



CONFERENCE MINISTERIELLE SUR LA COOPERATION HALIEUTIQUE ENTRE LES ETATS AFRICAINS RIVERAINS DE L'OCEAN ATLANTIQUE

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

Executive Secretariat

WORKSHOP REPORT

**"For a better understanding of the role of fishing and marine protected areas in the Agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ)"
and its implementation in the ATLAFCO region .**



**Casablanca, Morocco
May 18-19, 2026**

I. Review of the meeting's context

The adoption on June 19, 2023, and subsequent entry into force on January 17, 2026, of the Agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ), within the framework of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, mark a major step forward in the collective governance of the Ocean.

This Agreement constitutes the first binding international legal instrument specifically dedicated to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ).

In this context and in accordance with its 2025–2027 Strategy and the guidelines of the Declaration of the 11th Ordinary Session of the Conference of Ministers announced in Abidjan on April 24, 2025, in particular adherence to international legal instruments and support for Member States in their implementation, ATLAFCO organized a regional workshop in Casablanca on May 18 and 19, 2026, under the theme:

"For a better understanding of the place of fishing and marine protected areas in the Agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ) and its implementation in the ATLAFCO region ."

This workshop aims to strengthen understanding of the issues of the BBNJ and its implications for fisheries and marine protected areas, to identify the needs and priorities of Member States, and to promote enhanced regional coordination and active participation of States in future governance and implementation processes of the BBNJ Agreement.

II. Opening of the workshop

The opening ceremony of the workshop was marked by the participation of senior government, diplomatic and institutional officials, demonstrating the strategic interest given to the theme of the BBNJ and the issues related to the sustainable governance of the oceans in the ATLAFCO region.

The following Member States participated in the workshop: Benin, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Liberia, Morocco, Mauritania, Democratic Republic of Congo, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.

Also present were representatives from regional organizations, technical institutions and international partners, including:

- The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO),
- The President of the ATLAFCO network of African fisheries research institutes (RAFISMER);
- The Long-Distance Fisheries Advisory Council (LDAC);
- The European Bureau for Conservation and Development (EBCD);
- The Northeast Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC);
- The Fisheries Agency of Japan;
- The Central American Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector Organization (OSPESCA);
- The Media Observatory for Sustainable Fishing in Africa (MOSFA).

The list of names of all participants is attached in Appendix II.

III. Technical sessions of the meeting

The work took place over two days around five thematic sessions allowing participants to progressively address the legal, technical, institutional and operational dimensions of the BBNJ Agreement.

The first day was devoted to the foundations of the treaty and the interactions between marine biodiversity conservation and fisheries management. The second day focused on the national and regional realities of implementing the BBNJ, as well as the strategic priorities of Member States in preparation for COP1, scheduled for January 2027 at the United Nations headquarters in New York.

The provisional agenda was adopted unanimously without modification. It is attached as Annex I.

Session 1: Introduction to the BBNJ Agreement – Strategic, Legal and Technical Framework

Moderator : Mr. Iván López Van der Veen, President of LDAC/European Union.

The aim of this session was to present the general framework of the BBNJ Agreement, its main pillars, its implications, and the **challenges for developing states** . The presentations reiterated that the treaty is an implementing agreement of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, structured around four fundamental pillars: 1) **marine genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits**, 2) **area-based management tools including marine protected areas**, 3) **environmental impact assessments**, and 4) **capacity building and the transfer of marine technologies** .

Participants stressed the principle that the Agreement should be implemented **without undermining the mandates of RFOs and RFMOs**, as well as the **central role of science** in ocean governance.

The discussions also highlighted **the challenges** faced by developing countries and small island developing states, particularly regarding scientific, technical, and financial capacity, while emphasizing the **opportunities offered** by technology transfer, benefit-sharing, and strengthened regional cooperation. A call was made for a **coordinated approach** , the development of a **regional center of excellence** , and training a new generation of African experts for BBNJ.

