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Consultative workshop to validate the functional review and rationalization of fisheries and aquaculture platforms and networks in Africa for anchorage, accountability and enhanced capacities in project implementation

26 to 28 September, 2022

Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Welcome Remarks by Acting Director, AU-IBAR Delivered by Ms Francisca Gonah

- Hon. Mashimba Mashauri Ndaki (MP), Minister for Livestock and Fisheries
- FAO Representative in Tanzania, HE Ms. Nyabenyi Tito Tipo
- Representative of AUDA-NEPAD, Mr Cheikh Tidjane N'Dongo
- Representatives of the Regional Economic Communities and Regional Fisheries Institutions
- Presidents and Members of the continental and Regional Non-State Actors platforms
- President of the Policy Research Network for Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa (PRNFAA), Media Observatory for Fisheries and Aquaculture (MOSFA) and Chair of the Africa Platform for Regional Institutions in Fisheries, Aquaculture and Aquatic Systems (APRIFAAS)
- Representative of the Women organisation (AWFISHNET)
- Representative of the Aquaculture Network for Africa (ANAF)

Excellencies, distinguished ladies and gentlemen

I wish to welcome you all to this very important meeting and for graciously accepting our invitation. I bring you warm greetings from the Acting Director of AU-IBAR, Dr Nick Nwankpa who for unavoidable reasons cannot be with us this morning. He has accordingly requested me to apologise for his absence. It is therefore a great honour to represent him in this important meeting.



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Firstly, as a measure of gratitude, I wish to convey the gratitude and appreciation of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat and that of the Commissioner of Agriculture Rural Economy, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment of the African Union Commission, H.E. Mrs. Josefa Leonel Correia Sacko to the Government and People of United Republic of Tanzania. Special recognition is given to H.E Minister for Livestock and Fisheries in the United Republic of Tanzania for his magnanimity in granting the African Union the privilege to organize this event here in Dar es Salaam. This is a clear illustration of the commitment of the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania to the vision of the African Union towards the aspiration for a ‘Prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development’ as enshrined in Agenda 2063 “the Africa we want”.

H.E. the Hon. Minister, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Facilitation of effective participation of non-state actors in fisheries and aquaculture in decision-making processes by the African Union, RECS and member States is a commitment made by the 2014 Joint Ministerial Conferences of African Ministers for Fisheries and Aquaculture. This was followed by the adoption of the Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture (PFRS) which prioritized the need for empowering non-state actors through formulation of advocacy strategy to ensure inclusion in fisheries management and decision-making process at all levels. The networks and platforms as Non-State Actors are generally aimed at supporting harmonization and coordination in the governance of the fisheries and aquaculture sector within the framework of Africa Fisheries Reform Mechanism (AFRM).

H.E. the Hon. Minister, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you are aware, AU-IBAR jointly with AUDA-NEPAD implemented the Phase One of the EU-funded Fisheries Governance Project (FishGov1) from 2014 until 2018. The project was dedicated towards strengthening institutional capacities in fisheries governance in Africa. The project received several recommendations from stakeholder engagements to establish platforms and networks. A number of them were established: Policy Research Network for Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa



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(PRNFAA), Media Observatory for Fisheries and Aquaculture (MOSFA), Africa Platform for Regional Institutions in Fisheries, Aquaculture and Aquatic Systems (APRIFAAS), African Women Fish processors and traders Network (AWFISHNET), regional platform of non-state actors involved in fisheries and aquaculture (Eastern, Southern, Central and West Africa). Some of them were established with development and technical partners such as WorldFish, World Bank and FAO. Furthermore, Aquaculture Network for Africa (ANAF) was transferred to AU-IBAR from FAO. A reasonable development has been made by the regional non-state actor's platforms in realising anchorage with specialised regions institutions. The West African NSA platform (WANSAFA) is working with PRCM through informal set-up, as well as ECOWAS. AU-IBAR is also aware that EAFRISH has a close working relationship with LVFO; similarly, SANSAFA with SADC. In the North, Arab Maghreb platform is working with UMA. There is however an imperative need to formalize some of these linkages.

H.E. the Hon. Minister, Ladies and Gentlemen,

These platforms and networks are facing different challenges. One of the key challenges is formalization and strengthening of governance instruments and strategic planning for effective operations. The Phase two of the Fisheries Governance project (FisGov2), also funded by the EU has directed efforts towards rationalising, in other words support them to better improve their operations and become autonomous. Institutional anchorage is also promoted in these initial critical stages.

H.E. the Hon. Minister, Ladies and Gentlemen,

You will agree with me that this meeting is timely. AU-IBAR through the FishGov 2 project, have contracted one of the AU recognised Centers of Excellence, National Fisheries Resources Research Institute (NaFIRRI) to: (i) Conduct a functional review of existing platforms and networks in relation to PFRS and AFRM (ii) Support rationalization of existing platforms and networks, ensure institutional anchorage and accountability at the relevant level, enhance their capacities and use them to implement identified activities / pilot projects (iii) Conduct inventory of Non-State Actors in Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa. This meeting is also



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envisaged to raise awareness on the African Union policy instruments. Throughout the course of this meeting, we will hear the outcomes of these studies including the proposed recommendations. I urge each one of us, to provide practical mechanisms moving forward.

H.E. the Hon. Minister, Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, Before I finish my speech, on behalf of the African Union, AU-IBAR would like to take the opportunity to express gratitude to H.E. the Hon. Minister and his dedicated staff for facilitating the organization of this meeting especially the visa issues and for this conducive atmosphere the meeting is being held. My special gratitude goes to the FAO for partnering with AU-IBAR, the scope of partnership on non-state actors have broadened over the years. In this regard, it is worthwhile to recognize the role and contribution of Ms. Lena and Dr. Gueye for their continued collaboration. We also thank the European Union for the dedicated support to initiatives in the fisheries and aquaculture sector.

I wish you all very interactive discussion. Thank you for your kind attention.