

**MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON FISHERIES COOPERATION AMONG
AFRICAN STATES BORDERING THE ATLANTIC OCEAN**



EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

Report of the Ministers' meeting of ATLAFCO Bureau

EL JADIDA (MOROCCO), 20 SEPTEMBER 2011

1. The meeting of the Ministers of the Bureau of the Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States Bordering the Atlantic Ocean (ATLAFCO) was held on September 20, 2011 in El Jadida, Morocco.

2. The following Member States of the Bureau of ATLAFCO: Angola, Cameroon, Gambia, Ghana, Morocco, Senegal and Togo attended the meeting.

The list of the participation is attached to this report.

3. The following observers also attended the meeting: the African Network of Institutes for Fisheries Research and Marine Sciences (RAFISMER), the Gathering of African Maritime Training Institutions (REFMA), the African Network of Women in Fisheries (RAFEP), the Japan Overseas Fisheries Cooperation Foundation (OFCF), the Fishery Agency of Japan and the representatives of B&D consulting firm.

4. Mr. Abdeljebbar YOUSSEFI read a speech on behalf of Mr. Aziz AKHANNOUCH, Minister of Agriculture and Marine Fishery of Morocco. He wished on this occasion to welcome the Ministers and participants, and assured the availability of the Kingdom of Morocco to continue providing support for ATLAFCO.

5. In his speech, Mr. Hachim EL AYOUBI, Executive Secretary of ATLAFCO, recalled the context in which his appointment has occurred and stressed that the major challenge is the restructuring and revitalization of ATLAFCO. He thanked the Bureau and all Member States for their involvement and efficiency, in particular, The Chairman of ATLAFCO and his counterpart, Mr. Aziz AKHANNOUCH.

6. Hon. Kwesi AHWOI, Minister of Food and Agriculture of Ghana, Chairman of ATLAFCO delivered the opening speech of the meeting. He first thanked the Government of Morocco for its continued support to ATLAFCO, and called on Member States to be more involved particularly through the payment of their contributions. The Chairman declared open the Ministerial Meeting.

7. His Excellency, Khouraichi THIAM, Minister of Maritime Economy of Senegal made a statement on the behalf of ministers present. He thanked the Kingdom of Morocco for its efforts towards the ATLAFCO and support to the Organization. He also urged Member States to pay their contributions.

8. The meeting took note of the commitment of Angola to host the ninth session of the Ministerial Conference in Luanda during the period April-May 2012.

9. The following presentations were made to the meeting:

- Report of the Working Group on the review of texts,
- Proposed Budget for the years 2012 – 2015,
- Draft transitional budget for the period July to December 2011,
- Methodology for developing the strategic plan of ATLAFCO during the period 2012 to 2015.

10. The papers presented were adopted by the Bureau who authorized the Executive Secretary to initiate the implementation of the program of restructuring. The actions taken under this program will be presented at the 9th session of the Conference of Ministers.

11. The Bureau examined the attached report of the meeting of experts and adopted it.

12. The Bureau adopted the final report.

13. After thanking all the participants, the Chairman proceeded with the closing of the meeting.

Done in El Jadida, on September 20, 2011.

Annex 1 : PARTICIPANTS LIST

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Annex 2: Speeches

2.1 Speech delivered by Hon. Kwesi AHWOI, Minister for Food and Agriculture of the Republic of Ghana and Chairman of the Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States Bordering the Atlantic Ocean (ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT)

**Meeting of the Bureau held In El-Jadida, Morocco
20TH SEPTEMBER, 2011**

Colleague Ministers of the Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States Bordering the Atlantic Ocean (ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT)

Distinguished Experts,

Ladies and Gentlemen

First of all, let me convey to you warm felicitations from the Government and people of Ghana and welcome you in my capacity as Chairman of ATLAFCO, to this extra-ordinary session of the Bureau of ATLAFCO.

May I also crave your indulgence to wholeheartedly thank the Government and the people of the Moroccan Kingdom, for the warm welcome extended to our delegations on the occasion of this important meeting.

I wish to state that this has been usual at every opportunity, of my dear colleague, Honourable Minister for Agriculture and Fishery, Mr. Aziz AKHANNOUCH, to epitomize the unique touch of Moroccan hospitality and the red-carpet treatment we enjoy, for which we are very grateful.