✓ **The implications of the BBNJ Agreement for ATLAFCO Member States**

The BBNJ Agreement represents both a strategic opportunity and a major challenge for ATLAFCO Member States in terms of ocean governance, marine biodiversity conservation, and the sustainable use of fisheries resources. **Key issues** include adapting legal and institutional frameworks, strengthening scientific and technical capacities, accessing financing and marine technologies, and effectively participating in international ocean governance mechanisms and future Conferences of the Parties.

It also offers **important prospects** for regional cooperation, sharing of expertise, scientific research, maritime surveillance and protection of fisheries resources and marine ecosystems.

Member States stressed, however, that the **main challenge** lies in the ability to translate international commitments into **operational national and regional mechanisms** , through enhanced coordination, resource mobilization and consistent participation in the BBNJ decision-making processes.

Session 2: Area-based management tools and marine protected areas and their implementation

Moderator : Mr. Maximilian Schwarz, Head of International Affairs, EBCD

This session focused on the challenges related to establishing area-based management tools, including marine protected areas in ABNJ. The presentations showed that, despite the ecological importance of areas located beyond national jurisdictions, their level of protection remains extremely low.

Speakers emphasized the importance of close coordination between conservation mechanisms and regional fisheries management organizations to avoid institutional duplication and ensure effective management of marine areas. The discussions also highlighted the crucial role of science, ecological connectivity, and scientific data in the design of future marine protected areas.

The ATLAFCO region, despite having priority marine areas of high ecological value, currently lacks any marine protected areas in the ABNJ. The participants therefore called for strengthening ratification of the Agreement, mobilizing funding, building scientific capacity, and preparing Member States for future meetings of the Conference of the Parties.

Session 3: BBNJ Agreement and Fisheries Management

Moderator : Mr. Driss Meski, expert in international fisheries policy

The discussions highlighted the **interactions** between area-based management tools, including marine protected areas, environmental impact assessments, and **fisheries management** in ABNJ. Participants emphasized the need for close **coordination** between the BBNJ Agreement and regional fisheries management organizations, while respecting their mandates and leveraging their scientific and operational expertise to ensure coherent and complementary implementation of the agreement.

The discussions confirmed that marine biodiversity is the foundation of sustainable fisheries and that **the conservation and sustainable use of living marine resources** should be considered **complementary** .

Fishing operators in the ABNJ expressed concerns regarding the practical **implementation of management measures**, including area closures, control mechanisms, and compliance systems. These discussions highlighted the need for a clearer implementation framework, grounded in sound scientific principles and supported by strengthened institutional capacity, data sharing, and cooperation among the relevant stakeholders.

The session also highlighted **FAO's role** in supporting States in the ratification and implementation of the BBNJ, through technical assistance, capacity building, development of data exchange systems and support for regional cooperation.

Session 4: Current status and implementation process of the BBNJ Agreement in the COMHAFAT region

Moderator : Dr. Ichiro Nomura, Special Advisor, Fisheries Agency of Japan

The objective of this session was to take stock of the implementation of the BBNJ Agreement within the ATLAFCO member states, based on national presentations and exchanges between participants.

The presentations highlighted a generally favorable political dynamic for the BBNJ in the ATLAFCO region. To date, 19 Member States have signed the Agreement and 10 have already ratified it or initiated advanced ratification processes at the national level.

However, the discussions revealed **varying levels of progress** among Member States. Some countries have already undertaken legal and institutional reforms, established national coordination mechanisms and developed roadmaps for the implementation of the Agreement, while others highlighted **the significant national scientific, technical and financial constraints they face** .

Participants highlighted the **opportunities offered** by the Agreement, particularly regarding the protection of fisheries resources beyond EEZs, access to international financing, capacity building, and the transfer of marine technologies. They also drew attention to the risks associated **with delays in ratification or implementation** , including the marginalization of Member States in future governance mechanisms of the ABNJ.

As CoP1 approached, discussions highlighted the need to strengthen regional coordination, harmonize the positions of member states, and prepare for statutory meetings.

In this regard, **ATLAFCO** was unanimously considered the most appropriate institutional and regional framework for consultation, coordination, pooling of resources, capacity building and support for Member States in the progressive and coordinated implementation of the BBNJ Agreement.

