



## INFORMATION NOTE

### BEST PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNT ON FUNCTIONAL INSTITUTIONAL ANCHORAGE BETWEEN RECS AND REGIONAL FISHERIES BODIES/ REGIONAL SEA CONVENTIONS (RFBS/RSC) AND FRAMEWORK FOR EFFECTIVE ANCHORAGE

#### Key Messages:

- Africa is endowed with productive aquatic ecosystems with significant fishing and aquaculture activities that constitute the fisheries and aquaculture sector.
- This is poor coordination amongst actors; lack of coherence in governance instruments and approaches; increasing incidences of Illegal Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing due to weak capacity in the AU member states; weak evidence to foster reform; generally weak capacity and poor infrastructure; and lack of inclusive governance.
- There is need for a deliberate effort to deepen knowledge and understanding of establishing effective partnership amongst RFBs and RECs for the success of the fisheries and aquaculture sector in Africa.
- Building capacities for effective linkages amongst RFBs and RECs should be hinged on best practices, lessons learnt on existing functional institutional anchorage and frameworks that govern these linkages.

#### Purpose:

The purpose of this information note is to present recommendations for Best practices and lessons learnt on functional institutional anchorage between RECs and Regional Fisheries Bodies/ Regional Sea Conventions (RFBS/RSC) and framework for effective anchorage.

#### Background:

Africa is endowed with productive aquatic ecosystems with significant fishing and aquaculture activities that constitute the fisheries and aquaculture sector. The sector provides economic growth, livelihoods and food security benefits to the continent's inhabitants and beyond. However, the sector's potential has not been fully exploited and does not therefore significantly contribute to increased GDP, food security and poverty alleviation in the five regions of the continent. This is in part due to: poor coordination amongst actors; lack of coherence in governance instruments and approaches; increasing incidences of Illegal Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing due to weak capacity in the AU member states; weak evidence to foster reform; generally weak capacity and poor infrastructure; and lack of inclusive governance as observed by the first and second Conferences of African Ministers of Fisheries and Aquaculture (CAMFA I and CAMFA II). This observation evoked a continent-wide intervention in the governance of Africa's fisheries and aquaculture sector, which saw the endorsement of the Policy Framework and Reform Strategy (PFRS) for fisheries and aquaculture in Africa, as a blueprint for facilitating sustainable development in Africa's fisheries. With EU support, AU-IBAR alongside AUDA-NEPAD sought to address these challenges during the FishGov1 project, but further observed: failure to implement the objectives set by the legislation; non-operational financing mechanisms and insufficient budgetary resource mobilization;

proliferation of institutions working concurrently but inconsistently within the fisheries sector; multiple membership to other RECs with distinct agendas; absence of formal agreement between institutions; absence of a coordination mechanism; and lack of functional interactions between the bodies of the two institutions were observed.

#### **Situation at hand:**

Under FishGov-1, an assessment of collaborations between RECs and RFBs revealed numerous inadequacies that include (i). Failure to implement objectives set by the legislation; (ii). Non-operational financing mechanisms and insufficient budgetary resource mobilization; (iii). Proliferation of institutions working concurrently but inconsistently within the fisheries sector; (iv). Multiple membership to other RECs with distinct agendas; (v). Absence of formal agreements between institutions; (vi). Absence of a coordination mechanisms; and (vii). Lack of functional interactions between bodies of the two institutions. Given these weaknesses, primarily as a result of absence of formal institutional linkages, weak collaboration and cooperation between the institutions, there was need for a deliberate effort to deepen knowledge and understanding of establishing effective partnership frameworks that create the right structure and process for success.

It was thought that this could be well accomplished through reviewing and recommending best practices and lessons learnt on existing functional institutional anchorage between RECs and RFBs. Similarly, the importance of enhancing collaboration between institutions responsible for fisheries and aquaculture and multiple resource users (e.g. Regional Sea Conventions, mining, water basin management authorities, forestry etc.) could not be over emphasized; particularly from the point of view of establishing integrated management systems to optimize resources through collaborative management, especially towards improved Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation in Fisheries and Aquaculture.

#### **Recommended best practices:**

Based on examples observed from successful institutional anchorages globally and internationally, the following best practices for functional institutional anchorage between RECs and Regional Fisheries Bodies/ Regional Sea Conventions (RFBs/RSC) are recommended.

