REPORT

Of

The Consultative Meeting to Validate the Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure for RFBs and Establishment of a Continental Platform for Regional Fisheries Bodies in Africa

22nd – 24th April, 2015

Cotonou, BENIN










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List of Acronyms

ANAF	Aquaculture Network for Africa
ASC	Aquaculture Stewardship Council
AU	African Union
AU MS	African Union Member States
AUC	African Union Commission
AU-IBAR	African Union Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CAMFA	Conference of African Ministers of Fisheries and Aquaculture
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
CCRF	FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries
CEBERVIRHA	Economic Community of Livestock and Fish Resources/ La Communauté Economique du Bétail de la Viande et des Ressources Halieutiques
CECAF	Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic
CIFAA	Committee for Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture for Africa
COFI	FAO Committee on Fisheries
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
COREP	Regional Fisheries Committee for the Gulf of Guinea
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DRM	Disaster Risk assessment
EAC	East African Community
EAF	Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EIA	Environnemental Impact Assessment
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FCWC	Fishery Committee of the West Central Gulf of Guinea
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICCAT	International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority for Development
IOC	Indian Ocean Commission
IOTC	Indian Ocean Tuna Commission
INFOPECHE	Inter-governmental Organization for Marketing Information and Cooperation Services for Fishery Products in Africa
IUU	Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing
LCBC	Lake Chad Basin Commission
LME	Large Marine Ecosystem
LTA	Lake Tanganyika Authority
LVFO	Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization
MCA	Minimum Conditions of Access
MCS	Monitoring Control and surveillance
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MEY	Maximum Economic Yield
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MSC	Marine Stewardship Council
MSY	Maximum Sustainable Yield

NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NPCA	NEPAD Planning and Coordination Agency
NGO	Non-Government Organization
PSMA	Port State Measures Agreement
REC	Regional Economic Community
RFB	Regional Fishery Body
RFMO	Regional Fisheries Management Organization
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SOFIA	State of the World Fisheries and Aquaculture
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards
SRFC	Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission
SWIOFC	South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission
TAC	Total Allowable Catch
TCP	Technical Cooperation project
TURF	Territorial Use Rights in Fisheries or Territorial Use Rights in Fishing
WBC	Water Based Commissions
WWF	World Wildlife Fund for Nature
ZAMCOM	Zambezi Watercourse Commission

FISHGOV PROJECT
"Fish for posterity"

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Summary and Context

Fisheries management in Africa is usually entrusted in the Ministries or Departments of Fisheries at national levels with the mandate for management and development of the sector that would bring sustainable socio-economic benefits to the member states. In most regions of Africa, the member states have established Regional Fisheries Bodies (RFBs) to ensure regional collaboration, coherence in policy and management practices of the sector. There is huge overlap of mandates and lack of coordination of activities and programs between existing RFBs. The situation is aggravated by emergence of new regional fisheries bodies, such as the Large Marine Ecosystem (LME)-based institutions that could also pose serious risk of duplication of functions, increasing multiplicity of memberships, additional financial burdens to member states and uncoordinated intervention. The mandate of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) is to foster regional integration for socio-economic development of their member states. The fisheries development aspect is however weak in the RECs secretariat, where usually one officer is in charge of fisheries and livestock and there is no functional or institutional linkages between the RECs and the RFBs.

The above analysis calls for high level and structured interventions, preferably at the level of African union, to address this situation in a participatory manner, which would provide the requisite leadership. The African Union has developed the Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa, which was endorsed by the Summit of African Heads of States and Governments in June 2014, Malabo, Equatorial Guinea. A key pillar in this Pan African policy document is strengthening regional cooperation, institutional collaboration and coordination in fisheries management on the continent. The African Union has also established an African Fisheries Reform Mechanism (AFRM) whose purpose is mainly to foster coordination, coherence and cooperation in the African fisheries and aquaculture sector.

The EU funded Fisheries Governance project "'Strengthening institutional capacity to enhance governance of the fisheries sector in Africa", implemented by AU-IBAR, in collaboration with the NEPAD Agency, has a major activity on enhancing collaboration in the governance of the fisheries and aquaculture sector. This activity entails conducting institutional and performance of RFBs and Water basin Commissions (WBCs) with a view to their rationalization for effective delivery of services to member states as well as developing a mechanism for their anchorage to Regional Economic communities.

This presentation was a culmination of several related meetings on institutional collaboration in the fisheries sector with the prime objective of establishing an African platform for regional fisheries bodies and related institutional as well as a mechanism for institutional linkages at regional levels, specifically between RECs and RFBs.

The meeting provided a forum to review the strides by AU in forging institutional collaboration and regional cooperation in African fisheries; examine coordination and cooperation as a key pillar in the Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa, progress on action plan of the Accra Meeting on Institutional Collaboration; validate the Terms of Reference and Rule of Procedure for Continental Platform for Regional Fisheries Bodies in Africa, enrich the document on framework for formalizing Relationship Agreement for building or strengthening institutional linkage between RECs and RFBs, as well as validate the TORs and Rule of Procedure for RFB Platform for validation of agreed template of legal text for REC and RFB cooperation- as a framework for formalizing REC-RFB cooperation

1.2 Objectives

The overall objective of this consultative meeting was to validate for implementation the proposed Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedures for Continental Platform for Regional Fisheries Bodies (RFBs).

The specific objectives were to:

i. Review and validate the RFBs institutional assessment reports and propose roadmap for implementation of the recommendations;
ii. Agree on a roadmap for operationalizing a Continental RFB platform;
iii. Review for adoption, as a template for replication, the draft legal text for anchorage of REC and RFB.

1.3 The Expected Outcomes were proposed to be as follows;

i. The Terms of Reference and Rule of Procedures for continental platform for RFBs reviewed and validated by the stakeholders;
ii. The institutional assessment reports of RFBs are reviewed and validated?
iii. A roadmap for operationalizing terms of reference and rule of procedures for continental platform for RFBs is established (developing institutional linkages for sustainable fisheries management and aquaculture development ;)
iv. Recommendations for establishing linkages between RECs and RFBs are made.
v. A framework for formalising linkages between RECs and RFBs adopted.

1.3 Attendance

In attendance for the Consultative Meeting were thirty five delegates from Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Regional Fisheries Bodies (RFBs) and Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) and other fisheries related regional institutions. The full list of the participants attached to this report as **Appendix I**.

2. OPENING SESSION

The opening ceremony was introduced and coordinated by Dr. Mohamed Seisay, Senior Fisheries Officer of the African Union – InterAfrican Bureau for Animal resources (AU-IBAR).He warmly welcomed the participants and introduced the key speakers for the welcome ceremony. The following opening remarks were made;

Mr. Jonathan Nyarko Ocran, the Policy Officer of the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture welcomed the delegates and participants while making statement on behalf of the African Union Commission at the meeting. He highlighted the important role fisheries and aquaculture play in the economy of the continent in recognition of which the sector is placed high on the table of priority of the AUC on the development blueprint for the continent's development over the next fifty years called Agenda 2063. The full statement of Dr. Ocran is attached as **Appendix II** to the Report

Mrs. Isabelle Viallon, Policy Officer, European Commission, DG DEVCO, in her statement on behalf of the EU expressed appreciation on the giant strides by AU-IBAR that has culminated in the organization of the consultative meeting. She acknowledged that operationalizing coordination, cooperation and partnership in the fisheries and aquaculture requires a lot of efforts and recognized the importance of dealing with coordination especially with limited resources for the management and development of the aquatic resources. It is in line with this that the EU is happy to partner with the AU in this regard.

The opening statement by NPCA was provided by Dr. Hamady Diop, Program Manager Fisheries and Aquaculture of NEPAD Agency who while welcoming participants to the meeting reechoed the active role of the NPCA in the process of preparation of the initiative to ensure that priorities and strategies proposed are in line with African Union priorities and action plan, and that they complement other planned or ongoing continental activities. He recalled that CAMFA I, had

among other key challenges identified ineffective and poor governance arrangements at various levels including coordination of national and regional organizations, donors assisted programs and policies. Dr. Diop's speech is in **Appendix III.**

During the opening ceremony, Dr. Simplice Nouala, Chief Animal Production Officer, AU-IBAR welcomed the participants on behalf of the Director of AU-IBAR, Professor Ahmed A. El-Sawalhy. He noted that the meeting was the peak of the journey African Union commenced with stakeholders and it is a significant and final step towards a successful conclusion of one of the most seemingly intractable much talked about obstacle to good governance in fisheries management – institutional collaboration, coordination and regional cooperation. The task was important, hence enhancing coordination and institutional collaboration is a priority for AU-IBAR for the expeditious development of the fisheries sector along with strategic partners. A manifestation of the importance of the critical issue of institutional collaboration, cooperation and coordination is its identification by stakeholders to become a key standalone policy pillar in the Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa. He reaffirmed AU-IBAR's commitment to support Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Regional Fisheries Bodies (RFBs) and Member States to achieve desirable outcomes in fisheries. Finally, he thanked the EU for the support and generosity to provide funding for the Fisheries Governance Project, the consultants that have provided the necessary information for this meeting and the participants who have worked and voyaged tirelessly in the past with AU-IBAR. Dr. Nouala's welcome address on behalf of the Director of AU-IBAR is attached to this report as **Appendix IV.**

Mr. Toko Abdoulaye the Permanent Secretary on behalf of His Excellency Issa Azizou, Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries officially declared the Meeting Open. He enumerated the potential benefits of regional collaboration with regards to joint efforts in combating Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, enhancing intra-regional trade in fish and fish products, increased investment, common approach in addressing transbounadry issues such as pollution, degradation of habitat, etc. The full statement of the Minister is attached as **Appendix V** to the report.

3. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE MEETING

Dr. Simplice Nouala, Chief Animal Production Officer, AU-IBAR chaired the consultative meeting and coopted Mr. Mamane Tahir Na-andi, the Fisheries and Aquaculture Expert of the Lake Chad Basin Commission and Dr. Vivian Dr. Vivian Iwar, Head, Livestock Development Division of ECOWAS into the Secretariat.

The Agenda was introduced by the Chainman and adopted, as given in **Appendix VI.**

4. TECHNICAL SESSION

The technical session of the meeting commenced with range of presentations by AU-IBAR, the Consultants and the rapporteurs of the sub-thematic working groups and main highlights are as given in the foregoing.

5. HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Dr. Mohamed Seisay gave a presentation on the Historical Perspective of Coordination, Cooperation and Collaboration in the continental development of the fisheries and aquaculture in Africa with an overview of strides by AU in forging institutional collaboration and regional cooperation in African fisheries. His presentations gave a background on the potential of fisheries and aquaculture in Africa to positively influence or drive the socio-economic agenda of the continent towards poverty reduction and food security, enumerated the key players of the industry at regional level and outlined major challenges facing the sector to include among others;

- The development of the sector is replete with management issues, paramount of which are illegal fishing practices, low investment, incoherent policies, weak intra-regional trade, **weak coordination and cooperation in the sector (institutional and inter-state collaboration)**
- In some regions, the roles and mandates of existing regional institutions tend to overlap in fisheries and aquaculture related matters- ***duplication of effort and resources wastage***
- Some organizations such as CECAF and COMHAFAT cover large areas that include the competencies of smaller organizations (SRFC, COREP, and FCWC) and this creates duplication of efforts
- Multiplicity of memberships -Many States belong to more than one organization- ***heavy financial burden***.
- Generally fisheries activities of RECs are diluted within broader development scopes
- This problem is compounded by the lack of specialized fishery personnel that further create difficulties for RECs in providing an adequate framework for cooperation in fisheries management and development
- The low capacity of the RECs in understanding issues in fisheries governance is a risk in partnership coordination- effective IUU, intra-regional fish trade, management of shared resources, environmental issues
- There is a risk of inconsistency between RECs and RFBs on fisheries and aquaculture matters

Dr. Mohamed further highlighted some laudable initiatives taken by the AU to address these issues including continental Think Tank events focusing mainly on exploration of issues in regional cooperation in fisheries management and aquaculture development, role of RFBs and relationships with RECs.

He concluded that Regional Partnerships to manage the fisheries and aquaculture resources of the continent can be a strategy to minimize cross-border-externalities and promote the exploitation of economies of scale for development. The overall integration and interaction of the foregoing issues with focus in positively addressing them to chart the way forward formed the objectives and expected outcome of the meeting as highlighted above.

