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ASSESSMENT OF THE STATUS OF MONITORING, CONTROL AND SURVEILLANCE (MCS) SYSTEMS FOR CONSERVATION AND PROTECTION OF AQUATIC BIODIVERSITY IN SHARED AFRICAN AQUATIC ECOSYSTEMS IN THE WEST, CENTRAL AND NORTH REGIONS OF AFRICA.



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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

PCA	Africa Caribbean Pacific
AIS	Automatic Information System
MPA	Marine Protected Areas
AU-IBAR	African Union International Bureau for Animal Resources
BM	World Bank
CEBEVIRHA	Economic Commission for Livestock, Meat and Fishery Resources
ECOWAS	Economic Community Of West African States
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ICCAT	International Tuna Conservation Commission in Africa
MCA	Minimum Access Condition
MCC	Multinational Coordination Center
ATLAFCO	Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation between African States of the Atlantic Ocean
EAFC	Eastern Atlantic Fisheries Committee
GRFC	Gulf of Guinea Regional Fisheries Commission
FCWCWest	Central Gulf of Guinea Fisheries Committee
CR-SCS	Regional Center-Monitoring, Control, Surveillance
CRESMAC	Regional Center for Maritime Security of Central Africa
SRFC	Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission
DHLP	Fisheries Legislation Harmonization Department
DRSI	Information System Research Department
DSCSA	Monitoring, Control, Surveillance and Planning Department
EM	Member state
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FiTI	Fisheries Transparency Initiative
WATF	West Africa Task Force
NWG	National Working Group
IUU	Illegal, Unregulated, Undeclared
MCS	Monitoring Control Surveillance
PSMA	Port State Measures
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
RFO	Regional Fisheries Organization
IAP	International Action Plan
RAP	Regional Action Plan
SAP	Strategic Action Plan
PESCAO	Improving fisheries governance in West Africa
WARP	West Africa Regional Program
PRGRH	Regional Fisheries Resources Management Plan
TFP	Technical and Financial Partner

MCS	Monitoring, Control, Surveillance
SG	General secretary
MPA	Swedish International Cooperation Agency
FIS	Stop Illegal Fishing
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
MS	Permanent Secretary
ITLOS	International Tribunal Law of the Sea
TMT	Trygg Mat Tracking
AU	African Union
SOCU	Surveillance Operations Coordination Unit
EU	European Union
WAEMU	West Africa Economic Monetary Union
VMS	Vessel Monitoring Survey
EEZ	Exclusive economic zone
IUCN	International Union Conservation of Nature

SUMMARY

With reference to the contract, signed on 28/10/22 with AU-BIRA, for an assessment mission of MCS systems in shared African aquatic ecosystems, and in accordance with the schedule established by mutual agreement with the AU-BIRA team, the consultant visited some Regional Fisheries Organizations (RFO) located on the eastern side of the Atlantic Ocean. These are the SRFC (Dakar-Senegal), the FCWC (Tema-Ghana), the GRFC (Libreville-Gabon). For the regional fisheries organizations visited, the mission took place under good conditions.

Regional economic organizations such as ECOWAS-WAEMU-ECCAS, ATLAFCO, FAO and some NGOs including PRCM (Dakar), RAMPAO (Dakar), MAWA were visited or consulted by scheduled interviews through a questionnaire pre-established with mutual agreement with AU-IBAR.

Based on all the information and data collected, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The coastal States located on the eastern seaboard of the Atlantic Ocean have grouped together into four regional fisheries organizations (ATLAFCO-SRFC-FCWC-GRFC). They have similar cooperation mandates in the fight against IUU fishing and capacity building.
2. Surveillance structures, to monitor and control the activities of fishing vessels operating in their areas, exist in most coastal States located on the eastern seaboard of the Atlantic Ocean, but are relatively weak overall compared to the extent of the fight against IUU fishing.
3. The administrative and legal environment of all Member States and sub-regional fisheries organizations exist in various forms, but still remain very fragile and non-binding. Admittedly, States adhere to international conventions on fishing, without integrating specific MCS provisions into their national legislation to ensure their applicability.
4. The availability of sufficiently qualified human resources in MCS is a problem for almost all States and all fisheries organizations. The SRFC, which had good potential in this area, is currently declining in performance.
5. The financial means allowing to take in charge in an autonomous and continuous way the regional monitoring of fisheries, have not been resolved in the three Regional Organizations of Fisheries. Regional fisheries surveillance is carried out with the support of external Technical and Financial Partners (TFP). The mentality of always being assisted, even for the simplest needs, still persists in MS and RFOs.

The study presented below was based on the following axes:

- Evaluation of sub-regional fisheries organizations: SRFC-FCWC-GRFC-ATLAFCO (deliverable point 2 and 3)
- Comparative analysis of the three fishing organizations: SRFC-FCWC-GRFC (deliverable point 4 and 5)
- Measures for improving the sub-regional MCS and expanding monitoring measures towards other resource protection concepts (deliverable points 6 and 7)
- Measures to support sub-regional fisheries organizations in their MCS cooperation missions (deliverable point 5)
- Conclusion and recommendations (deliverable point 8)

In view of the questions and answers with the sub-regional fisheries organizations visited, major constraints have been identified in the Member States:

- The persistent anchoring of MS to “national sovereignty to the detriment of broader regional cooperation” considerably slows down the initiatives to combat IUU fishing proposed by regional fisheries organizations.
- The delays in bringing national legislation into line with the various international and regional legal instruments greatly weaken the effective application of measures to combat IUU fishing.
- The very average level of training or qualification of junior and managerial supervisory staff in the States does not always favor the best operational decision-making when necessary.
- Weak governance and lack of transparency in decision-making (selective sanctions and ineffective enforcement) weaken the credibility of MS and regional fisheries organizations
- The lack of control over the financing of projects and programs by the Member States and the regional fisheries organizations does not allow the planning and execution in time of the various action plans

Opportunities are noted

- Stronger political commitment at the highest level of States on the continent to support the IUU fight, expressed by Heads of State in Malabo.
- The involvement of AU-IBAR in the process of combating IUU fishing, with the support of technical and financial partners.
- The interest shown by ECOWAS, WAEMU and ECCAS, to cooperate with existing sub-regional fisheries organizations in the field of fisheries
- The presence of ATLAFCO bringing together 22 Member States, a broader cooperation framework

Recommendations for integrating, among other things, the ecosystem approach in fisheries monitoring were formulated.

- The concepts conveyed by FiTI and the Blue Economy will be the new complements to the traditional fisheries monitoring strategies conveyed by fishing organizations for better protection of the marine ecosystem.
- A Monitoring-Evaluation department endowed with prerogatives of interpellation of the MS, would be a great contribution in the three fishing organizations to follow and boost the common activities to be carried out.
- The involvement of flag States in monitoring the activities of their vessels will be the norm. Free licenses offered to foreign fishing vessels or charters entered into without the involvement of flag states should be banned throughout the region. Consignees, shipowners and agencies will be legally involved to varying degrees in monitoring the activities of their vessels.
- The observer program, the registration of foreign vessels in the regional register of fishing vessels, the use of the regional VMS, are some of the avenues among others identified as possible independent sources of funding for surveillance that must be seized.

Support needed from Technical and Financial Partners

- Support the sub-regional fisheries organizations to regain their credibility with the Member States (institutional support), to enable them to convey the messages and the right guidelines for resource management and environmental protection.
- Legal support that facilitates the intelligent application and proper reading of MCS legal texts by operational staff,
- Capacity building support for surveillance personnel on methods, techniques for research and analysis of concordant information that could confuse an IUU fishing vessel. The training of trainers will be privileged.
- Diversification of options for the protection of aquatic systems in general (FiTI concept, Blue Economy, MPA, Biological Rest, and others)

I. INTRODUCTION

I.1. Situation

The coastal states located on the eastern Atlantic coast, stretching from Morocco to Namibia share several currents rich in nutrients with positive impacts on aquatic biodiversity. We notice:

- The countries forming the SRFC (Mauritania Cape Verde Gambia, Guinea Conakry, Guinea Bissau, Senegal, Sierra Leone) located in the northern part of the Eastern Center Atlantic, are part of the Large Marine Ecosystem of the Canary Current which flows from north to south, with upwellings of relatively cold, nutrient-rich coastal waters.
- The countries forming the FCWC (Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, Benin, Nigeria) and GRFC (Cameroon, Gabon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Sao Tomé y Príncipe, Angola) are part of the Gulf of Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem (GCLME) which stretches from Bissagos Island in the north to Cape Lopez in the south.

Each of these areas is characterized by the interpenetration and interdependence of the maritime fisheries of the countries that make it up with the socio-economic relations between national actors from different countries, the movements of migrant fishermen working in several fisheries in several areas, access to several resources in different ecosystems through reciprocal fishing agreements between neighboring States, commercial economic links between fishing actors, particularly artisanal, etc. This makes the management of aquatic ecosystems complex with the shared exploitation¹ of several national and foreign actors and the interactions between the different components of the system.

The coastal States located on the East Atlantic Ocean coast naturally have maritime borders drawn according to geographical and geopolitical contexts, which the marine resources present in the various aquatic ecosystems ignore. Pelagic species, in particular sardinella, tuna species, species living on the border edges, sea turtles, birds and others make seasonal migrations passing through several maritime areas of different countries depending on the currents, temperatures and biomass that coastal states have a duty to protect.

Threats to the sustainability of shared resources and to the balance of marine ecosystems are real in all areas of the Eastern Atlantic Ocean seaboard, due to this interdependence of marine fisheries. Climate change, which has become a global problem that has not yet been mastered, the overexploitation of certain species prized by international markets, illegal, undeclared and unregulated fishing carried out by national and foreign fishing vessels, especially in coastal areas, the governance in the States and the administrations, the lack of transparency in the management of fisheries, the lack of consultation and harmonization of the texts and methods of management in the States, the weakness of the means of surveillance in the States, the different forms of marine pollution observed with the discarding of fish at sea, the dumping of toxins by coastal industries, petroleum products with the increasingly intense exploitation of offshore drilling, are all factors that expose the marine ecosystem and the marine species found there are at risk of irreversible decline in all African coastal states.

¹ By shared, we mean (i) resources shared between neighboring States (ii) resources shared between different operators (indigenous fishermen, migrant fishermen, fishermen operating through fishing agreements)

This very worrying situation of preservation and conservation of the marine ecosystem has not escaped the notice of the highest state authorities in Africa, who on several occasions during high-level meetings, particularly in Malabo in June 2014, have launched calls for a common and concerted fight against IUU fishing, and a rational and virtuous exploitation of marine resources and their environments. Coastal States are called upon individually to react to the threat, but also sub-regional fishing organizations, existing regional economic organizations on the Atlantic coast, national institutions dealing with fishing and environmental problems, regional institutions, NGOs present in Africa dealing with fisheries and environmental issues.

Aware of the seriousness of this threat, and the difficulties of individually leading this fight for the protection and conservation of marine ecosystems, while assuming their responsibilities as a coastal State, and taking into account the interdependence and interweaving of maritime fisheries countries, the States have come together through sub-regional fisheries organizations, SRFC for the West zone, FCWC for the Center zone, GRFC for the Gulf of Guinea and the south, ATLAFCO for all 22 African coastal States, with a view to pooling their means of intervention, harmonizing their actions in the fight against IUU, and rationalizing their activities.

This regrouping in fisheries organization, very relevant as an option, supported by Regional Economic Organizations such as (WAEMU-ECOWAS-ECCAS), and international institutions such as FAO, AU-IBAR, the World Bank (WB), the EU has a different experience depending on the targeted organization that will be assessed, to identify strengths and weaknesses, constraints and opportunities, and see the possibilities of expanding the current MCS methods and strategies used, to other concepts, such as the economy blue, FiTTI, MPAs, biological repos, concerted fishing agreements, precautionary measures, application of PSMAs, participatory monitoring, co-management, the Abidjan Convention, with a view to better management problems of preserving the shared marine ecosystem. Many paths are open.

To do this, the evaluation of the MCS systems of each fishing organization in the region will be made from elements drawn from:

- The various MCS strategic initiatives to combat IUU put in place by fishing organizations since their creation with the strengths and weaknesses,
- The legal, institutional and organizational environment put in place to properly address MCS issues, constraints and possibilities
- The logistical and financial means available to ensure the proper protection of resources
- An analysis of the possibilities for expansion into new MCS initiatives to improve resource protection

Afterwards,

- A comparative analysis of the different fisheries organizations in the region will be made to identify the divergences, the points of convergence, the possibilities of cooperation, the orientations likely to improve the common protection of shared resources (threats and opportunities).
- Recommendations will be formulated to support and extend the initiatives undertaken by regional organizations to other aspects of sustainable management of the marine ecosystem.
- An overview of support needs will be made to enable States and sub-regional organizations to improve their capacities to protect resources and their environments.

1.2. Context

An Aquatic Ecosystem is defined as a set of living beings within a specific medium or environment interacting with each other in this aquatic environment. We distinguish marine ecosystems such as oceans, seas, marshes, reefs, shallow coastal waters, estuaries, salty coastal lagoons, rocky shores, coastal areas and freshwater ecosystems where we find rivers, lakes, wetlands, swamps, floodplains.

The ecosystem approach focuses on the interactions between components of a system, which can modify the behavior of the other components of the system. Fishing cannot be considered in isolation but as part of a whole that considers the interactions it maintains with the environment and other human activities. The overexploitation of fishery resources in a given space and mainly the targeting of particular species to the detriment of others in the same environment, the dredging of the seabed with highly destructive gear of habitats, are among the main causes of the disturbance of biodiversity. Beyond the targeted species, fishing affects all the compartments of the area's ecosystem. Unmonitored, Unchecked, Unsupervised, fishing activity inevitably upsets the balance of biodiversity.

The African continent is adjacent to highly productive marine ecosystems. The countries forming the SRFC are part of the large marine ecosystem of the nutrient-rich Canary Current, which flows from north to south, while the countries forming the FCWC and the GRFC are contained within the boundaries of the Large Marine Ecosystem of the Gulf of Guinea (GCLME) which stretches from the island of Bissagos in the north, to Cape Lopez in the south. These shared marine currents carry throughout their course species, particularly pelagic species, and nutrients that serve several coastal States which have the duty to exploit them rationally.

The seas, oceans, lakes and rivers are home to a large number of biodiversity and provide the means of wealth, subsistence and food security to the population. Man has always acted as if the seas, the oceans continually had inexhaustible resources, often with unsavory behavior. Today, several harmful factors threaten the sustainability of aquatic biodiversity, including IUU fishing practiced mainly in coastal areas, with destructive dredging instruments, overexploitation of prized species in a given area, bycatch discarded at sea, the destruction of habitats, the various marine pollutions, the dumping of toxic waste, the discarding of fish at sea, mining activities, gas exploration, and others.

Faced with this massive destruction of breeding areas, various levers have been activated by States and sub-regional or even regional fisheries organizations through the deployment of traditional MCS systems (fishing laws, monitoring center, observer program, vessel register, monitoring by VMS, Surveillance Radar, information sharing, etc.) and now an expansion of these traditional SCS measures, through the installation of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), adherence to the blue economy compatible with the good health of marine ecosystems, the adoption of biological rest in critical breeding areas, the development of aquaculture in the Member States to diversify catches, behavior of transparency and good governance in the management of resources, the application of the provisions of the Abidjan Convention to contain marine pollution and other systems such as participatory monitoring or co-management for the application of jointly adopted regulations.

Unfortunately, the weak means of fisheries surveillance available in African coastal States do not always make it possible to block the way to certain destructive acts perpetrated by fishing vessels which come to exploit in an irrational, Illegal, Unregulated and Undeclared (IUU) way, the fishery resources of the region. The harmful consequences of this IUU fishing have disastrous impacts on the conservation and protection of biodiversity in the region's shared aquatic ecosystems. They are felt in all the coastal states of the region, through a significant reduction in their resources, the disappearance of several species, the closure of fish processing industries, job losses, with very negative impacts on their economies. national. The food security of the population is thus increasingly weakened. Poverty is intensifying. Violence sets in.

To deal with this situation of generalized overexploitation of the region's fishery resources, and its direct negative impacts on aquatic biodiversity, the African coastal States, located on the eastern side of the Atlantic Ocean and northern Africa, including marine resources are interdependent, realized the magnitude of the task to be accomplished, the complexity of the fight against IUU fishing to be carried out individually and sectorally. They have decided to face the threat together, by grouping together according to their geographical situations and political contexts, within various sub-regional and regional fisheries commissions, with similarities in terms of their ecosystems, in particular:

1. The Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC-1985), West Zone, comprising seven Member States (Mauritania, Senegal, Cabo Verde, Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Guinea, Sierra Leone)
2. The Fisheries Committee of the West and central of the Gulf of Guinea (FCWC-2007), Center West Zone, grouping (Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, Benin, Nigeria)
3. The Regional Fisheries Commission of the Gulf of Guinea (GRFC-1984) south central zone, grouping (Angola, Cameroon, Congo, Democratic Congo, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Sao Tome)
4. The Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation between African States of the Atlantic Ocean (ATLAFCO-1989) on the entire Atlantic Ocean coast, which brings together 22 coastal States located on the east coast of the Atlantic Ocean, including one North Africa (Morocco).

These four sub-regional/regional fishing organizations concerned by the requested study do not always have the same experience in fishing or the same political context of creation, but all have a common objective: to fight effectively against illegal fishing , Unregulated, Undeclared (IUU) in all its forms within their respective maritime areas, and ensure rational and concerted exploitation of fishery resources with a view to securing the sustainability of aquatic biodiversity in shared ecosystems for the benefit current and future generations . The resolution of the marine ecosystem where the species live is naturally linked to solving responsible fishing problems. The more we monitor activities at sea, the more we monitor certain factors related to the sustainability of marine ecosystems.

The African Union Inter African Bureau for Animal Resources(AU-IBAR), in its activities to support the fight against IUU fishing conducted throughout the EEZs of coastal States, develops with States and existing sub-regional fisheries organizations , strategic response frameworks adapted to the context to better strengthen their capacities to fight against IUU fishing, this time with the support of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), in the project "Conservation of biodiversity economy in the Africa zone blue economy", which aims to improve the political environment, regulatory and institutional

frameworks, the capacities of AU Member States and Regional Economic Organizations, to sustainably conserve biodiversity and ecosystems water bodies in their areas. There are also other organizations such as the FAO and NGOs such as PRCM and RAMPOA, Mava in the West African zone, which operate in this context of protection of marine aquatic ecosystems with similar approaches.

For this purpose, it is requested to assess the status of monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) systems in African shared aquatic ecosystems (marine ecosystems and freshwater ecosystems) at national and regional levels in the purpose of establishing and/or strengthening a transboundary MCS system in an identified shared aquatic ecosystem to enhance the conservation and protection of aquatic biodiversity.

1.3. Methodology and scope of the study

As stated in the terms of reference, it is understood “to conduct an assessment of the status of Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) systems in African shared aquatic ecosystems, to identify priorities, national and regional capacities in to strengthen existing MCS initiatives and expand their scope to cover the conservation and protection of aquatic biodiversity, including MPAs, and coral reefs, marine pollution”

The study presented here is mainly focused on the existing regional MCS instruments, used to establish a common coherent policy to fight against all harmful fishing behaviors that affect the resource and its environment and thus ensure the protection of the marine ecosystems identified on the entire eastern seaboard of the Atlantic Ocean and in North Africa. Freshwater ecosystems (rivers, lakes, wetlands, swamps, floodplains) which are not insignificant for the environment, are the responsibility of the Member States and their localities, are quite numerous with local diversities of very specific monitoring, that only the local communities and state governments can manage and control as a whole.

IUU fishing, particularly in coastal areas, and poor governance, were the main threats to the protection of marine ecosystems identified in this study.

More specifically, the study involved the following activities :

- Consult and conduct interviews with national and regional institutions specialized in fisheries, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), stakeholders who have cross-border or regional initiatives on Monitoring, Control and Surveillance of fisheries for the protection and conservation of aquatic biodiversity.
- Obtain relevant information, data, literature and documentation on existing or ongoing transboundary MCS initiatives in regionally shared aquatic ecosystems
- Conduct a status assessment of selected regional initiatives on MCS systems to determine strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to effective conservation and protection of aquatic biodiversity in shared aquatic ecosystems.
- Identify existing gaps or technical requirements, institutional challenges to provide institutional and technical capacity building support for regional MCS systems in shared aquatic ecosystems.
- Develop proposals to expand the scope of regional initiatives to cover biodiversity hotspots, including MPAs, coral reefs, pollution detection, monitoring, response and reduction.

Based on the findings, develop appropriate recommendations on requirements and gaps to support the strengthening of regional MCS initiatives in identified national and transboundary aquatic ecosystems.

To meet the proposed terms of reference, six work phases have been selected

1. Documentary research with Member States, regional fisheries organizations, through pre-established questionnaires and scheduled meetings.
2. The visit of certain fishing organizations on the eastern Atlantic Ocean coast (SRFC-FCWC-GRFC-FAO-ECCAS), to collect them analyzes of the situation,
3. Contact by video conference system with Regional Economic Organizations (WAEMU-ECOWAS-ATLAFCO-Tunisia), and institutions and/or organizations dealing with fisheries-related issues (Abidjan Convention) NGOs (PRCM, RAMP AO, MAV A)
4. and comparative analysis of MCS initiatives taken by each regional fisheries organization to determine strengths, weaknesses, constraints and opportunities.
5. The development of proposals that can improve and/or expand MCS initiatives taken by fisheries organizations to other fisheries management approaches on shared aquatic ecosystems
6. Exploration of new possible avenues for capacity building in the fight against IUU fishing

The mission officially started on October 30, 2022, with the signing of the contract, valid for a maximum duration of 60 days, with the production of a start-up note five days after signature as provided for in the ToRs, where the parties agreed agree on the understanding of the ToR, on the schedule of visits, and on the resource persons or organizations likely to be visited or to contact for the purposes of the study.

The consultant residing in Dakar, used this opportunity to directly visit the SRFC and all the organizations based in Dakar (PRCM, MAV A, RAMP AO) which are active in the field of protection of the marine environment and its species.

The six (6) days of physical mission granted were reserved for the visit of FCWC-FAO (3 days), GRFC-ECCAS (3 days). The coastal States located on the eastern side of the Atlantic Ocean could not be physically visited because of the limited time allocated to the various field visits. However, the Regional Economic Commissions (RECs), (WAEMU-ECOWAS-ATLAFCO), were consulted by video conference, as well as Tunisia to cover North Africa.

Consequently, the study focused on the evaluation of the MCS systems of the four sub-regional and regional fisheries organizations (SRFC-FCWC-GRFC-ATLAFCO) located on the eastern side of the Atlantic Ocean. It was highlighted their ability to properly take charge of the common fight against IUU fishing, and to integrate into their missions and daily activities those relating to the promotion and development, among others, of MPAs, FITTI, blue economy, biological rest, co-management of fisheries, and participatory monitoring.

It should be noted that the consultant had much more information in the West zone (SRFC) where he resides and the center zone (FCWC) where he previously worked for two years than in the GRFC zone, currently in the process of institutional change. or the North Africa zone which requires a specific approach.

The mission generally took place under good conditions, with respect for schedules and the various meetings.

2. INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT OF REGIONAL INITIATIVES ON CROSS-BORDER MCS SYSTEMS

The coastal States located on the eastern Atlantic Ocean seaboard have grouped together according to their geographical locations and political contexts, within various sub-regional and regional fisheries commissions, with similarities in terms of their ecosystems, in particular:

1. The Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC-1985), West Zone, comprising seven Member States (Mauritania, Senegal, Cabo Verde, Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Guinea, Sierra Leone)
2. The Fisheries Committee of the West and Center of the Gulf of Guinea (FCWC-2007), Center West Zone, grouping (Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, Benin, Nigeria)
3. The Regional Fisheries Commission of the Gulf of Guinea (GRFC-1984) south central zone, grouping (Angola, Cameroon, Congo, Democratic Congo, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Sao Tome)
4. The Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation between African States of the Atlantic Ocean (ATLAFCO-1989) on the entire Atlantic Ocean coast, which brings together 22 coastal States located on the east coast of the Atlantic Ocean, including one North Africa (Morocco).

To fight effectively against illegal fishing, Unregulated, Undeclared (IUU) in all its forms within their respective maritime areas, and ensure rational and concerted exploitation of fishery resources with a view to securing the sustainability of aquatic biodiversity in shared ecosystems for the benefit current and future generations.

A. AREA COVERED BY THE SRFC



source: SRFC

I. Presentation

The Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC) is an inter-governmental organization for fisheries cooperation at the service of its Member States (MS) established by the convention of March 29, 1985, amended on July 14, 1993. It currently includes seven (7) Member States, Cabo Verde, Gambia, Guinea,

Guinea Bissau, Mauritania, Senegal and Sierra Leone.

