

REPORT OF FCWC FIFTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE Lomé, Togo,



14 December 2012

1. The fifth Ministerial Conference of the Fisheries Committee for West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC) took place in Lomé, Togo, on 14 December 2012, following the meeting of the Advisory and Coordinating Committee (ACC) and the round table for the technical and financial partners, held from 12 to 13 December 2012.

2. Ministers from five of the six member Countries namely the Republic of Benin, the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, the Republic of Ghana, the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Republic of Togo attended the Meeting. The Republic of Liberia was not represented at the meeting.

3. Members of the ACC, Representatives of several regional and international Organizations including: FAO¹, UNECA², AU-IBAR³, INFOPÉCHE⁴, SRCF⁵, WADAF⁶, AEM-EMA⁷, ATLAFCO⁸, GIZ⁹, WWF¹⁰, WFP¹¹, Fish For AFRICA, the private sector together with resource persons attended the meeting. The list of participants is given in Annex 2.

I. Opening Ceremony

4. In his introductory speech, the FCWC Secretary-General, **Mr Seraphin Dedi Nadjé**, recalled - the achievements of the Committee since its inception. He also took the opportunity to explain why this 5th Ministerial meeting was preceded by a round table of partners and donors, as part of the process of development of the FCWC 2011-_2020 Strategic plan. He particularly expressed his gratitude to all delegations who attended the meeting - for their commitment, which will immensely contribute towards the achievement and pursuance of the committee's vision and mandates.

5. The FCWC Secretary-General also highlighted some challenges - arising from inadequate funding, poor staffing for the FCWC secretariat, delays in adoption of the FCWC's Headquarters Agreement document by the hosting country.

6. In his keynote address, **Mr OURO KOURA AGADAZI**, the Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries of the Republic of Togo, welcomed, on behalf of the government and the people of Togo, his Colleagues and the distinguished representatives of regional and international organizations and the experts from the member countries.

¹ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

² United Nations of the Economic Commission for Africa

³ African Union- International Bureau for Animal Resources

⁴ Intergovernmental Organization for Market Information and Cooperation Services in Africa

⁵ Sub regional Commission for Fisheries

⁶ West African for the development of the Artisanal Fisheries

⁷ African Ecolabelling Mechanisms

⁸ Ministerial Conference for Fisheries Cooperation among countries bordering the Atlantic Ocean

⁹ German Cooperation

¹⁰ World Wildlife Fund

¹¹ World Food Program

7. He, then thanked the FCWC for the opportunity granted his country to host this important conference. He further reiterated the country's commitments towards the development of fisheries and aquaculture and - also collaborate with regional, international partners and organizations in sustainable fisheries resources management and protection of aquatic ecosystem which provides livelihoods to many people in the region.

8. He formally requested assistance from the Ministerial Conference for Togo in combating illegal fishing and meet the international related instruments such the UE fisheries regulation.

9. This opening ceremony of the Ministerial Conference was chaired by Honourable **BUKAR TIJANI**, Minister of STATE, Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

10. He welcomed delegates to the 5th FCWC Ministerial Conference and further reiterated that the objectives of the Committee is to promote cooperation amongst Member States for sustainable development, rational management, facilitating optimum utilization of marine fisheries resources within the sub-region.

11. He appealed to members to pay their annual contributions and increase the number of professional staff to facilitate efficient and effective implementation of the FCWC Strategic Plan and other programmes. He concluded his address by wishing members fruitful deliberations before declaring the Conference opened.

II. ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING

12. **Mr. Evaristus Edet**, Federal Director of Fisheries of Nigeria and Chairman of the Advisory and Coordinating Committee (ACC), presented the Advisory and Coordinating Committee (ACC) and round table meeting reports, which was unanimously adopted (Annex 1) and comprise :

