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INTERAFRICAN BUREAU  
FOR ANIMAL RESOURCES



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**NATIONAL REPORT ON DEVELOPING AN ALL-INCLUSIVE AND  
DELIBERATE STRATEGY FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN  
AQUATIC BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION AND INTEGRATED  
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT IN MALAWI**

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABES	African Blue Economy Strategy
ADP	Area Development Plans
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AEJ	Association of Environmental Journalists
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission.
AU-IBAR	African Union Inter African Bureau for Animal Resources
AWFISHNET	African Women Fish Network
BVC	Beach Village Committee
CBD	Convention on Biological
CCRF	FAO Code of Conduct on Responsible Fisheries
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CoP	Conference of the Parties
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
DARBE	Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy, and Sustainable Environment
DDP	District Development Plans
DoF	Department of Fisheries.
EAD	Environmental Affairs Department
EMA	Environmental Management Act
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FCMA	Fisheries Conservation and Management Act
GoM	Government of Malawi
GPA	Gender Plan of Action
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MNRCC	Ministry of Natural Resources and Climate Change
MS	Member State
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NFAP	National Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy
NGO	Non-governmental Organizations
NGP	National Gender Policy
NSA	Non-State Actors
PFRS	Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for fisheries and aquaculture in Africa
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SEP	State of the Environment Reports
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound

SSF	Small-Scale Fisheries Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-
UN	United Nations
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VDC	Village Development Plans



# I INTRODUCTION

The African Union InterAfrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR) with support from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), is implementing the project on Conserving Aquatic Biodiversity and Ecosystems in the context of the Africa Blue Economy. The project envisions to support selected African Union Member States (AU-MS) to develop all-inclusive and deliberate strategies for mainstreaming gender in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management, as part of the project activities to strengthen gender inclusivity in aquatic biodiversity and environmental management in Africa.

The project commissioned a study to identify priority issues and actions that would enhance the role of women in aquatic biodiversity and environmental management in AU-MS for the purpose of designing a continental strategy to guide gender mainstreaming in conservation programmes and initiatives. The study was completed and the report produced, which was validated by stakeholders of AU member states in December, 2022. Selected AU-MS were proposed to be supported to develop or strengthen all-inclusive strategies that promote gender mainstreaming in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management. Consequently, Malawi was identified as one of the three AU-MS to receive such support under the scope of the project.

It is against this background that AU-IBAR is collaborating with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Climate Change through the Environmental Affairs Department and Department of Fisheries in Malawi organised a national stakeholder consultative workshop in Lilongwe on 3rd and 4th May, 2023. This was a way of providing technical support to Malawian relevant stakeholders to strengthen or develop an all-inclusive and deliberate strategy for mainstreaming gender in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management.

## *1.1 Rationale and Justification*

With 20% of Malawi's surface area of 118,484 km<sup>2</sup> covered by water, aquatic ecosystems provide habitat to an array of biodiversity which support job creation, food and livelihood security. The Malawi National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan II (2015 – 2025) calls for the development of specific policies and legislative frameworks on biodiversity management that take into account the needs of vulnerable groups and gender roles, which is in line with the African Union's Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for fisheries and aquaculture in Africa (PFRS) and the African Blue Economy Strategy (ABES), both advocating for the inclusion of gender and youth in policies, laws and plans in aquatic biodiversity. Therefore, a national consultative workshop was organised in response to supporting Malawi's effort to develop a country specific aquatic biodiversity strategy as an important entry point for gender mainstreaming to enhance the role of women and youth in inclusive aquatic biodiversity conservation and integrated environmental management. The programme of the workshop is shown in Annex I.

## *1.2 Objectives of the Workshop*

The purpose of the meeting was to provide a platform for the stakeholders to explore ways of promoting gender mainstreaming in conservation of aquatic biodiversity and environmental management to address

and remove gender-based barriers. The barriers are often experienced disproportionately by women and strengthen gender inclusivity in aquatic biodiversity and environmental management in Malawi.

Specifically, the workshop was to achieve the following objectives:

- a. Create awareness on AU-IBAR's continental strategy on gender mainstreaming in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management;
- b. Identify priority issues and actions for enhancing the role of women in aquatic biodiversity and environmental management
- c. Identify important entry points for enhancing the role of women and youth in inclusive aquatic biodiversity conservation and integrated management in the context of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan.
- d. Facilitate the drafting of gender initiatives, programmes and aspects in aquatic biodiversity conservation to be included in the revised National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) as an essential tool for attaining the inclusive, transformational development denoted by the blue economy.
- e. Adopt the outcomes or recommendations for further work.

There were 28 participants (Annex 2) to the workshop drawn from government, non-state actors, academic institutions, civil society organizations (CSOs), Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), independent consultants and technical partners on gender and youth. They were hosted by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Climate Change through the Environmental Affairs Department and Department of Fisheries.

### **Expected Outputs**

- a. National stakeholders sensitized on AU-IBAR's continental strategy for mainstreaming gender in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management;
- b. National priority issues and actions for mainstreaming gender in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management identified;
- c. Mechanisms for mainstreaming gender in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management outlined;
- d. Initiatives, programmes and aspects in aquatic biodiversity conservation to be included in the revised NBSAP outlined



*Family photo taken during the National Consultative Workshop to develop a National Strategy for mainstreaming gender in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management in Malawi. Lilongwe, Malawi. 3-4 May, 2023*



## 2. OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE NATIONAL WORKSHOP

Ms Mphatso Kalemba and Dr Friday Njaya jointly facilitated the official opening session. Official remarks and statements were made by the Environmental Affairs Director on behalf of the Principal Secretary for the Ministry of Natural Resource and Climate Change, a statement from AU- Director made by Ms Francisca Gonha on behalf of African Union Inter African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR) Director, and remarks from Dr Motseki Hlatshwayo on behalf of SADC Executive Secretary.

### 2.1 *Official opening remarks by Ms Taonga Mbale Luka*

In her official opening remarks, the Guest of Honour welcomed the participants to the event, which the Ministry of Natural Resources and Climate Change through Environmental Affairs Department and Fisheries Department co-facilitated the national workshop on the development of an all-inclusive and deliberate biodiversity strategy as an important entry point for women's empowerment.

She noted that the workshop formed an important entry point for women's empowerment in aquatic biodiversity and environmental management in Malawi. The Government of Malawi was therefore greatly honored because AU-IBAR had selected Malawi to be amongst the first countries to domesticate the Continental Strategy on Gender Mainstreaming in Aquatic Biodiversity Conservation and Environmental Management as part of the initiative to implement the Africa Blue Economy Strategy.

The Guest of Honour indicated that Malawi aligns itself to the Draft Continental Strategy on gender mainstreaming for Africa that recognizes that women are central towards achieving a blue economy due to their frequent interactions with aquatic environments in their daily economic activities as well as in their efforts to meet the food and nutritional requirements of their households. This was also in line with the Gender Plan of Action which was adopted at the 15th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in December, 2022, with an aim to support and advance gender responsive implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework. She pointed out that the Government of Malawi together with the Government of Canada co-chaired the Friends of Gender at the Conference which advocated for the adoption of the Gender Plan of Action, which showed Malawi's commitment to Gender issues at local, national and international levels.

Ms Luka Mbale then noted that Malawi's Gender Policy of 2015 already recognizes that mainstreaming gender in natural resources and environmental management. She reminded the participants that a number of benefits are outlined therein, which includes enhanced value ownership of the natural resources by all gender groups, sustainable and equitable soils, water, forests and natural resources in general. She therefore stated the Gender Policy therefore ensures that all gender groups value and own natural resources and their environment.

With regards to the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), the Guest of Honour pointed out that Malawi developed a gender-specific target to address biodiversity and gender considerations. Target 15 states that, 'By 2025, the supply of important ecosystem services is safeguarded and restored, considering gender roles and responsibilities of the youth, the poor and the vulnerable. She reminded that

Participants that as Malawi plans to revise its NBSAP to align it to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, an assessment of how best Gender could be incorporated in the revised NBSAP, and specifically with regards to aquatic biodiversity needs to be seriously considered and concrete recommendations made. It was therefore her hope that this would be achieved through the national workshop.

The Guest of Honour also indicated that the Policy Priority Area 5 of National Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy also recognizes the promotion of gender equality in fishing communities and a need to recognize that women and men play important and complementary roles in the governance and development of the sector. She, therefore, expressed her desire that the existing policy instruments would be used to inform deliberations at this workshop and urged the participants to come up with concrete actions on how best to mainstream gender in aquatic biodiversity with appropriate entry points identified.

Lastly, she thanked AU-IBAR for the technical and financial support that have made it possible to hold the workshop. She requested AU-IBAR to continue supporting the country in further domestication of the Africa Blue Economy Strategy, specifically to ensure that Malawi develops its own blue economy strategy or aquatic biodiversity strategy as necessary.

## *2.2 Statement by Ms Francisca Gonah*

A statement from AU-IBAR was made by Ms Francisca Gonah, Senior Human Resources, on behalf of the Director AU-IBAR. She welcomed the participants to the consultative workshop organized by the African Union Inter African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR) in collaboration with the Government of Malawi as a host, and with support from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA).

She conveyed a message from Her Excellency, the Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy, and Sustainable Environment, Amb. Josefa Sacko. Ms Gonah said the Ambassador expressed her sincere appreciation to the Government and People of the Republic of Malawi for accepting to work with AU-IBAR to jointly organize and host the national workshop. This was a clear demonstration of the commitment of the Malawian Government to the aspirations of African Union as enshrined in the AU Agenda 2063 advocating for “A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development”.

Ms Gonah stated that since October 2021, AU-IBAR has been implementing a 3-year project on “Conserving Aquatic Biodiversity in African Blue Economy”, with a vision to place conservation of aquatic biodiversity and ecosystems at the heart of Africa’s Blue Economy Development Agenda, which is a key goal in the AU agenda 2063. She pointed out the project aims to enhance the Policy environment, Regulatory Frameworks and Institutional capacities of AU Member States and Regional Economic Communities to sustainably utilize and conserve aquatic biodiversity and ecosystems as well as environmental management contributing towards socio-economic development.

Ms Gonah underscored the need to conserve the aquatic biodiversity for the sustainability of blue economies in the African continent and thus, deliberate, all-inclusive effort is required to achieve desired conservation outcomes. She expressed worry that women are not fully integrated at all levels in the

use and management of these resources, as in many African settings, women are often marginalized and under-represented in decision-making and active participation in the management of aquatic resources. These challenges are mainly rooted in certain cultural and social norms and practices and unequal rights over land and other natural resources. She therefore noted that in order to develop effective solutions for conserving aquatic biodiversity, gender differentiated roles of natural resource management must be fully analyzed to ensure that both women's and men's specific knowledge in these areas are being equally integrated into programmes and policies. She indicated further that women have the potential to contribute highly to achieving conservation goals for sustainable development.

In the light of this, she said that AU-IBAR commissioned a study last year to identify priority issues and actions for enhancing the role of women in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management and subsequently developed a Continental Strategy for mainstreaming gender in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management. In rolling out the Strategy, AU-IBAR is supporting member states, of which the Republic of Malawi was selected, to develop all-inclusive and deliberate biodiversity strategy as an important entry point for women's empowerment in aquatic biodiversity and environmental management.

She expressed her enthusiasm about this workshop because could offer a unique opportunity to support the Republic of Malawi to develop a National strategy for mainstreaming gender in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management initiatives and programmes, which would enhance effective implementation of Malawi's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP).

She went on further to appreciate the presence of representatives of the Government of the Republic of Malawi, and to the Secretariat of SADC. She indicated that the cooperation and support are very valuable in sustaining the contribution of AU-IBAR to enhancing food security and livelihoods on the Continent.

In conclusion, Ms Gonah thanked the participants, representatives from various Ministries, Departments, Agencies, Experts and Resource Persons for their acceptance of the invitation to this workshop and wished them a successful, interactive and fruitful deliberations and outcomes.

### *2.3 Welcome remarks by Dr Motseki Hlatshwayo*

On behalf of the Executive Secretary of SADC, Dr Motseki Hlatshwayo, the Fisheries Advisor at SADC Secretariat thanked the AU-IBAR for inviting SADC Secretariat to participate in the workshop on development of an all-inclusive strategy for mainstreaming gender in aquatic biodiversity and environmental management. He expressed pleasure for selecting Malawi as one of the Member States supported welcomed the.

Dr Hlatshwayo stated that mainstreaming of gender in aquatic biodiversity conservation and ecosystem management involves ensuring that the different perspectives, experiences, and needs of gender groups are integrated into all stages of conservation and management. He noted that this is important because gender roles, norms, and power relations can influence how people use and interact with aquatic ecosystems, and could also affect how conservation measures are designed and implemented. Including a gender

lens in conservation and management could lead to more equitable outcomes for both people and the environment, and can contribute to long-term sustainability.