6. COORDINATION AND COOPERATION AS A KEY PILLAR IN AFRICAN POLICY FRAMEWORK AND REFORM STRATEGY FOR FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE IN AFRICA

Dr. Aboubacar Sidibe made the presentation on the regional and sub-regional coordination and cooperation as one of the keys pillar the Pan African policy framework and reform strategy for fisheries and aquaculture in Africa. The Collaboration is needed, inter alia, to build appropriately integrated and iterative systems of governance, both nationally and internationally. However, RECs and RFBs presently operate in a “siloed” or isolated way and their actions are generally fragmented and/or incoherent. His presentation indicated that the PFRS acknowledged that a key challenge across the fisheries management spectrum is the lack of policy coherence and coordination in the management of the fisheries and aquaculture resources in the AU countries. Therefore, the PFRS document has been formulated with the main purpose of facilitating coherent policy development for the sustainable management of fisheries and aquaculture resources among the member states of the African Union. The initiative further provides opportunities for member states to optimize benefits from their natural resources by implementing the strategic reforms enunciated in the document which requires commitment to undertake reforms by appropriate institutions of AU member states and provides guidance on good governance principles considered as best practices in fisheries management and outlined strategic actions for key pillars for reform of African fisheries.

Accordingly, the Policy Framework and Reform Strategy was intended to elaborate and make explicit essential guiding principles for good governance of Africa’s fisheries for increased coherence and coordination of the sector as well as help facilitate regional collaboration and integration in shared fisheries and aquaculture resources management

The PFRS further indicates that the management of shared ecosystems and resources require new levels of cooperation if the resources are to be managed effectively, and contribute to economic growth and livelihoods of

participants. This can be achieved through, inter alia, by: harmonizing fisheries policies and legal frameworks for shared water bodies or marine living resources; promoting efficient dialogue and coordination processes between riverine countries and other stakeholders for effective bilateral and/or regional cooperation for shared resources. Moreover the guiding principle requires that implementation of the reforms is the joint responsibility of government ministries, departments or agencies in-charge of fisheries, donor agencies, technical institutions and all others involved in the sector. Effective implementation will therefore require strong cooperation, collaboration, coordination and investment across a range of entities based on a visionary, sequencing and participatory approach and guided by the following principles, Adoption of a process approach in implementation; Prioritization; Consultation, Cooperation and Participation; Equity and equality; Scalability; Sustainability; Accountability and Self-development.

He noted that strengthening the performance of the RFBs and enhancing collaboration in their modus operandi is the major challenge. In some regions, the roles of existing institutions tend to overlap in fisheries and aquaculture-related matters. There is a general lack of collaboration between regional institutions and complementary or reciprocal relationships between these institutions and other industries, such as mining, which activities affect fisheries resources or habitats for which these fisheries agencies are responsible.
His presentation further gave an insight into the Objectives; Expected Outcomes; Strategies and Actions for the coordination and cooperation in the Pan African Fisheries Policy and Reform strategy as follows:

Policy objective of the PFRS: Strengthen South-South (bilateral and regional) cooperation, and develop coordinated mechanisms among RECs, RFBs and LME-based commissions to ensure coherence of fisheries policies and aquaculture development and their adoption and adaptation.
Expected Outcomes of the PFRS:

- Transparency, accountability and effective participation of stakeholders are hallmarks of RECs and RFBs in Africa
- International fisheries issues at regional levels are coherent and harmonized
- Approaches to the management and development of shared fisheries and ecosystems are harmonized
- BMP are widely disseminated
- Many fisheries are managed and aquaculture enterprises are developed on the basis of ecosystem approaches or considerations
- Mechanisms for preventing and resolving conflicts are in place in many countries
- RECs and RFBs are positive forces for regional economic integration

Strategies and Actions of the PFRS:

a. Increased strategic cooperation in several areas of capture fisheries and aquaculture development need to be pursued by Member States:
    - support and strengthen regional organizations whose mandates include fishery and aquaculture development
    - improve inter-regional collaboration and networking between regional organizations to ensure synergy and coherence
    - strengthen the capacity of regional organizations for information development, analysis and dissemination
    - promote and facilitate the formation of regional federations of producers' organizations
    - mobilize financial resources for and create regional funds for investments in fisheries and aquaculture development

- encourage Africa's RFBs to apply internally recognized best practice for regional fishery bodies

b. Create synergies and complementarities in the programmes at regional level. The action steps could include:

a. review and update the legal frameworks of these regional institutions, as appropriate
b. recognize RFBs as specialized technical units of RECs and institute sustainable financing mechanisms for RFBs
c. strengthen linkages among RFBs through Memoranda of Understanding and Letters of Agreement
d. promote greater collaboration with large marine ecosystems projects or consultative arrangements in their areas of jurisdiction
e. promote linkages with NGOs
f. coordinate donor inputs to the sector
g. establish a Network of RECs and RFBs Secretariat similar to the global Secretariat of regional fisheries organizations

7. PROGRESS ON ACTION PLAN OF THE ACCRA-GHANA MEETING ON INSTITUTIONAL COLLABORATION

Mr. Obinna Anozie made a presentation on the Progress on Action Plan of the Accra-Ghana Meeting on Institutional Collaboration which is summarized as follows;

(i) Establish a platform for RFBs

- Consultancy Awarded and report ready for presentation on development and formulation of TOR & Rules of Procedure for the establishment of APRIFAS*

(ii) Formalize existing linkages/agreements between RFBs, WBCs and RECs

- Consultancy was awarded and study conducted to formulate draft legal text between COREP & ECCAS as well as Preparation of MOU
- AU-IBAR provided a platform for interaction between RFBs, WBCs and RECs at the inception workshop and launching of FishGov in Dar es Salaam and has effectively involved them in AFRM WG as members in key positions

(iii) Assessment of performance RFBs and WBCs

- Consultancy Awarded, assemement successfully conducted in the South, East; West and Central Regions and report ready for presentation

(iv) Participation of meetings of RFMOs and setup a mechanism to plan and facilitate decisions implementation

- AU-IBAR has established contact with IOTC; ICCAT; SEAFO. And FishGov has accommodated and made provision for Funding MS Participation in RFMO meetings

(v) **Collate and share information on calendar of meetings of RECs and RFBs and directory of institutions**

- AU-IBAR develops calendar of events of RFMOs, RECs and RFBs on quarterly which will soon be disseminated through AU-IBAR Website.
- Development of Directory/Inventory for a framework of projects to improve governance of fisheries and aquaculture sector in Africa

(vi) Participation of RFBs and WBC in CAADP process

- AU-IBAR has engaged some MS to align fisheries projects with CAADP & PFRS

(vii) Joint planning and programming between RFBs and RECs

- Action to be propelled by Platform

(viii) Lobby recruitment of fisheries experts in RECs

- SADC and IGAD has accomplished in line with and for the implementation of principles of AFRM/PFRS and activities of FishGov Principles. Efforts in progress for ECOWAS to follow as well as other RECs

(ix) Continental forum to maintain a website for sharing information on RFB activities. Linking of RFB websites at AU and REC level

- The Fisheries Governance Project has a dedicated sub activity on strengthening capacity for coordination and dissemination of information which has been adequately accommodated in the questionnaires administered during various Scooping Missions on MCS, MPA and inland fisheries and waterbodies

8. MAIN FINDINGS OF THE INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT OF RFBs

The ultimate goal of the Institutional Assessment of the RFBs in line with the recommendations of the meeting on 'Enhancing Institutional Collaboration in the Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa' in July 2014, Accra, Ghana was to rationalize the RFBs in order to enhance the effectiveness of their performance and efficiency in delivery of their respective mandates as well as development of a framework for forging institutional or intra-agency and inter-agency collaborations. The action also targeted to;

i. To carry out review of their mandates, structure and instructional stet-up
ii. Undertake assessment of their past and current activities in fisheries and aquaculture and their impact of their activities in their geographical area of competency
iii. Assessment of their capacities and gaps in line with their mandates their institutional linkages with similar organizations within the region

As scheduled in the Agenda of the meeting the 3 Consultants who executed relevant exercise to achieve these objectives respectively took time one after the other to make presentations of their findings from the consultancies conducted in specific geographical regional coverage of the continent.

7.1 SOUTH-EASTERN AFRICA

The consultant who conducted the assessment in the South Eastern Region of Africa Mr. Mathias Wafula made a presentation on his findings which are summarized below;

7.1.1 Coverage:

The area covered in the consultancy includes the following institutions in the Southern and Eastern Africa Region;

(i) Committee for Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture of Africa (CIFAA).
(ii) South-West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission (SWIOFC).
(iii) Lake Tanganyika Authority (LTA).
(iv) Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization (LVFO).
(v) Aquaculture Network for Africa (ANAF).
(vi) Lake Victoria Basin Commission (LVBC).
(vii) Zambezi Watercourse Commission(ZAMCOM)

7.1.2 Main findings

A. CIFAA

(i) The role played by CIFAA in the establishment of RFBs like LVFO, LTA was acknowledged.
(ii) Members have lately expressed the need to restructure CIFAA to effectively address the challenges facing inland fisheries of Africa.
(iii) Main concerns raised include, lack of quorum and poor attendance of meetings, and FAO's adoption of change of policy on RFBs established under Article VI.

B. SWIOFC

(i) Established under Article VI(I) as an advisory fisheries Commission on marine resources of the EEZ of member states.
(ii) The decision to relocate SWIOFC secretariat in Jan.2015 from FAO regional office to a member state will strengthen the sense of ownership by members.

(iii) Members have lately expressed the wish to transform SWIOFC into a management body.

C. LTA

(i) LTA was established through CFAA sub-committee for Lake Tanganyika.
(ii) LTA however took on mandates beyond fisheries and aquaculture- water basin authority.
(iii) Three of the four members had acceded to the protocol in 2004/2005, but operationalized in 2009.
(iv) Its short history notwithstanding, LTA has prepared LTRIMP and taken on a number of projects on fisheries.
(v) Institutional linkages with existing RECs not quite clear.
(vi) Funding challenges by the contracting parties.

D. LVFO

(i) Established through CIFAA as a FMO.
(ii) An institution of the EAC.
(iii) Discussions underway for the expansion of mandate and scope of LVFO to have an East African outlook(EAFO) and accommodate Rwanda , Burundi and any other new members of EAC.
(iv) Funding challenges of contracting parties.
(v) Apparent overlap of mandate with LVBC.
(vi) LVFO has established grass root structures (BMUs) for co-management.
(vii) LVFO has established standard operating procedures.

E. ANAF

(i) ANAF established through CIFAA
(ii) Website temporarily housed at LVFO secretariat in Jinja-Uganda.
(iii) Low membership and lack of funding mechanism.
(iv) Proposal to transform ANAF into an intergovernmental body.

F. LVBC

(i) An institution of EAC.
(ii) LVBC does not have grass root structures.
(iii) Substantial Donor funding for most of the programme activities.
(iv) Coordinating World Bank funded LVEMP II project. Fisheries component of the project is implemented by LVFO.
(v) Apparent overlap of mandate with LVFO.

G. ZAMCOM

(i) Established by SADC in 2011.
(ii) Its short history not withstanding ZAMCOM has embarked on a number of activities in line with ZAMCOM operational plan.
(iii) Fisheries and aquaculture is not among the initial themes and activities.

H. FAO

(i) FAO's global mandate to promote national and international actions on fisheries research, conservation , management and development is acknowledged.
(ii) FAO recognizes the critical role of Regional Fisheries Bodies and continues to support and encourage active participation of RFBs in decision making process.
(iii) FAO continues to support the meetings of Regional Fishery Bodies Secretariat network.
(iv) FAO shift of policy towards RFBs. At 22nd session of COFI in1997,a recommendation was adopted to establish a mechanism /process for RFBs to meet greater share of their operating costs with a view of ultimately becoming financially less dependent on the FAO regular budget and re-establishing Article VI bodies under new arrangements.

I. African Union (AU)

(i) African Union Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture is well acknowledged.
(ii) AU recognises the critical roles played by RFBs and RECs in implementing the policy and strategy.
(iii) AU has shown commitment to strengthen RFBs.

J. RFBs General

(i) Commitment of members of RFBs. They can only be as effective as their contracting parties permit.
(ii) Overlaps and multiple memberships in RFBs and RECs.
(iii) Elaborate mandates and functions which have not been implemented due to financial limitations.
(iv) Main recommendations-AU
(v) The AU should support the member states to domesticate the AU Policy Framework and Reform Strategy.

