



**FCWC**

Fisheries Committee for  
the West Central Gulf of Guinea

# 10 YEARS

**THE FCWC:  
FROM PAST TO PRESENT - TEN YEARS  
OF EXISTENCE (2007 - 2017)  
ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROSPECTS IN  
THE MEDIUM AND LONG TERM**

Accra, Ghana  
December 2017



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# Acronyms and Abbreviations

<b>ACP</b>	<b>Africa, Caribbean and Pacific</b>
<b>PSMA</b>	<b>Port State Measures Agreement</b>
<b>CCC</b>	<b>Advisory and Coordination Committee</b>
<b>ECOWAS</b>	<b>Economic Community of West African States</b>
<b>REC</b>	<b>Regional Economic Community</b>
<b>CMA</b>	<b>Convention on Minimum Conditions of Access to Fisheries Resources</b>
<b>ATALFCO</b>	<b>Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States Bordering the Atlantic Ocean</b>
<b>COREP</b>	<b>Regional Commission for Fisheries</b>
<b>FCWC</b>	<b>Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea</b>
<b>SRFC</b>	<b>Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission</b>
<b>FAO</b>	<b>United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation</b>
<b>INN</b>	<b>Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.</b>
<b>MoU</b>	<b>Memorandum of Understanding</b>
<b>NAFAG</b>	<b>National Fisheries Association Of Ghana</b>
<b>NORAD</b>	<b>Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation</b>
<b>PESCAO</b>	<b>Program for the Improvement of Fisheries Regional Governance in West Africa</b>
<b>REPAO</b>	<b>Fisheries Policies Network in West Africa</b>
<b>MCS</b>	<b>Monitoring, Control and Surveillance</b>
<b>SIDA</b>	<b>Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency</b>
<b>TMT</b>	<b>Trygg Mat Tracking</b>
<b>WAEMU</b>	<b>West African Economic and Monetary Union</b>
<b>WAMER</b>	<b>West Africa Sea Program</b>
<b>WATF</b>	<b>West Africa Task Force</b>
<b>EEZ</b>	<b>Exclusive Economic Zone</b>

# 1. Introduction

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This document is prepared by the Secretariat of the Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC) on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Organization (07 November 2007 - 7 November 2017), which is celebrated in the tenth session of the Conference of Ministers of the Committee, held in Abuja, Nigeria, from 12 to 15 December 2017.

This document is a review on the Committee during its first decade of existence. It is intended to highlight the achievements noticed during the reporting period and to identify prospects for the coming years.

The work is based on evidence from the available literature that includes the reports of the sessions of the Committee's ministerial conference as adopted by the Member States, and the various study reports and reports of projects/programs implemented, supplemented by the results of recent activities.

This work has been completed by the publication of a magazine called "The Pioneers of Fisheries Cooperation" as a duty to memory and as a sign of gratitude. This review is for reminding us of the major role of the Member States, resource persons and partners institutions whose contributions have enabled the FCWC to have an internationally recognized stature.

This document is structured as follows: first, a historic overview of the Committee's establishment is made; then the sub-regional organization is presented with its main achievements with reference to the different areas of expertise of the Committee, in accordance with the Convention which establishes it; lastly the medium and long term prospects are set forth.

## 2. Historic Overview of the FCWC Establishment

The tale begins with the **greater political will that Member States demonstrated in various meetings:**

- **1999 and 2005** - Member States of the Conference of the Fisheries Ministers of bordering States of the Atlantic Ocean (ATLAFCO) have made strong recommendations during the fourth and sixth sessions respectively held in Conakry in Guinea and in Rabat, Morocco.
- **2006** - The six Ministers of the States concerned, namely Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Togo have signed the Abidjan Declaration approving the establishment of the Committee and the headquarters of the Secretariat in Ghana.
- **2007** - All states have signed the Convention in Cotonou, Benin during the first session of the Conference of Ministers, marking the formal establishment of the Committee, except Nigeria, which signed the Convention two years later, in 2009.
- **2007:** The Member States have pledged to support the Committee through mandatory (statutory) and voluntary contributions.

Then **the committee feasibility assessment has been approved.** Indeed, the FAO (United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization) has provided technical and financial support through the conduct of feasibility studies, validated by all Fisheries Directors of the Member States in April 2006.

### 3. What Is The FCWC?

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The FCWC is composed of six (6) coastal countries of the Gulf of Guinea as follows: **the Republic of Benin, Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, Republic of Ghana, Republic of Liberia, Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Republic of Togo** (figure 1).

The FCWC region covers a total area of 1,766,463 km<sup>2</sup> and is populated with 237,765,553 inhabitants. The FCWC Member States include the black African giant, Nigeria, with its 170,123,740 inhabitants.

Regarding fisheries, the FCWC area has 2,633 km of coast length and an Economic Exclusive Zone (EEZ) of 923,916 km<sup>2</sup>. Despite its impressive maritime space, the FCWC area does not produce enough fish to feed its population. Only Ghana is relatively "self-sufficient" in terms of fish production. Its imports of fish products represent less than 10 % of total availability in cost equivalents. All five other countries in this zone are dependent on imports of fish products for over 70 %.

