

**RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE AFRICAN PLATFORM FOR
REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS FOR FISHERIES, AQUACULTURE AND
AQUATIC SYSTEMS (APRIFAAS)**

Rule 1 - Definitions

In these Rules,

“**Bureau**” means the governing body of the Platform comprising of a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson and a Rapporteur;

“**Chairperson**” means the Chairperson of the Platform;

“**Member**” means a Member of the Platform;

“**Platform**” means the African Platform for Regional Institutions for Fisheries, Aquaculture and Aquatic Systems

“**Representative**” means representative of a Member of the Platform or any other invited organization, individual or stakeholder;

“**Secretariat**” means the Secretariat of the Platform;

Rule 2 - Status and Composition

1. The Platform is an informal and non-decision-making mechanism established to strengthen institutional coordination and collaboration with respect to fisheries and aquaculture matters in Africa

2. The Platform shall be composed of the following:

1. The General Assembly
2. The Bureau
3. The Secretariat

Rule 3 - Functions of the Platform

The Platform shall:

- Coordinate and facilitate systematic exchange of information between regional fisheries, aquaculture and aquatic institutions, henceforth referred as ‘stakeholders’ across the continent;
- Improve dialogue between stakeholders
- Coordinate and facilitate the elaboration of harmonized work programme;
- Strengthen the capacity of the African continent to speak with one voice on fisheries and aquaculture matters in regional, continental and international fora and in dialogue processes with partners; and
- Monitor and coordinate evaluation and implementation of the harmonized work programme.

Rule 4 - The Bureau

The Platform shall appoint a Bureau consisting of the elected:

- Chair
- 1st Vice Chair
- 2nd Vice Chair
- Rapporteur
- Vice rapporteur

The Bureau shall hold office for an initial establishment and organizational consolidation term of 24 months. The Platform will decide the final terms of office for members of the Bureau after this initial term expires.

The primary function of the Bureau shall be to facilitate meetings of the Platform

The Bureau shall meet as necessary, either in person or by means of telecommunication

Rule 5 - Duties of the Chair

1. In addition to exercising the powers conferred upon him or her elsewhere in these rules the Chair shall:
 - represent the Platform in between meetings;
 - Preside at sessions of the Platform and meetings of the Bureau;
 - Ensure the observance of the present rules in accordance with the definitions; functions and operating principles of the Platform;
 - Accord participants the right to speak;
 - Rule on any points of order;
 - Subject to these rules, exercise complete control over the proceedings and maintain order.
2. The Chair may also propose:
 - The closure of the list of speakers;
 - A limitation on the time to be allowed to speakers and on the number of times a member may speak on an issue;
 - The adjournment or closure of debate on an issue;
 - The suspension or adjournment of a meeting.
3. Whenever the Chairperson is unable to perform his or her duties for any reason, the 1st Vice-Chairperson shall assume the duties of the Chairperson and in its absence the 2nd vice chairperson shall assume the duties

Rule 6 - The Secretariat of the Platform

AU-IBAR in its role as the CAMFA Secretariat will act as the Secretariat for the Platform and shall coordinate the day-to-day affairs of the Platform including but not limited to the following:

- Collating, processing (where required) and disseminating information amongst the Members;
- Drafting and processing relevant documents as may be requested by the Platform;
- Organising the meetings of the Platform as provided in Rule 7 and providing all necessary support required for such meetings including report-writing, preparation of press-releases, communiqués, declarations etc.;
- Providing support to the Bureau of the Platform;
- Keeping proper records of the Platform which must be properly organized for easy reference;
- Disseminating the work of the Platform as may be required;
- Executing such other tasks as may be assigned to it by the Platform; and
- Facilitating exchange of information and work programmes between members and observers of the platform.

Rule 7 Platform meetings

1. The Platform shall meet at least once a year;
2. The venue and dates of each session are to be decided by the chair in consultation with the secretariat and the Bureau.
3. The Secretariat will invite and notify the members of the Platform of the venue and dates of any session at least eight weeks before it is due to commence;
4. Without prejudice to rules (2) and (3) the platform may, when necessary, convene extra ordinary meetings.

Rule 8 – Accreditation and Representation of Members

Each Member of the Platform shall be appointed by institution to the Platform. Each institution should be represented by appointed representative.