7.1.3 Recommendations:

Mr. Wafula's report presented the following recommendations;

(i) The AU should support the member states to domesticate the AU Policy Framework and Reform Strategy;
(ii) CIFAA could be transformed into a pan African platform for fisheries and aquaculture in Africa and be hosted at AU headquarters;
(iii) The role played by CIFAA in East and Southern Africa be taken up by two new RFMOs to be established out of LVFO and ZAMCOM;
(iv) SWIOFC could be dissolved and its role taken over by two RFMO to be established out of LVFO and ZAMCOM to cover East and southern Africa.
(v) LTA is a water basin authority with pronounced mandate on fisheries;
(vi) To enjoy the fish trade benefits to the international market, it may be more beneficial for the proposed RFMO covering East Africa to include the fisheries of Lake Tanganyika;
(vii) AU could support LTA and LVFO to establish joint committees and working groups;
(viii) AU should liaise with EAC to ensure continued support towards the process of expanding the LVFO scope and mandate;
(ix) LVFO is transformed into RFMO to take responsibility for all inland fisheries, aquaculture and marine resources of the EEZ of the member states in the East African region;
(x) The proposed EAFO will take over the responsibilities previously performed by CIFAA and SWIOFC in East Africa;
(xi) AU should support the strengthening of ANAF through stakeholder sensitization, recruitment, and re-location to its permanent home preferably to AU headquarters;
(xii) EAC should encourage and support regular interacting forums for the two institutions.
(xiii) AU should liaise with SADC and seek funding to support a feasibility study to assess the potential and propose projects on fisheries and aquaculture development in Zambezi basin.
(xiv) The establishment of SAFO as an RFMO similar to EAFO proposed under LVFO and to cover southern Africa inland fisheries, aquaculture and the marine resources of the EEZ of member states.
(xv) AU should support the process of establishing a continental platform for RFBs in Africa.
(xvi) The AU through the Heads of States and Government Summit should urge all member states to increase their national budgets to fisheries and aquaculture development.
(xvii) AU should liaise with development partners to secure more funding of development projects on fisheries and aquaculture especially those that are regional or trans boundary in nature.
(xviii) AU should support the member states to identify sustainable funding mechanisms for fisheries and aquaculture.

7.2 WESTERN AFRICA

The summary of the presentation of Mr. Georges Mba-Asseko who conducted the assessment of the RFBs in the Western Africa is given below;

7.2.1 Coverage:

Mr. Mba-Asseko assessed the following institutions in the West Africa;

(i) Sub-regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC)
(ii) Organization for the Development of the Senegal River (OMVS),
(iii) Fisheries Committee for West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC)
(iv) Niger Basin Authority (NBA)

7.2.2 Main Findings

(i) RFBs and WBCs have not deviated from their original mandate; However the mandates have been expanded over time in accordance to changes of activities under their management ;
(ii) The SRFC and FCWC are functional despite financial difficulties;
(iii) The recurrent requests the countries vis-a-vis for their RFB multifaceted support, indicate the usefulness of these organizations is highly appreciated by countries
(iv) Lack of stable financial resources, technical personnel in the RFOs is too often linked to projects. This does not ensure continuity of service for certain executives and makes them delicate in human resources management. Indeed, there is a resulting lack of durability to a continuous renewal of personnel;
(v) Lack of necessary human resources for the implementation and monitoring of activities at national levels;
(vi) A recurring instability in the leadership of fisheries administrations also weakens the implementation chain;
(vii) African institutions repose enough confidence on regional organizations;
(viii) There are still many requests to provide financial support, while at the same time, donors funding released simply on the basis of terms of agreement (memorandum of understanding, contract, etc. .).

Recommendation;

The report presented by Mba-Asseko gave the following as recommendations;

(i) On the issue of trust and institutional confidence, it is suggested that the AU-IBAR for example uses commonly used mechanism by funding agencies to entrust to the REC, or even to the RFBs, funding to assist countries;
(ii) Review the mandates of the RFBs so that they can better play their roles to support consultants, member states representation and contributions;
(iii) Strengthen institutional links of the RFBs with the RECs in particular so that their resolutions become guidelines to countries (minimum conditions for access, right based fisheries management plan, etc.);
(iv) Strengthening links with the RECs so that the RFBs become the technical partners of the communities;
(v) Support the establishment within RECs of a position or a unit dedicated to the fisheries and aquaculture sector;
(vi) Set up a platform for partners to channel technical and financial support and ensuring coordination of development assistance;
(vii) Unburden the countries of the weight of the RFBs contributions and provide operational resources to ensure that they provide better support to States;

7.3 CENTRAL AFRICA

The report on the institutional assessment of the RSFBs in the Central Africa was presented by Dr. Oumarou Njifonjou and summarized as indicated below;

7.3.1 Coverage:

Dr. Njifonjou assessed the following institutions;

(i) The Regional Fisheries Commission of the Gulf of Guinea (COREP);
(ii) The Commission of the Lake Chad Basin (LCBC);
(iii) The Economic Commission on Livestock, Beef and Fish Resources (CEBEVIRHA);
(iv) The International Commission of the Congo-Oubangui-Sangha Basin (JRCC);

(v) The Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS);

7.3.2 Main findings

Mandates: - The mandates and functions of the RFBs are drawn in consistent with expectations and in line with the principles of fisheries governance;

- The major constraint to the functions of the RFBs / WBC is insufficient resources (human and financial) available to allow these institutions to achieve their goals;

Overlapping activities: Although the RFBs have a specific mandate, their activities tend to overlap: the COREP's has reversed its convention to include the development of inland fisheries and aquaculture in addition to maritime area.

Besides the livestock and inland fisheries development, in CEBEVIRHA there is inclusion of maritime activities; LCBC has in its functions the development of inland fisheries and aquaculture for all member countries.

There is a level of confusion in all these functions and areas of activity making it unclear if this is intentional or the confusion comes from a lack of coordination and synergy in determining and executing mandates.

Aquaculture Development: For better coordination and more sustainable approach there is need to coordinate all initiatives in the aquaculture sector in the sub-region and in sub Saharan Africa. The COREP in its work program has the establishment of Aquaculture Center of Excellence in Central Africa. The PFRS of the AU stresses the need for the establishment of Centers of Excellence in Aquaculture in Africa.

Information Sharing; Very little information is shared among the RFBs. There are no visible Communication strategies in some RFBs**.** The websites of some institutions are not functional or are uncompleted. In some instances where the web sites work, the skill and competence of technician are below expectations.

7.3.3 Recommendations

The recommendations made by Dr. Njifonjou after assessing the above institutions include;

(i) The AU to support reform initiatives undertaken by the RFBs/WBC to increase particularly their performance in achieving their mandates;
(ii) There is need to support the new five-year investment plan of the LCBC, including improving the staff strength and capacity development in the fisheries component;
(iii) For the CEBEVIRHA, it is urgent to establish a communication strategy of this institution. This should allow the establishment of an exchange programme and other information and regular experiences with other RFMOs, development and dissemination of synergies, joint plans of action and joint implementation of programs;
(iv) The revised Convention of the COREP has provisions for the adoption of a series of implementing regulations which include: internal rules, staff regulations and financial regulations. Since the entry into force of the revised Convention, these additional texts are waiting implementation; COREP should urgently work towards accomplishing this.
(v) The anchorage of the COREP to ECCAS has provisions for a positive outcome; Collective effort and synergy is recommended to complete this process, and make this event a case study for replication in other regions;
(vi) There is need to establish technical collaborative mechanisms and sustainable financing for the RFBs;
(vii) Recruitment of technically qualified expert by the RFBs;
(viii) Encourage ECCAS to advance in the process of recruiting a fisheries expert to act as a liaison and facilitate the process anchorage with the COREP.

7.4 Discussion on Presentation of Main Findings of the Institutional Assessment of RFBS

The discussion that followed the presentation of main findings of the institutional assessment of RFBs by the consultants highlighted the following key issues;

7.4.1. The Secretary of the SWIOFC, Mr. Aubrey Harris, outlined the history of the Commission in relation to some of the recommendations of the report. He informed that FAO proposed that member countries take up responsibilities within a mandatory body during negotiations to set up SWIOFC, but members had not been prepared at the time. He informed the meeting that in response to requests of members during a performance review, the Secretariat would be moving to Maputo in July. Setting up two large RFMOs one for eastern and one for southern Africa, each to cover marine and inland fisheries as well as aquaculture, as proposed in the report, would have several profound constraints including: being technically overstretched; require extensive negotiations possibly of over 10 years; inadequately address specific issues of very broad mandates; duplicate or subsume existing functional bodies such as SWIOFC, BCC and LTA; and leave member countries confused and unsupported. He had contacted his membership that had expressed extreme concern that the proposal would split existing good cooperation and harmonized positions of the coastal and island countries of the Western Indian Ocean, to the detriment of their objective of seeking greater economic benefits from their fisheries. Mr. Harris concluded that links between RECs and RFBs should be more innovative and adaptable than the proposals of the report.

7.4.2 The representative of ATLAFCO highlighted the importance of the ATLAFCO due to the extent of its area of competence and its key role in regional governance and strengthening of institutional cooperation. He also reaffirmed the commitment of ATLAFCO to reinforce the development of sustainable fisheries resource's exploitation in the continent.
The chairman of the meeting welcomed ATLAFCO, and congratulated it for the commendable efforts and initiatives taken, including the signing in February 2015 of the Memorandum of Understanding for the coordination and collaboration between regional institutions, and reassured ATLAFCO with respect to its participation in the various events at the continental level."

7.4.3 Dr. Vivian Iwar of ECOWAS in her contribution to the discussion opined that the Member States are beginning to be subscription fatigued particularly when issues are crosscutting and when such sector is not well funded in the countries. Addressing this hydra headed challenge in her opinion will involve utilization of or requires some form of political influence; collapsing of institutions and the need to proactively work more closely together by institutions. More importantly according to her is the drive and call for regional institutions to work together to avoid partners and member states being pushed to where they are fatigued. Work plans need to be harmonized and should come with outputs and indicators to clearly address the issue of duplication of resources.

Further discussions for reviewing, refining and amendments to enrich the consultant's reports with a view to formulate recommendations as corrective measures to address common challenges in strengthening and rationalizing RFBs and propose action plans for their rationalization were carried out at a break-out session in four working groups namely:

Group 1- Central Africa
Group 2- South Eastern Africa
Group 3- West Africa
Group 4- Others (Mainly delegates from EU, FAO, ATLAFCO, Abidjan Convention and AU-IBAR)

7.5 Recommendations of the Working Group on the regional assessment reports

The recommendations of each of the four Working Groups on the Main Findings of the Institutional Assessment of RFBs by the consultants were presented at a plenary session and their highlights are as summarized below;

A. Group 1- Central Africa

The Group for Central Africa made the following recommendations to be reflected and enrich the final report;

i. Supporting States in strengthening the capacity of actors;
ii. Encourage ECCAS to advance in the process of recruiting the Fisheries Expert;
iii. Assistance to the LCBC to finance its 2013-2017 five-year plan of investment;
iv. Assist CEBEVIRHA to develop a communication strategy;
v. Develop and adopt the implementing regulations of the PRC included in the new provisions of the revised Convention;
vi. Establish technical cooperation mechanisms and sustainable financing for RFBs;
vii. Expedite the action required by AU-IBAR in the implementation of reports of the Consultants in the assessment of RFBs.