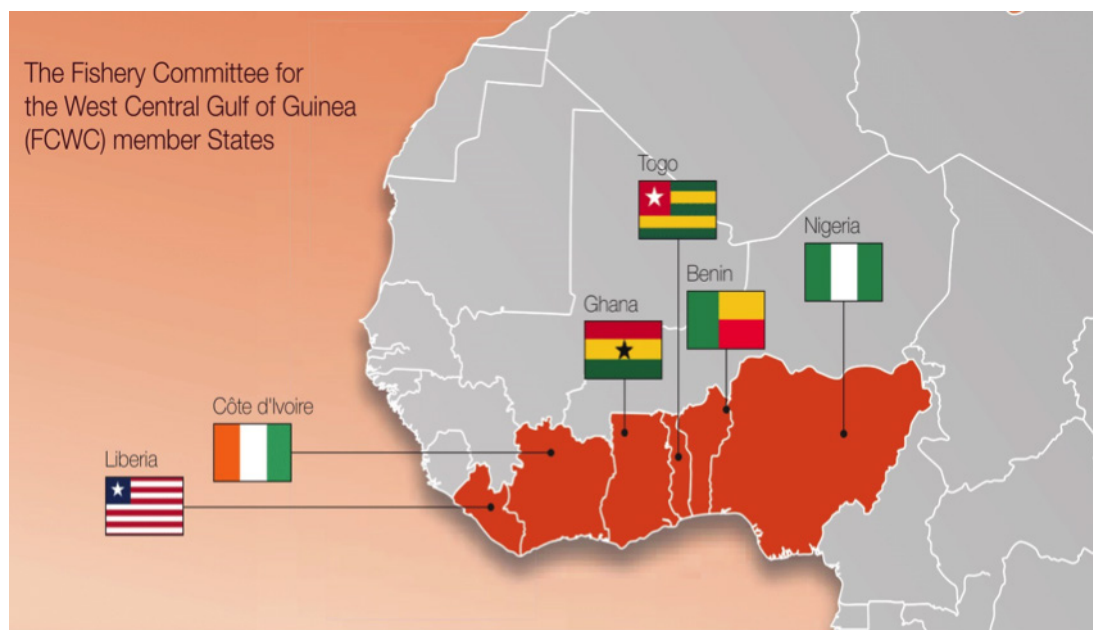


Figure 1 : Member states of the Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC).

Despite the poor performance of their fishing industry, the sub-region countries are not immune to over-exploitation of fishery resources, resulting from difficult control over the development of foreign industrial fishing and IUU ( illegal, unreported and unregulated) fishing. These countries do not either escape the degradation of the marine and coastal environment. This is the main reason for the creation of the FCWC by the States of the subregion to boost the fisheries sector , by ensuring the sustainable management of their fisheries resources.

**Clear objectives** were assigned to the Committee. According to Article 5 of the Convention establishing the FCWC, the Committee seeks *to promote cooperation between the Contracting Parties to ensure, through appropriate management, conservation and optimum utilization of marine resources referred to in the Convention and to encourage fisheries sustainable development based on these resources.*

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This general objective is broken into five (5) specific objectives corresponding to the large areas of intervention of the Committee (Box 1).

**Box 1 : The FCWC Areas of intervention**

1. Fisheries Policy, Governance and Institutional Arrangements;
2. Conservation and sustainable use of resources;
3. Improving the livelihoods of small-scale fishermen and actors;
4. Monitoring, Control and Surveillance and IUU fishing;
5. Fisheries Research and Research in Related Disciplines ;
6. Excellence in management.

To achieve these objectives, **clear roles and responsibilities** have been set forth for the Committee. These duties and responsibilities are as follows:

- 1) Provide a forum for discussion on all fisheries issues;
- 2) Improve the livelihoods of fishermen and processors of fishery products, including by developing appropriate measures to deal with the situation of migrant fishermen;
- 3) Harmonize fisheries laws and regulations between Contracting Parties ;
- 4) Strengthen cooperation on relationships with countries fishing on the high seas;
- 5) Strengthen sub-regional cooperation for monitoring, control, surveillance (MCS) and law enforcement, including the progressive development of common procedures ;
- 6) Promote capacity building on fisheries research;
- 7) Promote the development of standards for the collection, exchange and publication of fisheries data;
- 8) Develop and promote common policies and strategies, as appropriate, in the sub-region to strengthen the sub-region's position in international meetings;

## 4. Establishment of the Committee

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For the purposes of the **effective establishment** of the Committee, the **mechanisms for creating the Committee** have been developed and validated by the Member States. These initial documents provide the rationale and objective of the creation of the Committee.

The FCWC now has a **consolidated legal framework** with the adoption of the following instruments:

- **The Convention** establishing the Committee and the Rules of Procedure, adopted in **2007**;
- **The Organizational Chart of the Secretariat and a permanent funding mechanism** for the Committee activities, established in **2008**;
- **The Headquarters Agreement** signed by the Minister of Animal and Fisheries Resources of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, Chairman of the Conference of Ministers (**Mr KOBENAN Kouassi Adjoumani**) and the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development of the Republic of Ghana (**Hon. SHERRY Ayittey**), notified by the Parliament of Ghana in January 2016. This Headquarters Agreement gives **a diplomatic status to the Committee**.
- **The Rules of Procedure, the Financial Regulations and the Manual of Procedures** have been prepared by the Secretariat and presented at the Ninth Session of the Conference of Ministers, and are still available.

To this must be added two (2) Conventions which were elaborated and adopted thanks to the support of the ATLAFCO and the Project "Fisheries Intelligence and Support to Monitoring, Control and Surveillance in West Africa" funded through Norwegian cooperation (NORAD). They are as follows: (i) **the Convention on the Minimum Conditions for Access to the FCWC Fishery Resources** and (ii) **the Convention on the Pooling and Sharing of Fisheries Information and Data in the FCWC Area**.

- The **Convention on Minimum Conditions for Access to Fishery Resources in the FCWC Area or the CMA Convention** was adopted during the sixth session of the Conference of Ministers in 2013. It was largely inspired by international conventions on the sustainable management of fisheries resources. The FCWC thus has an important legal instrument whose entry into force has contributed to the harmonization of the principles and general rules for responsible fishing and to a regional integration of fisheries policies in its area.
- The **Convention on the Pooling and Sharing of Fisheries Information and Data in the FCWC Area** was adopted during the seventh session of the Conference of Ministers in 2014.