Its mandate is the strengthening of cooperation between MS through mechanisms for the sound governance of fisheries resources, to improve the sustainable management of fisheries in the maritime areas under the jurisdiction of its Member States.

- The main objective of the SRFC is to harmonize the national fisheries policies of the Member States with regard to the preservation, conservation and exploitation of fishery resources, and to strengthen cooperation for the well-being of populations, in particular through the following areas:
- Harmonization and coherence of national fisheries policies in terms of conservation and virtuous exploitation of fisheries resources;
- Sub-regional cooperation in fisheries monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) of fishing areas, including institutional, legal and operational support, to eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing;
- The development of human capacities to undertake fisheries research;
- Strengthening the scientific and technical information system;
- The adoption of common and coordinated voices in international bodies.

2. Overview of MCS strategic initiatives implemented by the SRFC since its creation

The SRFC, created since 1985, practically functioned until 1993 without having a real policy of Monitoring, Control and Surveillance of fisheries (MCS) clearly defined. It was the period of orientation, organization and method research.

From 1994, with the support of Luxembourg cooperation (Lux-development), the SRFC set up a Monitoring Operations Coordination Unit, called SOCU, based in Banjul, Republic of Gambia, whose mission was to organize common or joint fisheries surveillance operations, within the framework of the AFR010 and AFR013 projects, with the participation of the naval and air resources available in the Member States and to strengthen the capacities for research, analysis of information and control of fishing vessels carried out by surveillance staff of Member States (MS). For SOCU, it was a question of combining maritime surveillance and aerial surveillance, through occasional joint missions (2 to 3 days) in part of the sub-region with a view to detecting and combating vessels adept at IUU fishing. This operational support lasted from 1994 to 2004 with encouraging results without completely influencing IUU fishing.

- Faced with the growing scale of the negative economic, social and environmental impacts of IUU fishing, and following a very worrying finding on the sharp decline in fishery resources in the EEZs of the MS of the SRFC, the very advanced destruction of biodiversity and of the marine environment, the successive closures of fishing companies, the loss of jobs in all fishing sectors, the Ministers in charge of fishing in the Member States of the SRFC launched in Nouakchott in 2001, the Declaration of Nouakchott which stipulates and:
- Recommends the full adherence of Member States to the International Plan of Action (IAP-2001-FAO) aimed at preventing, deterring and eliminating IUU fishing in the world;

Affirms the full determination of MS to fight together against all forms of IUU fishing in the region.

- This so-called Nouakchott declaration led the SRFC to adopt in 2002, its first Strategic Action Plan (SAP) spread over the period 2002-2010 which provided in its MCS component:
- To strengthen the operational capacities of the SOCU.
- To encourage Member States to equip themselves with surveillance means such as national fisheries surveillance structures, coastal fisheries surveillance stations and electronic tools for monitoring fishing vessels.
- To strengthen cooperation between SOCU and the national surveillance structures of MS.
- To establish a sub-regional register of fishing vessels, based on the national registers of the MS.

Encourage MS to participate in all joint fisheries surveillance actions, coordinated by SOCU.

In 2010, at the end of the first SAPI, despite all the efforts made by the SRFC and the MS in terms of MCS, many strategic objectives will still remain to be achieved. IUU fishing has not weakened enough in the sub-region and it has even moved into other forms (illegal transshipment of products at sea, falsification of documents, corruption, misrepresentation, etc.).

In 2011, the SRFC adopted a second Strategic Action Plan (SAP2) valid for the period 2011-2015 which, unfortunately, leaves little room for MCS actions. Thus, during the period (2010-2013), the MCS strategy of the SRFC will be limited solely to the program of the EU/MCS project, financed by the EU and managed by WAEMU with interesting results obtained at the end of the project, including the provision of two strategic documents: “(i) the study on the creation of a permanent mechanism for financing regional surveillance”, “(ii) the draft MCS regional convention² and its application protocols”. These two documents, which are very useful for improving the MCS, have not received the treatment hoped for, to become, to date, appropriate strategic working tools for the SRFC.

In 2016, the SRFC adopted a third Strategic Action Plan (SAP3) 2016-2022, where once again, the MCS part will be reduced to the programs developed within the framework of the Regional Program in West Africa (PRAO) funded by the World Bank (WB) and the Program for Improvement of Fisheries Governance in West Africa (PESCAO) funded by the EU and managed by ECOWAS.

The PRAO/BM () based on the MCS plan, and the studies on the capacity building of the staff of the Member States, in particular the development of an application guide on the PSMA, which equipped the SRFC with a database the Dashboard³, and supported all initiatives to finalize the MCS agreement initiated since 2013 as part of the EU/MCS project.

The PESCAO/EU (2018-2022), for its part, supported the standardization of national fishing legislation with international legal fishing instruments through a comparative study of the legislation of the Member States, continued to support joint operations of surveillance of fisheries organized in the different areas of the commission’s MS and ensured the training of staff for better management of MCS aspects. The SRFC

²Reservations are expressed by two MS. Consultations are still ongoing

³The Dashboard should make it possible to strengthen national information systems in terms of databases on (1) licenses and the fishing fleet (2) fishing effort and catches (3) monitoring activities and to create national Dashboards.

seems to have mastered the organization and conduct of joint fisheries surveillance operations, without however being able to finance this activity itself.

The SRFC should better appropriate and consolidate the various studies carried out for its benefit within the framework of support projects, if it wants to achieve the expected results for the MS.

3. Overview of the legal environment to support SRFC MCS

The SRFC is an intergovernmental cooperation body bringing together seven Member States. All the legitimacy of the actions taken by this organization is based on its 1985 creation convention amended in 1993 which puts forward the principle of unanimity⁴ of all the Member States, for all major decisions to be taken.

- Thus, only two major consensual conventions have been signed and ratified by member states throughout the existence of the SRFC. They are:
- The 1993 Minimum Access Conditions (MAC) agreement, amended in 2013

The 1993 convention on the right of hot pursuit, which refers to application protocols hitherto not yet drawn up by the MS concerned.

These two legal texts, essential cooperation instruments of the SRFC, have shown their limits in stimulating dynamic and active cooperation at the level of the Member States. They lack authorities and binding powers over the MS, because they do not set minimums on strategic orientations and refer several decisions to national legislation or to protocols between MS that have not been developed, especially for the convention on the right of hot pursuit.

Unanimity as the only concept in force in decision-making at the SRFC level, prevents this organization from having a very important MCS convention for its operational functioning, with its various application protocols, relating to the legal creation of the regional register of fishing vessels, the observer program with regional competence, the regional VMS, the right of enhanced hot pursuit, and the exchange of information. The Member States are unable to agree unanimously (5/7 agreements for the moment) on all the articles proposed on the draft MCS convention, which is nevertheless strongly supported by the main TFPs (EU/WB/ECOWAS)

- I. The SRFC must react quickly to give the concepts “ Unanimity and Consensus “ a new progressive reading in the direction of a dynamic compromise which only reflects the desire to cooperate together to effectively combat IUU fishing.

4. Overview of the SRFC organizational environment

In order to strengthen the operating capacities of its structures, the SRFC had to modify its organization chart in 2009 to create three Departments: “Harmonization Legislation of Policies (DHLP)”, “Monitoring Control Surveillance of Development (MCSD)”, “Research, Information System (RIS)”, supposed to take charge of all the concerns of the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission, particularly in MCS. This distribution of tasks between departments follows the identified contours of the needs of the Planning Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCSD) system. Unfortunately, the departments created have operated in a

⁴Article 8 of the convention: the decisions of the conference of ministers are taken unanimously.

compartmentalized manner ⁵, without consultation/coordination between them, jeopardizing the establishment of a necessary synergy in the overall actions of the Secretariat.

The SRFC wanted to improve the necessary coordination between the three departments by creating in 2018, a position of “program manager”, a conductor, a position which ultimately proved to be more problematic than useful. The roles and prerogatives of this program manager have not been clearly defined, nor fully accepted by the actors themselves.

The distribution of posts, in particular for the Permanent Secretary of the organization (PS), had severely hampered the normal functioning of the organization for four years (2013-2017). MS could not agree on a consensual process for appointing a new PS. This crisis between the Member States was a counterproductive element for the organization and had a negative impact on its functioning. Finally, a compromise for a regular rotation and in alphabetical order on the post of PS between MS is found (2018) in order to settle this dispute. This may not be the ideal solution in terms of the efficiency of the work required, but will have the merit of removing the existing ambiguities between the Member States.

The SRFC has difficulty organizing its statutory meetings provided for in the founding agreement, every two years for the conference of ministers and once a year for the coordination committee. These various statutory meetings ⁶, which are very important for the life of an organization, are not held regularly on dates that have often expired for various reasons (budgetary, availability of actors, calendar of States, and others). This represents a major handicap, a great weakness of the organization and ultimately does not encourage the attraction of TFPs to come and support MCS initiatives and SRFC projects.

The SRFC is trying to find an institutional stability that allows it to carry out its missions correctly and fight effectively against IUU fishing. Good staff management for effective work still needs to be perfected at the level of the SRFC. The efficiency of the organization is thus very weakened. Support for the common protection of fisheries resources is weakening.

5. Overview of the logistical and financial environment in terms of MCS of the SRFC

The availability of sufficient and well-managed financial resources generally conditions the good vitality of a company, or a sub-regional structure. The level of financial needs of the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission is determined according to the objectives assigned to the organization, and also on the basis of a Strategic Action Plan defined and accepted by all the MS.

The doctrine in terms of determining the finances of the SRFC remains quite complex without a real clear guideline. The SRFC suffers from a chronic financial deficit, which is not conducive to the sustainable development of effective and harmonious cooperation allowing it to properly deal with the challenges of protecting resources and their habitats. Member States’ annual contributions, reflecting their degree of political will in the Member States to cooperate together, and the Commission’s main sources of funding, are not regularly paid.

⁵ No synergy between departments. No coordination with the program manager

⁶ The non-regular holding of statutory meetings often leads to the delay in validating the operating budget of the CSRP and very important documents for the life of the institution.

The observation today is that the SRFC cannot financially (i) organize with its own funds a single working meeting of the Member States, (ii) finance a study on a subject of general interest, (iii) organize a regional conference without the support of external Technical and Financial Partners. The agenda of this organization is totally dependent on the will of TFPs and the availability of their financial resources, which are increasingly scarce and constraining mobilization.

The first political will of cooperation of the Member States is measured by the strict respect of the commitments made, in particular the payment on the due date, of the annual contributions. Unfortunately, this is not currently the case at the SRFC.

6. Summary of current initiatives in MCS matters by the SRFC

The SRFC is developing several MCS initiatives with mixed results that necessarily impact on the conservation and protection of biodiversity in the various shared aquatic systems in its area.

MAJOR SCS INITIATIVES OF THE SRFC	STRENGTHS / WEAKNESSES
The effective application by MS of the provisions relating to Port State Measures (PSRMs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ The SRFC has encouraged the adhesion of its MS to the PAI and to the convention on the RMEPs of which 7/7 of the States are members. ☞ All MS have a National Action Plan to combat IUU fishing (PAN-IUU.) drawn up in accordance with FAO formats and recommendations ☞ The provisions of the Measures of Jurisdiction, Port State, Flag State, Coastal State drawn from the various international instruments are integrated into the sub-regional MCA convention, revised in 2013 ☞ The effective application of the provisions contained in the various conventions (PSMA-MCA) is still quite mixed in several MS ;
Judicious use of new technologies (VMS,AIS, Radar) by MS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ All MS/SRFC currently have national and functional VMS/AIS devices. ☞ The personnel assigned to the operation of these new technology instruments are relatively well trained in the use of the data drawn from these instruments. ☞ There is still no automatic exchange of information from the national VMS to Ucos, which does not have a regional VMS. This provision is provided for in the draft MCS convention still under study.
Maintaining joint surveillance operations as an IUU strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ This strategy of joint operations as a means of dissuasive surveillance is well accepted by the MS ☞ The organization and conduct of joint fisheries surveillance operations are well mastered by SRFC staff. ☞ The financing of these operations is always provided by the TFPs. (Very big weakness in this area). ☞ Mastery of sustainable financing mechanisms for surveillance operations by the SRFC is not yet ensured
Optimization and pooling of existing naval, air and human resources in the sub-region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Some MS make their naval, air and human surveillance resources available as needed to the SRFC for joint fisheries surveillance operations ☞ The MS involved in a joint surveillance operation facilitate access for naval and air resources chartered to their maritime and airspace.

MAJOR SCS INITIATIVES OF THE SRFC	STRENGTHS / WEAKNESSES
The availability of sufficiently qualified staff at MS level to deal with surveillance issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Various training modules have been regularly provided within the framework of the PRAO program and the EU/MCS and PESCAO projects to all MS MCS staff to take up surveillance issues ☞ On the other hand, the follow-up and maintenance of the personnel trained within the framework of these various supports is often lacking, hence a regular loss of performance.
A good flow of information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ The operation of the Dashboard, an essential element in the sharing of information, has not yet achieved the expected performance ☞ The regional register of fishing vessels is not yet officially established, but a database exists with the Dashboard (unfortunately not always up to date) ☞ Sharing of operational information only during joint surveillance operations
Revision of the agreement on the minimum conditions of access to the resource, to make it more adapted to the current context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ The MCA convention was revised in 2013 with the introduction of several MCS aspects, including certain provisions of the PSMAs. ☞ The provisions of the CMA convention are not very restrictive and often refer to national legislation that is difficult to control or to protocols that are not very effective. ☞ Usefulness and use of the MCA are still very mixed
The broader draft MCS convention considering the right of maritime, administrative and judicial hot pursuit, the protocols on the observer with regional competence, the regional register of fishing vessels, the regional VMS, the exchange of information and the mechanisms financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Draft convention drawn up since 2013 within the framework of EU/SCS support is still being studied at MS level. ☞ No well-established consensus yet between States on the substance and form of this MCS convention ☞ The protocols relating to the regional register, the competent observers, the regional VMS, annexes to the convention, are still awaiting approval from the MCS convention. No progress in this area.
Funding mechanisms for MCS activities in the sub-regional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ The SRFC does not yet master its own means of financing. Member States' annual contributions are very insufficient and uncertain, ☞ A document on sustainable funding mechanisms has been developed since 2013 as part of the EU/MCS project, but has not been followed up. ☞ The SRFC is currently financially blocked
Areas of cooperation with other regional fisheries organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ No visible concrete initiatives yet. Except for invitations from the FCWC to participate in, prepare for and carry out joint surveillance operations organized by the SRFC. This within the framework of the PESCAO ☞ Protocol signed between ECOWAS, FCWC and SRFC
FiTI and Blue Economy Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The SRFC has signed an involvement protocol with the FiTI. - No concrete promotional or explanatory action has yet been taken by the SRFC. - Mauritania has joined the FITI and regularly produces its annual reports to this effect

7. Conclusions and recommendations n°1

- i. The SRFC had to produce during its existence (1985-2022) three Strategic Action Plans, containing MCS components which focused their activities on building the capacities of national fisheries surveillance structures in the MS, and the organization of operations joint fisheries surveillance between MS, with acceptable results that must be capitalized on

- ii. The initiatives attempted in the field of harmonization of MCS legislation, the draft MCS convention, the study on the permanent financing mechanisms of the SRFC, have not yet led to positive results, for lack of the necessary consensus on major decisions which condition the operation of the SRFC. The political will of MS is questioned.
- iii. The poor management of the SRFC staff, the partitioning of the work of the different departments, the lack of visibility in the activities, have had a negative influence on the dynamism sought by the organization to carry out its activities in a coherent manner. The SRFC is weakened. Institutional strengthening is needed.
- iv. Statutory meetings are no longer held on the due date. In addition, the ministers in charge of fisheries in the MS often meet behind closed doors without involving the PS/SRFC to take major decisions that directly impact the functioning of the organization. These constraints do not favor the smooth running of the organization's activities. This is not likely to promote proper management of MCS issues. Thus, a new burst of the MS or a new institutional reorganization, turns out to be necessary.
- v. The SRFC has serious problems for the follow-up and the application of directives, recommendations, resulting from studies or statutory meetings. The lack of legal privilege over the MS, the weak legal environment, prevent the SRFC from carrying out a dynamic monitoring and evaluation of the initiatives taken by mutual agreement by the MS. The prerogatives and powers of the Permanent Secretary should be strengthened in this regard.
- vi. The SRFC suffers from a chronic financial deficit, not conducive to the sustainable development of effective and harmonious cooperation. Proposed solutions ⁷are however available with the study on financing mechanisms. It remains to seize the opportunities offered.

All these institutional weaknesses, capacity building, poor governance, noted at the level of the sub-regional organization, naturally have repercussions on the correct and coherent management of the global strategy for the conservation and protection of aquatic biodiversity at the level of the marine ecosystems of Member States and the region. The Nouakchott declaration (2001) is still valid.

⁷ Document on sustainable funding mechanisms for MCS prepared in 2013

B. AREA COVERED BY THE FCWC



SOURCE: FCWC

I. Presentation

The FCWC, called committee, is an intergovernmental organization created by convention signed on November 7, 2007 in Benin. It is headquartered in Tema, Ghana. It is made up of six-member states: Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Togo.

It has a functional institutional framework with in particular three (3) organs:

- The Conference of Ministers
- The Secretariat,
- The Advisory and Coordination Committee (CCC).

Its main objective is to encourage cooperation between all contracting parties with a view to ensuring, through proper management, the conservation and optimum use of living marine resources for the sustainable development of fisheries.

The FCWC has positioned itself as the main institution for fisheries cooperation in the sub-region. It is supported in its objectives by Technical and Financial Partnerships (TFP) for the implementation of projects/programmes.

2. Overview of the FCWC institutional environment

The FCWC is headed by a Secretary General (SG) who is a national of one of the Member States, appointed by the Conference of Ministers for a period of five years, renewable once. Secretariat staff, other than seconded staff, are appointed by the Secretary General.

The Conference of Ministers, the supreme decision-making and orientation body, meets once a year to validate the annual report of the SG, outline new orientations, approve the organization's budget. The statutory meetings provided for in the founding agreement always take place on the due date.

The Advisory and Coordination Committee comprises the heads of the departments responsible for sea fishing or their representatives for each Member State. It accompanies the activities of the secretariat, provides technical advice to the conference of ministers.

The FCWC organization chart provides for five services (Management, Aquaculture, MCS, Communication, finance and administration) which correspond to the current needs of the FCWC. A legal department could be added to this because of the regional nature of the activities. The system currently very centralized on the person of the SG, works perfectly. This is not a bad thing for a young organization (2007) which is being built.

Since the creation of the Fisheries Committee, the Government of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire has fully covered the salary of the Secretary General (SG) made available to the Sub-Regional Fisheries Organization, in accordance with the commitments made. This well-established tradition will soon be confronted with the change of SG from another nationality in principle to 2024. The FCWC will already have to take avant-garde measures to pass this very delicate course of change of SG in regional organizations. A modification of the texts and new commitments for an effective management of the SG by the organization itself will probably be on the agenda. You will have to prepare for it.

The FCWC placed a strong emphasis on communication and the image of the organization. The FCWC site is well fed. Information on the life of the organization (report, seminars, training, activities, projects and programs) and on other aspects of fishing concerning other countries are available at any time on the FCWC website and the Basecamp platform. The FCWC thus offers a large window of visibility and transparency of the organization, by showing its achievements, its objectives, and its needs. This reassures the authorities of the region and the TFPs.

An institutional rapprochement of the FCWC with the ECOWAS body is taking place gradually. The implementation by the FCWC of one of the components of the PESCAO Program domiciled within ECOWAS is a fairly indicative signal of this orientation. A project, linking the FCWC to the regional organization ECOWAS, like GRFC to ECCAS is often mentioned between the two parties. The will on both sides exists. This vision remains to be finalized.

3. Overview of FCWC legal and policy instruments to support MCS

The FCWC has had to develop and adopt important legal instruments and fisheries policies on which it relies to carry out the effective implementation of regional cooperation based on coordinated management measures. These are:

- The FCWC Convention on Minimum Conditions of Access to Fishery Resources or MCA Convention (2013)
- The Convention on the pooling and sharing of information and data on fisheries in the FCWC area (2014)
- The protocol relating to the establishment of the Center-Regional MCS (CR-MCS)
- The Regional Fisheries Resource Management Plan (PRGRH) adopted in 2017
- The Regional IUU Action Plan (PAR-INN 2019-2023)
- The Strategic Action Plan (SAP 2020-2030)
- The strategy to combat illegal transshipment at sea
- The establishment of the West African Task Force (WATF) and the National Working Groups (NWG)
- The project "Information and support for monitoring, control and surveillance of fisheries in West

These various documents /projects, of a sub-regional nature, reflect the good vision of the authorities in charge of fisheries management in the region, and their desire to find appropriate solutions to the various problems of rational exploitation and conservation of fishery resources.

It should be noted that the two FCWC conventions (that relating to the MCA and that on the sharing of information), are very useful in the management of fisheries resources, but do not take sufficient account of the responsibilities due to the flag State. (vessels from outside the region), an important point for the monitoring of foreign vessels, contained in various international legal instruments, including the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (FAO) and the PSMAs, or even certain relevant provisions should have been transposed into the one of the FCWC conventions to better confirm the responsibilities of flag States in the effective control of their vessels wherever they are.

The FCWC convention on the pooling and sharing of information and data on fishing” is well done, but certain related application protocols have not been adopted. By way of illustration, it is not specified the type of secure information system that the FCWC must set up, cited in the agreement in its article (6), to ensure the collection of data. The same applies to the legal value of the information collected in the regional register of fishing vessels or in the database, or even that coming from observers on board the fishing vessels. Finally, it is not specified either the how to transmit the information according to the harmonized format, or other necessary details that can validly confuse an IUU fishing vessel. These protocols give value to the convention and allow the legal application of the provisions to better ensure the protection of resources and their environments.

In addition, registration in the sub-regional register of fishing vessels (cited by article 9 of the information sharing agreement), a very important prerequisite because of its application for the authorization of foreign fishing vessels is not always framed by a protocol specifying the terms of application. This provision, an essential element for the monitoring of foreign fishing vessels in the MS, contributes to the protection and conservation of the fishery resources of the sub-region and their environments.

Apart from some necessary clarification arrangements (protocol to be taken), the legal environment of the FCWC as a whole is coherent enough to carry out the missions of cooperation and protection of fishery resources and their environments in the region.

4. Overview of the different MCS strategies implemented by the FCWC

In order to guide its activities of common interest for its Member States, the FCWC had adopted in December 2010 its first Strategic Action Plan (SAPI) valid for the period 2011-2020 which contains in its MCS part two strategic axes:

- Strengthening national capacities for an effective, efficient and sustainable fisheries MCS system
- The establishment of effective regional cooperation mechanisms in MCS and making them work to put an end to IUU fishing in the center-west of the Gulf of Guinea;

This PASI translates the vision of the FCWC on the way, the form to ensure a sustainable development of halieutic resources in its zone. It constituted an orientation and planning tool whose main objective was the sustainability of the use of fishery resources and the mobilization of Technical and Financial Partners (TFP) to ensure food and nutritional security. populations in FCWC MS.

Notable activities have been developed in this context to lead MS towards an effective harmonization of their fisheries legislation in terms of MCS⁸ with new surveillance tools. These tools include the establishment of (i) a regional register of fishing vessels (databases of fishing vessels established), (ii) a draft observer program with regional competence (Feasibility study carried out, Application Protocol approved and Test Program proposed), (iii) sharing of information and (iv) use of new technologies for monitoring fishing vessels, VMS and AIS (protocol for the creation of the CR- MCS adopted-regional VMS functional).

The WATF (West African Task Force) , supported by a technical team Trygg Mat Tracking (TMT) a foundation registered in Norway, and Stop Illegal Fishing (SIF) within the framework of the project entitled: "Intelligence and MCS in fisheries", the aim of which is to strengthen regional cooperation, information and communication , is part of the decisive and positive initiatives taken by the FCWC to strengthen its capacities to fight against IUU fishing in the region and to take charge protection and conservation of the aquatic environment. The dissuasive effects of this system have contributed to strengthening efforts to combat IUU fishing in the FCWC zone.

The PESCAO program (2018-2022), funded by the EU/EFCA, supported by ECOWAS, has contributed to (i) building the capacity of FCWC staff through training programs adapted to the threat of IUU fishing in the region , (ii) the harmonization and standardization of legal frameworks for fisheries⁹ in MS to ensure effective control of IUU fishing activities, (iii) the establishment of a Regional MCS Center (RC-MCS) and its application protocol¹⁰ for the permanent monitoring of fishing vessels authorized in the region, (iv) the feasibility study of an observer program with regional competence planned to embark on board foreign fishing vessels, (v) the organization of a joint surveillance test operation between two neighboring States to ensure the feasibility of such an activity between the MS.

These actions taken within the framework of the TMT (Trygg Mat Tracking) and the PESCAO (EFCA), show that the FCWC has indeed taken an important and decisive step in its construction as a sub-regional organization for fisheries cooperation.

