



## **Welcome Remarks by Director, AU-IBAR Dr Dr. Huyam Salih**

### **CONSULTATIVE TRAINING WORKSHOP ON STRATEGIC PLANNING WITH REGIONAL NON-STATE ACTORS PLATFORMS IN FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE**

**14- 17 AUGUST 2023  
NAIVASHA, KENYA**

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- Representative of the FAO Senior Fisheries and Aquaculture Officer, Dr Dismass Mbabazi
- Presidents and members of the continental and Regional Non-State Actors platforms
- Representative of the African Women Fish Processors and Traders Network (AWFISHNET)
- Experts
- AU-IBAR Colleagues
- Distinguished ladies and gentlemen
- All protocol observed

I wish to welcome you all to this very important meeting and thank you all for graciously accepting our invitation. I am particularly pleased to physically witness the opening ceremony of this important training workshop on strategic planning especially this being my first official engagement outside the office after assumption of duty as Director of AU-IBAR. At the onset, I wish to reassure you that I will continue AU-IBAR's spirit of promoting and ensuring the Voice of Africa's animal resource sector's Non-State Actor stakeholders is heard and results into tangible outcomes for their livelihoods the sustainability of the sector and the welfare of our peoples.



On this note, I wish to convey the greetings and the appreciation of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC) 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 of Kenya for the hospitality to host this event in this beautiful lakeside resort of Naivasha, as well for the ongoing collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the European Union for their tireless support to AU-IBAR for animal resources development in general and the support to enhancing continental fisheries and aquaculture governance in particular.

**Distinguished delegates**, the issues of enhancing inclusive governance in the fisheries and aquaculture sector was recognized by the African Union Joint Conference of Ministers of Agriculture, Rural Development, Fisheries and Aquaculture in 2014. The Hon. Ministers at that Conference recognized the potential of small-scale fisheries to contributing to poverty reduction, food and nutrition security and socio-economic benefits of fishing communities and beyond and therefore recommended that AUC, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and African Union Member States to facilitate the participation of non-state actors in fisheries and aquaculture decisions making processes. In collaboration with the global body, the FAO, it is my assurance that we remained committed towards creating a conducive environment for Non-State Actors to independently and equitably play their rightful role for the sustainable development of Africa's agricultural sector. This action answers to the call of the AU Agenda 2063, the *Africa*



*We Want* whereby achieving equity and equality in all respects pertaining to human rights and economic empowerment are key issues for Africa's citizenry.

There is no doubt therefore the African Union and partners recognize and acknowledges that the non-state actors are indeed the engines of the continent's socio-economic development and growth. This is because, a well-coordinated and strong NSA, placed them in unique position to engage with the state actors to drive the development agenda of African Union member states and the continent. The challenges the continent is facing arising from population growth characterized by a youthful population, environmental degradation, climate-change, globalization vis-à-vis regional integration cannot be resolved unless the private sector and civil society are inclusive as partners complementing governments to advance Africa's shared agenda for agricultural transformation. It is against this background that Africa's fishery and aquaculture non-state actors are integral stakeholders constituted within the African Fisheries Reform Mechanism (AFRM) that is founded on the principles of inclusivity, representation and collectiveness.

**Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,** before assuming office, I was adequately informed that FAO has formal collaboration with AU-IBAR to implement activities to "Support Strengthening the Institutionalisation and Capacity for Strategic Planning among Non-state actor platforms, including small-scale fisheries, in Africa". I am delighted to know that this training workshop jointly organised by AU-IBAR and FAO exhibits the partnership between these two institutions towards strengthening your capacities in strategic action planning to achieve the continental goals that contribute towards the global Sustainable Development Goals. It is my



outmost belief that these action plans would help you prioritize goals, maximize resources, make better decisions, increasing your organization's efficiency and effectiveness as you implement strategic plans. In doing so, it is envisaged that by the end of the workshop, each region, will have an advanced draft of its own strategic action plan for implementation.

**Distinguished delegates**, this workshop would not have come at a better time when African continent has embarked on the process of developing its own narrative consistent with the aspirations of the African Union agenda 2063. Thus the successful outcome of this training workshop would help boost your moral standing and public confidence towards the formal recognition of small-scale fisheries and aquaculture non-state actors especially by your members at national level, technical level and development partners. The strategic action plans will further facilitate coordination and coherence of efforts among artisanal fishery practitioners and foster credibility, transparency, and ease of monitoring. I am happy to observe that the composition of participants takes into consideration gender dimensions.

**Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen**, I would not complete these remarks without reminding the delegates the continental instruments guiding AU-IBAR and as well as the global instrument guiding the FAO in advancing inclusive governance and participatory approaches. AU-IBAR is guided by Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa (PFRS) and Africa Blue Economy Strategy (ABES). The FAO's key instrument in strengthening the role of NSA is the Global Guidelines for small-scale fisheries.



I wish to inform delegates that it is our intention to submit to the AUC Policy Organs (The specialized technical committee on agriculture, rural development, water and environment) this year for official recognition of the continental NSA platform, AFRIFISH.

**Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,** Before I finish my speech, on behalf of the African Union, AU-IBAR would like to take the opportunity to again express its gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Kenya for smooth facilitation of visas to all AU MS. My special gratitude goes to the FAO for partnering with AU-IBAR, the scope of partnership on non-state actors have rapidly broadened over the years. To the FAO representative, Dr Dismass present here this morning, we hope that the outcomes of this one-year collaboration project with AU-IBAR, under these FAO Letter of Agreement, will activate discussion for the second phase of support. AU-IBAR is looking forward to further collaborating with the global body on these activities. I would like to reiterate my profound gratitude to the European Union for its dedicated support to the African Union's initiatives in the fisheries and aquaculture sector.

**I thank you all once again for honouring this invitation and wish you all very interactive and spirited discussions.**

**The meeting is officially opened!!!**

**I thank you for your kind attention and God bless you all.**