



TERMS OF REFERENCE AND COMPOSITION OF MEMBERSHIPS PROJECT TECHNICAL COMMITTEE (PTC)

CONSERVING AQUATIC BIODIVERSITY IN AFRICAN BLUE ECONOMY

1. BACKGROUND

The African Union-Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR), a specialized technical office of the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment (DARBE) of the African Union Commission (AUC). AU-IBAR is mandated to support and coordinate the utilization of livestock, fisheries, aquaculture and wildlife as resources for both human wellbeing and economic development in the Member States of the African Union (AU MS). The Vision of the AU-IBAR Strategic Plan 2018-2023 is an Africa in which animal resources contribute significantly to integration, prosperity and peace. AU-IBAR's intervention in the fisheries and aquaculture sector is guided by the Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for fisheries and aquaculture in Africa (PFRS) which is aimed at improving governance of the sector for increased sustainable contribution to food security, livelihoods and wealth creation. Also, within the framework of the African Union Agenda 2063, the Africa Blue Economy Strategy (ABES) envisioned an inclusive and sustainable blue economy that significantly contributes to Africa's economic growth and institutional transformation.

The Africa Blue Economy Strategy is endorsed at the highest political level of the continent. The Strategy incorporates key critical vectors for promoting blue economy development in Africa, including fisheries, aquaculture and ecosystem conservation; shipping, maritime safety and trade; climate change, environmental sustainability and coastal and marine tourism; sustainable energy and extractive mineral resources; governance, institutional finance, policies and job creation.

AU-IBAR with support from the Swedish Agency for International Development Cooperation (SIDA), is implementing a project on "Conserving Aquatic Biodiversity in African Blue Economy", for three year's period. The overall objective of the project is to enhance the policy environment, regulatory frameworks and institutional capacities of AU Member States and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to sustainably utilize and conserve aquatic biodiversity and ecosystems. The specific objectives of the project are as follows:

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

AU-IBAR is responsible for the overall management and coordination of the Project.

2. ROLE OF PROJECT TECHNICAL COMMITTEE (PTC)

Objective

The PTC is a technical body aimed at ensuring coherence, synergies and minimizing duplications in the implementation of activities by the project implementation partners and other relevant institutions.

Mandate and Functions

The PTC shall have the mandate to ensure informed, evidence-based decision making by the Project Steering Committee (PSC) meeting. Specifically, the PTC will:

- Act as the project planning, monitoring and coordination platform;
- Conduct interactive discussions on project activities, including the annual workplans, budget, M&E framework, communication strategy and make recommendations to the PSC; and,
- Ensure coherence in the implementation of activities by the implementing partners and other institutions.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PROJECT TECHNICAL COMMITTEE CHAIR

The PTC Chair is a representative from the Directorate or Technical Division of DARBE. The responsibilities of the PTC Chair are to:

- Chair the Project Technical Committee Meeting;
- Clarify and summarize presentations and deliberations during each meeting;
- Reviews the agenda for meetings in consultation with the Secretariat;
- States the purpose of meeting to members and also the agenda items at the beginning of meeting; and,
- Provides a summary of conclusions/ recommendations and tasks at the end of each meeting.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SECRETARIAT OF THE PROJECT TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

The PTC Secretariat will be at AU-IBAR. The functions of the Secretariat shall be:

- Preparation of meeting agenda in consultation with the Chair;
- Preparation of invitation letters and sending invitations to members;
- Ensures that agendas and supporting materials are delivered to members in advance of meetings;
- Preparation of minutes of the PTC meeting and circulate to members; and,
- Captures and consolidates recommendations of the meeting.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PROJECT TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Individual Technical Committee members shall have the following responsibilities:

- Represent the interests of projects' stakeholders and beneficiaries;
- Take a genuine interest in the project's outcomes and overall success
- Act on opportunities to communicate positively about the project;
- Check that the project is aligned with the organizational strategy as well as development policies of AU MS; and
- Actively participate in meetings through attendance, discussion, and review of minutes, papers and other PTC documents.

