



AFRICAN UNION
**INTERAFRICAN BUREAU
FOR ANIMAL RESOURCES**

**REPORT
ON
“AWARENESS CREATION WORKSHOP ON FISHERY IMPROVEMENT
PROJECTS (FIPs) FOR ECO-LABELLING CERTIFICATION TOWARDS
SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES AND MARKET ACCESS”**

*11th JULY 2015
Abidjan, Cote D'Ivoire*



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I. INTRODUCTION

The African Union- Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resource (AU-IBAR) in collaboration with NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA) is implementing a Fisheries Governance Project titled 'Strengthening Institutional Capacity to Enhance Governance of the Fisheries Sector in Africa'. The project is funded by European Union (EU). The overall objective is to enhance the contribution of fisheries resources to food security and economic growth in Africa. One of the key activities includes 'strengthen capacities for access to market' through strengthening capacity of African Union Member States (AU-MS) in fisheries improvement programmes for eco-labelling certification. This activity is also in support of the implementation of the policy pillar on fish trade and market development in the policy framework and reform strategy for fisheries and aquaculture in Africa

Thus in implementing the above mentioned activity, the AU-IBAR in collaboration with NPCA and Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) organized a meeting in Abidjan, Cote D'Ivoire on the 11th July 2015 with the main objective of creating awareness on eco-labelling certification process in fisheries for informed decision making by the African Union Member States (AU MS). Accordingly, the meeting majorly focused on discussing the criteria for selecting pilot fisheries improvement programmes (FIPs) contextualized to the African fisheries.

The meeting was attended by 79 participants comprising Directors of Fisheries and Aquaculture from AU MS, Non State Actors (NSAs), Private sector, Women and Youth Groups, Development Partners, members of African Fisheries Reform Mechanism (AFRM) Working Groups and individual experts. The list of participants/delegates and observers is presented in Annexure 2.

1.1 Background

Among the food commodities, fish remains the most traded commodity globally. African waters possess majority of living resources however the local populace are not benefiting from the returns of exploiting this high valued resources. The fisheries sector is characterised by lack of capacity to participate in standard setting and adherence to various standards such as sanitary and phytosanitary standards (SPS), market related trade measures such as European Union Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing regulations, traceability, eco-labelling (MSC, Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC), African Ecolabelling Mechanism (AEM)) etc.

Access to lucrative markets remains a challenge for most fish and fishery products. A significant amount of fish products produced from African waters are sold and consumed locally. Fisheries is therefore a source of livelihoods for most Africans. Most products are sold cheaper locally without value addition. In furtherance, post-harvest losses characterise most local catches at landing site; the situation is worsened due to absence of processing facilities and poor human resources capacity in fish processing and preservation techniques. The situation is also undermined by unsustainable fish practices in several target fisheries on the continent. Ecolabelling certification by accredited sources has become a requirement in most fish importing countries and supermarket chains. Market access by African fish products is slowly becoming constrained due to increasing rigid conditions being imposed within and without the continent.

Globally most retailers accept eco-labelled fish and fishery products by recognised bodies such as MSC and Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC). As a result, African fisheries lags behind due to lack of capacity and resources in place. With the recently established African Eco-label Mechanism (AEM) and other mechanism, it is expected that African fish and fishery products would have a recognised certification and

also improved sustainable practices in the fisheries sector. As already noted, there are several agencies for eco-labelling certification of fish products (e.g. MSC, ASC, the ongoing initiatives Eco-Mark Africa, the AEM).

In view of the complexity of issues in African fisheries and critical roles the sector plays in food security and general livelihoods of particularly rural communities on the continent, it is important to create awareness on eco-labelling certification process by various agencies so that AU member states would be in advantage position for informed decision-making of the choice and implementation of these mechanisms.

In addressing these challenges, MSC is implementing Fishery Improvement Projects (FIPs) that are aimed at (a) improving the environmental performance of a fishery (b) involving partnerships (fishers, markets, government, NGOs, funders) (c) providing incentives for fisheries that do not currently meet the MSC standard and (d) framework for management to address governance issues in fisheries. The FIPs is a mechanism developed by MSC to support fisheries that seek improvement toward sustainability and ultimately certification.