## 5. Operation And Performance Of The Bodies

A **functional institutional framework** does exist, particularly with the establishment and operation of the Committee bodies. Through the decision-making process involving the Platform of Ministers (**the Ministers' Conference**) and **the Secretariat**, the Directors of fisheries and various experts who meet regularly on the **Advisory and Coordination Committee (CCC)** are educated to take ownership of the FCWC activities.

The visual representation of the Committee is effective, with:

- The opening of the **Headquarters in Tema** (premises and equipment made available by the Government of the Republic of Ghana, in accordance with the commitments made when the Committee was set up ) with a minimum staff (the Secretary General and an Assistant).
- The adoption of a **Logo** for the Committee.
- The creation of a website for publication and exchange of information between Member States and partners in both languages ( www.fcwc-fish.org), functional with maintenance by the Committee Secretariat (training of the Webmaster) and the necessary steps taken by Member States to supply the site regularly, in accordance with the commitments made at the third session of the Conference of Ministers of the Committee.

Table 3 gives an idea of the number of site visits during 2007.

**Table 3: Number of visitors on the Committee's website in 2017.**

Mois	Unique Visitors	Number of Visits	Pages	Number of Clicks	Bandwidth
January 2017	2.280	4.217	14.890	95.108	2,29 GB
February 2017	2.639	4.675	19.914	124.763	2,86 GB
March 2017	3.128	6.754	17.200	187.019	5,13 GB
April 2017	3.343	7.043	23.876	125.728	3,46 GB
May 2017	4.083	10.600	25.428	148.052	3,45 GB
June 2017	4.059	13.512	27.111	117.718	2,98 GB
July 2017	3.563	10.627	20.915	91.814	2,41 GB
August 2017	4.254	11.446	21.017	83.201	2,43 GB
September 2017	5.294	11.140	22.849	82.925	2,71 GB

- o Installation of new interactive communication tools.
- o An address and a location:
  - secretariat@fcwc-fish.org
  - Po Box bt 62 Tema, Ghana
  - 4th floor of the building of the Fisheries Research Division, located at Tema, Community 2.

**The annual accounts of the Committee have been audited** for the period between 2015 and 2016, by the Audit Unit of the Ghana Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development, pending the recruitment of a private auditor, in accordance with the recommendations of the Seventh Session of the Conference of Ministers. Reports are available.

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## 5.1 Conference of Ministers

**The Ministerial Conference, the highest decision-making body of the Committee**, is characterized by the regularity of its statutory meetings (at least once a year). Each Contracting Party shall be represented at the meetings of the Conference of Ministers by the Minister responsible for sea fishing or his representative. In total ten (10) sessions were organized between 2007 and 2017.

As shown in Table 1, all countries hosted the Conference Session. This shows **the commitment of the Member States to develop fisheries cooperation but also the dynamism of the Secretariat of the Committee**, despite its small staff. The organization of annual statutory meetings is characterized by their regularity.

Only the Fifth Session scheduled for year 2011 failed to meet this rule due to changes in Institutional Ministry for Fisheries of Nigeria, which was presiding over the Conference of Ministers. The **determination of the new Nigerian authorities** subsequently led to the resumption of the FCWC activities through the organization of the Fifth Session in Togo the following year (2012).

**Table 1: Summary of the sessions of the FCWC Conference of Ministers organized annually.**

Sessions	Dates	Place
First	5 - 7 Novembre 2007	Cotonou, Bénin
Second	17 - 19 Décembre 2008	Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire
Third	16 - 18 Décembre 2009	Accra, Ghana
Fourth	8 - 10 Décembre 2010	Abuja, Nigeria
Fifth	12 - 14 Décembre 2012	Lomé, Togo
Sixth	11 - 13 Décembre 2013	Cotonou, Bénin
Seventh	10 - 12 Décembre 2014	Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire
Eighth	9 - 11 Décembre 2015	Accra, Ghana
Ninth	14 - 16 Décembre 2016	Monrovia, Liberia
Tenth	12 - 15 Décembre 2017	Abuja, Nigeria

## 5.2 The Advisory and Coordination Committee (CCC)

**The CCC constitutes the FCWC technical support.** Each Contracting Party shall appoint a member to the Advisory and Coordinating Committee. The appointed member shall be responsible for the national administration of sea fishing or his representative (Article 9 al 1). The CCC holds at least two regular meetings a year.

The CCC shall oversee the activities of the Secretariat, make recommendations to the Conference of Ministers on any matter relating to the functions of the Committee under Article 5.2 of the Convention. In addition, it shall provide technical and scientific advice to the Conference of Ministers and advise the Secretary General on the implementation of decisions taken by the Conference of Ministers.

**Poor mobilization of personnel and irregular financial contributions of the Member States have severely limited CCC activities.** However, States have gradually respected their commitments through their contributions (statutory and voluntary) to the functioning of the Committee.

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### 5.3 General Secretariat

The General Secretariat is the executive body of the Committee. It is headed by a Secretary General appointed by the Conference of Ministers for a term of five years renewable.

The Secretary-General is a national of a Member State of the Committee and chosen on the basis of his technical expertise and on the basis of pre-established selection criteria. He is the legal representative of the Committee. He directs the work of the Committee in accordance with the decisions of the Conference of Ministers and as directed by the Committee.

Since the creation of a Committee, the Government of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire has been fully supporting the Secretary-General made available to the Regional Organization, in accordance with commitments made.

