

<p>Comité des Pêches du Centre Ouest du Golfe de Guinée</p> <p>(CPCO)</p>		<p>Fishery Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea</p> <p>(FCWC)</p>
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REPORT OF SECOND MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

1. The Second Ministerial Conference of the Fishery Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC) took place in Abidjan-Côte d'Ivoire, on 19 December 2008, following the Meeting of the Advisory and Coordinating Committee (ACC) held on 17 and 18 December 2008.
2. The Minister of Animal Production and Fisheries Resources (MIPARH) of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire and representatives of Ministers in charge of Fisheries of the Republic of Benin, the Republic of Ghana and the Republic of Togo attended the session. Due to technical problems, the delegates of the Republic of Liberia and the Federal Republic of Nigeria were unable to attend the meeting.
3. Representatives of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, Regional Office for Africa (FAORAF), the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), Intergovernmental Organization for Marketing information and Cooperation Services for Fishery Products in Africa (INFOPECHE), the Swedish Board of Fisheries (SWEDMAR), the West and Central African component of the Fisheries and HIV/AIDS Programme (FAO/WorldFish Centre), Collecte Localisation Satellites (CLS) Company, and resource-persons attended the meeting as observers. The list of participants is given in Annex 2.

I- Opening Ceremony

4. The opening ceremony of the Ministerial Conference was chaired by Mr. Paul-Antoine BOHOUN BOUABRE, Minister of State and Minister of Planning and Development of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire. It was marked by the presence of the Representative of the Minister of African Integration of Côte d'Ivoire, the FAO Representative to Cote d'Ivoire, the Representative of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in Cote d'Ivoire and the Chief of the Department of Rural Development, Natural Resources and Environment of the WAEMU Commission.
5. In his introductory remarks, Mr Alphonse DOUATI, Minister of Animal Production and Fisheries Resources of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire reminded the participants that the FCWC is both an instrument of sub-regional cooperation and a pool of technical expertise for the promotion of the fisheries industry within the framework of the Economic Partnership Agreements. He thanked the ACC for the quality and relevance of its work submitted for review by the ministerial session. Mr Douati also expressed appreciation for the efforts made by the member States to consolidate the role of the FCWC. He concluded by thanking the development partners, particularly the FAO and the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), for their support to the Committee.
6. On behalf of the Chairman of the Ministerial Conference, Mr. Christophe GBEGBO, Ambassador of the Republic of Benin in the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, thanked the Government of Côte d'Ivoire for accepting to host the session. He further emphasized the socio-economic importance of fisheries in the countries of the sub-region and the relevance of the Committee in addressing the many needs of the populations of the member States.

7. As chairperson of the ceremony, Mr. BOHOUN BOUABRE welcomed the participants in the traditional way; *akwaba*, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire. He thanked the member States of ECOWAS for their support in the search for a lasting solution to the Ivorian crisis.

8. Mr. BOHOUN BOUABRE underscored the importance of fish to food security in member Countries, particularly in areas where animal production was low. He furthermore emphasized the need to implement concerted policies and strategies to confront the challenges on Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing. In this context, he expressed his conviction that only the FCWC can offer the opportunity for policy and technical dialogue between the member Countries on tackling the challenges. In conclusion, he reassured the participants of the commitment of Côte d'Ivoire to support the initiatives of the FCWC.

II. Adoption of the Agenda

9. The proceedings were presided over by Mr. Alphonse DOUATI, Minister of Animal Production and Fisheries Resources of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, Vice Chairperson of the Ministerial Conference of the FCWC, following the absence of the Chairperson. The Conference unanimously adopted the agenda which is given in Annex 1.

III. Report of the Programme of Work 2007-2008

10. The Secretariat recalled the *raison d'être* for establishing the FCWC as well as actions undertaken since the first ordinary Ministerial session held in Cotonou, Benin in November 2007, and presented the key outcomes in the implementation of the 2007-2008 planned activities.

11. The Secretariat informed the Meeting of contacts made with different member States, and of the participation of the Secretary General in meetings scheduled by other regional fisheries management organizations. These included the 19th Session of the Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic (CECAF) and the 7th meeting of the Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States Bordering the Atlantic Ocean (ATLAFCO). The Meeting was also informed that the Secretariat also contacted some regional organizations, institutions and projects for example the Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystems (GCLME), and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), with a view to establish formal Cooperation with them as appropriate. In addition contacts were made with the World Bank, WAEMU and GCLME to seek funding for the Committee.

