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POLICY NOTE

Enhancing Ratification, Domestication and Implementation of Global Instruments for Aquatic Biodiversity Conservation, Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation and Environmental Sustainability in Africa.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The African Union (AU) elaborated the Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and aquaculture in Africa (PFRS, 2014) and Africa Blue Economy Strategy (ABES, 2019) in order to foster socio-economic growth through harnessing the full potential of aquatic resources endowment and hence enhancing the blue economy contribution to Africa's development framework, the Agenda 2063. These Continental Policies are aligned to the Global initiatives especially the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 14 on life below and under the sea.

The African Union Inter African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR) commissioned this study in the Eastern and Southern African Regions to find workable solutions towards enhancing the ratification, domestication and implementation of relevant Continental and Global Instruments by African Union Member States (AU–MSs) related to aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management. The Study unraveled existence of considerable impediments to National and Regional level coordination, technical capacity and resource mobilization for the process of ratification, domestication and implementation of these Instruments. The study therefore proposes formulation of a Continent-wide framework and establishment of a dedicated Unit in African Union Commission to assist AU-MSs with the negotiation and enhanced domestication of relevant Global Instruments. In this regard the study also proposes establishment of an African Continental Environmental Facility (ACEF) similar to the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) of the UN.

The study established that AU–MSs are largely aware of the existence of the Continental and Global Instruments for conservation of aquatic biodiversity with the majority going as far as signing the Instruments. The Instruments are perceived as relevant and crucial for aquatic resources conservation and sustainability. Most of the Instruments require State actions, while a number of them only set standards for companies and businesses that impact or use aquatic resources. Lack of financial resources, weak technical capacity and lack of or outdated requisite technological infrastructure are cited as some of the key challenges faced by AU–MSs in their implementation of Continental and Global environmental and socio-economic development Instruments.

The study additionally recommended that AU–MSs set up Regional technical support units, preferably within the RECs (East African Community (EAC), Economic Community for West African States (ECOWAS), Inter – Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), Economic Community for Central African States (ECCAS),

Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), Common Market for the Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the Arab Maghreb Union (UMA). Other specialized Regional aquatic resources management bodies such as Regional Fisheries Bodies (RFBs) or Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs), Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs) etc., for dealing with issues of implementation of aquatic biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation, environmental sustainability and generally Blue Economy planning, monitoring and development issues.

1. INTRODUCTION

African Union Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU–IBAR) is a specialized technical office of the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture (DREA) of the African Union Commission (AUC). AU–IBAR's mandate is to support and coordinate the sustainable development and utilization of animal resources (Livestock, fisheries, aquaculture and wildlife) to enhance nutrition and food security and contribute to the wellbeing and prosperity of the people in the member states of the African Union.

Africa is endowed with expansive aquatic ecosystems that contain significant aquatic biodiversity but they are faced with increasing pressure from diverse users and climate change effects including; extreme and destructive weather events, Sea level rise, prolonged droughts and wildfires, urbanisation and related reclamation, sewerage and industrial related pollution, plastic wastes etc. The AU's interest is to conserve the Blue Economy Resources (BERs) and foster sustainable access to Blue Ecosystems (BES) services.

One way for achieving these targets is to support AU-MSs in ratifying, domesticating and implementing relevant Global Instruments for aquatic biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation and environmental sustainability.

Some of the key Global Instruments identified include:

- International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL), 1973
- Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter 1972.
- United Nations Convention of the Law of the Seas (UNCLOS III), 1982
- Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing, 2016.
- Convention for Biological Diversity (CBD), 1992
- The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), 1992.
- Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, 1989.
- Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade), 1998.
- Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, 2001.
- Seabed Arms Control Treaty, 1971.

- International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation, 1990 (OPRC 90).
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), 1973.

1.1. Overall Objective

The overall Objective of this Policy Note is to increase awareness among AU Member States and strengthen their capacity for informed decision making towards increased ratification, domestication and implementation of Global Instruments related to the conservation of aquatic biodiversity, climate change, and environmental sustainability.