The fisheries advisor reminded the participants that the aquatic ecosystem plays a crucial role in sustaining life on earth as it is a source of food, income, and livelihood for millions of people. However, the increasing degradation of aquatic biodiversity and environmental pollution has adversely affected the lives of people, particularly women, who are often the most vulnerable and marginalized in society. He therefore stated that the workshop was important, as it aimed to address the issues by proposing strategic interventions in empowering women to play an active role in conserving and managing aquatic biodiversity and the environment. He emphasized that by empowering women, the idea was not only promoting gender equality but also harnessing the immense potential they possess to contribute towards a more sustainable future.

He further indicated that this workshop resonated well with the International Women's Day celebrated earlier this year on 08 March under the theme "DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality". He therefore noted that people's lives depend on strong technological integration, for instance attending a course, calling loved ones, making a bank transaction, or booking a medical appointment. Everything currently goes through a digital process. While innovation and technology have the power to transform lives, he said that there were still many barriers to equality. Access to inclusive digital technologies and education was therefore critical as globally, there are 259 million fewer women having access to the internet than men, even though they account for nearly half the world's population. He also pointed out that innovation and technology could play a crucial role in mainstreaming gender in aquatic biodiversity conservation. For instance, the integration of modern techniques such as remote sensing, artificial intelligence, and machine learning could support the development of gender-responsive conservation strategies. These approaches can provide real-time data and insights that can inform decision-making processes and enhance the targeting of conservation actions towards specific gender-related needs and concerns. Additionally, technology-enabled platforms such as mobile apps and social media can help engage women and other marginalized groups in conservation efforts, enhance their participation, and facilitate their access to relevant information and resources. Overall, science-based innovations and technologies can help bridge the gender gap in aquatic biodiversity conservation and contribute to more inclusive and equitable outcomes.

He then reminded the participants that the Government of Malawi launched the Malawi Network for Women in the Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector early in 2022, which was a huge step towards ensuring that women in fisheries and aquaculture achieve gender equality by 2030. He therefore expressed hope that the workshop would lead to effective, innovative, and sustainable solutions for gender mainstreaming in aquatic biodiversity and environmental management. He finally thanked the AU-IBAR for providing leadership and support to the Member States and Regional Economic Communities for the betterment of the Continent.



*Opening session of the workshop*

### 3. PROCESS OF THE NATIONAL CONSULTATIVE WORKSHOP

The process of the workshop was jointly coordinated by the Environmental Affairs Department (EAD) and Department of Fisheries under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Climate Change, which is the national focal point for the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD). The workshop was interactive with papers presented followed by discussions in plenary during which the vision, purpose and objectives of the Strategy (separate document) were discussed and agreed upon.

For further active participation and focused areas of discussion, three groups were formed to discuss and prioritize key issues to inform the Strategy. The groups were based on area of expertise or experience and their presentations were made in plenary followed by discussions for clarifications or additional input (Annex 3). The discussions were based on prioritized issues, after which the priority areas were identified and agreed actions outlined. The timeframe was agreed to be from 2023 to 2030 depending on subsequent steps like revision of the NBSAP. Finally, a communiqué for the workshop was drafted prepared as one of the expected deliverables of the workshop and then shared in soft copy to all participants. After discussions and feedback, the communiqué (Annex 4) was finally adopted.

## 4. SUMMARY OF PRESENTATIONS

### 4.1 Individual presenters

This session was first facilitated by Ms Yasinta Ganiza who invited presenters to make their presentations. Several papers as outlined in Annex 4 were presented followed by plenary discussions. The technical presentations included the following:

- a. (a) Overview of the project on Aquatic Biodiversity Conservation in the context of the African Blue Economy Strategy;
- b. (b) the Continental Strategy for Gender Mainstreaming in Aquatic Biodiversity Conservation and Ecosystem Management in Africa;
- c. (c) Overview of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, Target 7, 15 and the Kunming – Montreal Framework Target 23 and Gender Plan of Action;
- d. (d) Overview of the Malawian Fisheries Policy and Gender Provisions;
- e. (e) Capacity development gaps and technical needs for enhancing gender mainstreaming in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management;
- f. (f) Overview of the National Gender Policy; and
- g. (g) Overview of the national policy of Parks and Wildlife – Aquatic Biodiversity and Gender.

During plenary, the Question and Answer session was done and following key issues were identified. The key issues that were raised were as follows:

- a. Gender mainstreaming – In mainstreaming gender in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management programmes, stakeholders must ensure that the full suite of gender mainstreaming continuum (the 5 stages of gender mainstreaming) are taken into consideration. Assessment of strategies and initiatives on aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management must follow the gender continuum.
- b. To increase women rangers in wildlife conservation, social constraints that prevent women from taking full advantage of the sector should be addressed
- c. Innovations and technologies that address gender issues are lacking in Malawi.
- d. Population growth should be considered as an important issue in gender mainstreaming. Stakeholders involved in population issues should be brought to the table.
- e. Highlight the issues of involving champions in the various stakeholder groups to promote aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental development.
- f. Focus effort on mainstreaming gender in the commercial fisheries sector.
- g. The biodiversity strategy lacks a clear strategy on how to mainstream gender.
- h. Opportunities for gender mainstreaming identified in the Continental Strategy should be tied into the Malawi process for gender mainstreaming in the NBSAP. We need to identify and outline the gender

responsive and transformation action plan in NBSAP

- i. It takes quite long to review expired strategy documents and this is associated with financial constraints and other resource constraints.
- j. Aquatic biodiversity conservation should not be restricted to the fisheries sector alone. There are other important sectors for the blue economy which should be considered as well. Other fields should be developed e.g. Taxonomists
- k. Documentation of qualitative data is relevant for gender mainstreaming. Very little is published on gender issues in Malawi.
- l. Policy gender gaps based on targets: Although gender mainstreaming in aquatic biodiversity and integrated environmental management has been on top of the agenda for Malawi, some potential policy and capacity obstacles still exist. For example, the 2020 report by the FAO-NORAD Small-scale project survey to map women's small scale fisheries organizations in Malawi revealed that most of the women organizations needed assistance in formalizing their organizations, funding for operation of group activities, and technical training on fisheries. This means that addressing these capacity gaps would lead to improved delivery and participation of women in the blue economy, which needs development of its strategy.
- m. Weak governance on gender inclusion: Gender equality and women's empowerment have been central to building resilience due to the relevance of women's traditional and local ecological knowledge in management strategies (UNEP, 2020). Women's understanding of the environment and their role as custodians of traditional knowledge could have relevance in co-creation of resilience and adaptation strategies in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management (FAO & ARC, 2021). Women usually engage in inshore fishing, However, due to declining fisheries resources over the past two decades, some women like on Lake Malawi have tended to go in deeper offshore areas as well to exploit Usipa (*Engraulicypris sardella*).
- n. Gaps in gender inclusion in programming processes: There is limited aquatic biodiversity gender inclusion in local government programming processes: while gender issues in aquatic conservation and management are highlighted at central government level, there is limited coverage of the same at local government levels. Programming processes at district council level including preparation of the State of the Environment Reports (SEPs) and Village Development Plans (VDCs), Area Development Plans (ADPs) and District Development Plans (DDPs) have limited inclusion of gender issues which makes the subject be well known at high level.
- o. Inadequate understanding of social issues and limited innovation along aquatic resource value chain: Some cultural beliefs and traditional norms tend to restrict women's access to certain aquatic resources. For example, women are not allowed to buy fish at Mbenji Island on Lake Malawi because that is traditionally considered a taboo. Similarly, on Lake Chilwa, women cannot buy and process fish in

temporary shelters constructed within the lake, due to social nature associated with fishing by men, as they go fishing half-naked. Consequently, women are denied first hand access to resources rather than paying more for the same after the resources pass through several middlemen. This situation creates panic and vulnerability to immoral behaviour like “sex for fish” just to have access to fish. Socio-cultural barriers are also reported along the aquatic value chain including production, processing and access to markets. Therefore, these issues promote gender inequality and threaten the livelihoods of women some of whom head families.

- p. Constraints related to gender division of labor – Gender norms often impose restrictions on women’s mobilities, limiting their access to aquatic resources and related livelihood activities. Norms that assign women productive and reproductive roles to reproductive work and household duties have contributed to low savings of women to engage in business and entrepreneurship.
- q. Inequalities in accessing resources and benefits: Access to aquatic resources has been gendered, and women have lower access to aquatic and environmental resources compared to men in Malawi. Minimal efforts have been done in understanding the gender-specific constraints faced by women fish traders, and gearing support towards enhancing their efficiency of operations. As well, the rights, access, and control over resources by women and youth have been ignored.
- r. Climate change and women’s vulnerability to shocks – Women have been disproportionately vulnerable to environmental risks and disasters and gender-based violence amid degradation of aquatic and environmental resources (IFRC & UNICEF, 2021; UN Women, 2021a). The decline in aquatic resources increase women’s vulnerability to engaging in sexual exploitation for accessing fish or other aquatic resources. For instance, women and girls engage in transactional sex in situations where fish landings are low.
- s. Gender-based violence: Women experience increased vulnerability to gender-based violence in the fisheries sector attributed to socio-cultural and harmful social norms. Gender power imbalance have restricted women to access good markets for fish in markets. Women have less voice to demand good prices for their fish products at markets. This is mainly due to powerful young middlemen (Andagwira) and do not have any regard as to whether the women would make any good returns from their businesses or not.
- t. Limited capacity to monitor and evaluate gender mainstreaming: Gender mainstreaming into aquatic resource conservation and ecosystem management requires a robust participatory monitoring and evaluation framework. Various partners including the government, NGOs, CSOs, media, academic institutions and the private sector should be involved to uphold good governance based on the underlying principles of participation, transparency and accountability.
- u. Limited engagement of non-state actors: Engagement of non-state actors like African Women Fish Network (AWFISHNET) and Association of Environmental Journalists (AEJ), media practitioners in gender mainstreaming into aquatic biodiversity and integrated environmental management is paramount



to ensure that the initiatives are on track. Resource mobilization should not only be left to the Government alone but also to other partners.

The participants convened in 3 working groups to identify issues, gaps, challenges and priority actions for mainstreaming gender in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management programmes and initiatives in Malawi. Each working group presented their main discussion points in plenary and received feedback for input into their final submissions.

## **4.2 Group presentation**

Ms Chikondi Pasani was the facilitator of this session. Three working groups presentations were made in plenary by the rapporteurs of the groups as summarized below:

### ***Group 1: Gender mainstreaming - Identify the current issues women and youth are facing in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management and propose priority actions for gender mainstreaming***

#### **Issues and Recommendations:**

- a. Engender the objectives and actions proposed for the strategy
- b. Ensure that key messages for communicating gender issues are tailored according to the stakeholder groups being targeted.

### ***Group 2: NBSAP Target on Aquatic Biodiversity - Identify the gaps, recommend changes on Target 7 of the NBSAP based on relevant Targets of the Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework***

#### **Issues and Recommendations:**

- a. The Ministry of Gender should share the available gender mainstreaming guidelines with relevant stakeholders to ensure that the process of mainstreaming gender issues aligns with biodiversity issues.

### ***Group 3: NBSAP Target on Gender - Identify gaps and recommend changes on target 15 of the NBSAP based on Target 23 of the Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework***

#### **Issues and Recommendation:**

- a. Indicators proposed should be engendered and not presented as outputs
- b. Emphasis should be laid on enhancing institutional coordination and collaboration considering the transboundary nature of the aquatic environment.

## 5. VISION AND PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The workshop deliberated on the vision, purpose and objectives facilitated by Dr Friday Njaya. The following were discussed and finally reviewed.

### 5.1 *Vision of the Strategy*

An all-inclusive and gender transformative strategy that promotes sustainable aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management in Malawi.

### 5.2 *Purpose*

The Strategy is developed to guide effective gender mainstreaming in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management efforts in Malawi. It is aimed at supporting gender transformative and youth inclusive interventions in aquatic biodiversity conservation, sustainable use and integrated environmental management.

### 5.3 *Objectives of the Strategy*

The workshop agreed to have the following objectives of the Strategy:

- a. To ensure that aquatic biodiversity and ecosystem management policies and programs are sensitive to gender equality and women empowerment issues.
- b. To promote advocacy on gender equality and women's empowerment in aquatic biodiversity conservation and ecosystem management.
- c. To strengthen capacity of the women and youth in undertaking their responsibilities and rights over aquatic and environmental resources based on the rights-based approach.
- d. To promote equal and equitable rights and active participation of women and youth in research and innovation.
- e. To adopt and scale up participatory management processes that involve use of women's traditional knowledge in aquatic biodiversity conservation and integrated environment management for sustainable use.
- f. To develop a participatory monitoring and evaluation framework at community, district and national levels to track progress on gender mainstreaming in aquatic biodiversity conservation and integrated environmental management.

## 6. PRIORITY AREAS AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

Dr Motseki Hlatshwayo and Dr Friday Njaya were co-facilitators of this session. After lengthy deliberation, the participants agreed that the Strategy should have five priority areas after agreeing on the vision and purpose. The key priority areas include Policy and Governance Reforms; Capacity Development, Research and Innovation; Advocacy, Communication and Stakeholder Engagement; Socio-cultural and Behavioral Change; and Monitoring and Evaluation. The propriety areas, objectives and expected outcomes are outlined below.