However, some weaknesses are noted in the MCS fisheries monitoring system put in place. Although remarkable efforts have been made by the FCWC, to bring the maximum number of Member States (6/6) to adhere to the Convention on Port State Measures (PRM) and to the Regional Action Plan for the against IUU fishing (RAP-IUU). The effective application of the provisions contained in the convention (PSMA) and the Regional IUU Action Plan are currently very mixed:

- The flag States of foreign fishing vessels are not fully involved in the fishing authorizations issued to their vessels by the MS. Thus, their obligations¹¹ responsibility due, in the monitoring and control of

⁸National IUU action plans in line with the provisions recommended by FAO have been adopted in 6/6 MS. That of Togo dating from asks to be updated.

⁹Document produced by EFCA within the framework of the PESCAO project

¹⁰Protocol adopted.....

¹¹Track the activities of vessels flying their flag, wherever they are

their vessels which fall to them are not fully fulfilled. This sometimes motivates the multiple requests for information made by MS on the WATF platform.

- The reports of foreign vessels to enter or leave the waters under the jurisdiction of a MS, or in a port¹², are not made in the forms and deadlines set out in the conventions on PSMA and CMA. States/ports are often presented with a fait accompli when ships arrive. The port authority can be notified of the arrival of a vessel without the authority responsible for applying the procedures for combating NN fishing, which alone is empowered to accept or refuse access for a fishing vessel to the port is not sufficiently informed. The fault is not entirely attributable to foreign fishing vessels, if the port State has not clearly defined the fishing authority to whom this information is addressed, nor the forms and deadlines for transmitting this information. Which is often the case in several states.
- The obligation of national and foreign fishing vessels authorized to fish to have a VMS beacon¹³ permanently functional and to automatically transmit information to the CR-MCS, still needs to be perfected in several States. This limits the performance of VMS monitoring by the CR-MCS and the exchange of information.
- Secure and sustainable financing of FCWC's MCS activities, independently of TFPs, has not yet been acquired. There is not yet a clear option declined on this objective.

Nevertheless, notable successes are identified:

- The regularity of statutory meetings, and of the WATF working group, with very instructive themes and promising recommendations on the MCS
- Capacity building of staff, including inspectors with the application
- The construction of monitoring equipment facilitating the work and analysis of data by the monitoring staff
- The visibility of the FCWC and its TFPs with MS, with the regular distribution of flyers, t-shirts, effigies, and other materials marked with the name of the partners and the FCWC.
- The vitality of the website, which traces all the useful events and the life of the FCWC
- The great availability of the SG responding to all invitations, international forums on MCS and the fight against IUU, with the voice of FCWC MS

The first PASI coming to an end (2020), a second PAS2 has been proposed for the period (2020-2030) after evaluation and analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of SAPI. This is for the FCWC in the MCS part, of:

- Make operational and efficient, the Regional MCS Coordination Center (CR-MCS)¹⁴
- Improve the legal environment for fisheries surveillance by developing a document that brings together all the MCS aspects¹⁵ contained in international fisheries instruments, thus allowing the harmonization of fisheries legislation and the uniform treatment of infringements and sanctions by MS.

¹²Articles 21 and 22 of the CMA

¹³Article 9 point 4 CMA

¹⁴The CR-SCS is working. Its VMS/AIS equipment is efficient. There are still communication instruments to be completed, the application of SOPs with the strengthening of staff

¹⁵SCS agreement

- Finalize the observer program with regional competence ¹⁶ which monitors the operations of authorized fishing vessels on a daily basis;
- Strengthen national MCS capacities and establish regional MCS cooperation mechanisms to effectively combat IUU fishing
- Support the new three-year program, led by TMT in partnership with Global Fishing Watch, SIF and FAO, aimed at improving the implementation capacities of PSM to deter and combat IUU fishing. Program tested in two FCWC States (Ghana-Côte d'Ivoire). The current results obtained are encouraging.

However, to give real chances of achieving certain expected results, it is recommended to take simple measures listed in the table below;

OBJECT	ARRANGEMENTS TO BE TAKEN
Make operational and efficient, the Regional MCS Coordination Center (CR-MCS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Reinforce the staff of the center (an assistant to the head of the center ¹⁷, a manager of the observer program, a head of information and analyst service) ☞ Prospect and identify in the Member States, the personnel likely, after a little training, to be able to strengthen the capacities of the center. ☞ Adapt and apply the developed SOPs ☞ Fully ensure monitoring and evaluation of SCS recommendations taken daily by the center ☞ Finalize the connectivity of the national VMS to the regional VMS ☞ Make information from fishing vessel monitoring instruments legally acceptable
Improve the legal environment of fisheries surveillance through the development of a document that brings together all the MCS aspects contained in various international fisheries instruments, thus allowing the harmonization of fisheries legislation and the uniform treatment of infringements and sanctions by MS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ The development of an MCS convention, bringing together all aspects of the IUU fight (The study model available at the SRFC can inspire) ☞ Develop all application protocols to the various conventions to make them applicable and operational.
Define and standardize the sub-regional register of fishing vessels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Create a register with its three functions: (i) Legal instrument (ii) information system (iii) fisheries resources management instrument with its database, to make its information legally acceptable.
Finalize the process of creating an observer corps with regional competence to monitor the fishing operations of authorized vessels on a daily basis;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ The protocol and the test project are available ☞ Select an experienced manager to launch this test project. ☞ Have a TFP to support the test phase.

These simple actions, without excessive burdens, can help achieve some interesting objectives of combating IUU fishing and protecting the marine aquatic environment.

5. Overview of the logistical and financial environment to support the MCS

Without secure, sustainable, autonomous and easily mobilized financial resources, it will be difficult for the FCWC to carry out concrete monitoring activities at the right time and in a timely manner.

The main autonomous source of funding for the FCWC is based on the annual subscriptions of the MS, regulated by convention, payment of these subscriptions fixed by common agreement, within the reach

¹⁶A test program is offered. There remains the application

¹⁷Always provide for cases of unavailability, absence from post, resignation or other cases of unavailability.

of all the MS, often depends on the personal commitment of those in charge of fishing in post in the MS at a specific time, and/or sometimes the very embarrassing intervention of the SG with the authorities of the countries concerned. This makes the availability of financial means and in time to undertake planned activities very uncertain. However, the visibility efforts undertaken regularly by the FCWC with the constant support provided to the MS with MCS equipment, should draw the attention of the authorities to the need to financially support the sub-regional organization by paying at least regularly and on time, their annual dues. This is unfortunately not the case for several reasons. It will be necessary to look for other independent financing mechanisms to overcome these one-off and/or recurrent difficulties.

The FCWC is dependent on the financial resources of the TFPs. Until then, the latter, very confident in the management of the FCWC and the respect of the conditions, provide regular and substantial financial support. This has made it possible to achieve, among other things, interesting objectives in the fight against IUU fishing. This cyclical and occasional support is expected to decrease and stop one day. The FCWC will have to prepare for this.

6. Current MCS initiatives underway at FCWC

The FCWC normally carries out its program to combat IUU fishing. It intends to strengthen the effective use of innovative technologies ¹⁸ to increase its capacity to monitor safe, fair and legal fishing. This is the theme of the year 2022 of the FCWC which proposes in the MCS field to:

- Make effective the regular organization of joint fisheries surveillance operations between MS, to consolidate actions to combat IUU fishing;
- Finalize the observer program with regional competence and its application protocol;
- Make the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) effective for the rational operation of the CR-MCS
- Encourage the use of innovative VMS/AIS technologies and finalize the process of connecting national VMS to the regional system
- Expand other concepts of conservation and protection of the aquatic ecosystem in the FCWC area

Remarks

- i. If the process of organizing the joint surveillance operation was well mastered by the actors after the first test (Togo-Benin) carried out in December 21. we can worry about the costs and funding of future operations. Indeed, it is thanks to the total support of the costs by the PTF (Trygg Mat Tracking (TMT), that the test operation of monitoring fisheries (Togo-Benin) was able to be carried out. An autonomous financing mechanism for joint fisheries surveillance operations independently of TFPs is not on the agenda at the CPCO the strategic document on the long-term mechanisms for financing fisheries surveillance produced (not yet applied) by the SRFC, can be used It can be a source of inspiration for the CPCO in its search for secure and sustainable funding for its surveillance operations and its activities in general.
- ii. The 'Regional Competence Observer' program is beginning to take shape. The application protocol proposed for this purpose is accepted by the MS. It is then recommended to go through a test phase, limited to a certain number of targeted ships in various MS. The management of this test phase can be quite delicate and requires an experienced and well-informed team leader on the issues and problems

¹⁸ Theme of the year 2022

of fisheries surveillance in the region and human resources management with the support of a TFP to ensure the start-up costs of the operation. The current CR-SCS /CPCO team has a human potential that will need to be expanded to better take charge of all aspects of this program.

- iii. The Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) are currently available at the CPCO to ensure the operation of the CR-SCS. Inspired by existing SOPs in other fisheries organizations of the same type but in different contexts, the orientations proposed in the SOPs still require streamlining and adaptation to the local context in order to be easily applicable and gradually. Actions should be classified in order of priority and progressive application.
- iv. The regional VMS of the CR-SCS was designed to be connected with the other VMS existing in the MS and to have all the information in order to be able to share it with the actors concerned for a rational and effective exploitation. This provision is not yet fully effective for several constraints to overcome. However, the CPCO must ensure that this VMS connection process with the States does not generate additional financial burdens for the MS and/or the CPCO. These possible charges are part of the conditions of access to the resource.
- v. The exchange of information on the monitoring of fishing vessels is always supported by Trygg Mat Tracking (TMT), then relayed by the CR-SCS through the GTAQ. It is a very dynamic system that thrills all stakeholders in this platform. Very interesting information allowing a good decision-making are regularly provided from this mechanism. All systems that work naturally need to be sustained. The CPCO will have to strengthen the capacities of its MCS staff on the techniques of research and analysis of concordant information that can validly confuse an IUU fishing vessel, to prepare to replace Trygg Mat Tracking (TMT) one day very soon and continue to provide this intelligence service on fishing vessels.
- vi. The CPCO uses known means of monitoring fisheries, monitoring centers equipped with electronic means of monitoring vessels, registers of fishing vessels, observer program, information sharing. Some of these methods of follow-up, control, monitoring, are expensive, demanding in organization and methods to give convincing results. Alongside these surveillance instruments, the FAO and other NGOs, aware of the weak logistical, financial and human capacities of coastal States, especially African ones, are setting up other initiatives, voluntary guidelines along the lines of improve the protection of fishery resources at a lower cost. These are the International Action Plan (IAP) with its various tools, the MREP convention with its port control procedures for fishing vessels, the FiTI concepts for transparency and the fight against corruption, blue economy for good governance and virtuous use of the sea, which MS and FCWC can use to cost-effectively improve the protection and monitoring of fisheries resources and their environments.
- vii. Admittedly, the CPCO promotes AMREP in order to get all of its MS to adhere to the convention. But the application of certain provisions still poses a problem: the official designation of the ports to accommodate foreign fishing vessels, the authority authorized to grant or refuse access to the port, to immobilize or release a fishing vessel suspected of IUU fishing , to prosecute or have prosecuted an

IUU fishing vessel, the treatment of foreign vessels suspected of IUU fishing, the admissible evidence, are not always well clarified in the organization of the MCS system. The same is true for the ability of States to receive at any time (day and night) the report issued by fishing vessels to cross the waters or to come to port (the existence of a 24/24). Organizational and methodological work is still necessary in almost all MS, to make the MREP system clear, effective and useful.

7. Summary of SCS initiatives led by FCWC

MCS INITIATIVES	STRENGTHS/ WEAKNESSES
Realization of a Regional IUU Action Plan (PAR-IUU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ The updating of the regional IUU plan is effective. 52 measures were retained. ☞ Most of the MS of the FCWC (5/6) have a National IUU Action Plan, in accordance with the provisions and indications of the FAO. ☞ The effective application of all the provisions contained in these plans is still very mixed.
Creation of an MCS Regional Center and its application protocol.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ The SCS regional center is created. ☞ It is functional and has competent staff (not sufficient) to carry out its activities. ☞ The different SOPs for its operation are available. Their applicability remains.
Organization of joint monitoring operation between MS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ A joint surveillance test operation was successfully organized (Togo-Benin). ☞ Projects to consolidate these actions on a regional scale are being studied at FCWC level. ☞ A Ghana-Côte d'Ivoire operation project is in the making.
Establishment of an observer program with regional competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ The feasibility study is available. ☞ The adoption of an application protocol is in progress. ☞ A test phase program is proposed
Establishment of a regional register of fishing vessels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ A database of fishing licenses is currently shared. ☞ The regional register of fishing vessels as a legal instrument, and an instrument for the exchange of information in general on vessels remains to be consolidated
Automatic sharing and exchange of information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ The creation of the WATF allows exchanges of information on request through the Basecamp platform supervised by TMT ☞ Legal values of the information remain to be determined and consolidated
Setting up a regional VMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Regional VMS system established at CR-MCS. ☞ Connection and automatic data exchange not yet fully resolved.
Sustainable funding mechanisms for sub-regional surveillance activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ No clear guidance is given in this area. ☞ RDTs are under study
Cooperation with economic organizations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Linkage project of the FCWC to ECOWAS, as a technical fishing body still pending. ☞ Cooperation protocol with neighboring regional organizations, not yet operational

8. Conclusions and recommendations n°2

- i. The FCWC, the youngest organization on the eastern side of the Atlantic Ocean (2007), has been able to capitalize on all the good practices of previous fishing organizations, and avoid the trap of unanimity as the only solution for making major decisions. Organs are working properly
- ii. The FCWC has opted for the visibility and transparency of its actions by showing on its site and everywhere, its achievements, its objectives, its needs. This transparency strategy reassures MS and

TFPs, deserves to be supported and disseminated in other fisheries organizations.

- iii. WATF with its Basecamp platform has thrilled all the stakeholders of the MS of the FCWC, and constitutes a powerful tool for exchanging information for the effective monitoring of fishing vessels operating in the FCWC zone. This system deserves to be consolidated and extended to the MS of other sub-regional fisheries organizations (SRFC-FCWC) to make the fight against IUU more effective.
- iv. The FCWC's legal environment is consistent enough to conduct MCS activities. However, the widespread practice of free licensing in the region, the non-involvement of flag States in the treatment of their vessels, may slow down the efficiency sought for the monitoring of foreign fishing vessels. The practice of free licensing should be banned in the region in favor of a structured fishing agreement including flag States or fishing organizations.
- v. The organization and methods to make PSMA useful and efficient remain to be done. The official designation of the authority by regulatory text, empowered to accept, refuse, immobilize, prosecute, release a vessel suspected of IUU fishing, must be done in all MS. This Authority will normally be different from the Port Authority. Member States will provide themselves with the means and the necessary organization to receive at all times all useful information on access by foreign fishing vessels to their waters and/or their ports. The problem of permanence will have to be solved.

C. AREA COVERED BY GULF REGIONAL FISHERIES COMMUNITY (GRFC)



SOURCE: GRFC

1. Presentation

As a reminder, GRFC was created on June 21, 1984 in Libreville by Convention on the regional development of fisheries in the Gulf of Guinea. It is made up of seven-member states bordering the Gulf of Guinea, which are Angola, Cameroon, the Republic of Congo, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea and Sao Tome and Principe.

Its main objective can be summed up as assisting the Member States with a view to protecting and developing, in a sustainable manner, fishery resources as well as promoting the development of aquaculture, with a view to maximizing the exploitation of aquatic potential of the area and to guarantee the well-being of the greatest number of inhabitants.

Its specific objectives are to:

- Promote the protection and rational exploitation of fisheries resources in the GRFC zone and the aquatic ecosystems found there;
- Put in place a coordinated and harmonized policy for the regulation of access and the allocation of fishing rights;
- Promote private and public investment in institutional areas (management, training and research structures) and infrastructure.

2. Overview of GRFC's organizational environment

In 2009, GRFC changed and became a specialized institution of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) in charge of the fisheries and aquaculture sector within the framework of regional integration with the following MCS objectives;

- Harmonization of fisheries policies of States Parties;
- Concerted management of access to resources by foreign vessels;
- Environmental protection including transboundary ecosystems and species;

- Strengthening the legal and institutional framework.

To achieve its objectives, GRFC has set up:

An agreement on the Determination of Minimum Conditions of Access (MCA), Exploitation and Trade of Fishery Resources in December 2013, which regulates:

- Cooperation in the fight against IUU
- Offenses and penalties for fishing vessels
- Special provisions applicable to artisanal fishing

This convention, which is very similar to that of the SRFC and the FCWC, gives scope for convergence and cooperation between the three fishing organizations.

And a Regional Action Plan for the fight against INDNR (PAR-INDNR) which deals with:

- The implementation of international and regional instruments;
- Coastal State responsibilities
- Flag state responsibilities
- Flag state responsibilities
- Strengthening the Fisheries Monitoring, Control and Surveillance System
-

These two documents summarized GRFC 's MCS strategic vision in its policy for the protection and monitoring of fisheries resources in the Central Africa-Gulf of Guinea zone.

3. Reminder of COREP's SCS policy

A first Strategic Action Plan (SAPI) for the period 2009-2015 was adopted by the Council of Ministers in July 2008. The implementation of this plan, in its MCS part, was done thanks to the support FAO (TCP/RAF/310 and TCP/SFC/3501), the ACP Fish II Program under the supervision of ECCAS, the NEPAD Planning and Coordination Agency, and various support from the Inter-African Bureau for Resources Animals (AU-BIRA) which enabled the ECCAS- GRFC institutional liaison agreement.

SAPI has produced various interesting tools necessary for the sustainable management of fisheries. This is in particular

- The fisheries monitoring, control and surveillance plan (MCS Plan),
- From the agreement on the minimum conditions of access to the resource,

The weaknesses identified in the implementation of SAPI mainly concern:

- Lack of funding for selected programs
- The very limited human resources to animate the institution.

In the second Strategic Action Plan (SAP2), for the period 2016-2020, it was envisaged to continue the fight against IUU fishing by implementing the instruments of good governance developed during SAP I:

- The establishment of a regional unit for the coordination of MCS activities at the level of the Executive

Secretariat of GRFC.

- The establishment of a regional register of fishing vessels and an information exchange system based on fishing licenses.
- The establishment of a regional observer program.
- The exchange of information on the monitoring of fishing vessels, provided by the VMS system, on-board observers and fisheries inspectors.
- Capacity building of control personnel: inspectors and observers.
- The implementation of good governance instruments developed during SAP I.

AU-IBAR was asked to support two strategic axes:

Axis 1 : Institutional and operational support for the establishment of a regional coordination unit for MCS activities at the level of the GRFC Executive Secretariat. The conceptual study has been done, the protocol for setting up the SCS center is still pending. AU-IBAR was also asked to ensure the operationalization of the regional unit for the coordination of MCS activities, equipped with a regional communication system and a database/operational information. This process is still awaited.

Axis 2: Technical support from AU-IBAR for the establishment of a regional observer program and regional register of fishing vessels, with theoretical and practical training sessions for the benefit of fisheries inspectors, observers at on board vessels, and the development of regulatory texts concerning fisheries control measures and techniques. The platform of the regional register of fishing vessels is already materialized on the GRFC website. Similarly, the registry management application user guide.

4. GRFC today

ECCAS has embarked on a vast institutional reform program which introduces many changes modifying the status of its constituent bodies. As part of the reform of the Community Economic Institution, GRFC will be technically supervised by the Environment and Natural Resources Department. Its objective will be to assist Member States with a view to protecting and enhancing, in a sustainable manner, fishery resources and to promoting the development of aquaculture. New measures are still proposed at this time to broaden the mandate of GRFC to the fields of agriculture, livestock and rural development.

The rapprochement of ECCAS and CEMAC will lead to new arrangements. GRFC will be integrated into the agency for agro-pastoral development, fisheries and food security to be created to rationalize and make more coherent the activities of the various institutions.

All this denotes many changes at the same time, which will have to be mastered and appropriated with intelligence and over time.

5. Analyzes of the current situation

- GRFC, in its current form, will disappear with the reform to become an agency responsible for the management and development of fishing, aquaculture, agriculture and livestock activities. This reform certainly targets performance and consistency objectives between the different institutions.

- However, like any reform of this scale, the time required for it to be effectively considered by all stakeholders, its understanding, and its implementation will necessarily require a lot of fine-tuning during multiple coordination meetings over several years. The process is taking its course.
- During this transition phase, which can be long, GRFC no longer has a well-defined program with the Member States within the framework of Fisheries Monitoring, Control and Surveillance. Thus, the following initiatives are purely and simply frozen pending the effective implementation of new strategic orientations:
 - The establishment of a regional coordination unit for MCS activities at the level of the GRFC Executive Secretariat initially planned,
 - The establishment of a regional register of fishing vessels and an information exchange system based on fishing licenses,
 - The establishment of a regional observer program,
 - The exchange of information on the monitoring of fishing vessels, provided by the VMS system, on-board observers and fisheries inspectors,
 - Capacity building for control personnel: inspectors and observers,

This frost will inevitably impact on the immediate protection of fishery resources and the marine ecosystem of the sub-region, which will have to be assessed over time.

Pending the end of the transitional phase and the effectiveness of the reform instruments, GRFC Member States will be called upon individually to fully play their roles of Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) of their maritime areas according to their national capacities. But as generally, the individual capacities of MCS of the MS are very limited to sufficiently and correctly consider the IUU fight in all its forms, it will be necessary to expect negative impacts on the protection of the resource and its environment.

- **COREP/CEBEVIRHA relationship**

There is another sub-regional fisheries organization, the Economic Commission for Livestock, Meat and Fishery Resources (CEBEVIRHA), which also deals with fisheries policies in the member countries of Cameroon, CAR, Gabon and Chad. There may be skill overlaps in some missions. In order to avoid duplication of efforts, it is necessary to clearly define the real contours of their mandates in terms of MCS and marine fisheries.

- **COREP/CRESMAC relationship**

CRESMAC is a civil-military institution, which has an operations coordination center, equipped with competent personnel, equipped with communication equipment and a system for monitoring fishing or merchant vessels. Given the existence of CRESMAC and GRFC, two regional technical institutions with the status of specialized institutions of ECCAS, with similar mandates in terms of protection and monitoring of fisheries resources in the maritime area covered by GRFC, It is logical and relevant to build synergies between these two institutions to strengthen the effectiveness of surveillance activities at sea, by pooling surveillance resources without causing additional financial costs or unnecessary duplication.

6. MCS initiatives and results

INITIATIVES	STRENGTHS/WEAKNESSES
Realization of a Regional Strategic MCS and IUU Plan (PR-INN)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A regional MCS action plan is carried out This plan is not drawn up in FAO format
Creation of an SCS Regional Center and its application protocols.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study carried out Realization not yet effective
Organization of joint monitoring operation between MS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operation within the framework of the CMC (CRESMAC) No joint fisheries surveillance operation organized by GRFC
Establishment of an observer program with regional competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No studies yet There is no observer program in most countries
Establishment of a regional register of fishing vessels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the national level, the databases concerning the registers are partially complete and operational At the regional level, the format of the register is not defined.
Automatic sharing and exchange of information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No organized sharing of information exchanges Low level of information exchange between countries
Implementation of a regional VMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National VMS systems exist No regional VMS
Sustainable funding mechanisms for sub-regional surveillance activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No study on the issue Funding supported under ECCAS
Cooperation with economic organizations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specialized institution of ECCAS

7. Conclusion and recommendation 2

Whatever the duration of the current reform and the organization put in place, the protection of marine resources and ecosystems requires;

- i. The creation of a regional coordination unit for MCS activities,
- ii. The establishment of a regional register of fishing vessels and an information exchange system based on fishing licenses,
- iii. The establishment of a regional observer program,
- iv. Exchanges of information on the monitoring of fishing vessels frequenting the area, by national and regional VMS system,
- v. Observers on board fishing vessels,
- vi. Fisheries inspectors to control said fishing vessels and
- vii. Good fisheries regulations.

These provisions should be considered now by the GRFC unit responsible for participating in the implementation of the reform, to mitigate the negative impacts that will be caused by this transition.

D. ATLAFCO AREA

Created in 1989, Ministerial conference on fisheries cooperation among African states bordering Atlantic Ocean (ATLAFCO) is an intergovernmental organization which brings together 22 countries from Morocco to Namibia. The constitutive convention of ATLAFCO adopted on July 5, 1991 in Dakar, sets the areas and modalities of fisheries cooperation between MS: To do this, the Conference encourages:

- The promotion of cooperation in the management and development of fisheries
- The development, coordination and harmonization of the efforts and capacities of Member States with a view to preserving, exploiting, enhancing and marketing fishery resources;
- Solidarity with landlocked states and geographically disadvantaged states in the region.

