

**Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States  
Bordering the Atlantic Ocean**



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**Executive Secretariat**

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**REPORT OF THE EXPERTS MEETING**

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*“FOR SUSTAINABLE EXPLOITATION OF MARINE RESOURCES”*

**10TH ORDINARY SESSION OF ATLAFCO**

**ABIDJAN, COTE D’IVOIRE,  
26, 27 August 2018**

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## I. Opening session

1. The Meeting of Experts of the Conference of Ministers on Fisheries Cooperation among the African States bordering the Atlantic Ocean (ATLAFCO), held in Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire), on 26 and 27 August 2018, prelude to the 10th Ordinary Session of the Ministerial Conference scheduled for 28 August 2018.
2. This meeting was held under the theme " *For sustainable exploitation of marine resources* "
3. Delegates from 21 member countries took part in the session: Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Liberia, Morocco, Mauritania, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo.
4. Namibia did not participate.
5. Representatives of the African Union/Inter African Bureau for Animal Resources(AU-IBAR), the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC), the Fisheries Committee for the West-Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC), the Regional Fisheries Commission of the Gulf of Guinea (COREP), the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), the Intergovernmental Organization for Information and Cooperation for the Marketing of Fishery Products in Africa (INFOPECHE), African Confederation of Artisanal Fisheries Professional Organizations (REPAO), the Confederation of African Artisanal Fisheries Organizations (CAOPA), the West African Association for the Development of Artisanal Fisheries (WADAF), the Grouping of African Maritime Training Institutes (REFMA), the African Network of Women in Fisheries (RAFEP), the Japan Fisheries Agency, the Advisory Committee on Long Distance Fisheries (LDAC), the European Commission and International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF) attended the meeting as observers.
6. The **list of participants** is attached in **Annex I**.
7. Mr. Obina ANOZIE, representative of AU-IBAR thanked ATLAFCO for the invitation to this session and recalled the importance of the fisheries and aquaculture sector for Africa and the efforts deployed for the alignment of ATLAFCO programs with the political framework and the reform strategy of fisheries and aquaculture in Africa. He welcomed the quality of the cooperative relationship between ATLAFCO and AU-BIRA, recently formalized with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding.  
This institutional cooperation illustrates the common will to strengthen the harmonization and coherence of actions between the continental level and the regional level, for a better synergy and performance of our institutions, based on complementarity and pooling of efforts and means to make the fisheries and aquaculture sector a dynamic engine of inclusive growth and integrated and sustainable development in the Region.
8. The opening ceremony of the meeting was chaired by Dr. Méité Anlyou ZOUMANA, Director of Cabinet of to the Minister of Animal and Fisheries Resources (MAFR), representative of Côte d'Ivoire, current chair of ATLAFCO. In his address, he welcomed the participants, and stressed the importance for Côte d'Ivoire to hold this ordinary session in Abidjan.

9. On behalf of Minister Kobenan Kouassi ADJOUMANI, he expressed his deep gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Alassane OUATTARA, President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, and to his Prime Minister for the very useful support they brought to the organization and the holding of this session of the Ministerial Conference of ATLFCA in Côte d'Ivoire.
10. Dr. Meité urged participants to contribute actively to the work of that session in order to present relevant and easily applicable recommendations to the Conference of Ministers.
11. Dr. Helguilè SHEP, Director of Aquaculture and Fisheries of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire has been appointed by the Director of Cabinet to chair the work of the experts to facilitate the progress of the discussions.
12. Dr. Meité also declared open the work of the Experts' meeting.

## **II. Presentation and adoption of the Agenda**

13. The agenda of the Experts meeting was reviewed and adopted unanimously. (**Annex II**).
14. The Secretariat of the meeting was provided by Dr. Domtani ALI, Director of Fisheries and Aquaculture of Togo assisted by ATLAFCO.

## **III. Activity Report**

15. The Executive Secretary of ATLAFCO presented the activity report and the detailed financial statement covering the period 2015, 2016, 2017 and the first half of 2018.
16. With regard to the activity report, he informed the experts of the status of ratifications/accessions and that of Member States' contributions to the budget of ATLAFCO.
17. Regarding achievements, the Executive Secretary of ATLAFCO presented the activities organized around five main themes related to the action plan of the 9<sup>th</sup> Session of the Conference of Ministers. He has, for this purpose, detailed activities, conclusions and recommendations resulting from the implementation of this action plan.
18. With regard to the development of the strategic partnership with organizations having similar activities, he provided information on the memorandums of understanding signed with the following organizations: The Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC), the Fisheries Committee for the West-Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC), the Regional Fisheries Commission of the Gulf of Guinea (COREP), the Intergovernmental Organization for Information and Cooperation for the Marketing of Fishery Products in Africa (INFOPECHE), African Confederation of Artisanal Fisheries Professional Organizations (REPAO), the Confederation of African Artisanal Fisheries Organizations (CAOPA), and the West African Association for the Development of Artisanal Fisheries (WADAF).
19. The Executive Secretary also informed the Meeting of the Memorandum of Understanding signed with the Inter-African Bureau of Animal Resources of the African Union (AU-IBAR).