6. GENERAL

6.1 Membership

6.1.1 Project Technical Committee

The PTC will comprise of not less than 10 and not more than 15 decision making members. Membership

will reflect the geographical diversity and representation, gender, technical and strategic interests of 'Aquatic Biodiversity Project' and will be jointly nominated by the Implementing Partner(s) of the project.

Members will be designated as follows:

6.1.2 *Decision making members*

- a. 1 Representative DARBE;
- b. 2 Representatives of STC-ARDWE Bureau Member States (Selected 2 Directors in charge of environment or aquatic biodiversity): rotational;
- c. 2 Representatives of 2 RECs: rotational;
- d. 1 representative from Regional Fisheries Bodies (RFBs) or Water Basin Commission (WBC) – rotational;
- e. 2 representative from Regional Sea Conventions (RSCs) or Large Marine Ecosystem (LME)-based organization: rotational basis;
- f. 1 representative from the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management (SWaM);
- g. 1 representatives from AU Centres of Excellence in disciplines related to environmental or ecosystems management: rotational basis; and,
- h. 1 private sector.
- i. 1 representtaive from NSA

6.1.3. *Observers, non-decision members*

- a. Representatives of other development or technical partners (e.g. EU, World Bank, FAO, UNEP, WWF, CITES);
- b. Implementing agency – AU-IBAR;
- c. Swedish embassy to African Union / SIDA; and,
- d. Representative of the Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) namely ICCAT, IOTC, SEAFO and CCAMLR will be invited on rotational basis.

6.1.4. *Co-opted experts*

The chair can invite an expert to provide an opinion on specific subject matters as deemed necessary.

6.2 *Quorum and Decision-making*

A minimum number of 10 Technical Committee members are required for decision-making purposes. The quorum shall include the AU-MS, RECs, RFBs/WBC/RSC and Private Sector.

6.2.1 *Decision-making Process*

- a. Decisions will be made by consensus.
- b. Meetings will be conducted in English and French languages.

6.3 *Frequency of Meetings and Funding*

6.3.1 *Meeting Frequency, Convening and Chairing*

- a. The PTC will meet once a year (physical or virtual as the case may be). The first meeting will be held as soon as practical after the establishment of the PTC;
- b. An extraordinary meeting may be convened as and when the need arises;
- c. The date, time and venue for each PTC meeting shall be determined during the previous meeting and should be included in the minutes of that meeting, apart from the first meeting for which these details will be communicated in a written invitation by the Secretariat at AU-IBAR; and,
- d. The payment of honoraria to the PTC Members is not envisaged. However, direct costs associated with travel and attendance at physical meetings will be met by 'Aquatic Biodiversity project'.

6.4 Agenda, Minutes, and Decision documents

The relevant documents will be sent to members seven working days in advance of a PTC meeting. These shall include:

- Agenda for the upcoming meeting;
- Minutes of the previous meeting;
- A progress report for the project; and,
- Any other documents/information to be considered at the meeting.

6.4.2 Procedures for Agenda and Minutes

- a. The Secretariat (Project Coordination Team at AU-IBAR) shall prepare the agenda for each meeting in consultation with the Chair. It will be circulated to implementing Partner(s) for agreement or amendment prior to distribution. The Draft agenda will be circulated to members of the PTC for their comment and adoption.
- b. The Secretariat for the PTC shall draft the minutes of each meeting and circulate to members of the PTC within 14 days after the meeting.
- c. The minutes shall record only deliberations reached against each agenda item, not the detailed discussion, unless so determined by the members during the meeting for specific issues.
- d. The AU-IBAR Aquatic biodiversity Project Team will act as Secretary of the Project Technical Committee meetings and will be responsible for keeping records and minutes.

6.4.3 Validity Period for comments on documents

In the event of tasks assigned to the PTC or selected members (such as commenting on reports and documents, or endorsing project outcomes), the deadline for validating the PTC deliberations/ contributions will be one month after circulation of the draft. If the deadline expires without the PTC members' reaction, the proposal will be considered approved.

6.4.4 Confidentiality

PTC members are expected to treat any reports and other forms of information derived from the Aquatic Biodiversity Project activities with the utmost confidentiality.