### *VISION, PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES*

#### **Vision of the Strategy**

An all-inclusive and gender transformative strategy that promotes sustainable aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management in Malawi.

#### **Purpose**

The Strategy is developed to guide effective gender mainstreaming in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management efforts in Malawi. It is aimed at supporting gender transformative and youth inclusive interventions in aquatic biodiversity conservation, sustainable use and integrated environmental management.

#### **Objectives of the Strategy**

The Strategy has the following specific objectives:

- a. To ensure that aquatic biodiversity and ecosystem management policies and programs are sensitive to gender equality and women empowerment issues.
- b. To promote advocacy on gender equality and women's empowerment in aquatic biodiversity conservation and ecosystem management.
- c. To strengthen capacity of the women and youth in undertaking their responsibilities and rights over aquatic and environmental resources based on the rights-based approach.
- d. To promote equal and equitable rights and active participation of women and youth in research and innovation.
- e. To adopt and scale up participatory management processes that involve use of women's traditional knowledge in aquatic biodiversity conservation and integrated environment management for sustainable use.
- f. To develop a participatory monitoring and evaluation framework at community, district and national levels to track progress on gender mainstreaming in aquatic biodiversity conservation and integrated environmental management.

## 7. PRIORITY AREAS AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The Strategy has five priority areas based on the analysis of key issues on gender and the youth. The key priority areas include Policy and Governance Reforms; Capacity Development, Research and Innovation; Advocacy, Communication and Stakeholder Engagement; Socio-cultural and Behavioral Change; and Monitoring and Evaluation. Their objectives and expected outcomes are outlined below.

### *7.1 Policy areas, objectives, expected outcomes and strategic action*

#### **Priority Area I: Policy and governance reforms**

In reviewing Gender Action Plan, UNEP reported about five areas in the plan could be more useful in supporting five areas in supporting national implementation, focusing on funding, capacity development, technical advice, partnerships, and implementation/reporting mechanisms. Proposals included: ensuring adequate financing and technical assistance; providing capacity-building and guidelines to support implementation; enhancing public-private partnerships; obtaining buy-in from relevant sectors to develop and implement the Plan; integrating the Plan in national reporting and national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs); and enhancing the links between the Plan, NBSAPs, and sectoral policies. Therefore, putting in place gender-responsive policies and programmes with adequate institutional and financial support will help to narrow the gender inequalities in aquatic biodiversity conservation and ecosystem management.

**Strategic objective 1.1:** *To ensure that aquatic biodiversity and ecosystem management policies and programs are sensitive to gender equality and women empowerment issues.*

#### **Expected outcomes:**

*1.1.1 Gender analysis and budgeting process conducted to inform and emphasize gender mainstreaming in the design, formulation, implementation, and monitoring of policies relevant for aquatic biodiversity conservation and ecosystem management.*

*1.1.2 Effective engagement of non-state actors including civil society groups and faith-based organisations on the promotion of good governance, transparency and accountability in the implementation of transformative gender-based interventions in the conservation of aquatic biodiversity and integrated environment.*

*1.1.3 All-inclusive District Development Plans prepared focusing on aquatic biodiversity and integrated sustainable environment.*

*1.1.4 Bye-laws established at district council level to include equal access to fishing grounds by women, men and the youth*

*1.1.5 Mechanism to sustain funding for gender mainstreaming initiatives developed*

#### **Strategic actions:**

*1.1.1.1 Examine the gender mainstreaming strategy context and synthesize results for financing and human resource needs at community, district and national levels considering the specific issues at each level.*

*1.1.2.1 Capacitate non-state actors promotion of good governance, transparency and gender-responsive protocols and policies to address identified gaps*

- 1.1.2.2 *Map our existing non-state actors including civil society groups and faith-based organisations on the promotion of good governance, transparency*
- 1.1.3.1 *Develop and implement District Development Plans (DDPs) and budgets in aquatic biodiversity and integrated environment*
- 1.1.4.1 *Develop by-laws on equal access to fishing grounds by women, men and the youth conservation and integrated environmental management.*
- 1.1.5.1 *Establish self-financing policy options to support implementation of the outlined actions in this Strategy*

## **Priority Area 2: Advocacy, communication and stakeholder engagement**

**Strategic objective 2.1:** *To promote advocacy and build engagement on gender equality and women's empowerment in aquatic biodiversity conservation and ecosystem management.*

### **Expected outcomes:**

- 2.1.1 *Increased advocacy on gender and youth engagement in aquatic biodiversity conservation and integrated environmental management*
- 2.1.2 *Increased awareness on gender-responsive and rights-based approaches among stakeholders*
- 2.1.3 *Increased use of gender-responsive communication*
- 2.1.5 *Enhanced recognition of women's knowledge and skills in aquatic biodiversity conservation; and environmental management*

### **Strategic actions:**

Interventions can target women inclusivity through gender-responsive communication and stakeholder engagement approaches with a focus on the following:

- 2.1.1.1 *Develop and disseminate messages on women and youth engagement in the aquatic biodiversity conservation and integrated environment at community, district and national levels*
- 2.1.2.1 *Formulate and disseminate gender-responsive communication strategies and human rights using media to engage different members of the society including men, women, school children and youth on aquatic conservation and ecosystem management related issues taking into consideration cultural settings.*
- 2.1.3.1 *Identifying champions at community, district and national levels to use apply gender responsive communication strategy.*
- 2.1.4.4 *Engage women in various networks and platforms to use their knowledge and skills in aquatic biodiversity conservation; and environmental management.*

### **Expected output**

- 2.1.5 *Increased participation of women in commercial use of aquatic biodiversity and ecosystem management.*
- Strategic actions*
- 2.1.5.1 *Provide support to women and youth SMEs in the sustainable use of aquatic resources.*
  - 2.1.5.2 *Establish mechanisms for stakeholder and consultative engagements for increased ownership; sharing of knowledge and experiences.*

### **Priority Area 3: Capacity development, research and innovation**

**Strategic objective 3.1:** *To strengthen women's capacity in undertaking their responsibilities and rights over aquatic and environmental resources based on the rights-based approach.*

#### **Expected outcomes:**

*3.1.1 Women gain the required skills, knowledge, information and access to rights over resources, and taking leadership roles in aquatic biodiversity conservation for commercial use and integrated environmental management.*

*3.1.2 Women are in the rightful leadership positions and power to engage in policy and legislative framework development and review processes in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management*

*Strategic actions:*

*3.1.1.1 Strengthen the knowledge and skills in gender mainstreaming in aquatic biodiversity conservation and ecosystem management among government institutions; academia and research institutions; private sector; and community and social groups for building capacities to implement gender mainstreaming strategies.*

*3.1.1.2 Increase investment in strengthening women's knowledge and skills in aquatic biodiversity conservation and ecosystem management such as technical, managerial, financial, leadership, conflict management and resolution, strategic planning, and innovation and technology.*

*3.1.1.3 Promote other ecosystem conservation programs including "Waste for wealth" as an alternative source of livelihood for the women in the fishing communities.*

*3.1.2.1 Increase women's participation in electoral processes to gain influential positions in various committees related to aquatic biodiversity conservation and integrated environmental management*

*3.1.2.2 Support rights-based approaches by considering women's rights to enable them equal participation, and recognize women as key actors in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management.*

*3.1.2.3 Provide support to women's and youth organisations through social capital development*

*3.1.2.4 Support women into access to finance through access to credits and loans with participation in online or digital banking facilities like mobile or agent banking.*

*3.1.2.5 Improve employment conditions by establishing child care centres at work, providing mother benefits at work and supporting capacity development and mentorship programmes enabling women in breaking the barriers to career development*

*3.1.2.5 Incentivise women's activities including providing specialized funding opportunities on gender research, and providing entrepreneurship opportunities for women; involving women in research and innovation regarding aquatic resources*

**Strategic objective 3.2:** *To promote equal and equitable rights and active participation of women in research and innovation*

#### **Expected outcome:**

*3.2.1 Women actively participate in aquatic biodiversity research and innovation.*

*Strategic actions:*

*3.2.1.1 Build capacities of academic and research institutions on gender, aquatic biodiversity conservation and integrated environmental management sciences.*

*3.2.1.2 Conduct gender-responsive research and innovation by supporting timely and efficient sex-disaggregated*

data collection

3.2.1.3 *Enhance the development of value additional innovative technologies to reduce post-harvest losses and improve /more income for women.*

#### **Priority Area 4: Socio-cultural and behavioral change**

An all-inclusive aquatic biodiversity conservation and integrated environmental management in Malawi is necessary for socio-economic growth of the country. Cultural biodiversity plays an important role of sustaining aquatic biodiversity ecosystem services and therefore its loss affects local communities in their role as the creators, custodians and innovators of biological knowledge and resources. Over the past years, however, there has been a growing concern on the loss of cultural diversity and traditional knowledge is linked to the loss of biological diversity. Some aquatic ecosystems have been designated as sacred or protected areas for a number of reasons. For example, Mbenji Island and some places on Lake Chilwa and graveyards have been protected areas where harvesting of aquatic resources like fisheries are prohibited. Despite recognition of the importance of the traditional and cultural values in aquatic resource management, some cultural values and traditional beliefs appear to restrict women to access the resources.

**Strategic objective 4.1:** *Adopt and scale up participatory management processes that involve use of women's traditional knowledge in aquatic biodiversity conservation and integrated environment management for sustainable use.*

#### **Expected outcomes**

4.1.1 *Participatory management processes that involve women, instead of restrictive bans for environmental protection, is adopted and scaled up.*

4.1.2 *Participation of women, and their traditional knowledge is applied to ensure sustainable use of aquatic resources is promoted.*

4.1.3 *Transformative approaches for addressing gender norms constraining women's access to aquatic resources are applied.*

##### *Strategic actions*

4.1.1.1 *Increase equal and equitable access to aquatic resources for aquatic health systems and sustainable livelihoods.*

4.1.2.2 *Promote participation of women and their traditional knowledge on aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management for sustainable use of the resources.*

4.1.3.3 *Adopt and use transformative approaches for addressing gender norms constraining women's access to aquatic resources*

##### *Strategic outcome*

4.1.4 *Educational campaigns on male engagement and community engagement approaches for identifying and addressing the underlying causes of gender inequality are mounted.*

##### *Strategic action*

4.1.4.1 *Conduct public awareness campaigns on promotion of male and community engagement approaches for identifying and addressing the underlying causes of gender inequality*

4.1.4.2 *Increase equal and equitable access of women, men and the youth to aquatic resources for aquatic health systems and sustainable livelihoods.*

## **Priority Area 5: Monitoring and evaluation**

Monitoring and evaluation are essential in the implementation of this Strategy. Various stakeholders including government, actors in the use of the aquatic resources, non-state actors, civil society groups and the private sector need to be capacitated with relevant monitoring and evaluation skills. The stakeholders will also need to have adequate financial resources and adequate human resources. Funding sources will be primarily from the sustainable use of the aquatic biodiversity and ecosystem services through mechanisms like established trusts, commissions (in cases where transboundary ecosystems exist), access to benefit sharing arrangements and levies at council level. The Strategy will be reviewed depending on emerging issues from within and outside Malawi.

The monitoring systems for evaluating the effectiveness of aquatic biodiversity and integrated environmental management programme implementation need to be carefully designed. Considering that gender issues have dynamic and complex nature due to their embeddedness in the socio-cultural contexts, monitoring implementation of this Strategy will help in capturing the lessons and making required changes at various levels. Information gathered during monitoring can be used in reprioritization of the gender issues and allocation of resources by the public, partners and private sector.

**Strategic objective 5.1:** *Develop a participatory monitoring and evaluation framework at community, district and national level to track progress on gender mainstreaming in aquatic biodiversity conservation and integrated environmental management.*

### **Expected outcomes:**

- 5.1.1 Monitoring and evaluation frameworks for mainstreaming gender in aquatic biodiversity conservation and integrated environmental management at community, district and national levels established and used by all stakeholders.*
- 5.1.2 Domestication of various gender responsive national, regional and global instruments achieved with participation of relevant actors involved in aquatic biodiversity conservation and integrated environmental management.*
- 5.1.3 State of the Environment Reports (SEPs) prepared and circulated to all stakeholders with gender inclusion.*
- 5.1.4 All-inclusive District Development Plans with set targets, indicators and responsible institutions for sustainable use of aquatic resources and ecosystem services.*
- 5.1.5 Civil society and advocacy groups to monitor engagement of women, men and the youth in aquatic biodiversity conservation and integrated environmental management at all levels (community, district and national) established and given necessary capacity.*
- 5.1.6 Self and supported funding mechanisms established for implementation sustainability.*

#### **Strategic actions**

- 5.1.1.1 Develop a monitoring and evaluation framework for gender mainstreaming and following up policy implementations at various levels.*
- 5.1.2.1 Establish Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound (SMART) indicators for domestication of global and regional gender policy and strategic frameworks and guidelines across different levels (community, district and national) levels.*



5.1.3.1 Ensure gender inclusion in the preparation of the State of Environment Reports (SEPs) with respect to aquatic biodiversity and integrated environmental management.