B. Group 2- South Eastern Africa

The recommendations made by the Group for South Eastern Africa for enriching the final report include as listed below;

i. The AU should support the member states through the RECs and RFBs (and other organizations within the RECS eg WBCs) to domesticate the AU Policy framework and Reform Strategy through regional policies and encourage strong alignment and coordination of the policies and programmes
ii. On the proposal to transform CIFAA into a Pan-Africa Platform the Working Group noted that CIFAA held its extraordinary session in Lusaka in December, 2014 during which a working group was formed with Malawi, DRC, Gambia, Sudan, and Uganda as members. The working group met in Malawi in March 2015 and recommended that the statutes and Rules of procedure of CIFAA be reviewed and that a TRUST FUND for voluntary contributions be established. The CIFAA extraordinary session is scheduled for 14-15 July 2015 in Dakar –Senegal where the working group recommendations will be presented and discussed including the restructuring plan. Hence the proposal to transform CIFAA into a Pan-Africa platform could be brought up at the Dakar session for member's consideration.
iii. Lack of linkages with RECs in some cases seems to compromise the regional integration agenda. Examples include;
    - The role of RECS (SADC, IOC, COMESA, IGAD, EAC) as coordinating mechanisms.
    - The role of RFBs (BCC, SWIOFC) as reporting institutions, MCS efforts, information and monitoring.
    - The role of WBCs (LTA, ZAMCOM, LVBC) as riparian management authorities for water and water related activities.
iv. The existing treaties for COMESA, EAC, SADC and regional strategies and protocols by IOC, Nile Basin Initiative could be better applied to promote better linkages in the region
v. The RFBs have clear mandates but have poor implementation of roles and responsibilities. The RECs have very clear roles which even provides for management of other RFBs or cooperation with them. However RECs need to provide a leadership role in the following:
    - Domestication of the AU Policy framework and strategy.
    - Implementation of regional programmes through better coordination and alignment of interventions e.g. EAC-LVFO, LVBC
    - Enter into active agreements with regional bodies and AU to support cooperation projects in the region to strengthen fisheries governance.
vi. AU needs to do the following:

- Support RECs to harmonize policies, programmes and promote linkages and provide for capacity to strengthen fisheries and aquaculture cooperation within the regions, mainly amongst regional organizations.
- The support should be through agreements as per existing legal and policy instruments and be done through implementing of regional plans through these organizations.
- Supporting the creation of new RFBs where strong RFBs are required but don't exist e.g. IGAD to cover the Red Sea area (Djibouti, Sudan, S. Sudan, Somalia, Eritrea and Yemen).
- Support member states seeking to develop fisheries in other shared water bodies e.g. the need to strengthen capacity of ZAMCOM and SADC in fisheries and aquaculture for the development of fisheries and aquaculture in the Zambezi basin."

vii. On the recommendations for strengthening of ANAF the Working Group proposed that;.
- AU should consider entering into agreement with FAO to host ANAF.
- In order to reengineer ANAF other models like NACA should be consulted.
- The ANAF membership should be broadened to include industry, academia, research institutions, NGOs etc
- Networking activities in the continent with World Aquaculture Society (WAS), Aquaculture Association of Southern Africa (AASA) should be considered.
- ANAF should encourage linkages amongst farmer's organizations, private sector, academia, NGOs, regional organizations and governments.

viii. In approaching continental initiatives AU should follow the principle of subsidiarity by going through the RECs. The RECs should also do the same by working with/through the regional bodies

ix. AU should advise LVFO through EAC to ensure that the mandates and responsibilities of the proposed East African Fisheries organization do not overlap or duplicate those of SWIOFC and CIFAA especially with regard to the area of operation

Group 3- West Africa

The Group 3 proffered the under listed recommendations to enrich the final report of the consultant on the institutional assessment of the RFBs in West Africa:

i. Reformulation of the recommendation of the consultant taking into account the existing arrangements notably in the PFRS for establishment of collaboration between RECs and RFBs. In line with this it is suggested that ECOWAS prepare:
   - Short term MoU permitting the sensitization/the coordination/mutual understanding of the mandates (work basis of: regional frame for the coherence of the Fisheries policies)
   - Long term MoU to engage the Ministers in charge of the fisheries in a dynamics of recognition and anchorage with the ECOWAS

ii. Encourage States to find a mechanism for appropriate financing of RFBs by the member states

Group 4- Others

The Group's recommendations for enriching the final reports of the Consultants on Institutional Assessment of the RFBs are as listed below;

i. In the rationalization of the RFBs and WBCs, there is the need to take into account biological and ecosystem factors and not necessarily which RECs they should belong to or consideration of their geographic locations.
ii. The rationalization of RFBs and Water Basin Commissions should focus on existing institutions. There is no need to create new institutions.
iii. There should be joint and back-to-back meetings between RECs and RFBs.
iv. There is need to clarify and reinforce the mandates of RFBs and WBCs if necessary (for example, change their mandates from advisory roles to management ones).
v. Legal instruments between RECs and RFBs should be developed or instituted.

vi. A meeting of partners or donors should be held to provide a coordinated technical and financial support for the development of the fisheries and aquaculture sector in accordance with the implementation of the Policy framework and Reform Strategy

The above recommendations of the Working Groups were discussed upon and are to be integrated in the final reports of the consultants for the final versions of the reports.

However, major fallout of the preceding discussions was Dr. Vivian's intervention in which she informed the meeting that ECOWAS Treaties boarder on policy issues and regulations and that with respect to agriculture the mandate is from the Secretariat to the commissioner. The Heads of States on implementation of CAADP-ECOWAS development of Agriculture the intent of the text subsumes all other bodies with sectoral issues. It therefore becomes imperative for regional bodies to work proactively to become technical partners or work on technical issues with ECOWAS to enable their technical competences, capacity and capability be absorbed into ECOWAS. She further stressed that specialized technical committees such as the Ministers of Fisheries and Aquaculture cannot approve funding but only gives recommendation which may not be taken by the Finance and Admin Committee. This is based on the decision making structure which lies with the Heads of Government. Therefore Fisheries Bodies do not have foothold in ECOWAS – huge mandate but no strong decision making authority. The best approach therefore may be to get the Ministers of Fisheries and Aquaculture to make Strong recommendations for ECOWAS to take recognition that ECOWAS Region requires their technical support to act technically. This also requires vigorous political pursuit to adopt and absorb these Regional Bodies. She therefore opined that the only way is through establishing MOU which has criteria because there are 2 Organizations covering the 15 MS of ECOWAS. According to her from experience it is better for the Ministers to be pressured to make strong recommendation to ECOWAS for recognition.
Following Dr. Vivian's intervention the Chairman ruled that the immediate action required to address this case is to hold a meeting between the AU-IBAR, the RFBs and ECOWAS with a view to develop a roadmap for partnership and collaborations between the organizations.

Side Meeting between the AU-IBAR, FCWC, SRFC and ECOWAS

As concluded in the plenary session a side meeting was held between the delegations of AU-IBAR, FCWC, SRFC and the ECOWAS. In attendance at the meeting were;

i. Dr. Simplice Nouala (Chief Animal Production Officer – AU-IBAR – Chairman)
ii. Dr. Mohamed Seisay (Senior Fisheries Officer – AU-IBAR)
iii. Dr. Nelly Isyagi (Project Officer – Aquaculture – AU-IBAR)
iv. Dr. Aboubacar Sidibe (Project Officer – Fisheries Resources – AU-IBAR)
v. Mr. Obinna Anozie (Policy Analyst – Fisheries & Aquaculture – AU-IBAR)
vi. Dr. Vivian Iwar (Head, Livestock Development Division – ECOWAS)
vii. Mr. Dedi Seraphine (Executive Secretary - FCWC)
viii. Mrs. Marième Diagne Epouse Talla (Acting Permanent Secretary -Sub-regional Fisheries Commission)

Objective
The main objective of the meeting was to develop a roadmap for facilitation of partnership and collaborations between the 3 organizations namely ECOWAS, FCWC and SRFC while liaising with AU-IBAR especially in implementing the FishGov Project and identify the roles each institution is to play to facilitate instructional coordination with the interest to work as a strong block of the Continent in the area of rational and sustainable fisheries and aquaculture development.

Deliberation
Discussion during the meeting cantered on how the RFBs and ECOWAS should gradually work together. The entry point was identified to be through the formulation and endorsement of an MOU. Accordingly RFBs were requested to draft an MoU to be reviewed and translated by AU-IBAR and sent to ECOWAS for final review and call for signature.

The following are highlights of the decisions reached at the meeting;

- RFBs to formulate a draft text of MoU between them and ECOWAS as there is already in existence an MoU between the RFBs (i.e. FCWC and SRFC)
- A copy of the draft MoU is to be sent to AU-IBAR for translation

- Final draft copy in the working languages to be sent to ECOWAS for internal process

Roadmap

- RFBs to share Draft MoU and relevant documents by 15th May, 2015;
- Feedback comments by 30th May, 2015;
- Further comments by ECOWAS.
- Final document to be submitted to ECOWAS by end of June;
- Ceremony for signing of MoU by ECOWAS President; Secretary General of FCWC; Permanent Secretary of SRFC and the Director AU-IBAR as witness.

Note

The MoU should consider the ECOWAS Fisheries Policy Implementation and ongoing initiative of ECOWAS for Fisheries and Aquaculture Development as well as the AU FishGov Project implementation.
Text of the MoU should be in simple and easy to read and understand English and French Languages.

9. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND RULE OF PROCEDURE FOR CONTINENTAL PLATFORM FOR REGIONAL FISHERIES BODIES IN AFRICA

In consonance with the recommendation of the meeting on institutional collaboration in the fisheries and aquaculture sector and in recognition of absence of an overarching platform, at African Union level, for Regional Fisheries Bodies as a major hindrance to building and strengthening collaboration amongst the Regional Fisheries Bodies in Africa AU-IBAR awarded a consultancy to develop TOR for the establishment of an AU-led platform as a forum for Regional Fisheries Bodies to be coordinated at the CAMFA Secretariat of the African Fisheries Reform Mechanism to Mr. Michel Xavier Biang (Legal Advisor/Consultant)

The overall objective of this consultancy was to develop terms of reference and rule of procedures for establishing continental platform for RFBs.

Mr. Biang made a presentation on the **Terms of Reference and Rule of Procedure for Continental Platform for Regional Fisheries Bodies in Africa** as a product of this consultancy. His presentation covered 10 key areas of the TOR & RoP as listed below. The full text of his report is attached to this report as **Appendix VII**

1. Preamble
2. Objectives of the Memorandum
3. Areas of Cooperation
4. Cooperation Arrangements
5. Consultative Committee
6. Consultative Committee Membership
7. Assistance
8. Funding
9. Entry into Force and Depository
10. Amendments

At the break-out Session the 4 Working Groups also reviewed and amended Mr. Biang report the summary of which collectively cover the following areas and concluded with unanimous proclamation of the establishment of and entry into force The African Platform for Regional Institutions for Fisheries, Aquaculture and Aquatic Systems (APRIFAS).

Introduction
Objectives of the Platform
Membership
Modus operandi
Funding
Revision
Establishment

The full text of the TOR which was unanimously adopted at the plenary is attached to this report as **Appendix VIII**.

10. CASE STUDY FOR REGIONAL FISHERIES COMMITTEE (COREP) FOR GULF OF GUINEA AND ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF CENTRAL AFRICAN STATES (ECCAS)

AU-IBAR also awarded a consultancy to Mr. Biang with the main objective to define the nature of the linkage between COREP and ECCAS in order to develop an institutional set of good practices between Regional Economic Communities and their related specialized agencies. The consultation exercise was also targeted at delivering a final report focusing on:

- Highlighting the institutional structure, the geographical area of competence, the mandate of the COREP and ECCAS with their relevant accompanying data and documents;
- Analysing the most important aspects of the COREP and ECCAS policy and legal instruments to identify their strengths and weaknesses;
- Describing the current arrangements existing between COREP and ECCAS, while identifying strengths and weaknesses in order to enhance the capacity of both institutions. Ongoing activities between COREP and ECCAS should be developed with an emphasis on fisheries management (and documented);
- Highlighting the main lessons learned from the analysis of relations between the COREP and ECCAS;
- Describing relevant aspects of the best practices in use between both institutions and recommending other approaches that can improve fisheries management;
- Addressing in depth legal and policy constraints to strengthening relations between COREP and ECCAS, and making concrete proposals for amendments.

Mr. Biang report concluded thus:

- COREP has the ideal profile to play a fundamental role in the ECCAS system as a reformed, efficient and effective partner, but requires resources to accomplish this goal;
- Additional resources are needed to sustain the revitalization process and it will be a very profitable investment to the extent that it will very quickly provide all members with the benefits generated by activities focused on commonly-agreed strategic objectives;
- Despite improvements recommended in developing policies, raising funds, adjusting the legal and institutional framework, it would be a mistake to think that this is an end in itself and an automatic guarantee of efficiency for both institutions;
- The reality on the ground proves to be a real challenge involving sometimes serious flaws in the implementation of programmes. The causes of these factual irregularities are multiple, the most recurrent being;
    - Multiple memberships of States to several RECs, which are a complete waste given the financial constraints that many of them are facing, on the one hand, and given the shortcomings in implementing convergent policies due to different or contradictory approaches at the regional level, on the other hand.
    - The slow progress in programme performance. Very often, States are reluctant to implement programmes, fully and in a timely manner, especially when they do not perceive their immediate potential benefits.
    - National, regional and international constraints in investment financing.
- To effectively respond to these challenges, requires a good synergy of initiatives and actions between RECs, specialized agencies and States.