ATLAFCO, Regional and Inter-Governmental organization for fisheries cooperation is called upon to participate in the coordination of the fight against IUU fishing at the regional level and to have an effective intervention plan to support States and sub-regional fisheries organizations in this mission.

I. Overview of MCS instruments used by ATLAFCO Member States

The countries of the ATLAFCO zone are gradually strengthening their MCS capacities from year to year to prevent, counter and eliminate the different forms of IUU fishing, to varying degrees depending on the country and the zone. This capacity building was made possible thanks to the strategic and institutional support provided by the repercussions of the various fishing agreements concluded with foreign countries, and organizations such as the EU, the World Bank, the AU through BIRA, ATLAFCO, ICCAT, and some NGOs.

Complex procedures¹⁹ are noted almost everywhere in several MS to have the texts adopted or the plans drawn up applied. The formula (SRFC) which tries to bring together in a single document (sub-regional MCS convention) all the relevant MCS aspects contained in various international legal instruments in the field of fisheries, to make it a reference centralizing all the provisions to be taken into account by the national legislations, deserves to be studied, supported and popularized with the other fishing organizations in order to facilitate the global consideration of the modifications necessary for the MS, and to harmonize the national legislations in their MCS parts.

2. Overview of ATLAFCO's MCS legal basis

At the level of the ATLAFCO regional organization, the provisions relating to MCS are those contained in the national fisheries regulations of the MS and/or in the provisions agreed at the level of existing sub-regional fisheries organizations.

The action of a regional fisheries organization is more visible if the Monitoring, Control and Surveillance of fisheries is considered directly in its attributions. We note that it is not clearly stipulated for ATLAFCO, both in the statements of reasons for its creation and in the specific objectives contained in the agreement (article 2), the particular mandate of the organization to play a decisive role in the MCS of MS or sub-regional fisheries organizations located on the eastern Atlantic seaboard. Article 5 of the ATLAFCO

¹⁹It took ten years for Senegal to finalize the process of revising its fishing law

agreement which speaks of Monitoring-Control and Surveillance specifies “the parties consult and collaborate by all the means at their disposal or which they could jointly equip themselves with in order to ensure the Monitoring-Control and Surveillance including the technical control of any fishing vessel operating in its area” This formal remark cannot prevent ATLAFCO, whose mandate also covers “ The development, coordination and harmonization of the efforts and capacities of the Member States with a view to preserve, exploit, develop and market fishery resources” to provide specific and structured support to MS and existing regional fisheries organizations in areas of protection and better management of fishery resources. It is within this framework that ATLAFCO had supported the FCWC in its program “Common management of shared fish stocks-2013” and “The promotion and pooling and sharing of information on fishing-2016” then the SRFC in the formulation of an action plan for the implementation of the advisory opinion of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS)-2016”. These resource management activities also fall within the framework of capacity building in the fight against IUU fishing.

In addition, ATLAFCO is involved in the Monitoring, Control and Surveillance of tuna activities in the Atlantic zone with ICCAT, by formulating feasibility studies on the establishment of a scientific observer program placed on board tuna vessels that frequent the region. The major difficulty of this regional scientific observer program will remain the legal validity of the reports made by the observers, without specific agreements with the countries visited.

A gradual approach based on existing compliance observer programs in sub-regional fisheries organizations, with additional tasks such as monitoring catch declarations, monitoring data transmissions when entering/ leaving fishing areas , the monitoring of discards and associated catches, transshipment and the actions of vessels in the event of significant discards and associated catches, the weather in the area, could be a prudent approach to solving this difficulty in monitoring long-range tuna vessels stock.

3. Overview of cooperation initiatives taken by ATLAFCO in MCS matters

The framework for ATLAFCO’s action in the area of IUU fishing is the Rabat Declaration of September 8, 2014 on regional cooperation for the fight against IUU fishing, by which the Ministers meeting at the Ministerial Conference declared their political will to initiate coordinated action to combat IUU fishing at national and regional level.

i ATLAFCO / AU-IBAR institutional relations

Conclusion, in 2018, of a Memorandum of Understanding between ATLAFCO and the AFRICAN UNION through the AU/IBAR Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources, this partnership provides a cooperation framework that facilitates collaboration between the two institutions, to better harmonization and coordination of their actions, in complementarity and synergy, including alignment at regional and national level with African strategies and policies adopted at AU level in the area of fisheries. This level that ATLAFCO has been designated since 2021, chair of APRIFAAS, which is a platform created by AU/IBAR under the auspices of the fisheries reform mechanism, adopted by the AU IN 2014 and revised in 2021. APRIFAAS is the platform that brings together regional institutions for fisheries, aquaculture and aquatic systems. Its mandate is to strengthen coordination and cooperation between stakeholders involved in fisheries at continental and sub-regional level, under the supervision of AU/IBAR, which provides the secretariat for

the platform.

ii. Institutional relations ATLAFCO / SRFC / FCWC / GRFC

ATLAFCO has concluded with SRFC, FCWC, GRFC and other regional fisheries cooperation entities (specialized in artisanal fishing, REPAO and WADAF) a memorandum of understanding for coordination between regional fisheries institutions and organizations operating in the ATLAFCO zone in 2015. This MoU plans in particular to put in place relevant partnership agreements with a regional vocation to increase the synergies and complementarity of programs and the mobilization of resources, and for the purpose of developing a common program, to establish priority actions,

In addition, ATLAFCO signed a memorandum of understanding on October 28, 2015 with the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) which advocates cooperation between the two organizations for the fight against IUU fishing. In this context, the two organizations have decided to combine their efforts to raise awareness and mobilize their Member States, to encourage them to ratify PSMA as soon as possible,

iii. ATLAFCO-SRFC:

- The promotion of the management of shared and cross-border stocks, small pelagic have benefited from funding from ATLAFCO within the framework of an agreement with the SRFC for the implementation development plan for this fishery in the area as part of the “small pelagic project”
- The implementation of the Convention relating to the determination of the minimum conditions of access within the SRFC zone
- Strengthening the capacities of the Administrations of the Member States for the control and inspection of vessels in the context of the fight against IUU fishing

iv. ATLAFCO –FCWC

- Contribution of ATLAFCO to the financing of FCWC activities relating to the implementation of the process of elaboration and adoption of “The harmonization of the conditions of access to shared resources and the exchange of information on fishing”;
- Strengthening the capacities of the Administrations of the Member States for the control and inspection of vessels in the context of the fight against IUU fishing
- Examination of the state of integration of the provisions of the Convention on the minimum conditions of access to the waters of the FCWC area in the national legislations of the MS;
- Proposal of measures aimed at strengthening national legal frameworks intended to combat IUU fishing.

v. ATLAFCO- GRFC

- - Project to develop national registers and a regional register of industrial fishing vessels in the GRFC region.
- - Development of regional programs aimed at strengthening regional coordination, for the fight against IUU fishing and strengthening the MCS of fishing activities in the ATLAFCO region.

4. Conclusions and recommendations n°4

- i. ATLAFCO as a regional and Inter-Governmental organization for fisheries cooperation, called upon to participate in the coordination of the fight against IUU fishing, could have, in agreement with the sub-regional fisheries organizations, a Regional Action Plan of IUU fishing, serving as a reference or guide to harmonize and define the main lines of action to combat IUU fishing in the space of the 22 MS.
- ii. It also seems essential for the success of initiatives to combat IUU fishing that ATLAFCO Member States progress within the framework of their RFOs on other equally important initiatives such as the conclusion of specific sub-regional conventions on cooperation issues. in terms of monitoring, control and surveillance,
- iii. There is a need to strengthen institutional cooperation between the regional fisheries organizations operating in the region which have an advisory mandate and the regional economic communities, mainly ECOWAS and ECCAS, which have a political mandate and which are invested by the AU, of the mission to promote economic integration at the regional level. This cooperation is much needed when it comes to cross-cutting issues that require coordination between States, whether it be issues related to the environment, aquatic biodiversity or the blue economy, and of course the fight against IUU fishing, including strengthening of MCS systems
- iv. by ATLAFCO should be consistent with the actions or initiatives of Regional Fisheries Organizations, in accordance with the 2014 Rabat declaration which had insisted on the need to harmonize its efforts to better synergy. The memorandum of understanding signed between ATLAFCO and the regional fisheries organizations must show its effectiveness (i) development of partnership (ii) establishment of a common program (iii) exchange of information (iv) monitoring and evaluation.

E. AREA COVERED BY THE STATES IN NORTH AFRICA

The States of North Africa (Morocco-Algeria, Tunisia, Libya and Egypt), are part of a large regional group, the General Commission for Mediterranean Fisheries (CGPM) which is a regional fisheries organization, bringing together 22 countries. located on the Mediterranean (North-South) and the EU, with the objective of ensuring the conservation and sustainable use of marine resources, the development of aquaculture in the Mediterranean, in the Black Sea.

As the fisheries, marine environment and ecosystems of the Mediterranean and Black Sea face increasing pressure from various anthropogenic sources, it is essential that adequate measures are taken to manage their sustainability. Productive fishing and aquaculture operations require healthy seas, conservation of the marine environment will be a central aspect of GFCM's work.

Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) are essential activities to ensure good fisheries management and rebuild stocks, especially in the Mediterranean Sea, considered to be outside biologically safe limits. The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) has taken significant steps in recent years to reverse this situation, including the adoption of a new agreement text better suited with a Regional Action Plan to combat against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing (RPOA-IUU). This is an important moment to reinforce the management measures adopted with a strong regional framework to combat IUU fishing and implement the FAO International Plan of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate IUU Fishing (FAO IPOA-INN). These actions are global in nature and concern the 22-member countries, five of which are African.

In North Africa, there are not yet any inter-State fisheries organizations as on the eastern seaboard of the Atlantic Ocean responsible for coordinating MCS activities. Each State manages its maritime areas individually.

For this study, due to the limitation of physical missions in the different areas, Tunisia served as a framework for reflection to give an overview of the situation in the countries of North Africa.

I. Case of Tunisia

In order to ensure the good health of marine ecosystems and their environments, several management measures have been taken by Tunisia over the past 20 years with the overall objective of preserving fisheries resources, namely:

- The freezing of fishing effort when necessary,
- The regulation of fishing campaigns for a range of species with a strong commercial interest,
- Alignment with the common policy in the management of the sector (FAO/CGPM-African Union or the European Union),
- The establishment of a 3-month biological rest period in the Gulf of Gabes for trawlers (since 2009),
- The creation of Marine Protected Areas (the regulatory and institutional framework for this component was established during the period 2009-2014)
- The implementation of a program to install artificial reefs in the Gulf of Gabes (since 2009).

It should be noted that Tunisia, within the framework of its program for the conservation and sustainable exploitation of fishery resources and in alignment with its international commitments, in particular towards the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) and the Commission for the Conservation of Tunas of Atlantic (CICAT), the Ministry of Agriculture, Hydraulic Resources and Fisheries (MARHP) launched, through the General Directorate of Fisheries and Aquaculture (DGPA), a project aimed at establishing a national monitoring system for fishing vessels by satellite (VMS) with beacons installed on board fishing vessels ensuring the satellite transmission of geo-referenced data and central and local monitoring centers within the Ministry of Interior (Maritime National Guard), the Ministry of National Defense (National Navy) and the Ministry of Finance (Tunisian Customs).

In addition to the international and national legal basis governing the VMS put in place between 2013 and 2015, a new amendment to law no. n° 2018-30 of May 23, 2018 which allows in particular the observation of certain offenses based on the data received through the national VMS system. This is an important step forward.

MPAs, the blue economy, biological rests, aquaculture, fisheries agreements, are all initiatives taken by Tunisia to improve the conservation of resources and its environments.

- For MPAs, the program to create Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) is struggling to experience real growth.
- For the Blue Economy, a national strategy is being developed with the support of the World Bank,

Aquaculture is an activity that started in the 1960s. It was not until 1985 that private investment in the aquaculture sector started with the participation of banks, however, inland aquaculture could not achieve the expected goals

Overall, all of the aforementioned management processes are based on an almost perfect participatory approach involving the profession, civil society, the Administration and Research.

2. To analyze

- Apart from a few difficulties related to the use of prohibited fishing gear by some small-scale fishermen, IUU fishing by foreign industrial vessels is a rare phenomenon in North Africa.
- Tunisia's fishing legislation, inspired by international instruments, is well done. The provisions contained in the PSMA are applied, even if the convention is not always ratified by Tunisia.
- The acceptance by the legal authorities of the elements taken from the national VMS system as evidence constitutes an important advance in the monitoring, control and surveillance system of fishing vessels and a good measure for the protection of resources.
- With the support of the World Bank, Tunisia's membership of the blue economy will be an opportunity to meet the challenges of protecting the aquatic ecosystem. A communication strategy will be necessary to disseminate the main advantages of this option, and facilitate the appropriation of the strategies carried out by all the actors, in particular the fishing community.

3. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE MCS PROVISIONS OF THE THREE SUB-REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS (SRFC-FCWC- GRFC) AND COOPERATION FRAMEWORK

The performance of the MCS systems of the three sub-regional fisheries organizations of the African continent located on the eastern seaboard of the Atlantic Ocean, could be measured globally on the following indicators:

- The political will and importance shown to the fisheries sector by MS authorities.
- The quality of the institutional organization put in place to deal with MCS issues.
- The existence of a coherent administrative and legal environment to manage the MCS.
- The availability of sufficient human, logistical and financial resources to support the actions
- The existence of secure funding mechanisms to sustain the organization's activities.

It is on the basis of these criteria that the performance and dynamism of sub-regional fisheries organizations will be compared and then make proposals for improvement.

1. Political will and declared importance for regional fisheries organizations

The fishing sector remains a determining element for the food security of the population and the national economy in the SRFC zone, then a less important sector on the economic fabric of the west central zone (FCWC) and the southern zone of the Gulf of Guinea (GRFC) or other natural resources are much more important in value.

In relation with the extent of the destruction of fishery resources and their marine environments due to intense IUU fishing of all forms, and the negative repercussions on the marine ecosystem and other economic sectors of the countries, on the food security of population, the AU States, decided on June 23, 2014, at the summit of Heads of State and Government in Malabo, the adoption of a capacity building framework for good governance of the continental fisheries and aquaculture.

It is also to recall at the level of the SRFC, the Nouakchott Declaration of 2011 of the Ministers of the States of the SRFC, and in 2010, during the first conference of African ministers in charge of fisheries and aquaculture (CMAPA) in Banjul, which reflected the will of the Member States to fight together and vigorously all acts of IUU fishing and to preserve a healthy aquatic ecosystem everywhere.

These expressions of interest, expressed by the highest authorities of AU coastal MS, have served as a basis and motive for consolidating initiatives for the responsible protection and virtuous management of fisheries resources located in the EEZs of fisheries organizations located on the eastern side of the Atlantic Ocean. This resulted in practice in the development of several strategic action plans in the three fisheries organizations considering several aspects of MCS. The Technical and Financial Partners (PTF) such as the EU and the World Bank (WB), the African Union (AU-IBAR) adhered to these guidelines and came to support the initiatives taken by the sub-regional fisheries organizations.

This very strong expression of interest taken at the highest level by the authorities of the States of the African continent reflects the political will of the Heads of State of the AU to eradicate IUU fishing everywhere in Africa.

However, with regard to this expression of political will, we note:

- The SRFC lacks the dynamism to capitalize on and appropriate the results of the studies carried out within the framework of its strategic plans, which are likely to improve its functioning. Only joint surveillance operations have become a reality, subject to the support of TFPs.
- The FCWC is rolling out its various strategic action plans without many obstacles with satisfactory results, in particular the creation of the CR-MCS in Tema, the Basecamp for the exchange of information and the regional VMS system to better eradicate acts of fishing. INN.
- GRFC opts for transparency in its activities and the involvement of all States in the day-to-day running of the organization with quarterly reports drawn up and then distributed to all MS or all information relating to operational activities, administrative and financial aspects of the organization are noted. Today, GRFC is in the midst of a transformation. Many of his initiatives are pending.

2. The institutional framework put in place by the regional fisheries organizations.

To monitor, control and monitor the exploitation activities of their fisheries resources, the coastal States of the African continent have set up different organizational and functional frameworks of their structures responsible for the protection and monitoring of fisheries, and this, according to the contexts. specific to each country. Different arrangements for the structure of fisheries surveillance have appeared in several countries, ranging from the administrative surveillance structure (Directorate), to the Coast Guard, often with its own means of surveillance and a slight financial autonomy, or to the Maritime Prefecture with a role coordination body, or the High Authority for the Sea, an organizational framework for overseeing State action at sea. The choice by each country of a specific structure in charge of fisheries surveillance is generally dictated by the local context or by their particular circumstances at the time.

Apart from these institutional frameworks adopted in each country, the States have grouped together under different regional fisheries organizations, depending on the area, with a view to coordinating and rationalizing the fisheries surveillance actions carried out by each Member State.

The three SRFC-FCWC- GRFC organizations have a similar configuration of their institutional structures:

- A Conference of Ministers which is the supreme and decision-making body. It is made up of the Ministers in charge of fisheries from the various Member States, one of whom chairs between two sessions.
- A Coordination Committee or Consultative Coordination Committee, or technical committee, is the technical and advisory body responsible for monitoring the execution of the various decisions of the Conference of Ministers. It is generally made up of “Directors of Fisheries or any other expert appointed by the Member States”.

- A Permanent Secretary or Secretary General or Executive Secretary is the executive body responsible for implementing the decisions of the Conference of Ministers.

This type of institutional organization chart adopted by African coastal States generally corresponds to a practice of simple management of international cooperation organizations by the authorities of the MS. There can be real benefits if the roles and lines of responsibility of all stakeholders are clearly defined and understood by all actors.

Although being cooperative organizations, sub-regional fisheries organizations often undertake initiatives that some MS consider beyond their mandate as a simple cooperation body. This is why the linking of the SRFC and the FCWC to the regional organization ECOWAS, could be a way to circumvent this difficulty which arises each time that it is a question of taking sufficiently advanced acts of cooperation to strengthen capacities to combat IUU fishing. GRFC is already tied to ECCAS.

All three fisheries organizations (SRFC-FCWC- GRFC) recognize the usefulness and relevance of having a center in their areas for coordinating operations to combat IUU fishing. The SRFC has set up the SOCU based in Banjul, the FCWC has set up the MCS Regional Center (CR-MCS) in Tema, the GRFC is in the process of setting up a coordination center in Libreville.

Apart from the traditional IUU instruments, such as the regional compliance observer program, the ²⁰regional register of fishing vessels managed by the fisheries administrations, the VMS monitoring system for fishing vessels used by the various fishing organizations in the African region, the FCWC has an important system of exchange platform, sharing of information on fishing vessels (Basecamp), successfully implemented within the framework of the WATF, which deserves to be consolidated and shared with the other neighboring fishing organizations SRFC and GRFC.

3. The administrative and legal environment of sub-regional organizations.

All these three fishing organizations are created by agreements which set out the objectives to be achieved and the necessary legal framework. These are the March 1985 convention for the SRFC, the November 2007 convention for the FCWC, and the June 1984 convention for the GRFC. These three organizations all derive their legitimacy for action from the various creation conventions and from the other conventions reached by consensus between them, in particular:

- The various conventions on the Minimum Conditions of Access (MCA), taken by the three organizations (SRFC-FCWC- GRFC), quite similar in their orientations
- The 1993 Convention on the Right of Maritime Hot pursuit and its application protocol for the SRFC
- The agreement on the pooling and sharing of information for the FCWC
- The various application protocols.

Unfortunately, the various regional legal instruments taken individually have shown over time their limits in stimulating dynamic and active MCS cooperation at MS level. They lack binding authorities and powers because they do not set minimum standards or precise indicators for important strategic orientations

²⁰ The concept and usefulness of the regional register of fishing vessels is not yet clearly defined in the minds of MS. Legal instrument? Information system ? resource management tool? data base ? or all three at the same time?

and refer several decisions to national legislations often very late on international instruments or to undeveloped protocols.

The perfect integration of relevant MCS provisions of international instruments into the domestic laws of countries poses challenges for all African coastal states. Almost all the MS of these sub-regional fishing organizations have internal red tape to modify or adapt their fishing legislation to the continuous evolution of international law and to allow a coherent and coordinated application of actions.

The SRFC has attempted to circumvent this difficulty by initiating a regional MCS convention which brings together all the relevant aspects of the IUU fight, contained in various international legal instruments in a single document and allows all MS to have the same reading, the same approach and similar reactions on the treatment of aspects of the fight against IUU fishing and the protection of resources and their environments. This draft convention proposed since 2013 is still at the study stage at the SRFC, and is still slow to be adopted for various reasons ²¹. Other fisheries organizations (FCWC- GRFC) can take inspiration from this approach to facilitate the consideration of relevant and useful provisions drawn from different legal instruments.

4. Human and financial logistical means in regional fisheries organizations

The coastal States of the African continent are all aware of the importance that must be given to the protection and surveillance of fishery resources in their respective EEZs, but the logistical means, in particular naval and air, necessary to ensure this protection of resources are at the beyond the possibilities of a single country. The sub-regional fisheries organizations (SRFC-FCWC- GRFC) often benefit from the support of external Technical Financial Partners, to come and support the Member States in the accomplishment of their Fisheries Monitoring-Control and Surveillance missions in their areas.

The partners or donors, very concerned at the moment to support alone and permanently the Member States and the regional fisheries organizations in their fisheries monitoring, control and surveillance missions, have proposed several formulas for participation, or involvement. progressive loading of surveillance burdens by states through secure and sustainable funding mechanisms without palpable success. The spirit of being permanently supported by TFPs is always present.

There is a risk of seeing a gradual withdrawal of TFPs from the programs of regional fisheries organizations, if the mentality of always being assisted by TFPs does not gradually disappear in favor of a political will to become financially independent. The search for autonomous financing mechanisms to sub-regional fisheries organizations is becoming a priority, or failing that, linking up with economic organizations in their areas with their own financing will also be a solution. The SRFC conducted a study on autonomous financing mechanisms which deserves to be considered and consolidated. The FCWC seems to opt much more for linking up with ECOWAS, which has more resources. These are two options available to fisheries organizations.

²¹ The consensus required for its adoption is slow to materialize. 5 States out of 7 agree on the whole text. 2 States have reservations.

The human potential in charge of MCS remains acceptable in all of the three fisheries organizations (SRFC-FCWC-GRFC), even if there are significant efforts to be made in the field of training on the analysis and research of evidence that can validly confuse an IUU fishing vessel. Many types of training have been provided in many areas without visible and tangible results being identified. The training modules given to MCS personnel in the three fisheries organizations should be adapted to the particular local context and to the immediate needs of the concerns. Training of trainers in States seems to be the most appropriate way to maintain and enhance the capacities of highly mobile MCS personnel in MS. This need should be notified to the technical and financial partners to better direct their programs and their support.

5. Mechanisms of cooperation between sub-regional organizations

Permanent cooperation between neighboring regional fishing organizations located on the eastern seaboard of the Atlantic Ocean is a necessity to fight effectively against IUU fishing. It is in this context, on the initiative of ATLAFCO, that a memorandum of understanding for the coordination between sub-regional fisheries organizations was signed in 2015, between FCWC-SRFC-GRFC, with a view to (i) develop partnerships (ii) promote synergies and complementarities (iii) establish joint programs (iv) inform each other.

As such, ATLAFCO has provided technical and financial support to:

- The SRFC for (i) the implementation of the common management program for shared stocks and (ii) the Convention relating to the determination of minimum access conditions within the area
- To the FCWC for (i) the examination of the state of integration of the provisions of the Convention on the minimum conditions of access to the resource of the FCWC space in the national legislations of the Member States (ii) the proposal of the measures to strengthen national legal frameworks to combat IUU fishing.
- To GRFC for the Project to develop national registers and a regional register of industrial fishing vessels

Apart from this technical and financial support from ATLAFCO, there have been no decisive concrete actions of cooperation between the three fisheries organizations in MCS matters. Yet the need is felt, especially between the SRFC and the FCWC where several ships at risk use the border states of these two organizations to carry out their packages without being able to legally challenge them.

However, cooperation between the FCWC and the SRFC worked well within the framework of the PESCAO programme, where FCWC personnel were regularly invited to assist in the preparation and conduct of joint fisheries surveillance operations organized by the SRFC. A way to impregnate and prepare the FCWC for the future organization of joint fisheries surveillance operations in its area. The results of this exercise were very positive with the success of the Togo-Benin joint test operation organized by the FCWC.

This desire for cooperation could extend even further to (i) the planning of joint MCS activities (ii) the exchange and sharing of data on fishing vessels, vessels at risk, (iii) the common implementation strategy of FiTI and Blue Economy concepts in the region (iv) harmonization of fisheries agreement terms and conditions in the region (v) consultation on biological rest periods in MS (vi) and monitoring and management of tuna in the Atlantic by speaking with the same voice, the voice of Africa in the ICCAT forums.

