries through attraction of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Transfer of technologies and technical assistance and cooperation projects. » Motorization of traditional crafts, use of more efficient fishing techniques, fish prediction data, application of GIS and remote sensing etc. » Transfer of technology and capacity building in quality assurance. <p>In a controlled manner, encourage investment in moderate-scale industrial off-lagoon fishing project, considering the importance given to preservation and willingness to participate in capacity building projects targeting local SMEs (see activity 4.1.5.).</p>	1					» Fisheries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » At least one support initiative is put in place » At least 1 leisure enterprise willing to participate in capacity building of local SMEs. 	Fisheries commission	FRTU, RPFO, ROFCF		
2.4. Improve the operating environment for fisheries and fish processors	<p>2.4.1. Establish procedural cost rebates in the following specific cases: High-seas licence: for SMEs willing to transit to off-lagoon for the first three years of activity. Fees of ship control: for SMEs willing to transit to off-lagoon for the first three years of activity.</p> <p>2.4.2. Gradually upgrade infrastructure for fisheries operations and compliance with national and international standards (HACCP) in view of developing fresh and chilled fish exports to Mauritius and Reunion. The following infrastructure will need upgrades: » Renovation of the existing cold chamber and envisage sharing the facility. » Increase and mutualize the local production of flake ice. » Fishing ports and Fish Landing Stations (FLS). » Fleet capacity for offshore fishing.</p> <p>2.4.3. In alignment with activity 2.5.1. of the NES fisheries POA: Declassify the fisheries, aquaculture and fish processing sectors from "commercial electricity users" to "industrial electricity users" to allow a rebated electricity rate of 10 US\$ cents per KW/hour and about 13 US\$ cents in Rodrigues, to ensure competitiveness.</p> <p>2.4.4. Conduct a cost-benefit analysis to assess the relevance and feasibility of developing local maintenance/repair of fishing vessels in Rodrigues, taking into consideration the development objectives of the industry and the environmental impacts of the development of a vessels' repairation centre.</p>	2					» Fisheries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » At least one technical assistance project attracted » At least five small-scale fisheries upgraded equipment through the five years of the NES » At least one technical assistance project in quality assurance » At least one investment in off-lagoon fishing by end 2021. 	Fisheries commission, MoOE	BOI, FRTU, RPFO, ROFCF		
		3					» Fisheries	» Two rebates established by end 2017.	Fisheries commission	MoOE		
		2					» Fisheries	» At least one upgrade initiative launched in the five years of implementation in each area.	Fisheries commission	MoOE		
		1					» Entire industry	» Seafood sector classified under Industrial electricity user	Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities, Fisheries commission	Regional Assembly, MoOE		
		2					» Fisheries	» Based on the cost-benefit analysis decision is taken to develop the local vessels repair or not.	Fisheries commission	MoOE		

Strategic objective 2: Strengthening the fisheries sector and support transition to off-lagoon operations

Operational objective	Activities	Priority 1=high 2=med 3=low	Implementation period					Beneficiaries	Targets	Lead implementer	Supporting implementers	Possible funding source
			2017	2018	2019	2020	2021					
2.5. Pool and modernize fish processing activities	2.5.1. Promote the development of first level value addition on fisheries products through retention of a great part of the production of octopus and fish for processing (to prepare dried fish and octopus, as well as grilled and smoked octopus). Promote the development of shared facilities for smoking, drying and grilling of seafood products such as the St Gabriel shared processing unit currently being put in place in the South East Region.	2					» Seafood processing	» At least two new common processing facility set up by end 2021.	Fisheries commission	FRTU		
	2.5.2. Promote the development of second level value addition through the usage of dried and smoked seafood in community kitchens for products such as "vindaye poisson", "piment poisson" and "piment ourite". The agro-processing community kitchens could be used for further development of these products. (to be linked with activity 4.4.4.).	2					» Seafood processing	» At least five new community kitchens set up by end 2021	Fisheries commission	FRTU		
	2.5.3. The Fisheries Research and Training Unit to study traditionally processed fish products to identify ways for better conservation and packaging. Research should also cover possibilities for diversification of locally processed products.	2					» Seafood processing	» At least two study projects developed on local fish processing	FRTU	Fisheries Commission		

Strategic objective 3: Preserve and modernize the artisanal production in Rodrigues

