
LAWS OF SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

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CHAPTER 52

FISHERIES ACT

Act 8 of 1986
amended by
Act 32 of 1986
Act 25 of 1989

Numbering of sections

<i>Original number</i>	<i>Comment</i>	<i>Present number</i>
1 - 30	—	1 - 30
31	a 25/89	31
32 - 38	—	32 - 38
39	a 32/86	39
40 - 44	—	40 - 44
45	a 32/86	45
46 - 47	—	46 - 47
48	spent/omitted	—

Index of subsidiary legislation

Booklet 1	Oysters (Close Season) Order.
Booklet 2	Fisheries Regulations.

CHAPTER 52**FISHERIES ACT**

Arrangement of sections

Preliminary

1. Short title.
2. Interpretation.

PART I*Fisheries Management and Development*

3. Promotion of fisheries.
4. Fisheries management and development plan.
5. Fisheries advisory committees.
6. Regional cooperation in fisheries.
7. Fisheries access agreements.
8. Foreign fishing licences.
9. Storage of fishing gear.
10. Observation of law.
11. Local fishing licences.
12. Validity of fishing licence and agreement.
13. Fishing licences.
14. Fees, royalties, etc.
15. Cancellation and suspension of fishing licences.
16. Notification.
17. Fish processing establishments.
18. Local fisheries management areas.
19. By-laws.

PART II*Marine Reserves and Conservation Measures*

20. Fishing priority areas.
21. Leasing of land for aquaculture.
22. Marine reserves.
23. Research.
24. Prohibited fishing methods.
25. Possession of prohibited fishing gear.

PART III

Registration of Local Fishing Vessels

26. Local fishing vessels to be registered.
27. Register of local fishing vessels.
28. Change of ownership to be notified.
29. Restriction on putting to sea.
30. Power of inspection.
31. Restriction on fishing, etc.

PART IV

Enforcement

32. Authorised officers.
33. Powers of authorised officers.
34. Sale of perishable goods seized.
35. Immunity of authorised officers.
36. Assaulting, etc; authorised officers.
37. Liability of master.
38. Release of vessel, etc; on bond.
39. Forfeiture.
40. Presumptions.
41. Onus of proof.
42. Disposal of vessel, etc; forfeited.
43. Jurisdiction.
44. Power to compound offences.

PART V

Miscellaneous

45. Regulations.
46. Exemptions.
47. Saving.

AN ACT for the promotion and management of fisheries and for matters incidental thereto and connected therewith.

Commencement: 4th March 1986
S.R.O. 5 of 1986

Preliminary

Short title.

1. This Act may be cited as the Fisheries Act.

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires—

Interpretation.

“access agreement” means an agreement under section 7;

“authorised officer” means any fisheries officer, any customs officer or police officer and any other person or category of persons designated as an authorised officer by the Minister under section 32;

“court” means a magistrate’s court;

“Chief Fisheries Officer” means the person appointed as Chief Fisheries Officer under section 3 (2) (a);

“fish” means any aquatic animal, whether piscine or not and includes any shellfish, turtle, mollusc, crustacean, coral, sponge, echinoderm, its young and its eggs;

“fish aggregating device” means any man-made or partly man-made floating or submerged device, whether anchored or not, intended for the purpose of aggregating fish, and includes any natural floating object on which a device has been placed to facilitate its location;

“fisheries officer” means the Chief Fisheries Officer, fisheries officer, or assistant fisheries officer and such other officers appointed under section 3 (2);

“fishery” means one or more stocks of fish or fishing operations based on such stocks which can be treated as a unit for purposes of conservation and management and which are identified on the basis of geographical, scientific, technical, recreational and economic characteristics;

“fisheries plan” means the plan for the management and development of fisheries prepared under section 4;

“fishery waters” means the waters of the exclusive economic zone, territorial sea, archipelagic waters and internal waters as defined in the Maritime Areas Act, and any other waters over which Saint Vincent and the Grenadines claims fisheries jurisdiction;

Cap. 333.