- i. Reference to policy instruments and frameworks:** Institution and operation of RFBs should be hinged on existing policies, conventions, rules and regulations that guide operations of fisheries bodies anchored to RECs. A good example of such arrangements is the existence of a Protocol that instituted the ATLAFCO framework and the EAC Treaty signed in 1999 that put in place the EAC. The EAC Treaty provides for Agriculture and food security (Articles. 105–110) and Environment and natural resources management (Articles. 111– 114) and in this way, all RFBs are expected to follow these frameworks in their operations.
- ii. Administrative management structures:** RFBs should have well developed administrative management structures. For instance, there should be provision for Technical Committees that provide advice on scientific and technical issues to the Council of Ministers and Scientific Sub-Committees that provide scientific and technical advice to the Technical Committee and the Secretariat. RFB structure should also be comprised of a secretariat constituted by the Executive Secretary and departments of Fisheries Development and Programming, Human Resource, accredited Financial and Logistics procedures, plus Training and Research Department; which implement the decisions of the Council of Ministers. This structure represents effective control and management of resources. These are key systems that help build confidence in partners that may be interested in funding research and development projects in RFBs.
- iii. Clarity of mandates of partners:** partnerships should be collaborative institutionalized arrangements organized around the common goals and/or collective goods of various stakeholders. Several partnerships have been formed involving RECs and RFBs with a purpose to unify otherwise unconnected entities around a shared sense of mission, and to provide a basis for a collaborative relationship. Such linkages require that partnering bodies have their mandates well spelt out. For example, partnering institutions could have a mandate that is directed towards key elements such as: development of fisheries and aquaculture resources; sustainable management and; environmental protection, towards which they collectively but individually deliver.

- iv. Adoption of climate smart fisheries and aquaculture policies:** Partnering institutions should embrace these tenets of responsible fisheries and aquaculture practices that that should be collectively maintained and encouraged under the partnership arrangement. For example, the Indian Ocean Commission is one example whose mandate strongly emphasizes climate change adoption issues, because environmental issues are high on the scale due to increasing threats arising from global warming and are disastrous in scale not only for the fisheries sector but every aspect of life.
- v. Policy Guidance:** Partnerships should be led by policies and regulations which guide operations of Economic Blocks, including management tools and existing institutional capacity. In this regard, the key practice is that RECs recognize RFBs as technical arms for fisheries management and aquaculture development. This example applies to The Regional Fisheries Committee for Gulf of Guinea (COREP), one of the regional fisheries bodies operating in West Africa; whose mandate includes protection and development of fishery resources as well as promotion of the development of aquaculture in order to maximize the exploitation of potential in aquatic areas and guarantying the welfare of majority of inhabitants.
- vi. Inclusivity of member states:** Institutional anchorage should provide for inclusivity of member states. This practice utilizes a membership model that ensures adequate representation while simultaneously exploring member differences and searching for solutions that transcend individual capacities. It emerges that having effective and inclusive partnerships has tremendous benefits such as: improving performance, and harmonization of policies that govern fisheries and aquaculture management activities.
- vii. Growth in expanded network through mutual benefits:** Effective and inclusive partnerships should be a mechanism for expanded networks which provide an inalienable opportunity for growth. For example, partnerships observed amongst RECs and RFBs enable the parties to: share the burden of larger projects; supplement skill set when specific expertise is needed; share resources; utilization of low hanging fruits and avoiding duplications. Therefore, there are exclusive mutual benefit from joint knowledge, a wider breadth of skills, and a quality end product, while offering an opportunity to collaborate on critical undertakings, bringing new insight to the table, and ultimately creating something that otherwise would not have been possible while acting individually. It is further demonstrated that in a mutually beneficial partnership, each partner takes active interest in the other, while working together to develop shared success. In a scenario where there is balanced commitment and investment from each party, possibilities of driving impact, innovation, and longevity are overall returns.
- viii. Increased capital, resources and opportunity for operations:** Effective and inclusive partnerships should be seen to increase capital and resources for operations. For example, partnerships created across member states cut across larger population blocks and also taps onto a consolidated GDP. In this case, more partners are thus given chance to venture into a common activity. Under this arrangement, partnerships create opportunity to enhance the capacity of partners to access funds for financing common interventions there by solving common problems.
- ix. Enhanced long-term stability:** Institutional anchorages should be given time to grow to stability. Worth noting are linkages that exist between and amongst several RECs and RFBs that were established several years back and have stood the test of time. This therefore suggests that partnerships enhance longterm stability guaranteed by joint decisions and negotiations.
- x. Promotion of transboundary and crosscutting approach to management:** Institutional linkages between RECs and RFBs cut across different member states. Such linkages help member states to benefit from engagements that transcend boundaries, broaden their audiences, and make value creation more inclusive and accessible. These partnerships also bridge different sectors (public, private, and non-profit) adopting new perspectives to interventions.
- xi. Need for partnership management:** Institutions need to relay on partnerships with individuals, groups or institutions such as governments and donors; whose active participation and support are essential for successful implementation of projects and programs as observed in different RECs, RFBs and RSCs. Partnership management amongst fisheries institutions involves following up

