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Research Article
Fishery Policy Framework and Policy Capacity Gaps in Nepal

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ABSTRACT

The fishery sector in Nepal contributes NPR. 13 billion to the economy and employs over 500,000 people. Current fish production in Nepal as 5.7 t/ha/year, with potential production significantly higher at 10 t/ha/year, presenting tremendous growth opportunities. This paper assesses the capacity of policy actors to formulate, formalize, implement, and evaluate fishery policies. Based on the current fishery policy framework, this paper brings qualitative information collected through literature review, field observations, interviews, stakeholder consultation meetings, key informant interviews (KIIs), and focus group discussions (FGDs). The findings revealed significant gaps in the policy process, framework, and the capacity of policy actors. Moreover, it highlights deficiencies in institutional capabilities, the availability and use of reliable data and evidence for policy. Additionally, the paper identifies the fact about poor coordination among relevant ministries; existing lack of coherence with associated acts and policies, and issues with feed and nutrition, marketing, investment, and loan provisions that mainly hinder the promotion of the fishery sector. Therefore, fostering stronger linkages and collaborative efforts across all levels of government is essential to address existing policy gaps and unluck the full potential of Nepalese fisheries.

Introduction

Nepal benefits from a rich diversity of fish species and a growing fishery sector, supported by its extensive freshwater resources, including rivers, lakes, ponds, and reservoirs (Timsina et al., 2022). This sector is vital for the nation's economy and food security, providing livelihoods and serving as a primary source of protein as it is also one of the fastest-growing segments of agriculture in the country (Gurung, 2016). Currently, Nepal's total fish production is 113,736 t contributing about NPR.13 billion to the national economy. In the total production, aquaculture contributes 92,736 t (80%) and capture fisheries add 21,000 t (20%). Within aquaculture, pond fish culture leads with the production of 82,161 t including 75,292 t from the Terai region; 6,787 t from the hills, and 82 t from the mountains (CFPCC, 2024).

Province-wise distribution of pond fish culture in Nepal reveals regional variations. Madhesh Province leads with the highest production at 47,640 t, followed by Lumbini Province with 15,885 t while Karnali Province records the lowest production (82 t). This reflects the fact that concentration of fish production has been focused primarily in Terai region; Karnali contributes the least in total production (CFPCC, 2024).

CFPCC (2024) also reported the fact that current productivity of fish is 5.7 t/ha/year, but the potential production is way higher i.e., 10 t/ha/year. Also, Nepal's per capita fish production remains low (about 3.8 kg annually), with total per capita fish availability (including imports) at 3.9 kg (Shrestha et al., 2022). This is considerably below the 28 kg per person per year consumption seen in developed countries and 11 kg in the case of developing countries, underscoring the need for increased production and consumption (FAO, 2020).

Several institutional structures are established at governmental level to support and promote the overall

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fishery sector in Nepal. The Central Fisheries Promotion and Conservation Center (CFPCC), operating under the Department of Livestock Services within the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, is the primary institution for fisheries and aquaculture development in the country. Likewise, the Nepal Agricultural Research Council (NARC) functions as the leading body for agricultural research including the fishery subsector with several research facilities at different research stations in the country. The Prime Minister Agriculture Modernization Project (PMAMP) also has provided significant contribution to fishery development in Nepal, with a particular focus on the Terai region. Under this initiative, 3 super zones, 6 zones and 39 pocket areas are designated for fishery promotion. Notably, 30 of the total pockets lies in Madhesh province (CFPCC, 2024).

History of Aquaculture in Nepal reflects the facts about its commencement in 1946/47 with the establishment of a fisheries unit under the Agricultural Council (Kunwar & Adhikari, 2020). Since then, numerous policies and strategies have been formulated and implemented to support the fishery sector (Gurung et al., 2012). The Aquatic Animal Protection Act of 1960 was a key early measure, enacted to regulate the conservation of aquatic biodiversity. Since then, several policy interventions were made for the regulation and promotion of fishery sector aiming for its sustainable development. The Constitution of Nepal (2015), Article 57 grants right to establish legal mandate through policy and acts to all three tiers of government; federal, provincial and local level. Fishery policies, therefore, need to be developed and implemented across all these governments to ensure comprehensive sectoral development.