“fishing” means fishing for or catching or taking or killing fish by any method of placing any fish aggregating device and includes searching for fish;

“fishing licence” means a foreign fishing licence or a local fishing licence;

“fishing vessel” means any vessel used for commercial fishing or related activities or for sport fishing;

“foreign fishing licence” means a licence issued in respect of a foreign fishing vessel under section 8;

“foreign fishing vessel” means any fishing vessel other than a local fishing vessel;

“licence” means a licence issued under this Act;

“local fishing licence” means a licence issued in respect of a local fishing vessel under section 11;

“local fishing vessel” means any fishing vessel:

- (a) wholly owned by the Government or by any public corporation established by or under any law of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines;
- (b) wholly owned by one or more persons who are citizens of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines; or
- (c) wholly owned by any company, society or other association of persons incorporated or established under the laws of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines of which at least fiftyone per centum of the voting shares are held by citizens of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines;

“locally based foreign fishing vessel” means any foreign fishing vessel based in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines which lands all its catch in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines;

“master” means the person or persons having control of a fishing vessel at any given time, and includes a fishing master, fleet commander or pilot having control of such vessel;

“Minister” means the Minister to whom matters relating to fisheries have been assigned;

“related activities” in relation to fishing means:

- (a) trans-shipping fish to or from any vessel;
- (b) storing, processing or transporting fish taken from the fishery waters up to the time it is first landed;
- (c) refuelling or supplying fishing vessels or performing other activities in support of fishing operations;
- (d) attempting or preparing to do any of the above;

“test fishing operations” means any fishing operations undertaken over a limited period of time with the approval of the Chief Fisheries Officer for the purpose of testing the feasibility of commercial fishing operations with a view to the establishment of locally based fishery operations.

PART I

Fisheries Management and Development

Promotion
of fisheries.

3. (1) The Minister shall take such measures as he thinks fit under the Act to promote the management and development of fisheries, so as to ensure the optimum utilisation of the

fisheries resources in the fishery waters for the benefit of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

(2) There may be appointed:

- (a) a Chief Fisheries Officer; and
- (b) such other fisheries officers, assistant fisheries officers and other officers as may be necessary to give effect to this Act.

4. (1) The Chief Fisheries Officer shall prepare and keep under review a plan for the management and development of fisheries in the fishery waters.

Fisheries management and development plan.

(2) The fisheries plan shall:

- (a) identify each fishery and assess the present state of its exploration;
- (b) specify the objectives to be achieved in the management of each fishery;
- (c) specify the management and development measures to be taken; and
- (d) specify the licensing programmes to be followed for each fishery, the limitations, if any, to be applied to local fishing operations and the amount of fishing, if any, to be allocated to foreign fishing vessels.

(3) In the preparation and review of the fisheries plan, the Chief Fisheries Officer shall consult with the local fishermen, local authorities, other persons affected by the fishery plan and with any fisheries advisory committee appointed under section 5.

(4) The fishery plan, and each review thereof, shall be submitted to the Minister for approval.

5. (1) The Minister may appoint a fisheries advisory committee to advise on the management and development of fisheries.

Fisheries advisory committees.

(2) Any fisheries advisory committee appointed under this section shall include the Chief Fisheries Officer and such other persons as the Minister may consider capable of advising on the management and development of fisheries.

6. (1) The Minister may enter into arrangement with other countries in the region or with any competent regional organisation, providing for:

Regional cooperation in fisheries.

- (a) the harmonisation of systems for the collecting of statistics, and the carrying out of surveys and procedures for assessing the state of the fisheries resources;

- (b) the harmonisation of licensing procedures and conditions in respect of foreign fishing vessels;
- (c) schemes for the issue of fishing licences in respect of foreign fishing vessels by a competent regional organisation on behalf of the Minister and the recognition of regional licences issued by such organisation, subject to such conditions as may be specified in the agreement or arrangement and to such additional conditions as the Minister may specify from time to time;
- (d) the taking of joint or harmonised enforcement measures in respect of foreign fishing vessels contravening fisheries laws in the region;
- (e) the establishment and operation of joint or regional fisheries management bodies where appropriate;
- (f) where appropriate, the establishment of a regional register of fishing vessels;
- (g) such other cooperative measures as appropriate, including measures for promoting the welfare of fishermen and the insurance of fishing vessels and gear.

(2) For the purpose of giving effect to any arrangement or agreement entered into under this section, the Minister may, by order, in the Gazette—

- (a) authorise any competent regional organisation designated in the order to issue fishing licences in respect of foreign fishing vessels on behalf of the Minister within the limits set out in the order;
- (b) exempt from the requirements of section 8 any foreign fishing vessels, or class of foreign fishing vessels, holding valid regional fishing licences issued by a competent regional organisation designated in the order; and
- (c) prescribe the conditions to be observed by foreign fishing vessels exempted under paragraph (b) while fishing or navigating in the fishery waters.