1.2. Scope

This Policy Note examines a number of major Global Instruments relevant to aquatic biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation and environmental management. To assist the AU-MSs and other stakeholders in enhancing their domestication, ratification and implementation processes in Africa, the Policy Note sets out recommendations, implementation guidelines, and priority activities.

2. SYNOPSIS OF SOME OF THE KEY IDENTIFIED GLOBAL INSTRUMMENTS

2.1. The status of ratification, adoption and implementation of identified Global Instruments, outlining challenges to their ratification, domestication and implementation.

The survey found that, in the East and Southern Africa Regions, most AU-MSs were aware of the existence of the 55 identified Continental and Global Instruments important for aquatic biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation and maintenance of environmental sustainability. Out of the 24 AU-MS assessed, 60% had ratified the Instruments, 60% had endorsed them, and only 56% said they were implementing them to some extent. In the ratification, approval, and implementation processes of these Continental and Global Instruments, 70% of the AU-MSs reported that the lack of funding was the main obstacle.

2.2. Synthesis of critical provisions of identified Continental and Global Instruments, highlighting opportunities and benefits to AU Member States and RECs.

Status of domestication, ratification and implementation as well as summary details of the key identified Global Instruments relevant to the management and conservation of aquatic biodiversity, the mitigation of climate change, and/or the sustainability of the aquatic environment are presented in Table 1 in terms of their;

i. Goals and Purposes;
ii. Significant Convention milestones;
iii. Contentious issues in the agreement;
iv. Advantages/Benefits of the AU-MSs implementing the Convention; and,

Table 1: *Synthesis of critical provisions of identified Continental and Global Instruments, highlighting opportunities and benefits to AU Member States and RECs*

	Convention	Background	Key milestones	Status of ratification and implementation among AU-MSs	Benefits to AU-MSs implementing the Convention
1.	International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL), 1973.	The International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, universally known as MARPOL, was passed in 1973 and came into effect in 1975. In an effort to combat climate change impacts, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) became the first International regulator for the transport sector to adopt Globally binding energy-efficiency requirements for all ships.	• ***Oil pollution control:*** Over the past five decades, IMO, Governments and industry have worked together to achieve a dramatic and sustained reduction in major oil spills from ships; and have established effective systems for preparedness and response if there is an incident and created a comprehensive mechanism for providing compensation to those affected. • ***Climate Change Impact Mitigation:*** In 2011, IMO became the first International regulator for a transport sector to adopt Globally-binding energy-efficiency requirements, which apply to all ships Globally, regardless of trading pattern or flag State, aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions from International shipping. The mandatory energy-efficiency measures to reduce emissions of Green House Gases from International shipping, under Annex VI of IMO's pollution prevention Treaty (MARPOL), came into force in 2013 and have been subsequently strengthened; • ***Reduction in GHGs emissions: In 2018,*** IMO Member States adopted an initial IMO strategy on reduction of GHG emissions from ships, setting out a Vision which confirms a commitment to cutting GHG emissions from International shipping and to phasing them out as soon as possible. There's a specific linkage to the Paris Agreement, and clear levels of ambition – including at least a 50 per cent cut in emissions from the sector by 2050, compared to 2008.	Currently up to160 Countries are Parties (signed on) to the Convention including 24 Countries in South and Eastern Africa Regions. However, in Africa only 17 Countries proceeded to ratify the MARPOL Convention with five from the South and Eastern Africa including; Kenya, Madagascar, Namibia, South Africa and Sudan by November, 2022.	MSs that ratify become part of the wider Global effort to control pollution of the Oceans; benefit directly with support from IMO in capacity building, exchange among Parties on required information and technology, engage in processes to bring pollution of their waters under control, and adopt recovery and improvement measures for productivity of target aquatic ecosystems.