As earlier stated by the Executive Secretary and our colleague, the Moroccan Minister, our meeting is being held at a very special moment in the life of our organization.

Hitherto, we have been overwhelmed by the demand from our partners on the need to strengthen our organization, to allow it to play the leading role in the African and International Fishery Sector. This demand has been driven by the full awareness of all actors, that the type of challenges we are facing can only be tackled at Regional Level.

However, we have never been able to entrust our organization with the necessary political will that could help inject it with the human and financial resources needed for an effective and efficient implementation of its mandate.

That is why, I wish to commend strongly the step taken by my colleague, the Honourable Aziz Akhanoukh in appointing a new Executive Secretary who has been the spearhead in implementing our Conference decisions. The change in the Executive Management of our organization has been very instrumental during the last two years, in revamping the dynamism initiated by the Conference.

It is my great pleasure to announce to you that during the first half of 2011, the Executive Secretary, under the leadership and guidance of an Ad-hoc Working Group on the revision of ATLAFCO statutory documents, has conducted a thorough study on the restructuring and revitalization of our organization. The outcome of that mission was submitted to the Experts/Technical Working Group which considered and accepted it after discussions and amendments.

The report of the Working Group, which is an outcome of a two-day discussion by our experts, is hereby tabled for final adoption by this Bureau.

Colleagues and Experts, coupled with the restructuring and reinvigoration process, the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco has substantially increased its support to the organization. This will help fill the funding gap during the interim period leading to the establishment of a functional Regional Secretariat capable of raising the needed funding for the organization.

May I, on your behalf and my own, extend my sincere appreciation to the Government and people of the Kingdom of Morocco for this important and welcome move and urge the Executive Secretary to speed up the process, once it is approved by the Bureau.

A budget for 2011 will be presented during this meeting. It includes the main actions relating to the restructuring process and most importantly the first ATLAFCO Strategic Plan which will constitute henceforth, the negotiation instrument with our members and partners.

Guided by the Result Based Management Principles, the 2012 – 2015 ATLAFCO Strategic Plan will also be our performance measuring tool.

Finally, Colleagues and Experts, on the whole, it appears that step by step, we are consolidating and strengthening our organization. But our strong political will and commitment are needed now more than ever and I am certain that we shall give our organization all the support it deserves to play the leading role it was assigned.

I am assured that I can count on all of you in that regard, the same way that we can count on the continued support of our Japanese partners who have been at the core of our action.

May God Almighty Pave Our Way with Success.

Long Live ATLAFCO

Long Live the African Fishery Sector

Long Live African Cooperation

Thank You.

2.2 SPEECH of H.E. Aziz AKHANNOUCH, Minister of Agriculture and Marine Fisheries of the Kingdom of Morocco delivered by Mr. Abdeljebbar YOUSSEFI, the General Secretary

EL JADIDA (MOROCCO), SEPTEMBER 20TH, 2011

- His Excellency Kwesi AHWOI, President of the Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States Bordering the Atlantic Ocean « ATLAFCO » and Minister for Food and Agriculture of the Republic of Ghana,
- Excellencies the Ministers,
- Mister Executive Secretary of ATLAFCO,
- Distinguished delegates, observers and guests,

It is with genuine pleasure that I welcome on this memorable day my fellow members of the ATLAFCO Bureau on this African soil of Morocco.

As you know, our country is particularly attached to this anchor which is the major base of our cooperation in accordance with the enlightened vision of His Majesty King Mohamed VI of Morocco.

Beyond the issues of management and regional cooperation in fisheries and fishery resources, Morocco considers ATLAFCO to be a model regional cooperation framework which contributes to the strengthening of our historical and geographical ties of brotherhood and solidarity.

I would like on this opportunity to recall the Kingdom of Morocco's adherence to the values of African regional cooperation and seamless commitment to make it a powerful tool to strengthen the potential of African countries and contribute to the economic and social development of their peoples.

This commitment justifies our position in strengthening regional cooperation in fisheries and fisheries management through ATLAFCO, a valuable tool that we have built together for over 20 years and it is our right to benefit from it today.