The Secretariat reports on the work of the Committee to the Conference of Ministers, formulates the work program of the Committee and establishes its budget. It convenes the meetings of the Conference of Ministers and the Advisory and Coordinating Committee as well as the technical meetings, organizes them and supports them. It compiles the documents necessary for these meetings, implements the decisions of the Conference of Ministers and provides technical assistance to any Contracting Party which makes the request.

The various meetings of the Conference of Ministers preceded by the meetings of the CCC, which is the political and decision-making platform of the Committee, have been used by the Secretariat for the conduct of its activities in accordance with the mandate of this Organization for the sustainable management of fisheries resources in the sub-region. **A valuable work for planning, partnership development and communication** was carried out by the Secretariat for the visibility of the Committee despite the insufficient resources.

Moreover, the Secretariat strives to **ensure better representation of the Member States** in the bodies allocated to organizations at the sub-regional, regional, continental and international levels, particularly in the implementation of the **African Way in Fisheries** and the evaluation of the FCWC Member States in the implementation of the Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA).

## 6. Projects And Support To Member States

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To meet the growing needs of Member States and the sub-region for the sustainable management of fisheries resources, a number of projects have been implemented in partnership with the Committee Secretariat, the Technical and Financial Partners (TFPs) concerned and the Member States. Furthermore, **various supports have been brought** by the Secretariat to countries. One of the projects resulted in the development of a **Strategic Plan** for the Committee, thus providing the Committee with a **Roadmap** with a **Vision** and elements to ensure that the stated objectives and Vision are achieved.

### 6.1 Projet SIDA d'appui au Comité

This first project carried out by the Secretariat of the Committee in 2009 was financed by SIDA (Swiss Cooperation). Staff has been provided to the Secretariat, in the person of **Mrs. Jessica Hjerpe OLAUSSON** who has been part of the team for one year. Moreover, it was within the framework of this project that the **study on the migration of fishermen in the sub-region** was conducted, which led to **the adoption of the FCWC Action Plan to monitor migration**. This support project also allowed the FCWC Secretariat to participate in regional and international meetings (such as COFI), and to co-finance the first session of the Experts (CCC) and the FCWC Ministers in 2007.

**Three strategic actions have been taken to manage migration in the sub-region:** (i) identification of foreign migrant fishermen; (ii) monitoring and supervision of the movement of foreign migrant fishermen and their fishing gear; and (iii) development and implementation of integration measures for foreign migrant fishermen in the professional organizations of the host countries.

### 6.2 Programme technique de coopération TCP/RAF/3215 (D)

"Support to the Fisheries Committee for the West-Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC) for the preparation of a Strategic Action Plan and a Regional Action Program"

This project was implemented between September 2009 and August 2010 by FAO, in close collaboration with the Committee Secretariat, at a cost of US Dollars 220,000. The technical support and monitoring were provided by FAO through the Sub-Regional Office for West Africa, the Regional Office for Africa in Accra and the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture in Rome.

Thanks to the TCP, the FCWC has **a guidance and planning tool that is specific to the needs of the States members of the Committee.**

The participatory strategic planning process (a collaborative approach between the CCC of FCWC and each of the Member States) has achieved the following results:

1) The development of (i) a Strategic Plan which constitutes a roadmap for the period of 2011 - 2020 and adopted by the Member States in 2010 during the Fourth Session of the Conference of Ministers, held in Abuja, Nigeria, and (ii) a Program of Action to short and medium term (2011 – 2014).

The Strategic Plan helped identify priority actions and of common interest in order to mobilize donors and ensure a harmonized and sustainable management of shared fishery resources.

The short and medium-term action program, accompanied by project briefs, was submitted to donors for its implementation at the fifth session of the Conference of Ministers, held in Lomé, Togo, in 2011. The resulting Round Table of Technical and Financial Partners provided a general consensus on the relevance of the Strategic Plan and the implementation of projects for sustainable fisheries in the region, as well as its consistency with the AU's policy and many other development partners. The partners pledged to provide the FCWC with technical and financial support for the implementation of the first short and medium term Action Program. The FCWC thus has a tool for project development and donor mobilization. Unfortunately, apart from the visibility given to the FCWC activities, there has not yet been direct and immediate funding, mainly because of the structural weaknesses of the FCWC due to the lack of technical and accounting staff, the Secretary-General being the only one to carry out everything.

2) Strengthening the FCWC capacities in planning for the management of fisheries with the participation of the Secretariat and the States at different stages of the development process and through the wide dissemination of the Strategic Plan to Member States

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and technical and financial partners by the Secretariat of the Committee.

3) For the implementation of the FCWC Strategic Plan, a Triennial program has been prepared. The implementation of this first triennial program, which was planned for 2011-2014, is being continued until now for lack of adequate human and financial resources. The analysis of the results obtained led us to the remarks below.

- It is mainly the strategic priorities 2 (Conservation and responsible use of fisheries resources), 3 (Improving Management of Artisanal Fisheries and Livelihoods of Artisanal Fishermen) and 4 (MCS and fight against IUU fishing) which cover most of the activities that have led to concrete achievements. These include activities to (i) develop and implement appropriate management frameworks, (ii) build capacity of artisanal fishers in member countries and other operators, and (iii) build national capacity for an effective, efficient and sustainable fisheries MCS system, and put in place effective regional cooperation mechanisms in MCS.
- Many activities related to the improvement of policies, governance and institutional arrangements (Strategic Priority 1) are being implemented.
- Fisheries research and related disciplines (Strategic Priority 5) and the engagement of civil society actors are the focus areas that experienced the least progress, for lack of real partners. However, the Fish Trade Program "Improving Food Security and Reducing Poverty through Intra- Regional Fish Trade in Sub- Saharan Africa" implemented by WorldFish, NEPAD agency and UA-BIRA on EU funding, has helped develop a decision making tool for stakeholders of the fisheries sector at national and regional levels in cross-border trade of fish products. To this must be added the two innovations resulting from the implementation of the TCP on statistics, namely (i) collecting data on SSF on a harmonized basis, and (ii) introducing the data collection system with the Android mobile phone and estimating the contribution of artisanal fishing to the GDP of countries, along with the creation of a regional center for regular collection of fisheries data.
- As a result, the research activities that remain to be developed will concern the status of fish stocks, efforts will be continued on intra-regional trade in fishery products and on fishery statistics. The advanced discussions with some partners like Japan Cooperation (JICA) and the West African Regional Fisheries Project (WARP) implemented by the World Bank, will soon lead to the implementation of appropriate activities.