on and maintaining effective, productive, and harmonious relationships with partners. This is usually as informal as phone calls, e-mails, and social visits or as formal as written, signed agreements that partners review periodically. It also involves investment of time and resources to maintain partnerships, by communicating regularly with partners. Maintaining effective partnerships helps to ensure that projects stay on track because success or failure of linkages does often not relate to its complexity or the strengths and weaknesses of its participants, but success or failure of linkages is more often determined by how partners handle challenges and opportunities. How partnerships are managed helps the partnering institutions to navigate through complex, changing and often unfamiliar terrain.

**xii. Clarity of leadership:** It is important to be clear about leadership and leadership hierarches in partnerships. This is key to effective leadership institutional anchorage. It helps to define institutional goals and vision and gives a clear understanding of what must be done to reach set partnership goals and helps to identify obstacles partnering teams may have to face while trying to reach for the goal. RECs, RFBs, RSC and LME are anchored severally based on clear missions and goals and this has guided in the development of solid plans to foster linkages and to turn their visions into reality. Clarity of leadership in these linkages has also motivated partnering teams and provided a road map to success. A clear vision breeds passion and creates excitement that drives the leader and the team and strategic clarity provides meaning to the tasks, where each member can work with their own unique skill sets, but with the purpose of promoting a common goal.

**xiii. Prevailing diversity in practices:** It is important to appreciate the benefits of a diversified workforce in instituting linkages amongst regional fisheries institution. In this case diversity and inclusion are regarded as strategic components of institutional anchorage. Analysis of diversity in practice further reveals that global dynamic operational environments, dependence on knowledge and talent shortage are key reasons behind focusing on diversity. The thinking is driven by the assumption that a diverse workforce with an inclusive culture makes fisheries organizations more innovative,

agile and attuned to the needs of different stakeholders in the fisheries and aquaculture sector. For example, gender diversity and diversity of nationality have received great attention because it is usually believed that a heterogeneous workforce is a rich seedbed for ideas and the need for diversity is also driven by factors such as talent non-availability, changing demographics, stakeholder expectations, globalization of the fisheries and aquaculture sector, sustainability and an imperative for innovation which stem from the dynamics of changing fisheries resources and environment around the world.

**xiv. Trust and high commitment levels:**

Partnerships arrangements should avail all comprehensive information to the partners about the goals and direction for the sector's performance and why those goals are important. In this way, stakeholders are aided to understand their roles, expectations, their authority level, and the boundaries within which they must perform their tasks.

**xv. Clear working arrangements.** Partnerships amongst RFBs and RECs should frameworks in form of contracts or agreements that outline specific practices for the partners. These documents helped to establish rules of how the partners manage responsibilities. Partnership agreements help establish clear boundaries and expectations of the partnership in general. Agreements also define some key items such as contributions, distributions, ownership, decision making, dispute resolution, critical developments and dissolution.

**xvi. Performance management systems:** Linkages should be guided by clear performance management systems. These enable leaders in RECs, RFBs and RSCs to track and coach partner performance in real-time. These systems not only ensure that partnering states are working effectively towards aligning partnership goals, but also assist leaders in developing their talents for peak performance. They focus on ongoing conversations, real-time data, and progress updates and are used to improve communication and documentation within partnerships.