5.1.4.1 Develop all-inclusive District Development Plans with set targets, indicators and responsible institutions for sustainable use of aquatic resources and ecosystem services.

5.1.5.1 Capacitate advocacy groups to monitor engagement of women, men and the youth in aquatic biodiversity conservation and integrated environmental management at all levels (community, district and national).

### **Expected Outcome**

5.1.6 Self and supported funding mechanisms established for implementation sustainability.

### **Strategic Actions**

5.1.6.1 Partners collect data and information on women's roles and the nature of their work in the aquatic biodiversity and integrated environmental management with application of participatory processes that support informed policymaking.

5.1.7.1 Establish self and supported funding mechanisms and link with the already existing ones like Climate Change Fund, Access to Benefit Sharing and grants) and research grants to achieve implementation sustainability.

5.1.8.1 Train women groups (cooperatives and associations and networks) and local and national level partners on resource mobilisation

5.1.9.1 Apply "Payments for ecosystem services (PES)" principle

5.1.10.1 Develop by-laws on collecting levies on aquatic resources for use by the communities including women

### **Expected outcome**

5.2.7 Reviews of gender responsive national policies, strategies and action plans conducted regularly

Strategic action

5.2.7.1 Identify gaps in NBSAP on emerging issues on the aquatic biodiversity conservation with gender inclusive.

## **8. WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS**

Dr Alberta Sagoe facilitated this session. She outlined several recommendations as follows and also discussed a communique (Annex 5). During discussions in plenary, the following recommendations

- a. As the strategy is still under development, there is the need for involvement of relevant experts to enhance development of an all-inclusive strategy.
- b. AU-IBAR is requested to continue supporting Malawi to develop a National blue economy strategy.
- c. There is the need for further consultation of the draft strategy once completed at various levels.
- d. There is a need to validate the strategy for ownership.
- e. SADC proposed a policy brief developed for the Strategy as a means to popularize it.

## 9. CLOSING OF THE WORKSHOP

### 9.1 *Official closing remarks by Mrs Yasinta Ganiza*

In her closing remarks on behalf of the Principal Secretary, Ms. Yasita Ganiza thanked all participants for their active participation. She also acknowledged the AU -IBAR for their technical and financial support and choosing Malawi to be the first AU member State to develop the National Strategy for Gender Mainstreaming into Aquatic Biodiversity and Integrated Environment. Ms. Ganiza further asked AU-IBAR officials to consider supporting developing Malawi's Blue Economy Strategy and also urged them to complete the draft strategy which would later be validated in a workshop. She indicated that Malawi is committed to implementing the Strategy. She finally expressed her gratitude to SADC for their continued support and hoped for further support in undertaking this work. She finally urged the participants to keep supporting the national initiatives to ensure that the country's aquatic biodiversity is conserved and sustainably used for the benefit of all.

### 9.2 *Closing statement by Ms Francisca Gonah*

In her closing remarks, Ms Gonah on behalf of the Ag. Director of AU-IBAR, thanked the participants for their dedication and commitment shown during the national workshop for the past two days. She indicated that the participants focused on identifying viable ways to promote gender mainstreaming in conservation of aquatic biodiversity and environmental management as a means to address and remove gender-based barriers, that are most often experienced disproportionately by women. She was therefore pleased to note that the workshop achieved the key objectives.

She also expressed pleasure to observe participants engage actively in the group discussions and contributed to identification of issues, gaps, challenges and priority actions for developing a strategy to mainstream gender in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management in the context of AU-IBAR's Continental Strategy on gender mainstreaming in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management.

It was her expectation that the strategy for gender mainstreaming in aquatic biodiversity and environmental management would be finalized by the Technical Facilitator, Dr. Friday Njaya. She underscored its importance as it would provide the country on the next steps and the necessary support for kickstarting implementations of actions. On behalf of the Director AU-IBAR, she pointed out that AU-IBAR would continue to support the Republic of the Government of Malawi in this area, to be able to effectively mainstream gender in aquatic biodiversity initiatives and programmes.

She then thanked the Government and People of the Republic of Malawi for collaborating with the AU-IBAR and accepting to domesticate the continental gender mainstreaming strategy on behalf of Her Excellency the Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment, Amb. Yosefa Sacko. Special thanks were made to the Swedish Government through the Swedish International Development Cooperation (SIDA) for their immense support to the implementation of Africa's Blue Economy through the Project on "Conserving Aquatic Biodiversity in African Blue Economy". Lastly she expressed her sincere appreciation to the representatives of various Ministries, Departments and

Agencies, the Experts, Non-State Actors, and SADC Secretariat for their steadfast support to AU-IBAR's Blue Economy programmes and project implementation and that of AU as a whole. Your cooperation and commitment is most appreciated. Finally, she acknowledged the management and staff of the Golder Peacock Hotel for their hospitality during the workshop.

She then concluded her remarks with a quote by famous Thomas Eisner "Biodiversity is the greatest treasure we have. Its diminishment is to be prevented at all costs"

# ANNEXES

## ANNEX I: WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

Time	Activity	Facilitator/Moderator
<b>Day 1: Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 2023</b>		
08:30-09:00	<b>ARRIVAL &amp; REGISTRATION OF PARTICIPANTS</b>	
<b>OFFICIAL OPENING SESSION</b> <b>MODERATOR: Dr. Friday Njaya, Director of Fisheries, Malawi</b>		
09:00-09:30	Welcome statement by SADC Secretariat  Welcome remarks by Ag. Director AU-IBAR, Dr. Nick Nwankpa  Official Opening by Representative of Malawi Government  Objectives of the Workshop and Expectations	Dr Motseki Hlatshwayo, Technical Advisor- Fisheries  Represented by Ms Francisca Gonah, Senior HR officer, AU-IBAR  Hon. Principal Secretary, Ministry of Natural Resources and Climate Change  Dr. Alberta Sagoe (Gender Policy and Strategy Expert), AU-IBAR
09:30-09:45	<b>FAMILY PHOTO AND TEA BREAK</b>	AU-IBAR
<b>TECHNICAL SESSION I</b> <b>MODERATOR: Mrs Yasinta Ganiza, Gender Focal Point-EAD</b>		
09:45-10:00	Overview of the project (Aquatic Biodiversity Conservation in African Blue Economy – Gender considerations)	Mrs. Hellen Moepi-Guebama, Fisheries Officer, AU-IBAR
10:00-10:15	Continental Strategy for Gender Mainstreaming in Aquatic Biodiversity Conservation and Ecosystem Management in Africa	Dr. Alberta Sagoe (Gender Policy and Strategy Expert), AU-IBAR
10:15-10:30	Overview of National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, Target 7, 15 and the Kunming –Montreal Framework Target 23 and Gender Plan of Action	Mrs Mphatso Kalemba, Chief Environmental Officer- EAD
10:30-10:45	Overview of the Malawian Fisheries Policy and Gender Provisions	Mrs Chikondi Pasani, Deputy Director of Fisheries- Fisheries Department
10:45-11:00	A brief Overview of National Gender Policy	Mrs Grace Kussein, Ministry of Gender
11:00-11:15	Overview of the national policy of Parks and Wildlife – Aquatic Biodiversity and Gender	Maisa Kataya
11:15-12:00	Discussion	
12:00-13:00	<b>LUNCH</b>	ALL
<b>WORKING GROUP SESSION</b> <b>MODERATOR: Mrs. Mphatso Kalemba, Chief Environmental Officer, Ministry of Natural Resources and Climate Change</b>		
13:00-13:20	Presentation of Situational Analysis - Capacity Development Gaps and Technical Needs for Enhancing Gender Mainstreaming in Aquatic Biodiversity Conservation and Environmental Management	Dr. Friday Njaya, National Consultant
13:20-13:30	TORs for Working Groups, arrangements and allocation of participants: <i>Capacity Development Gaps and Technical Needs for Enhancing Gender Mainstreaming in Aquatic Biodiversity Conservation and Environmental Management</i>	Dr. Friday Njaya, National Consultant and AU-IBAR

Time	Activity	Facilitator/Moderator
13:30-16:30	<p><b>Group 1: Gender mainstreaming</b> Identify the current issues women and youth are facing in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management and propose priority actions for gender mainstreaming</p> <p><b>Group 2: NBSAP Target on Aquatic Biodiversity</b> Identify the gaps, recommend changes on Target 7 of the NBSAP based on relevant Targets of the Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework</p> <p><b>Group 3: NBSAP Target on Gender</b> Identify gaps and recommend changes on target 15 of the NBSAP based on Target 23 of the Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework</p>	Working groups
16:30	<b>TEA-BREAK &amp; CLOSURE</b>	ALL
<b>Day 2: Thursday, 4<sup>th</sup> May 2023</b>		
<b>MODERATOR: Mrs. Hellen Moepi-Guebama, AU-IBAR and Mrs Chikondi Pasani</b>		
09:00-09:15	Recap of Day 1 proceedings	Dr. Alberta Sagoe
09:15-09:45	Plenary presentation – Group 1	Rapporteur of working groups
09:45-10:15	Plenary presentation – Group 2	Rapporteur of working groups
10:15-10:45	Plenary presentation – Group 3	Rapporteur of working groups
10:45-11:00	<b>TEA BREAK</b>	ALL
<b>TECHNICAL SESSION 2 WORKING GROUPS MODERATOR: Dr Motseki Hlatswayo, SADC Secretariat</b>		
11:00-11:15	Presentation of a strategy outline and priority issues for Gender Mainstreaming in Aquatic Biodiversity Conservation and Ecosystem Management in Malawi	Dr. Friday Njaya
11:15-13:00	Identification of objectives and actions for identified priority areas in the Strategy on Gender Mainstreaming in Aquatic Biodiversity Conservation and Ecosystem Management in Malawi	Working Groups
13:00-14:00	<b>LUNCH</b>	ALL
14:00-15:00	Working group Presentations	Rapporteurs of Working Groups
15:00–15:30	Discussions	All
15:30–16:00	Adoption of the communique (Next Steps and Way forward)	Dr Alberta Sagoe & Dr. Friday Njaya
16:00-16:30	<b>Closure of meeting</b>	AU-IBAR, SADC & Guest of Honour
16:30	<b>TEA BREAK &amp; DEPARTURE</b>	All

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## ANNEX 3: SUMMARY OF PRESENTATIONS

### Presentation I

#### **Overview of the Aquatic Biodiversity Conservation in African Blue Economy – Gender consideration**

**Hellen Moepi-Guebama, Fisheries Officer, AU-IBAR**

#### **Introduction**

The African Blue Economy (ABES) was developed following the Sustainable Blue Economy conference held in Kenya in 2018. The African leaders at the conference urged the African Union (AU) to work with relevant stakeholders to formulate the ABES. The Strategy would guide sustainable development and utilization of aquatic resources in Africa.

**Vision:** The Vision of the BE Strategy is an inclusive and sustainable blue economy that significantly contributes to Africa's transformation and growth

#### **Purpose of the African BE strategy**

The objective of the BE Strategy is to guide the development of an inclusive and sustainable blue economy that becomes a significant contributor to continental transformation and growth, through advancing knowledge on marine and aquatic biotechnology, environmental sustainability, the growth of an Africa-wide shipping industry, the development of sea, river and lake transport and fishing; and exploitation and beneficiation of deep-sea mineral and other resources.

#### ABES thematic areas

- (a) Fisheries, aquaculture, conservation and sustainable aquatic ecosystems
- (b) Shipping/transportation, trade, ports, maritime security, safety and enforcement
- (c) Coastal and maritime tourism, climate change, resilience, environment, infrastructure
- (d) Sustainable energy and mineral resources and innovative industries
- (e) Policies, institutional and governance, employment, job creation and poverty eradication, innovative financing

#### **Rationale for the project**

Threats to aquatic biodiversity, resources and environmental sustainability

- (a) Overexploitation of living species,
- (b) Pollution from several sources (land-based municipal and agricultural activities),
- (c) Uncontrolled introduction of exotic species in aquaculture systems, effluents from mining activities
- (d) Urban development and resource-based industries, coastal tourism activities, coastal infrastructure development that destroy or reduce natural habitats
- (e) Air and water pollution, sedimentation and erosion, and climate change also pose threats to aquatic biodiversity.
- (f) Resulting impacts on the sustainability of socio-economic activities and livelihoods. - Threats to sustainability of livelihoods, esp. women's livelihoods, which necessitates safeguarding vulnerable

and marginalized groups and implementing adequate compensation systems.

