COMMUNIQUE

TRAINING WORKSHOP ON CAPACITY BUILDING FOR FISHERIES STATISTICAL DATA COLLECTION ANALYSIS AND UTILIZATION OF SCIENTIFIC DATA FOR INFORMED DECISION-MAKING IN FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. A training workshop on "capacity building for fisheries statistical data collection analysis and utilization of scientific data for informed decision-making in fisheries and aquaculture" was jointly organized by the African Union Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR) and the NEPAD Agency in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Federal Republic of Nigeria with support from the European Union from 05-09 September 2016 in Abuja, Nigeria.

2. The overall objective of this exercise was to equip African fisheries experts and officials with enhanced skills and knowledge with respect to their ability to collect, analyse and interpret fisheries data so as to better inform fisheries management decisions. The specific objectives were to:
   - Understand what kinds of data that can be collected, where and how data can be collected and stored, and also the common problems associated with data collection and storage.
   - Create awareness of the importance or relevance of various types (bio-statistical, economic, social, environmental etc.) of data for sound management of fisheries resources.
   - Strengthen the capacity for fisheries statistical data collection, analysis and utilization of scientific data.
   - Build skills on the use of data to support evidence-based policy and rational management measures with regards to fisheries resource exploitation in African context.

3. The training was attended by 40 participants from the following African Union Member States (AU MS): namely Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Cote D'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Mozambique, Nigeria, Republic of Congo, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sudan, The Gambia and Tunisia; Regional Economic Communities (RECs): ECOWAS and UEMOA; Training resource persons and International experts as well as AU-IBAR staff members.

4. The opening ceremony was marked by two statements from the representatives of AU-IBAR and Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Federal Republic of Nigeria:

Dr Simplice Nouala, Chief Animal Production Officer gave the welcome remarks on behalf of Prof. Ahmed A. El-sawalhy the Director of AU-IBAR. He highlighted that fisheries management decisions are often taken with difficulty and without reference to the status of exploited stocks in the EEZs of coastal countries. This has been attributed mainly to absence of relevant information to inform policy and management decisions and also inadequate capacity to interpret and utilize research data even where such data are available. The availability of reliable data is one of the prerequisites for informed decision making in fisheries and aquaculture. Thus, the AU-IBAR developed a training manual to enhance capacity of AU member States in interpretation and utilization of fisheries (and ecosystem) scientific data/information for rational fisheries management. The overall objective of this document is to equip the African fisheries decisions makers,
experts and/or administrators with the necessary skills and knowledge for enhancing their ability to successfully know and appreciate what kind of data could be analyzed to help understand the dynamics of fisheries for rational and sustainable management actions. He thanked the Government and People of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for accepting to host this important event.

Dr Shehu M.U Ahmed, Permanent Secretary of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Federal Republic of Nigeria made opening remarks at the training workshop on behalf of the Chief Audu Ogbeh, Honorable Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development. He alluded to over-fishing as being caused by the weak capacities of fisheries administrators with respect to adequately interpreting and utilizing research data for informed management decisions making. This training serves as a stepping stone towards addressing this area capacity deficiency on the continent.

II. THE TRAINING

a. Setting the scene;

i. Fisheries management systems (targets) in Africa-Setting the scene presentation and the background, objective and expected outcomes of the training workshop.

b. Technical presentations;

The main technical facilitator was the AU-IBAR Consultant, Dr. Pete Fielding, from the OLRAC SPS. The course content was largely based on the Training manual for Senior Fisheries Managers developed by OLRAC for AU-IBAR.

i. Marine environment of the African coast-LMEs and the freshwater aquatic environment of Africa
ii. Water model-Illustration of population dynamics
iii. Introducing the issue of sustainability – what is it?
iv. Sustainable populations and overfishing
v. The effects of unsustainable fishing and the status of African fisheries
vi. Overview of fishing operations – the stages of a fishing operation
   • The complexity of fishing operations - vessel and gear properties, vessel movements, gear deployment, environmental dynamics, fish movement and population dynamics
   • Broad overview of data that can/should be collected at the different stages of a fishing operation
   • The issue of standardization of units in data collection
vii. Overview and discussion of different fisheries management options–Setting management objectives and targets – biological/economic/social
viii. How are fish caught – types of fishing gear
ix. Overview of different data capturing technologies
x. Indicators relevant to fisheries management: Biological (age structure, size at maturity, etc.); Economics (unit prices, revenue, value profitability); Social (fishers, settlements, etc.) and Operational indicators, etc.
xi. Why manage fisheries? Biological, Ecosystem, Economic and Social consequences of not managing fisheries- Tragedy of the commons
xii. Data collection strategies - Brief overview on complete enumeration; sampling; routine data collection and Ad hoc data collection
xiii. Catch and effort data and the relevance to fisheries economics and management- Defining Fishing Effort - the need to standardize Effort. FAO standardization of fishing effort. Ways of limiting effort - Effort Fishing effort and fishing (fishing gear limitations, sea days, fishing seasons, minimum size, marine protected areas, other examples)
xiv. To bring other perspectives to fisheries management, the workshop, the participants were introduced to relevant economic and social issues in fisheries management as well as international instruments available for managing fisheries. The presentations were given by the following resource persons:
   - Economics fisheries management targets by Dr Andrew Baio
   - Social consideration and fisheries management targets by Prof Paul Onyango
   - Managing fisheries in an international context – compliance issues by Prof Benedict Satia
xv. Presentation of experiences by selected member states: current fisheries management practices and challenges;
   - Ghana (Western Africa region)
   - Cameroon (Central Africa Region)
   - Kenya (Eastern Africa Region)
   - Mozambique (Southern Africa Region)
   - Tunisia (Northern Africa Region)
   - Nigeria (Western Africa region)