(3) Any order made under subsection (2) shall be subject to negative resolution of the House of Assembly.

Fisheries
access
agreements.

7. (1) The Minister may enter into access agreements with other states and with associations representing foreign fishing vessel owners or charterers, providing for the allocation of fishing rights to vessels from those states or associations.

(2) The fishing rights allocated under agreements entered into under this section shall not exceed the total resources or

amount of fishing allowed to the appropriate category of foreign fishing vessels under the fisheries plan.

(3) Any agreement entered into under this section shall include a provision establishing the responsibility of the foreign state or association to take necessary measures to ensure compliance by its vessels with the terms and conditions of the agreement and with the laws relating to fishing in the fishery waters.

(4) For the purposes of this section and section 8, the term "state" shall include any regional organisation to which the power to negotiate access agreements has been delegated by the member countries of that organisation.

8. (1) No foreign fishing vessel shall be used for fishing or related activities in the fishery waters without a valid foreign fishing licence issued under this section. Foreign fishing licences.

(2) An application for a foreign fishing licence shall be made, in the prescribed form, to the Minister or to a competent regional organisation authorised to issue fishing licences under section 6 (2) (a).

(3) Subject to the provisions of this Act and any regulations made hereunder, the Minister may issue a foreign fishing licence authorising a foreign fishing vessel to be used in the fishery waters for such fishing or related activities as may be specified in the licence.

(4) Subject to subsection (5), no foreign fishing licence shall be issued to any foreign fishing vessel unless there is in force with the government of the flag state of the vessel, or with an association of which the owner or charterer is a member, an agreement entered into under section 7 to which the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is a party.

(5) Subsection (4) shall not apply to a licence issued in respect of:

- (a) test fishing operations; or
- (b) a locally based foreign fishing vessel.

(6) Where a fishing vessel is used in contravention of subsection (1), or of any condition of the foreign fishing licence, the master, owner and charterer of that vessel is each guilty of an offence and liable to a fine of five hundred thousand dollars.

9. The fishing gear of any foreign fishing vessel which is prohibited by section 8 from fishing within the fishery waters, shall be stowed in such manner as may be prescribed while within the fishery waters. Storage of fishing gear.

Observation
of law.

10. No licence shall relieve any foreign fishing vessel or its master or crew of any obligation or requirements imposed by law concerning navigation, customs, immigration, health or other matters.

Local fishing
licences.

11. (1) No local fishing vessel shall be used for fishing or related activities in the fishery waters without a valid licence issued under this section in respect of that vessel.

(2) An application for a local fishing licence shall be made in the prescribed form to the Chief Fisheries Officer.

(3) Subject to subsection (4), the Chief Fisheries Officer may issue a local fishing licence in the prescribed form.

(4) No application for a local fishing licence shall be refused except on any of the following grounds, namely—

(a) that it is necessary to do so in order to give effect to any licensing programme specified in the fisheries plan;

(b) that the Chief Fisheries Officer has reason to believe that the applicant will not comply with the conditions of the licence;

(c) that the vessel in respect of which the application is made does not have a valid certificate of inspection where so required under the laws governing merchant shipping, or is not in compliance with regulations made under section 45 relating to the safety of the vessel; or

(d) such other grounds as are specified in this Act or any regulations made hereunder.

(5) Where a local fishing vessel is used in contravention of subsection (1), or of any condition of the local fishing licence, the master, owner and charterer of that vessel each is guilty of an offence and each liable to a fine of two thousand five hundred dollars.

Validity of
fishing
licence and
agreement.

12. (1) Unless earlier cancelled in accordance with section 15, a fishing licence shall be valid for a period of not more than twelve months.

(2) Where a vessel licensed as a local fishing vessel becomes a foreign fishing vessel, the licence shall automatically terminate.

(3) The term of a foreign fishing licence shall not extend beyond the term of validity of the applicable access agreement.

(4) No licence shall be transferable except with the written permission of the Chief Fisheries Officer or, in the case of a foreign fishing licence, the Minister.

13. (1) Every fishing licence shall be in the prescribed form and shall be subject— Fishing licences.