**xvii. Learning and information exchange, knowledge and good practices:** Institutional linkages should emphasize knowledge exchange amongst partnering institution. This makes knowledge accessible across partnering institutions. Sharing information

and best practices helps in streamlining work and increases productivity of stakeholders. This practice helps to shrink unproductive time spent on searching for information. Knowledge sharing stimulates workplace innovation, faster and better decision making, improves stakeholder relationship, reduces knowledge loss, builds corporate communities and reduces cost and time.

xviii. xviii) Proper identification of specific barriers to successful partnerships: All hurdles should be removed for institutional linkages to thrive, so as to drive better collaboration with more impact. Such hurdles may include: lack of time, lack of scope and focus, poor organizational culture: people and politics, lack of tools and facilities, lack of confidentiality, and long distances between partnering institutions. Successfully collaborating institutions should learn to go above these challenges so as to effect partnerships.

xix. **Envisaged benefits to partners:** Linkages to partnerships amongst RECs and RFBs should build synergies, increase organizational legitimacy, institutional building and networking. These characteristics provide for innovation, knowledge transfer and capacity building.

#### **Lessons learnt:**

After interacting with the several collaborations that exist between and amongst RECs and RFBs, several lessons come through. For example:

- There is a need to harmonies strategies to ensure that partnering bodies work together to coordinate activities in order to reduce duplications and to save resources productively. There is also need for joint planning, resource mobilization and implementation of agreed upon harmonized areas of concern to avoid duplication.
- Reviewed documents also revealed limited technical manpower among some RFBs, for example amongst committees governing fisheries activities in some member states. In this case, RFBs need to harness expertise from respective government agencies in sister organizations. To actualize this, RFBs may need to draw a framework that enables sourcing for required expertise from related organizations or institutions. Similarly, AU-IBAR should strengthen working relationships and mechanism of operation in form of Memorandum of understanding (MoUs) between RFBs and fisheries agencies to

operationalize these engagements.

- Institution of RECs and RFBs is guided by frameworks and guidelines. This suggests that framework for institutional anchorage especially relating to fisheries and aquaculture sector with environmental protection agencies are key in guiding establishment and operationalization of partnerships.
- Partnerships strengthen national institutions, capacity building and joint research for the effective use and management of marine resources, scientific and technical programs and technical and vocational training courses, as well as the exchange of experiences and best practices among member countries in the spirit of solidarity and partnership.

#### **Some of the Framework that guide effective institutional anchorage:**

- i. The Convention on the Sustainable Management of Lake Tanganyika
- ii. The 2010 Law on Maritime Zones under the National Jurisdiction of Angola
- iii. The 2018 Presidential Decree on the Statute of the Ministry of Fisheries and the Sea and the 2018 Presidential Decree on the Marine Fisheries, Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Management Measures for the year 2018 of Angola
- iv. The East African Community (EAC) Treaty
- v. The Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy for the East African Community
- vi. The EAC regional strategy and implementation plan
- vii. The Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for African fisheries and aquaculture
- viii. Indian Ocean Commission's Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Strategy (2015-2025)
- ix. The 1968 African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, (Algiers Convention)
- x. The 1981 Convention for Cooperation in the Protection and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the West and Central African Region (Abidjan Convention):
- xi. The 1985 Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern African Region (Nairobi Convention)
- xii. The 1995 Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea Against Pollution (Barcelona Convention)
- xiii. The 1996 Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic area (ACCOBAMS)

xiv. The 2001 Protocol on Fisheries, adopted by the Southern African Development Community (SADC Protocol)

**Proposals to improve existing policies and guidelines governing institutional anchorage:**

- There is need to provide for harmonization of administrative structures and management, as regards to reporting to unified committees.
- There is need to strengthen policies pertaining to harmonizing shared resources of concern e.g. water quality management and other aquatic organisms apart from fish.
- Administrators and policy makers in the different collaborating institutions should be seen to play key roles in efforts geared towards ensuring democratic anchorage and governance.
- Planning for institutional anchorage should be based on a comprehensive understanding of the traditions and structures of existing governmental systems of partner states. This is important because governments hold the primary power and responsibility over the content in the joint plans.
- It is important to have a policy on joint planning, resource mobilization and implementation of agreed upon harmonized areas of concern. This helps to avoid duplication and will create effectiveness in implementation of areas of concern.
- There is need to strengthen inclusive policies that effectively guide sustainable fisheries, aquaculture and water management and environmental protection



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