AFRICAN UNION INTERAFRICAN BUREAU FOR ANIMAL RESOURCES
AUDA-NEPAD AFRICAN UNION DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
Funded by the European Union



POLICY FRAMEWORK AND REFORM STRATEGY FOR FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE IN AFRICA

Creating a conducive and enabling environment for the fish sector to create equitable, social and economic development in Africa

FUNDAMENTAL ELEMENTS AND KEY POLICY MESSAGES OF THE POLICY FRAMEWORK AND REFORM STRATEGY

Scope and Nature

The geographic scope of the Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture (PF&RS) covers all member states of the African Union.The PF&RS focusses on marine and inland fisheries and aquaculture, as well as the post-harvest sector, and recognizes that fish is a valuable and vital renewable resource which, if properly managed, can provide important benefits to present and future generations of human-kind. The PF&RS acknowledges the diversity of uses of fish resources and advocates a broad, inclusive approach to fisheries management and aquaculture development. The framework is based on a clear vision and achievable objectives. Both the vision and goal are in line with the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and strategies that have been adopted by many governments to stimulate economic growth and modernize development in their respective countries. Furthermore, it is evidence-based, takes a holistic view of issues and is pragmatic and precautionary in its approach.

Overall Purpose

The overall purpose of the Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture is to facilitate transformation of Africa's fisheries and aquaculture for food, livelihoods and wealth. Accordingly, the PF&RS is intended to:

- Elaborate and make explicit essential guiding principles for good governance of Africa's fisheries for increased coherence and coordination of the sector;
- Assist AU Member States, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Regional Fisheries Bodies (RFBs) to develop realistic fisheries and aquaculture policies by suggesting standards and best practices to increase the sector's benefits to AU member states, in terms of food security, employment and income;
- Help facilitate regional collaboration and integration in shared fisheries and aquaculture resources management;
- Provide appropriate guidance on how to implement reforms for fisheries and aquaculture development;
- Facilitate ratification and/or adoption of appropriate provisions in international fisheries management instruments;

For more information: Email: *ibar.office@au-ibar.org* **Website:** *www.au-ibar.org*

- Facilitate advocacy for increased investment in the fisheries and aquaculture sector.

VISION, GOAL, POLICY ARENAS AND OBJECTIVES

Vision Statement

Sustainable management and utilization of fisheries and aquaculture resources through the creation of a conducive and enabling environment for equitable, economic and social development in Africa.

Overall Goal

Provide structured guidance to Africa's fisheries management agencies, development assistance donor agencies, technical institutions, fish producers and traders, and other stakeholders involved in the sector through a prioritized prospectus of opportunities to facilitate reforms towards coherent national and regional policies that realize the full wealth-generating potential of African fisheries and aquaculture and ensure sustainable social, environmental and profitable outcomes for Africa and its peoples.