Operational objective	Activities	Priority 1=high 2=med 3=low	Implementation period					Beneficiaries	Targets	Lead im-plementer	Supporting imple-menters	Possible funding source
			2017	2018	2019	2020	2021					
3.1. Ensure sustainable supply of local natural materials for artisanal products	3.1.1. Multiply replanting initiatives for the “vacocas parasol” (<i>Pandanus heterocarpus</i>) on non-agricultural areas and close to shores, to preserve this endemic species but also to ensure sufficient plantations for long-term provision of materials for local artisans. Explore possibilities of having a second usable natural material to replace the vacocas to minimise impact on the plantations.	1					» Artisans	» At least five new planting initiatives are initiated during the five-year period » Study on potential alternative raw material is carried out by end-2018	Commission of environment and others	CoA		
	3.1.2. Develop planting initiatives for the “aloès” (<i>Furcraea foetida</i>) in non-agricultural areas to ensure sufficient supply for artisans. Support artisans in the development of yarns extraction techniques while minimizing the humidity in the fibres. The machinery supplied through SMEDA’s assistance is not functioning with the current technique owing to excess humidity in the leaves (dried leaves are too fragile to be used as well).	2					» Artisans	» At least three new planting initiatives are initiated during the five-year period » Support initiatives carried out for artisans to process Aloès yarns.	Commission of environment and others	CoA		
	3.1.3. Develop planting initiatives for the “vétivier” (<i>Veliveria zizanioides</i>) in non-agricultural areas to ensure sufficient supply for artisans. Promote the usage of the plant for tilling purposes in agriculture, since it can be very efficient in this use. Once grown, the plants can be shared between farmers and artisans.	2					» Artisans » Agricultural sector	» At least three new planting initiatives are initiated during the five-year period » At least three pilot tilling areas put in place in the five-year period	Commission of environment and others	CoA		
3.2. Facilitate cluster textile and machinery imports	3.2.1. Provide training on sourcing techniques to artisans (identification of sourcing company based on the competitiveness of their products, etc.) and promote the use of the cooperatives as a means to reduce sourcing cost through collective sourcing.	1					» Artisans	» 30 to 40 artisans are trained per year	SMEDA	RRA		
	3.2.2. Place cooperatives as coordinating bodies for bulk orders to ensure best possible prices for all the players. The cluster approach is to be put in place where the artisans are located on the island.	2					» Artisans	» Cooperatives established as common sourcing facilities	Artisans’ cooperatives	SMEDA		
3.3. Develop local product design capacity	3.3.1. Invite international designers to examine artisanal products of Rodrigues and come up with a number of proposed new designs on key products such as pottery, jewellery, bags and textiles. The designs must respect the traditional visuals characterising Rodriguan products, but come up with new details and adjustments which will cater to international tourists. The new designs will be presented and discussed with artisans’ cooperatives and a selection process will be carried out. The selected designs will be retained and artisans will be trained on the manufacturing side.	2					» Artisans	» International designers specialized in pottery, and accessories are invited to present new designs. » New designs selected. » 30 to 40 artisans are trained per year on the development of the newly designed products.	SMEDA/Responsible Commission	RRA		
	3.3.2. Following the provision of international expertise, provide training to artisans on product design that is aligned with international buyers’ preferences (taking the newly designed products as a starting point) and on the identification of best suited/more cost-effective raw materials for their products.	2					» Artisans	» 30 to 40 artisans are trained per year to develop new designs	SMEDA	RRA		
	3.3.1. Develop a more generalized training through SMEDA on manufacturing techniques and best practices (in connection with activities 3.2.1., 3.3.1 and 3.3.2.). Develop a registration and monitoring system to identify trained artisans and follow up on their new products and results.	1					» Artisans	» 30 to 40 artisans are trained per year on manufacturing techniques » A training monitoring system is put in place	SMEDA	RRA		
3.4. Reinforce and systematize training provision and promote the sector among young people	3.4.2. Promote local artisanal products at schools as part of the Rodriguan heritage to be preserved and modernized through new ideas and international design.	1					» Artisans	» Promotional campaign is carried out each year to new students	SMEDA/Responsible Commission for Education	RRA		