The MSC has developed two standards for MSC certification;

- i. fisheries standard for environmental sustainability
- ii. Chain of custody standard for seafood traceability

The process toward certification involves the following steps

- a. Pre-assessment of the fishery to identify gaps in fisheries needing improvement;
- b. Action planning for improvement, responsibilities defined and milestones created;
- c. Implementation involve capacity building, partnership in activities, actions implementation; and
- d. Benchmarking and Tracking to monitor the rate of progress in achieving actions measure against the standard

If successful in the implementation of the action plan and standards are met, fishery will be certified and benefits can trickle down to the fisher folk. MSC gap analysis provides a clear route map to sustainability, allows for the identification of clear targets, brings partners together to work towards clearly defined goals, leads to improved environmental performance, and provides framework to motivate fisheries that want to work towards sustainability.

1.2 Objective of the meeting

The main objective of the meeting was to present and seek agreement from Member states on criteria for selecting pilot FIPs.

2. OPENING SESSION

Dr Simplice Nouala, Chief Animal Production Officer, on behalf of the Director of AU-IBAR introduced the session and outlined the synergies between the Policy Framework for Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa (PFRS) and the Fisheries Improvement Projects (FIPs) and certification.

3. THE MEETING (Technical Session)

The presentation on the Fishery Improvement Projects pilots (FIPs) was done by Ms. Olujemisi Oloruntuyi from MSC who provided a description of FIPs and the process for implementing FIPs (Annexure I). It outlined the potential benefits of FIPs in terms of fish stock conservation and enhancing market access

and how FIPs can contribute to outcomes and objectives of the PFRS. The presentation also provided information and shared experiences on a number of case studies of fisheries going through the FIP process along the MSC standards supported by different partners (Suriname seabob fishery, Ben tre clam fishery, Kenya lobster and the Gambia sole) and the benefits and experiences of those fisheries from the FIP process. The presentation also outlined the selection criteria and qualification of fisheries as pilot projects for FIPs

There was an extensive discussion following the presentation. Some of the discussion was on clarification of the MSC and FIPs process and how challenges to certification are addressed by the MSC.

Discussion on selection criteria for pilot projects in fisheries:

On the criteria for selecting FIPs for piloting, Member States proposed and agreed on the following:

- On the jurisdiction of the pilots, projects at a national and regional level should be considered.
- On the scale of the pilots, Member States proposed it should be open to both small-scale and large scale fisheries.
- It was agreed that the project could start with a minimum number of corridors and not all the corridors need to be represented in the initiative initially.
- Commodity species: Fisheries of commercial importance, including export commodity should be considered. There was a suggestion of potential species to cover. These included bonga, Nile perch, Grouper, Shrimp and other species that have an export focus.
- Government engagement and support.
- Additional partner commitment.
- Presence of other regional or in country projects that could support the FIP.

4. OUTCOMES OF THE MEETING

With the agreement from the member states on the criteria, the stakeholders agreed on the next steps on how to move this process forward, including selecting and implementing the pilots.

The stakeholders recommended that AU-IBAR should set up a FIP Working Group comprising representation from AU-IBAR, WWF, AEM, NEPAD and MSC with AU-IBAR providing leadership and convening of the working group.

The immediate task of the steering group will be to:

- Generate an initial list of fisheries for consideration in the pilots based on the criteria agreed by the Member States. This could be undertaken by MSC and WWF with input from other experts in the region known to both MSC and WWF. It is proposed that this should be completed at the latest by the end of August.
- Narrow down to a smaller sub-set of pilots from the initial list. It is proposed that this could be done through a small-workshop involving members of the working group and perhaps one or two experts. It is proposed that this could hold at the end of September.
- Determining the scope of activities within the selected FIPs. This activity could be done through the workshop suggested above.
- Draft and agree on action plan for follow up. The workshop can agree on a draft action plan that would have been developed prior to the workshop potentially by MSC and Ms Nancy Gitonga.
- Explore funding options collaboration from partners, namely .e. WWF, AU-IBAR, MSC, NEPAD, AEM, etc.

These are suggested actions and responsibilities which can be discussed further as the next stage to follow up on the successful discussion at the Think Tank meeting.

The Member States validated the selection criteria for the FIPs pilots.