12. The Secretariat also reported on actions taken to implement the recommendations of the inaugural meeting of the FCWC as well as other activities and initiatives undertaken in collaboration with technical and financial partners of the Committee. Finally, the Secretariat gave a status report on financial support identified for the implementation of its activities and underscored the major constraints encountered during the period under review and suggested solutions.

13. The Conference congratulated and encouraged the Secretariat for the quality of the work done, and the efforts made in performing its duties despite the financial challenges the Committee faced. The Conference thanked all the partners for their technical and/or financial support to the Secretariat in implementing its activities. The Meeting specifically expressed its gratitude to the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and FAO for their sustained contribution to the work of the Committee and expressed the wish that such support would continue.

14. The Delegate of Togo informed the meeting of the establishment by decree of a Directorate for Fisheries and Aquaculture in the member Country. The Meeting welcomed the information and expressed the hope that the Department would be operational as soon as possible.

15. The Conference noted the commitment by Ghana to refurbish the Committee's headquarters within the next three months and also to finalise the headquarters agreement as soon as possible. The Secretariat was urged to follow up these matters.

16. The Meeting noted that all Members of FCWC had signed the Convention establishing the Committee and decide to take steps to ratify the Convention as soon as possible.

17. The Conference made commitment to formally appoint Focal Points and inform the Secretariat before 31 March 2009.

18. The Representative of WAEMU informed the Conference that his institution was unable to give a positive response to the request made by the FCWC Secretariat to undertake certain activities of interest to FCWC countries because these activities had been taken into account in WAEMU's three-year fisheries development programme. The secretariat was invited to continue collaboration with WAEMU by developing a synergy of its work programme, where appropriate, as part of the implementation of WAEMU's three-year work programme.

19. The Meeting welcomed the creation of FCWC Website and advised the Secretariat to set up a data management system for the website. The Meeting encouraged member States to regularly provide information that would be fed into the website.

20. The Conference agreed in principle to set up two working groups, one on Fisheries Statistics and another one on Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing. It was also agreed that the terms of reference of these two working groups would be reviewed during the first meeting of each of the working groups. The Conference suggested that interested partners such as WAEMU could be associated to the working groups.

21. In view of the importance member Countries of FCWC intended to give to monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) as one of the tools to combat IUU fishing in FCWC area of jurisdiction, the Meeting advised the Secretariat to work closely with the Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States bordering the Atlantic Ocean (ATLAFCO) and WAEMU to ensure synergy in any programmes to implement surveillance schemes for member Countries. The Meeting further advised that close working relationship should be established between FCWC and the New Partnership for Africa Development (NEPAD) in the projected framework of the regional programme on governance and trade within which NEPAD intends to have an important component to address IUU fishing.

22. The amended and adopted version of the Report on the Work Programme (2007-2008) is provided as Annex 3.

IV. Consultant's Report on the Committee's Secretariat Structure

23. After highlighting the importance and relevance of a Secretariat to FCWC, the factors impacting the design and structure of a secretariat, and the process approach to be adopted for its establishment, the consultant suggested an appropriate organizational chart for each development phase of the Secretariat (from start-up to maturity). This was supplemented by the following proposals: establishment of technical and administrative units to back up the secretariat and the Advisory and Coordinating Committee (ACC); human resources needs; terms of reference of the staff; recruitment procedure, staff remuneration scheme and policy; Committee's working methods and staff regulations. The Consultant's report is provided in Annex 4.

24. The Conference appreciated the quality of the consultant's work and endorsed the report. The suggested organizational chart was adopted for the start-up phase with the four technical and administrative units: (i) Secretariat with a financial and administrative Assistant to become later a Secretary/Administrative Assistant; (ii) Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Unit with a Coordinator; (iii) Fisheries Management Unit and (iv) Aquaculture Unit, each with an Advisor. The adopted organigramme is shown in Annex 5.

25. The Conference endorsed the proposal for assigning ad hoc working groups to perform most of the Secretariat's tasks. The Meeting emphasized that such working groups should address specific topics with clearly stated terms of reference.

26. As regards sourcing staff for the Secretariat, the Conference opted to combine secondment and direct recruitment processes. It was agreed that in conformity with Article 11 of the Convention of FCWC, the Secretary General would be seconded by a Member of FCWC but that the other staff should be sourced by direct recruitment in compliance with the consultant's suggested procedure. Member countries could also make available or second to the Secretariat at the Member's expense temporary workers to execute specifically planned assignments.