The most recent advancement in fishery policy is the 'National Fisheries Development Policy' of 2022, marking a pivotal milestone in the sector's evolution after seven decades of development, but a complete set of policy documents is still missing. The absence of a long-term vision for sustainable fishery development from the state, primarily due to the lack of a comprehensive policy document and long-term planning since long time resulted in a deficiency of essential acts, regulations, and guidelines necessary for the effective promotion and regulation of the sector. Further, this resulted in uncoordinated efforts, inefficient resource management, and low production levels at present.

Public policies are created through a collaborative process involving various stakeholders, including government bodies, policy analysts, and the media, with policy evaluation assessing their success or failure. The overall steps can be broadly classified as backward and forward systemic linkage (Elmore, 1979; Nair & Lopez, 2024).

Backward systemic linkage involves reviewing and integrating past experiences and lessons learned into the current policy formation process (Miola A et al., 2019). This requires thorough stakeholder engagement, consultation, and coordination, ensuring that all relevant parties are involved before policy formation. Effective consultation and coordination among the stakeholders ensure that the policy is well-informed and considers all relevant factors (Freeman & McVea, 2005). Participation of different stakeholders before policy formation helps in building consensus, increasing the legitimacy of the policy, and ensuring that it addresses the needs of those affected (Bryson, 2011).

Forward systemic linkage focuses on ensuring that policies are designed to be flexible and resilient, anticipating future developments, and guiding policy outcomes (Ahlqvist et al., 2012). After policy formation, it is crucial to maintain open lines of communication with all relevant stakeholders to monitor the policy's impact and make necessary adjustments. Thus, continuous stakeholder engagement, consultation, and coordination becomes essential. Stakeholder engagement during policy implementation helps in identifying any issues early on and addressing them promptly (Bryson, 2011). Participation ensures the relevancy and effectiveness of policy in changing circumstances as well.

Key actors in policy process are primarily responsible to maintain effective forward and backward linkage. In the fishery sector, policy actors include official actors (government officials and elected representatives) and non-official actors (NGOs, farmers, cooperatives, political parties, media, and others). Official actors rely on expertise, evidence-based practices, and policy theories, while non-official actors influence decisions through advocacy and lobbying. The capacity of these stakeholders to maintain effective linkage in formulation, implementation, and evaluation of policies is vital for achieving sustainable growth in the fisheries sector (WB policy briefs, 2004).

The sufficient policy capacity among both official and non-official policy actors of three tier governments is to improve the persistent underdevelopment of the fishery sector in Nepal. Literatures states that, the key determiners of the policy capacity are knowledge, skills, political and ethical abilities, as well as the systemic and institutional abilities of the implementing authorities (Wu et al., 2015). Identifying and addressing the critical gaps in these determiners is thus essential for

assessment of policy gap (Research Institute (IFPRI), 2017).

Agriculture trends in Nepal have long been dominated by traditional practices, with policy efforts often falling to achieve desired outcomes due to fragmented governance and weak institutional coordination. Among sub- sectors, fisheries remine particularly under-prioritized, despite their growing economic and nutritional value. In this context, understanding how policy actors, policy capacity, and actor engagement influence policy effectiveness is critical. Therefore, this paper seeks to explore the Nepalese fishery policy framework, fishery policy process, and gap of policy actors and their capacity in fishery policy process

Materials and Methods

This study employed a mixed-methods approach combining both qualitative and quantitative research techniques. Data were collected through document review, interviews, observations, and surveys. For the analysis of policy gaps in the fishery subsector, the top two local governments (municipalities and rural municipalities) of highest producer district in each province were selected.

30 Key Informant Interviews (KII) and four Focus Group Discussions (FGD) were conducted to gather a broad range of stakeholders' perspectives. The participants of FGD's included members and officials from fishery association Nepal, fishery traders, government officials, and fishery technicians. 30 KII were conducted in all the seven provinces, including fishery policy experts, parliamentarians, ex-ministers, committee members of provincial assemblies, mayors and deputy mayors of local governments, chairs of district coordination committees, representatives from fishery associations, and experts from the Agriculture and Forestry University.

A purposive and random sampling method was employed in this study to select respondents, aiming to capture both specific expertise and a broader range of perspectives from diverse stakeholders within the fishery sector. A purposive and random sampling method was used to select respondents, and data were collected using a pretested questionnaire distributed via Kobo Toolbox. The questionnaire featured a blend of semi-structured and close-ended questions, including Likert scale questions to assess respondents' attitudes and opinions on related issues offering quantitative perspectives to their opinions. Respondents were drawn from all seven provinces, ensuring geographic diversity and regional representation providing a comprehensive view of the sector from policy makers to practitioners.