6. Cooperation mechanisms with economic and financial organizations

6.1 WAEMU/ECOWAS

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the West African Economic Monetary Union (UEMOA), both located in the SRFC and FCWC zone, are economic and financial integration organizations, which cover 12 coastal States where fishing is an important instrument for the economic and financial sector, for the food security of populations. These economic organizations attach great importance to the two sub-regional fisheries organizations located in their areas (SRFC-FCWC).

6.1.1. WAEMU, in its agricultural policy (agriculture, livestock, fisheries) with the objective of ensuring food security in its MS, developed in 2003 a Three-Year Development Program (PTD) for fisheries, which recommends a legal framework for responsible fishing and the adoption of a common Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) system.

In 2010, WAEMU initiated a Draft Regulation for the Harmonization of Legislative Texts on Fisheries and Aquaculture.

Two guidelines are currently proposed. It's about the:

- Directive on a common regime for the sustainable management of fisheries resources in WAEMU member states;
- Directive instituting a common fishery monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) system within WAEMU. The only problem will be that the geographical area of the WAEMU member countries is not consistent with the areas for common management and monitoring, control and surveillance, particularly for shared stocks.

WAEMU had to entrust the implementation of the project to improve fisheries surveillance funded by the EU (EU/MCS: 2010-2013) to the SRFC, with at the end interesting results on the fight against IUU fishing, in particular the implementation of the draft MCS convention and the study on long-term funding mechanisms for monitoring. This cooperation deserves to be supported.

6.1.2. ECOWAS with its regional program on fisheries and aquaculture, adopted in 2010 in Banjul, aims to promote sustainable fisheries and aquaculture capable of ensuring food security for the population and the harmonization of fisheries policies in West Africa. west

In terms of mobilizing financial resources for the fisheries sector, access to EDF regional funds must pass through ECOWAS, which is a real advantage for cooperation with sub-regional organizations in its area.

ECOWAS promotes the principle of complementarity and subsidiarity. For this, it relies on the sub-regional fisheries organizations the SRFC and the FCWC, entrusting them with the operational component of the fight against IUU fishing of the PESCAO project, funded by the EU (2018-2022) with the main activity, the organization of a joint surveillance operation in the SRFC zone, the development of a Regional MCS Center equipped with regional VMS in the FCWC zone, the

training of personnel and the harmonization of the legislation of the MS.

ECOWAS covers a broader spectrum that covers all West African countries, this space is more viable for developing a global fisheries policy

These initiatives taken by WAEMU and ECOWAS show the confidence placed in the FCWC and the SRFC, by the two regional organizations, for the fight against IUU fishing and the capture of all the economic advantages drawn from a rational exploitation of the sea, beneficial to the conservation of the resource and its ecosystem.

- The regional economic organizations, WAEMU and ECOWAS, need these technical and operational arms that are the FCWC and the SRFC, to achieve one of their objectives: to ensure food security and improve the living conditions of the population.
- FCWC and SRFC also need a wider frame, more regular framework, capable of securing and rationalizing the various supports offered by TFPs, hence the importance of structured cooperation with economic organizations: WAEMU and ECOWAS.

Consequently, it remains to formalize these cooperation frameworks, by integrating fishing organizations as a technical arm or specialized institution with coordination actions of the two economic and financial organizations. As such, a memorandum of understanding was initiated between ECOWAS-FCWC-SRFC, to consolidate the position of technical body of these two organizations.

6.2 ECCAS

GRFC was already a specialized institution of ECCAS since 2009. The ongoing reform of ECCAS initiated in 2021, confirms GRFC as a specialized institution dependent on the department in charge of this sector and endowed with executing agencies. Other arrangements are still planned to harmonize with CEMAC bodies dealing with the same issues. It will take time to have a good reading and visibility of the reforms initiated in the GRFC zone.

I. Conclusions and recommendations n°5

- i. The institutions of the three fisheries organizations on the eastern side of the Atlantic Ocean are quite similar to each other. The Permanent Secretary (SP), or Secretary General (SG) or Executive Secretary (ES), is always under the authority of a rotating minister, and works with an advisory coordination committee which advises him. The powers of the (SP, SG, SE) are generally very limited and boil down to very diplomatic cooperation roles with the MS. The sovereignty of the Member States, often mentioned to the detriment of active cooperation, limits certain initiatives in terms of resource management, suggested by regional fisheries organizations. The evaluation and regular follow-up of the recommendations resulting from the statutory meetings of these fisheries organizations, an indicator that reflects the dynamism and smooth running of a sub-regional fisheries organization, is considered very weak in all of the three fisheries organizations. Recommendations can be beautiful, but difficult to apply. Hence the need to have a dynamic monitoring and evaluation department that provides a regular and clear view of the smooth running of the joint activities selected.

- ii. In a regional fisheries organization that brings together several MS, transparency on the activities carried out is fundamental. All stakeholders must be sufficiently informed about the actual activities of the regional organization, the objectives achieved, the immediate needs, the daily difficulties and others. The regional fisheries organizations tend to inform the Member States of their activities only during the statutory meetings which are held annually or bi-annually where the activity and financial reports are presented which the delegates present adopt without much analysis. GRFC, on the other hand, regularly drew up quarterly reports sent to the MS in which all the daily activities of the regional organization are listed. This transparent process of GRFC brings the organization closer to the MS and increases confidence in the secretariat team. The FCWC and especially the SRFC can take inspiration from the method used by GRFC to be more visible and more attractive.
- iii. The two fisheries organizations have set up regional fisheries surveillance structures (SOCU (SRFC), CR-MCS (FCWC), which make it possible to receive and analyze information from various sources, draw the best conclusions and then return them. Member States for action to be taken. This work is done by selected resource persons made available to regional fisheries organizations. The rather complex legal implications linked to the results of analyzes from various sources of information recommend that MCS personnel in position in these organizations is recruited according to their skills in this field and not according to the systematic criteria for the distribution of positions between MS. It remains to give legal value to the results of the analyzes made from the electronic instruments for monitoring fishing vessels (VMS-AIS) to be able to legally prosecute vessels suspected of IUU fishing. Remains to be done in the three fisheries organizations.
- iv. Cooperation between MS of the same organization, or between neighboring sub-regional organizations, is possible only if the stakeholders have harmonized legal texts based on international legal instruments, similar working methods, and a common political will to fight together against IUU fishing. Even if the political will of the Member States has been announced, the regional organizations are still struggling with the harmonization of their fishing legislation. All the studies carried out for this purpose have not given satisfactory results because of the many provisions to be made both in various conventions and legal instruments that the MS have difficulty in adhering to, then integrating continuously and separately into their legislations with often complex ratification procedures. The SRFC is currently trying to bring together all the relevant MCS aspects drawn from the various international legal instruments, in a single document called the MCS convention ²², a formula to guide the MS towards the harmonization of certain MCS aspects and facilitate their support by the EM. This approach deserves support.
- v. Funding for the MCS activities of these three organizations is essentially based on support from TFPs, which are becoming rare and demanding. The search for sustainable funding mechanisms for the MCS activities of regional fisheries organizations independently of TFPs is becoming an urgent necessity. It is necessary to find as quickly as possible, sources of autonomous and sure financing to avoid falling into the non-control of its own activities. Studies are available at the level of the SRFC, they can inspire the FCWC and the GRFC

²² With this MCS convention, the MS will have the same approach, the same behavior with similar treatment when faced with an IUU fishing vessel or collaborating with this activity

All these suggestions, recommendations made in the document, aim to improve the management capacities of fishery resources and their environments (marine ecosystems of MS).

The sub-regional approach is favored, because of the difficulties of individual fight against all forms of IUU fishing, the interdependence, the interweaving of the various marine fisheries of neighboring and even distant States, the existence of socio- direct economic relations between the national actors of the different countries of the region, the frequent and uncontrolled movements of industrial or artisanal migrant fishermen, on shared or sedentary resources.

It is about improving the current actions and measures of MCS and then extending them to other concepts of monitoring and management of resources and the marine ecosystem. This, in a participatory way, simple and easy to achieve for a more rational exploitation of the fishing environment.

4. SYNTHESIS OF MCS ORIENTATIONS TAKEN BY THE THREE SUB-REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

----- Executed _ _ _ _

----- Star project

----- Not planned

I. ON THE OPERATIONAL LEVEL				
Designation	SRFC	FCWC	GRFC	
Creation of a sub-regional coordination unit (structure) for surveillance operations	Ucos	CR-MCS in Tema	MCS cell	
Strengthening the legal environment for surveillance, in particular the development of conventions or the confirmation of national legislation with international conventions	-Minimum Resource Access Conditions (MCA)	-Minimum Resource Access Conditions (MCA)	-Minimum Resource Access Conditions (MCA)	
		-Agreement on the exchange and sharing of information		
	Right of pursuit agreement			
	- Draft MCS convention			
Implementation of a sub-regional VMS allowing the automatic exchange of information	-Provided for in the protocol of the draft MCS convention	-Functional.		
Establishment of a protocol for the exchange of information between the States and with the supervisory structure	Provided for in the protocol of the draft MCS convention	-Effective Works within the framework of the WATF		
Strengthening of cooperation between sub-regional and regional surveillance structures and national surveillance structures	SCS Technical Commission exists	WATF and NWG are functional		
The planning and organization of joint (common) surveillance operations in the area of the sub-regional commission	Joint surveillance operation regularly organized	Test operation carried out. (Benin-Togo)		
The search for the establishment of sustainable funding mechanisms for sub-regional surveillance	Study carried out			
Establishment of a sub-regional/regional register of fishing vessels	Provided for in the protocol of the draft MCS convention	Database completed		
Establishment of a sub-regional observer body (or with sub-regional competence)	Provided for in the protocol of the draft MCS convention	Proposal made and protocol proposed		
Application of the provisions contained in the Port State Measures	Provisions introduced in MCA and MCS convention.			
Capacity building of junior staff and supervisors in charge of surveillance	Regular training provided within the framework of EU/PRAO projects	Regular training provided as part of the TMT / PESCAO projects		

Implementation of an agreement on the minimum conditions of access to the resource	Agreement amended in 2013			
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2. POLITICAL WILL

Designation	SRFC	FCWC	GRFC	Comments
Significance of Heads of State Call to Malabo Summit 2014	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Declaration of Nouakchott 2001	Yes	Not concerned	Not concerned	
Statutory meeting of the conference of ministers	Random progress	Regular procedure		
Statutory meeting of coordination committees	Random progress	Regular procedure		
Appropriation of studies and projects initiated	Very weak	Proactive		

3. AVAILABILITY OF MEANS

Designation	SRFC	FCWC	GRFC	Comments
Humans	Decreasing capacity	Growing capacity		
Logistics	Acceptable	Acceptable in progress		
Financial	Weak, depends on TFPs	Weak, depends on TFPs		

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5. IDENTIFIED AREAS TO EXPAND THE SCOPE OF REGIONAL MCS SYSTEMS IN SHARED AQUATIC ECOSYSTEMS

I. Current measures

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) obliges coastal States, stakeholders, to ensure rigorous and virtuous management of fishing and mining resources, located in their EEZs, for the well-being of their respective populations. In accordance with international law, coastal States, individually or collectively within the framework of sub-regional organizations, have developed various strategies to assume their responsibilities in the management and protection of their marine ecosystems.

It is with a view to ensuring this protection of their common or shared fishery resources that the coastal States on the eastern seaboard of the Atlantic Ocean have grouped together into four organizations with regional/regional fisheries competences (FCWC-SRFC- GRFC - ATLAFCO) with fairly similar strategies to combat IUU fishing overall. These States and sub-regional organizations have understood the need to:

- i. Establish a consistent legal environment consistent with international law** to carry out activities. This has been done, with the elaboration in all States of laws regulating fishing, the adherence of these coastal States to international legal instruments, in particular the code of conduct for responsible fishing, the International Plan of Action (IPA) and Port State Measures (PSMA). However, there remains the effective application by all of the directives resulting from these protocols or conventions. **(Political will)**
- ii. Set up a coherent administrative and institutional framework, adapted to the local context.** This has been done differently in the States, with the establishment of an administrative structure for monitoring fisheries (Directorate), or Coast Guard (CG), or Maritime Prefecture, or High Authority for the Sea, to take charge of the national coordination of fisheries surveillance operations. However, it remains to make these surveillance structures operational and effective and operational to carry out the expected missions. **(Political will)**
- iii. Regroup between neighboring States by pooling human, material and financial resources.** This was done with the creation of the SRFC (seven coastal States), the FCWC (six coastal States), the GRFC (seven coastal States), and ATLAFCO (22 coastal States). However, it remains to give these organizations clear prerogatives, powers to act and control to monitor the effective application of the directives and recommendations issued by the decision-making bodies **(political will)**
- iv. Acquire innovative fisheries monitoring instruments.** Most coastal States use electronic instruments for monitoring fishing vessels (VMS-AIS-GPS-Satellite Images-Radar). It remains to put in place the legal environment in accordance with international law, for the validity and admissibility of information from the monitoring and control instruments of fishing vessels, in order to be able to use them to legally prosecute fishing vessels suspected of fishing INN. **(Political will)**

- v. **Develop MCS Strategic Action Plans** that plan in time and space, the activities and the means necessary to achieve the assigned objectives. All fisheries organizations (SRFC-FCWC- GRFC) regularly develop strategic action plans every five or ten years, which unfortunately are only partially applied. However, it remains to design realistic Strategic Action Plans, in line with the implementation capacities of the Member States. **(The Right Strategy is required)**.
- vi. Adopt instruments for the monitoring-control and surveillance of fisheries, such as the regional register of fishing vessels, the observer program with regional competence, automatic exchanges of information. These various instruments for monitoring fishing vessels are accepted and adopted in most coastal States. It remains to ensure their effective functioning. **(Political will)**

All these strategic provisions taken by Member States and sub-regional fisheries organizations are solid instruments for the protection and monitoring of fisheries resources. Their effective implementation should be able to yield convincing results, to reduce the negative impacts on marine ecosystems. But for various reasons, including the reflex of sovereignty often developed by certain Member States, the low level of organization and working method, the lack of follow-up of decisions and recommendations resulting from statutory meetings, and other reasons, have considerably reduced the chances and possibilities of performance of these monitoring systems:

- i. The legal instruments dealing with MCS are not always updated, the Strategic Action Plans are executed at a low level of forecasts, the financial means put in place by the TFPs at the disposal of the MS or sub-regional organizations are only used partially ²³.
- ii. The lack of sufficient and efficient human resources, operational equipment, substantial funding, are always put forward by the States or sub-regional fisheries organizations to justify the decline in performance. While it is true that the reasons mentioned by the States are part of the causes of poor performance, it must be recognized that the various strategic plans prepared by external experts and then proposed to sub-regional fisheries organizations often lack realism linked to the quantity considerable number of activities proposed in a context of scarcity of human and financial means to support such programs and are naturally out of step with the real possibilities and environment of States and regional fisheries organizations.
- iii. The financing costs of these often-huge strategic plans are left to the discretion of the TFPs who decide according to their schedules with conditions that do not always suit the beneficiaries. This classic scheme generally used and served to all fishing organizations without a guarantee of results deserves to be reconsidered. A change of approach is needed so that the regional fisheries organizations themselves master their own developments.

Improving the effectiveness of regional fisheries surveillance, through other initiatives, requires a simple, realistic and pragmatic approach. The actions proposed must be simple, easy to carry out, within the material, human and financial resources available or may be available to the Member States and/or sub-regional fisheries organizations, in accordance with international law. The grouping of States within a sub-regional fisheries organization is already an important step in the direction of improving the capacities of the MS. These States, grouped into sub-regional fisheries organizations must agree first on strong and

²³ PTFs are challenged to streamline their disbursement procedures in order to facilitate financing and financial absorption within the framework of support for a regional MCS program.

unifying general principles, very simple to apply, in particular:

- i. The demonstration of a sincere political will to cooperate together
- ii. The acceptance effective implementation of decisions, conventions, protocols and recommendations taken by mutual agreement
- iii. Solidarity in the fight against IUU fishing activities
- iv. The regular, timely payment of their obligation in terms of contribution and participation in joint actions, are necessary to build a dynamic and effective cooperation.

2. Other Axis for extending MCS initiatives to other aspects of biodiversity management

Traditional methods of fisheries surveillance, surveillance centers equipped with naval, aerial and electronic means for monitoring fishing vessels, registers of fishing vessels, observer program, information sharing, and others, are well-known working tools. by the Member States, quite expensive, demanding in terms of organization and working methods, to give convincing results. Alongside these various fisheries monitoring instruments, the FAO, aware of the low logistical, financial and human capacities of the coastal States, especially African ones, has initiated several initiatives, voluntary guidelines aimed at improving protection, monitoring and monitoring of fishery resources adapted to the capacities of mainly African coastal States. These are the International Action Plan (PAI) designed in a flexible and flexible way, with its various working tools, the convention on the very practical PSMAs, with its very effective control and organization methods, concepts FiTIs focused on transparency and the fight against corruption, the Blue Economy advocating a healthy ecosystem, which MS and sub-regional fisheries organizations have the possibility of using to improve the conservation of biodiversity at a lower cost aquatic.

This will be an opportunity for these sub-regional fisheries organizations (SRFC-FCWC- GRFC- ATLAFCO) to appropriate these concepts, to convey them to MS in a simple and comprehensive format, to obtain their full support. It will be a question of defining, in relation to the Member States, minimum standards to be adopted in these areas, clear indicators to measure the performance achieved in these new concepts and achieve the expected results.

Other organizations such as AU-IBAR, NEPAD, have carried out studies within the framework of the protection of fisheries resources ²⁴, and ECOWAS ²⁵” which are references and guides for an approach to simple and realistic policies for the monitoring and protection of diversified fishery resources. International cooperation agencies such as SIDA (Sweden), NGOs such as RAMPAO, PRCM, MAWA, are also developing concepts in line with the protection of the marine ecosystem that must be considered.

This is why, faced with the multiple challenges affecting the sustainability of world fisheries such as the overexploitation of resources, the negative effects of climate change, marine pollution, the globalization of activities at all levels, adverse consequences of IUU fishing, of new axis of resource protection and reinforcement of MCS systems have been developed with many simple initiatives.

²⁴ “The policy and strategic framework for fisheries and aquaculture”

²⁵ “The regional fisheries and aquaculture strategy”

Axis I: MPAs, biodiversity conservation factors

As a reminder, the regional fisheries organizations of the region are generally mandated for the management and protection of the fishery resources located on the continental shelf and in the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) of the MS. Some fisheries organizations have, however, extended their field of intervention to inland fisheries, aquaculture or Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), which are internal national resources that MS have a duty to organize and manage according to their particular environmental and local context ²⁶, while considering good practices learned elsewhere, in other areas.

MPAs are development tools dedicated to the conservation of marine resources and are part of a system of good governance. Their creations can be justified by this desire to reduce fishing pressure and ensure the stability of the ecosystem. Well managed, MPAs create real benefits that directly impact the conservation of the marine ecosystem and biodiversity, and can (i) serve as nurseries for juveniles (ii) provide refuges for vulnerable species (iii) limit the destruction of habitats. Badly managed, they can have negative effects with the postponement of fishing effort in other sensitive areas leading to overexploitation of resources. Well chosen, they can protect critical sites and the marine environment of a well-defined area. Poorly defined, they become sources of inter-community conflict, detrimental to the preservation of resources.

Although generally considered useful for the protection of resources and their environments, it often remains difficult to obtain the full support of the populations for this initiative which imposes on them changes in their way of life or their tradition. Co-management, a form of decentralization and sharing of responsibilities, including fishermen, institutions, administrations, local communities is often used to iron out difficulties. A form of democratization of resource management that must be supervised in order to avoid quickly squandering the benefits of this initiative at the slightest disagreement.

Regional fisheries organizations, although not acting directly in the MS, will be able to broaden their fields of activity to intervene in certain areas hitherto reserved for sovereign States, including Marine Protected Areas, internal marine pollution and others. fields whose field of activity is not limited. Thus, they will be able to accompany and recommend the regular evaluation of the results obtained in the MS on the management initiatives of MPAs or aquaculture, capitalize and enhance knowledge, share good practices learned elsewhere with other Member States to improve management. They can also be involved at various levels in tasks directly related to the action of surveillance and control of fishing activities, in particular through the development of regulatory texts of a regional nature centered on the operation of aquaculture farms, on the protection and monitoring of marine resources through participatory monitoring, co-monitoring, co-management and above all regulating and supervising the many stakeholders in this sector, in particular NGOs, to harmonize their approaches for the benefit of different States members. A network of MPAs such as exists in the West African zone (RAMPAO) is also a means of sharing acquired experiences, lessons learned, best practices and ensuring more rational protection of migratory species while throughout their cycles. Sub-regional fisheries organizations can intervene in this context to harmonize the approaches of these different MPA initiatives in their region while recommending for the development of appropriate international guidelines based on lessons learned in all areas.

²⁶The involvement of several stakeholders, customary leaders, different administrations including National Parks, environmental departments, fisheries departments, local communities, NGOs, can complicate the rational management of MPAs. A participatory approach is recommended

The three sub-regional fishing organizations all have an agreement on the Minimum Conditions of Access (CMA) to the resource. They will be able to improve these MCA conventions by considering minimum provisions for the determination, management and monitoring of MPAs, the relevant provisions of the convention for the safeguard at sea (SOLAS), the international convention on the preservation of pollution of the seas by ships (Marpol). This legal framework taken at the regional level through the improved MCAs, allows the national administrations of the Member States in charge of fisheries, to weigh much more on the national stakeholders, to have certain good governance approaches that are often difficult to pass on locally accepted. The sub-regional organizations will also have to ensure or recommend the adhesion and especially the appropriation of the provisions contained in these various international legal instruments by the MS.

Axis 2: FITI Initiative, transparency and good governance

The Fisheries Transparency Initiatives (FiTI) is a global partnership that aims to make access to the resource more responsible, through the transparent sharing of information between all stakeholders: governments, companies, civil societies. It is based on the regular publication of all fisheries laws and regulations, the various fishing agreements, the state of the available stock, the number of operational vessels, the catches made, the payments made by category, landings, transshipments, and discards.

States are called upon to adhere to this initiative. The indirect benefits of joining the FiTI concept will be: (i) a contribution to the fight against IUU fishing, (ii) a way to fight corruption in institutions, (iii) a way to make Partners more confident Technical and Financial. Therefore, an approach for better conservation of the marine ecosystem.

In the West Africa zone, the SRFC concluded in 2016 a Partnership Agreement with FiTI on the basis of common objectives aimed at the implementation of transparency and the adherence to the FiTI of all the Member States of the SRFC. Mauritania and Senegal are currently members. The first has integrated this Initiative into its sector policy and its daily sector management actions. As for Senegal, this initiative remains for the moment a wishful thinking.

This transparency initiative conveyed by FiTI is in line with the steps already taken by the SRFC, the FCWC within the framework of the PRAO with the establishment of a Dashboard ²⁷, a transparency and good governance tool for the exchange of information on the resource and the fishing sector in general, then also the FCWC with the efficient operation of its Basecamp platform which is also a place for the transparent exchange of information on fishing activities and the monitoring of fishing vessels. The effective implementation of these tools, Dashboard and Basecamp, by the SRFC and the FCWC, complements the initiatives of transparency conveyed by FiTI and of good conservation of aquatic biodiversity. The SRFC and the FCWC will be encouraged to improve the performance of these various tools (FiTI, Dashboard, Basecamp) and promote them to other Member States. The collection of good information on fishing, one weak point of these management instruments, will have to be given great attention to make them effective.

²⁷An information system that should promote transparency in the exchange of information between national systems on (1) licenses and the fishing fleet (2) fishing effort and catches (3) activities of fishing vessels and others.

The FiTI Standard is designed in principle in such a way that any country can implement it, including those for which the collection of information is limited, but it must be recognized that there will necessarily be costs associated with this practice. A website facilitating access to information for all, a multi-party commission in charge of collecting, compiling and validating data, a clear legal environment defining the rules for the flow of information, will be prerequisites for the FiTI standard. Regional fisheries organizations could support MS in the organization and methods required to meet the requirements of the FiTI standard. The example of Mauritania, the first African country to join the FiTI, having produced and published reports in 2018-2019-2020, in line with the FiTI standard, can serve as a model to be shown and conveyed by fisheries organizations with MS. This initiative can improve the MCS aspects necessary for the protection of marine ecosystems.

Axis 3: Blue Economy, rational use of marine resources

Economy concept appeared at the Rio 2012 International Conference as an approach that creates wealth and jobs, guaranteeing both the environmental balance of natural capital and the social inclusion of the populations concerned.