27. The Conference approved the salary scale as well as other allowances for staff as suggested by the Consultant. The remuneration scheme, that is, the salary scale and allowances would take effect from 1 January 2009, and would be reviewed as necessary. The Salary Scale and a table of the allowances appear in annex 6. The Meeting decided to review in details at a later date the draft Staff regulations specifying the relations between staff and the Committee, including terms and conditions of service, prepared by the Consultant.

V. Consultant's Report on the Funding Mechanism

28. The Conference reviewed the document presented by the consultant (Annex 4) with respect to funding mechanisms for FCWC. The document aimed at identifying potential funding sources, a realistic manner to share the burden of the Committee's budget among its Members, resource mobilization strategies, staff requirements, draft financial regulations and provide guidelines for monitoring and managing the expenditures of the Committee.

29. The Meeting endorsed the recommendations of the Consultant's Report. In particular, the Meeting approved the principle of a phased staffing in conformity to the selected organizational chart that it had adopted. This means staff shall be strengthened numerically and in subject matter as the Committee matured.

30. Based on the understanding that sustainable funding would be only possible through contributions from member Countries, the Conference decided to pursue funding the Committee's activities based on contributions levels set previously for each country till the end of 2009. The Meeting further decided that beyond that date, and with effect from 2010, FCWC should adopt the proposed contribution scheme, consisting of a fixed and equal amount for all countries (representing 60% of the budget), and a variable portion (40% of the budget) calculated on the basis of each country's catch production as provided in FAO statistics.

VI. 2009 Programme of Work

31. The Secretariat presented the 2009 Programme of Work of the Secretariat. The Conference highlighted the importance of at this early stage of the Committee's life and in view of financial constraints to select and budget, as a priority, activities that correspond to the immediate needs of Member Countries, taking into account the achievements and available material and human resources.

32. The amended work programme which appears as Annex 7 was adopted by the Conference.

VII. Budget for Financial Year 2009

33. The budget estimates for implementing the 2009 planned activities, presented by the Secretariat were discussed, amended and adopted.

34. The budget amounted to US\$ 378,500 of which 185,000US\$ (approximately 49%) would be contributed by Members. The budget estimates are given in Annex 8.

35. For a smooth running of the Secretariat, the member Countries decided to pay their annual contributions for 2009 (US\$ 32,250 per Member) and arrears for 2008 not later than 31 March 2009.

VIII. Thematic Presentations

36. The representatives of CLS Company presented their services on illegal fishing detection via VMS (Vessels Monitoring System) and satellite radar in West Africa. The aim was to preserve countries' fisheries resources while ensuring better fisheries control. CLS has already been supporting some countries of the region by setting up satellite surveillance systems.

37. Benin shared its experience regarding HIV/AIDS control in the Fisheries communities in collaboration with the Fisheries and HIV/AIDS Program in Africa. Analysis of mobility and migration, coupled with a value chain approach in synergy with the HIV/AIDS control initiatives were instrumental to adjusting responses to sector-specific needs. The Pandemic mitigation proposed by Benin follows a multi-sectoral approach. The experience highlights the need for fisheries administration to come up with an action plan in liaison with the National HIV Control Strategy.

38. The Conference urged the member States to follow the experience of Benin and adopt the new technologies in fisheries management.

II- Declarations of the heads of Delegations

39. The representatives of the Republic of Benin, Republic of Togo, CLS Company, FAO and SWEDMAR each made a declaration to share experiences with the Committee and continue to support it. Declarations are given in annex 9.

III- Election of Officers

40. The following countries were unanimously elected by the Conference:

- Chairperson: Côte d'Ivoire
- Vice-Chairperson: Ghana.

IV- Other matters

41. No matters were raised under this agenda item.

V- Venue and Date of the next Ministerial Conference

42. According to the Convention of the Committee, the Conference noted that the third Ministerial Conference will be held in Ghana in 2009. The date will be specified later, in close collaboration with the Chairperson and the host country.

VI- Adoption of the Report

43. The report was adopted on 19 December 2008.

VII- Closing Ceremony.

44. The participants congratulated the Ivorian authorities for the excellent arrangements made for the smooth running of the session.

VOTE OF THANKS

The Participants in the second Ministerial Conference of the Fishery Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC), held in Abidjan from 17-19 December 2008,

Noting with satisfaction the excellent working conditions made available to the delegations, which were instrumental to a successful meeting.

Would like to thank the Government of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire for the facilities offered, and the Ivorian people for their hospitality and kindness during their stay in Abidjan.

Done in Abidjan, December 19, 2008

The Conference