	Convention	Background	Key milestones	Status of ratification and implementation among AU-MSs	Benefits to AU-MSs implementing the Convention
2.	Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter, 1972	The Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment was one of the first International Accords aimed at protecting the marine environment. Its objective is to promote the effective control of all marine pollution sources. In 1996, the Treaty was modified to also provide for protection of biodiversity and aquatic ecosystem restoration.	• It is one of the first Global Conventions to protect the marine environment from human activities/pollution; • It is a binding Instrument which makes implementation easy through enforcing the provisions, • Is meant to promote the effective control of sources of pollution and to take all practicable steps to prevent pollution dumping of wastes and other matter from ships; and, • Under the Protocol all dumping is prohibited, except for possibly acceptable wastes on the so-called "reverse list".	As of April 2022, the original Convention had 87 Parties, and up to 54 Parties had signed on to the added Protocol, which became operational on 24th March, 2006.	These include having controls placed on industry and ship pollution prevention; the Convention promotes improvement and recovery and increases production of Blue Ecosystem Services; and being part of the Global effort to combat marine pollution prevention with direct benefits in information exchange and capacity building.
3.	The International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation, 1990 (OPRC 90).	The 1990 International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response, and Co-operation (OPRC 90) calls for the implementation of efficient readiness measures. It aims to make it easier for Nations to cooperate and support each other when preparing for and responding to oil pollution catastrophes. The OPRC 90 was expanded to include preparedness and response to pollution events by hazardous and noxious compounds in 2000 (OPRC-HNS Protocol).	• OPRC 90 has led to the formation of five International Treaties on oil and natural gas pollution. The Treaties ensure that Parties to the OPRC 90 put systems in place to prepare, respond and collaborate in case of oil pollution or Hazardous and Noxious Substances (HNS) pollution; and avails measures for addressing civil liability and compensation for oil pollution damage.	In the South and Eastern Regions of Africa, only two Members Namibia and South Africa had accented to the OPRC 90 Convention by November 2022.	OPRC 90 provides an International platform for cooperation and mutual assistance in preparing for and responding to major oil and HNS pollution incidents, as well as a mechanism for establishing cooperative agreements with other State Parties; a way to quickly access pertinent technical assistance and response resources in the event of an oil or HNS incident; a framework for the development of National and Regional capacity to prepare for and respond to oil and HNS incidents (ITCP).

	Convention	Background	Key milestones	Status of ratification and implementation among AU-MSs	Benefits to AU-MSs implementing the Convention
4.	Seabed Arms Control Treaty, 1971.	The Seabed Arms Control Treaty (Seabed Treaty) is a multilateral agreement between 96 Countries. It was agreed to in 1971 and came into force in 1972. The objective of the Treaty is to stop any emplacement of nuclear weapons on the Ocean floor beyond a 12-mile coastal zone, and empower Parties to the Treaty to observe all Seabed "activities" of any other signatory beyond the 12-mile zone.	• Control of use of the Sea-bed for dangerous activities that can have adverse impact on aquatic biodiversity by curbing of the proliferation of nuclear arms.	The Treaty had 94 existing Parties as of October, 2018, while another 21 States were Signatories but had not yet ratified the Treaty. In Southern and Eastern Regions, Madagascar, Sudan, Tanzania, and Burundi are Signatories but have not ratified the Treaty; Zambia, Seychelles, Eswatini, South Africa, Rwanda, Lesotho and Botswana have ratified the Seabed Treaty.	The Treaty allows for continued objection to nuclear arms proliferation, use, and facilitated monitoring of such activities
5.	United Nations Convention of the Law of the Seas (UNCLOS III), 1982.	UNCLOS was established in 1960 with 168 Signatories including the EU with the objective to create a comprehensive framework for the governance of the World's Oceans and Seas. It establishes guidelines for all uses of the Oceans' resources and provides a comprehensive set of rules for management and utilization.	• Standardizing States' claims to maritime zones and the resources within them; establishing mechanisms for dispute resolution; putting in place remedies including environmental maintenance, protection, and restoration; majority of maritime boundaries have been agreed upon by neighboring Countries with only a few formal disputes; Agreement on Global fish stocks, commonly known as the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement (UNFSA); and beginning in 2018 providing a new protocol for the treatment of environmental disasters.	All African Nations have signed the UNCLOS Convention except for Djibouti.	UNCLOS clarified the breadth of the territorial Sea, defined other maritime zones, and provided a new zone, putting an end to the "chaotic situation" in the first half of the 20th Century and provides for privileges and rights of States in use of the Oceans. UNCLOS also defined and elaborated sovereignty and user rights and advantages for AU-MSs and other Countries over the Oceans.