The blue economy is based on the rational and sustainable use of ocean resources in favor of economic growth, improved incomes and jobs, and the health of ocean ecosystems. For the Member States, this will involve promoting sustainable fishing and aquaculture, establishing marine protected areas, combating pollution of all kinds, integrating the management of coastal resources, developing knowledge that improves the health of the oceans, guiding the development of an inclusive blue economy, contributing to the transformation, the growth of the continent, by advancing knowledge on marine and aquatic biotechnology, environmental sustainability, the use of marine aquatic ecosystems, development harmonious maritime and river transport, the virtuous management of fishing activities in these aquatic spaces, the rational exploitation of minerals taken from the deep seabed and other marine resources, the responsible practice of seaside tourism. This very broad Blue Economy concept embraces several economic sectors in a State with divergent interests that are sometimes difficult to reconcile between them.

Regional fisheries organizations could appropriate in this very broad blue economy concept, the simple principle: “ Healthy marine ecosystems are more productive and represent a means of guaranteeing the sustainability of economies based on the sea “.

This message conveyed by the regional fisheries organizations, conveyed to the Member States, can raise the awareness of decision-makers, promote their adherence to the concept of blue economy and growth , and lead them to take measures for the rational and virtuous management of the fisheries potential of the oceans, seas, such as the codification of fish discarded at sea, the restriction of immature catches, the erection of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), the concerted biological rest agreement, the development of aquaculture, the banning of the use of destructive explosives and non-selective fishing gear, the use of co-management as a conservation strategy, and other simple measures to combat IUU fishing which represent means of guaranteeing the sustainability of economies based on the sea. The sub-regional fisheries organizations could make proposals for improving their MCA conventions ²⁸ which would consider the

²⁸The different CMAs of fisheries organizations are similar in form and substance. They are not very restrictive and do not set minimums that allow developments to be monitored. The improvement will relate to the fixing of minima with the considering of the measurements quoted.

regional framework. regulation of fishing in the MS as a whole, with a focus on the rational use of the resource by fixing in this area, minima/maxima not to be lowered or reached.

Adherence to the FiTI standard, the Abidjan Convention, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the London Convention on the Prevention of Pollution at Sea, the MARPOL Convention fight against pollution by ships, by MS, are part of the paths that lead to the concept of 'the blue economy, a means of guaranteeing the sustainability' of economies based on the sea and increase benefits generated for African coastal states.

The MS will be invited to adhere to these various international conventions, the sub-regional fisheries organizations could also centralize or group together the relevant elements of these various international conventions within a single regional convention (improved MCA), to facilitate the management by MS.

Moreover, with the multiple recent discoveries of offshore oil all along the seaboard of the eastern part of the Atlantic Ocean, with its inevitable ecological and environmental repercussions linked to the exploitation of oil resources, the coexistence of oil and fishery resources is becoming a hot problem. The defense of food security, in the face of the enormous economic contributions of the exploitation of oil resources, creates a dilemma for the authorities of coastal States responsible for the protection of fishery resources and the well-being of the population. Very wide security perimeters are defined around oil exploitation platforms, thus depriving national fishermen of enormous maritime spaces without real or significant compensation. Regional fisheries organizations have little prerogative to intervene in this sensitive area, where national sovereignty is quickly brandished. States have the sovereign right to exploit their natural resources according to their own environmental policies and in accordance with their obligation to protect and preserve the marine environment. They also have a duty to take appropriate measures to ensure that pollution resulting from internal incidents does not spread beyond the areas where they exercise sovereign rights.

It is at this level that sub-regional fisheries organizations can intervene by relaying the regional-scale intervention measures provided for by the Abidjan Convention, which define the alert levels ²⁹, the methods for evaluating and monitoring the threat ³⁰, the models and forms of communication ³¹ on this subject, the gradual means of intervention according to the threat, the responsibilities of the stakeholders in dealing with the threat, the decision-making and coordination centers. To legally consolidate their actions, regional fisheries organizations are invited to adhere to the Abidjan Convention (if the legal texts allow it), which provides the legal framework for regional intervention to deal with the identified problems of environmental management. seafaring and ensuring the sustainability of sea-based economies.

Axis 4: Biological rest and regulation of fishing

Biological rest has become a common practice adopted in several coastal states. It is generally on the recommendations of the country's research institutes or empirical customary knowledge that biological rest decisions are made. The multiplicity of actors concerned by the impacts of this decision, the diversity

²⁹(1) low level (2) limited threat (3) gradual evolution (4) strong progression (5) danger for other areas

³⁰(1) the location of the slick (2) the estimated volume and extent of the spill (3) the direction and speed of the slick's movement (4) the direction of the winds, currents, and weather of the area.

³¹(1) The format of the communication model (2) the information circuit (3) the information providers (4) the recipients and operators

of economic interests at stake, generally complicates the taking of the right direction for a useful and effective biological rest. The main winner in this initiative will certainly be the resource, which will thus be protected and renewed for a time.

It will be difficult to manage to get all the national players, let alone the regional players, to agree on a common, uniform decision on biological recovery. Nevertheless, the regional fisheries organizations will be able to invest in regulating and organizing the various biological recovery measures introduced in the region if it is known that foreign vessels change fishing areas each time biological recovery takes place in another neighboring State and thus accentuate the pressure on the resource. The limitation of the possibilities of access to several resources of several MS at the same time and of the multiple licenses on several States issued to foreign vessels³² can be the beginning of an approach to regulate and coordinate the different biological rests by the regional fisheries organizations, and avoid transferring the pressure on the resource from one State to another. We must also not lose sight of the fact that the beneficial effects drawn from the various biological rest periods can be quickly squandered by the overcapacity of fishing as soon as the reopening is carried out and the absence of additional support measures to regulate access to the fisheries. Fishermen always feel the need to make up for the moments of deprivation of their fishing vessels. The MS are then called upon to regulate by progressive quotas or by other measures to rationalize catches.

Member States' adherence to the concept of the blue economy, to the initiatives of the FiTI, to the work of the Fisheries Committee for the Central-East Atlantic (CECAF), and to the Abidjan Convention, can facilitate spaces compromise between Member States, and avoid jeopardizing the benefits derived from the biological rest initiative. A rational and virtuous management of resources advocated in the blue economy, with a limitation of fishing capacities by quotas, can also mitigate the perverse effects of this measure. This will be the message to be conveyed by the sub-regional organizations and the vigilance strategy to be proposed to the MS. In the CPCO zone, initiatives are currently underway to achieve voluntary consultation on concerted biological rest between MS.

The agreements on the Minimum Conditions of Access to the resource (MCA) of the three fishing organizations could be modified for this purpose to consider this need to regulate and coordinate the various biological rest established in the region.

Axis 5: ICCAT for the protection of highly migratory species

ICCAT (ICCAT) is an intergovernmental regional organization for the management of highly migratory fisheries (tuna and related species) on the eastern seaboard of the Atlantic Ocean and its adjacent seas. It deals mainly with high seas fisheries due to the migratory nature of species (tuna and associated species).

Its work mainly consists of:

- i. Collect and analyze statistical information relating to conditions, current trends in fisheries resources, measures and management methods;
- ii. Present recommendations on the studies and surveys to be undertaken;

³²Foreign vessel means fishing vessels that do not fly the flag of a MS of the sub-regional organization

- iii. Publish and disseminate the results of the work and various scientific information concerning its field of intervention, with the aim of preserving the resource, the marine ecosystems for rational and sustainable exploitation.

The contracting parties to this organization adopt within themselves fisheries conservation and management measures through resolutions and recommendations, in particular measures aimed at preventing IUU fishing which include:

- The publication of IUU lists;
- Monitoring of fishing operations by satellite;
- The presence of observers on board.

ATLAFCO brings together 22 African coastal states from Morocco to Namibia, regularly intervenes in the management activities of tuna resources managed by ICCAT. The SRFC, FCWC and GRFC MS are almost all members of ICCAT and observe, according to their possibilities, the recommendations formulated by the tuna management organization in the Eastern Atlantic. However, certain directives, the exchange of information, the presence on board of scientific observers, the respect of fishing quotas, and other provisions, pose serious problems of application to the MS, even if ATLAFCO, a regional organization, makes important efforts for the promotion, the popularization of the directives or recommendations emanating from the ICCAT.

In terms of the fight against IUU fishing, the MS of the SRFC/FCWC/ GRFC give much more priority to promoting compliance observers, which correspond to their first need in terms of fisheries monitoring, than that of scientific observers whose selections, training, management can pose serious problems for coastal States in Africa. It will still remain to resolve the legal monitoring of foreign tuna vessels operating off the African coast in several fishing areas at the same time, in accordance with ICCAT directives. The major difficulty in setting up a scientific observer program on a regional scale will lie in the validity of the reports produced by the observers, insofar as, in the case of fishing tuna boat transboundary, without specific agreements with the countries, it will be difficult for the coastal States to validate the reports of observers that they do not directly control.

In terms of using new technologies to complement the work of physical observers on board tuna vessels, trials are underway in Ghana. The results are awaited. But it must be realized that Coastal States have a much greater need for compliance monitors in the first place who deal with the enforcement of harmful regulations and practices that current technology cannot fully support.

Fishing organizations can overcome this difficulty by gradually considering certain ICCAT recommendations in their emerging regional compliance observer programs, to monitor and control certain activities of tuna vessels operating in several areas.

The compliance observer remains a main option for MS of fisheries organizations. A gradual approach to meet the need for monitoring tuna vessels with large ranges of activity will also be an activity to be studied and promoted by fishing organizations in conjunction with ATLAFCO.

Axis 6: The involvement of small-scale fishing actors in the protection of resources

In the absence of adequate control and management of access to fishing areas, the protection of MPAs, marine ecosystems and their environments will remain without significant positive effect. A regulatory framework for the exploitation of coastal resources, well structured, easy to understand, well accepted by the stakeholders will be an asset for success. The involvement of local communities and other users of fisheries resources will be decisive in this quest to protect the marine ecosystem, coastal areas, and respect for regulations. The proper definition of fishing zones (prohibited zone) remains a major concern for small-scale fishing stakeholders.

Sub-regional fisheries organizations on the eastern Atlantic Ocean coast are called upon to develop communication strategies to draw the attention of MS to awareness and understanding of the benefits derived from rational management systems for healthy coastal ecosystems, through MPAs, concerted biological rests, adherence to FITI concepts, blue economy, co-management and participatory monitoring. Thus, in all the forums organized in their regions, the fisheries organizations will reserve in their agendas, a section dedicated to the protection of marine ecosystems with concepts such as participatory monitoring, co-management, FITI and the blue economy. Best practices and lessons learned everywhere will be shared with all stakeholders. The messages conveyed will be more audible if the emphasis is placed during these forums on the protection of small-scale fishermen (safety), on their working tools (destruction of fishing gear and boats by industrial vessels), on the protection of their fishing zones (fishing in zones prohibited by industrial vessels), on the possible compensation of losses (during biological rest or safety zone around oil platforms, destruction of their fishing gear) and the recovery of their catches. They will be in a position to easily understand and appropriate the proposed marine ecosystem protection measures.

Axis 7: involvement of women in the MCS

As part of the proper use of fisheries resources, women can play an important role in the fisheries value chain, as administrators, controllers, distributors, traders, processors and sometimes financiers of fish products, and contribute to strengthening the conservation of aquatic biodiversity, if fully integrated into:

- The administrations in charge of fisheries protection and surveillance, as directors, administrators, inspectors, fisheries control and surveillance officers.
- Landing sites, as quality controller of landed fish and monitoring the origin of catches, and collecting fishing statistics
- Viable Economic Interest Groups (EIG), by organizing women to facilitate access to financial means, regulate good fish trading practices, influence catches useful for processing, trade, and the health of beaches

We now notice, in many African coastal States, women with a certain level of qualification (university level), are increasingly empowered to occupy positions of high responsibility, such as National Director, project manager, administrator of program and others. They do not suffer from any inferiority complex, and often seem to be more rigorous in the exercise of their responsibilities. Positive discrimination will be recommended in this direction at the level of this station of responsibility to better promote the promotion of women.

At the level of intermediate functions, in particular fishing officers such as fisheries inspectors, field control officer in landing sites, monitoring officer of the quality control of fishery products, the full involvement of women is possible, see highly recommended. However, it is necessary to consider the natural constraints linked to the condition of women, especially the complexity of the working environment, with the access of fishing, artisanal and industrial vessels, the safety of their working environment and others. For equal work with men, it is necessary to provide higher compensatory remuneration to women in the form of additional bonuses which consider precisely the natural constraints they encounter (availability, family responsibilities, traditional environment, tradition and even religion).

In this case, for both senior and intermediate staff, good basic training will be an important lever for their complete and easy integration into positions of responsibility in the administration and the private sector. The motivation for access to these basic training courses will be recommended, for example, through diploma training scholarships systematically granted to women in all training cycles in the fishing sector. Capacity building by training women is quite a long job, but a sure lever to eradicate in a sustainable way, this disparity between men and women in access to work and responsibilities.

Axis 8: The Abidjan convention and the fight against marine pollution

The Abidjan Convention covers the marine environment, coastal zones and adjacent waters under the jurisdiction of West, Central and Southern African States. 22 African countries are members. It integrates its coastal zone development activities through monitoring, surveillance, monitoring and appropriate evaluation. It encourages States Parties to take measures aimed at strengthening their capacities on the identification of ecosystems, biodiversity and degraded coastal landscapes and the use of appropriate technologies in coastal management, the improvement of techniques for the rehabilitation of degraded coastal areas, as well as the setting up of cross-border restoration and rehabilitation programmes.

The convention directly addresses the 22 stakeholder countries through designated focal points. The sub-regional fisheries organizations (SRFC-FCWC- GRFC) which each bring together a certain number of Member States, with similar geographical environments and political contexts, can serve as a relay, an appropriate framework for the coordination of activities, centralization and prior analysis of information, thanks to their various existing regional coordination centers in their respective areas, their observers present at sea on board fishing vessels. The extension of the Abidjan Convention to regional fisheries organizations, a legal framework that will legalize their interventions, can be envisaged and will contribute to strengthening the capacities of RFBs and Member States to better monitor, assess and jointly manage threats to coastal aquatic ecosystems and their environments.

3. Conclusions and recommendations 6

These new axes for a rational and virtuous exploitation of fishery resources proposed above, require sub-regional fisheries organizations to:

- Take care of their images with MS, through transparency in actions in order to make the messages conveyed more audible and more credible.

- Show their usefulness, by becoming a safe and credible channel for the mobilization of logistical and financial resources through TFPs for the benefit of MS.
- Affirm their major roles in the management of disputes, disputes that may arise between MS.
- Raise the voice of MS in international forums to defend the common interests of the sub-region (Negotiation of fisheries agreements, Minimum Conditions of Access, Port State measures, ICCAT, harmonization of positions on key issues, etc.)

It is through these simple actions of organization and methods that the political will of the Member States to cooperate together will manifest itself, considering the most pressing concerns of the sub-regional fisheries organizations.

4. Summary of recommendations on the new axes and their indicators

Axes	Shares	Indicators
Marine Protected Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accompany MS - Recommend the regular evaluation of the results of the different MPAs in their areas - Sharing experiences and good practices with MS - Capitalize and enhance knowledge - Propose regulatory texts on the operation of aquaculture farms - Coordinate and harmonize the proposed approaches of NGOs to different Member States - Encourage States to adhere to the various conventions (Solus-MARPOL, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protected species grow in and around the area • The ecosystem is revitalized in and around the area
FITI initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote and recommend adherence to the FITI concept in MS - Accompany MS to reach the FITI standard - Monitor the publication of annual reports according to the FITI model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The culture of transparency is growing in MS • Fishing information is available
Blue economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promotion of the Blue Economy concept - Foster buy-in to the blue economy concept - Raising the awareness of decision- makers - Improving the MCA conventions to take the provisions of the blue economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sea creates wealth • The different types of pollution are controlled
Biological rest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote consultation for coordinated biological rest in their areas - Raise awareness or limit multiple licenses allowing access to several resources from several MS to avoid the carryover of fishing effort - Rework MCAs to support this multiple licensing issue - Raising awareness to regulate by progressive quotas when fishing returns after biological rest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The resource periodically renews • Yields are better
Protection of highly migratory species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote compliance spotter in large scale vessels in their areas - See the possibility of improving the training of observers to support certain simple scientific data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on tuna management is available • Observer programs are getting stronger
Involvement of artisanal fishing stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Design a good communication strategy with the artisanal fishing sector - Involve craftsmen in all consultations at regional level - Promote participatory monitoring and co-management in their areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fishing regulations are respected • Recommendations are implemented
Pollution Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adhere to the Abidjan convention - Serve as a relay or focal point of the convention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RFOs adhering to the Abidjan Convention • Risk management is controlled • RFOs participate in the analysis and monitoring of pollution threats

6. IDENTIFIED GAPS ON THE STRENGTHENING OF REGIONAL MCS SYSTEMS

The capacity building of regional MCS systems to properly take-charge protection of marine ecosystems, requires sub-regional fisheries organizations and their MS to adopt a good working organization method to gradually remove the constraints, of a legal, institutional and operational nature which are before them. Some major constraints identified should be considered:

1. The limited mandate

The very limited mandate of sub-regional fisheries organizations to act on advanced cooperation actions, particularly in coastal areas of MS (MPAs, biological rest, aquaculture, etc.) is a serious handicap for the preservation of resources and their environments. The reflex of sovereignty is quickly brandished by States when the measure does not suit them. The endorsement of certain initiatives put forward by the Regional Economic or Financial Organizations of the region could be a direct solution to circumvent the difficulty. Directives issued by these regional economic or financial organizations are binding and apply directly to MS.

2. Authority

The lack of authority or positive influence of sub-regional fisheries organizations on the MS, for the effective application of the recommendations or directions taken by mutual agreement by the authorized bodies, then the monitoring and evaluation of these recommendations reduce the effectiveness of the measures enacted. Strengthening the powers of the SG/SP/SE can be envisaged in these cases. But also, the strengthening of the credibility of sub-regional fisheries organizations, their visibility and the justification of their usefulness are necessary to draw the attention of MS to the work and orientations proposed by their sub-regional fisheries organizations.

3. The impact of legal instruments

The various regional legal instruments, taken individually, have shown over time their limits in stimulating dynamic and active MCS cooperation at MS level. They sometimes lack binding authorities and powers because they do not set minimum standards or precise indicators for important strategic orientations and refer several decisions to national legislation often very late on international instruments or to undeveloped protocols. The seamless integration of relevant MCS provisions of international instruments into the domestic laws of countries poses challenges for all African coastal states. Almost all the MS of these sub-regional fishing organizations have internal red tape to modify or adapt their fishing legislation to the continuous evolution of international law and to allow a coherent and coordinated application of actions. The adoption of a Memorandum of Understanding on the proposal of sub-regional fisheries organizations or an administrative arrangement can morally commit the MS to apply good governance approaches in certain areas while waiting to modify their legislation.

4. **Weak governance**

Weak governance in the fisheries sector, with easy issuance of free licenses to foreign fishing vessels without the involvement of flag States and/or the granting of flags to foreign vessels having no connection with the country are dangerous practices for the resource and its environment. It is for these foreign vessels to fish quickly, the maximum possible resources and leave when it's over, without worrying about tomorrow. Membership of the MS to the FITI which refers to transparency and/or to the blue economy which advocates a healthy sea, are sure ways to circumscribe this evil. The granting of licenses to foreign fishing vessels will be permitted only through signed fishing agreements between States or a well-identified regional organization. This measure makes it possible to ensure the responsible profile of foreign vessels eligible for a fishing license in the region. MCA should consider this provision.

5. **Easy access to the resource**

The easy access to the migratory pelagic resource by large-capacity foreign vessels, accompanied by negative competition to attract more foreign vessels to shared resources (pelagic in general), practiced by certain Member States, is a disaster for the resource and the environment. Concerted management of shared migratory resources (pelagic species) regulated by the fisheries organization in the area is an urgent necessity even if the ROPs are not OGP (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea³³ and Code of Conduct for responsible fishing advocate this approach) in order to guarantee the form and level of exploitation of this resource for sustainable management. The Regional Economic Commissions (RECs) in the zones may also be called upon on this issue to include it in their directives.

6. **The lacks of consistency**

The lack of consistency in the interventions of the various Technical and Financial Partners, particularly in the artisanal fishing sector, creates some confusion in the approaches necessary for the protection of ecosystems and their environments. Artisanal fishermen are often faced with several proposals from NGOs in the form of projects which stop as soon as the funds are exhausted. The FAO database which lists all the interventions of TFPs, or the establishment of the joint technical secretariat (WAEMU-ECOWAS) in West Africa are initiatives that can iron out the difficulties of coherence in the interventions that exist. ECCAS, for its part, intends to resolve this problem of consistency in its current reform.

7. **Financial autonomy**

The failure to achieve financial autonomy to accomplish the assigned objectives is a major handicap for the three sub-regional fisheries organizations. State dues are random. TFPs are becoming more and more demanding on their support. The sub-regional organizations no longer control their orientations or their programs. The search for sustainable mechanisms for autonomous financing of their programs is essential. There are studies in this direction. We must seize these opportunities.

8. **Precautionary principle not applied**

Resource assessments are very uncertain in fisheries and when they are made, the results are overtaken by the reality of the moment. States do not systematically apply the precautionary principles in the allocation

³³ "Where the same fish stock or stocks of associated species are found in the exclusive economic zones of several coastal States, these States shall endeavor, directly or through the appropriate sub-regional or regional organizations, to agree on the measures necessary to coordinate and ensure the conservation and development of these stocks, without prejudice to the other provisions of this Part

of fishing permits, they often act as if marine resources are inexhaustible. The negative and irreversible impacts of this uncontrolled exploitation are immediate. A good awareness of this phenomenon and a culture of good governance are necessary to curb this irrational practice. A first measure in the direction of reducing³⁴ access to the resource by foreign industrial fishing vessels in the area covered by the sub-regional organization, during a determined and concerted period of the year (for example 3 months), corresponds to an easy-to-implement form of biological rest that does not affect national fishermen.

9. Control of artisanal fishing

The mastery of artisanal fishing is a real difficulty that affects the aquatic ecosystems of all African coastal states. Participatory surveillance and co-management are used by some States to try to lessen the negative impacts of this lack of control. The grouping of small-scale fishermen in well-structured and strong associations is an approach that makes it possible to have valid interlocutors and to involve small-scale fishermen in the decisions and orientations taken by the administration for a more responsible management of coastal resources. Sub-regional fisheries organizations should promote this associative approach of artisanal fishermen to better establish their strategies for raising awareness of the issues.

10. Differences in responsibilities

Differences in responsibilities between national administrations on the management of coastal zones (Fisheries-Environment-National-Parks-Port) leading to conflicts of jurisdiction, affect the effectiveness of measures for rational management of fisheries resources and their environments. Inter-agency cooperation is lacking. internal governance is challenged.

11. Low Cooperation

Active and useful cooperation between the various sub-regional fisheries organizations is very weak. Few exchanges of information on ships at risk. Little solidarity in the proceedings initiated by a State of an organization on a vessel suspected of IUU fishing or acts contrary to international law. Dubious vessels use these weaknesses to fish illegally in one state in one region and land their products safely in another state in another organization.

The signing of specific Memorandum of cooperation between sub-regional organizations in this sense can be a way to solve this difficulty.

12. The contested delimitation of maritime borders.

ill-defined maritime boundaries between some neighboring coastal states create unregulated contentious areas with shared stocks targeted by IUU fishing vessels without risk of being challenged by a duly responsible state. Politics (sovereignty) takes precedence over economics (management). States do not always manage to agree on the management of these shared stocks. The marine ecosystems of these areas are weakened. The approach established between Senegal and Guinea-Bissau, which have agreed on common management of their disputed border area, can be cited as an example and if necessary conveyed to other disputed areas by sub-regional fisheries organizations to mitigate the harmful effects of this divergence.

³⁴This cannot be considered as segregation of access to the resource. The states give surplus resources, if there is a surplus.