### **Basic Project Information**

The project is financed by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) for a duration of 3 years- starting from 15th October 2021. The project cost is USD 5,496,119 and its collaborating partners and beneficiaries include African Union Member States (MS); specialized regional institutions like Regional Economic Commissions (RECs), environmental-based organizations, Large Marine Ecosystem (LME) -based institutions, RFOs, and WBC; Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management; Universities; Research institutes; NGO-based organizations; and NSAs. The project covers 55 AU member states; 8 RECs in the five regions of Africa (West, Central, East, Southern and North)

### **Objectives**

The overall objective is to enhance the policy environment, regulatory frameworks and institutional capacities of AU MS & RECs to sustainably utilize and conserve aquatic biodiversity and ecosystems. Its strategic objectives:

- (a) Ratify and/or align relevant international/regional instruments related to blue economy themes (with specific reference to protecting and conserving biodiversity)
- (b) Optimizing conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity while minimizing conflicts among blue economy sub-themes
- (c) Strengthening measures for mitigating the negative impacts of coastal and marine tourism, oil, gas, deep sea mining and climate change on aquatic biodiversity and environment
- (d) Strengthening gender inclusivity in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management

### **Presentation 2**

#### ***Continental Strategy for gender Mainstreaming in Aquatic Biodiversity Conservation and Ecosystem Management in Africa***

***Alberta Ama Sagoe, Gender Policy and Strategy Expert – AU-IBAR***

The presentation gave a background to the African Union – InterAfrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR). It highlighted AU-IBAR as a technical entity under the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy, and Sustainable Environment (DARBE) of the African Union Commission.

Mandate: AU-IBAR is charged with promoting the coordination and utilization of all animal resources (livestock, fisheries, aquaculture, and wildlife) for the benefit of African citizens. Recently extended to blue economy development in the African continent.

The Conserving Aquatic Biodiversity and Ecosystems in the context of the Africa Blue Economy Project is 3- year project: October, 2021 – September, 2024 and its purpose is to enhance the policy environment, regulatory frameworks and institutional capacities of AU Member States and Regional Economic Communities to sustainably utilize and conserve aquatic biodiversity and ecosystems.

The rationale for the Project is that Africa is rich in aquatic resource including large marine ecosystems and has networks of rivers and lakes. However there are threats to aquatic biodiversity, resources and environmental sustainability that include overexploitation of living species, pollution from several sources (land-based municipal and agricultural activities), uncontrolled introduction of exotic species in aquaculture systems, effluents from mining activities, urban development and resource-based industries, coastal tourism activities, coastal infrastructure development that destroy or reduce natural habitats, and air and water pollution, sedimentation and erosion, and climate change also pose threats to aquatic biodiversity. These impacts on the sustainability of socio-economic activities and livelihoods of women and. therefore, imperative to safeguard the vulnerable and marginalized groups, by implementing adequate compensation schemes. Hence, the formulation of Conserving Aquatic Biodiversity in the Context of the Africa Blue Economy Strategy Project

### **Strategic Objectives**

- (a) Support AU–MS to ratify and/or align relevant International/Regional Instruments related to blue economy themes (with specific reference to protecting and conserving biodiversity)
- (b) Optimizing conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity while minimizing conflicts among blue economy sub–themes
- (c) Strengthening measures for mitigating the negative impacts of coastal and marine tourism, oil, gas, deep sea mining and climate change on aquatic biodiversity and environment
- (d) Strengthening gender inclusivity in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management  
Relevant AU instruments underpinning the project and promoting gender inclusivity in sustainable use and management of aquatic resources
- (a) Agenda 2063 – The strategic framework for the socio-economic transformation of the African continent over the next 50 years.
- (b) Achieve full gender equality in all spheres of life through empowering women and addressing violence and discrimination against women and girls
- (c) Malebo Declaration on accelerated agricultural growth and transformation for shared prosperity and improved livelihoods.
- (d) Support and facilitate preferential entry and participation for women and youth in gainful and attractive agri-business opportunities
- (e) Africa Blue Economy Strategy – for guiding an inclusive and sustainable blue economy that contributes to Africa’s transformation and growth.
- (f) Prioritizes the empowerment of women and youth in fisheries and aquaculture in order to take full advantage for blue growth.
- (g) The Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa.
- (h) Gender and Youth is highlighted as a cross-cutting issue to be addressed.

### **National Consultative Workshop – Objectives**

The purpose of the workshop is to provide a platform for stakeholders to explore ways of promoting gender mainstreaming in conservation of aquatic biodiversity and environmental management to address and remove gender-based barriers, that are most often experienced disproportionately by women and strengthen gender inclusivity in aquatic biodiversity and environmental management in Malawi.

Specifically, the workshop will achieve the following objectives:

- (a) Create awareness on AU-IBAR's continental strategy on Gender mainstreaming in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management;
- (b) Identify priority issues and actions for enhancing the role of women in aquatic biodiversity and environmental management
- (c) Identify important entry points for enhancing the role of women and youth in inclusive aquatic biodiversity conservation and integrated management in the context of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan.
- (d) Facilitate the drafting of gender initiatives, programmes and aspects in aquatic biodiversity conservation to be included in the revised NBSAP as an essential tool for attaining the inclusive, transformational development denoted by the blue economy.
- (e) Adoption of the Outcomes or recommendations for further work.

### **Presentation 3**

#### **Overview of National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, Target 7, 15 and the Kunming –Montreal Framework Target 23 and Gender Plan of Action** **Mphatso Kalemba, Chief Environmental Officer (Biodiversity), Environmental Affairs Department**

#### **Biodiversity management in Malawi**

Biodiversity in Malawi falls under 3 categories, namely: (a) at genetic level, which is the biological variation that occurs within species e.g. crop wild relatives; (b) at species level e.g. conservation of elephants and conservation of Mulanje cedar; and (c) at ecosystems level, e.g. aquatic biodiversity, and terrestrial.

#### **Aquatic ecosystems in Malawi**

Aquatic ecosystems cover about 20% of the total surface area of Malawi and are habitats to a diversity of fish and other aquatic fauna and flora. The major aquatic ecosystems in Malawi include lakes (Malawi, Malombe, Chilwa, Kazuni and Chiuta), rivers (Songwe, South Rukuru, North Rukuru, Dwangwa, Linthipe, Shire and Bua River), wetlands and other small water bodies.

Aquatic ecosystems are important in Malawi as they provide goods and services such as fisheries, agriculture, livestock grazing, ecotourism, water supply, water purification, carbon sequestration and transport, among others.

#### **Conservation status of species**

The IUCN Lists contains only (3344) species that have been assessed for the IUCN Red List. It is therefore not representative of all the species in the country. On the status of ecosystems, aquatic ecosystems are some of the most critically endangered ecosystems.

#### **Biodiversity provisions in EMA 2017**

Section 45: Regulation of use and management of rivers and lakes

Section 46: Management of river banks and lake shores

Section 48: Regulation and Use of Wetlands

Section 50: Identification of hilly and mountainous areas

### **Aquatic Biodiversity in the NBSAP**

Target 7: By 2025, aquatic biodiversity is managed and harvested sustainably within safe ecological limits,

#### **Actions**

- Develop guidelines to promote integrated watershed management;
- Develop programs on integrated watershed management;
- Promote use of legal fishing gear;
- Develop a national wetlands policy;
- Identify, rehabilitate and protect fish spawning and nursing areas;
- Undertake ex-situ conservation of threatened or endangered aquatic species;
- Review and implement strategies and plans for management of endemic fish species;
- Reduce fishing effort in shallow waters by promoting deep-water fishing.

### **Aquatic biodiversity in the Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework**

The Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework gives a highlight of the following aquatic biodiversity goals A and B:

#### **Goal A**

- The integrity, connectivity and resilience of all ecosystems are maintained, enhanced, or restored, substantially increasing the area of natural ecosystems by 2050;
- Human induced extinction of known threatened species is halted, and, by 2050, the extinction rate and risk of all species are reduced tenfold and the abundance of native wild species is increased to healthy and resilient levels;
- genetic diversity within populations of wild and domesticated species, is maintained, safeguarding their adaptive potential.

#### **Goal B:**

- (a) Biodiversity is sustainably used and managed and nature's contributions to people, including ecosystem functions and services, are valued, maintained and enhanced, with those currently in decline being restored, supporting the achievement of sustainable development for the benefit of present and future generations by 205

### **Aquatic Biodiversity in the Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework**

In terms of aquatic biodiversity targets, the Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework presents the following:

Target 1: Ensure that all areas are under participatory, integrated and biodiversity inclusive spatial planning and/or effective management processes addressing land- and sea use change, to bring the loss of areas of high biodiversity importance, including ecosystems of high ecological integrity, close to zero by 2030, while respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities.

Target 2: Ensure that by 2030 at least 30 per cent of areas of degraded terrestrial, inland water, and marine and coastal ecosystems are under effective restoration, in order to enhance biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, ecological integrity and connectivity.

Target 3: Ensure and enable that by 2030 at least 30 per cent of terrestrial and inland water areas, and of marine and coastal areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, are effectively conserved and managed through ecologically representative, well-connected and equitably governed systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, recognizing indigenous and traditional territories, where applicable, and integrated into wider landscapes, seascapes and the ocean, while ensuring that any sustainable use, where appropriate in such areas, is fully consistent with conservation outcomes, recognizing and respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, including over their traditional territories.

Target 4: Ensure urgent management actions to halt human induced extinction of known threatened species and for the recovery and conservation of species, in particular threatened species, to significantly reduce extinction risk, as well as to maintain and restore the genetic diversity within and between populations of native, wild and domesticated species to maintain their adaptive potential, including through in situ and ex situ conservation and sustainable management practices, and effectively manage human-wildlife interactions to minimize human-wildlife conflict for coexistence.

Target 5: Ensure that the use, harvesting and trade of wild species is sustainable, safe and legal, preventing overexploitation, minimizing impacts on non-target species and ecosystems, and reducing the risk of pathogen spillover, applying the ecosystem approach, while respecting and protecting customary sustainable use by indigenous peoples and local communities.

Target 6: Eliminate, minimize, reduce and or mitigate the impacts of invasive alien species on biodiversity and ecosystem services by identifying and managing pathways of the introduction of alien species, preventing the introduction and establishment of priority invasive alien species, reducing the rates of introduction and establishment of other known or potential invasive alien species by at least 50 per cent by 2030, and eradicating or controlling invasive alien species, especially in priority sites, such as islands.

Target 9: Ensure that the management and use of wild species are sustainable, thereby providing social, economic and environmental benefits for people, especially those in vulnerable situations and those most dependent on biodiversity, including through sustainable biodiversity-based activities, products and services that enhance biodiversity, and protecting and encouraging customary sustainable use by indigenous peoples and local communities.

Target 10: Ensure that areas under agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries and forestry are managed sustainably, in particular through the sustainable use of biodiversity, including through a substantial increase of the application of biodiversity friendly practices, such as sustainable intensification, agroecological and other innovative approaches, contributing to the resilience and long-term efficiency and productivity of these production systems, and to food security, conserving and restoring biodiversity and maintaining nature's

contributions to people, including ecosystem functions and services.

**Target 11:** Restore, maintain and enhance nature's contributions to people, including ecosystem functions and services, such as the regulation of air, water and climate, soil health, pollination and reduction of disease risk, as well as protection from natural hazards and disasters, through nature-based solutions and/or ecosystem-based approaches for the benefit of all people and nature.

**Target 12:** Significantly increase the area and quality, and connectivity of, access to, and benefits from green and blue spaces in urban and densely populated areas sustainably, by mainstreaming the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and ensure biodiversity-inclusive urban planning, enhancing native biodiversity, ecological connectivity and integrity, and improving human health and well-being and connection to nature, and contributing to inclusive and sustainable urbanization and to the provision of ecosystem functions and services.

**Target 13:** Take effective legal, policy, administrative and capacity-building measures at all levels, as appropriate, to ensure the fair and equitable sharing of benefits that arise from the utilization of genetic resources and from digital sequence information on genetic resources, as well as traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources, and facilitating appropriate access to genetic resources, and by 2030, facilitating a significant increase of the benefits shared, in accordance with applicable international access and benefit-sharing instruments.

**Target 17:** Establish, strengthen capacity for, and implement in all countries, biosafety measures as set out in Article 8(g) of the Convention on Biological Diversity and measures for the handling of biotechnology and distribution of its benefits as set out in Article 19 of the Convention

## **Gender and biodiversity in malawi**

### **Gender target in the NBSAP**

**Target 15:** By 2025, the supply of important ecosystem services is safeguarded and restored, taking into account gender roles and responsibilities of the youth, the poor and the vulnerable.

### **Actions**

- Develop policy and legislative frameworks on biodiversity management that take into account the needs of vulnerable groups and gender roles;
- Develop and implement collaborative management programs for the terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems with the participation of vulnerable groups, including women;
- Conduct awareness-raising campaigns in the fringes of protected ecosystems on biodiversity management from a poverty and gender perspective;
- Develop programs to support alternative income-generating activities that can take away pressure from the ecosystems, support livelihoods and address gender issues (e.g. bee keeping; energy efficient stoves)



Target 22: Ensure the full, equitable, inclusive, effective and gender-responsive representation and participation in decision-making, and access to justice and information related to biodiversity by indigenous peoples and local communities, respecting their cultures and their rights over lands, territories, resources, and traditional knowledge, as well as by women and girls, children and youth, and persons with disabilities and ensure the full protection of environmental human rights defenders.