- (a) to such general conditions as may be prescribed;
- (b) to such general conditions as may be specified under subsection (2); and
- (c) to such special conditions as may be specified under subsection (3).

(2) The Minister may, by order in the Gazette, specify general conditions, additional to those prescribed, to which all fishing licences or any category of fishing licences shall be subject, including conditions relating to open and closed seasons, prohibited fishing areas, minimum mesh sizes and minimum species sizes.

(3) The Chief Fisheries Officer or, in the case of a foreign fishing licence, the Minister, may attach to any fishing licence such special conditions as he may think fit.

(4) The Chief Fisheries Officer or, in the case of a foreign fishing licence, the Minister, may where he is satisfied that it is expedient for the proper management of fisheries in the fishery waters, vary any special conditions attached to any fishing licence.

(5) Where the Minister or the Chief Fisheries Officer varies any special conditions attached to any fishing licence he shall notify the licence holder of such variation as soon as practicable.

14. There shall be payable in respect of every fishing licence such fees as may be prescribed and such royalties or other charges as the Minister may determine. Fees, royalties, etc.

15. (1) The Chief Fisheries Officer, or, in the case of a foreign fishing licence, the Minister, may cancel or suspend a fishing licence on any of the grounds set out in subsection (2). Cancellation and suspension of fishing licences.

(2) A fishing licence may be cancelled or suspended where the Minister or the Chief Fisheries Officer, as the case may be, is satisfied that:

- (a) it is necessary to do so in order to allow for the proper management of any particular fishery;
- (b) the vessel in respect of which the licence has been issued has been used in contravention of this Act or of any regulations made hereunder, or of any condition of the licence or in breach of any applicable access agreement; or
- (c) he is required or authorised to do so in accordance with the provisions of any arrangement or agreement entered into under section 6.

(3) Where a fishing licence has been cancelled or suspended under subsection (1), notification of the cancellation or suspension shall be given to the person to whom the licence was issued.

(4) Where a fishing licence has been suspended or cancelled on the grounds specified in subsection (2) (a), a proportion of any fees paid for the fishing licence representing the unexpired period of that licence, or the period of suspension, as the case may be, shall be reimbursed to the licensee at his request.

Notification.

16. (1) Any notification given under section 13 (5) or 15 (3) shall be in writing except as otherwise specified in subsection (2).

(2) In the case of a foreign fishing vessel, a notification referred to in subsection (1) may be in writing or by telex, radio or such other form as the Minister deems appropriate.

Fish processing establishments.

17. (1) The Minister may grant to any person a licence to operate a fish processing establishment on payment of such fees and subject to such conditions as may be prescribed.

(2) Any person who operates, or allows to be operated, any fish processing establishment except under a licence granted under subsection (1) and in accordance with the conditions of such licence, is guilty of an offence and liable to a fine of one thousand dollars.

(3) In this section "fish processing establishment" means any land, premises or other place on, or in which, fish are canned, dried, gutted, salted, iced, chilled, frozen or otherwise processed for sale by wholesale in or outside Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

Local fisheries management areas.

18. (1) The Minister, may, by notice in the Gazette,

(a) designate an area as a local fisheries management area;

(b) designate any local authority, fishermen's cooperative or fishermen's association or other appropriate body representing fishermen in the area as the local fisheries management authority for that area.

(2) Where there is no appropriate body representing fishermen in the area, the Minister may promote the formation of such a body.

(3) The Chief Fisheries Officer shall, to the extent he deems it practicable, provide to any local fisheries management authority such assistance as may be reasonably necessary for the performance of its functions.

19. (1) A local fisheries management authority designated By-laws. under section 18 (1) (b) shall make by-laws, not inconsistent with this Act or any regulations made hereunder, regulating the conduct of fishing operations in the designated area.

(2) By-laws made under subsection (1) shall be approved by the Minister and published in the Gazette before they come into effect.

(3) By-laws made under subsection (2) may provide that a breach of any by-law shall constitute an offence and may provide for penalties by way of fine of two hundred and fifty dollars.

PART II

Marine Reserves and Conservation Measures

20. The Minister may, by order in the Gazette, declare any area of the fishery waters to be a fishing priority area where he considers that special measures are necessary to ensure that authorised fishing within the area is not impeded or otherwise interfered with. Fishing priority areas.