Rule 9 - Quorum

The quorum for any meeting of the Platform shall be constituted by a simple majority of its membership.

Rule 10 - Agenda of meetings

1. The Secretariat shall, in consultation with and under the guidance of the Chair of the Bureau, prepare a provisional agenda for each statutory meeting of the Platform.

2. Any member of the Platform may request the Secretariat to include specific items in the provisional agenda.
3. The Secretariat shall distribute the provisional agenda for each statutory meeting, along with other official documents to be considered at such meeting, to the members in the official languages of the Platform at least six weeks before the meeting is due to commence.
4. The provisional agenda shall also be available to other relevant stakeholders of the Platform.
5. Between the date of distribution of the provisional agenda and the date of adoption of the agenda by the Platform meeting in plenary, members of the Platform may propose supplementary items for inclusion in the agenda, provided they are of an important and urgent nature. The Secretariat shall include such items on an updated provisional agenda.
6. During any statutory meeting, members of the Platform may revise the agenda by adding, deleting or amending items. Only items that members consider to be of an important and urgent nature may be added to the agenda during a statutory meeting
7. Any item of the agenda of a statutory meeting, consideration of which has not been completed at the session, shall be included automatically in the agenda for the next statutory meeting.

Rule 11 - Proposals/Substantive Motions/Amendments

Proposals, substantive motions and amendments shall normally be in writing and shall be put to the Members in the order in which they are received by the Chairperson. Parts of any proposals, motion or amendment may be voted on separately at the request of any member, unless the original mover objects. If the original mover objects, the objection shall be put to the vote as a procedural matter.

Rule 12 - Vote on Motions/Proposals

Any motion or proposal by a Member shall be seconded before being put to vote. A motion or proposal can at any time be withdrawn so long as no vote has been taken with respect to it. If the motion or proposal has been seconded, the Member who has seconded it may require that it be put to the vote as his/her motion or proposal, with the same right of precedence as if the original mover had not withdrawn it.

Rule 13 - Vote on Amendments

If two or more amendments to a motion or proposal are made, the Chairperson shall rule on the order in which they are to be voted upon. Ordinarily, the Platform shall first vote on the amendment furthest removed in substance from the original proposal and then on the amendment next furthest removed until all amendments have been put to the vote, but when an amendment adds to or deletes from the text of motion or proposal, that amendment shall be voted on first.

Rule 14 - Meetings

The Platform may in its discretion invite representatives of any relevant stakeholders with no voting rights into a discussion under its consideration.

Rule 15 - Informal Consultations

The Platform may hold informal consultations with other relevant stakeholders as may be needed for the discharge of its responsibilities.

Rule 16 - Working Languages

The working languages of the Platform shall be African Union official languages. Interpretation into the official languages of the Platform will be provided for all the sessions of the Platform.

Rule 17 - Membership of the platform

- Regional institutions with mandates in fisheries, aquaculture and aquatic systems in Africa.
- Development partners with initiatives in fisheries and aquaculture in Africa
- New institutions and partners in the above categories and seeking membership of the platform should make enquiries to the Secretariat at AU-IBAR

Rule 18 - Voting Rights

Each member of the Platform shall have one (1) vote. Observers shall not have voting rights.

Rule 19 - Decision making

The Platform shall take all its decisions by consensus or failing which decisions shall be taken by simple majority of Members present and eligible to vote.

Rule 20 - Method of Voting

Voting shall be either by a show of hands or any other method as may be determined by the Members.

Rule 21 - Records of the Meetings

1. The Platform shall adopt its reports.
2. A record of the proceedings of the Platform's meeting shall be kept by the Secretariat and shall be circulated among the Members and all relevant stakeholders.

Rule 22 - Communication

The Platform may communicate its deliberations as it deems necessary.

Rule 23 - Financial Responsibility

Each Member shall be responsible for expenses relating to its participation in the Platform.

Rule 24 - Modifications to the rules of procedure

1. Modifications to these rules of procedure may be adopted by a 75% majority vote of the members of the Platform.
2. Any modifications proposed to these rules of procedure, submitted by members of the Platform or by the Bureau, should be communicated to all members of the Platform at least eight weeks before they are submitted to the session where the proposals are expected to be discussed.

Rules 25 - Entry into Force

The present Rules shall take effect upon adoption by the Platform.