Results

Nepalese fishery policy framework

Backward systemic linkage of fishery policy framework

Our study shows that there is two type of policy actors; official and non-official actors. In Nepal official policy actors includes, executive, legislatives and Judiciary in all three tires of governments. Executives include elected representatives, bureaucrats, similarly, legislative includes parliament, provincial assembly and local municipality assembly, and judiciary includes courts and local judiciary. Non official policy actors including Individual fishery farmer, fishery group, fishery cooperatives, association of fishery farmer's, fishery product traders and entrepreneurs, political parties, fishery sector interest group and the media. Official and non-official actors need to interact all seven stages as a backward linkage of policy process. Policy need assessment; policy need analysis and prioritization; presentation of policy draft among policy actors; public debate and collection feedback and suggestions, draft revision; expert consultation; and preparation final draft are seven key stages. Policy actors required various type of capacities performing these stages effectively. In the fishery policy process, significant gaps in the backward systemic linkage were identified where inefficiencies and biasness in the stages performed were observed.

Forward systemic linkage in fishery policy framework.

Forward systemic linkage focuses on ensuring that policies are designed to be flexible and resilient, anticipating future developments, and integrating stakeholders during policy implementation. The study shows that seven key stages are being active as a forward linkage of fishery policy process. Policy as a complete set of documents requires subsequent policies, act, regulation, directives, working mandates, periodic plan and implementation calendar with a concrete action plan to be made which are seven stage of forward policy linkage. After policy formation, it is crucial to maintain open lines of communication with all relevant stakeholders to monitor the policy's impact and make necessary adjustments. Policy actors required good capabilities to develop a merit fishery policy and need to address all associate issue specific role in each policy documents for the achievement of policy goal. In our case, while a fishery policy exists, there is a significant gap in the necessary forward linkages, such as the absence of essential acts, regulations, and other supporting frameworks.

The policy formulation in Nepal expected to follow six key stages: setting the agenda, analyzing policies, forming committees, preparing and consulting on drafts, finalizing the draft, and obtaining cabinet approval. Each stage is intended to be guided by

thorough research and data. However, significant gaps identified in the availability and use of evidences during these stages. The study shows that policy making is considered as straightforward technical function of government.

The process begins with identifying key issues and evaluating options, followed by committee review and proposal refinement. Drafts are then discussed with stakeholders, and the final draft is submitted for cabinet approval. But the effective research and data are crucial at each stage is lacking to ensure that policy is evidence based. The findings also noted that the application of relevant theories and principles is limited. The formulation process is predominantly influenced by official actors, such as politicians and bureaucrats, with non-official actors playing a minimal and largely ineffective role.

Nepalese fishery policy process:

Importance of fishery policy process

The survey results indicated that understanding the policy problem is the most crucial step in the fishery policy process. Defining the policy agenda and engaging stakeholders are also viewed as essential. Moving from policy documents to practical action presents significant challenges, highlighting the need for a robust implementation framework. Additionally, continuous review and evaluation are crucial to ensure the policy remains relevant amidst changing circumstances. The importance of policy drafting and endorsement follows, reflecting their role in shaping and formalizing effective policies.

Key sources of information for fishery policy formulation

Bureaucracy emerged as the most influential source, indicating its central role in policy formulation. Following closely were international development corporations' partners and expert think tanks from internal universities which contributed valuable external expertise and academic insights to the policy-making process. In contrast, sources such as neighboring countries and global/regional declarations and conventions exerted minimal influence on Nepalese fishery policy.

Influence of different stakeholders in policy formulation

The analysis of stakeholder influence on policy formulation revealed varying degrees of impact among different groups. Politicians were perceived as the most influential followed by international development corporations' partners. The media, INGOs, farmers groups and federations were found to have considerable influence in policy formulation. Advocacy groups and trade unions, were perceived as having the least influence among the stakeholders examined. These findings highlighted the diverse and multi-faceted nature of stakeholder influence in policy formulation, with politicians and international partners at the forefront.