III. SUMMARY OF 2011-2012 ACTIVITY OF FCWC SECRETARIAT

13. The report covered the period of January 2010 to December 2012. The main achievements are summarised as follows: (i) Reinforced cooperation among Member States by visiting all Member States and meeting with Ministers in charge of fisheries of each country except Benin.; (ii) Promotion of Sustainable Fisheries Development and Management within the sub-region towards organizing two technical working group meetings on improvement of fisheries data collection and combating IUU fishing; (iii) Preparation of a Technical Cooperative Program on the improvement of fisheries statistics to be financed by FAO ; (iv) Attendance of meetings on behalf of the FCWC to collaborate with programmes and projects implemented in the region; (v) Developed partnership with regional project in the region such as NEPAD-FAO Fish Program (NFFP), EAF Nansen Project, ACP Fish II ; (vi) Supporting countries to develop national and regional fishing vessel register and to ratify or access to the FAO Port States Measures Agreement (PSMA) where Article Art 21 addresses the special requirements of developing States.; (vii) Elaboration of MoU with regional organizations: signed with

WADAF; GCLME; and Fish for Africa or under review for INFOPÊCHE, NEPAD, ATLAFCO; (viii) organizing training program for MCS officers on-board vessel for inspection and information sharing system in fisheries management (ix) Improvement of the FCWC Bilingual website (English and French) (x) promoting FCWC's 2011_ 2020 Strategic Plan towards the round table of partners and donors.

14. The Conference was also informed on the main constraints related to the functioning of the Committee. These are lack of professional staff, as well as support staff despite prior commitment on the issue by member states; relocation of the Committee's Headquarters from Tema to Accra for better visibility; Delay of the headquarters document adoption for smooth running of the secretariat in Accra, conveyed to the Ghanaian Authorities.

15. The meeting recommended that countries provide senior staff on secondment to the FCWC Secretariat. It also reminded Nigeria to fulfil its earlier commitment made at the 3rd session of the Ministerial Conference related to send a senior fisheries officer at FCWC Secretariat.

16. In particular the meeting urged Ghanaian Authorities to examine the seat agreement for adoption and find a new office in Accra for the Committee

17. The work done by the Secretary and efforts made in performing its duties despite the financial challenges the Committee faced, were appreciated by the Ministerial Conference.

18. The meeting also requested COTE D'IVOIRE to pursue its support to the Committee with another mandate for FCWC's Secretary General, an Ivorian citizen, for five (5) years after December 2013.

IV. PRESENTATION OF DRAFT CONVENTIONS ON CONDITION OF ACCESS TO EEZ OF THE FCWC MEMBER COUNTRIES / AND DATA COLLECTION AND INFORMATION SHARING IN FCWC REGION

19. The two (2) Conventions were prepared by **Dr. Joseph Catanzano**, Consultant. The Conference congratulated the consultant for the quality of the work done and acknowledged the relevance of the document.

20. The meeting recommended that the Convention should first be sent to the legal department of member countries for review and coherence with national law. The document reviewed should be sent at the latest on the 31st, March 2013 to the FCWC Secretariat for collation of the comments and returned to the member countries for final validation and adoption during the sixth Ministerial Conference.

V. FACILITATING THE PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PLAN IN FCWC/COREP REGION

21. In the presence of **Dr. Koranteng and Dr. Kebe**, FAO, a brief introduction of the EAF-Nansen project of FAO was made in the presentation of the ACC meeting report. The meeting noted that the immediate objective of the project is to enable the Staff responsible for fisheries research and management administrations in the participating countries to sustainably manage their fisheries resources.

22. The Conference acknowledged with thanks the work done by FAO and made the following recommendations:

- ✓ Each country should emphasize formal approval and implementation of the management plans at country level as soon as possible to avoid further decline of the fisheries resources.
- ✓ FCWC to provide the forum to monitor the implementation of the plans. Such a forum would allow countries to meet regularly to review progress and problems encountered in the implementation of their respective plans and to assist one another to find solutions;

23. The Conference *requested FAO to* assist the FCWC to facilitate activities at sub-regional level as per the specific points raised above.

VI. ROUND TABLE OF THE TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL PARTNERS

24. The report of the round table discussion was presented by **Mr Edet**. He also presented the FCWC Strategic Plan and described objectives of the Round Table which include:

- ✓ Strengthen consultation and partnership between the FCWC and its Technical and Financial Partners on coherent fishery policies and management strategies;
- ✓ Agree on the relevance of the budget requested;
- ✓ Identify fast-tracking funding strategies; and
- ✓ Request assistance from the Development Partners.