Mr. Biang presentation at the meeting on anchorage agreement between the Economic Community of Central African States and Regional Commission Fisheries in the Gulf of Guinea is summarized below:

1- Legal base and teleological agreement are based on the following considerations:

- Provisions of the treaty establishing the Economic Community of Central African States entered into force on 18 December 1984 and the Provisions of the Convention relating to the Regional Commission Fisheries in the Gulf of Guinea was adopted in Pointe Noire, May 8, 2009,
- Decision No. 9 / ECCAS / CGC / XIII / 07, taken on 30 October 2007 by the Conference of Heads of States and Governments of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), giving the Regional Commission Fisheries in the Gulf of Guinea (COREP) specialized agency status of ECCAS,
- Report of the meeting on strengthening institutional collaboration in fisheries and aquaculture sector in Africa, held in Accra from 10 to 12 July 2014,
- Desire to strengthen the legal framework for securing and promoting effective collaboration between ECCAS and the COREP.

2- On the legal and administrative status of the COREP and the ECCAS concerning the agreement

- COREP is an independent organization,
- Legal personality of the COREP is recognizing, as assigned by the Convention on the regional development of fisheries in the Gulf of Guinea on behalf of the Economic Community of Central African States,
- Reciprocal Representation of each organization in the sessions of the other and reciprocal inscription of important issues on the agenda of the sessions.

3- Engagements subscribed by the ECCAS in Fisheries development;

- Institutional and technical commitments undertaken by ECCAS in fisheries and aquaculture before the conclusion of this Agreement, shall vest to the COREP which coordinates and organizes within it, all activities relating to fisheries development and aquaculture,,
- The ECCAS States that are not yet members of the COREP at the time of signature of this Agreement, shall automatically become subject to the rights and obligations arising from the binding agreement as soon formalize their commitment to the COREP,,
- The devolution arrangements in the COREP, institutional and technical commitments of ECCAS with non-member states in the COREP are subject to consultation and arrangements between the parties with the involvement of relevant entities.

4- Involvement of the binding agreement for the parties;

- Recommendations of ECCAS to COREP,
- Financial Grants of ECCAS to the budget of the COREP (Article 12 of agreement),
- The COREP conducts discussions with ECCAS, at his request, regarding these recommendations and report to ECCAS,
- Exchange of information and documents, and cooperation and collaboration of statistical services,
- Harmonization of personnel standards with a common frame of settlement of disputes concerning personnel,
- In term of Final Provisions Subsequent additional arrangements necessary will be elaborated to ensure efficient implementation of the Agreement and the review of agreement will be done by consultation of the parties before its entry into force upon signature.

11. RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

The Meeting came up with a range of recommendations as detailed in the Communique which was unanimously adopted at the close of the meeting and summarized below;

- The recommendations of the Working Groups as outlined on paragraph 7.5 (Page 11) are to be used by the consultants to enrich the reports of the institutional assessments of regional fisheries bodies and water basin commissions and with final versions circulated to stakeholders;

- The Terms of Reference for the establishment of a continental platform for RFBs was adopted for operationalization. (**Appendix 8**).
- With the delegates' unanimous adoption of the TORs a Continental Platform named **African Platform for Regional Institutions for Fisheries, Aquaculture and Aquatic Systems (AFRIPAS)** was duly established.
- The CAMFA Secretariat will develop the draft rules of procedure of the Platform for presentation in the first meeting of **AFRIPAAS.**
- The request for AU-IBAR, ECOWAS, SRFC and FCWC to develop a roadmap leading to signing of Memorandum of Understanding between the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Sub Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC) on the one hand and with the Fisheries Committee for West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC) on the other hand was accomplished as reflected on page on Page 14 of this report. Decisions reached in a side meeting to this effect held between the AU-IBAR, FCWC, SRFC and ECOWAS are as follows;
    - RFBs to formulate a draft text of MoU between them and ECOWAS as there is already in existence an MoU between the RFBs (i.e. FCWC and SRFC)
    - A copy of the draft MoU is to be sent to AU-IBAR for translation
    - Final draft copy in the working languages to be sent to ECOWAS for internal process

- The Full text of the Communique adopted at the close of the meeting with details of the outcome of the meeting is attached to this report as **Appendix IX.**

"Fish for posterity"

12. APPENDICES

1. APPENDIX I: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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COMHAFAT/ATLAFCO Mr. Mohamed Sadiki, Cadre à la COMHAFAT COMHAFAT/ATLAFCO 2, Rue Ben Darkoul Ain Khalouiya, Rabat, MAROC Tel. : +212 530774221 Fax : +212 530174242 E-mail : sadikicomhafat@gmail.com	**COREP** Mr. Emile Essema, Secrétaire Exécutif Commission Régionale des Pêches du Golfe de Guinée (COREP) 161 Libreville, GABON Tél. : +241 07 06 23 64, E-mail : essemile@yahoo.fr
LAKE TANGANYIKA AUTHORITY Mr. Kaitira Ibrahim Katonda Director of Fisheries, Lake Tanganyika Authority (LTA) Kigobe Nord, 84 US Avenue, P.O. Box 4910 Ngagara, Bujumbura, BURUNDI Tel. : +257 79 138 000 +257 22 273 585 (Direct line) Fax : +257 22 275 663 E-mail : kaitira.katonda1@gmail.com	**SUB-REGIONAL FISHERIES COMMISSION** Mrs. Marième Diagne Epouse Talla, Acting Permanent Secretary, Sub-regional Fisheries Commission Villa no. 4430, Amitié 3, Rue KA-38 (rue mère) Dakar SENEGAL Tél. : +221 33 864 04 75 E-mail : spcsrp@spcsrp.org and masodiagne@yahoo.fr
SWIOFC Mr. Aubrey Harris, Secretary of SWIOFC, Senior Fisheries Officer, Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) P.O. Box 3730, Harare, ZIMBABWE Tel. : +263 42 53 655-8 E-mail : aubrey.harris@fao.org	**INDIAN OCEAN COMMISSION (IOC)** Mrs. Jérômine Fanjanirina Kompé, MCS Assistant, Indian Ocean Commission Blue Tower, 5th Floor, Institute Road, Ebene MAURITIUS Tel. : +230 402 61 00Fax : +230 466 01 60 E-mail :Jeromine.fanjanirina@coi-ioc.org
OTHER REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS	
CONVENTION D'ABIDJAN Prof. Dr. Yacouba Cissé, Professeur de Droit – Expert Droit de la Mer, Convention d'Abidjan – PNUE 25 BP 1628 Abidjan 25 Abidjan, COTE D'IVOIRE Tel. : +225 47 199 828 Fax : +225 22 415 567 E-mail : ycisse2009@yahoo.fr and ycisse@uottawa.ca	
INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS	
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NEPAD Dr. Hamady Diop, Programme Manager, Fisheries and Aquaculture, NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, Block B, International Business Gateway, Midrand, Johannesburg, SOUTH AFRICA Tel. : +27 (0) 11 256 36 06 E-mail : hamadyd@nepad.org	**AU COMMISSION** Mr. Jonathan Ocran, Policy Officer – Livestock African Union Commission, P.O. Box 3243 Addis Ababa ETHIOPIA Tel. : +251 926 78 35 85 E-mail : ocranj@africa-union.org
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Mrs. Ruth Wambugu Accountant AU-IBAR P.O. Box 30786 – 00100, Nairobi KENYA Tel.: +254 20 3674000 / 208 Fax : +254 20 3674341 E-mail : ruth.wambugu@au-ibar.org	Mrs. Irène Uwizeye Bilingual Administrative Assistant AU-IBAR P.O. Box 30786 – 00100,Nairobi, KENYA Tel.: +254 20 3674212 Fax: +254 20 3674341 E-mail: irene.uwizeye@au-ibar.org

2. APPENDIX II: INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY MR JONATHAN NYARKO OCRAN

AFRICAN UNION
الاتحاد الأفريقي

UNION AFRICAINE

UNIÃO AFRICANA

Addis Ababa, ETHIOPIA P. O. Box 3243 Telephone 517 700 Cables: OAU, ADDIS ABABA

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY MR JONATHAN NYARKO OCRAN, POLICY OFFICER- LIVESTOCK AT THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL ECONOMY AND AGRICULTURE, AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION AT THE CONSULTATIVE VALIDATION MEETING ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CONTINENTAL PLATFORM FOR REGIONAL FISHERIES BODIES

HOTEL DU LAC, COTONOU, BENIN

22ND- 24TH APRIL, 2015

The Honourable Representative of the Government of Benin,
The Chief Animal Resources Officer at AU-IBAR, Dr Simplice Nouala
The Senior Fisheries Advisor at the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, Dr. Hamady Diop,
The Representative of the European Union, Madam Isabel
Distinguished Participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me start by conveying to you the warm greetings and the best wishes of the Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, Her Excellency, Mrs. Tumusiime Rhoda Peace and Dr. Abebe Haile Gabriel, Director of the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture at the African Union Commission. Let me also thank the Government and the People of Benin for the hospitality accorded us since our arrival in Cotonou.

I am particularly happy to be associated with this meeting which is seeking to establish a continental platform for Regional Fisheries Bodies in Africa. It is an undeniable fact that the Fisheries and Aquaculture sector play an important role in the economies of most African countries. In some countries, the sector contributes 27 percent of the revenues and about 33 percent or more of the total export revenues. The sector also provides livelihoods to over ten million men and women who are engaged in fish catching, fish processing and trade. It is further estimated that about 58.3 million people are engaged in fisheries and aquaculture in Africa. It is in recognition of the importance of fisheries and

aquaculture in Africa that the African Union continues to place it high on its agenda. The Africa Union has just launched a development blueprint for the continent's development over the next fifty years called Agenda 2063. In this document, the blue or ocean economy features very prominently as a tool for accelerated economic growth of Africa. It is projected that there should be at least 50 percent increase in value addition in the fisheries and aquaculture sector in real terms by the year 2023. It is also planned that at least one giant aquaculture showpiece would be built in Africa and an African Centre for Blue Economy would also be established. Furthermore, it is planned that skills and technological platforms would be established at the national level in Africa for blue economy businesses. These are laudable vision and goals that need to be embraced by all Africans.

Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen

Let me now touch on the purpose for which we are all gathered here today. It was at the first Conference of African Ministers of Fisheries and Aquaculture (CAMFA) held in the Gambia in 2010 that the need to strengthen the collaboration between Regional Fisheries Bodies and Regional Economic Communities in Africa was first raised. This was to be done as a means of improving the governance structure for efficient management of fisheries and aquaculture resources in Africa. It was also noted that there are multiple agencies in the fisheries and aquaculture in Africa that share regulatory responsibilities and sometimes their functions overlap leading to duplication of work and efforts. As such, there was the need to rationalize these agencies and streamline their functions so that parallel initiatives on the African continent could be avoided. To address this problem and other issues, AU-IBAR and the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency in collaboration with stakeholders in the sector developed the Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa which has a component on strengthening regional cooperation and institutional collaboration in the management of fisheries in Africa. This policy document has since been endorsed by the African Union Heads of State and Government in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea in 2014. The same institutions (AU-IBAR and NPCA) together with the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture (DREA) of the African Union Commission have organized series of meetings in the past three years aimed at getting the Regional Fisheries Bodies and the Regional Economic Communities in Africa to talk to each other and collaborate. In the process, AU-IBAR commissioned a legal study to provide a harmonised legal framework that would enable Regional Fisheries Bodies and Regional Economic Communities to align their goals in order to ensure coherence. From this work, some initial recommendations have been made on how to rationalize Regional Fisheries Bodies in Africa. I must add that good progress has been made in all these endeavours.

Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen

It is my fervent hope that from this meeting a functioning and effective continental platform for Regional Fisheries Bodies in Africa would be put in place. This platform would hopefully guide the judicious and sustainable management of fisheries and aquaculture resources in Africa for the benefit of all stakeholders.

I therefore urge all of us to discuss issues dispassionately and come out with concrete recommendations which when implemented would see fisheries and aquaculture sector grow in leaps and bounds in Africa.