Data, information and evidences in policy process

The study conducted in two of the highest-producing local levels from the top fish-producing districts in each province revealed a significant data gap in policy formulation. The assessment reveals significant gaps in availability and use of reliable data, information and evidences in the policy process (formation, formalization, implementation and evaluation). These gaps mean that policy decisions are often made without a solid foundation of evidences. Weaknesses in evidence based legal frameworks, institutional mechanism and resource allocation makes it difficult to identify and address key issues and set a clear policy agenda. Stakeholder engagement is also found limited. The sector experiences delays in policy implementation, and weak mechanisms for policy review and revision often result in outdated policies.

Gap of fishery policy capacity and actors

Fishery sub sector policy capacity gap

The assessment of policy capacity in the fishery sector highlights several key areas of concern. Legislative capacity, encompassing legal, structural, resource, and environmental factors, is identified as relatively robust. However, significant gaps exist in identifying fishery policy issues and defining clear policy agendas. Stakeholder engagement in the policy process is also limited, reducing the inclusiveness and effectiveness of policy-making. Furthermore, the ability to implement policies promptly is found to be lacking, with considerable deficiencies in the processes of policy review, evaluation, and revision. Policy drafting, in particular, emerges as a critical area needing improvement, reflecting the overall challenges in the sector's policy capacity.

Issues in fishery sub sector

The analysis of fishery management aspects revealed that feeding and nutrition were considered the most critical factors. Marketing, emerged as another key priority, highlighting the necessity for effective strategies to promote fishery products. Other vital aspects included financial investment and loan provision, Grading, processing, and packaging, technology and mechanization and Illegal entry of fishes from neighboring countries.

Gap in political abilities

Out of the 14 local levels examined, none had comprehensive fishery policies, acts, or regulations in place. Only two local levels had any policies related to

aquatic animals: Kailari Rural Municipality in Kailali district with the "Ponds and Lake Conservation and Promotion Procedure" and Barahatal Rural Municipality in Surkhet district with the "Aquatic Biodiversity Conservation Act 2077." Although the federal government recently created a guiding policy "National Fishery Development policy, 2022", the complete set of documents, including acts, regulations, and directives, remains lacking.

At the provincial level, fishery is mentioned within broader agriculture development policies. Even Madhesh Province, the highest producer in the country, lacks a dedicated fishery policy. Similar is the case with all other provinces.

The constitutional rights granted to all three-tier government to make necessary policy interventions has not been fully utilized for streamlining fishery sub sector development. There remains a gap in comprehensive legal frameworks and coordinated policy efforts across federal, provincial, and local levels. Moreover, influencing role of non-official policy actors has not been significant to pressurize the policy formulation in the sector.

Coordination, consultation and collaboration with other ministries

The analysis of ministry collaboration in policy implementation revealed significant gap between ministries during policy process. Sufficient and meaningful consultation and collaboration to relevant ministries during policy formulation and evaluation is not practiced. The biggest gap is seen with the ministry of finance, thus enough budget allocation for implementation of planned activities to achieve policy goals is lacking. Similarly, the gap in coordinating role of OPMCM and other ministries is lacking.

Linkage gap among fishery policy and other agriculture policies

The fishery policy and other related agricultural policies is perceived to be non-consistent and have coherence issues. The National Food Security Policy of 2076 was perceived to have the most prevalent gap with fishery policy. Following closely, the Agri Bio-Diversity Policy of 2071 and the Agricultural Mechanization Promotion Policy of the same year ranked second and third.

Linkage gap of fishery policy and other act of Nepal

The Feed and Material Act, 2033 was perceived to have the most prevalent gap with fishery policy. Following closely, Aquatic Life Conservation Act, 2017 and Export and Import Control Act, 2013 ranked second and third. Similarly, the Food Act, 2023 and the Animal Slaughterhouse and Meat Inspection Act, 2055 were also perceived to have significant gap. Likewise, other acts were also perceived to have policy coherence issues.