Session 5: National and regional priorities for the implementation of the BBNJ and preparation for CoP1

Moderator : Dr. Bernal Chavarría, International Law Jurist – OSPESCA

This session helped to identify key national and regional priorities for the effective implementation of the BBNJ Agreement and coordinated participation of Member States in future Conferences of the Parties . it constituted one of the key moments of dialogue as it allowed all participants to exchange on national needs in terms of accession and implementation of the BBNJ Agreement and to collectively reflect on building a united and coherent regional positioning, so that the member states of ATLAFCO can speak with one voice at the next CoP/BBNJ.

Also, during this dialogue, the ATLAFCO Executive Secretariat presented the results of the responses to the questionnaire it had prepared and sent to its member states to identify their needs and expectations regarding this new international treaty. These results are as follows:

A- National priorities for implementing the BBNJ agreement

- Accelerate the ratification of the BBNJ Agreement and the harmonization of national legal frameworks with its provisions
- Establish permanent intersectoral coordination mechanisms involving relevant institutions, including those related to the environment, fisheries, scientific research institutions, etc.

- Strengthen scientific, technical and legal capacities for assessing the environmental impact of area-based management tools , including marine protected areas in the ABNJ as well as at the level of marine genetic resources;
- Contribute to the development of national systems for monitoring, controlling and surveillance of maritime activities, as well as the capacities for collecting, managing, analyzing and sharing and managing marine data;
- Strengthen coordination among relevant government services at the national level to ensure harmonization of positions and actions related to the implementation of the BBNJ

B- Constraints (On a case-by-case basis - These constraints are not generalized to all Member States):

- Weak technical and scientific capacity of certain states;
- Insufficient funding dedicated to the implementation;
- Complexity of international governance mechanisms;
- Risk of marginalization of developing states in decision-making processes;
- Need for a coherent coordination with existing regional organizations.

C- Regional priorities & expected support

- Strengthening regional cooperation on ocean governance.
- Pooling the resources of Member States and their scientific and technical capacities, as well as the creation of a center of excellence for maritime and oceanic research in the ATLAFCO region;
- Coordinate and harmonize the position of Member States during the sessions of the Conference of the Parties (CoP);
- Develop a regional platform for sharing scientific and fisheries data in relation to the BBNJ Agreement;
- Transfer of marine technologies and access to digital and satellite tools;
- Provide financial support to existing monitoring, surveillance and control (MSC) programs;
- Supporting developing states in preparing for and participating in the BBNJ negotiation and governance processes;
- Preserve the powers and scope of competence of the sub-regional and regional fisheries and management organizations (RFMOs & RFMOs)

D-Perspectives at the upcoming "CoP/BBNJ" meetings

D.1 Governance and equitable participation

- Promote inclusive, equitable and transparent global ocean governance;
- Ensure that the BBNJ Agreement does not affect the sovereign rights of States;
- Ensure balanced representation of countries at the level of the operational bodies of the BBNJ;
- Ensure transparent, inclusive and consensus-based decision-making;
- Respect the principle of environmental justice and intergenerational equity;
- Maintain consistency with the frameworks of existing sub-regional and regional fisheries and fisheries management bodies;

D.2 Access to marine genetic resources and benefit sharing

- Establish an operational, simple and fair mechanism for sharing benefits;
- Ensure effective access to marine genetic resources for scientific research;
- Promote inclusive, equitable and transparent global ocean governance;

- Respect the principle of environmental justice and intergenerational equity;
- Ensure the sharing of scientific data and results in real time.

D.3 Area-based management tools including Marine Protected Areas in ZAJN

- Strengthen the presence of developing states in scientific and technical bodies;
- Ensure that decisions are based on sound scientific principles;
- Promote an integrated ecosystem approach linking coastal areas, waters under national jurisdiction and areas beyond national jurisdiction;
- Take into account existing socio-economic and sectoral activities;
- Ensure coordination with relevant sub-regional, regional and international organizations.