	Convention	Background	Key milestones	Status of ratification and implementation among AU-MSs	Benefits to AU-MSs implementing the Convention
6.	Convention for Biological Diversity (CBD), 1992.	CBD is a Multilateral Treaty that supports conservation of biodiversity, promotes sustainable use of its components with a fair and equitable arrangements for sharing of benefits arising from the biodiversity. It has two derived protocols that respond to specific aspects of biodiversity conservation; The Cartagena Protocol which regulates the transport of living modified organisms (LMOs) brought about by biotechnology from one Nation to another and the Nagoya Protocol that regulates access to genetic resources and fosters fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their utilization of biodiversity.	• Ecologically and Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs) have been described, mapped, and expanded across all Seas and Oceans as a result of the CBD. For the time being, CBD is concentrating on locating EBSAs in specific maritime locations using scientific standards. Concern over this aspect of marine and coastal biodiversity is developing. Efforts are also underway to develop an International legally binding Instrument (ILBI) under UNCLOS (BBNJ) for management of biodiversity outside National jurisdictions.	The CBD has been ratified by all African Nations and is used as a tool for the sustainable use of biodiversity in all AU-MSs.	The UN's Convention on Biological Diversity and Cooperation aims to ensure that International Agreements on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity are implemented in several areas. These comprise; fair and equitable distribution of genetic resources; access to and transfer of technology, including biotechnology, to governments and local communities that provided traditional knowledge and biodiversity resources.

	Convention	Background	Key milestones	Status of ratification and implementation among AU-MSs	Benefits to AU-MSs implementing the Convention
7.	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), 1992.	The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change was one of three Agreements that was ratified at the "Rio Earth Summit" in 1992. The Convention states that greenhouse gas concentrations must be kept "at a level that would exclude dangerous anthropogenic (human-induced) interaction with the climate system". "Such a level should be achieved within a time-frame sufficient to permit ecosystems to naturally adjust to climate change, to ensure that food supply is not jeopardized and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner. It came into effect on 21st March, 1994. It served as the foundation for the later Global discussions that led to the Paris Agreement. Key contentious issues in implementation of UNFCCC: The issue of whether the targets set and Nationally determined commitments (NDCs) do not go far enough to address the threat and risks posed by Climate Change is an important one for the African Union. These are positions that can be strengthened by participation of the AU in addition to the respective AU-MSs at the COP.	• In 1992, the UNFCCC was able to persuade Governments to ratify the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreements on climate change. There were many opposing viewpoints regarding climate change at the time and by then, there was less information than there is currently. Even in the presence of scientific ambiguity, members were required to act in the interests of human safety and environmental sustainability.	Africa's Member States (AU-MS) are working to domesticate various provisions of the UNFCCC through Policies, Laws, and Guidelines, as well as capacity development and public awareness campaigns. Currently, all the 24 AU-MSs in the Southern and Eastern Region of Africa have submitted their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) for GHGs emission reductions.	The UNFCCC successively persuaded Member States to ratify the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreements. The Secretariat for the UNFCCC holds annual Conference of Parties (COP) and preparatory meetings in groups as well as different forums, subsidiary bodies followed by series of submissions and National communications. The AU-MSs' NDCs have all been communicated to the UNFCCC secretariat. AU-MSs' have also made these known Nationally and have included them into their respective National Development Policies and actions.