Table 1. Ranking the importance of fishery policy process

Steps of fishery policy formulation	Index value ± S.D	Rank
Understanding policy problem	4.32 ± 0.69	Rank I
Defining policy agenda, and issues	4.17 ± 0.67	Rank II
Engagement of stakeholders	3.73 ± 0.87	Rank III
Policy implementation	3.49 ± 1.21	Rank IV
Policy review, evaluation revision	3.39 ± 1.26	Rank V
Drafting policy	3.39 ± 1.38	Rank V
Policy endorsement and political consent	3.12 ± 1.12	Rank VI

Where, 1- Very Low, 2- Low, 3-Moderate, 4-High, 5-Very high
(Source : Author Survey, 2024)

Table 2. Key Sources of information for Nepalese Fishery Policy Formulation

Source of Information	Index value ± S.D	Rank
Bureaucracy	4.07±1.03	Rank I
International development corporations' partners	3.5±1.04	Rank II
Expert / Think tanks degree from internal universities	3.34±1.11	Rank III
Expert / Think tanks degree from external universities	3.29±1.08	Rank IV
INGOs	3.27±0.95	Rank V
Politicians	3.15±1.13	Rank VI
Farmers groups, and federations	3.15±1.06	Rank VII
International treaties, and agreements by government	3.15±1.11	Rank VIII
Media	3.02±1.08	Rank IX

Where, 1- Very Low, 2- Low, 3-Moderate, 4-High, 5-Very high
(Source : Author Survey, 2024)

Table 3. Influence of different stakeholders in policy formulation

Influence of different stakeholders in policy formulation	Index value ± S.D	Rank
Politicians	3.74±1.02	Rank I
International development corporations' partners	3.62±0.94	Rank II

Media	3.36±1.06	Rank III
INGOs	3.31±1.2	Rank IV
Farmers groups, and federations	3.18±1.07	Rank V
Private sectors	3.15±1.04	Rank VI

Where, 1- Very Low, 2- Low, 3-Moderate, 4-High, 5-Very high
(Source : Author Survey, 2024)

Table 4. Ranking of fishery sector policy capacity gaps

Gap in fishery sector policy capacity	Index value ± S.D	Rank
Legislative capacity (legal, structural, resources, and environmental)	4.07±1.08	Rank I
Identify policy issue	3.95±0.86	Rank II
Defining policy agenda	3.54±0.84	Rank III
Stakeholders' engagement in the policy process	3.34±1.09	Rank IV
Timely policy implementation ability	3.02±1.25	Rank V
Policy review, evaluation, and revision	2.93±1.35	Rank VI
Policy drafting	2.71±1.08	Rank VIII

Where, 1- Very Low, 2- Low, 3-Moderate, 4-High, 5-Very high
(Source: Author Survey, 2024)

Table 5. Ranking of issues within the fishery

Sectoral Gap of Fishery	Index value ± S.D	Rank
Feeding and Nutrition	4.1±0.83	Rank I
Marketing	3.95±0.86	Rank II
Financial investment and loan provision	3.61±0.95	Rank III
Grading, processing, and Packaging	3.44±1.07	Rank IV
Technology and mechanizes	3.39±0.97	Rank V
Illegal entry of fish	3.29±0.81	Rank VI
Risk and Business Insurance	3.12±1.33	Rank VII
Water Quality Management	3.07±1.1	Rank VIII

Where, 1- Very Low, 2- Low, 3-Moderate, 4-High, 5-Very high
(Source: Author Survey, 2024)

Table 6. Coordination and collaboration of MOALD with other ministries during fishery policy process

Ministry collaboration	Index value ± S.D	Rank
Ministry of Finance	3.98±0.82	Rank I
Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers	3.78±0.91	Rank II
Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation	3.59±1	Rank III
Ministry of Education, Science and Technology	3.27±0.78	Rank IV
Ministry of Home Affairs	3.24±0.89	Rank V
Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies	3.1±1.02	Rank VI

Where, 1- Very Low, 2- Low, 3-Moderate, 4-High, 5-Very high
(Source : Author Survey, 2024)

Table 7. Linkage between fishery policy and other agriculture policies

List of Policy	Mean ± SD	Rank
National Food Security Policy 2076	3.62±0.88	Rank I
Agro Bio-Diversity Policy, 2071	3.43±1.17	Rank II
Agricultural Mechanization Promotion Policy, 2071	3.35±1.16	Rank III
Agribusiness Promotion Policy, 2063	3.3±1.13	Rank IV
National Agriculture Policy, 2061	3.29±1.09	Rank V
Irrigation Policy, 2070	3.16±1.17	Rank VI
Trade Policy, 2072	3.11±0.98	Rank VII
Climate Change Policy, 2067	3.08±1.1	Rank VIII

Where, 1- Very Low, 2- Low, 3-Moderate, 4-High, 5-Very high
(Source : Author Survey, 2024)