This provides a framework for consultation, coordination and cooperation between the two Institutions in areas of common interest, for a better coherence and synergy of their action.

20. The participants congratulated the Executive Secretary for the quality and clarity of his presentation and praised the efforts of the staff who significantly improved the performance of ATLAFCO.
21. In order to enrich the activity report, participants suggested including tables illustrating the work done in the beneficiary countries.
22. In accordance with the recommendations of the 9<sup>th</sup> Session of the Conference of Ministers, the financial accounts of ATLAFCO have been audited and certified by an external auditor.
23. The Executive Secretary reported on the efforts made by ATLAFCO partners to mobilize the necessary financial resources for carrying out the activities set out in the action plan and urged Member States to pay their contributions and arrears.
24. The meeting rightly appreciated the transparency in the management of the financial accounts and the participants undertook individually to sensitize their competent authorities to regularize their financial situation vis-à-vis the ATLAFCO.

#### **IV. 2019-2020 Action Plan**

25. The Executive Secretary of ATLAFCO presented the Action Plan for the 2019-2020 period with a focus on sub-regional and regional activities articulated around the following five strategic axes:
  - Conservation and sustainable use of fisheries resources;
  - Improving the performance of the sector;
  - Promotion of intra- regional trade of fishery products;
  - Strengthening ATLAFCO' group within international fisheries bodies;
  - Maritime safety and security
26. The budget for the implementation of this Action Plan is estimated at US \$ 2,600,000 to be mobilized on:
  - The "Fisheries Promotion Fund" (US \$ 2,000,000)
  - The "Regional Fund for Fisheries Development" (US \$ 600 000).
27. The meeting endorsed the 2019-2020 Action Plan and suggested that in the future its presentation should include performance indicators to measure the impact of these activities.
28. The meeting also requested that these activities should be integrated into a framework of complementarity/synergy with those of other sub-regional, regional and continental actors.

#### **V. Interventions by partners**

29. Mr. Kenji Kagawa, Special Adviser to the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan, recalled the contribution of his country to the activities of ATLAFCO. He undertook to transmit the wishes of ATLAFCO to the relevant competent authorities of Japan.
30. Mr. Kristofer Du Rietz, of the European Commission has expressed his deep appreciation to ATLAFCO and renewed his commitment to the latter on all

aspects of cooperation based on complementarity and benefit by ATLAFCO.

31. Mr. Alexandre RODRIGUEZ, Executive Secretary of the Advisory Council for Long Distance Fishing (LDAC), expressed his satisfaction with the work of ATLAFCO and reaffirmed the commitment of LDAC to continue to cooperate with this organization in coordination with the European Union.

32. Mr. Camille Jean Pierre MANEL, Executive Secretary of ICCAT, welcomed the excellent relations existing with ATLAFCO and reiterated his readiness to strengthen cooperation with ATLAFCO for achieving the common goals of both organizations.

## VI. Thematic presentations

33. As part of the theme of this session, thematic presentations were delivered:

- The first one entitled "*ATLAFCO and sustainable exploitation of fisheries resources*" was made by ATLAFCO's Secretariat. It focused on the challenges of the fisheries sector in the ATLAFCO area including sustainable management of marine resources, fight against IUU fishing, technology transfer, support for small-scale fisheries, and promotion of gender.
- This presentation was complemented by a presentation on the main conclusions and recommendations of the studies for the implementation of *the Regional Observer Program* and *the Harmonized Port Inspection Program*.
- The presentation on "*The principle of the sustainable use of marine resources*" was presented by Mr. Amadou Teliwel DIALLO from Guinea, who recalled the crucial role of marine resources in food and nutritional security (Resolution on food security presented at the IWC 66).
- Mr. Yuki MORITA presented the Japanese proposal on the reform of the IWC for the restoration of the solid decision-making function of the IWC for the conservation and management of whale resources. He also stressed the crucial importance of collectively support the proposal on the hunting catch limits for aboriginal subsistence on which the Scientific Committee of the IWC declared that it is sustainable.

34. The participants also invoked the right of ATLAFCO member States to use the fishery resources in their maritime area to satisfy the food and nutritional needs of their populations as part of a management based on objective knowledge of the stock status.

35. The meeting recommends submitting **the Resolution** on food security to the **Secretariat of the International Whaling Commission (IWC)** attached as **Annex III**.