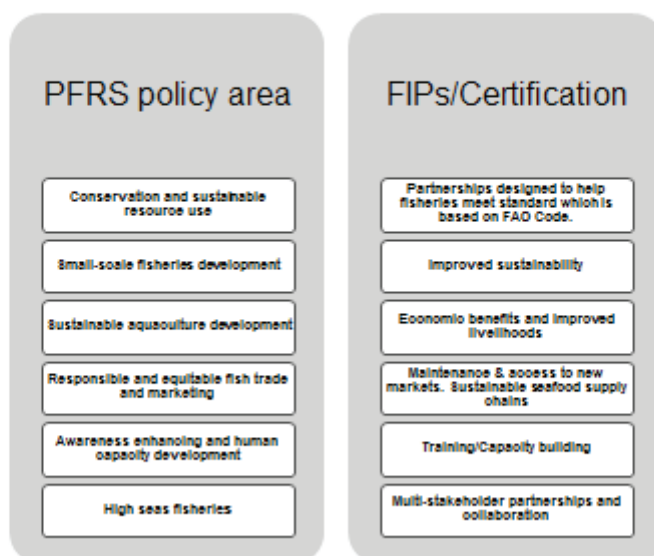
5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the participants agreed that there was need for government engagement and support, and partners' commitment to ensure successful implementation of the FIPs pilots at national and regional level. The successful implementation would help guarantee socio-economic and environmental benefit that would accrue from to the member states consistent with the provisions of the PFRS.

Supporting PFRS implementation through Fishery Improvement Projects pilots (FIPs)



PFRS/FIP Synergies



Follow up actions

- Awareness
- Capacity building
- Select activities from Fisheries Governance and Fish Trade projects with synergies with the concept of FIPs
- Develop selection criteria for selecting AU MS to pilot Fisheries Improvement Programme
- Select pilots/implementation



Objectives of this session

1. Overview of FIPs
2. Discussion of selection criteria
3. Next steps

CERTIFIED SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD



Marine Stewardship Council
Fisheries Improvement Project:
Partnering for sustainability



Outline

- MSC Standards
- Fisheries Improvement Projects (Case studies)
- Supporting the PFRS
- Follow up: Selection criteria for pilots



MSC Fisheries Standard



1. Health of the target fish stock
2. Impact of the fishery on the environment
3. Effective management to ensure future sustainability



Chain of custody standard



1. Certified products are purchased from certified suppliers
2. Certified products are identifiable
3. Certified products are segregated
4. Certified products are traceable and volumes are recorded
5. The organisation has a management system



Fisheries Improvement Project (FIP)



- A deliberate, managed and partnership based effort to improve the environmental performance of a fishery towards sustainability and ultimately certification
- Involves partnerships
- Initial feasibility review against MSC standard
- Intended for fisheries that currently do not meet full requirements for certification



Process



Pre-assessment

- Identifies gaps in fisheries needing improvement

Action plan

- Plan improvements
- Define responsibilities
- Create milestones

Implementation

- Capacity building
- Partner activities
- Actions implemented

Benchmarking and Tracking

- Monitor rate of progress in achieving actions
- Communication with partners

After improvements

- Full assessment and certification as required
- Benefits



Benefits of FIPs

- MSC gap analysis provides a clear route map to sustainability
- Allows identification of clear targets
- Brings partners together to work towards clearly defined goals
- Leads to improved environmental performance
- Provides framework to motivate fisheries that want to work towards sustainability



Suriname seabob fishery-Case study



Partnership

- Government, industry and eNGO

Benefits:

- Management controls formalised in a mandatory Code of Practice
- Seabob working group established by government
- First ever full stock assessment
- Development of harvest control rules
- Government plans to replicate model in other fisheries
- Public Relations
- Creation of market for unknown species



Ben tre clam (Vietnam)- Case study



Partnership

- WWF and Government (Fisheries Dept)

Benefits:

- Data on ecosystem
- Management review
- 30%-50% increase in price
- New markets in Europe and America
- 165% increase in total value at landing



Gambia sole fishery- Case study



Partnership

- USAID, Uni of Rhode Island, WWF, Atlantic Seafood Company, GAMFIDA, Government

Process so far:

- Initial assessment
- Action plan development
- Data collection (local knowledge, scientific)
- Sole management committee
- Management plan

Benefits:

- Support from German retailer (Kaufland)
- Management improvements
- Rockefeller funding for value chain



