



## Session 04

## Profitability and economic drivers of small pelagic fisheries in West Africa: a twenty year perspective

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### Abstract

Small pelagics are the main fish resource in North West Africa. In Senegal, these are mainly sardinellas (*Sardinella aurita* and *S. maderensis*) and bonga shad (*Ethmalosa fimbriata*). The fisheries, mainly encircling gillnets and purse seines, are predominantly performed by artisanal fishers and are of great importance for the Senegalese economy and for food security in the region. However, in recent years, the main conditions for these fisheries have changed and recent observations have shown strong declines in profit. An analysis over the last twenty years (1993-2013) show that the fisheries lost profit between 65 and 100 % while operating costs increased by 25 and 90 %, for encircling gillnet and purse seine, respectively. While the fuel price dominates as determining factor during the survey period, important other drivers during the last five years were a decrease in fish biomass and an increase in fishing effort.

**Keywords:** Small pelagics, *Sardinella aurita*, *S. maderensis*, *Ethmalosa fimbriata*, encircling gillnets, purse seine, food security, operating costs, North West Africa.



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