With those few remarks, I wish all of us a successful and enjoyable meeting.

I thank you.

3. APPENDIX III: Statement by Dr. Hamady Diop

NEPAD PLANNING AND COORDINATING AGENCY

Statement delivered at the "Consultative meeting of RFBs to validate the terms of reference and rule of procedure for continental platform for regional fisheries bodies in Africa, anchorage to regional economic communities and their institutional assessment"
Hotel du Lac, Cotonou, Benin, on 21 April 2015

by Dr. Hamady Diop

Program Manager Fisheries and Aquaculture
NEPAD Agency
Johannesburg
South Africa
www.nepad.org

Distinguished Delegates;
Ladies and Gentlemen

I wish to convey to you warm regards from the Chief Executive Officer of the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, His Excellency, Dr Ibrahim Assane Mayaki.

I would like to welcome all the participants to the "***Consultative meeting of RFBs to validate the terms of reference and rule of procedure for continental platform for regional fisheries bodies in Africa, anchorage to regional economic communities and their institutional assessment***." We thank you for your participation at this meeting because as key stakeholders, your participation is vital to the success of the project "Strengthening institutional capacity to enhance governance of the fisheries sector in Africa" also known as the FishGov initiative.

The NEPAD Agency participated actively during the final preparation of the initiative to ensure that priorities and strategies proposed are in line with African Union priorities and action plan, and that they complement other planned or ongoing continental activities.

FishGov draws from Pan-African Fisheries Policy Framework and Reform Strategies and will support the implementation of the Pan-African Fisheries Policy Framework and Reform Strategy within the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (also known as the CAADP) which is promoted by the NEPAD Agency's Action Plan. This programme is also crafted to support and deliver of the recent recommendations from the Second Conference of African Ministers of Fisheries and Aquaculture (CAMFA II) and the Head of State meeting in Malabo last year.

Ladies and gentlemen

Recall that CAMFA I, held in Banjul, The Gambia from September 20th to 23rd, 2010, identified many challenges for the African fisheries sectors and their potential contributions to wealth creation for the African continent. Among those key challenges are ineffective and sometimes poor governance arrangements at many levels including (i) coordination of national and regional organization (ii) coordination of donors assisted programs and (iii) coordination of policies. Those coordination issues result from a multiplicity of issues that may be relevant on an individual basis but contribute to a climate of disorganization and confusion when taken in whole.

A recent meeting, organised by AU-IBAR, on enhancing institutional collaboration in fisheries and aquaculture sectors concluded that the actual governance arrangement characterised by a lack of an overarching platform, at African Union level, is a hindrance for regional fisheries bodies to interact more effectively with various stakeholders including RECs.

This meeting is very timely as it will validate the TORs and rules of procedures for a continental platform and agree on a roadmap for operationalizing it.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Distinguished delegates, at this point in time, I want to convey my very sincere appreciation, to the European Commission, who has continuously and tirelessly shared our African development vision; by supporting AU-IBAR and NEPAD Agency with funding for the FishGov.

I wish you fruitful discussions, and I am confident that the outcomes of this meeting will benefit Africa.

Our role as NEPAD Agency will be to out-scale these outcomes and contribute to the operationalisation of the platform.

I thank you for your attention

FISHGOV PROJECT
"Fish for posterity"

4. APPENDIX IV: Welcome Address BY DIRECTOR OF AU-IBAR

AFRICAN UNION
INTERAFRICAN BUREAU FOR ANIMAL RESOURCES

Consultative Meeting to Validate the Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure for RFBs and Establishment of a Continental Platform for Regional Fisheries Bodies in Africa
22nd – 24th April, 2015
Cotonou, Benin

Welcome Address

BY

Prof. Ahmed A. El-Sawalhy
DIRECTOR OF AU-IBAR

The Hon. Minister Responsible for Fisheries and Aquaculture, Benin;
Representative of the African Union Commission;
Representatives of Regional Economic Communities;
Representatives of Regional Fisheries Bodies and other Regional Organizations;
Representative of the NEPAD Agency;
Development Partners;
Colleagues, Distinguished ladies and gentlemen;

I am exceptionally glad and honoured to welcome you all once more to this very important **Consultative Meeting to Validate the Terms of Reference and Rule of Procedure for RFBs and Establishment of A Continental Platform for Regional Fisheries Bodies in Africa.** This gathering is the peak of the journey African Union commenced with some of you and it is a significant and final step towards a successful conclusion of one of the most seemingly intractable much talked about obstacle to good governance in fisheries management – institutional collaboration, coordination and regional cooperation

Before progressing further with my statement, I wish, on behalf of Chair of the African Union Commission, Dr. Nkosazana Clarice Dlamini Zuma and the Commissioner of Rural Economy and Agriculture of the African Union Commission, Mrs. Tumusiime Rhoda Peace, to thank the Government of Republic of Benin, in particular the Ministry and the Hon. Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture, for accepting to play host to the meeting. The African Union appreciates this magnanimous display of the commitment and fraternity with our Pan African Institution, which is determined to end poverty and build economic integration amongst its member states.

Also, an acceptance to participate in an important event and programme of this magnitude elicits expression of some gratitude to various groups. My very warm welcome goes especially to the representatives of Regional Economic Communities, Regional Fisheries Bodies, Water Basin Commissions and other organizations. These institutions have worked and voyaged tirelessly in the past with us and have continued to do so at the concluding stages and we hope they would continue this forward march with us in the near future.

The presence of the European Union is re-assuring and underscores the continued commitment of a reliable and trusted partner in supporting our effort, in a concerted manner, to fight diseases, poverty and food insecurity on our African continent towards meeting the fundamental goals and vision of our institution - "***An integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in global arena***."

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, I am convinced that African fisheries and aquaculture sector has now reached a threshold at which concerted partnership is critically required in order for the continent to capitalise on recent gains. Enhancing coordination and institutional collaboration is therefore a priority for my institution, AU-IBAR, for the expeditious development of the sector along with our strategic partners. A manifestation of the importance of the critical issue of institutional collaboration, cooperation and coordination is its identification by stakeholders to become a key standalone policy pillar in the Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa.

We are now on the verge of a break-through in this long and tedious journey since the African Ministers of fisheries and aquaculture in 2010 came out with compelling recommendations which, amongst others, charged the African Union to develop a framework for institutional collaboration, focussing in particular on the RFBs and RECs as key players in regional issues. Hence the need for institutional collaboration and regional cooperation for sound regional fisheries management has been discussed at several forums and the tragic consequence for lack of it has been enumerated in several texts and reviews on fisheries management and development. Since then, my institution, AU-IBAR, in partnership with other African Union agencies (DREA and NPCA) has embarked on processes toward the implementation of this recommendation. Consequently, two preliminary continental Think Tank forums on strengthening linkages between the RECs and RFBs were conducted in Johannesburg, South in September 2012 and in September 2013 which resulted in very tangible outcomes that laid the foundation for follow-up activities. One of the main recommendations from the first Think Tank meeting was the request for AU-IBAR to conduct institutional assessment of existing relationship between the Economic Community of Central African States, ECCAS, (which is a REC) and the Fisheries Committee of the Gulf of Guinea, COREP, (which is a RFB). I am glad to report to distinguished delegates that this recommendation was implemented by my office, AU-IBAR, by conducting an institutional review on the de facto relationship between ECCAS and COREP in the central African region. The assessment brought out very thoughtful issues and pertinent recommendations that were presented and extensively discussed at the second Think Tank meeting, participants may recall.

Following the adoption of the Policy Framework and Reform Strategy as the authentic blue print for African fisheries and aquaculture sector development by the Summit of African Heads of States and Governments June 2014, Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, and the subsequent funding from the European Union to start its implementation, the African Union immediately moved to consolidate and conclude the series of events and activities pertaining to institutional collaboration, cooperation and coordination. This is because we realised this issue, to a large extent, holds the answer to our gallant efforts in instituting good governance in regional fisheries management and also has cascading effects on national fisheries management. Hence the July 2014 Accra meeting on institutional collaboration. Thus the objective of the Accra meeting was to consolidate the outcomes of all previous initiatives on institutional collaboration and develop practical steps or action plans towards the conclusion of this long journey. Given the importance of that meeting to African Union goal of regional integration, participants would recall that I was personally at that meeting as a participant despite the excruciating fasting period under a hot burning African sun!. It is my expectation that the present meeting would therefore ensure that the momentum on the success from that meeting is built on since some of the distinguished institutions represented in that meeting are again here with us this morning.

Distinguished delegates please permit to enumerate some of the major recommendations of that crucial Accra meeting which included establishment of a continent network as a platform for African regional fisheries bodies, formulation of text for formalizing institutional cooperation between ECCAS and COREP (which could be adopted for replication in other regions), institutional assessments of regional fisheries bodies with a view to their rationalization etc. I am proud to inform you that these recommendations have been implemented and would constitute major agenda items during the present meeting. This main objective of this meeting present meeting is to review and validate the findings from

these accomplished activities. This meeting should therefore be viewed as a culmination of all past initiatives in regional fisheries management.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, the establishment and operationalization of a platform for RFBs would help enhance coordination, promote harmonization and duplication of activities. It is universally acknowledged and accepted that strengthening the capacity of RECs in fisheries and aquaculture by their linkage to the RFBs is vital for strengthening regional fisheries governance on issue such as regional cooperation in the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, implementing minimum terms and conditions in fisheries, strengthening intra-regional trade in fish and aquaculture products, regional negotiation for equitable fisheries partnership agreements etc. The institutional assessment of RFBs and Water Basin Commissions would help identify challenges, weaknesses and gaps that mitigate the efficient discharge of their mandates to their constituent member states as well as their individual institutional comparative strengths and advantages. The assessment is therefore expected to provide evidence-based recommendations as to their strengthening and hence rationalization.

Without be being immodest, it is important to note that since CAMFA 1 2010, significant progress has been made by the RECs in incorporating fisheries and aquaculture on the development agenda. In the last few years, we have seen the recruitment of fisheries experts by IGAD, SADC etc and some semblance of institutional linkage between ECCAS and COREP; EAC and LVFO (Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization), emergence of strong fisheries agenda in ECOWAS; formulation of regional strategies with various RECs, e.g. strategy for fish diseases EAC.

The challenge in this meeting is to tie the loose ends and consolidation of all regional and continental initiatives by officially establishing an African owned RFB platform and adopting a template or framework for formalization technical collaboration between RFBs and RECs. Therefore, fellow compatriots the exercise before us represents an important milestone in our collective march to greatness. Our mutual posterity beckons on us all to stand up and protect our abundant God given fisheries resources. Participating in this process is your way of demonstrating your faith in the future of our continent; a future founded on the promise of food security, elimination of hunger and malnutrition. I sincerely believe that this co-operation will continue to grow in years ahead and eventually lead to a greater heights and opportunities for Developing African Countries in Fisheries and Aquaculture Development. The task we have at hand is solemn but we must assured that based on the political mandate we have received from CAMFA I and CAMFA II, we can seize the opportunity to improve the lives of our existing generations and those yet unborn.

I wish to affirm AU-IBAR's commitment to support Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Regional Fisheries Bodies (RFBs) and Member States to achieve desirable outcomes in fisheries. We are looking forward to working jointly with other partners to mobilise and provide more technical support to the Member States. This support would not have been possible if it were not for the generosity of our development partners, most notably EU who has provided funding for the Fisheries Governance Project.

I would be failing in my duty without openly expressing my candid appreciation to the various learned consultants that have provided the necessary information for this meeting.

I thank you very much for your attention and wish you a very interactive and fruitful meeting.

5. APPENDIX V : Speech by the Représentative of the Ministre



Discours de Son Excellence Mr Le Ministre ou de son Représentant

Monsieur les Représentants du Directeur du Bureau Interafricain des Ressources Animales de l'Union Africaine (UA-BIRA),

Mesdames et Messieurs les Représentants des Communautés Economiques Régionales,
Monsieur le Représentant de l'Agence NEPAD de l'Union Africaine,

Mesdames et Messieurs les Représentantes de la Commission de l'Union Européenne

Mesdames et Messieurs les Représentantes de la FAO et les autres Partenaires au développement

Mesdames et Messieurs les Représentants des Organisations Régionales des Pêches et Organisations des Gestion des Bassins et Fleuves (OGBF) et les Commissions des Grands Ecosystèmes Marins,

Mesdames et Messieurs, chers participants

Cotonou accueille ce jour la réunion consultative des Organisations Régionales de la Pêche (ORP) pour approuver les termes de référence et les règles de procédure d'une plateforme continentale des organisations régionales des pêches et des communautés économiques régionales en Afrique.