D.4 Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA)

- Establish clear, harmonized and non-discriminatory procedures;
- Strengthen national capacities for conducting and evaluating EIAs;
- Ensure a balanced international monitoring mechanism;

D.5 Capacity building and transfer of marine technologies

- To ensure an effective, sustainable and accessible transfer of marine technologies;
- Establish predictable and sustainable financing;
- Develop training programs tailored to the needs of developing countries.

Recommendations and Conclusions of the Workshop

The participants in the ATLAFCO regional workshop, convened in Casablanca on 18–19 May 2026 under the theme of the role of fisheries and Area Based Management Tool (ABMT) including marine protected areas in the BBNJ Agreement and its implementation in the ATLAFCO region, having examined the legal, institutional, scientific and operational issues related to the implementation of the said Agreement, adopt the following conclusions and recommendations:

PREAMBLE

- Recalling that the BBNJ Agreement, adopted on 19 June 2023 and entered into force on 17 January 2026, constitutes an essential complement to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction;
- Considering the strategic importance of marine resources and the high seas for food security, ecological resilience, economic development and the legitimate interests of ATLAFCO Member States;
- Reaffirming the need for ocean governance based on cooperation, equity, science, sustainability and respect for the competences of relevant regional and international institutions;
- Recognizing the central role of regional fisheries management organizations, as well as the need to ensure complementarity between their mandates and the mechanisms provided for under the BBNJ Agreement;
- Emphasizing the importance of capacity building, transfer of marine technology, access to financing, sharing of scientific data and intersectoral coordination for the effective and balanced implementation of the Agreement;
- Recognizing the importance for the fisheries authorities to get fully involved in the implementation of the Agreement
- Noting the need for Member States to develop consolidated national positions and a harmonized regional voice within the decision-making processes of the Conference of the Parties;

The participants:

1. Express their willingness to accelerate the ratification of the BBNJ Agreement, adapt regional and national policy and legislation to its requirement as appropriate and establish the institutional and operational mechanisms necessary for its implementation;
2. Underline the need to strengthen regional coordination under the auspices of ATLAFCO to promote, within international negotiations and BBNJ governance bodies, a common, coherent, coordinated and proactive position of Member States;
3. Encourage, at both national and regional levels, the institutionalization of intersectoral coordination mechanisms involving relevant stakeholders, with a view to ensuring harmonized positions and effective monitoring of the implementation of the Agreement;
4. Recognize the central role of regional fisheries management organizations, as well as the need to ensure complementarity between their mandates and the mechanisms provided for under the BBNJ Agreement
5. State that the implementation of the BBNJ Agreement must be carried out in a coordinated manner with regional fisheries management organizations and other competent frameworks, while respecting their respective mandates and avoiding institutional overlap;
6. Emphasize that fisheries activities must be duly considered in the processes of designation, management, monitoring and evaluation of ABMT, including marine protected areas beyond national jurisdictions, in accordance with the general principles and approaches of the Agreement in particular, the precautionary and ecosystem approaches, and the sustainable use of living marine resources;
7. Call for the strengthening of the scientific, technical, legal and institutional capacities of Member States, particularly regarding participation in BBNJ mechanisms, environmental impact assessments, international negotiations and the Défense of regional and African interests;
8. Highlight the need to secure effective fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from marine genetic resources, transfer of marine technology and access to financing mechanisms under the scope of the Agreement for Member States;
9. Recommend strengthening through regional cooperation monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) systems for activities on the ABNJ, as well as improving mechanisms for the collection, exchange and sharing of scientific data and information among Member States;
10. Encourage the promotion of an integrated ecosystem-based approach founded on ecological connectivity between coastal marine protected areas and those located on the ABNJ, to ensure coherence in conservation efforts and sustainable management of shared marine resources;
11. Call upon ATLAFCO, with the support of relevant regional and international partners, to mobilize sustainable technical, institutional and financial assistance mechanisms to support the implementation of the Agreement and ensure active, structured, effective and sustained African participation in the BBNJ process.
12. Stress the need to expand capacity-building, awareness-raising, outreach and communication activities targeting the various relevant stakeholders.