21. (1) The Government may lease land, including areas of the foreshore and sea-bed, for the purposes of aquaculture, if satisfied, after reasonable enquiry, that such lease will not substantially prejudice the rights of the members of the public thereto and such lease shall be in conformity with any regulations made under section 45 relating to the leasing of land for aquaculture. Leasing of land for aquaculture.

(2) The provisions of the Crown Lands Act shall apply *mutatis mutandis*, to the leasing of lands including foreshore and sea-bed for the purposes of aquaculture under this section. Cap. 238.

(3) Notwithstanding any provisions of the Crown Lands Act, the Minister shall, by notice in the Gazette, give particulars of any lease granted under subsection (1) giving the boundaries of the area leased, and the Minister may restrict and control, by regulations made under section 45, the use of such land, including foreshore or sea-bed, by members of the public.

22. (1) The Minister may, by order in the Gazette, declare any area of the fishery waters and, as appropriate, any adjacent or surrounding land, to be a marine reserve where he considers that special measures are necessary— Marine reserves.

- (a) to afford special protection to the flora and fauna of such areas and to protect and preserve the natural breeding grounds and habitats of aquatic life, with particular regard to flora and fauna in danger of extinction;
 - (b) to allow for the natural regeneration of aquatic life in areas where such life has been depleted;
 - (c) to promote scientific study and research in respect of such areas; or
 - (d) to preserve and enhance the natural beauty of such areas.
- (2) Any person who, in any marine reserve, without permission granted under subsection (3);
- (a) fishes or attempts to fish;
 - (b) takes or destroys any flora and fauna other than fish;
 - (c) dredges or extracts sand or gravel, discharges or deposits waste or any other polluting matter, or in any way disturbs, alters or destroys the natural environment; or
 - (d) constructs or erects any buildings or other structures on or over any land or waters within such a reserve;

is guilty of an offence and liable to a fine of one thousand dollars.

(3) The Minister, or any person authorised by him in writing, may give written permission to do any of the things prohibited under this section where the doing of such things may be required for the proper management of the reserve or for any of the purposes referred to in subsection (1).

Research.

23. (1) The Minister may, on the submission of a fisheries research plan approved by the Chief Fisheries Officer, grant permission for any vessel or person to undertake research into fisheries in the fishery waters, and in doing so may exempt such vessel or person from any of the provisions of this Act.

(2) The Minister may attach such conditions as he deems fit to any permission granted under subsection (1).

(3) Any person who undertakes or assists in any fisheries research in the fishery waters—

- (a) without permission under subsection (1);
- (b) in contravention of any condition or conditions attached to the permission under subsection (2);

is guilty of an offence and liable to a fine of one thousand dollars.

(4) Any permission or exemption granted under this section shall be in writing.

24. (1) Any person who—

Prohibited
fishing
methods.

(a) permits to be used, uses or attempts to use any explosive, poison or other noxious substance for the purpose of killing, stunning, disabling or catching fish, or in any way rendering fish more easily caught; or

(b) carries or has in his possession or control any explosive, poison or other noxious substance for any of the purposes referred to in paragraph (a);

is guilty of an offence and liable to a fine of two thousand five hundred dollars.

(2) Any explosive, poison or other noxious substance found on board any fishing vessel shall be presumed, unless the contrary is proved, to be intended for the purpose referred to in subsection (1) (a).

(3) Any person who lands, sells, receives or is found in possession of any fish taken in contravention of subsection (1) (a), knowing or having reasonable cause to believe them to have been so taken, is guilty of an offence and liable to a fine of two thousand five hundred dollars.

(4) For the purposes of this section, a certificate as to the cause and manner of death or injury of any fish signed by the Chief Fisheries Officer, or by any person authorised by him in writing, shall be accepted as *prima facie* evidence in a court without proof of the signature of the person appearing to have signed the certificate or his official character.

(5) For the purposes of subsection (4), the defendant to proceedings brought under this section is entitled to fourteen days' notice in writing of the prosecution's intention to adduce the said certificate.

25. Any person who, within the fishery waters, uses for fishing or has on board any fishing vessel, in circumstances which indicate an intention to use for fishing in the fishery waters—

Possession
of pro-
hibited
fishing gear.

(a) any net the mesh size of which does not conform to the prescribed minimum mesh size for that type of net;

(b) any type of trap or other fishing gear which does not conform to any standards prescribed for that type of trap or other fishing gear; or

(c) any other net or fishing gear which is prohibited by this Act,

is guilty of an offence and liable to a fine of one thousand dollars.