### **6.3 TCP/RAF/3512 to strengthen the systematic collection of fisheries data in West Africa**

The FCWC signed the technical assistance agreement with FAO for the implementation of the TCP/RAF/3512, on January 12, 2016 in Accra, Ghana. This project aims at improving regular collection of data from fisheries activities in the FCWC area. It is implemented by FAO on a 24-month period (May 2016 - April 2018) with a budget of US D 393,000, in close collaboration with the FCWC, the main intergovernmental counterpart.

The objective of the project is to increase knowledge about the exploitation of fishery resources and the livelihoods of fishing communities, thus contributing to more sustainable development of sea fishing, with a view to improving food safety and to alleviate poverty.

It is expected that the project facilitates evidence-based decision-making on management, planning and fisheries development and formulation of national policies on fisheries food security and reducing poverty in fishing communities of the sub-region.

The four expected results of the project are as follows:

- 1) Development of appropriate and cost-effective sample surveys for small-scale fisheries
- 2) Development of national fisheries information systems
- 3) Establishment of mechanisms for the exchange of information between the FCWC and its Member Countries
- 4) Improved collaboration between the FCWC and its member countries with the Fishery and Resource Monitoring System (FIRMS)

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#### 6.4 Project “Fisheries Intelligence and Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) Support in West Africa”

Two (2) **Technical Working Groups** on IUU fishing and fishery statistics were established at the second session of the Conference of Ministers in 2008. It should be recalled that the decision to establish Working Groups within the FCWC meets the need for assisting the Secretariat of the Committee in the performance of its numerous duties. These working groups are permanent and provided for in the FCWC Convention and Organizational Chart as subsidiary bodies of the FCWC. They are thus called upon to deal with specific themes with clear and precise terms of reference. **Five (5) meetings** were organized by the Technical Working Groups on Improving Fisheries Data Collection and Combating IUU Fishing.

Moreover, a **Regional Action Plan to combat IUU fishing was adopted in 2009** and during the drafting process, the Ministers adopted a declaration called “**Accra Declaration on the fight against IUU fishing**” to demonstrate the political will of the Member States to fight against this scourge.

The Project “**Fisheries Intelligence and Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) Support in West Africa**” funded by the *Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD)* came to strengthen the fight against IUU fishing at the heart of FCWC's interventions. It has been implemented over the period 2015 - 2017 by Trygg Mat Tracking (TMT), in close collaboration with Stop Illegal Fishing (SIF), NFDS ( Nordenfjeldske Development Services ) as well as with the FCWC Secretariat and Member States.

In this context, this project promoted the creation and operation of a West Africa Task Force (WATF) composed of experts from the six (6) FCWC member states, Basecamp communication platform for sharing information and facilitating cooperation and exchange of intelligence. This Working Group supports regional cooperation to identify, track down, gather evidence and put in place enforcement measures and prosecutions against illegal fishing operators.

The Committee Secretariat supported the operationalization of the WATF through the following actions:

- Support for MCS activities at the request of WATF members ;
- Holding of two meetings of WATF per year;
- Organization of a regional training workshops on collecting, securing and analyzing fisheries information;
- Strengthening MSC planning at the regional level and regional cooperation and the presentation of the study reports ;
- Holding of a national training workshops and involvement of experts to support implementation ;
- Strengthening cooperation between the different fisheries administrations at national level through the establishment of National Working Groups (NWGs)

The MCS mechanism put in place, in particular through the Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS) and the AIS, made it possible to board a large number of vessels involved in IUU fishing, particularly in waters under Liberian jurisdiction, with cumulative fines representing a fairly significant amount of money. This has significantly reduced IUU fishing and thus the monetary losses associated with this phenomenon.

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## 6.5 Coordination of regional projects and participation in their implementation

Various regional projects have taken place in the subregion and the Secretariat has coordinated and participated in their implementation. These are mainly projects implemented under the EU-funded ACP FISH II Program, the FAO AEF-NANSEN project and the Fish Trade Project of WorldFish, NEPAD Agency and African Union.

### 6.5.1 ACP Fish II Program

The projects implemented by the FCWC Secretariat under the EU-funded ACP Fish II Program deal with: i) the study on the creation of national registers of industrial fishing vessels; ii) support for the implementation of the FCWC regional action plan against IUU fishing; iii) technical assistance for the FCWC capacity building through the development of its website.

### 6.5.2 EAF-Nansen / FAO project

Through the EAF-Nansen Project, implemented by FAO, support has been provided to the FCWC Member States for the development of management plans. Indeed, Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Togo have been assisted to develop beach seine management plans that have been adopted except for Ghana.

The FCWC Secretariat monitored at sub-regional level the implementation of these fisheries management plans, which resulted in the signature of a Support and Financing Agreement for the implementation of these plans under the new EAF-Nansen Program, which was scheduled to start in January 2017 with the acquisition of a new research vessel. A new scientific plan has been developed to guide the deployment of the new research vessel, also named Dr. Fridtjof Nansen, as well as related scientific documentation for the management and capacity building component of the new program.