TARGET 23: Ensure gender equality in the implementation of the Framework through a gender-responsive approach, where all women and girls have equal opportunity and capacity to contribute to the three objectives of the Convention, including by recognizing their equal rights and access to land and natural resources and their full, equitable, meaningful and informed participation and leadership at all levels of action, engagement, policy and decision-making related to biodiversity.

Entry points for gender in biodiversity at National and Local Level

- Assessment of Gender Mainstreaming
- Sex-disaggregated statistics
- Special interventions (Stand alone projects or project components at project design stage)
- Capacity Building on gender related activities
- Information dissemination approaches that allow women to have adequate preparedness and knowledge on how to cope in the face of ecosystem degradation.
- Creation of institutional structures that allow women to come together and make decisions and get

## **Presentation 4**

### ***Overview of the Malawian Fisheries Policy and Gender Provisions***

***Chikondi Manyungwa-Pasani, Deputy Director of fisheries, Department of Fisheries***

#### **Introduction**

Gender equity and equality is the fourth guiding principle of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries (SSF Guidelines), and sits within its wider human rights framework. Chapter 8 of the SSF Guidelines is dedicated to gender equality. The SSF Guidelines contain acknowledgement of the roles of women in the small-scale fisheries value chain, the need for gender equity and equality in access to human well-being resources, and the need for equal gender participation in fisheries governance. While inclusion of gender in the SSF Guidelines is unprecedented and encouraging, effective implementation is the critical next step.

#### **Definition of terms**

Gender refers to the socially constructed characteristics of women and men, such as norms, roles, and relationships of and between groups of women and men. It varies from society to society and can be changed.”

Gender equality usually pertains to the creating of, or the outcome of equal opportunities for women and men by removing formal barriers (Reeves and Baden 2000). In a small-scale fisheries context this could mean changing policies that exclude (primarily) women from equal access to fisheries jobs, markets, or

other resources. It can also be thought of as an outcome of efforts to create equal opportunities.

Gender equity is the process by which equality can be achieved. While equality and equity are often used synonymously, there are differences in emphasis, and hence operationalization. Equity works towards equality by acknowledging the different positions of women and men in society, and compensating for those differences (Reeves and Baden 2000).

Gender mainstreaming: gender considerations in policy-making, which necessitates addressing the implications of policy for women and men, and girls and boys. The aim is to ensure that gender is present in all aspects of a certain project or activity, with a larger goal of gender equality (UN Women 2016).

Empowerment: The process by which those who have been denied the ability to make strategic life choices acquire such an ability (Kabeer 2000).

Gender Transformative Approaches: A method for tackling gender based inequalities in particular constraining gender norms and thereby kick starting a process towards gender equality. It is a methodology that engages both men and women as agents of change to transform structural barriers.

### **Context of gender in Malawi**

Malawi faces high levels of gender inequality (ranking 115 out of 156 countries in the 2021 Global Gender Gap Index), which highlights the relative attainment of women and men across a range of health, education, economy and political participation measures. The Malawi 2063 vision states that “gender inequalities shall ‘be addressed to improve the socio-economic status of people in Malawi by accelerating the pace of inclusive wealth creation. Fundamentally, gender equality will be advanced at all levels through multi-sectoral approaches and in-depth multi-disciplinary analysis of issues at the household, community and national level. Before 2063, Malawi shall have eliminated all gender-based discrimination and harmful practices, including gender-based violence and child marriages. Further, Enabler 5: Human Capital Development’ of Vision 2063 states that gender transformative approaches will be promoted to ‘reduce gender power imbalances which hinder the economic empowerment of women’ and the delivery of social services and programmes will be enhanced to better ‘target different categories of the poor, marginalized and vulnerable.

### **Gender and fisheries law and policies**

#### **International**

- In 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which set internationally legally binding principles and standards for realizing women’s rights
- In 1995 Beijing Declaration was adopted by the fourth World Conference on Women, reflecting a new international commitment to the goals of equality, development and peace for all women everywhere.
- In 2012 the Rio+20 outcome document, ‘The Future We Want’, defined the new Sustainable Development Goals
- In 2015 126 states adopted the SSF Guidelines Chapter 8 of the SSF Guidelines is dedicated to gender equality and the guidelines also augment the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, which was silent on women and gender.

- SADC
- SADC Protocol on Gender and Development adopted in 2008 and remains the key instrument in advocating for women economic empowerment, elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and achievement of gender equality within the SADC region.
- SADC Food and Nutrition Security 2015-2025 Strategy recognises the pivotal role played by women in ensuring food and nutrition security.

## **Gender and fisheries law and policies**

### **National**

- Malawi constitution provides the basis for formulating gender aware policies in the country. The Constitution contains phrases such as “All persons”, “Every person” in Section 13 (a) and Section 20 (1) (2) provide for gender equality and Section 24 (1) (2) provides for equality of persons (non-discrimination) and rights of women
- National Gender Policy (2015) is framed to lead to the realization of women rights as enshrined in the Malawi Constitution in ensuring equal participation of women and men at all levels of governance and the enjoyment of their human rights.
- In 2013, the GoM put in place a new gender legislation called the Gender Equality Act which aims at ‘promoting gender equality, equal integration, influence, empowerment, dignity and opportunities for men and women in all functions of society, to prohibit and provide redress for sex discrimination, harmful practices and sexual harassment, to provide for the public awareness on promotion of gender equality issues

### **Context of gender issues in fisheries policy**

- Gender issues in fisheries sector are covered under the following areas:
- Part III of the Fisheries Conservation and Management Act of 1997 provide for local community participation through BVCs as part of fisheries co-management arrangement but does not explicitly mention gender equity.
- Policy Priority area number 4 on governance seeks to promote the principals of governance, inclusiveness, accountability and equity.
- Policy Priority number 5 on Social development and Decent Employment which commits to enhance and increase attention on social development and decent employment in small scale fisheries and promotion of gender equality as a prerequisite for the improvement and socio-economic sustainability of the small-scale fisheries sector and empowerment of small-scale fishing communities
- Under the social development and decent employment theme, the policy recognizes that small-scale fishing communities often suffer from unhealthy, risky and unsafe working conditions and are often prone to high levels of vulnerability including HIV and AIDS.

### **Context of gender in fisheries policy**

- Gender issues are covered in the National Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy of 2016
- Policy Priority Area No. 4 (Governance) seeks to promote the principals of governance, inclusiveness, accountability and equity.
- Policy Priority Area No. 5 (Social Development and Decent Employment)t which commits to enhance

and increase attention on social development and decent employment in small scale fisheries and promotion of gender equality as a prerequisite for the improvement and socio-economic sustainability of the small-scale fisheries sector and empowerment of small-scale fishing communities

- The policy recognizes that small-scale fishing communities often suffer from unhealthy, risky and unsafe working conditions and are often prone to high levels of vulnerability including HIV and AIDS.

### **Fisheries Conservation and Management Act of 1997**

Part III of the Fisheries Conservation and Management Act of 1997 provide for local community participation through BVCs as part of fisheries co-management arrangement. However it does not explicitly mention gender equity

### **Inequities in SSF**

- Small-scale fishing communities also commonly suffer from unequal power relations.
- Conflicts with large-scale fishing operations are an issue, and there is increasingly high interdependence or competition between small-scale fisheries and other sectors
- Small-scale fishing communities are commonly located in remote areas and tend to have limited or disadvantaged access to markets, and may have poor access to health, education and other social services
- low levels of formal education, existence of ill health (often including above-average incidences of HIV/AIDS) and inadequate organizational structures.
- Limited available opportunities as small-scale fishing communities face a lack of alternative livelihoods, youth unemployment, unhealthy and unsafe working conditions, forced labour, and child labour.
- Pollution, environmental degradation, climate change impacts and natural and human-induced disasters add to the threats facing small-scale fishing communities.
- All these factors make it difficult for small-scale fishers and fish workers to make their voices heard, defend their human rights and tenure rights, and secure the sustainable use of the fishery resources on which they depend

### **Gender and governance of SSF**

- Generally weak representation of women in governance hence women have little influence on decision making processes.
- At technical level there is only one female serving in the management of the Department of Fisheries as Deputy Director
- At local level structures, women are less involved in BVCs than men.

### **How the Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy contributes to addressing gender issues**

- Promoting actions to capture women's potential in fisheries
- In terms of investments we are promoting fish processing technologies that would enable the women produce quality fish products that would enable them fetch good prices on the markets.
- Improving fish post-harvest management and marketing
- Providing labor-saving technologies that allow for the freeing up of women's time to take advantage of opportunities in the fisheries sector.

- Investing in knowledge and data systems for collecting, disseminating and analyzing more complete and reliable data, disaggregated by gender.
- Promoting gender balanced roles small scale fisheries governance structures
- Strengthening fisheries organisations and women's roles within them.
- Research interventions are inclusive to meet specific needs of women and men as well as youths
- Enhancing financial inclusion to empower women economically in fish value chain activities
- Improving safety, hygiene and health through development of standards and codes of practice for fish handling.

### **Benefits of increasing recognition of women's roles**

- Community scale gender equality increases economic growth
- Improves nutrition
- Greater life satisfaction for both men and women
- Influences fisheries conservation outcomes

### **Approaches to implementing gender**

- The SSF Guidelines are very explicitly modeled on a human rights framework, which would also include approaches that recognize the aspiration for gender equity and equality, not only as a means to a material end, but simply because it is the right thing to do.
- Understanding of historical and cultural contexts that highlights the gendered aspects.
- Gender roles frameworks, examine the material realities of women and men by characterizing the gendered division of labor and access to resources.
- Livelihood approaches – which focus on material realities and adaptability – include gender as one social variable that can produce differences in access.
- Social relations frameworks and gender transformative approaches allow the inclusion of power relations.

### **What can be done to accelerate attainment of gender equity**

- Move beyond mere monitoring and do not focus on easy targets and metrics
- Develop a cultural change to support full and effective participation at all levels of decision making
- Provide sufficient training in implementation of gender oriented policies
- Work towards employee and community acceptance to achieving gender equity by increasing awareness of contextual and non contextual factors contributing to gender inequities
- Disrupt the system by providing long term resource commitment including finance and ensuring an equal sharing of implementation responsibilities

### **Further reading**

Biswas, Nilanjana. 2017. Towards gender-equitable small-scale fisheries governance and development: A Handbook In support of the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication. FAO. Rome

Department of Fisheries. 2021. Development of a Gender, HIV and AIDS Strategy for the Fisheries Sector in Malawi, Issues Paper. Lilongwe, Malawi

FAO. 2013. Good Practice Policies to Eliminate Gender Inequalities in Fish Value Chains. FAO. Rome

## **Presentation 5**

### ***Capacity development gaps and technical needs for enhancing gender mainstreaming in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management***

***Friday Njaya, Director of Fisheries, Ministry of Natural Resources and Climate Change***

#### **Introduction**

We depend on biodiversity for food, medicine, energy, clean air and water, security from natural disasters as well as recreation and cultural inspiration, and it supports all systems of life on Earth (UNEP, 2022). The objectives of aquatic biodiversity in terms of fisheries include:

- Protection of fish spawning and nursery areas
- Actions e.g. governance reforms, sanctuary areas/closed areas or protected areas (e.g. Lake Malawi National Park), closed seasons, zoning, upgrading value chains to reduce post-harvest losses or improving fish quality
- Reduction of fish mortality rates
- Using appropriate fish gears, fishing gear materials e.g. no monofilaments, recommended meshes, no use of poison like katupe
- Restoration of core areas for sensitive species and habitats
- Zoning, habitat recovery e.g. aquatic vegetation in Lake Malombe
- Reduce the impact of fishing on the seabed/lakebed
- No use of Nkacha or Ngongongo (undermeshed gillnet, trawling with undermeshed bunts or bottom trawling, Ngwanjengwanje,

#### **Focus of our task**

- Identify strategy or mechanisms of strengthening gender inclusivity in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management
- Promote gender mainstreaming in conservation of aquatic biodiversity and environmental management
- This is to remove gender-based barriers often experienced disproportionately by women, and
- Strengthen gender inclusivity in aquatic biodiversity and environmental management in AU member states including Malawi
- Align NBSAP to regional, continental and global biodiversity instruments by identifying gaps
- SADC Regional Biodiversity Strategy
- AU Harmonised Regional Biodiversity Framework and Joint Action Plan
- Global instruments e.g. Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

#### **Policy and legislative frameworks on biodiversity and gender**

- CBD Global Biodiversity Framework
- Aichi Biodiversity

- Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Alleviation
- FAO Code of Conduct on Responsible Fisheries (the Code)
- Gender Action Plan
- Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

### **Policy and legislative frameworks on biodiversity and gender**

- SADC Regional Biodiversity Strategy
- AU Harmonised Regional Biodiversity Framework and Joint Action Plan
- SADC Protocol on Gender and Development adopted in 2008 and remains the key instrument in advocating for women economic empowerment, elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and achievement of gender equality within the SADC region
- SADC Food and Nutrition Security 2015-2025 Strategy recognises the pivotal role played by women in ensuring food and nutrition security.