Cette marque de confiance honore le peuple béninois qui en mesure toute la portée symbolique. C'est donc un réel plaisir pour moi, de vous souhaiter, au nom de son Excellence Monsieur Issa Azizou, Ministre de l'Agriculture de l'Elevage et de la Pêche empêchée, une cordiale bienvenue à Cotonou. Je formule d'ores et déjà le vœu que votre séjour dans la capitale béninoise vous comble de satisfaction à tous les niveaux.

Les eaux côtières et océaniques des pays de l'Union Africaine regorgent de ressources halieutiques très diverses, avec d'énormes potentiels de marché et de valeurs nutritionnelles qui, si elles sont efficacement gérées pourraient contribuer de manière significative durable à la sécurité alimentaire et à la réduction de la pauvreté dans les Etats membres de l'Union Africaine (UA).

Malheureusement, nos ressources halieutiques pour les principales espèces, continuent de faire l'objet d'une surexploitation tant par les flottilles nationales que par les navires étrangers, avec ou sans autorisation. Une des conséquences immédiates de cette situation est la baisse de la production et, consécutivement, la baisse tendancielle des apports du secteur à la croissance économique et aux recettes d'exportation, ainsi que la grosse perte de biodiversité aquatique subséquente.

L'examen de la coopération halieutique en Afrique a montré, d'une part, une coopération insuffisante et peu efficace entre Organisations Régionales de Pêches (ORP) et Communautés Economiques Régionales (OER), d'autre part, une situation complexe, peu propice au développement d'une coopération harmonieuse et efficace et à la gestion efficiente des ressources humaines et financières.
Mesdames et Messieurs,

Je salue donc cette réunion organisée par Bureau Interafricain des Ressources Animales de l'Union Africaine sur le renforcement de la collaboration institutionnelle dans le secteur de la pêche et de l'aquaculture pour appuyer le processus de la mise en place d'une plateforme dirigée par l'Union Africaine en tant que forum des organismes.

En parcourant l'agenda de votre réunion, j'ai noté que vous aurez à aborder d'importantes questions portant notamment sur :

- L'évaluation institutionnelle des ORP
- L'approbation des termes de référence et les règles de procédure pour la mise en place de la plateforme continentale des organismes régionaux des pêches (les ORP);
- L'examiner pour consolidation, en tant que modèle à reproduire, de projet de Lettre d'Accord Technique en vue de d'institutionnaliser et formaliser les relations entre les ORP et les CER.

La mise en place d'une plateforme africaine des organisations régionales des Pêches, des organisations des Gestion des Bassins et Fleuves et les Communautés Economiques Régionales est une étape importante dans le renforcement de la Gouvernance du secteur de la Pêche et de l'Aquaculture en Afrique. Cette plateforme permettra de promouvoir l'harmonisation des programmes et activités pour minimiser les duplications, améliorer la cohérence et rationnaliser l'utilisation des ressources financières de plus en plus rare au niveau du continent.

C'est pourquoi je voudrais recommander que les travaux de la présente réunion puissent conduire à des propositions concrètes pour une meilleure coopération et collaboration entre les organisations régionales de pêche et les Communautés Economiques Régionales.

De même les mandats des Organisations Régionales des Pêches doivent être révisés afin de leur permettre d'assurer la mise en œuvre de la politique des pêches et de l'aquaculture définie par les Communautés Economiques régionales. Chaque Organisation Régionale des Pêches de l'Afrique doit être érigée en une institution spécialisée de la Communauté Economique Régionale. Cela réduirait le financement par chaque pays du fonctionnement des ORP et des CER.

D'ores et déjà, je me félicite de l'adoption, l'année dernière, par les Chefs d'Etat du cadre politique et de la stratégie de réformes de la Pêche et de l'Aquaculture en Afrique. L'un des 7 domaines politiques de cadre politique est le renforcement de la coopération et de la collaboration régionale et sous régionale.

C'est pour moi le lieu de formuler, au nom des Gouvernements des pays membres, de l'Union Africaine nos vifs remerciements à l'endroit des Partenaires Techniques Financiers, pour leurs soutiens combien nécessaires à l'atteinte des objectifs de notre document de cadre politique et de réforme de stratégie.

Je reste persuadé qu'ils seront toujours à nos côtés pour une meilleure gouvernance des pêches en Afrique.

C'est sur cette note d'espoir que je déclare ouverte la réunion consultative des pour approuver les termes de référence et les règles de procédure de la plateforme Africaine des organisations régionales des pêches en Afrique et les communautés économiques régionales.

Je vous remercie pour votre aimable attention

6. APPENDIX VI: AGENDA

CONSULTATIVE MEETING OF REGIONAL FISHERIES BODIES (RFBs) AND REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES (RECs) TO VALIDATE DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE AND RULE OF PROCEDURE FOR A CONTINENTAL PLATFORM OF AFRICAN RFBS

22-24 APRIL 2015, COTONOU, BENIN

Time	Event	Presenter/facilitator
Day 1	**22-04-2015**	**Facilitator- Dr. Simplice Nouala**
13:00-14:00	Registration	AU-IBAR Secretariat
14:00-14:30	• Introductory remarks • Statement by EU • Statement by NPCA • Welcome remarks • Opening statement	• AUC-DREA • EU • NPCA • Director of AU-IBAR • Hon. Minister, Benin
14:30-14:45	Presentation objectives and expected outcomes of the workshop	AU-IBAR
14:45-15:00	Photo session and Tea-Break	
15:00-15:30	Historical perspective- Over view of strides by AU in forging institutional collaboration and regional cooperation in African fisheries	AU-IBAR
15:30:16:00	Coordination and cooperation as a key pillar in African policy framework and reform strategy for fisheries and aquaculture in Africa	AU-IBAR
16:00-16:15	Tea-Break	
16:15-16:45	Presentation of outcome of the Meeting on institutional collaboration in Accra, Ghana, July 2014	AU-IBAR
16:45-17:30	Discussion	
Day 11	**23-04-2015**	
09:00:10:00	Presentation of main findings of the institutional assessment of RFBs in: (i) South Eastern Africa (iii) Western Africa 9iii) Central Africa	Mr. Mathias Wafula Mr. Georges Mba-Asseko Dr. Oumarou Njifonjou
10:00-10:15	Tea Break	
10:45-11:00	Discussion and validation	
11:00-11:30	Presentation on Terms of Reference and Rule of Procedure for Continental Platform for Regional Fisheries Bodies in Africa	**Mr. Michel Xavier Biang** Legal Advisor/Consultant
11:30-12:00	Discussion and validation	
12:00-12:30	A framework for formalizing relationship agreement for building or strengthening institutional linkage between RECs and RFBs- **presentation of a draft *case study for Regional Fisheries Committee (COREP) for Gulf of Guinea and Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)***	**Mr. Michel Xavier Biang** Legal Advisor/Consultant
12:30-13:00	Discussion	
13:00-14:00	Lunch	
14:00-16:00	***1.Working group: Terms of reference of RFB Platform*** -Review the report for validation and adoption -coordinating role of the Platform Secretariat -Rule of procedure, chairs, meeting -Membership criteria for the platform ***2.Working Group: template for relationship agreement for REC and RFB cooperation*** -Review report for adoption as a template for replication in other regions -suggestions for roadmap for replication to other regions	Working Groups
16:00-17:00	Presentation of final validated TORs and rule of procedure for RFB platform for validation Presentation of agreed template of legal text for REC and RFB cooperation- as a framework for formalizing REC-RFB cooperation	
Day 111	**24-04-2015**	
09:00-10:00	Recap of previous days' deliberations- RFB platform and framework for formalizing REC–RFB cooperation	
10:00-10:15	Tea break	
10:15-13:00	Working Group discussion: ***RFB institutional assessment*** - Based on report of institutional assessment, formulate recommendations as corrective measures for address common challenges in strengthening and rationalizing RFBs - Propose action plans for their rationalization ***Linkage with RFMO*** Suggest practical steps in formalizing linkages between RFB (including WBC), LME and RFMO Identification of institutional challenges for forging linkage with RFMO	Working Groups
13:00-14:00	Lunch	
14:00-15:00	Working group discussions continued	
15:00-15:15	Tea-Break	
15:15-16:15	Plenary discussions	
16:15_17:00	Prospects for Common platform for RECs: Intra-institutional coordination)?	

"Fish for posterity"








7. APPENDIX VII: MOU for Regional Fisheries Cooperation

MEMORANDUM OF COOPERATION FOR REGIONAL FISHERIES ORGANIZATIONS IN AFRICA

ON THE CONSULTATION PLATEFORM FOR FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT

January 2015

1. Preamble

The Parties to this Memorandum of Cooperation hereinafter referred to as the Parties:

Considering that the African Union, through the Inter African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR), has a long-standing tradition of collaboration with Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Regional Fisheries Organizations (RFOs);

Taking into account the recommendations from various meetings on strengthening institutional cooperation between RECs and RFOs for more effective and coherent concerted action;

Noting with interest the recommendations contained in the report on consultations regarding the review of institutional links between the Economic Community of Central African States, abbreviated as ECCAS and the Regional Fisheries Committee for the Gulf of Guinea, abbreviated as COREP;

Noting that most RFOs share common objectives and are faced with similar challenges, each within its jurisdiction and sphere of competence;

Noting recurring overlaps in program delivery often resulting in duplication of effort and inappropriate use of resources, leading to difficulties in mobilizing meaningful partnerships;

Recognizing the need for regular consultations among RFOs, to harmonize and coordinate implementation of some activities of common interest;

Bearing in mind the conclusions of the meeting on strengthening institutional collaboration in fisheries and aquaculture, held in Accra, Ghana, from 10 - 12 July 2014;

Emphasizing the recommendation by the Conference of African Ministers responsible for Fisheries and Aquaculture, abbreviated as CAMFA, held in Banjul in 2010, for effective institutional collaboration among RFOs in fisheries development in Africa;

Considering the objectives set out in the Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy Framework and Reform Strategy, adopted by the 23th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the African Union in June 2014 in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea;

Agree to the following:

2. Objectives of the Memorandum

This Memorandum of Cooperation aims to:

(i) Institutionalize a forum as a platform for dialogue among RFOs across the African continent;

(ii) Define common areas and programs to strengthen institutional collaboration in Africa in the fisheries and aquaculture sector;

(iii) Strive for more consistency in decision-making and program implementation, and when seeking out partnerships, for concerted action by RFOs.

3. Areas of Cooperation

The Parties to this Memorandum undertake to strengthen their collaboration, namely through:

(i) Establishing a continental forum under the coordination of the CAMFA Secretariat to provide the necessary support to fisheries and aquaculture development across the continent;

(ii) Implementing and monitoring decisions and recommendations adopted jointly on issues pertaining to fisheries and aquaculture;

(iii) Sharing information through the development of a dedicated website to facilitate links with the African Union and Regional Economic Communities (RECs);

(iv) Establishing a system for sharing information and experiences on a regular basis;

(v) Developing synergies, joint plans of action and joint implementation of programs;

(vi) Setting up the Fund for fisheries and aquaculture established by the African Fisheries Reform Mechanism;

(vii) Joint publications;

(viii) Contributing to the development of an African Voice seeking a common position at regional and international fora;

(ix) All other matters of common interest.

4. Cooperation Arrangements

Cooperation activities of the Forum shall be implemented as described below:

(i) Holding a statutory annual meeting,

(ii) Mutual invitations and participation in statutory meetings organized by each party as well as in sectoral meetings;

(iii) Ad hoc consultation meetings.

5. Consultative Committee

The Parties shall set up a Consultative Committee whose mandate shall be to:

(i) Identify priority areas where activities need to be harmonized;

(ii) Define joint programs and projects in order to strengthen institutional collaboration in the fisheries and aquaculture sector in Africa;

(iii) Review the implementation of shared programs and actions;

(iv) Promote institutional collaboration through joint awareness-raising, extension (studies, publications, economic events, etc.) and training.

The Committee shall meet at least once a year, alternately at CAMFA headquarters or at the headquarters of one of the Parties.

6. Consultative Committee Membership

The Consultative Committee shall consist of:

(i) Chief executive officers of RFOs;

(ii) the Secretary General of the CAMFA;

(iii) the Director of AU-IBAR.