36. The meeting congratulated the speakers for the quality of their presentations and recommended considering the suggestions from the debates.

## **VII. Other presentations**

37. The meeting followed with interest the following presentations:
- The RAFEP, a sustainable initiative for recognition of the role and the place of the women of the fisheries sector in Africa, by Mrs. Amy Christiane DAGO, president of the RAFEP.
  - The REFMA by Mr. Koffi K. EUGENE, Director of the High School of Navigation (ESN) of Côte d'Ivoire.
  - Good practices to be developed in tuna fisheries to promote the use of biodegradable fish aggregating devices (FADs), by Mr. Papa KEBE of the ISSF.

## **VIII. Recommendations**

38. Following exchanges and discussions, the participants adopted a set of recommendations related to the fight against IUU fishing, the principle of sustainable use of living marine resources, the strengthening of ATLAFCO, and consolidation of the African Voice.
39. The meeting agreed to record the main recommendations in the draft Declaration, entitled *Declaration of Abidjan*, for submission to the Conference of Ministers. (**Annex IV**).

## **IX. Place of the next ordinary session of the Conference of Ministers**

40. The meeting has not received any proposal on this subject.

## **X. Closing of the meeting**

41. The Chairperson of the Meeting declared the meeting closed at 19:30.

Done in Abidjan on August 27, 2018

## Annex I: list of participants

N°	Pays/Institutions	Nom et prénom/Experts	Titre	E-mail
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## **Annex II : AGENDA**

**August 26-27, 2018**

- **Registration**
- **Opening of the meeting**
- **Adoption of the agenda and organization of work**
- **Report of the Executive Secretary**
  - ✓ **Status of ratifications and accessions vis-à-vis the ATLAFCO Convention**
  - ✓ **Report of the relevant period activities**
- **Thematic presentations**
- **Others**
- **Place and date of the next Session**
- **Break (report writing)**
- **Reading and adoption of the final report**
- **Closing of the meeting**

### Annex III: DRAFT RESOLUTION ON FOOD SECURITY

Submitted by Antigua and Barbuda, Cambodia, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone

- **WHEREAS** the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) was established on 16 October 1945 to defeat global hunger and has 194 Member States, 2 Associate Members and 1 Member Organization;
- **WHEREAS** the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (ICRW) was signed on December 2, 1946 and that the International Whaling Commission (IWC) has 88 Member States;
- **WHEREAS** the United Nations estimate that the global population is expected to increase from 7.2 billion today to 9.6 billion by 2050;
- **WHEREAS** the FAO has as its vision, “A world in which the responsible and sustainable use of fisheries and aquaculture resources makes an appreciable contribution to human well-being, food security and poverty alleviation”;
- **WHEREAS** the FAO has as its mission, “To strengthen global governance and the managerial and technical capacities of members and to lead consensus building towards improved conservation and utilization of aquaculture resources”;
- **RECALLING** that the ICRW recognizes in its preamble, “that it is in the common interest to achieve the optimal level of whale stocks as rapidly as possible without widespread economic and nutritional distress”;
- **RECALLING** the right of every person to an adequate standard of living including food as stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- **RECALLING** paragraph 158 of the outcome document of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20 “The Future We Want”, 20-22 June 2012) conveying the “importance of the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and seas and of their resources for sustainable development, including through their contributions to poverty eradication, sustained economic growth, food security and creation of sustainable livelihoods and decent work, while at the same time protecting biodiversity and the marine environment and addressing the impacts of climate change”;
- **RECALLING** the United Nations Millennium Development Goals which aim, "to halve between 1990 and 2015 the proportion of people who suffer from hunger";
- **RECALLING** that UN Sustainable Development Goal 14 is to, “Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development”;
- **RECALLING** the UN DESA 2014 to “improve human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities”;

- **NOTING** that the responsible and sustainable management of the fisheries sector remains a critical objective to strengthen food and nutrition strategies within developing countries;
- **NOTING** that whales have been harvested for nutritional needs for thousands of years;
- **NOTING** that the FAO has established five strategic objectives namely:
  - Help eliminate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition;
  - Make agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable;
  - Reduce rural poverty;
  - Enable inclusive and efficient agriculture food systems;
  - Increase the resilience of livelihoods to disasters.
- **NOTING** further that IWC members are Member States of the FAO;
- **RECOGNIZING** the importance of food and nutritional security to the world's poorest and the need to engage in responsible and sustainable management of marine resources;
- **RECOGNIZING** the value of world cultural diversity, the existence of different food production methods, and the individuals and communities that practice sustainable hunting under the Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling (ASW) of the IWC;
- **AFFIRMING** our solidarity with communities whose food supply depends primarily on whales, considering their nutritional needs, cultural identities and livelihoods;
- **AFFIRMING** the inherent link between food security and nutrition, preservation of cultural identity and security of livelihoods when delivering on global sustainable development goals;
- **CONSIDERING** that convergence of the visions of the FAO and the IWC and cooperation between them will further enhance the ability of both organizations to fulfil their respective missions;