25. A general consensus on the relevance of the Strategic Plan and implementing projects for sustainable fisheries in the region was particularly noted by the Conference as well as its coherence with the AU and CAMFA and many other Development partners including UNECA, FAO, WB, UNIDO, African Development Bank.

26. Consequently, from the fruitful discussion, the Partners committed themselves for technical and financial support to the FCWC Organization. The summary of the committed partners and Organizations list is available in the Expert meeting report.

27. The Conference urged the General Secretary to formally send copy of the strategic plan to various organizations and Agencies for collaboration, explore mechanism and

options to address the poor rate of membership contribution to the FCWC; facilitate the signing of pending MOUs; and circulate the report of the 5th Ministerial meeting to appropriate development partners who were not in attendance;

28. The meeting recommended two more projects related to aquaculture development and capacity building be added to the strategic plan;.

VII. PLANNED ACTIVITIES AND BUDGET FOR 2013

29. The Annual Programme of Activities and Budget 2013 were approved by the Ministers. The documents are provided as Annex 5 and Annex 6.

VIII. DECLARATIONS OF HEAD THE DELEGATION

30. The Honourable Minister, **BUKAR TIJANI** informed the assembly that his country has already cleared five (5) years pending contributions to FCWC operating budget, furthermore, Nigeria will send a staff to the FCWC before the middle of January 2013 to contribute to staff strengthening efforts.

31. In response to the Conference unanimous and earlier request to Cote d'Ivoire related of the position the Committee's General Secretariat, Honourable **KOBENAN ADJOURMANI**, Minister of Côte d'Ivoire took the commitment on behalf of his country to lead the Secretariat of the Committee, for another mandate of (5) five years, after December 2013.

32. Honourable **AMASAH NAMOALE**, Deputy Minister from Ghana, assured the Conference hat his government will work on the signatory of the Headquarters Agreement and the relocation of the FCWC Office.

IX. ELECTION OF THE OFFICERS

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

- Chairperson: TOGO
- Vice-Chairperson: BENIN

34. The outgoing President of the FCWC, **Mr BUKAR TIJANI** from Nigeria, handed-over formally the mantel of the chair of to its new President, **OURO- KOURA AGADAZI**, Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries of TOGO.

X. OTHER BUSINESS

35. The Conference was informed of the AU initiative on ‘fostering policy coherence and coordination mechanism in Africa fisheries management. The framework and the roadmap for the formulation of the Pan African Fisheries Policy Framework for reform of African fisheries conducted by AU were presented. The next steps include the drafting of the Pan African Fisheries Policy Framework, organizing validation meeting of Directors of Fisheries on the continent as well as second Conference of African Ministers for Fisheries and Aquaculture for adoption of the Pan African Fisheries Policy Framework and the African Fisheries Reform Mechanism.

36. Africa Ecolabelling Mechanism (AEM) which is an African initiative under the auspices of the AU to develop ecolabelling mechanisms for Africa, and promote sustainable consumption and production through the development and implementation of the EMA sustainability standards was introduced at the Conference.

37. The Conference recommended member countries to support these AU initiatives and attend the second Conference of African Ministers for Fisheries and Aquaculture (CAMFA)

XI. DATE AND VENUE FOR THE NEXT MEETING

38. The Representative of the Republic of Benin informed the meeting that its government accepts to host the next meeting, in Cotonou, BENIN. The precise date will be discussed with the General Secretary of the FCWC, but The Conference suggested the period of November -December of 2014.

XII. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

39. The report was adopted unanimously by the honorable Ministers and Heads of delegation, with the reserve to include the amendments.

XIII. CLOSING CEREMONY

40. The Minister of State of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Honourable **BUKAR TIJANI**, thanked the New Chairman of the Ministerial Conference and further assured him that Nigeria will continue to support the Committee. He pledged for cooperation and support from members countries and also expressed appreciations to development partners for their support.

41. The meeting thanked and expressed its gratitude to the Government and people of Togo for the warm, professional and friendly welcome to all participants. In return, the newly elected chairman of FCWC, Honourable **OURO KOURA AGADAZI**, thanked the Delegates and wished them safe return. to all the participants.