c. Training exercises and case studies based on group activity and discussion;
The exercises were undertaken in the form of group work and discussions on the following:
i. Complexities and data standardization issues in fisheries data collection in different countries
ii. Fisheries of the African continent – who are the resource users, the scale and type of fisheries and the problem issues with each
iii. Developing data collection programmes for a variety of fisheries – Objectives of fisheries management, what data, how and who to collect, frequency, Biological, social and economic indicators, quality assurance, analysis and storage
iv. Case study on fisheries resources management with examples on the Lobster fishery-scenarios for data analyses and interpretation of results for management decision
v. Exercises on the application of international instruments and national legislative instruments to manage fisheries and combat IUU fishing
vi. Exercises on catch, effort, catch per unit effort, price, revenue and costs and quota allocation mechanisms
vii. Exercises on collaborative data requirements and information exchange for and regional fisheries management organizations to improve the management of shared fisheries
viii. Data requirements for aquaculture development policy making

III. OUTCOMES OF THE MEETING
The meeting among others came up with the following outcomes;

i. The Fisheries Managers were had an improved understanding of many of the issues associated with data collection, analysis and interpretation of scientific data (biological, economic, social and legal) for informed decision making.

ii. The Fisheries Managers were equipped with the necessary tools and knowledge on international instruments and their relationship and influence to different type of fisheries. There was an improved understanding of what instrument they could consider when making management decisions at national, regional or international level.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The workshop contributed to strengthening the capacities of participants in the collection, analysis and use of statistical data on fisheries for making informed decisions. At the end of proceedings, the recommendations were made as follows:

➢ African Union

The participants commended African Union for such an important initiative designed to improve fisheries management and aquaculture development and expressed:

i. The need for allocation of more days for the training to allow for increased and much better understanding of concepts, techniques and skills of data analyses and their interpretation for rational fisheries management and responsible aquaculture. Additionally the participants also requested for a repeat of the training

ii. The need for strengthening research institutions and foster linkages between research institutions and the institutions in charge of fisheries management and aquaculture development

iii. Facilitate establishment of regional or sub regional collaboration for data collection and harmonization of systems, especially for shared fisheries and aquaculture resources

iv. Support the coherence of existing regional and sub-regional initiatives on fishery data collection particularly with regard to the recording of effort

➢ Member States should

i. Implement primary data collection on biological, economic and social issues to support informed and rationale decision-making

ii. Strengthen research institutions and foster linkages between research institutions and the institutions in charge of fisheries management and aquaculture development

iii. Train continuously enumerators and observers/compliance officers on accurate data collection, methodologies and reporting

iv. Member states should increase support (e.g. budget, logistics etc) to data collection to support informed decision-making

v. Implement strategies for regional arrangements to consider Minimum Terms of Conditions for Access including Vessel Day Scheme
vi. Implement provisions of continental and international fisheries and aquaculture instruments and to increase compliance with RFMOs

vii. Implement fisheries management plans and regimes to be supported by appropriate data

viii. Implement scientific and compliance observer programmes. There is need for member states to have provision for costs of observer programmes to be taken charge of by authorised fishing industries/countries/agencies to insure effective and sustainable data collection and observation of the fishing activities at high sea. The costs of the Observer programme should be incorporated in the fishing licences or some appropriate mechanisms to avoid compromising the observers.

ix. The fisheries managers should be guided by the FAO species and Area codes when implementing data collection in their fisheries and aquaculture

x. Ensure that the data collected in the coastal states (national boundary) water is the same as the high seas fisheries particularly for the straddling stocks i.e. harmonisation of standards for data collection

xi. The member states expressed concern over underestimation of total fishery production from their EEZs due to the conditions of reporting data by FAO, e.g. reporting of catch data by flag states, Within the provision of international best practices in fisheries and aquaculture statistical data reporting, participants therefore called for a situation where member states are also able to store and report on fish catches from their EEZs as accurate reflections of their total fisheries production

V. ADOPTION OF THE COMMUNIQUE

The communiqué was adopted by the meeting.

VI. CLOSURE

Closing statement was given by Dr. Simplice Nouala, Chief Animal Production, on behalf of the Director of AU-IBAR. Prof. Ahmed Elsawalhy.