### **Gender and small-scale fisheries**

- Sustainable development of SSF cannot be understood, or equitably enacted, without considering gender
- Gender disaggregated data from the IHH report indicate that at least 45 million women participate in SSF fisheries value chains and subsistence activities worldwide, representing 40 percent.

### **Women participation in aquatic biodiversity conservation and integrated environment - barriers**

- Women not allowed to participate in the launch of a fishing vessel
- Women disallowed to access Mbenji Island
- A lady fish trader buying from offshore areas (Karonga)
- Limited participation of women and youth actors along fish value chain – fishing
- Fish processing facilities – access to technologies

### **Environmental and socio-economic concerns**

- overcapacity - overfishing
- deforestation
- bad agricultural practices resulting in soil erosion
- biomass burning
- climate change
- high population growth
- increasing levels of poverty
- exotic aquatic weed (water hyacinth)
- Limited space for participation of women and youth in freshwater biodiversity conservation due to division labour - this includes migrants whereby men go fishing and women and youth are left behind to process fish on beaches
- Women not allowed to do fish business

- Youth engaged only as crew and water bailers (zimgubidi)
- Youth in towns being engaged as ‘illegal middlemen’ Ndagwiras hence discouraging women fish traders
- Men traders can transport large quantities of fish to markets – women?
- Aquaculture can offer opportunities for economic empowerment - land tenure issues?

## Pollution

- Pollution from agricultural and forestry effluents is recorded as a threat to 29% of freshwater fish species native to Lake Malawi
- Sedimentation, pollution and loss of riparian shading, impact cyprinids including species belonging to the genera *Labeo*, *Labeobarbus* and *Opsaridium*
- *Labeo mesops* has completely disappeared in most rivers in the catchment because of degraded rivers and streams

## Invasive species

- Invasive alien plant and animal species represent a serious threat to freshwater species in Lake Malawi
- Invasive species are, however, currently recorded as a threat to only 2% of native freshwater fish species
- Despite this low level of current threat, it is extremely important to prevent introduction of alien invasive species and to control those already present in the catchment
- E.g. invasive plant species like water hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*) and Kariba weed (*Salvinia molesta*)

## Barriers to women participation in aquatic biodiversity

Capacity gaps	Technical needs
Policy gaps on gender mainstreaming	Identify gender mainstreaming gaps in key relevant policies and programming processes on biodiversity - NBSAP, NEP, NFAP, Wildlife Policy etc.
Need for an inclusive strategy on biodiversity and other aligned sectors apart from NBSAP	Technical support to develop an inclusive Blue Economy Strategy – biodiversity, gender, tourism, mining, climate change, environment, marine etc.
Limited information on biodiversity conservation	Develop clear messages on the need for biodiversity conservation with equal participation by women, men and youth
Climate change impacts on biodiversity not well understood	Develop and disseminate technical messages on the impacts of climate change by gender
Lack of incentives for participatory biodiversity conservation	Provide adequate incentives for biodiversity conservation and its sustainable use
Limited alternative livelihood opportunities outside agriculture and natural resource exploitation	Identify alternative sources of income (SMEs) to female-headed households apart from agriculture and natural resources
Limited access to capital for fisheries and aquaculture SMEs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide soft loans and financial support to women and youth to start various businesses</li> <li>• Formalise groups into cooperatives</li> </ul>
Limited access to fishing grounds and fishing facilities by women workers due to socio-cultural issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess socio-cultural barriers to enable women access fishing grounds and fishing facilities - this may address sex-for-fish transactions</li> <li>• Formulate appropriate policies to promoted access</li> </ul>
Lack of support to women and the youth to venture into lucrative fishing or aquaculture businesses e.g. marketing of fresh high valuable Chambo and not Usipa only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical and financial support to women and the youth to start high capital-intensive fishing businesses like cage farming and Chambo selling</li> <li>• Formalize groups for loan access</li> </ul>



Limited opportunities for equal participation of men and women in fisheries management due to division of labour	Ensure equal opportunities and power given to women in various networking groups and BVC structures
Inadequate biodiversity inventory and monitoring systems, and knowledge on ability to handle biodiversity information	Keep and share biodiversity inventory and put in place monitoring mechanisms to all users by gender
Low levels of awareness, knowledge and appreciation of biological resources at various levels	Promote awareness of aquatic biodiversity to all users including men, women and youth
Weak institutional and legal frameworks for carrying out aquatic biodiversity initiatives	Analyse existing policy and legislative frameworks to identify gaps like on access, tenure and invasives based on local knowledge and gender
Limited and unsustainable funding for implementing aquatic biodiversity programmes	Ensure programmes on aquatic biodiversity are sustained with benefits streams to all users e.g.ABS
Inadequate research and development approaches for biodiversity initiatives	Technical support to carry out appropriate R&D approaches on aquatic biodiversity that is demand-driven for both women, men and youth
Limited attention to the management of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) and Invasive Alien Species (IAS)	Provide attention to GMO issues based on needs by gender
Persistent degradation of the environment and increasing loss of natural resources	Develop aquatic biodiversity programmes that would address CC and environmental degradation e.g. tree plantation along river banks to reduce siltation
Decreasing natural habitats and fragile ecosystems precipitating diminishing diversity of species	Empower women to participate in aquatic biodiversity programmes e.g. establishing sanctuaries
Exploitation of natural resources accelerating at an unsustainable rate higher than the rate of recovery	Ensure freshwater biodiversity activities with participation of all users
Land degradation as well as natural and human induced environmental disasters continue to pose a great problem	Develop and disseminate technical message on disasters to all users
Invasives/exotics e.g. <i>O. niloticus</i> and water hyacinth	Enforce regulations and ban their use e.g. water hyacinth as flowers for decorating households
Limited recognition by the political leadership on the importance and severity of the problem of the environment	Develop policy briefs for politicians and policy makers
Poorly planned or unplanned development	Need to support capacitating Lakeshore Development Committee
Site-scale conservation, with a focus on Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs), can help to guide conservation of freshwater species in the region	Engage all users in the establishment of KBAs on Lake Malawi Develop and disseminate appropriate technical messages to the public
Lack of knowledge on mining regulations e.g. sand along lakeshore areas and rivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public awareness messages</li> <li>• Ecosystem based Natural Resource Management – Lilongwe Principles</li> </ul>
Pollution through use of poisonous plants and plastics (Katupe)	Public awareness on waste management and illegal fishing

**Presentation 6**  
**The National Gender Policy- 2015-2020**  
**Department of Gender Affairs**

**Introduction**

Malawi is a signatory to several major international, regional and sub-regional legal instruments that promote gender equality such as:

- Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
- Beijing Platform for Action
- Maputo Protocol
- SADC Protocol on Gender and Development

In order to institutionalize these instruments at national level, the Government has passed laws and policies which aim to promote gender equality. The National Gender Policy is one of the policies that have been domesticated to facilitate attainment of Gender Equality in Malawi.

The Malawi's first National Gender Policy was launched on 8th March, 2000 and had a five-year life span (2000 to 2005). The National Gender Policy was developed for the following reasons:

- To sustain the gains achieved by the 2000-05 national gender policy on gender equity and equality
- To address emerging issues not initially tackled by the former NGP
- To provide guidelines for mainstreaming gender in various sectors of the economy
- To address the persistence inequalities and under representation of women in decision making positions at all levels
- To maintain a collective and sustained response to gender issues at all levels in Malawi
- To provide a framework for the functioning of the National Gender Machinery

**How is the NGP linked with other policies**

The National Gender Policy is not a stand-alone policy as it draws synergies from several other public sector policies, legal instruments, strategies and programmes that focus on socio-economic development of Malawi. At the national level, the Policy has strong linkages to several policies like:

- The Republican Constitution
- The Malawi Growth and Development Strategy
- The Reproductive Health Policy
- The Education Policy
- The National HIV and AIDS Policy
- The Agriculture Policies
- The Environmental policies
- The National Youth Policy
- Gender Equality Act (2013)

## **Problem Statement**

The National Gender Policy deals with challenges and emerging issues from the implementation of the 2000-2005 National Gender Policy. These are but not limited to:

- Persistent unequal power relations between men and women, boys and girls
- Increasing cases of gender-based violence
- High HIV and AIDS infection rates especially among women and girls
- Limited male involvement in reproductive health, HIV and AIDS programmes,
- High dropout rates for girls from schools
- High poverty levels particularly amongst women
- limited participation and representation of women in decision-making processes at all levels
- Inadequate enforcement of laws
- Disparities in access and control over resources by the majority of women

## **Purpose, goal, Outcomes and objectives of the National Gender Policy**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the policy is to strengthen gender mainstreaming and women empowerment at all levels in order to facilitate attainment of gender equality and equity in Malawi.

### **Goal**

To reduce gender inequalities and enhance participation of women, men, girls and boys in socio economic development processes.

### **Policy Outcomes**

- Increased meaningful participation of women, men, girls and boys in decision making, wealth creation and poverty reduction.
- Reduced gender-based violence at all levels
- Enhanced gender mainstreaming across all sectors
- Enhanced institutional capacity of the National Gender Machinery

### **Policy Objectives**

- The Policy seeks to achieve the following broad objectives:
- To advocate for increased access, retention and completion to quality education for girls and boys.
- To ensure women, men, boys and girls sexual and reproductive health rights, and HIV AIDS status are improved.
- To strengthen gender mainstreaming in all sectors of the economy.
- To reduce poverty among women and other vulnerable groups (Orphans, widows, PLHA, persons with disabilities, the elderly) through economic empowerment.
- To promote women's participation in decision making positions in both politics and public life.
- To reduce gender-based violence.
- To strengthen the capacity of the National Gender Machinery.

## **Policy Priority Areas**

The Policy has eight priority areas as follows:

### **1. Gender in Education and Training**

- To reduce gender disparities between men and women in all spheres of education

### **2. Gender in Health**

The policy ensures that:

- Women, men, girls and boys and other vulnerable groups have access to quality sexual and reproductive health services
- Gender issues are mainstreamed in all HIV and AIDS programmes
- Gender issues are mainstreamed in other health programmes

### **3. Gender in Agriculture, Food security and nutrition**

The policy ensures that:

- Women and other vulnerable groups have access to and control over agricultural productive resources, technologies and markets for cash crops, food and nutrition security
- Nutritional disorders are reduced among all gender groups

### **4. Gender in Natural Resources, Environment and Climate Change Management**

- The policy ensures that:
- All gender groups value and own natural resources and their environment.
- Gender is mainstreamed in natural resource and the environment.

### **5. Gender in Governance and Human Rights**

The policy ensures that:

- Women and girls and boys fully and equally participate in politics and decision making positions at all levels
- Women and girls' rights are upheld at all levels

### **6. Gender and Economic Development**

- To ensure that gender issues are mainstreamed in all poverty reduction and economic empowerment initiatives
- To increase and strengthen women's participation in economic empowerment initiatives is increased and strengthened

### **7. Gender Based Violence**

The policy ensures that:

- Laws and policies shall be formulated and enforced to eliminate gender-based violence and human trafficking
- Response and access to socio economic services are improved to address gender-based violence and human trafficking
- Knowledge, attitudes and practices on Gender Based Violence are improved

## **8 National Gender Machinery**

The policy shall ensure that

- An effective harmonized coordination mechanism on gender within the National Gender Machinery is in place and functional
- The capacity of all stakeholders of the National Gender Machinery is developed and strengthened
- Annual gender mainstreaming, budgets and audits at all levels are compiled and disseminated

### **Implementation Arrangements**

The Institutional Framework for implementation of the National Gender Policy comprise the Gender, Youth Development and Sports Sector Working Group, Gender Technical Working Group which also works in close collaboration with other Sector Working Groups to ensure that gender is mainstreamed in all the sectors. There is also the Gender Technical Working Group which is further strengthened with sub-technical working groups to give more attention to sub technical in the areas of Women Economic Empowerment, Political Empowerment of Women and Gender Based Violence sub TWGs. Overall, the public sector, private sector, media, development partners and CSOs should be harnessed for successful implementation of the National Gender Policy.

### **Stakeholders in the Policy Implementation**

- The Key stakeholders in implementation of the policy include:
- Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare
- Office of the President and Cabinet
- Department of Human Resource Management and Development
- Ministry of Economic Planning and Development
- Ministry of Finance,
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Education,
- Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security,
- Ministry of Justice and other Government Ministries,
- District Councils
- Development Partners
- Non-Governmental Organizations

### **Implementation**

The Ministry responsible for Gender as the National Gender Machinery has the overall mandate of providing technical guidance and coordinating all gender interventions for all sectors to ensure effective implementation of the policy. The role other sectors and stakeholders is to implement the National Gender Policy as prescribed.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation Plan**

- The national Gender Policy implementation requires an integrated and effective monitoring system.
- This requires undertaking monitoring and evaluation functions at all levels including gathering information at macro, sectoral and grassroots levels.