PART III

Registration of Local Fishing Vessels

Local fishing vessels to be registered.

26. (1) From and after the 4th March, 1986, every owner of a local fishing vessel shall, before such vessel is put to sea, be the holder of a valid certificate of registration in respect of such local fishing vessel.

(2) Application for a certificate of registration shall be made on behalf of the owner to the Chief Fisheries Officer.

(3) Upon receipt of an application made under subsection (2), the Chief Fisheries Officer shall, as soon as possible thereafter, inspect the fishing vessel to which the application refers and, if satisfied that the same is sea-worthy and fit for the purpose of fishing, issue to the owner a certificate of registration in which shall be recorded such other particulars as may be prescribed.

Register of local fishing vessels.

27. (1) The Chief Fisheries Officer shall keep a register of every local fishing vessel in respect of which there is in existence a valid certificate of registration, and shall cause to be entered in the said register the place of mooring or beaching of such fishing vessel, and such other particulars as may be prescribed in respect of such fishing vessel.

(2) The contents of the register of local fishing vessels shall be *prima facie* evidence of the facts contained therein in all proceedings under this Act.

Change of ownership to be notified.

28. (1) On the sale or change of ownership of a local fishing vessel, in respect of which a valid certificate of registration is in existence, the vendor and purchaser of such fishing vessel shall, within seven days of such sale or other change of ownership, notify the Chief Fisheries Officer of the change of ownership (stating the name and address of the new owner or owners) and return to the Chief Fisheries Officer the certificate of registration issued for such fishing vessel for cancellation.

(2) The Chief Fisheries Officer shall issue to the new owner of the local fishing vessel a new certificate of registration.

Restriction on putting to sea.

29. No local fishing vessel shall put to sea unless there is in existence in respect of such fishing vessel a valid certificate of registration issued in accordance with the provisions of this Act.

Power of inspection.

30. (1) The Chief Fisheries Officer may at any time inspect, without notice, any local fishing vessel for the purpose of satisfying himself that such fishing vessel is being maintained in a sea-worthy condition.

(2) Where, on an inspection pursuant to subsection (1), the Chief Fisheries Officer is satisfied that the fishing vessel is not sea-worthy, or is unfit for the purpose of fishing, he may cancel the certificate of registration of that fishing vessel, and that fishing vessel shall thereupon be deemed to be not registered and shall be removed from the register of fishing vessels kept by the Chief Fisheries Officer.

31. (1) No local fishing vessel shall be used for fishing or related activities in the fishery waters unless there is in existence a valid certificate of registration issued in respect of that fishing vessel in accordance with the provisions of this Part. Restriction on fishing, etc.

(2) Where a local fishing vessel is used in contravention of subsection (1), the master, owner and charterer of that vessel each is guilty of an offence and liable to a fine of two thousand dollars.

PART IV

Enforcement

32. The Minister may designate, by notice in the Gazette, such persons as he deems fit, including members of the enforcement authority of any country or of any regional or sub-regional marine enforcement entity, to be authorised officers for the purpose of this Act. Authorised officers.

33. (1) For the purposes of enforcing this Act, any authorised officer may, without a warrant— Powers of authorised officers.

- (a) stop, board and search any foreign fishing vessel in the fishery waters and any local fishing vessel in or outside the fishery waters, and stop and search any vehicle;
- (b) require to be produced, examine and take copies of any licence or other document required under this Act;
- (c) require to be produced and examine any fishing net or other fishing gear whenever at sea or on land.

(2) Any authorised officer, if he has reasonable grounds to believe that an offence has been committed under this Act, may, without a warrant—

- (a) enter and search any premises, other than premises used exclusively as a dwelling house, in which he has reason to believe that the offence has been committed or where he has reason to believe that fish illegally taken are being stored;

KINGSTOWN. ST. VIVIAN.

- (b) take samples of any fish found in any vessel, vehicle or premises searched under this section;
- (c) seize any vessel (together with its gear, stores and cargo), vehicle, fishing gear, net or other fishing appliance which he has reason to believe has been used in the commission of the offence or in respect of which the offence has been committed;
- (d) seize any fish which he has reason to believe has been caught in the commission of the offence, or is being possessed in contravention of this Act;
- (e) seize any explosive or poison which he has reason to believe has been used or is being possessed in contravention of this Act.