They shall be assisted by their colleagues depending on the needs or the items on the agenda of the Committee.

7. Assistance

The Consultative Committee may call on any resource person or any entity whose expertise is deemed useful.

8. Funding

For the first two years of operation of the platform, AU-IBAR shall be responsible for facilitating the organization and holding of the Forum sessions.

The Forum shall define its operating rules, as well as arrangements for funding its activities.

9. Entry into Force and Depository

This Memorandum of Cooperation shall take effect from the date of signature by the contracting parties. It shall be valid for an unlimited period of time.

The original texts shall be deposited and registered with AU-IBAR, which shall be their depositary.

10. Amendments

All or part of this Memorandum may be amended at the request of either of the Parties. Draft amendments shall be transmitted to the secretariat of the CAMFA and shall be reviewed and adopted during the annual sessions of the Forum.

In witness whereof, the duly authorized parties have signed this Memorandum of Cooperation, drawn up in four original texts in English, French, Portuguese and Arabic, all texts being equally authentic.

Done in …, on ……

For the Lake Tanganyika Authority (LTA),
For the Commission pour le Bassin du Lac Tchad,
For the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation,
For the South - West Indian Ocean Commission,
For the Commission des pêches du Golfe de Guinée(COREP),
For the Fisheries Committee for west central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC),
For the Sub Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC),
For the Aquaculture Network for Africa (ANAF).

FISHCOP PROJECT
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APPENDIX VIII: TOR FOR THE PLATFORM OF REGIONAL FISHERIES INSTITUTIONS IN AFRICA

TOR FOR THE PLATFORM OF REGIONAL FISHERIES INSTITUTIONS IN AFRICA
April 2015

Introduction

1. The fisheries and aquaculture sector has the potential to positively influence or drive the socio-economic agenda of the continent towards poverty reduction, food and nutrition security and economic growth.
2. The development of the sector is however replete with management issues, paramount of which are illegal fishing practices, , weak coordination and cooperation, incoherent policies, weak intra-regional trade and low investment.
3. Of greater concern is that the roles and mandates of existing regional institutions which tend to overlap in fisheries and aquaculture related matters, leading to duplication of effort and wastage of resources.
4. In recognition of these challenges and the potential benefits that accrue from collaboration and coordination that include harmonization of programmes, information sharing and efficiency in the delivery of mandates and services to constituent member states, the AU undertook several initiatives:
5. In 2004 Sirte Summit, the Heads of State and Government, endorsed the Sirte Declaration which mandated the AU Commission to promote the development of fisheries resources
6. In 2005 AU/NEPAD Fish For All Summit developed Action Plan for the Development of African Fisheries and Aquaculture
7. In 2010, the First Conference of African Ministers of fisheries and aquaculture (CAMFA) made major recommendations for the sustainable development of the fisheries and aquaculture sector that were endorsed by the 18th Session of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government, in 2011.
8. In June 2014, the Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa was simultaneously endorsed with the African Fisheries Reform Mechanism by the Summit of African Heads of State and Government in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea to enhance policy coherence and coordination in the fisheries sector
9. The overall objective of these Terms of Reference is to establish and operationalize a continental platform for regional fisheries institutions in Africa

Objectives of the Platform

10. The specific objectives of this platform are to:
    a. Promote coherence and consistency in decision making.
    b. Develop joint publication, share knowledge and disseminate information.
    c. Develop joint action plans and publications.
    d. Contribute to the development and strengthening of coherent African voice.

Membership

11. Members of this platform shall include all African Union institutions, ,regional institutions, in Africa and development partners with mandate and initiatives in fisheries, aquaculture and aquatic systems.

Modus operandi

12. The platform shall undertake its activities through:
    a. Holding a statutory annual meeting,
    b. Mutual invitations and participation in statutory meetings organized by a member as well as in sectoral meetings;
    c. Ad hoc consultation meetings such as international conferences, workshops, seminars etc.
    d. Electronic discussions and consultations
13. The CAMFA Secretariat at AU-IBAR shall provide administrative support to the platform
14. The platform shall elect a chair and a deputy chair for two years

Funding

15. The Platform shall define its operating rules, as well as develop mechanisms or arrangements for funding its activities.

Revision

16. All or part of this Terms of Reference may be revised by the members during the platforms statutory meetings according to its operating rules.

Establishment;

17. With the adoption of this TOR in this Forum here in Cotonou, Republic of Benin this 24th day of April, 2015, **The African Platform for Regional Institutions for Fisheries, Aquaculture and Aquatic Systems (APRIFAS)** is deemed to have been established and have come into existence.

9. APPENDIX IX: FINAL COMMUNIQUE

AFRICAN UNION
الاتحاد الأفريقي



UNION AFRICAINE

UNIÃO AFRICANA

FINAL COMMUNIQUE

CONSULTATIVE MEETING ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AFRICAN PLATFORM FOR REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS FOR FISHERIES, AQUACULTURE AND AQUATIC SYSTEMS

22 – 24 APRIL 2015

COTONOU, BENIN

I. INTRODUCTION

1. A consultative meeting on the establishment of African Platform for Regional Institutions for Fisheries, Aquaculture and Aquatic Systems was organized jointly by the African Union Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR) and the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA) in Cotonou, Benin, from 22nd to 24th April 2015 with funding from the European Uninion.
2. The objectives of the meeting were to *(i)* validate the Terms of Reference for African Platform for Regional Institutions for Fisheries, Aquaculture and Aquatic Systems (APRIFAS) *(ii)* establish an African Platform for regional institutions of fisheries and aquaculture *(iii)* Review and improve institutional assessment reports for the RFBs and Water Basin Commissions including suggestions for their possible rationalization and (iv) review elements of the draft legal text for the anchorage of Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the Regional Fisheries Commission for Gulf of Guinea (COREP).
3. The meeting was attended by 35 participants comprising mainly of representatives of Regional Economic Communities/Agencies, Regional Fisheries Bodies, Water Basin Commissions, International Organizations (European Union and UN Food and Agriculture Organization), the NEPAD Agency, AU-IBAR, AUC-DREA, Abidjan Convention, ATLAFCO and experts (The list of participants is attached to this Communique as Appendix I).
4. Mr. Jonathan Nyarko Ocran, Policy Officer of the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture of the African Union Commission (AUC) highlighted the important role fisheries and aquaculture play in the economy of the continent in recognition of which the sector is placed high on the table of priority of the AUC on the development blueprint for the continent's development over the next fifty years called Agenda 2063.
5. Mrs. Isabelle Viallon, Policy Officer, European Commission, DG DEVCO, in her statement on behalf of the EC expressed appreciation on the giant strides by AU-IBAR that have culminated in the organization of the consultative meeting. She acknowledged that operationalizing coordination, cooperation and partnership in the fisheries and aquaculture requires a lot of efforts and recognized the importance of dealing with coordination especially with limited resources for the management and development of the aquatic resources. It is in line with this that the EC is happy to partner with the AU in this regard.
6. Dr. Hamady Diop, Program Manager Fisheries and Aquaculture of NEPAD Agency re-echoed the active role of the NPCA in the process of preparation of the initiative to ensure that priorities and strategies proposed are

in line with African Union priorities and action plan, and that they complement other planned or ongoing continental activities.

7. Dr. Simplice Nouala, Chief Animal Production Officer, on behalf of the Director of AU-IBAR, noted that the meeting was the peak of the journey African Union commenced with stakeholders and it is a significant and final step towards a successful conclusion of one of the most seemingly intractable much talked about obstacle to good governance in fisheries management – institutional collaboration, coordination and regional cooperation.
8. The meeting was officially opened by the Permanent Secretary, Mr. Toko Abdoulaye, in the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries of the Republic of Benin who stood in for His Excellency, the Hon. Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries Mr. Issa Azizou.
9. In his opening remarks the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries lauded the AU's initiative to address one of the most important recommendations of the first Conference of African Ministers for Fisheries and Aquaculture (CAMFA 1) and acknowledged the urgent need to establish an African Platform for Regional Institutions for Fisheries, Aquaculture and Aquatic Systems. The Permanent Secretary particularly praised the effort of the African Union Commission and the NEPAD Agency for the Policy Framework and Reform Strategy to guide the management and development of African fisheries and aquaculture sector for the benefits of our citizens.
10. He enumerated the potential benefits of regional collaboration in regards to joint efforts in combating Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, enhancing intra-regional trade in fish and fish products, increase investment, common approach in addressing transbounadry issues such as pollution, degradation of habitat, etc.
11. The Permanent Secretary noted the significance of establishing an African platform for fisheries, aquaculture and aquatic systems as this would promote coherence in the governance of the fisheries and aquaculture sector, harmonisation of programmes and activities as well as minimize duplication and wastage of resources.

II.THE MEETING

Presentations:

12. There were presentations on:
    i. Historical perspectives that gave the background to and objectives of the meeting.
    ii. The provisions of the pillar on regional collaboration and cooperation in the policy framework and reform strategy for fisheries and aquaculture in Africa.
    iii. The progress report on the implementation of the action plans of the Accra meeting on institutional collaboration conducted in July, 2014.
    iv. Presentations of the reports of institutional assessments of regional fisheries bodies and water basin commissions conducted by AU-IBAR in the following regions:
        a. Southern and Eastern Africa
        b. Central Africa
        c. Western Africa
    v. Terms of Reference for the establishment of an African Platform for Regional Institutions for Fisheries, Aquaculture and Aquatic Systems in Africa.
    vi. The legal text for formalizing institutional linkage between the ECCAS and the COREP.
13. The presentations were followed by group discussions. Five working groups were formed to discuss the following:
    I. The Regional assessment reports.
    II. The terms of reference and rules of procedure for the establishment of the African Platform for Regional Institutions for Fisheries, Aquaculture and Aquatic systems in Africa.

III. OUTCOMES OF THE MEETING:

On the regional Assessment Reports;

14. In recognition of the need to strengthen the performance of the Regional Fisheries Bodies and Water Basin Commissions in the discharge of their mandate and delivery for the benefit of their constituent member states and for realization of the full potential of the fisheries and aquaculture sector to the continents socio-economic development,
15. Aware of the potential benefits to the member states that come with rationalization of regional institutions, clarity of mandates, strengthened capacity in requisite areas of institutional expertise,

16. The meeting enriched the reports of the institutional assessments of regional fisheries bodies and water basin commissions and requested that the final versions be circulated to stakeholders for final comments by the 30th May, 2015,

On the establishment of an African platform for Regional Institutions for Fisheries, Aquaculture and Aquatic Systems;

18. In recognition of the role and efforts of the AU that have been put in the process of establishing this African platform for regional institutions consistent with CAMFA 1 recommendation,
19. Aware of AU efforts in addressing the issues of coordination in the architecture of the African Fisheries Reform Mechanism and also captured as a key pillar in the policy framework and reform strategy for fisheries and aquaculture in Africa,
20. Expressing gratitude to AU for implementing the Accra recommendation specifically regarding the establishment of an African platform for RFBs,
21. The meeting noted other initiatives at regional levels towards collaboration and cooperation in the sustainable management of fisheries and aquaculture resources,
22. Noting the importance and potential benefits of a continental platform of regional institutions for fisheries, aquaculture and aquatic systems, and resulting from harmonization of programmes, duplication of activities and minimizing wastage of resources,
23. The meeting adopted the terms of reference for the establishment of the platform (see attached).
24. The meeting agreed to establish the platform of African platform for Regional Institutions for Fisheries, Aquaculture and Aquatic Systems.
25. The CAMFA Secretariat will develop the draft rules of procedure of the Platform for presentation in the first meeting of the platform.

On the review of the legal text for anchorage between RFBs and RECs

26. The meeting took note of the key elements of the report of the legal text for anchorage of RECs and RFBs,
27. Noting the importance of regional cooperation in addressing fisheries management and development challenges such as combating IUU fishing, promoting intra-regional trade, sustainable aquaculture development, management of shared fisheries resources, policy coherence etc.,
28. The meeting requested AU-IBAR, ECOWAS, SRFC and FCWC to develop a roadmap leading to signing of Memorandum of Understanding between the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Sub Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC) on the one hand and with the Fisheries Committee for West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC) on the other hand.
29. The meeting expressed gratitude to the Government and People of the Republic of Benin for their hospitality and successful hosting of the meeting.
30. This Communique was adopted on 24th of April 2015