Annex I: Agenda

Time	Activities	Facilitator
Day 1: Monday, May 18, 2026		
9:00 - 9:30	Participant registration and check-in	
Official opening session <i>Moderator: Mr. Abdennaji LAAMRICH (ATLAFCO)</i>		
9:30 - 10:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Address from the Kingdom of Morocco (host country) - Welcome message from the ATLAFCO Executive Secretariat - Address by His Excellency the Ambassador of Japan to the Kingdom of Morocco - Opening address on behalf of the ATLAFCO presidency - Introduction of participants - Reading and adoption of the agenda 	
Session 1: Introduction to the BBNJ Agreement: Strategic, legal and technical framework <i>Moderator : Mr. Iván López VAN DER VEEN, Chairman of the Long-Distance Fishing Advisory Council (LDAC)</i>		
<i>The objective of this session is to help States and other stakeholders better understand the BBNJ Agreement, particularly the rights and obligations it sets out, in order to support States' efforts to become parties to it and prepare for its implementation.</i>		
10:00 - 11:00	Presentation 1 General overview of the BBNJ Agreement, the rights and obligations provided for and its cross-cutting elements	Dr. Bernal CHAVARRIA Expert in international Law - Central American Fisheries and Aquaculture Organization (OSPESCA)
	Presentation 2: The implications of the BBNJ Treaty for coastal and developing island states	Mr. Driss MESKI Expert in international fisheries policy
	Presentation 3: Scientific research within the framework of the BBNJ Agreement and strengthening the science-policy interface for decision-making	Dr. Mohamed NAJIH National Institute of Fisheries Research of Morocco, President of the ATLAFCO Network, African Network of Fisheries Research Institutes and Marine Sciences (RAFISMER)
	Discussions	
11:00-11:30	Family photo and coffee break	All participants
11:30 - 12:30	Presentation 4: The coherence between conservation objectives and the sustainable use of living marine resources within the framework of the BBNJ Agreement	M. Maximilian Schwarz International Affairs Officer European Bureau for Conservation and Development (EBCD)
	Presentation 5: International cooperation, technology transfer and capacity building for the implementation of the BBNJ Agreement	Dr. Abdelmalek FARAJ International Expert

Session 2: Area-based management tools, including marine protected areas, and their implementation

Moderator: M. Maximilian Schwarz International Affairs Officer European Bureau for Conservation and Development (EBCD)

	<i>The objective of this session is to explore the opportunities and challenges related to the establishment and management of area-based management tools, including marine protected areas, for Member States that have ratified the BBNJ Treaty</i>	
12:30 - 13:30	Presentation 6: The opportunities and hazards for regional fisheries bodies of BBNJ in terms of area-based management and on EIA	Dr. Darius CAMPBELL Northeast Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC)
	Presentation 7: Implementation of Marine Protected Areas in the High Seas: Ecological Connectivity, Contribution to the 30x30 Target and Impact Assessment	Dr. Hassan MOUSTAHFID United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
	Discussions	
13:30 -14:30	Lunch break	

Session 3: BBNJ Agreement and Fisheries Management

Moderator: Mr. Driss MESKI Expert in international fisheries policy

	<i>The objective of this session is to shed light on the impact of this treaty on the management of high seas fishing activities</i>	
14:30 - 17:00	Presentation 8: Fisheries and the BBNJ Agreement: FAO approach, guidelines (Guide, Directives...) and support for implementation	Mrs. Sarah FAGNANI , International Legal Consultant in Fisheries Law and Policy Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
	Presentation 9: BBNJ Agreement and Regional Fisheries Management Organizations: Coordination and Cooperation	Dr. Ichiro NOMURA Special Advisor, Japan Fisheries Agency
	Testimony The perspective of high seas fishing operators on the BBNJ treaty	Mr. Iván López VAN DER VEEN Lond Distance Fishing Advisory Council (LDAC)
	Discussions	
17:00	Coffee break and end of day 1	