### 6.5.3 WorldFish Fish Trade Project

The Secretariat has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with WorldFish Center, as part of the implementation of the project "Improving Food Security and Reducing Poverty through Promoting Regional Trade in Sub-Saharan Africa", FishTrade. A funding agreement of USD 45,000 has been concluded to support the FCWC in promoting intra-regional trade in fisheries products through inter alia the implementation of previously identified activities for the promotion of informal cross-border fish trade (Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo and Benin).

This activity is of paramount importance for improving the understanding of the dynamics of national and intra-regional fisheries trade and the conditions for carrying out fisheries trade activities in the sub-region.

The strong idea that can be drawn from these activities is that the Secretariat of the Committee was able to seize the opportunities offered and fully play its role in coordinating TFP interventions in the region.

### 6.5.4 Country support

Technical and financial supports have been provided to the Member States, if necessary by the Committee Secretariat. This is the case, for example, of Ghana at the time of the suspending its approval for the export of products and that of Togo during the period of suspension of development aid. An appeal was made at the forum of the FCWC Conference of Ministers in 2012 for mobilization to promote inter-administration dialogue and consolidate Togo's position internationally. Subsequently, Togo received support from the ACP Fish II Project to strengthen the fisheries legal framework, strengthen the capacity of fisheries inspectors, and facilitate inter-administration dialogue for the deregistration of offending vessels under the Togolese flag, facilitation and funding by the FCWC

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Secretariat of Togo's participation in the illegal fishing forum at INTERPOL headquarters.

Support has also been provided to Member States to facilitate the ratification and implementation of the main fisheries management instruments, including the Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA) and the EU 1005/2008 regulation on the traceability of catches. This support was made possible by the African Natural Resources Center (ANRC) of the African Development Bank (AfDB) which, through the FCWC Secretariat, assisted the Member States.

The various national reports with recommendations to boost the process of ratification of the identified instruments were at the disposal of member states. Ghana and Togo have ratified the PSMA while all other States are quite advanced in their accession to the agreement. On another note, Benin is one of the first seven (7) countries in Africa to sign this agreement for its entry into force.



## 7. Development of Partnerships

The development of strategic partnerships has resulted in recognition of the nascent organization and is the current strength of the FCWC.

Besides the projects implemented by the TFPs (SIDA, FAO, NORAD, EU, AfDB, WorldFish) and coordinated by the Committee Secretariat, various **partnerships, not yet considered as sustainable**, have been developed by the Committee Secretariat, through particularly the signing of Memoranda of Understanding, as shown in Table 22.

**Table 2: Main partnerships developed during the ten years of existence of the FCWC.**

Institutions	Type of Partnerships / Outcomes
WFU (World Fisheries University)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capacity building of fisheries staff: graduate education (Master in Fisheries Management, Social Science and Aquaculture).</li> </ul>
NOAA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional training program for fisheries inspectors and judicial officers since 2016 (3 participants per country for 5 days) and mobilizing International Trainers-Experts in fisheries MCS.</li> </ul>
ATLAFCO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaboration protocol signed for the participation of the FCWC in the meetings of the ATLAFCO and vice versa as well as for the financing of activities of the Committee: review of the fisheries legal framework of the FCWC Member States and operationalization of national, regional and international instruments.</li> <li>Signature in February 2015 of a Memorandum of Understanding for coordination between the institutions and Regional Fisheries Organizations in the COMHAFAT zone (Regional Fisheries Commission -COREP, Network on Fisheries Policies in West Africa -REPAO; Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission -CSRP, INFOPECHE and COMHAFAT).</li> </ul>
AU-IBAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The FCWC Secretariat support for the implementation of the African Fisheries Reform Facility.</li> <li>The Secretariat capacity building through sessions of activity planing and consultation on fishery and aquaculture strategic issues.</li> <li>Ongoing support from AU-IBAR for the evaluation of the regional IUU plan and the development of the regional fisheries management plan.</li> </ul>
NEPAD Programme PAF/SIF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financing of the organization of sessions of the Conference of Ministers</li> <li>Support for the participation of the FCWC in the technical groups Trade and MCS.</li> </ul>
International MCS Network (IMCS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The FCWC is a member of this Network as a structure engaged in the fight against IUU fishing. To this end, it benefits from capacity building sessions and receives documentation on fisheries MCS. The FCWC participated in the first bi-annual meeting of IMCS held in Africa in Mozambique in 2012.</li> <li>Capacity building, sharing of information and monitoring of activities of vessels involved in IUU fishing</li> </ul>
National Fisheries Association of Ghana (NAFAG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the FCWC in 2013 which sets out a framework for collaboration, partnership and technical and scientific cooperation.</li> <li>Capacity building of NAFAG members on the conditions of access to the waters of the Committee Area was carried out and a mechanism for the operationalization of the said Protocol was adopted by the Contracting Parties for its effective implementation.</li> <li>Mechanism for requesting and securing fisheries authorization documents (licenses) identified under the Memorandum of Understanding between the FCWC and NAFAG to be implemented by the Secretariat and the Member States.</li> </ul>
The Fish for African Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Signing of a collaboration contract for the promotion of aquaculture in the sub-region.</li> </ul>
GCLME	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Signature of a Memorandum of Understanding to boost cooperation and collaboration between the FCWC and GLCME Project.</li> </ul>

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For certain institutions such as the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), there are no Memoranda of Understanding yet. Indeed, Collaboration Agreements with the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) initiated by the FCWC following the recommendations of the two meetings of the Conference of African Ministers of Fisheries and Aquaculture (CAMFA), remained at the draft stage following certain internal considerations of these institutions. However, for ECOWAS, the Convention is in the process of taking shape as it has been selected as one of the expected outcomes of the EU-funded PESCAO Program (Improvement of Regional Fisheries Governance in West Africa) and which has the component "Support to the FCWC for strengthening the MCS". ECOWAS will have to bring this Convention to a successful conclusion before the end of the support within the framework of this Program which is an integral part of the ongoing FCWC and SRFC lashing process at ECOWAS under the auspices of the AU and EU.