(3) Any vessel seized under subsection (2), and the crew thereof, shall be taken to the nearest or most convenient port and the vessel may be detained pending the outcome of any legal proceedings under this Act or its release on bond or other form of security in accordance with the provisions of section 38.

(4) Where, following the commission of an offence under this Act by any foreign fishing vessel, such foreign fishing vessel is pursued beyond the limits of the fishery waters, the powers conferred on authorised officers under this section shall be exercisable beyond the limits of the fishery waters in the circumstances and to the extent recognised by international law.

(5) After a vessel has been stopped under the provisions of this section, any authorised officer may, concerning it or in relation to any fish or fish products therein, exercise any of the powers conferred by this section.

(6) An authorised officer, in exercising any of the powers conferred upon him by this section, shall, on demand, produce such means of identification as may be necessary to show that he is an authorised officer for the purposes of this Act.

Sale of
perishable
goods seized.

34. (1) Any fish or other articles of a perishable nature seized under this Act may, at the direction of the Chief Fisheries Officer, be sold, and the proceeds of sale shall be held and dealt with in accordance with the provisions of this Act.

(2) Where, after making all reasonable efforts, the Chief Fisheries Officer is unable to sell the fish or other articles referred to in subsection (1), or where such fish or other articles are unfit for sale, he may dispose of them in such other manner as he thinks fit.

Immunity of
authorised
officers.

35. No action shall be brought against any authorised officer in respect of anything done or omitted to be done by him in

good faith in the execution, or purported execution, of his powers and duties under this Act.

36. Any person who obstructs, assaults or threatens with violence an authorised officer in the exercise of the powers conferred on him under this Act is guilty of an offence and liable to a fine of one thousand dollars and to imprisonment for nine months.

Assaulting,
etc; auth-
orised
officers.

37. Where an offence against this Act has been committed by any person on board or employed on a fishing vessel, the master of such vessel shall also be guilty of the offence.

Liability of
master.

38. The court may, on application therefor, order the release of any fishing vessel (together with its gear, stores and cargo), vehicle, fish, fishing gear, net or other fishing appliance seized under this Act on receipt of a satisfactory bond or other form of security from the owner or other person claiming such property.

Release of
vessel, etc;
on bond.

39. Where any person is convicted of an offence against this Act or any regulations made hereunder, the court, in addition to any other penalty imposed—

Forfeiture.

- (a) may order that any fishing vessel (together with its fishing gear, stores and cargo) and any vehicle, fishing gear, net or other fishing appliance used in the commission of the offence, be forfeited;
- (b) shall order that any fish caught in the commission of such offence, or the proceeds of sale of such fish, and any explosive, poison or other noxious substance used in the commission of such offence, be forfeited.

40. (1) Until the contrary is proved, all fish found on board any fishing vessel which has been used in the commission of an offence against this Act shall be presumed to have been caught in the commission of that offence.

Presump-
tions.

(2) Where in any legal proceedings instituted under this Act following the seizure of a foreign fishing vessel by an enforcement vessel, the place in which an event is alleged to have taken place is in issue, the place stated in a certified copy of the relevant entry in the logbook or other official record of the enforcement vessel as being the place shall be presumed, until the contrary is proved, to be the place in which such event took place.

Onus of proof.

41. In any legal proceedings under this Act, where the defendant is charged with having committed an offence under which a licence, authority or the permission of any person is required for the doing of any act, the onus shall be on the defendant to prove that at the time to which the charge related the requisite licence, authority or permission was duly held.

Disposal of vessel, etc; forfeited.

42. Any vessel (together with its gear, stores and cargo), and any vehicle, fishing gear, net or other fishing appliance, explosive or poison ordered to be forfeited under this Act, shall be disposed of in such manner as the Minister may direct.

Jurisdiction.

43. Any offence against any of the provisions of this Act, or any regulations made hereunder, committed within the fishery waters by any person, or any such offence committed outside such waters by any citizen of, or person ordinarily resident in, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines or by any person on board any local fishing vessel, shall be triable in any court of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines as if such offence had been committed in any place in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines within the local limits of the jurisdiction of such court.

Power to compound offences.

44. (1) Subject to subsection (4), the Minister may, where he is satisfied that any person has committed an offence against this Act or any regulations made under this Act, compound such offence by accepting on behalf of the Government from such person a sum of money not exceeding the maximum fine specified for that offence.