In my capacity as Minister for fisheries, I am fully aware of the true value and the importance of the role ATLAFCO could play in enhancing our cooperation. The problems the fishing industry is facing in most of our countries are not always local in nature but go beyond national borders. It is therefore appropriate to give them a regional response.

Since its inception, ATLAFCO has experienced prosperous phases but phases of decline as well, and the framework has not been fully exploited.

In recent years, Morocco has initiated a process in collaboration of all member countries to revitalize our organization. You all remember Morocco's proposal for amendments to the Statute of ATLAFCO at the Bureau meeting in Accra in August 2008. These amendments which were adopted in Rabat in January 2009 paved the way for further steps marked

mainly by the signing of a Headquarters agreement between the Kingdom of Morocco and our organization.

Recently, in sync with the Chairman of the Ministerial Conference, His Excellency Mr. Kwesi AHWOI to whom I renew my congratulations for his leadership and his personal involvement, new actions have been initiated:

Mainly the appointment of a new Executive Secretary in the last quarter of 2010 and the substantial increase in the contribution of my country to provide the Secretariat with the means for its restructuring and make of our organization an international reference.

These actions have produced results and especially generated a great deal of expectations with many technical and financial partners already showing keen interest in our organization.

Therefore, we must collectively back this effort by providing significant political support to the organization to enable it play a leading role in the community of fisheries management organizations worldwide.

I would like to thank the Bureau members who made the trip and assure them of my readiness to work with them, both at bilateral and multilateral levels, for better management of our regional fisheries resources and the development of common interest projects. I urge them to support ATLAFCO in its development and to make our other members follow suit.

In an effort to strengthen the image of ATLAFCO, the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco has agreed to provide the required funds to enable it to have its own premises and relocate outside the Department of Marine Fisheries. This will give more visibility to ATLAFCO and contribute to its success.

I am personally committed to supporting action by the Executive Secretary to continue its efforts to mobilize member states and the technical and financial partners, such as Japan with its valuable contribution to our work, in parallel with the restructuring of the Secretariat under the authority of the President of the Ministerial Conference.

I wish you every success in your work and reiterate my pride to welcome you in El Jadida, the same city that hosted the signing of the Headquarters Agreement between the COMHAFAT and the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco on October 24, 2009.

Thank you for your kind attention.

**2.3 SPEECH of Mr. Hachim EL AYOUBI, Executive Secretary of ATLAFCO
ATLAFCO Bureau Ministers' Meeting, EL JADIDA (MOROCCO), SEPTEMBER 20TH, 2011**

Excellency, the President of the Ministers' Conference,

Excellencies, the Ministers Members of the ATLAFCO,

Members of the Bureau

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The ATLAFCO Bureau meeting provides me with the opportunity and pleasure to say a few words of greetings and welcome in my capacity as Executive Secretary.

I wish on behalf of the Executive Secretariat, the executive body carrying out the decisions of this August assembly, to rejoice at your strong presence at this meeting which ushers in major steps in revitalizing our organization.

Mister President of the Ministers' Conference,

I would like to emphasize your special commitment and your pertinent vision that allowed us to initiate and implement actions necessary to operationalize the decisions of the last Conference. In doing so, you felt the interest of regional cooperation in fisheries management but also its unique and irreplaceable nature in solving problems of this important sector of our respective national economies.

I want to thank you especially for your leadership and support to all our initiatives and to reiterate our commitment to bring your vision to ATLAFCO.

Mister President of the Ministers' Conference,

Let me also underline the continued and growing commitment of the Kingdom of Morocco through the person of your Moroccan counterpart, H.E. Aziz AKHANNOUCH, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries who accompanied our initiatives providing us with the necessary human, financial and technical resources. He, in fact, confirmed the key role that the Kingdom of Morocco plays in our organization with time-tested fidelity to the South-South cooperation.

Excellencies, Ministers members of the Bureau,

During this meeting, your high deliberations will cover the report of the Working Group set up by the Conference of Ministers to review the statutory texts of our organization as part of the required restructuring and revitalization to match the international environment and the role that ATLAFCO is called to play.