## 8. Summary Of The FCWC Achievements

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The main achievements (successes and/or changes witnessed) are summarised in boxes 2 to 4.

### Box 2: Committee achievement during the implementation phase.

- Consolidated legal framework: adoption of the Convention on the committee establishment, the Rules of Procedure, the Organizational chart for the Secretariat, the sustainable funding mechanism, the Headquarters agreement.
- Functional institutional framework: Secretariat establishment; regular organization of the annual meetings of the Coordination and Advisory Committee (CCC) and of the ministerial conference.
- Coordination in the framework of the fight against IUU fishing, recurring issue in the sub-region: within the FCWC intervention mechanism.
- Financial and technical support to members states in the framework of various platforms put in place, according to the needs expressed: Support to Ghana at the time of the suspension of its certification of products export and Togo (during the suspension period of development aid) ; facilitation of the ratification and the implementation of the main fisheries management instruments including the Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA) and the 1005/2008 EU regulation on the traceability of the catches made by most members countries.
- Better representation of member states in the bodies assigned to organizations at sub-regional, regional, continental and international level by the Committee Secretariat (establishment of the African Route in the fishing and the FCWC member states evaluation in the PSMA implementation).
- Committee visibility and positioning with partners (Regional Institutions and Programs) with which Memorandums of understanding and of collaboration have been signed for achieving common goals: effective partnership even if activities are yet to be developed.
- Effective Committee visual representation: Headquarters opening in Tema with precise address and location; creation of a web site for information publication and exchange between the member states and the partners in the two languages; installation of new interactive communication tools.
- Member states capacity building in various fields.
- Transparency in financial management: Auditing of the Committee annual accounts conducted.

### Box 3: Successes or changes elements during the FCWC maturity phase.

- 1) The FCWC has its own planning and guidance tools, in line with committee member states needs.
- 2) Member states have fulfilled the commitments, notably by contributing gradually to the committee Secretariat functioning (payment of voluntary and statutory contributions including the provision of staff).
- 3) Sustainable management conditions have been met with the adoption of the convention on the minimal access conditions to FCWC area fisheries resources and the convention on pooling and sharing of information and data on the area fisheries.
- 4) The Committee strategic plan is effectively implemented through the first three year programme (2011 - 2014).
- 5) The capacity development : developing a tool for stakeholders decision-making in fisheries sector at regional and national level in terms of fisheries products cross-border trade ; artisanal fishing data collection on harmonised basis ; the use of Android mobile phone in the artisanal fishing data collection system in the member states.

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**Box 4: Successes or changes elements related to fight against IUU fishing activities conducted by the FCWC.**

- 1) Real progress towards a modernised vessels monitoring system in the West Central Gulf of Guinea waters ;
- 2) More secure and efficient fisheries operations in the sub-region ;
- 3) A successful implementation of the action plan for deterring, preventing and eliminating the IUU fishing in the sub-region.
- 4) Trade related measures implementation to fight against IUU fishing in the region ;
- 5) An agreement for developing a common regional approach to fight against IUU fishing at the political and operational level; and for stock management. .
- 6) The sub-regional cooperation and institutional frameworks strengthening to improve MCS activities in the region: some new countries such as Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria have installed a VMS system whereas Liberia and Ghana reinforce their existing system.
- 7) An important reduction of IUU fishing particularly in the waters under the Liberian jurisdiction as result of many boarding conducted.
- 8) The awareness raising among member states and the support to PSMA implementation and signing.
- 9) The provision of regional interactive communications platforms on the issues related to fishing between authorities and experts.
- 10) The availability of an overview about IUU fishing phenomenon in the Gulf of Guinea (in partnership with INTERPOL).
- 11) The development of BaseCamp communication platform that enabled information sharing, the cooperation and the exchange of intelligence.

## 9. Medium And Long Term Prospects

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The Secretariat intends to reinforce the Committee achievements by diversifying the interventions areas and the FCWC partners for the coming years, in order to cover progressively the various pillars of the committee's mandate. In this respect, it is planned (i) to start the research activities, (ii) to implement the fisheries regional plan recommendations which are in the process of being drafted with the AU. (iii) to identify and to engage the civil society Organisations, (iv) to pursue the fight against IUU fishing notably through the activities of GTAO, the establishment of VMS regional Centre and the conduct of patrols with the PESCAO Programme support and (v) to strengthen the Committee Secretariat technical staff.

It is clear that the FCWC is the relevant regional institution for the governance of marine and coastal resources in the sub-region. In addition to the relocation of the headquarters from Tema to Accra to improve the Committee visibility and to bring the partners institutions Secretariat closer to Ghana and beyond, a sustainable solution should be found to the problems of staff and funding in order to enable the FCWC to play a more effective role in fishery policies design and implementation.

The coastal and marine resources constitute a highly political issue which cannot be reduced to a technical cooperation between states. The FCWC has to take into account the need to address the fisheries growing importance in the sub-region countries' economies and to ensure sustainable use of fisheries resources in the sub-region. In this regard, the member states should make changes by going beyond the initial political commitment phase in order to enter progressively into the real fishery cooperation which requires a coordination/consistency of public policies as far as fishery resources management is concerned. A focus will have to be soon laid on the first strategic pillar (Improvement of policies, governance and institutional arrangements) by taking effectively into account the new challenges facing the sector, including climate changes, conservation of biodiversity and degradation of marine and coastal environment, transparency in fishery sector (FITI), the blue growth, the Voluntary Guidelines on FAO artisanal fishing. It is through the development of sustainable strategic partnership with specialised institutions that the FCWC could implement programmes that will deal with the new challenges more effectively in the public policies.