	Convention	Background	Key milestones	Status of ratification and implementation among AU-MSs	Benefits to AU-MSs implementing the Convention
8.	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), 1973.	The CITES, or Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora was established in 1975. Its goal is to ensure that the continued survival of a species is not threatened by the worldwide commerce in specimens of wild animals and plants. Millions of plant and animal specimens are traded annually in the estimated billion-dollar International wildlife trade.	The requirement of a sustainable trading arrangement established a reasonable safeguard for the traded resources over the long term, even though many traded animal species are not endangered.	CITES has 184 Parties Globally now participating with 17 AU-MSs from the Southern and Eastern Regions of Africa.	AU-MSs implementing the Convention include a Global system accepted and controlled worldwide, among 181 Parties and the right to vote at the tri-Annual Conference of the Parties.
9.	Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, 1989.	Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal was enacted in 1989. Its goal at the time of its passage was to stop the "toxic trade," as it was known to safeguard the environment and human health. It was enacted on 22nd March, 1989 by the Conference of Plenipotentiaries in Basel, Switzerland. The Convention became effective in 1992. The Convention aims to promote the reduction of hazardous waste generation and the promotion of environmentally sound management of hazardous wastes, wherever they are disposed off.	Although the United States is not a signatory to the Treaty, the Basel Action Network (BAN) asserts that export shipments of plastic waste from the Country are now "criminal traffic as soon as the ships get on the high Seas," and that carriers of such shipments may be held accountable given that the transportation of plastic waste is prohibited in almost every other Country.	There are 190 Parties to the Convention as of September, 2022. The Convention has also been signed but not ratified by the US and Haiti.	Assuring that hazardous wastes are disposed of responsibly and as close to the point of origin as feasible which reduces the transportation of wastes abroad and their generation overall.

	Convention	Background	Key milestones	Status of ratification and implementation among AU-MSs	Benefits to AU-MSs implementing the Convention
10.	Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade), 1998.	The Rotterdam Convention is a Multinational Agreement that encourages shared responsibilities regarding the importation of hazardous chemicals. Chemicals mentioned in the Treaty may be imported or banned by signatory Governments at their discretion. The Convention was formed on 10th September, 1998 and came into force on 24th February, 2004.	The rapid growth in the production and distribution of chemicals has raised concerns about the risks posed by harmful substances and pesticides. Nations without the infrastructure required to oversee the use and import of these drugs are particularly vulnerable. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) started developing voluntary information-exchange initiatives in the 1980s.	Out of the 24 Countries in the South and Eastern Regions of Africa, 21 skipped the signing phase instead, they proceeded to ratify the Convention. In addition, they were implementing the Convention as of November, 2022. However, six Countries in the two Regions were signatory to the Convention as of November, 2022. The remaining three Countries of Angola, Comoros, and South Sudan in the two Regions were neither signatory nor ratifiers of the Convention by November, 2022.	The Convention promotes open exchange of information and calls on exporters of hazardous chemicals to use proper labelling, include directions on safe handling, and inform purchasers of any known restrictions or bans. Signatory Nations can decide whether to allow or ban the importation of chemicals listed in the Treaty, and exporting Countries are obliged to make sure that producers within their jurisdiction comply. Therefore, its effective implementation protects humans and the environment from adverse impact of chemicals at the Global level.