As you know, my appointment as head of the Executive Secretariat of ATLAFCO occurred while the implementation of the mission of this Working Group was underway. Inspired by the recommendations of His Excellency the Minister in charge of Fisheries of the Kingdom of Morocco and the relevant guidance of His Excellency the President of the Conference of Ministers, I engaged, immediately after I took office, in the widest consultations possible to grasp expectations of the various stakeholders, namely Member States and the donor community. It then appeared to me that beyond the grooming of our statutory texts that had started the organization needed a deep restructuring and revitalization to be able to play the role its members and partners expect.

Encouraged by Bureau members, I thought of hiring the services of consultant with expertise in the restructuring of regional organizations and knowledge of fisheries cooperation organizations in Africa for a study and proposals that will feed reflection of members of the Working Group. In doing so, I took into account the distance and professional activities of each member; it was difficult to delve deep into the restructuring process without the support of an expert in the matter.

I must pay tribute to the Moroccan government, to His Excellency the Minister of Agriculture and Marine Fisheries and to his senior staff, including the Secretary General attending today, for their lavish counsel and support.

Your high deliberations will also focus on implementation of actions necessary for the restructuring and revitalization of our organization, especially the development of a Strategic Plan which will form the basis for its partnership with Member States and technical and financial partners and for the strengthening of its institutional capacities through the deployment of human and financial resources required for the implementation of its mandate.

Your commitment to our organization which accounts for your presence here, despite your heavy workload, allows me to believe that ATLAFCO will emerge strong and renewed from this meeting and resolutely engaged in the process to turn it into a benchmark organization in the fisheries sector worldwide.

Reiterating my full readiness to listen to you and to endeavor for the implementation of all of your recommendations, I wish you a productive meeting.

Long Live ATLAFCO,

Long live African regional cooperation.

El Jadida, September 20, 2011

**MINISTERIEL CONFERENCE ON FISHERIES COOPERATION AMONG
AFRICAN STATES BORDERING THE ATLANTIC OCEAN**



EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

Report of the Expert's meeting of ATLAFCO Bureau

EL JADIDA (MAROCCO), 18-19 SEPTEMBER 2011

1. The meeting of experts of the Bureau of the Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States Bordering the Atlantic Ocean (ATLAFCO) was held on September 18 - 19, 2011 in El Jadida, Morocco.
2. The meeting was attended by experts from Member States of the Bureau of ATLAFCO: Angola, Cameroon, Gambia, Ghana, Morocco, Senegal and Togo and the Executive Secretariat of the ATLAFCO.
3. The following observers also attended the meeting: the African Network of Institutes for Fisheries Research and Marine Sciences (RAFISMER), the Gathering of African Maritime Training Institutions (REFMA), the African Network of Women in Fisheries (RAFEP), the Japan Overseas Fisheries Cooperation Foundation (OFCF) and the Fishery Agency of Japan and representatives of B & D consulting.

The list of participants is annexed to this report.

4. Mr. Abdelouahed BENABBOU, representing the Kingdom of Morocco, in his address, welcomed the participants. He underlined the special attention given to the new organizational and management procedures that have been put in place when the ATLAFCO engaged in a reform process to adopt statutes similar to international organizations.
5. He recalled that the ATLAFCO concluded a headquarters agreement with the Government of Morocco and a new Executive Secretary is appointed since one year. These reforms have generated more interest from potential partners of the organization.
6. He also assured the meeting of the availability of his country to continue to support ATLAFCO and informed of the provision of new premises as the headquarters for this organization.
7. Mr. Hachim EL AYOUBI, Executive Secretary ATLAFCO, has noted in his speech that the purpose of this meeting falls within the framework of the implementation of the recommendations of the eighth session of the Conference of Ministers.
8. On this occasion, he requested the Member States for more involvement in the process of implementation of this new dynamics, and thanked the Bureau and the observers for their attendance at El Jadida. He also paid tribute to the OFCF for its technical and financial support to the activities of ATLAFCO.

9. In his opening speech, the Chairman of the experts meeting, Honorable Mike AKYEAMPONG, Chairman of the Fisheries Commission of Ghana, expressed ATLAFCO's gratitude for the Kingdom of Morocco and Japan for their manifold support. He then congratulated the consultant and the working group for the quality of the produced documents.