## 9. Conclusion

**Significant progress has been made**, in particular in the process of setting up the Committee and developing an orientation and planning tool of its own, in line with the needs of the Committee's member States for an effective contribution to the development of fisheries cooperation.

However, the Committee still faces many constraints in the implementation of planned activities. These difficulties include **the lack of technical staff and support to the Secretary of the Committee, the late signing of the Headquarters Agreement by the host country, the eccentricity of the headquarters in Tema, the absence of genuine sustainable strategic partnerships** to support the Secretariat and Member States of the FCWC.

Nevertheless, the FCWC continues to be characterized by **growing support and interest from Member States, well-established institutional stability** and **budget programming responsive to its empowerment and development** to better meet the expectations of Member States.

## Appendix: List of Documents Produced In The Framework Of The Committee

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### 1. Conventional documents

- Declaration of Abidjan (2006)
- Convention for the Establishment of the Fishery Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (2007)
- Headquarters Agreement Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (2017).
- Ratification Convention for establishment of the FCWC and Headquarters Agreement - Host of Fishery Committee (2017)
- Convention on minimum Requirements for access to the Fisheries Resources of the area of the Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (December 2013).
- FCWC Staff Regulations
- Financial Regulations of FCWC
- Operational Manual of the Secretariat General of the Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea.
- Memorandum of Understanding for coordination between the Institutions and Regional Fisheries Organizations in ATLAFCO area (Feb 2015).
- Program for the implementation of the 2011-2020 FCWC Strategic Plan (September 2011).
- 2011-2020 Strategic Plan. Summary for Donors Meeting. DOC/FCWC/003
- 2011-2012 Business Plan for the FCWC Secretariat. DOC/FCWC/004

### 2. Reports of the Conference of Ministers

- Report of the Advisory and Coordinating Committee (ACC) of the Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC), 5 - 6 December 2007, Cotonou, Benin
  - First Ministerial Meeting for the Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC), 7 December 2007, Cotonou, Benin
  - Report of the Advisory and Coordinating Committee (ACC) of the Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC), 17 - 18 December 2008, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire
  - Report of the Advisory and Coordinating Committee (ACC) of the Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC), 16 - 17 December 2009, Accra, Ghana
  - Report of the Advisory and Coordinating Committee (ACC) of the Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC), 8 - 9 December 2010, Abuja, Nigeria
  - Report of the Advisory and Coordinating Committee (ACC) of the Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC), 12 - 13 December 2012, Lomé, Togo.
  - Report of the Advisory and Coordinating Committee (ACC) of the Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC), 11 - 12 December 2013, Cotonou, Benin
  - Report of the Advisory and Coordinating Committee (ACC) of the Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC), 10 - 11 December 2014, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire
  - Report of the Advisory and Coordinating Committee (ACC) of the Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC), 09 - 10 December 2015, Accra, Ghana
  - Report of the Advisory and Coordinating Committee (ACC) of the Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC), 14 - 15 December 2016, Monrovia, Liberia Accra
  - Report on the meeting of the Advisory and Coordinating Committee (ACC) of the Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC), 10 - 12 December 2014 - Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.
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- Report of the first Ministerial Meeting Report, 7 December 2007, Cotonou, Benin.
  - Report of the second Ministerial Meeting Report, 12 December 2008, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire
  - Report of the third Ministerial Meeting Report, 18 December 2009, Accra, Ghana
  - Report of the fourth Ministerial Meeting Report, 10 December 2010, Abuja, Nigeria
  - Report of the FCWC 5th Ministerial Meeting Report, 14 December 2012, Lomé, Togo
  - Report of the sixth Ministerial Meeting Report, 13 December 2013, Cotonou, Benin.
  - Report of the seventh Ministerial Meeting Report, 13 December 2014, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire
  - Report of the eighth Ministerial Meeting Report, 11 December 2015, Accra, Ghana
  - Report of the ninth Ministerial Meeting Report, 16 December 2007, Monrovia, Liberia
  - Activity report in respect of budgetary year 2007 - 2008. General Secretariat (2011).
  - Activity report in respect of budgetary year 2008 - 2009. General Secretariat (2011).
  - Activity report in respect of budgetary year 2009 - 2012. General Secretariat (2011).
  - Activity report in respect of budgetary year 2012 - 2013. General Secretariat (2011).
  - Activity report in respect of budgetary year 2013 - 2014. General Secretariat (2011).
  - Activity report in respect of budgetary year 2014 - 2015. General Secretariat (2011).
  - Activity report in respect of budgetary year 2015 - 2016. General Secretariat (2011).

### **3. Reports of studies, workshops and projects**

- Policy Brief West Africa on Informal Trade (2017)
- Capacity Strengthening Module for Fish Trade Association to enhance Market Access and Trade. AU-IBAR, WorldFish, NEPAD, EU (2017)
- Information workshop on the formulation and planning of the FCWC activities, Accra, 24 – 25 March 2010
- Midterm Review of the project TMT Fisheries Intelligence and MCS support in West Africa
- (Final Report. TMT – NORAD (September 2016).



**FCWC**

Fisheries Committee  
the West Central Gulf of Guinea

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

The Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC) facilitates cooperation in fisheries management between the member countries: Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Togo.

For more information go to:

[www.fcwc-fish.org](http://www.fcwc-fish.org)

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**THE FCWC, FROM PAST TO PRESENT (NOVEMBER 2007 – NOVEMBER 2017): ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROSPECTS**