



POLICY BRIEF

ON THE IDENTIFICATION AND ANALYSIS OF PRIORITY INSTRUMENTS RELATED TO FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE IN AFRICA UNION MEMBER STATES (AU MS): A STEP TOWARDS THEIR DOMESTICATION FOR IMPROVED FISHERIES GOVERNANCE

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Executive Summary

The list of global instruments related to fisheries and aquaculture is endless, as the case with those on the environment. Through in-depth studies and expert stakeholder engagement, AU- IBAR identified 25 prioritized instruments for domestication among AU MS. The analysis of these instruments brings clarity on the challenges hindering effective domestication. Against this background, strategies to improve participation of AU MS in effective fisheries governance have been suggested.

1. Introduction

International instruments provide guidance and general directions on promotion and development of fisheries and aquaculture resources with detailed considerations of biological, economic, social and environmental conditions. The instruments are very important to the conservation of the general aquatic environment and biodiversity therein, as well as the overall governance of these resources. In spite of their immense importance and availability of these instruments, their acceptability, integration and use by AU MS remains a major challenge. Indeed, many member countries have failed in their attempt to ensure good fisheries governance practices as a result of this.

2. Methodology

The instruments have been prioritized due to their direct linkages with aquatic environments and resources and their relevance to help in addressing specific issues and challenges related to fisheries and aquaculture on the Continent. Each instrument has been analyzed in terms of its scope, objectives, strengths, weaknesses, and advantages of its domestication.

The following methodological steps were used.

- Desk Review of documents on various international instruments
- Stakeholder (including AU IBAR and representatives if AU MS) engagements involving discussion and prioritization of the instruments
- Content analysis of prioritized instruments
- Proposal of strategies for effective domestication

3. Outcomes

The outcomes of the analysis are:

3.1 The 25 instruments can be classified into three groups including 1) fisheries specific instruments, 2) environmental protection, pollution control and biodiversity instruments and 3) other instruments such as those mooted by the European Union (EU), World Trade Organization (WTO) and International Labour Organization (ILO) among others.

3.2 The inability to domesticate and promulgate into domestic laws of the instruments has seriously affected the conservation and sustainable use of aquatic and environmental resources in AU MS.

3.3 The inadequate domestication of priority global instruments in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors among AU MS has retarded economic development on many fronts.

4. Strategies

We propose the following strategies to improve the participation of AU MS

4.1 Establish measures to promote political will among AU MS to domesticate and implement the priority instruments.

4.2 Enhance the capacity of relevant organizations including governmental and non-governmental to domesticate and implement instruments.

4.3 Establish a platform for awareness creation and sensitization of citizens, media, CSOs, academia and other stakeholders on the benefits of domestication of these instruments and the need to advocate for their implementation.

4.4 Set up mechanisms for tracking, monitoring and auditing domestication processes in AU MS.

4.5 Establish measures to enhance inclusivity by involving local communities, individuals and experts in the domestication of the instruments.

5. Conclusion

Conscientious efforts must be made to adopt effective strategies towards domesticating these instruments to ensure sustainable development in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors.

6. Policy Recommendations

6.1 Adopt strategies for effective participation in the individual regimes. For example, draw lessons from regional institutions, i.e. SADC that had worked on domestication alongside other specialized regional institutions such as COMHAFAT, RECS and AU- IBAR.

6.2 Promote policy coherence within the sector guided by PFRS.

6.3 Develop mechanisms to follow up on actions made by AU MS after domestication

6.4 Invest in the training of next generation of fisheries sector experts and create employment/ job and entrepreneurship opportunities for them to remain in the sector

6.5 Strengthen capacities of AU member states to implement binding resolutions and recommendations of international/regional institutions i.e. ICCAT, etc.

6.6 Involvement of experts (science and admin) from member states to be involved within

ICCAT and other key fisheries negotiations.

6.7 Engage in targeted awareness and partnerships with development partners for sustainability.

6.8 Encourage countries to be more involved in the international development to learn, and develop economically, and for networking.

6.9 Coordination of all fisheries projects and programs in Africa through networks

6.10 Encourage countries to pay memberships to keep right of votes in not to lose them.

6.11 The need to follow up on policies and other emerging issues happening every year, i.e. UNCLOS, etc. is paramount.

6.12 Coordination of all fisheries projects and programs in AU MS through networks is strongly encouraged.

6.13 Develop systems to track the domestication but also tracking of implementation outcomes; and finally.

6.14 Promote organizational structure and culture that allow access to data and information on fisheries and aquaculture.

References and Suggested Sources

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