

Executive summary
Policy, institutions and governance knowledge products (AFRM)

The Advisory council of the African reform mechanism reviewed, updated and embellished 4 knowledge products on policy, institutions and governance. These knowledge products were subsequently adopted at the 3rd advisory council meeting held in Mombasa, 14-15 august 2025, as follow:

1. *The Policy brief on Enhancing Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector Investments to Achieve Agenda 2063 Aspirations*
2. *Advocacy Note on the Institutionalization and Utilization of the Africa Fisheries and Aquaculture Database (AFAData)*
3. *Policy brief on strengthening Ocean Governance with a Focus on Fisheries Access Agreements (FAA)*
4. *Analysis and actions considered on policies, institutions and governance issues for fisheries and aquaculture development in Africa.*

The executive summary of the above knowledge products is presented below:

1. The Policy brief– Enhancing Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector Investments to Achieve Agenda 2063 Aspirations

This policy brief assesses Africa's fisheries and aquaculture sector's readiness to achieve Agenda 2063, based on foresight studies in climate change adaptation, fish supply and food security, and gender mainstreaming. highlighting challenges such as a fish supply deficit, high post-harvest losses, underdeveloped aquaculture, climate vulnerability, gender inequality, and weak governance and institutional capacity. It recommends boosting fish production through better resource management, aquaculture expansion, and reduction of illegal fishing; investing in sector-specific education and capacity building aligned with Blue Economy value chains; integrating climate adaptation strategies; reforming governance through coordinated results-driven planning at AU, regional, and national planning; empowering women in fisheries value chains; and leveraging public-private partnerships through mainstreaming fisheries and aquaculture into the National Agricultural Investment Plans (NAIPs) to attract investment, especially for small and medium enterprises, with the goal of enhancing food security in line with CAADP Kampala commitments, economic growth, and social equity across the continent.

2. Advocacy Note on the Institutionalization and Utilization of the Africa Fisheries and Aquaculture Database (AFAData)

The Africa Fisheries and Aquaculture Database (AFAData) is a continent-wide platform to harmonize fisheries and aquaculture data across African Union member states. The sector, critical for employment, nutrition, and economic development, faces challenges such as IUU fishing, weak governance, and inadequate data for evidence-based decision-making. AFAData addresses these gaps by providing a secure, user-friendly system for collecting, analysing, and sharing standardized production, trade, environmental, and socio-economic data. Piloted in seven AU member states and validated through regional workshops, the database aims to support sustainable management, improve policy decisions, strengthen regional



cooperation, and enhance institutional capacity. Full institutionalization, technical upgrades including reporting to the CAADP Kampala Biennial Review Reporting, capacity building, and sustainable funding are recommended to ensure AFAData's long-term effectiveness and its role in guiding the sustainable development of Africa's fisheries and aquaculture sector

3. *Policy brief strengthening Ocean Governance with a Focus on Fisheries Access Agreements (FAA)*

Africa's coastal and marine resources are crucial for food security, economic growth, and environmental sustainability, yet the fisheries sector faces significant challenges, including overfishing, illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, habitat degradation, pollution, and climate change. Fisheries Access Agreements (FAAs) with foreign fleets, while generating revenue, currently return only 10–15% of the processed fish value to African States, limiting economic benefits and undermining local livelihoods. This policy brief recommends that African States shift from being price-takers to value-setters in FAA negotiations by adopting coherent national policies, increasing economic returns through ecological levies and claims on value-added from distant water fishing states, enhancing regional cooperation, building negotiation and intelligence capacity, protecting small-scale fisheries, ensuring domestic processing and employment, integrating climate adaptation measures, and strengthening monitoring, control, and surveillance. Implementing these measures will boost Africa's negotiation power, maximize economic and social benefits, safeguard marine ecosystems, and position fisheries as a cornerstone of the continent's blue economy and sustainable development agenda.

4. *Analysis and actions considered on policies, institutions and governance issues for fisheries and aquaculture development in Africa*

Africa's fisheries and aquaculture sector is vital for food security, livelihoods, and economic growth but faces challenges including weak governance, limited data, climate change impacts, and gaps in policy implementation. A comprehensive SWOT analysis identified strengths such as established policy frameworks, regional coordination, and active stakeholder participation, alongside weaknesses like overreliance on external funding, insufficient capacity, and poor inter-sectoral coordination; it also highlighted opportunities in blue economy initiatives and regional collaboration, as well as threats from climate change, pollution, and governance risks.

The outcome of this SWOT analysis is the proposed Action Plan, which focuses on strengthening governance, enhancing monitoring and data systems, promoting climate adaptation, mobilizing domestic financing, and fostering public–private partnerships. Coordinated implementation by AU Member States, RECs, RFBs, and other stakeholders will improve sector productivity, safeguard aquatic ecosystems, support resilient communities, and position fisheries and aquaculture as a cornerstone of Africa's blue economy and sustainable development agenda.