Hour	Activities	Facilitator
Day 2: Tuesday, May 19, 2026		
Session 4: Implementation of the BBNJ agreement in the ATLAFCO region and the COP1 process <i>Moderator: Dr. Ichiro NOMURA</i> Special Advisor, Japan Fisheries Agency		
	<i>The objective of this session is to take stock of the implementation of this Agreement at the level of Member States and to illustrate the level of implementation in other countries bordering the Atlantic Ocean.</i>	
9:00 -	- Challenges of the COP BBNJ process for developing states: The case of OSPESCA member states	Dr. Bernal CHAVARRIA Expert in international Law - Central American Fisheries and Aquaculture Organization (OSPESCA)
11:00	- Presentation of the current status of the implementation of the BBNJ agreement in the ATLAFCO region	Individual presentations by representatives of Member States (max. 10 min)
	- MOSFA's actions to encourage adherence to international fisheries agreements and treaties, particularly the BBNJ Agreement - Discussions	Mr. William TCHOKI , Media Observatory for Sustainable Fisheries in Africa (MOSFA, Benin)
11:00-11:30	Coffee break	
Session 5: Roundtable <i>Moderator: Dr. Bernal CHAVARRIA</i> , Expert in international Law - Central American Fisheries and Aquaculture Organization (OSPESCA)		
	<i>This session will be devoted to discussing two themes related to legal and institutional needs at the national level, as well as identifying regional priorities.</i>	
11:30 -	Theme 1: Identifying national needs and priorities for accession to and implementation of the BBNJ agreement	All participants <i>Moderator: Mrs. Sarah FAGNANI</i>
13:00	Lunch break	
14:00 -	Theme 2: Positioning of ATLAFCO States and Regional Priorities	All participants <i>Moderator: Mr. Driss MESKI</i>
15:30 -	Summary of recommendations for the effective implementation and active contribution of Member States to the COP/BBNJ negotiations	Dr. Ichiro NOMURA
16:30 -	COP BBNJ: 1. Logistical steps for the CoP1 Conference of the Parties meeting (January 2027) 2. Commitment of the ATLAFCO Member States	Mr. Abdennaji LAAMRICH & Mr. Mohamed SADIKI (ATLAFCO)
17:00	Work concludes and coffee break	

Annex II: List of Participants

CONFÉRENCE MINISTÉRIELLE SUR LA
COOPÉRATION HALIEUTIQUE ENTRE LES ETATS
AFRICAINS RIVERAINS DE L'Océan
ATLANTIQUE



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

COMHAFAT/ATLAFCO

LISTE DE PRESENCE

Atelier sous le thème
"Pour une meilleure compréhension de la pêche et des aires
marines protégées dans l'accord sur la conservation et
l'utilisation durable de la biodiversité marine des zones ne
relevant pas de la juridiction nationale (BBNJ) et sa mise en
œuvre dans la région COMHAFAT"
Les 18-19 mai 2026
Hôtel ONOMO City Center -Casablanca

N°	Pays/Organisation	Nom et Prénom	Titre	Signature
1	Bénin	Mr HOUNKPATIN Faustin Comlan	Chef service d'appui au développement de l' aquaculture /Ministère de l'Agriculture, de l'Élevage et de la Pêche	
2	Cameroun	Dr KEMGANG Henry Serge	Directeur des Pêche de l'Aquaculture et des Industries Halieutiques, Point Focal BBNJ /Ministère de l'Élevage, des Pêches et des Industries Animales	
3	Côte d'Ivoire	Mr YAO Brou Fernand	Coordonnateur du projet de conservation de la biodiversité halieutique /Ministère des Ressources Animales et Halieutiques.	
4	Gabon	Mr NYAMA Mouketou Clauvice	Conseiller Technique /Ministère de la Mer, de la Pêche et de l'Économie Bleue	
5	Gambie	Mme SAMATEH Fanta Bojang	Deputy Permanent Secretary /Ministry of Fisheries and Water Resources and national assembly Matters	
6	Ghana	Mme ODOI Richner Naa Krokor	Deputy Director/Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture (MoFA)	