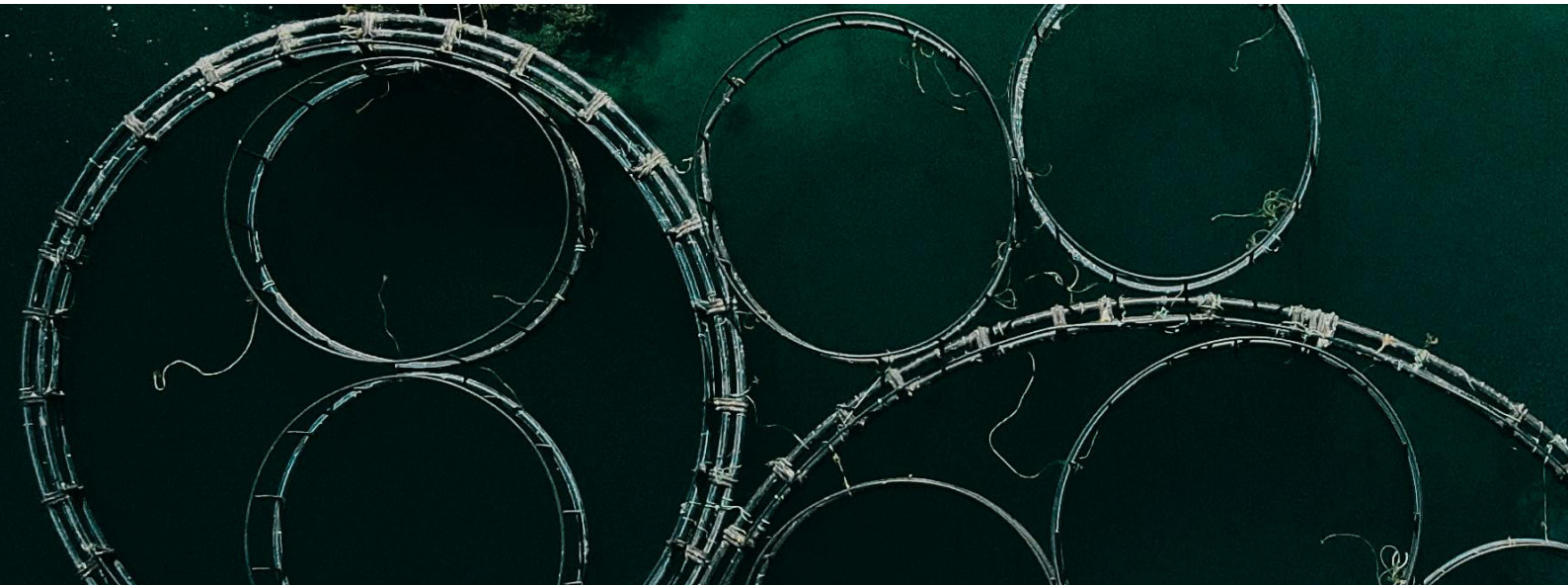
Main Policy Arenas, Objectives and Strategies

In view of the challenges and opportunities in Africa's fisheries and aquaculture sector, the following policy arenas are prioritized as needing reforms for enhancing the contribution of Africa's fisheries and aquaculture sector to socio-economic development of the continent. The policy arenas and the indicated strategic actions are the outcomes of a combination of several activities, including national and regional assessments for generation of evidence and a series of consultative processes, mainly at continental level.

POLICY ARENAS	OBJECTIVES	SUMMARY OF STRATEGIC ACTIONS
Conservation and Sustainable Resource Use	To establish national and sub-national governance and institutional arrangements that ensure that the societal contribution generated by Africa's sectors have the greatest impacts at the most appropriate level	• Create an enabling environment for sustainable management and for generating the potential of the resources • Design and apply appropriate users rights-based systems • Conduct fisheries within enforceable regulatory frameworks • Strengthen the scientific and socio-economic basis for fisheries management and aquaculture development
Small-scale Fisheries Development	To improve and strengthen the contribution of small-scale fisheries to poverty alleviation, food and nutrition security and socio-economic benefits of fishing communities	• Enhance effective bilateral and regional cooperation in the management of shared resources • Promote, support and coordinate sustainable pro-poor development • Improve fisheries governance through participatory management
Sustainable Aquaculture Development	To jumpstart market-led sustainable aquaculture through a variety of strategies and, where appropriate, support interventionist development approaches in aquaculture by strong strategic and implementation plans	• Build on traditional fisheries management systems, promotion of selective and location-specific fishing gear • Create an enabling environment • Create an African Centre of Excellence for Aquaculture • Mainstream aquaculture strategies and plans into national development plans especially CAADP