- The Government commits to develop and implement a national Gender monitoring and evaluation system for implementation of the National Gender Policy.
- The Ministry responsible for Gender through its Planning and Research Department will coordinate and lead the monitoring and evaluation process and ensure timely reporting and dissemination of results
- A Gender Monitoring and Evaluation Report will be published annually with data that is gender and sex disaggregated.
- All agencies implementing programmes related to this Policy will report periodically to the respective coordinating institution

### **Policy Evaluation**

The Policy will be reviewed in the midst of implementation to assess progress made and at the end of the implementation period in 2020 after monitoring key milestones and targets. The reviews will be coordinated by the Ministry responsible for Gender.

National Gender Policy Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy

Contains the following:

1. Strategies for policy priority areas
2. Implementation plan
3. Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

## **Presentation 7**

### ***Gender in Wildlife Conservation***

#### **Introduction**

Wildlife management programmes may affect women and men differently due to their rights, roles and responsibilities. The unique roles men and women play in their communities leads to different bodies of knowledge about the environments around them. Due to their roles gathering resources like wood, water and forest products, women have a unique understanding of the resources around them. However, if women are not specifically included in the design of policies and programmes this knowledge can be lost. Hence it is necessary to help women gain better access to education, health care, decision-making bodies and sustainable livelihoods. Doing so helps ensure that the voices, skills and knowledge of women are incorporated into discussions and decision-making related to conservation in their families and communities.

#### **Status**

##### **Recruitment**

- 40 percent women and 60 percent men.
- Men and Women run separate.
- Undergo same training
- Women promotion

### **Gender mainstreaming in collaborative management**

- Very small percentages of people involved in conservation are female.
- Women are very active member
- 40 percent women representation in Village Natural Resources Committees (VNRC) in all protected areas
- Gender inequalities and differences play an important role in the use, management and conservation of wildlife at the local level.
- Addressing gender issues is, therefore, as essential in achieving sustainability objectives as it is in advancing equal rights

### **Challenges in Implementing the Wildlife Policy**

- Social-cultural norms
- Attitudinal problems
- Lack of gender awareness and sensitivity trainings within the department

## ANNEX 4: COMMUNIQUÉ

**“CONSERVING AQUATIC BIODIVERSITY IN AFRICAN BLUE ECONOMY AND AU AFRICA  
BLUE ECONOMY STRATEGY” PROJECT  
NATIONAL VALIDATION WORKSHOP REPORT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL  
STRATEGY FOR MAINSTREAMING GENDER IN AQUATIC BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION  
AND INTEGRATED ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT**

**3-4 May, 2023 Lilongwe, Malawi**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

AU-IBAR in collaboration with the Republic of Malawi, through the Ministry of Natural Resources and Climate Change, organized a National stakeholder consultative workshop in Lilongwe, Malawi from 3rd to 4th May 2023, to develop an all-inclusive and deliberate strategy for mainstreaming gender in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management in Malawi. This meeting was organized to roll out the Continental Strategy developed for mainstreaming gender in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management under AU-IBAR’s Project on “Conserving Aquatic Biodiversity in African Blue Economy” being implemented with funding from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA).

#### *1.1 Objectives*

The purpose of the meeting was to provide a platform for stakeholders to explore ways of promoting gender mainstreaming in conservation of aquatic biodiversity and environmental management to address and remove gender-based barriers, that are most often experienced disproportionately by women and strengthen gender inclusivity in aquatic biodiversity and environmental management in Malawi.

Specifically, the workshop achieved the following objectives:

- a. Awareness created on AU-IBAR’s continental strategy on Gender mainstreaming in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management;
- b. Priority issues and actions for enhancing the role of women in aquatic biodiversity and environmental management identified;
- c. Important entry points for enhancing the role of women and youth in inclusive aquatic biodiversity conservation and integrated management in the context of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan identified;
- d. Gender initiatives, programmes and aspects in aquatic biodiversity conservation outlined to be included in the revised NBSAP.
- e. Draft of National strategy for mainstreaming gender in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management in Malawi developed.

#### *1.2 Participants*

The National workshop was attended by 35 participants comprising of representatives from: Ministry of Natural Resources & Climate Change; Association of Environmental Journalists; Lilongwe District Council; Environmental Affairs Department; Lake Malawi National Park; National Youth Network on Climate



Change (NYNCC); Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR); Department of Forestry; Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare; Department of Fisheries; Green Girls Platform; Department of National Parks and Wildlife; Ministry of Agriculture, Department of Land Resource Conservation; Malawi University of Science and Technology; IUCN; SADC Secretariat; Southern Africa Youth Forum; AWFISHNET – Malawi Chapter; Department of Agricultural Extension Services; and AU-IBAR Technical and Administrative staff

### *1.3. Methodology*

The workshop adopted a participatory and interactive approach. Following technical presentations on: 1) the Overview of the project on Aquatic Biodiversity Conservation in the context of the African Blue Economy Strategy; 2) the Continental Strategy for Gender Mainstreaming in Aquatic Biodiversity Conservation and Ecosystem Management in Africa; 3) Overview of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, Target 7, 15 and the Kunming –Montreal Framework Target 23 and Gender Plan of Action; 4) Overview of the Malawian Fisheries Policy and Gender Provisions; 5) Overview of the National Gender Policy; and 6) Overview of the national policy of Parks and Wildlife – Aquatic Biodiversity and Gender, participants convened in 3 working groups to identify issues, gaps, challenges and priority actions for mainstreaming gender in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management programmes and initiatives in Malawi. Each working group presented their main discussion points in plenary and received feedback for input into their final submissions. A communiqué for the workshop was drafted and presented in a plenary for the participants to review, make input and adopt. The communiqué was then shared in soft copy to all the participants.

## **2 OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE MEETING**

*facilitated by Dr. Friday Njaya, Director of Fisheries, Malawi*

### *2.1 Welcome Remarks*

Participants of the workshop were warmly welcomed by Dr Motseki Hlatshwayo, Technical Advisor- Fisheries, SADC Secretariat. He expressed appreciation to AU-IBAR for inviting SADC to participate in the National workshop and for selecting Malawi as a pioneering country to domesticate the Continental Strategy on gender mainstreaming in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management, developed under AU-IBAR's project on Conserving Aquatic Biodiversity. He noted that the Aquatic Biodiversity Conservation project is one of the few projects that involves the Regional Economic Communities in its implementation. On the importance of the workshop, Dr. Hlatshwayo highlighted on the opportunity provided by the workshop to apply a gender lens to development of aquatic biodiversity conservation programmes in Malawi to enhance sustainable blue economy development.

Madam Francisca Gonah, Senior HR officer, AU-IBAR also extended welcome salutations to the workshop participants on behalf of the Ag. Director of AU-IBAR, Dr. Nick Nwankpa and expressed gratitude to them for taking time off their busy schedules to participate and contribute to achievement of the aim of the workshop. In her speech, she extended complements from the Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy, and Sustainable Environment at the African Union Commission, Amb. Josefa Sacko. She expressed gratitude to the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) for

supporting implementation of the project of “Conserving Aquatic Biodiversity in the Context of African Blue Economy” which had created a platform for organizing the National Consultative Workshop on Gender Mainstreaming in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management in Malawi. She also expressed enthusiasm about the workshop, explaining that it offered a unique opportunity for AU-IBAR to support the Republic of Malawi to mainstream gender in its National Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan (NBSAP). She wished the workshop participants a fruitful deliberation.

## 2.2 *Opening Remarks*

The Director of Environmental Affairs, Ministry of Natural Resources and Climate Change, Mrs. Tawonga Mbale-Luka, on behalf of the Principal Secretary delivered the opening remarks for the meeting. She expressed appreciation to AU-IBAR for selecting Malawi to receive technical support for mainstreaming gender in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management. She expressed Malawi’s commitment to gender issues as demonstrated in the National Gender Strategy 2050. In her speech, Mrs. Luka also requested AU-IBAR to continue to support Malawi to fully domesticate the African Blue Economy Strategy in Malawi through efforts to support Malawi to develop and implement its blue economy strategy. She officially opened the meeting and wished participants fruitful deliberations.

Dr. Alberta Sagoe, Gender Policy and Strategy Expert at AU-IBAR, then provided the background information on the project and outlined the objectives of the national consultative workshop to the participants.

## 3 **TECHNICAL SESSION**

facilitated by Mrs Yasinta Ganiza, Gender Focal Point-Environmental Affairs Development

Technical Presentations made to set the scene for deliberations were:

- a. Overview of the project (Aquatic Biodiversity Conservation in African Blue Economy – Gender considerations) - Mrs. Hellen Moepi-Guebama, Fisheries Officer, AU-IBAR
- b. Continental Strategy for Gender Mainstreaming in Aquatic Biodiversity Conservation and Ecosystem Management in Africa - Dr. Alberta Sagoe, Gender Policy and Strategy Expert, AU-IBAR
- c. Overview of National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, Target 7, 15 and the Kunming –Montreal Framework Target 23 and Gender Plan of Action - Mrs Mphatso Kalemba, Chief Environmental Officer- EAD
- d. Overview of the Malawian Fisheries Policy and Gender Provisions - Mrs Chikondi Pasani, Deputy Director of Fisheries- Fisheries Department
- e. Capacity development gaps and technical needs for enhancing gender mainstreaming in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management
- f. A brief Overview of National Gender Policy - Mrs Grace Kussein, Ministry of Gender
- g. Overview of the national policy of Parks and Wildlife – Aquatic Biodiversity and Gender – Madam Maisa Kataya

### 3.1 *Issues Raised and Recommendations from the Technical Session:*

#### **Issues**

1. Gender mainstreaming – In mainstreaming gender in aquatic biodiversity conservation and

environmental management programmes, stakeholders must ensure that the full suite of gender mainstreaming continuum (the 5 stages of gender mainstreaming) are taken into consideration. Assessment of strategies and initiatives on aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management must follow the gender continuum.

2. To increase women rangers in wildlife conservation, social constraints that prevent women from taking full advantage of the sector should be addressed
3. Innovations and technologies that address gender issues are lacking in Malawi.
4. Population growth should be considered as an important issue in gender mainstreaming. Stakeholders involved in population issues should be brought to the table.
5. Highlight the issues of involving champions in the various stakeholder groups to promote aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental development.
6. Focus effort on mainstreaming gender in the commercial fisheries sector.
7. The biodiversity strategy lacks a clear strategy on how to mainstream gender.
8. Opportunities for gender mainstreaming identified in the Continental Strategy should be tied into the Malawi process for gender mainstreaming in the NBSAP. We need to identify and outline the gender responsive and transformation action plan in NBSAP
9. It takes quite long to review expired strategy documents and this is associated with financial constraints and other resource constraints.
10. Aquatic biodiversity conservation should not be restricted to the fisheries sector alone. There are other important sectors for the blue economy which should be considered as well. Other fields should be developed eg. Taxonomists
11. Documentation of qualitative data is relevant for gender mainstreaming. Very little is published on gender issues in Malawi.

#### **4 WORKING GROUP SESSIONS**

Facilitated by Mrs. Mphatso Kalemba, Chief Environmental Officer, Ministry of Natural Resources and Climate Change and Mrs. Chikondi Pasani, Deputy Director, Fisheries Department

Three working groups were created to deliberate on different issues after which results were presented at a plenary by the rapporteurs of the groups:

Group 1: Gender mainstreaming - Identify the current issues women and youth are facing in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management and propose priority actions for gender mainstreaming

##### **Issues & Recommendations:**

- a. Engender the objectives and actions proposed for the strategy
- b. Ensure that key messages for communicating gender issues are tailored according to the stakeholder groups being targeted.

Group 2: NBSAP Target on Aquatic Biodiversity - Identify the gaps, recommend changes on Target 7 of the NBSAP based on relevant Targets of the Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework

#### Issues & Recommendations:

- a. The Ministry of Gender should share the available gender mainstreaming guidelines with relevant stakeholders to ensure that the process of mainstreaming gender issues aligns with biodiversity issues.

Group 3: NBSAP Target on Gender - Identify gaps and recommend changes on target 15 of the NBSAP based on Target 23 of the Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework

#### Issues & Recommendation:

- a. Indicators proposed should be engendered and not presented as outputs
- b. Emphasis should be laid on enhancing institutional coordination and collaboration considering the transboundary nature of the aquatic environment.

### 5. WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

- a. As the strategy is still under development, there is the need for involvement of relevant experts to enhance development of an all-inclusive strategy.
- b. AU-IBAR is requested to continue supporting Malawi to develop a National blue economy strategy.
- c. There is the need for further consultation of the draft strategy once completed at various levels.
- d. There is a need to validate the strategy for ownership.
- e. SADC proposed a policy brief developed for the Strategy as a means to popularize it.

### 6. NEXT STEPS

- a. Comprehensive draft on the National Strategy for gender mainstreaming in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management to be shared with participants
- b. Workshop report to be prepared and shared with participants.
- c. Take actions to popularize the strategy at the National level.

### 7. CONCLUSION

The national delegates expressed appreciation to the AU-IBAR for this laudable initiative and on the same note, urged the organization to ensure activities are implemented to ensure sustainability of the programme.

### 8. ADOPTION OF THE COMMUNIQUE

IUCN moved for the adoption of the communique, which was seconded by the National Youth Network on Climate Change.

The Communiqué was adopted by the participants on Thursday, 4th May 2023.



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