Strategic objective 4: Support transition to export-readiness of SMEs in Rodrigues												
Operational objective	Activities	Priority 1=high 2=med 3=low	Implementation period					Beneficiaries	Targets	Lead implementer	Supporting implementers	Possible funding source
			2017	2018	2019	2020	2021					
4.1. Strengthen business linkages with Mauritius and promote investment	4.1.1. Encourage the development of partnerships with Mauritian companies for fresh fruit and vegetable production as well as fish and processed fish products.	1						» Farmers » Cooperatives	» Increase the quantity of fresh fruits sold to Mauritian companies by 10% every year, starting 2018	Deputy Chief Commissioner Office	SMEDA EM	RRA
	4.1.2. Further develop partnerships with Mauritian supermarkets and distributors for finished, processed, products and for handicraft products.	1						» Agro and fish processors » Artisans	» Increase the quantity of processed food sold to Mauritian distributors and supermarkets by 10% every year, starting 2018	Private sector	EM	RRA Private sector
	4.1.3. Develop an E-commerce initiative with Mauritius supported by the creation of a logistics platform for the distribution of products to Mauritius. The RRA is currently considering a partnership with the Mauritian Post for the development of the E-commerce, with payment made through the Mauritian Post.	2						» Agro processors	» E-commerce strategy defined by the end of 2018	RRA	Mauritian Post Private partners	Private
	4.1.4. Increase the participation of agro and fish processors to trade fairs and forums with Mauritian counterparts for knowledge transfer and sharing of best practices. Organize study tours to certified agro and fish processors in Mauritius.	1						» Agro processors	» Organization of a minimum of two trade fairs and one study tour for 20 processors per year in Mauritius, starting 2018	RRA	SMEDA EM	EM
	4.1.5. Create an incentives package to attract Mauritian and international private investors to Rodrigues. In particular, foreign investment could be promoted in very specific areas such as, but not limited to, sustainable/integrated aquaculture projects (for local lagoon shrimps, toothfish, etc.), limited scale off-lagoon fisheries, honey, agro-processing, yoghurt production and chicken processing, provided that investors pay particular attention to sustainable production and conservation.	1						» Entire economy	» Investment package ready by mid-2018	RRA	BOI	RRA
4.2. Establish a microfinance mechanism	4.2.1. Encourage Mauritian banks to develop microfinance tools adapted to SMEs in Rodrigues. Microfinance instruments should include microloans and microcredits for purchasing of small machinery or tools and other working capital expenditures.	2						» SMEs	» At least one commercial bank willing to engage in microfinance pilot initiative by end 2019	RRA	Commercial Banks MauBank	
	4.2.2. The provision of loans should be conditional on receiver following minimum training on financial literacy and entrepreneurial skills (pricing and costing) as well as business management aspects.	2						» SMEs	» Establishment of the mandatory training in cooperation with the commercial bank and SMEDA	Respective commission	Commercial banks, RRA MauBank	
4.3. Improve on the branding and commercialization of the products of Rodrigues	4.2.3. Promote banking and savings culture through sectoral cooperatives and training institutions.	3						» SMEs	» Key concepts of financial literacy are disseminated through sector cooperatives and training institutions	Sector cooperatives, Training institutions	SMEDA	
	4.3.1. In addition to the Scheme on Packaging/label3, improve the packaging and labelling of the products of Rodrigues by seeking the support of professional, renowned, companies operating in the field of commercial and industrial packaging and labelling. This will help improve the overall visual aspects of local products as well as to meet existing standards.	1						» Agro and fish processors	» Service provider(s) identified by mid-2018	RRA		RRA

Strategic objective 4 : Support transition to export-readiness of SMEs in Rodrigues

Operational objective	Activities	Priority 1=high 2=med 3=low	Implementation period					Beneficiaries	Targets	Lead implementer	Supporting implementers	Possible funding source
			2017	2018	2019	2020	2021					
4.3. Improve on the branding and commercialization of the products of Rodrigues	4.3.2. Launch a promotional campaign, in Mauritius and on the international level, for handicraft and artisanal products made in Rodrigues, and the newly developed product designs (in connection with activity 3.3.1.).	1						» Artisans	» Promotional campaign initiated and is visible in Mauritius (in tourist offices and hotels) and abroad (Mauritius diplomatic missions)	RRA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, Enterprise Mauritius	
	4.3.3. Launch call for an international expression of interest for the regular provision of jars, meeting international standards, for the agro- and fish-processing sector. Jars could then be distributed to the agro and fish processors at a subsidized cost. <i>Note:</i> The jars currently imported (generally from China and imported via Mauritius) are of poor quality, expensive, and do not meet international standards.	1					» Agro and fish processors	» Expression of interest launched by early 2018 » Supplier identified by mid-2018	RRA			
	4.3.4. Given the uniqueness of the products of Rodrigues, develop a geographical indication label, such as the Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) to promote and protect names of quality agricultural products, fish and foodstuffs, as well as artisanal products, in order to counteract the growing trend of falsification of Rodrigues' production. Activity to be linked with the development of the label "Rodrigues Naturellement"	1					» Entire economy	» Protected Geographical Indication developed by early 2019	RRA	Industrial Property Office, MCCI, Technology Transfer Office of the MRC	Donor agencies	
4.4. Enable compliance to Mauritian and international standards	4.4.1. Provide technical assistance to selected agro and fish processors, including cooperatives, willing to export their products to Mauritius with the view to guiding them in their efforts to become compliant with the requirements of Food Act and access to Pre-Market Certification. This programme could be developed in collaboration with SFWF4	1					» Agro and fish processors	» 10 agro-processing companies certified (Pre-Market Certificate) per year, starting 2018	RRA	RRA SFWF	RRA / donor agencies	
	4.4.2. Establish a support programme to upgrade progressively individual agro and fish processors' facilities, and kitchens in particular, in line with international food safety standards. Conduct sensitization campaigns on the importance of food safety standards.	1					» Agro and fish processors	» Support programme operational by the end of 2018	RRA	RRA SFWF, Mauritius Standards Bureau	RRA / donor agencies UNDP	
	4.4.3. Advocate for decreased certification costs incurred by the companies based in Rodrigues to comply with the Food Act and obtain the Pre-Market Certificate. A subsidized cost could be envisaged. This prohibitive cost to undergo chemo-physical tests in Mauritius currently represents MUR 50,000 (or approx. USD 1,400) per product.	2					» Agro processors	» 100% rebate obtained from operators based in Rodrigues as of mid-2018	RRA			RRA