7. STRATEGIES FOR INTEGRATING BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION AND ECOSYSTEMS INTO THE MCS FUNCTION

I. Extension of the mandate of sub-regional fisheries organizations on the protection of MPAs, marine ecosystems and their environments

RFO	Major Current Constraints for Support in MCS	Specific actions and measures to be taken within the RFO	Actions and support measures to be taken within the RFO
SRFC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Significant delays by the MS to consider the extension of the mandate of the SRFC on the conservation of sub-regional ecosystems, despite the Agreement of the Conference of Ministers to make Amendments to the 1993 convention. - Decisions are not binding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make the decisions of the conference of ministers binding for the MS - Promote and popularize the harmonization in the MS of the conservation policy through MPAs, biological rests, and the conservation of resources. - Proposed draft text to the conference of ministers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Launch a vast Information, Education and Communication (IEC) campaign - Put in place institutional and financial legal support
FCWC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conference of Ministers decisions not binding for MS - Mandate of the FCWC is open to artisanal fishing and aquaculture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make the decisions of the conference of ministers binding for the MS - Promote and popularize the harmonization in the MS of the conservation policy through MPAs, biological rests, and the conservation of resources. - Propose a draft text to the conference of ministers 	Set up institutional and financial legal support
GRFC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Specialized body of ECCAS in a phase of legal and institutional change. No constraints. The mandate is extended to fishing and aquaculture. - Decisions are binding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Integrate in the mandate of the reorganized GRFC the protection of MPAs, marine ecosystems and their environments - Promote and popularize the harmonization in the MS of the conservation policy through MPAs, biological rests, and the conservation of resources. - Propose a draft text to the conference of ministers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Launch a vast Information, Education and Communication (IEC) campaign - Establish legal, institutional and financial support

2. Encouragement of MS to adhere to international conventions: SOLAS, MARPOL, Abidjan convention

RFO	Major Current Constraints for the SCS Mutation	Specific actions and measures to be taken within the RFO for the mutation of the current MCS	Actions and support measures to be taken within the RFO for the change of the current MCS
SRFC	- Accession and transposition of the provisions of the various conventions into internal legislation pose problems for all three sub-regional fisheries organizations;	- List all the relevant points of the three conventions (Solas-Marpol-Abidjan convention) having direct impacts on the conservation of resources, to include them in one of the existing conventions (CMA) in the sub-regional organization, to facilitate consideration - Propose draft text to MS - Propose amendments to the conference of ministers	- Launch a vast Information, Education and Communication (IEC) campaign - Set up legal and institutional support
FCWC	- Accession and transposition of the provisions of the various conventions into internal legislation pose problems for all three sub-regional fisheries organizations;	- List all the relevant points of the three conventions (Solas-Marpol-Abidjan convention) having a direct impact on the conservation of resources, to include them in one of the existing conventions (MCA) in the sub-regional organization, to facilitate consideration - Proposed draft text to MS - Proposed amendment to the conference of ministers	- Launch a vast Information, Education and Communication (IEC) campaign - Set up legal and institutional support
GRFC	- Accession and transposition of the provisions of the various conventions into internal legislation pose problems for all three sub-regional fisheries organizations;	- List all the relevant points of the three conventions (Solas-Marpol-Abidjan convention) having a direct impact on the conservation of resources, to include them in one of the existing conventions (MCA) in the sub-regional organization, to facilitate consideration - Proposed draft text to MS - Proposed amendment to the conference of ministers	- Launch a vast Information, Education and Communication (IEC) campaign - Set up legal and institutional support

3. Promotion of FITI and blue economy in MS

RFO	Major Current Constraints for the MCS Mutation	Specific actions and measures to be taken within the RFO for the mutation of the current MCS	Actions and support measures to be taken within the RFO for the change of the current MCS
SRFC	- Vague or poor understanding of these concepts at MS level - Poor governance in institutions	- popularize existing models (FITI in Mauritania, Blue Economy in Gabon) - explain the process of adhering to these concepts	- Launch a vast Information, Education and Communication (IEC) campaign - Establish legal, institutional and financial support

FCWC	Vague/poor understanding of these concepts at MS level - Poor governance in institutions	- popularize existing models (FITI of Mauritania, Blue Economy (in Gabon-Tunisia) - explain the process of adhering to these concepts	- Launch a vast Information, Education and Communication (IEC) campaign within the ROP - Establish legal, institutional and financial support
GRFC	Vague/poor understanding of these concepts at MS level - Poor governance in institutions	- popularize existing models (FITI in Mauritania, Blue Economy in Gabon-Tunisia) - explain the process of adhering to these concepts	- Launch a vast Information, Education and Communication (IEC) campaign within the RFO - Establish legal, institutional and financial support

4. Amendment of the three conventions on the minimum conditions of access and support:ART, blue economy

RFO	Major Current Constraints for the MCS Mutation	Specific actions and measures to be taken within the RFO for the mutation of the current MCS	Actions and support measures to be taken within the RFO for the change of the current MCS
SRFC	- Deadlines too long because the Amendment to the Conventions subject to Authorization by the Conference of Ministers	- List the provisions to be considered. - Seek agreement with the States on these provisions to be amended - Present the project to the conference of ministers	- Set up legal and institutional support
FCWC	Deadlines too long because the Amendment to the Conventions subject to Authorization by the Conference of Ministers	- List the provisions to be considered. - Seek agreement with the States on these provisions to be amended - Present the project to the conference of ministers	- Set up legal and institutional support
GRFC	- Delays more or less long because the ECCAS Agreement required	- List the provisions to be considered. - Seek agreement with the States on these provisions to be amended - Present the project to the conference of ministers	- Set up legal and institutional support

5. Regulation concerted biological rest

RFO	Major Current Constraints for the SCS Mutation	Specific actions and measures to be taken within the RFO for the mutation of the current MCS	Actions and support measures to be taken within the RFO for the change of the current MCS
CSRP	Deadlines too long because the Amendment to the Conventions subject to Authorization by the Conference of Ministers	- Established the sub-regional register of fishing vessels - Submit the prior registration to the sub-regional register of all foreign vessels before issuing a fishing license in a MS. - Regulate multiple licenses from the sub-regional registry	- Set up legal and institutional support

CPCO	Deadlines too long because the Amendment to the Conventions subject to Authorization by the Conference of Ministers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established the sub-regional register of fishing vessels - Submit the prior registration to the sub-regional register of all foreign vessels before issuing a fishing license in a MS. Regulate multiple licenses	- Set up legal and institutional support
GRFC	- Delays more or less long because the ECCAS Agreement required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established the sub-regional register of fishing vessels - Submit the prior registration to the sub-regional register of all foreign vessels before issuing a fishing license in a MS. Regulate multiple licenses	- Set up legal and institutional support

6. Membership of the Abidjan convention

RFO	Major Current Constraints for the MCS Mutation	Specific actions and measures to be taken within the RFO for the mutation of the current MCS	Actions and support measures to be taken within the RFO for the change of the current MCS
SRFC	- The texts do not currently provide for membership by a fishing organization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - List the provisions to be considered. - Seek agreement with the States on these provisions to be amended - Present the project to the conference of ministers - Make the proposal to the Abidjan Convention 	- Set up legal and institutional support
FCWC	The texts do not currently provide for membership by a fishing organization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - List the provisions to be considered. - Seek agreement with the States on these provisions to be amended - Present the project to the conference of ministers - Make the proposal to the Abidjan Convention 	- Set up legal and institutional support
GRFC	The texts do not currently provide for membership by a fishing organization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - List the provisions to be considered. - Seek agreement with the States on these provisions to be amended - Present the project to the conference of ministers - Make the proposal to the Abidjan Convention 	- Set up legal and institutional support

8. SUPPORT REQUIRED TO STRENGTHEN REGIONAL MCS INITIATIVES IN AQUATIC ECOSYSTEMS

In view of all the observations above, it appears that the manifestation of the political will of the States to cooperate together still remains a great challenge for all the sub-regional fisheries organizations. The Member States certainly adhere to the principle of grouping together within a sub-regional fisheries organization, but subsequently leave all the responsibility to the fisheries organizations to manage to survive. It is often the result of a lack of visibility on the activities of their fisheries organizations that leads States to be far from the daily life and problems of their organizations. States are informed once a year or two years, through activity reports presented by fisheries organizations, during statutory meetings where generally the fisheries officials present, sometimes new to their posts, have often little hindsight to analyze, understand all the reports presented. However, it is the place where sub-regional fisheries organizations have the opportunity to demonstrate their usefulness to MS, and justify their reasons for existence through greater visibility and transparency of their activities.

To reverse this negative trend, to make the activities of regional fisheries organizations more visible, more attractive and more operational, four supports are expected from the various Technical and Financial Partners (TFP).

I. Support for strengthening regional MCS initiatives in aquatic ecosystems

- a. Support the sub-regional fisheries organizations to regain their credibility with the MS. **Institutional support** that allows sub-regional fisheries organizations to have the ability to sell themselves to MS, to be able to travel and/or move experts at any time in MS to raise awareness, promote an activity, to organize regular technical meetings for the benefit of the Member States in order to advance the files, to settle technical and operational details which can block a State, to assist the States in their steps to follow up on the proceedings initiated against foreign vessels, to facilitate the availability of operational information to the MS and other actions that will bring the sub-regional fisheries organizations closer to their MS (visibility), and fully justify their usefulness. The demonstration of the political will of the MS which is very weak at the moment could change in the good direction.

With greater visibility on the activities of fisheries organizations, awareness messages on other concepts of protection of aquatic ecosystems (FiTI, Blue Economy, biological rest) conveyed by fisheries organizations, will now be much more audible and better accepted in the Member States.

- b. **Legal support** on aspects of fisheries surveillance. The international legal instruments provide a legal framework of general orientation which is addressed to all nations, all international communities. These instruments, for their effective applicability, require adaptation to the local context in order to derive maximum benefit while complying with international law. The right of maritime hot pursuit within the framework of a sub-regional organization, the responsibilities of flag States, the notions of foreign vessels within the framework of sub-regional cooperation, the free licenses issued to foreign vessels in

the sub-region, the value legal information from the various monitoring instruments, chartered fishing vessels, responsibilities of charterers, flag state, and other considerations are all concepts of which Member States are not very clear of understanding. The effectiveness of a credible fisheries surveillance requires the existence of clear texts, well mastered by all the actors and in particular the supervisors.

Support that facilitates the application and proper reading of legal texts by operational staff will be an important step in the effectiveness and harmonization of fisheries surveillance actions and the protection of marine ecosystems.

- c. Building the capacity of surveillance staff.** Fisheries surveillance is no longer limited to the deployment of naval, aerial and electronic means at all times to chase after possible IUU fishing vessels. The ability to analyze and understand a situation based on several external information is a key element in the operational management of the monitoring of fishing vessels. The costs of physical surveillance are reduced and at the same time the very troublesome errors in the event of a dubious arrest are reduced. TFPs often assist fishing organizations by providing them with information on the activities of certain fishing vessels (case of WATF / FCWC). However, it remains to make the proper analysis of this information to then take the best legal decision with regard to the legal implications relating thereto. Good targeted staff training³⁵ is necessary for this purpose. The support of TFPs in training on the techniques of searching for concordant indices and analyzing information from various sources allowing them to draw the best conclusions and make the right decision will be an important step in improving surveillance and the protection of marine resources.
- d. Diversify options for the protection of aquatic systems** in general. Apart from traditional fisheries surveillance systems, patrol boats, maritime patrol aircraft, register of fishing vessels, observers on board fishing vessels, exchange of information, inspections of fishing vessels, application of PSM and conventions on the code of conduct for responsible fishing, there are other simple concepts for the protection of fisheries resources to be integrated into the MCS to improve the conservation of aquatic biodiversity and ecosystems in general: (i) Transparency in the activities and the fight against corruption, conveyed by FiTI, is also a means of reducing the risks of IUU fishing or the possibilities of collaboration with this activity in the States and consequently a better instrument for the protection of the aquatic environment. (ii) Good governance in fisheries with good rational and virtuous management practices advocated by the Blue Economy such as the normalization of fish discards at sea, the restriction of immature catches, the erection of Marine Protected Areas (AMP), concerted biological rest, prohibition of explosive fishing, banishment of monofilament, traceability of catches, and others, are simple ways within the reach of MS and sub-regional fisheries organizations, to better protect the aquatic system and reduce marine pollution. These two initiatives, FiTI and Blue Economy, can be supported by sub-regional fisheries organizations, provided that their voices are heard by MS. TFPs can raise the level of visibility and confidence of regional fisheries organizations, by giving them the means to carry and convey these FiTI and Blue Economy messages, to MS, in a coherent way and in the right place. The sub-regional fisheries organizations will set out their approach strategies.

³⁵ The training of trainer instead of a training of several groups without the possibility of follow-up, will be highly recommended.

2. Distribution of support needs for regional fisheries organizations to better integrate marine ecosystems into MCS

Securities	Activities	TFP Support/Cooperation	Result expected	Order of priority/ repartition Cost allocated
<p>Strengthening the credibility of regional organizations³⁶</p> <p>Intervention cost</p> <p>20% of the total allocated support budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Transparency in actions ☞ Good governance ☞ Visibility of activities 	<p>Institutional support that allows sub-regional organizations to have the capacity (i) to sell themselves to MS, (ii) to be able to travel and/or move experts at any time in MS to raise awareness or promote an activity, (iii) to organize regular technical meetings to move files forward, (iv) to settle technical and operational details that may block a State, (v) to assist States in their steps to follow up on prosecution of foreign vessels, (vi) to facilitate the availability of operational information to MS (vii) to organize joint fisheries surveillance operations, and others. All this will bring the sub-regional fisheries organizations closer to their MS (visibility), and fully justifies their usefulness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ The organization is regularly requested by the States ☞ Internal MCS constraints in the States are taken care of in relation to the regional organization ☞ Confidence in the organization is strengthened ☞ States accept the guidelines generally proposed by the ORP ☞ States are sufficiently informed of the need's constraints and capacity of their organization 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SRFC 50% from the budget 2. FCWC 30% from the budget 3. GRFC 20% from the budget
<p>Monitoring-Evaluation of activities³⁷</p> <p>Intervention cost</p> <p>10% of the total allocated support budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Directory of planned activities ☞ Execution schedule over time ☞ Definition of monitoring indicators ☞ Identification and monitoring of constraints ☞ Follow-up of achievements ☞ Solving Constraints ☞ Problem Solving Suggestions 	<p>Administrative and logistical support for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Creation of monitoring-evaluation departments in all regional organizations. (ii) Regular monitoring missions to MS (iii) establishment Regular activity report (quarterly) of evaluations and observations made. (v) Regular review meetings (vi) MS support if needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Monitoring-Evaluation structures are working ☞ The organization is regularly called upon ☞ Member States apply the recommendations resulting from the decisions of the competent authorities 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SRFC 40% from the budget 2. FCWC 40% from the budget 3. GRFC 20% from the budget

³⁶ The SRFC seems the most handicapped in this area. The CPCO benefits significant support from TMT in this regard, which will continue for another four years. Corep, a specialized institution of ECCAS, is in the process of being reconfigured.

³⁷ The CSRP and the CPCO have the same needs. COREP undergoing reform.

<p>Distribution of supervisory responsibilities and charges³⁸</p> <p>Intervention cost</p> <p>10% of the total allocated support budget</p>	<p>Details on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Responsibilities of MS/Coastal State/Port State ☞ Flag State Responsibilities ☞ Responsibilities of stakeholders (ship-owners/ consignees/ representatives) 	<p>Legal support</p> <p>(i) which facilitates the application and proper reading of legal texts by operational staff</p> <p>(ii) A good understanding and effective application of PSM</p> <p>(iii) Reinforcement of texts clarifying the legal responsibilities of all stakeholders</p> <p>(iv) A sub-regional MCS convention to harmonize IUU actions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ PSM are understood and applied in all MS. ☞ An IUU action plan is established and then applied ☞ Legal instruments are clear and easy to apply ☞ The responsibilities of the actors are well defined 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. FCWC 50% from the budget 2. SRFC 30% from the budget 3. GRFC 20%
<p>Autonomous financing mechanism³⁹</p> <p>Intervention cost</p> <p>10% of the total allocated support budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Identification of different funding mechanisms ☞ Study and Implementation 	<p>Financial support</p> <p>(i) Study and establishment of autonomous and sustainable financing mechanisms</p> <p>(ii) Development of standards for the use of funds generated</p> <p>(iii) Implementation/Enforcement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Funding for planned activities is assured ☞ Contributions from MS are paid regularly ☞ Transparency in the use of funds is ensured 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. FCWC 50% from the budget 2. SRFC 30% from the budget 3. GRFC 20% from the budget
<p>Diversification of surveillance means⁴⁰</p> <p>Intervention cost</p> <p>30% of the total allocated support budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Consideration of aquaculture, MPAs, FITI concepts, Blue Economy, participatory monitoring, Co-monitoring 	<p>Institutional support</p> <p>(i) Extension of the mandate of fisheries organizations to other concepts</p> <p>(ii) Feasibility study</p> <p>(iii) Proposed changes to the texts</p> <p>(iv) Draft text</p> <p>(v) Popularization</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Proposals for expanding the mandates of the ORP are available ☞ Approaches to consider the different monitoring concepts are established 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. FCWC 40% from the budget 2. SRFC 40% from the budget 3. GRFC 20% from the budget
<p>Legal support⁴¹</p> <p>Intervention cost</p> <p>10% of the total allocated support budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Improved legal instruments ☞ Reinforcement and standardization of legal texts 	<p>Legal support</p> <p>(i) Alignment of national laws with international instruments, MCS part (MCS Convention if possible)</p> <p>(ii) identification of the protocols necessary for the legal and effective application of the various international and regional legal instruments (MCS part)</p> <p>(iii) Study and introduction of provisions in conventions or protocols to broaden the scope of activities of fisheries organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ National laws are in conformity in MCS matters with international instruments ☞ Harmonization of MCS legislation is noticeable 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. FCWC 60% from the budget 2. GRFC 30% from the budget 3. SRFC 10% from the budget

³⁸ The SRFC and the CPCO have the same needs in this area. COREP undergoing reform.

³⁹ The CPCO, which is very dependent on TFPs, has a more pressing need. The SRFC already has a study in this direction. COREP, although an ECCAS institution, will need to diversify its funding possibilities.

⁴⁰ The same need for the three organization

⁴¹ The same need for the three organization

<p>Training and cooperation⁴²</p> <p>Intervention cost</p> <p>10% of the total allocated support budget</p>	<p>☞ Adaptation of training to the real needs of MS and regional organizations</p>	<p>Capacity building support</p> <p>(i) Training of staff on modules of search techniques for consistent clues that may confuse an IUU fishing vessel or collaborate with this activity.</p> <p>(ii) Staff training on legal fisheries surveillance actions</p> <p>(iii) training of trainers</p>	<p>☞ Supervisory staff are familiar with all SCS texts and processes</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. FCWC 40% from the budget 2. SRFC 40% from the budget 3. GRFC 20% from the budget
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The effectiveness of all these measures will depend on the political will displayed by the States with the partial abandonment of the national sovereignty reflex in favor of a broader regional cooperation between all the stakeholders

42 The three organizations have the same needs

9. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- i. The very limited mandate of RFOs could be extended to actions directly impacting the protection of coastal areas of MS. Failing this, certain useful provisions, deemed to fall under the sovereignty of the Member States, may be endorsed by the Regional Economic or Financial Commissions of each zone, whose directives are binding. RFOs and REC cooperation should be strengthened in this regard.
- ii. Improving the concepts of regional fisheries monitoring, hence the protection of the marine environment and the species that live there, requires a realistic and pragmatic approach. The actions proposed in the various Strategic Action Plans (MCS part) should be simple, comprehensive, commensurate with the means available or may be available to MS and sub-regional fisheries organizations. The design of these plans deserves great attention and involvement from the RFOs.
- iii. Sub-regional fisheries organizations should strive to strengthen their credibility and justify their usefulness to MS, through transparency in their activities, good governance in their strategic orientations, pragmatism in their support. Concepts conveyed by FiTI and the Blue Economy. This should enable them to harmonize their positions and bring a common voice to the Member States and in international forums.
- iv. A Monitoring-Evaluation Department endowed with prerogatives of interpellation of the Member States, would be a great contribution in the three fishing organizations, to boost the common activities to be carried out, to follow the recommendations and decisions resulting from the statutory meetings of the fishing organizations and to propose solutions simple and accessible to gradually lift the constraints.
- v. Fisheries surveillance is a shared responsibility, Coastal State, Flag State, Stakeholders. The involvement of flag States in the process of monitoring their vessels is a duty, even a due obligation. Free licenses offered to foreign fishing vessels or charters concluded without the involvement of flag States should therefore be banned throughout the region. Consignees, shipowners and agencies should be legally involved to varying degrees in the effective monitoring of the activities of their fishing vessels. Surveillance costs will thus be better shared, more bearable for the Member States.
- vi. The support of TFPs, provided on an ad hoc and cyclical basis, highly appreciated by the States and fishing organizations, is beginning to decline at the level of the various donors in view of the very mixed results often obtained within the framework of the projects. This decline needs to be corrected. Other independent funding mechanisms for fisheries surveillance are within reach of sub-regional fisheries organizations. It is simply necessary to seize them, thus relieving the Member States of certain constraining financial charges or difficult to respect. The regional observer program, the regional register of fishing vessels, the use of the regional VMS, the management of shared stocks, are sure and sustainable sources of funding among others identified as possible independent sources of funding for fisheries surveillance. that must be entered. Studies in this direction are available in the region (SRFC).

- vii. Apart from traditional fisheries surveillance systems, patrol boats, maritime patrol aircraft, regional register of fishing vessels, observers on board fishing vessels, exchange of information, inspections of fishing vessels, application of AMREP and provisions of the conventions on the code of conduct for responsible fishing, there are other simple concepts of protection of fishery resources to be integrated into the MCS to improve the conservation of aquatic biodiversity and ecosystems in general : Transparency in the activities and the fight against corruption, concepts conveyed by FiTI, Good governance in fisheries with good rational and virtuous management practices advocated by the Blue Economy, the policy for setting up MPAs in the regions supported by the IUCN , are initiatives capable of supporting the effective protection of marine resources and their environments that will need to be integrated into the strategies to combat IUU fishing with a regional approach.
- viii. Proper protection of fisheries resources initiated by the framework offered by sub-regional fishing organizations necessarily increases the yields of fishing vessels, the availability of products for industrialists, the profits of agencies and consignees, the work value of personnel at on board and in companies, and combat unfair competition from IUU fishing vessels in their areas. This monitoring, control and surveillance effort, supported by the Member States and the Regional Fisheries Organizations, naturally requires the logistical participation of legally authorized fishing vessels, the first beneficiary of this surveillance effort, to make the MCS actions carried out more effective and sustainable. for their benefit. Shipowners and fishing professionals are very aware of this. This is why foreign fishing vessels, the main beneficiaries of these resource protection and surveillance efforts initiated by the existing sub-regional fisheries organizations on the eastern side of the Atlantic Ocean, will be invited, apart from their payment normal of the fishing license in the issuing MS, to participate in the regional surveillance efforts, through (i) the mechanism of compulsory and paying registration on the sub-regional register of fishing vessels, before any authorization to exercise fishing in an area covered by the sub-regional organization (ii) paid boarding of regional observers on all foreign vessels, in particular tuna vessels. These two simple formulas can generate additional financial resources to support regional and national fisheries surveillance activities carried out by MS and RFBs.
- ix. Small-scale fishermen are among the many responsible for the degradation of aquatic biodiversity, the first to be affected by this degradation. The involvement of craftsmen, fishermen, wholesalers, women processors, traders, consumers in the fishing strategies developed by the administrations for a rational management of resources is an essential element of success for a virtuous and sober use of marine and freshwater ecosystems. The grouping of these actors within strong and well-structured national and regional fisheries organizations, to serve as valid and credible interlocutors, will be supported by the sub-regional fisheries organizations. These fishermen's organizations will be associated and/or invited as much as possible in the various forums organized by the sub-regional fisheries organizations, to actively share in the appropriation of the orientations taken.
- x. The sharp decrease in fishery resources is a reality observed almost everywhere in all the coastal areas of the States located on the eastern shore of the Atlantic Ocean. Overexploitation of resources, overfishing and IUU fishing are the main causes. Periods of biological rest are therefore advocated almost everywhere as a solution to mitigate the harmful effects of this strong overexploitation. It

should be remembered that it is the existence of surplus resources that justifies a coastal State granting its surpluses to foreign fishing vessels. This surplus is virtually exhausted in all coastal states due to overfishing. Without automatically rejecting the presence of foreign fishing vessels, a concerted biological rest can be established, on the whole of the territory covered by the sub-regional fisheries organization, for a period determined for this category of foreign fishing vessels. A measure which does not affect national actors on the exploitation of their resources and which would do good to the marine ecosystem of the region.

The marine aquatic ecosystem will thus be better protected, justifying the BLUE ECONOMY slogan “Healthy marine ecosystems are more productive and represent a means of guaranteeing the sustainability of economies based on the sea”.

ANNEXES

Annex I: Questionnaires submitted to sub-regional fisheries organizations

Questionnaires	GRFC answers	FCWC Answers	SRFC response
1. Have you received the mission's ToRs? if yes, your first comments?	Yes The mission is eagerly awaited and the consultant has already intervened on this file in Central Africa	The subject is relevant and places the fight against IUU fishing in a global and integrated context of the conservation of the biodiversity of marine resources.	Yes, the TOR have been sent by the consultant
2. Conception of your mission as SP of your Regional Fisheries Organization?	The consultant will assess the progress of the file since its first visit and may make recommendations to speed up the ongoing process.		To harmonize in the long term the policies of the Member States, in matters of preservation, conservation and sustainable exploitation of their halieutic resources and to strengthen their cooperation for the benefit of the well-being of their respective populations.
3. Vision and overall objectives to be achieved for your RFO in terms of MCS?	Set up Regional Coordination of MCS Systems		Achieving the elimination of illegal fishing activity in MS/ SRFC waters through : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmonization of policies for the preservation, conservation and exploitation of fisheries resources in the sub-region; • Adoption of common strategies in international bodies and development of sub-regional cooperation in Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS); • Plan and conduct Monitoring, Control and Surveillance activities for the purpose of concerted management of fisheries in the region covered by the SRFC; • Ensure the organization and monitoring of fisheries surveillance; Also ensure that the MCS system is adapted to the needs of the coordinated management of fisheries in the region covered by the SRFC.