#### **NOW THEREFORE THE COMMISSION:**

- **REAFFIRMS** Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights stating the right of all persons to an adequate standard of living including food;
- **URGES** Parties to take into consideration the need to ensure, among others, food security and nutrition, preservation of cultural identity and security of livelihoods in any decision making;
- **URGES** Parties to take into consideration the Blue Economy and Blue Growth perspectives in relation to food security for optimized benefits (economic and non-economic) from the marine ecosystem, in that way promoting societal foot print.

- **RESOLVES** to set up an ad hoc committee to recommend how the IWC can in the future take into consideration the need to achieve food and nutritional security for many of the world's populations when making changes to the Schedule;
- **INSTRUCTS** the Secretariat to forward this Resolution to the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations with a request for increased exchange of information between the FAO and the IWC.

**DECLARATION OF ABIDJAN  
10TH SESSION OF  
THE CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS**

**We**, Ministers and delegates of the Member States of the Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States bordering the Atlantic Ocean – ATLAFCO- (Angola, Benin, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Liberia, Morocco, Mauritania, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo), meeting in plenary on 28 August 2018 in Abidjan - Côte d'Ivoire - on the occasion of the 10th Ordinary Session of the ATLAFCO;

- **In accordance** with the spirit of the ATLAFCO **Convention**, which encourages active co-operation among its Member States to meet the aspirations of the States of the Region as part of a fisheries management strategy for the economic, social and nutritional development of their populations;
- **Recalling** the central role that the fisheries sector plays in the economies of the States of the Region, particularly in the area of food security and as a social safety net for large sections of their populations;
- **Convinced** of the importance of better consultation in facing the major challenges raised by fisheries exploitation and resource conservation policies at national, regional and international levels;
- **Noting** the sustained efforts for enhanced fisheries cooperation as well as the positive results that have been recorded by our Institution in recent years;
- **Welcoming** the increasing importance of the ATLAFCO group on the international fisheries scene;
- **Highlighting** the importance of enhancing the conservation and sustainable use of all our natural living resources, including those deriving from fisheries and aquaculture, through governance arrangements at national and regional levels and coherent policies based in particular on the best scientific knowledge;
- **Built** on the principle of *sustainable use of marine living resources*, based on the best scientific evidence available;
- **Considering** the recommendations resulting from the meeting of experts held on 26 and 27 August 2018 in Abidjan;

Adopt the following Declaration:

## 1. The fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU)

- We renew our commitment to the coordinated fight against IUU fishing by strengthening the Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) mechanisms, by adopting the conclusions and recommendations of studies on the implementation of regional programs i) **On-board observers**, and ii) the **Harmonized Port State Inspection** in the ATLAFCO region; in accordance with the national legal provisions.

## 2. The principle of sustainable use of marine living resources

- We reaffirm that the sustainable use of marine living resources based on the best scientific evidence available is essential to food security, livelihood and harmonious development of all our countries and we commit to adopt this principle in our fisheries management policies;

## 3. Strengthening ATLAFCO

- We commit ourselves to strengthen the ATLAFCO Institution, and for this purpose, we decide to:
  - a) Finalize the ratification/accession process to the ATLAFCO Convention;
  - b) Ensure regular payment of annual contribution and arrears;
  - c) Study the mechanisms for institutional anchoring of our Conference to the African Union institutions;
  - d) Continue expanding the network of partners working for sustainable fisheries
  - e) Support the operationalization of coordination mechanisms established between ATLAFCO and relevant regional and international institutions;
  - f) Examine the possibilities to hoist ATLAFCO to the status of a Regional Fisheries Management Organization (RFMO)<sup>1</sup>, by setting up a working group.

## 4. The consolidation of the ‘African Voice’

- We will strive to better defend the interests of the Member States by consolidating the ‘African Voice’ in international and regional forums dealing with fisheries and aquaculture issues.
- To this end, we commit ourselves to:
  - a) Ensure, among the various institutions concerned, national coordination on fisheries issues, in order to consolidate regional interests among the Member States, particularly at CITES meetings;

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<sup>1</sup> Mauritania issues a reservation

- b) Ensure active participation and pay dues to international organizations to which Member States are Parties, such as the IWC; and,
- c) Take concerted actions at every international organization in order to better reflect our interests and concerns of “**African Voice**”.