Table 8. Linkage of fishery policy and other relevant acts

List of Act	Mean ±SD	Rank
Feed and Material Act, 2033	3.95±0.81	Rank I

Aquatic Life Conservation Act, 2017	3.61±1.24	Rank II
Export and Import Control Act, 2013	3.49±1.19	Rank III
Food Act, 2023	3.43±0.93	Rank IV
Animal Slaughterhouse and Meat Inspection Act, 2055	3.34±1.15	Rank V
Statistics Act, 2079	3.32±0.84	Rank VI
Nepal Agricultural Research Council Act, 2048	3.32±1.09	Rank VII
Water Resources Act, 2049	3.26±1.18	Rank VIII
Pesticides Management Act, 2076	3.18±1.09	Rank IX
Animal Health and Animal Services Act, 2055	3.18±1.25	Rank X

Where, 1- Very Low, 2- Low, 3-Moderate, 4-High, 5-Very high
(Source : Author Survey, 2024)

Discussion

Ideally, in the policy process the major information sources should be research evidence and inputs based on ground reality through stakeholder's consultation, with bureaucracy playing a facilitative role in reflecting this information in policy drafts. Our findings revealed a critical insight into the Nepalese fishery policy framework. In procedural context, top-down approach to policy-making, with minimal engagement from relevant stakeholders. This top-down, procedural approach limits engagement from relevant stakeholders particularly local fishery entrepreneurs, fishery cooperatives and local marginalized community who most directly affected by such policy process. the policy process less responsive to broader socio-political contexts. The result matches to the findings of Gerth & Mills (2014) as it is well reported that bureaucracies, particularly in developing countries, have a significant influence on policy-making due to their structured hierarchies, formal procedures and significant reliance on governmental processes and institutional frameworks to guide policy decisions. Political leadership and elected representatives, while playing a key role in policy finalization, often lack the necessary technical expertise and heavily rely on bureaucratic assistance and guidance for decision-making.

The study revealed major gaps in the use of reliable data and evidence throughout the policy process, resulting in decisions that lack an effective use of facts and evidences, and often fail to deliver effective outcomes. Similarly, Shrestha (2019) in the ADB report on governance noted that weak evidence backing is a key reason for policies not able to achieve their intended goals. This highlights the importance of incorporating reliable data into policy-making over just institution-based decision making. The absence of robust policy framework identified in our study highlights a significant gap in prioritization and capability among policy actors, impeding their ability to properly assess needs and develop effective policies for the fishery sub sector. This finding is consistent with the reports of (Shamsuzzaman et al., (2024) as the authors well highlighted about similar challenges in Bangladesh,

indicating a broader pattern of insufficient policy frameworks impacting fisheries management.

The analysis of Nepal's fishery policy highlights the need for a supportive implementation environment, including legal, structural, resource, and environmental aspects. This aligns with Parsons et al. (2021), who emphasized the importance of robust frameworks for effective policy execution without which even good policies fail to achieve policy objectives.

Conclusion

This study provides a detailed assessment of the fishery policy framework and policy process in Nepal, revealing significant gaps that hinder effective policy formulation and implementation. The current framework is characterized by fragmented policies and weak institutional and legal foundations, which have undermined the sector's potential for growth and employment generation. Critical gaps in policy capacity were identified, particularly the policy process that remains predominantly top-down and bureaucratic, and the minimal involvement of non-state actors such as stakeholders, research institutes, the media and civil society. The analysis underscores the need for stronger coordination and meaningful consultation among key ministries to support the development of evidence-based fishery policy. Additionally, aligning fishery policy with related agricultural policies and legal frameworks is essential to ensure coherence and effectiveness. Comprehensive policy documents are essential to address the present fragmentation and ensure more consistent and effective policy implementation. These deficiencies reflect limited policy capacity of key actors, highlighting the need to reform the framework, process and structure of fishery policymaking to ensure more inclusive, coherent and impactful policy outcome through sustainable development of the sector. Despite its substantial potential, the fishery sector remains largely neglected by all three tiers of government, emphasizing the urgent need for a more coordinated and inclusive approach to fishery policy development in Nepal.

Recommendation

a. Formulate and implement policies based on data and measurement, research findings, clear and achievable targets, and globally accepted theories.
b. Capacity enhancement of the policy actors for reducing the forward and backward linkage gap in policy process.
c. A comprehensive policy framework, including acts, regulations, guidelines, directives, and working mandates, needs to be established

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