10. Before declaring open the proceedings of the experts' meeting, Honorable AKYEAMPONG has delegated the chairmanship of the session to Mr. Samuel QUAAATEY, Director of Fisheries in Ghana.

11. The draft agenda was adopted as follows:

- Opening Ceremony,
- Adoption of the agenda,
- Presentation and adoption of the report of the Working Group on the review of texts,
- Preparation of the 9th session of the Ministerial Conference: date, place and agenda,
- Exchange on inter-regional cooperation,
- Presentation of the draft budget,
- Presentation of the work plan for the second half of 2011,
- Exchange on the development of ATLAFCO strategic plan for 2012-2015,
- Adoption of the report,
- Closing of the meeting.

12. The report of the meeting of the Working Group on the Review of ATLAFCO texts held on 14 and 15 April 2011 in El Jadida, Morocco was presented by Dr. Malloum Ousman BABA, delegate of Cameroon, and Rapporteur of the Working Group.

13. The mandate of the Working Group was to review the documents produced by a consultant relating to the functioning of ATLAFCO, and validate them. These documents are:

- The letter of policy and procedures for managing human resources;
- The report recommendation;
- The status of staff;
- The rules of procedure;
- The Financial Regulation;
- The sheets of missions and posts;

- The manual of administrative, accounting and operational support procedures;
- The model for reporting in accordance with IPSAS;
- The annotated accounting plan according to IPSAS.

14. The representative of Angola has confirmed the commitment of his country to host the ninth session of the Conference of Ministers in Luanda during the period April-May 2012.

15. He also pledged to send the Secretariat an official letter of confirmation no later than October 31, 2011.

16. Issues relating to the management of international staff salaries and the principle of budgetary universality have attracted more interest from the participants. The report was adopted by the Bureau.

17. The experts stressed the interest in ATLAFCO to enhance synergy with the sub-regional organizations specialized sisters, namely: the Commission Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC), the Committee on Fisheries of the West Central Gulf of Guinea (CCPO), the Regional Fisheries Commission Gulf of Guinea (PRC) ; the regional organizations for economic integration, namely the Economic and Monetary Union of West Africa (UEMOA), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC) ; the international, intergovernmental and regional cooperation organizations, namely the European Union (EU), the World Bank, the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), the International Whaling Commission (IWC), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), etc.

18. At the end, the Executive Secretariat was recommended to strengthen cooperation with these organizations through the establishment of appropriate instruments.

19. The Meeting welcomed the interest shown by the United States and Norway to cooperate with the ATLAFCO, and the proposal to confer them observer status at meetings of the Organization.

20. To implement the program of reinvigorating and restructuring over a period of 2 to 3 years, an annual budget of 10,421,970 DHS or US \$ 1,270,972 has been submitted and approved by the Bureau.

21. As such, the Government of Morocco made a contribution of 5 million DHS (609,756 \$ USD) to cover the needs of the Secretariat for the period from July to December 2011.

22. The Bureau urged Member States to pay their annual contribution.

23. The work plan for the last six months of year 2011 was presented by the Executive Secretary. The Bureau adopted the work plan.

24. The Bureau welcomed the need for a coherent program that defines the vision of the Organization for the next four years (2012-2015).

25. The meeting adopted the methodological approach of the strategic plan presented by the Consultant, and recommended its preparation and finalization as soon as possible.

26. Mrs. Seynabou NDOYE, Chairwoman of the Bureau of the African Network of Women in Fisheries (RAFEP) presented her organization created in December 2010 at the Constituent General Assembly held in Senegal with the support of ATLAFCO. While welcoming this initiative, she has urged ATLAFCO continue its capacity building support to the network.

27. Mr. Yoshihiro TAKAGI, representing the OFCF Japan, presented the Women's Forum for Fish (FFP), established in Japan. As such, he expressed the interest of this organization for cooperation with the RAFEP. The Bureau supported that collaboration deemed beneficial to the RAFEP.

28. The meeting adopted the final report.

29. After thanking all the participants, the Chairman proceeded with the closing of the meeting.

Done in El Jadida, September 19, 2011.

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