Responsible and Equitable Fish Trade and Marketing	To harness significantly the benefits of Africa's fisheries and aquaculture endowments through accelerated trade and marketing	• Improve and align trade systems between AU MS in the same REC • Improve quality and safety of products to better access regional and international markets • Enhance the capacity of fisheries and aquaculture traders • Put in place efficient fish trade information systems • Improve the capacity of countries to implement traceability mechanisms
Strengthened Regional and Sub-regional Cooperation	To strengthen South-South (bilateral and regional) cooperation, and develop coordinated mechanisms among RECs and RFBs to ensure coherence of fisheries policies and aquaculture development, and their adoption and adaptation.	• Increase strategic cooperation in capture fisheries and aquaculture development needs • Create synergies and complementarities in programmes at regional level • Establish and reinforce the role of RECs and RFBs in regional economic integration • Enhance awareness and capacity development to improve fisheries and aquaculture governance: • Capacity development in Fisheries Management Planning, Fisheries Management, Regional Cooperation, Strengthening the scientific and economic basis for competitive, equitable and sustainable sectors, Strengthening the knowledge base systems
Awareness Enhancing and Human-capacity Development	To increase awareness of the potential and importance of sector and enhance the capacity of people and institutions in the African fishery sector to ensure the sustainable development of capture fisheries and aquaculture, based on current and emerging trends, challenges and needs.	
High Seas Fisheries	Increase and consolidate the African Voice in the governance and management of high seas fisheries.	• Encourage African countries to become members or cooperating parties of appropriate Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) • Encourage African countries to ratify and implement United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the FAO Port States Measures Agreement • Consult among member states and harmonize positions on key issues before meetings of RFMOs • Participate in the Area Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) programme to promote efficient and sustainable management of fisheries resources and biodiversity conservation in the ABNJ • Participate in the newly established Global Partnership for Oceans; build relationships and political, financial and scientific support in the region for high seas fisheries
CROSS CUTTING ISSUES		
Climate change and other disasters	Strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerabilities to climate change in African fisheries and aquaculture	• Enhancing information, knowledge and communication systems • Building adaptive capacity at the local level • Improving policy coherence and coordination at the national and regional levels • Identifying funding opportunities • Community economic empowerment



Gender and youth	Promoting gender equality and youth empowerment	• Effective participation of women and youth in decision-making processes • Inter-sectoral approaches and partnerships for empowering women and youth • Institutional capacity development for gender mainstreaming • Gender based violence prevention should be addressed at all levels, including within households
Private sector investments and financing mechanisms for Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa	Enhancing the developmental and profitable role of the private sector into realizing the vast potential of the fisheries and aquaculture sector in Africa	• Development of strategies to improve financial services to SMEs along value chains • Improving the enabling environment for financial services in the CAADP Country Compact Investment Plans • Establish an investment fund for SMEs in fisheries and aquaculture

Reform Strategies

The Policy framework makes use of a number of approaches, including economic, ecosystems, social and welfare. But the main precondition for these approaches to translate into development outcomes is a need for countries to commit to reforming their fisheries sectors through the following strategies:

- Take into account the full range of benefits in developing fisheries policy, including food and nutrition security, welfare and economic development.
- Move fish-resource wealth to the centre stage in the policy debate in order to ensure that such wealth does not encourage over-exploitation.
- Measure the potential wealth of fisheries in order to inform public debate about fishery policy goals and the cost of achieving such goals in terms of foregone wealth, where trade-offs may be needed.
- Build capacity and develop institutions, in both the public and private sectors, to support successful reform.
- Where overexploited stocks are concerned, priority should be to rebuild the stocks, with consideration for arrangements for the transitional period.
- Where job numbers fall due to a reduction in fishing effort, consideration must be given to alternative employment and livelihood opportunities.

Conclusion

The Policy Framework and Reform Strategy offers Africa the opportunity to transition its fisheries to productivity, sustainability and profitability with options for enhanced regional collaborative management of shared resources. Policy Framework and Reform Strategy will enable African governments to develop appropriate fisheries exploitation arrangements and aquaculture, with accompanied fiscal reforms that result in the sustainable generation of benefits at the community level and create wealth throughout the value chain.