7	Guinée	Mr DIALLO Tafsir	Conseiller Juridique / Ministère de la pêche et de l'économie maritime	
8	Guinée Bissau	Mr MANE Mussa	Conseiller du ministre des Pêches et de l'économie maritime /Ministère de la Pêche et de l'Économie Maritime	
9	Guinée Equatoriale	Mr NGUEMA Asangono Mariano	Directeur des pêches point focal de l'Accord BBNJ /Ministère de l'Agriculture de l'Elevage des Forêts, de la Pêche et de l'Environnement	
10	Libéria	Mr WEHYE Austin Saye	Director of Research and Statistics and BBNJ Focal Person /National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority NaFAA	Absent
11	Maroc	Mr ANWARI Nabil	Chef de service de la coopération multilatérale/ Direction de la Stratégie et de la coopération /Secrétariat d'Etat Chargé de la Pêche Maritime	
12		Mme HASSOUNI Fatima Zohra	Chef de division de la durabilité et aménagement des ressources halieutiques Direction des Pêches Maritimes /Secrétariat d'Etat Chargé de la Pêche Maritime	
13	Mauritanie	Mr GUEYE Djiby	Chef de service aménagement à la Direction de l'aménagement des ressources halieutiques /Ministère de la Pêche, des Infrastructures Maritimes et Portuaires	
14	RDC	Mr KOFFI Mulumba Casimir	Directeur chef de service production des pêches et ressources halieutiques (DPPRH) /Ministère de la Pêche et de l'Elevage	



15	Sao Tomé E Principe	Mr GOMES Pessoa Lima Joao	Directeur de la Pêche et de l'Aquaculture /Ministère de l'Agriculture, de la Pêche et du Développement Rural	
16	Sénégal	Mme KANE Fatimata	Représentante /Ministère des pêches, des infrastructures Maritimes et Portuaires	
17	Sierra Leone	Mr MANSARAY Mamoud	Chef par intérim des statistiques, de la recherche et des politiques /Ministère des Pêches et des Ressources marines	Absent
18	Togo	Mr WOMPA Koffi Mawoulivi	Chef section Filières aquacoles Direction des productions halieutiques (DPH)/ Ministère de l'Agriculture, de la pêche, des ressources animales et de la souveraineté alimentaire (MAPRASA)	
19	OMPDA	Mr TCHOKI Yemalin Appolinaire	Journaliste de la télévision nationale du Bénin-Membre OMPDA	
20	Expert International	Mr MESKI Driss	Expert international	
21	Consultant Juridique International	Mr CHAVARRIA Valverde Bernal Alberto	Consultant Juridique International	
22	Expert FAO	Mme FAGNANI Sarah	Consultante juridique internationale en droit et politique de la pêche, Division des pêches et de l'aquaculture/FAO	

32	Ambassade du Japon	Mr NAKATA Masahiro	Ambassadeur	中国
33		↓ Mme Nio MAKANA	Conseillère	吉沢 隆子
34	Londres- Royaume Uni	Dr Darius CABEL	Commission des Pêches de l'Atlantique du Nord-Est (NEAFC)	A distance
35	Washington/ Etats-Unis	Dr Hassan MOUSTAHFID	Administration Nationale des Océans et de l'Atmosphère (NOAA) des Etats-Unis	A distance
36	ECBD	Mme Despina SIMMONS	Directrice- Bureau Européen pour la Conservation et le Développement (EBCD)	A distance
37	Expert International	Mr Abdelmalek FARAJ	Expert International	A distance

Appendix III: Speeches

Speech by the Current President of ATLAFCO

Delivered by the representative of the Republic of Guinea

Mr. Representative of the Kingdom of Morocco;

Mr. Executive Secretary of ATLAFCO;

Ladies and Gentlemen, representatives of the various Member States;

Ladies and Gentlemen, representatives of partner States and organizations, without wishing to offend, allow me to specifically mention Japan because of its contributions to our countries.