Questionnaires	GRFC answers	FCWC Answers	SRFC response
<p>4. Strengths and opportunities offered to accomplish your mission and achieve the SCS objectives?</p>	<p>Strengths: Existence of appropriate institutions (GRFC – CRESMAC – AGEOS) The status of GRFC and CRESMAC: ECCAS institutions</p>	<p>Strong political commitment expressed through the various strategic documents, in particular the MCA Convention regional plans, information sharing, the ratification of the relevant instruments (PSMA), the regular training of inspectors, the adoption of observer programs, the creation of the regional MCS center and finally the support of technical and financial partners</p>	<p>Political will of 7 MS who want to pool their resources to fight together against IUU fishing practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote the sharing of MCS information in the SRFC area; - Develop a regional fisheries observer program; - Strengthen the capacities of the sub-region in the fight against IUU fishing; - Promote innovative approaches in the field of MCS; - Seek sustainable funding for MCS activities; - Strengthen the partnership with international initiatives involved in the fight against IUU fishing and support MCS activities concerning artisanal fishing. <p>The SRFC is the privileged interlocutor of the technical and financial partners both through bilateral cooperation (State – SRFC) and through cooperation with other regional or sub-regional organizations through development aid for the preservation of maritime resources.</p> <p>In addition, the TFPs operating in the maritime sector are aware that the SRFC as a sub-regional organization is the best receptacle for the implementation of their projects for their support policies in fisheries management for the benefit of coastal States.</p>

Questionnaires	GRFC answers	FCWC Answers	SRFC response
<p>5. Weaknesses and constraints preventing or slowing down your actions to achieve your SCS objectives? How to correct?</p>	<p>The long process leading to the establishment of the regional coordination mechanism</p>	<p>Insufficient qualified personnel for the full use of MCS systems / slowness of national processes for the adoption and internationalization of relevant texts</p>	<p>Weaknesses and constraints Difficulties related to obtaining in a timely manner all authorizations required to carry out MCS activities. Under-equipped with infrastructural, nautical, communication and detection means of national fisheries monitoring structures (fisheries monitoring centres, central administrations). Inexistence or insufficiency of sustainable financial means of operation to ensure optimal surveillance of the surveillance structures of MS /SRFC Surveillance agents or operators in the SRFC Member States do not have sufficient technical and legal capacity to face the challenges of an effective fight against IUU fishing in the sub-region How to correct? Grant more decision-making power to the SRFC in decision-making to carry out effective activities. Validate and implement legal instruments on IUU fishing. Energize and strengthen national MCS structures.</p>

Questionnaires	GRFC answers	FCWC Answers	SRFC response
6. Prospects for improving the SCS system? planned initiatives? Plans and strategies?	<p>initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project to set up the Regional Coordination Unit - Draft GRFC – CRESMAC memorandum of understanding - Regional Center of Excellence for Surveillance (AGEOS) Project 	<p>As prospects for improving the MCS system in our region would be to align ourselves with the structures of the Yaoundé architecture for the inclusion of fishing and the fight against IUU fishing in the ECOWAS integrated strategy for maritime security. .A rapprochement and pooling of resources could give more support to MCS activities Strengthened inter-agency cooperation would be beneficial for each of the sectors that can no longer be separated</p>	<p>Collaboration and information sharing. Qualitatively and quantitatively improve surveillance equipment in sub-regional surveillance centers Continue the training of surveillance agents (inspectors, CSP operators, etc). Strengthen the capacities of small-scale fishing communities (equipment and training) for responsible fishing in the coastal areas of Member States (participatory surveillance in Marine Protected Areas (MPAs and Protected Fishing Zones (ZPP)) The SRFC has developed an MCS Convention (not yet ratified) which deals with all issues relating to MCS See draft MCS agreement</p>
7. Does the institutional organization of your organization allow you to correctly take charge of the management of the SCS? if not, what do you suggest?	<p>The operational capacities of GRFC must be strengthened (human and financial resources)</p>	<p>Yes, and it has just been strengthened by linking to ECOWAS and the creation of the regional MCS center</p>	<p>Yes, however, it would be better to strengthen the power of the SRFC in this area The evolution of its mandate towards a fisheries management organization should allow the SRFC to properly take charge of the management of the MCS</p>
8. Do you have a coordination center for SCS actions in your organization? If so, what is its level of functioning? AVERAGE ? Weak ? Efficient?	<p>- Awaiting its adoption by the decision-making bodies</p>	<p>Yes, we have an MCS action coordination center in your organization with a good level of operation. However, there is a need to ensure the sustainability of its operation: budget, staff and platform for sharing data with all the agencies concerned.</p>	<p>Yes, the SRFC is setting up a sub-regional MCS centre. His level of functioning is very low</p>
9. What more do you wish you had to better achieve your SCS goals?	<p>- Training of staff from institutions and administrations involved in State Action at Sea (AEM)</p>	<p>Operational support: budget, qualified personnel, regular training of MCS upgrade managers and integration of the Yaris platform. Also integrated existing data sharing platforms for alerts and which will be followed by concerted actions</p>	<p>Validate the draft MCS convention by the MS of the SRFC; Implement sub-regional MCS projects; Set up a sustainable mechanism for financing MCS activities.</p>

Questionnaires	GRFC answers	FCWC Answers	SRFC response
<p>10. What is the degree of political will to cooperate shown by the MS in terms of MCS? what impact on the course of activities? What solution is envisaged?</p>	<p>- Organize a regional workshop to sensitize and mobilize Member States</p>	<p>The degree of political will to cooperate shown by MS in MCS matters is satisfactory and remains decisive for this MCS activity.</p>	<p>High degree of commitment of MS through their participation in the PSOs and their willingness to set up an MCS Convention. However, there is a lack of coordination between the decision-making body (the Conference of Ministers) and the national structures (MCS working group) which work directly with the permanent secretary of the SRFC.</p> <p>This has the impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The considerable slowdown in the implementation of MCS activities; - The lack of capitalization of the achievements of sub-regional projects and programs implemented by the SRFC; Difficulties in the implementation of protocols and other legal instruments. - Lack of ownership of the SRFC by its Member States. SRFC activities are initiated and implemented by TFPs. <p>To remedy this situation, it is necessary to increase the number and the technical and scientific capacity of the MCS personnel of the MS and to revitalize the national institutions.</p>
<p>11. What do you expect from MS? MS, do they accept easily? hardly? no way ? joint decisions taken during statutory meetings? in the agreements signed? the protocols in place?</p>	<p>- Not all States are progressing at the same pace, there are States that provide leadership for this theme</p>	<p>That the MS accept the common decisions taken during the statutory meetings, the conventions and the protocols</p>	<p>Joint decisions are sometimes taken through meetings, Conventions and Protocols, but their application by the Member States sometimes poses a problem.</p>
<p>12. What do you propose to improve SCS the situation if it is unfavourable?</p>	<p>- Assist countries to better equip themselves (Monitoring Center)</p>		<p>To improve the situation of the MCS, it is important to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Change the mandate of the SRFC - Adopt the MCS Convention - Consolidate fisheries surveillance operations in MS waters; <p>Organize inter-ministerial and inter-agency upgrading workshops with MCS actors.</p>

Questionnaires	GRFC answers	FCWC Answers	SRFC response
13. Is there a facility for cooperation between the regional fisheries organization and the MS? How is the usefulness of your RFO to MS reflected?	- States expect a lot from GRFC, but it has very limited means	Cooperation facilities between the regional fisheries organization and the MS exist. This translates into the establishment of a platform for the exchange of information, technical visits to identify needs and technical support and meetings of the regional working group (WATF) and the national working group (GTN) as well than exchanges of experts between States?	Yes, nevertheless, the Member States must be brought to respect the regulatory and statutory texts of the SRFC. Lack of visibility of CSRP activities in MS. The usefulness of the SRFC is reflected in the performance of its fisheries surveillance missions in the waters of all the MS; training of fisheries inspectors and operators of National MCS Centers; the exchange of information and the reinforcement of MCS equipment and material of the MS.
14. What are the areas of cooperation identified that you support to improve the MCS system in the region?	Refer to the regional coordination mechanism (CCR-MCS unit)	The areas of cooperation identified are as follows: the Yaoundé architecture, the Joint Analytical Call (JAC) made up of technical partners supporting the SCS system in the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the quality and sharing of MCS information; • Develop a sub-regional fisheries observer program; • Strengthen the capacities of the sub-region in the fight against IUU fishing; • Consolidate joint maritime and air surveillance operations; • Promote innovative approaches in the field of MCS; • Seek sustainable funding for MCS activities; • Strengthen the partnership with international initiatives involved in the fight against IUU fishing; Support MCS activities concerning artisanal fishing
15. Do you plan to extend the traditional monitoring systems (observer, register, VMS, MREP) to other resource protection concepts such as FiTTI? Blue economy? MPA, ? Biological rest?	Certainly, but depending on the means that will be made available to GRFC	Yes, we are working to expand the traditional surveillance systems with an observer program, sustained development of the Blue Economy, MPAs and the regional biological rest of fisheries . A protocol for the development of an observer program is adopted and awaiting implementation A pilot project to extend the fisheries closure underway in Ghana to the entire FCWC region	Yes with the draft MCS convention and its application protocol which integrate new concepts and synergies to effectively fight against IUU fishing

Questionnaires	GRFC answers	FCWC Answers	SRFC response
16. How can RFBs intervene in these areas? how to harmonize the procedures?	This is easier when the linking of an ORP to the REC is functional	Set up the common framework or projects / training / technical and financial support	By pooling technical and financial resources and harmonizing national legal instruments of MS and developing research as a tool to fight against IUU fishing
17. Does the institutional quality of your organization allow you to achieve the assigned MCS objectives? so difficult, what do you suggest to improve the situation?	The latest reforms at ECCAS strengthen the position of GRFC	Yes the institutional quality of our organization allows us to achieve the objectives assigned in terms of MCS	Yes, but to a lesser extent. Thus, for a better management of the MCS, it is imperative to change the mandate and the objectives of the SRFC.
18. Does the administrative and legal environment allow you to manage the SCS correctly? If not, what do you propose to remedy the situation,	Review the legislative and regulatory texts of the States for their upgrading	The administrative and legal environment deserves to be strengthened, especially at the national level and harmonized at the regional level (sanctions, MCA, license cost) to properly manage the MCS.	The legal environment put in place over the years by the SRFC makes it possible to manage the MCS correctly. Nevertheless, given the extent of the phenomenon of PINN, overexploitation of HR, among other things, the legal framework deserves to be updated and improved in order to better cope with the increasingly surprising innovations of the perpetrators of criminal activities. in the EEZs of the SRFC MS. This is why it is important to adopt the draft MCS Convention and to revise the MCA Convention to consider the new concepts that have arisen in the fishing sector.
19. Is there a secure and sustainable financial mechanism to take into account the basic needs of the SCS? if not, what do you think of as a safe and sustainable mechanism to validly support the regional MCS?	No	No, the financial, secure and sustainable mechanism to take into account the basic needs of the MCS does not exist.	No, there is no secure and sustainable financial mechanism to consider the basic needs of the MCS. The draft application protocols of the MCS Convention provide for this. It would be important to establish at the sub-regional level, a mechanism so that foreign fishing vessels operating in the EEZs of the MS of the SRFC pay registration fees. These royalties will allow the SRFC to further strengthen the MCS mechanisms that exist at the sub-regional level.

Questionnaires	GRFC answers	FCWC Answers	SRFC response
20. What areas of cooperation exist with the other ORPs in the region? if not, what do you propose as a framework for cooperation to improve MCS in the region.	Strengthen the GRFC – CRESMAC collaboration to benefit from the CIC system which links CRESMAC (Central Africa) to CRESMAO (West Africa).	The cooperation that exists with the other RFOs concerns the sharing of information and training.	We propose to establish partnership agreements allowing joint actions to be carried out between our different organizations such as the OPS. It would also be important to develop common action plans in terms of MCS between our different RFOs
21. Do you have areas of cooperation with the economic management institutions in your area? which ? with whom ? in which areas?		Yes, we cooperate with ECOWAS as the economic integration institution, for the fight against IUU fishing	We have a cooperation and partnership framework with ECOWAS and FCWC in all areas of common interest We also have areas of cooperation with WB, AU and EU
22. What roles do you think Economic Organizations play in the fight against IUU in your region?		Economic Organizations can play the role of strategic partner and resource mobilization in the fight against IUU.	RECs should play the role of financial partners of RFBs to enable them to be able to effectively fight against IUU fishing activities
23. What relations would you like to have with the Economic Organizations in your area?		Economic Organizations can play the role of strategic partner and resource mobilization (technical / financial) for the fight against IUU.	It would be desirable to have an institutional anchoring between the RECs and the ORPs so that the latter become the technical arms of these economic integration organizations

Annex 2: Terms of Reference

Assessment of the state of MCS systems for the conservation and protection of aquatic biodiversity in shared African aquatic ecosystems

Background:

The Blue Economy Strategy for Africa has been endorsed at the highest political level on the continent. The Strategy incorporates key vectors to promote the development of the continent's blue economy, including fisheries, aquaculture and ecosystem conservation; navigation, maritime safety and trade; climate change, environmental sustainability and ecotourism; sustainable energy and extractive mineral resources; governance, institutions and job creation.

The objective of the Africa Blue Economy Strategy (ABES) is to guide the development of an inclusive and sustainable blue economy that becomes an important contributor to the transformation and growth of the continent, by advancing knowledge on marine and aquatic biotechnology, environmental sustainability, use of marine ecosystems, management and conservation and carbon sequestration, growth of an Africa-wide shipping industry, transport development sea, river and lake, the management of fishing activities in these aquatic areas, and the exploitation and development of minerals from the deep seabed and other marine resources .

The Blue Economy Strategy for Africa is consolidated based on the following five thematic technical areas:

1. Fisheries, aquaculture, conservation and sustainable aquatic ecosystems;
2. Shipping/Transportation, Trade, Ports, Maritime Safety, Security and Enforcement;
3. Coastal and maritime tourism, climate change, resilience, marine ecosystem, environment, infrastructure;
4. Sustainable energy and mineral resources and innovative industries; and,
5. Policies, institutions and governance, employment, job creation and poverty eradication, innovative financing.

The African continent is adjacent to highly productive marine ecosystems which include the seven African Large Marine Ecosystems (LME), namely, Agulhas Current LME, Benguela Current LME, Guinea Current LME, Canary Current LME, Mediterranean Sea LME, the Red Sea LME and the Somali Current LME. Seas, oceans, lakes and rivers are home to a significant number of biodiversity and ecosystems provide sources of livelihoods, food security and wealth. African marine ecosystems are home to living and non-living resources; however, the unsustainable exploitation of these resources threatens biodiversity, resources and environmental sustainability. Several factors threaten aquatic biodiversity in African aquatic ecosystems. These include overexploitation of living species, pollution from several sources (municipal and agricultural land activities), dumping of toxic waste, mining activities, gas exploration, tourism development, etc. Consequently, important aquatic resources are becoming increasingly sensitive to both natural and man-made environmental changes. Thus, conservation strategies to protect and conserve aquatic life are needed to maintain the balance of nature and sustain the availability of resources for future generations.

Therefore, AU-IBAR, with the support of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), is implementing a 3-year project on “Conservation of Aquatic Biodiversity in the African Blue Economy” whose the overall objective is to improve the policy environment, regulatory and institutional frameworks , capacities of AU Member States and regional economic communities to use and sustainably conserve biodiversity and aquatic ecosystems. The specific objectives of the project are:

1. Ratify and/or align relevant international/regional instruments related to blue economy themes (with specific reference to the protection and conservation of biodiversity)
2. Optimizing the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity while minimizing conflicts between blue economy sub-themes
3. Strengthen measures to mitigate the negative impacts of coastal and marine tourism, oil, gas, deep sea mining and climate change on aquatic biodiversity and the environment.
4. Strengthen gender mainstreaming in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management

Reasoning:

IUU (unreported, unregulated and unreported) fishing activities in Africa are major concerns with respect to the sustainability of aquatic biodiversity, including unauthorized fishing in closed areas/seasons, illegal fishing, fishing with falsified and fraudulent vessel licenses or registrations, unreported and misreported catches. , fishing of threatened, endangered and protected (TEP) species, dumping of toxic waters, degradation of ecosystems and the environment, pollution, etc. billions of dollars. Weak governance is a major factor responsible for IUU fishing in coastal states.

Weak MCS systems have contributed to increased incidence of unsustainable practices and reduced aquatic biodiversity in African large marine ecosystems and inland waters. In most cases, current cross-border MCS systems are weak and require institutional strengthening and capacity development. There is therefore a need to conduct an assessment of MBS systems to identify national and regional priorities and capacities to provide support to strengthen comprehensive regional MBS systems.

There are regional agreements for the regional management and conservation of aquatic biodiversity; these include specialized regional institutions (regional fisheries organizations, river basin commissions, regional seas conventions). There are also regional initiatives on regional MCS systems. In most cases, the focus is on combating IUU fishing. There are, however, challenges in terms of the effectiveness of these regional MCS arrangements, weak governments by AU member states and therefore insufficient funding of these regional initiatives. In addition to traditional MCS systems for protecting fisheries resources, there is also a need to build the capacity of these existing initiatives and expand their scope to cover the conservation and protection of other aquatic biodiversity hotspots, including including protection of MPAs, coral reefs, environmental pollution. etc

To update the above, AU-IBAR, in the implementation of the project “Conservation of Aquatic Biodiversity within the framework of the Blue Economy Strategy in Africa ”, is committed to improving monitoring systems, monitoring and surveillance (SCS) for the conservation and protection of biodiversity by seeking appropriate short-term consultancy services. Fixed-term consultants to undertake this assignment which has been grouped together to facilitate its execution. One consultation will be undertaken in the Southern

and Eastern regions of Africa and the second consultation will be undertaken in the Western, Central and Northern regions of Africa.

Purpose :

The overall objective of this consultation is to conduct an assessment of the status of monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) systems in African shared aquatic ecosystems (marine ecosystems and freshwater ecosystems) at national and regional levels . for the purpose of establishing and/or strengthening a transboundary MCS system in an identified shared aquatic ecosystem to enhance the conservation and protection of aquatic biodiversity

Tasks :

1. Briefing with relevant AU-IBAR staff to agree expectations and provide clarification on any outstanding issues.
2. Prepare an inception report within 5 days of signing the contract outlining the proposed methodology, approach and locations for the visit
3. Consult Regional Economic Communities, Specialized Regional Institutions, other relevant stakeholders
4. Obtain relevant information, data, literature and documentation on existing or ongoing transboundary MCS initiatives in regionally shared aquatic ecosystems
5. Conduct a status assessment of selected regional initiatives on MCS systems to determine strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to effective conservation and protection of aquatic biodiversity in shared aquatic ecosystems
6. Identify technical gaps or requirements, institutional challenges to provide institutional and technical capacity building support of ongoing regional MCS systems in shared aquatic ecosystems for effective establishment, operation or operationalization
7. Develop proposals to expand the scope of regional initiatives to cover biodiversity hotspots, including MPAs, coral reefs, pollution detection, monitoring, response and reduction
8. Based on your findings, develop appropriate recommendations on requirements and gaps to support the strengthening of regional MCS initiatives in the identified transboundary aquatic ecosystems.
9. Prepare a complete report at the end of the mission

Qualification:

The successful candidate should hold a graduate degree in disciplines related to the conservation of biodiversity and aquatic ecosystems, including marine environmental protection, ocean science, maritime policy and law, aquatic conservation science, fisheries management. A PhD will be an added advantage

Experience:

General experience

1. Familiarization with national institutions responsible for fisheries management, aquaculture development, aquatic biodiversity protection and environmental management
2. Familiarization with the functions of regional economic communities and specialized regional institutions with mandates in the areas of fisheries, aquaculture, aquatic biodiversity and environmental protection
3. Knowledge and experience of African large marine ecosystems and freshwater ecosystem governance

systems, transboundary issues, challenges and opportunities

4. Familiarization with current challenges and approaches and best practices (institutional and technical) for effective MCS systems

Specific experience

1. Familiarization with industrial and artisanal fishing operations and activities in Africa
2. Knowledge of existing regional MCS systems in various regions of Africa, including institutional or regional arrangements or protocols for establishments and operations
3. Experience in supporting the formulation or promotion of policies or strategies to improve MCS systems for the protection of aquatic biodiversity, including the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing in African aquatic ecosystems
4. Evidence of carrying out similar institutional and capacity assessments for MCS systems or related fisheries or aquatic biodiversity regulatory systems.
5. Proof of experience or capacity required to design or propose MCS systems integrating the protection of biodiversity and aquatic ecosystems

Other essential skills and experience

1. Diplomacy and good interactive skills needed to deal with senior government officials, RECs, other regional organizations and donor/development organizations in Africa;
2. Good networking skills and the ability to stay positive and constructive
3. Very strong writing, analytical and communication skills are required.
4. Proficiency in at least 2 AU languages

Deliverables:

1. Inception report prepared outlining methodology and approach and briefing with relevant AU-IBAR staff
2. List of identified regional MCS initiatives (existing centers or units) with a detailed description of the current status, operations or functions of each identified regional MCS
3. Institutional assessments and institutional arrangements of identified regional initiatives on transboundary MCS systems conducted in shared aquatic ecosystems (marine and freshwater)
4. Mechanisms developed to strengthen the capacity and expand the reach of identified regional MCS systems (coordinating centers or units) in shared aquatic ecosystems to mainstream biodiversity and aquatic ecosystems
5. Gaps identified for collaboration or support by the project to strengthen identified regional MCS systems in aquatic ecosystems (Required support necessary for effective operationalization and functions of identified regional MCS systems in shared aquatic ecosystems are clearly described and detailed) .
6. A proposed mechanism for mainstreaming or integrating the conservation of aquatic biodiversity and ecosystems into MCS functions
7. Full consultation report prepared and approved

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34. Blue economy strategy. 2019 AU-IBAR
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36. WAEMU, July 2010, "Study to define a support program for fisheries monitoring, control and surveillance services in WAEMU member states", Provisional report, Fisheries resource management dynamics in East Africa West

Annex 4: calendar of visits_

(Period from November 14 to December 20, 2022)

Area visited	Period	People met or contacted
<p><u>CSRP area visit.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senegal: CSRP headquarters (Dakar) (Consultant's area of residence) 	<p><u>Monday November 14 to December 10, 2022</u></p> <p>According to schedule</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Malal Sané SP - Abdou Diakhate (lawyer) - Mika Diop (assistant) - Aby Gaye (Pescao manager) - Mr Seck Mamadou (Finance)
<p><u>Working sessions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ECOWAS (video conference) 	<p><u>Monday November 14, 2022</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Amadou Tall (Pescao coordinator) - Ibrahima Sylla (FAO project manager)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>NFIFM visit</u> (video conference) 	<p><u>Thursday, November 16, 2022</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Boubacar Sidibé (FAO project manager)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>PRCM visit</u> 	<p><u>Wednesday November 17, 2022</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ahmed Sehoury (program manager) - Cyrille Mbangue (communication)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Visit Mawa</u> 	<p><u>Monday, November 28, 2022</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mika Diop (coordinator)
<p><u>CPCO area visit (Ghana)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subject: CPCO headquarters 3 days FAO visit (Accra) 	<p><u>Departure from Dakar: Sunday November 20, 2022</u> <u>Visit : Monday 21/Tuesday 22 November 2022</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eré (CR-SCS) - Abena (monitoring-evaluation) - Joel (administration-finance) - Dr N'diaga Gueye (program manager)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>COREP visit</u> <p>COREP headquarters 3 days</p>	<p><u>Corep visit: Thursday 24/Friday 25 November 2022</u></p> <p><u>Contact ECCAS representative (phone)</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sabuni Kasereka (Executive Secretary) - Wora Flore (administration and finance) - Thérance Arland (administration) - Dr Bashirou Demsa (ECCAS)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Contact RAMPAO (video)</u> 	<p><u>Thursday, December 8, 2022</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Marie Suzanna (Executive Secretary)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Contact WAEMU (video)</u> 	<p><u>Monday, December 12, 2022</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diegana Ndong
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Contact ATLAFCO (video)</u> 	<p><u>Thursday, December 22, 2022</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bennabbou
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Contact Tunis (video)</u> 	<p><u>Tuesday, December 20, 2022</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nouaili Rafik
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Contact Abidjan Convention (video)</u> 	<p><u>Wednesday, December 15, 2022</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dr Yacoub Issola - Professor Jacques Abe



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