(2) On compounding an offence under this section, the Minister may order the release of any article seized under section 33 or the proceeds of sale of such article under section 34 on such conditions including the payment of such additional sums of money, not exceeding the value of the article seized, as he may think fit.

(3) No offence shall be compounded under this section unless the person who has committed the offence has expressed his willingness in a prescribed form that the offence be so dealt with.

(4) The compounding of an offence under this section shall be notified in writing under the signature of both parties to the appropriate magistrate's court.

(5) In any proceedings brought against any person for an offence against this Act, or any regulation made hereunder, it shall be a defence if such person proves that the offence with which he is charged has been compounded under this section.

(6) The powers conferred on the Minister by subsection (1) may be exercised by the Chief Fisheries Officer in respect of a local fishing vessel.

(7) This section does not apply to any offence against section 24 or 36.

PART V

Miscellaneous

45. (1) The Minister may make regulations generally for the management and development of fisheries in the fishery waters. Regulations.

(2) In particular, but without prejudice to the generality of subsection (1), the Minister may make regulations for all or any of the following purposes—

- (a) providing for the licensing, regulation and management of any particular fishery;
- (b) prescribing fisheries management and conservation measures including prescribed mesh sizes, gear standards, minimum species sizes, closed seasons, closed areas, prohibited methods of fishing or fishing gear and schemes for limiting entry into all or any specified fisheries;
- (c) prescribing the constitution, function, and duties of the fisheries advisory committee appointed under section 5;
- (d) regulating the catching and utilisation of fish taken incidentally when fishing for a species for which a licence has been issued;
- (e) providing for the registration and licensing of fishermen, fishing vessels, fishing gear and other fishing appliances;
- (f) organising and regulating sport fishing in the fishery waters;
- (g) regulating the use of scuba gear;
- (h) regulating or prohibiting the use of spear guns or other similar devices;
- (i) regulating the landing, marketing and distribution of fish;
- (j) regulating the transiting of foreign fishing vessels through the fishery waters, including the manner in which fishing gear is to be stowed;
- (k) making provision for rewards to be paid to any person providing information on operations of foreign fishing vessels leading to a conviction or compounding of an offence under this Act;

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- (l) prescribing the form of foreign fishing licences which may take the form of a written licence or a telexed or cabled authorisation;
 - (m) providing for the implementation of any agreement or arrangement entered into under section 6;
 - (n) regulating or prohibiting the entry into any fishing priority area established under section 20, of any class of vessel and prescribing any activities which may not be undertaken in that area;
 - (o) providing for the licensing and control of fish aggregating devices and for rights to fish aggregated by such devices;
 - (p) regulating:
 - (i) the management and protection of marine reserves and fishing priority areas;
 - (ii) the taking of coral and shells;
 - (iii) the setting of fishing fences;
 - (iv) the taking of aquarium fish;
 - (v) aquaculture developments;
 - (vi) aquaculture operations;
 - (q) prescribing measures for the protection of turtles, lobsters and conches;
 - (r) to provide for the control or prohibition of the import and export of fish;
 - (s) prescribing standards and other measures for the safety of local fishing vessels and fishermen;
 - (t) regulating or prohibiting the entry into land leased for the purposes of aquaculture or into waters superadjacent to such land;
 - (u) prescribing the terms and conditions of leases for aquaculture;
 - (v) providing for the form of a certificate of registration;
 - (w) providing for the particulars to be recorded in the register of fishing vessels;
 - (x) prescribing any other matter which is required or authorised to be prescribed.

(3) Where not otherwise provided for, any breach of a regulation made hereunder is an offence and any person guilty of such an offence is liable to a fine of five thousand dollars.

Exemptions.

46. The Minister may, by order in the Gazette, exempt from the requirements of section 11 any local fishing vessel under a size, type or class specified in the order.

Saving.

47. Notwithstanding the repeal of—

- (a) the Birds and Fish Protection Act;
- (b) the Fishing Nets Act; and
- (c) the Fishing Industry Act, 1961.

Cap. 44 of
1926.
Cap. 171 of
1926.
Act 19 of
1962.

any regulations, orders and notices made under any of those Acts and any licences, permits and other authorisations issued thereunder shall, except insofar as they are inconsistent with this Act, continue to have effect as though made or issued under this Act.

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