It is with great pleasure that I would like, on behalf of Mr. Fassou THEA, Minister of Fisheries and Maritime Economy (MPEM) of the Republic of Guinea, President of the Conference of Ministers of ATLAFCO, to thank the Kingdom of Morocco for hosting such a workshop "for a better understanding of the place of fishing and Marine Protected Areas in the BBNJ Agreement and its implementation in the ATLAFCO region".

The Kingdom of Morocco is a crossroads that is becoming increasingly important. We sincerely hope that this role will continue to strengthen at a time when we are witnessing a reconfiguration of global geopolitics, a reconstitution of interest groups, marked by the weakening or even the disintegration of some groups in favor of others.

During this period, ATLAFCO should not remain on the sidelines, but strengthen itself further, solicit and obtain from States a strengthened mandate in order to play its role in the maritime space of the Atlantic Ocean and beyond in the management of other oceans, in view of the interdependence between these different spaces.

The Minister of Fisheries and Maritime Economy of the Republic of Guinea, the current President of ATLAFCO, also instructs me to thank the Executive Secretary for the work done and the projects underway.

The topic that brings us together today is of paramount importance for the future of the oceans and, ultimately, for humanity. Indeed, the health of the oceans is not simply the health of the ocean itself. Nor can it be reduced to merely the preservation of marine biodiversity. It is essential for life on earth, and therefore for our very existence. In this sense, we could not have made a better choice.

On behalf of the Minister of Fisheries and Maritime Economy of the Republic of Guinea, President of ATLAFCO, I wish this workshop every success.

Thank you.

Tafsir DIALLO

Legal advisor

Coordinator of the PPF Blue Economy Project

**Speech by the representative of the State Secretariat for Maritime Fisheries
(Kingdom of Morocco)**

**Mr. Executive Secretary of ATLAFCO,
Mr. Representative of the current Presidency,
Ladies and Gentlemen, experts and representatives of the Member States,
Dear colleagues,**

It is a great honor for me to speak at the opening of this workshop and, on behalf of the State Secretariat for Maritime Fisheries, to welcome you to the beautiful city of Casablanca. The Kingdom of Morocco is particularly honored to host this crucial meeting organized by ATLAFCO, which closely monitors the development of all international instruments and works tirelessly to ensure their full understanding by its member states.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our work will focus on a major and historical theme: the role of fisheries and Marine Protected Areas in the BBNJ Agreement, as well as the challenges of its implementation in our region. This agreement on marine biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction is crucial and truly unique. Faced with the evolving landscape of global ocean governance, adopting this treaty is no longer simply an option, but a strategic imperative for our nations.

In this regard, I wish to emphasize that the State Secretariat for Maritime Fisheries and the National Institute of Fisheries Research (INRH) closely monitored all the crucial stages of the negotiations for this agreement. Our institutions actively contributed the essential technical expertise that informed and supported the remarkable work carried out on the ground by our permanent diplomatic mission in New York. It is this combination of scientific rigor, sectoral management, and diplomatic action that allows us today to approach this new era with foresight.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The question of how the BBNJ Agreement relates to the fisheries sector is multidimensional and fundamental. The adopted text implicitly confirms the role and mandate of Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) on the high seas. However, the practical application of this treaty raises questions for the international community that we must urgently address:

- Questions remain as to the real impact of the application of the agreement on the management and conservation schemes rigorously recommended by these RFMOs.
- We need to analyze whether there will be any interference or overlap between this new regulatory application and the implementation of traditional resource management measures.
- These risks of interference could arise in particular through the deployment of environmental impact studies (EIAs) on the high seas, which could impact our fleets and our management models.

In this context, this workshop offers a timely forum for sharing our visions and identifying the key factors for harmonious implementation. The sessions scheduled on the agenda—including the introduction to the strategic and technical framework of the BBNJ, the review of zone-based management tools, the analysis of complementarity with fisheries management, and the final roundtable on our regional priorities—will allow us to develop clear guidelines for safeguarding the fisheries interests of the ATLAFCO area.

In conclusion, allow me to wish you all an excellent stay in Morocco.

I warmly hope that our work will be rich, constructive and a source of concrete recommendations for the future of fishing and ocean governance in our region.