Kenya lobster fishery



Partnership

- Kenya Coastal Development Project, NEPAD, Kenya fisheries department, WWF, Academia, Government

Process so far:

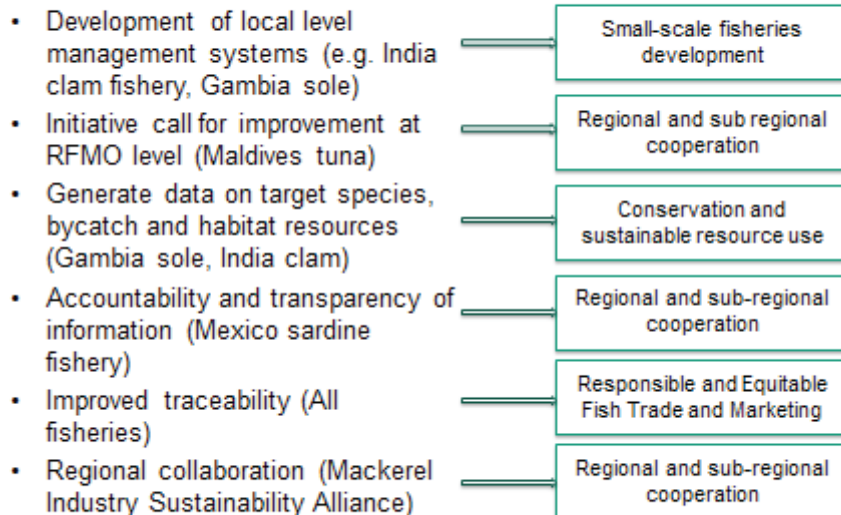
- Pre-assessment
- Action plan development
- Action plan implementation
 - Reference points
 - Data collection
 - Habitat characterisation
 - Prototype lobster trap
 - review of MLS



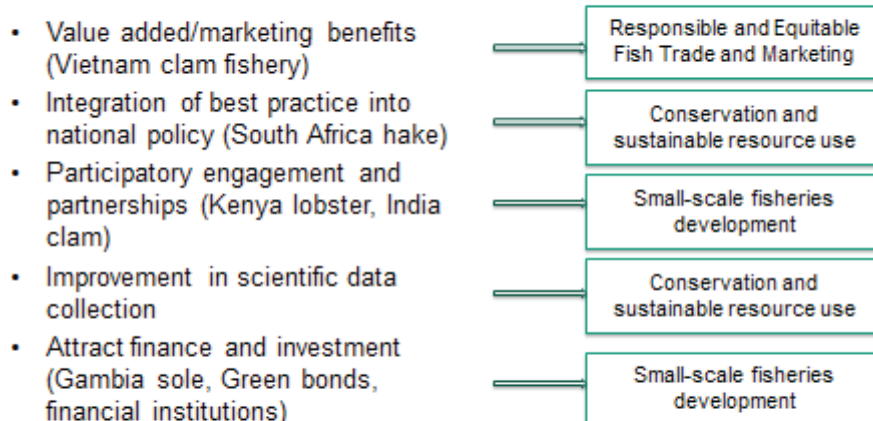
Benefits

- Improved knowledge
 - Management
 - Partnership support
-

Example outcomes and how they can contribute to PFRS



Example outcomes and how they can contribute to PFRS



Exploring collaboration



Potential pilots: Selection criteria

1. **Jurisdiction of the pilot fisheries** – Should the selected fisheries be identified at national level or should they be identified at a regional level?
2. **Scale** – Should the pilots focus on small-scale or large scale fisheries or both?
3. **Representation across the four trade corridors**



Criteria continued

4. **Commodity species** – Are there any species of particular importance that stakeholders would like to focus on?
5. **Likelihood of successful implementation**
6. **Government engagement and support**
7. **Partner commitment** –
8. **Regional or in country projects that could support FIPs**



Discussion

- Which are key criteria?
- Which fisheries meet these criteria?
- What are the next steps?



ANNEX 2: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS



Think Tank Meeting for the Validation of Parameter (Criteria) and Indicators for monitoring the alignment of National & Regional Fisheries & Aquaculture Policies to the Policy Framework & Reform Strategy for Fisheries & Aquaculture in Africa

Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire 9th -11th July 2015

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