	Convention	Background	Key milestones	Status of ratification and implementation among AU-MSs	Benefits to AU-MSs implementing the Convention
11.	Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, 2001.	Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) are a class of synthetic organic chemicals resistant to breakdown by chemical, biological, and photolytic processes in the environment. The Stockholm Convention seeks to end POP production, use, and emissions while limiting the development of new compounds that resemble POPs. The Convention was signed on 22nd May, 2001 in Stockholm and became effective from 17th May, 2004.	The call for International action to combat POPs, the establishment of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS) and the International Programme on Chemical Safety (IPCS), which prepared an assessment of the 12 worst offenders, known as the "dirty dozen," and the adoption of the Stockholm Convention on POPs in 2001 in Stockholm, Sweden, are important milestones for the convention.	There are 181 Parties to the Convention as of March, 2016 (180 states and the European Union). The United States, Israel, Malaysia, and Italy are notable non-ratifying Nations. Sixteen AU-MSs are Signatories among the Nations of Southern and Eastern Africa, and all 24 States in the two Regions have signed and ratified the Convention.	This Convention include the requirement that developed Countries provide new and additional financial resources and measures to eliminate production and use of intentionally produced Persistent Organic Pollutants POPs, eliminate unintentionally produced POPs where feasible, and manage and dispose of POPs wastes in an environmentally sound manner. The Convention aims to eliminate the production, use and emissions of POPs while preventing the introduction of new chemicals with POP-like characteristics and ensuring the environmentally sound destruction of POPs waste stockpiles

Obligations of AU-MSs that are Party to the Conventions

AU-MSs Party to the various Conventions are encouraged to: put in place measures and processes to ratify, domesticate and implement the Global Instruments; actively participate in the preparatory meetings in groups and Conference of Parties (COPs) as well as different forums, subsidiary bodies followed by series of submissions and National communications; build capacity and get updated information about the implementation of the Convention; develop appropriate National Policy and Regulatory framework for implementation of the provisions of the Convention; and collect and share information.

2.3. Challenges in ratification and implementation of Continental and Global Instruments for conservation of aquatic biodiversity

There are major and numerous gaps in National legislations, Policies, Strategies, Plans, and Programs of action for the implementation of domesticated Instruments. There hasn't been much progress achieved in ratifying, domestication and or putting into practice pertinent Instruments for the conservation of aquatic biodiversity. National Institutions are overburdened with the requirement for new communication and task coordination related to the growing number of Policy concerns. The overall planning framework for biodiversity has grown and very complex, and not all activities relevant to a given Convention are always expressly defined as part of a National strategy for biological diversity.

2.4. Guidelines / Mechanisms for enhancing ratifications, domestication and implementation of identified Instruments.

The need for heightened support of AU-MSs by African Union and RECs is critical and the two should work together more frequently to support AU-MSs with technical and legal support. The following actions are recommended:

a. Establish platforms and Focal Points or Desk Officers on the Blue Economy Sectors to oversee the improved ratification procedures;
b. Create regular high-level conferences on the status of Treaties in collaboration with Ministerial Committee for reporting progress and on Challenges of Ratification / Accession and Implementation at AU;
c. In addition, there is need to provide guidelines and technical support on how to domesticate and implement Treaties by AU-MSs; and,

d. Creation of an effective database and tracking system for all Treaties that the Member States have ratified or adopted, and online forum for public access.

3. CONCLUSIONS

The study identified and inventoried 55 Instruments, 38 of which were Global Instruments and 17 were Regional and or sub-regional in nature in the East and Southern African regions. There is a wide variety of Instruments, with the majority targeted to state actors. A number are targeted at users including companies, businesses and communities that depend on the aquatic resources and spaces for their business or livelihood activities. Several challenges were identified for AU–MSs low level of ratification, domestication and implementation including lack of financial resources for the processes and acquisition of required infrastructure; lack of technical capacity and technological infrastructure to support the implementation; lack of clarity of responsibility among the different sectors at National level; challenges of operating under the traditional National sectors with limited cross sectoral efforts; and wide jurisdictions that command a lot of resources among competing needs. Key solution proposed is creation of a support framework i.e. an African Continental Environmental Facility (ACEF) similar to the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) of the UN within AUC to support the aquatic biodiversity conservation efforts at Continental, Regional and sub-regional levels.

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