Strategic objective 4: Support transition to export-readiness of SMEs in Rodrigues												
Operational objective	Activities	Priority 1=high 2=med 3=low	Implementation period					Beneficiaries	Targets	Lead implementer	Supporting implementers	Possible funding source
			2017	2018	2019	2020	2021					
4.4. Enable compliance to Mauritian and international standards	4.4.4. Develop specific schemes for cooperatives and community kitchens willing to obtain the HACCP certification. » The procedures and eligibility criteria shall be written in a way that is easily accessible to those wishing to apply. » Ensure guidance on application procedures and more comprehensible application forms.	2						» Agro and fish processors	» Schemes operational by the end of 2018	RRA	CoA	RRA CIRAD
	4.4.5. Establish a list of tests and analyses required by agro processors and for the fisheries sector and perform a cost-benefit analysis to assess the relevance and feasibility of conducting such analyses locally, that is, tests that can be conducted in a timely and cost-efficient manner using the services provided by the Food Laboratory in Rodrigues.	2						» Food Laboratory	» List of tests and analyses that can be conducted in Rodrigues in a timely and cost-efficient manner established by mid-2018	CoA	RRA/Mauritius Standard Bureau (MSB)	RRA
	4.4.6. Based on the outcome of the cost-benefit analysis, envisage upgrading the Food Laboratory in Rodrigues that is currently only accredited for a limited number of tests including microbiological and physico-chemical analysis. Undertake targeted capacity building activities for the Food Laboratory staff.	2						» Food Laboratory	» Food laboratory fully operational by mid-2019	RRA	CoA RRA/MSB	RRA European Union
4.5. Support innovation & research	4.4.7. Further develop organic farming and organic production through: » Promotion and awareness campaign targeting young producers about the various benefits of organic farming. » Training of farmers on organic farming. » Seeking appropriate organic certifications such as ECOCERT.	1					» Agro processors	» First ECOCERT certification obtained in 2018	RRA	CoA	RRA	
	4.5.1. Support and expand the existing "Innovation Grant Scheme" encouraging the setting-up of innovative SMEs in Rodrigues5 The initiative aims at encouraging product diversification and to generate higher value-added.	1					» SMEs	» Number of SMEs benefiting from the scheme increased by 50% by 2021	RRA		RRA	
	4.5.2. Developing niche products through market intelligence for domestic and export markets, including organic agriculture.	1					» SMEs	» Market studies completed and recommendations for new products formulated by mid-2018	RRA	CoA	RRA Donor agencies	
	4.5.3. Support and follow up on the research activities currently conducted for the lime and honey sub-sectors at the CIDP in Mauritius for potential use in the cosmetic industry.	1					» Agro processors	» Based on the outcome of the research activities, elaborate a development strategy for those products by the end of 2017	RRA	CIDP	RRA CIRAD	
4.5.4. Offer financial support and banking facilities at attractive terms and conditions to innovative SMEs by encouraging commercial banks to offer low interest rate loans		1				» SMEs	» Number of loans granted to SMEs increased by 10% every year starting 2018	MRC, DBM		Commercial banks, MauBank		



FSC is an independent, non-governmental, not for profit organization established to promote the responsible management of the world's forests.

Printed by ITC Digital Printing Service on FSC paper, which is environmentally-friendly paper (without chlorine) using vegetable-based inks. The printed matter is recyclable.



Republic of Mauritius



International
Trade
Centre

Street address: 54-56, rue de Montbrillant
1202 Geneva, Switzerland
Postal address: Palais des Nations
1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
Telephone: +41-22 730 0111
Fax: +41-22 733 4439
E-mail: itcreg@intracen.org
Internet: www.intracen.org