



WEST AFRICA TASK FORCE
CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP
BENIN NATIONAL WORKING GROUP
Cotonou, 25-27 May 2016

The Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC), following the meeting of its West Africa Task Force held in Accra, Ghana, on 12 and 13 April 2016, organized in collaboration with the project "**Fisheries intelligence and MCS support systems in West Africa**", a capacity building workshop of the National Working Group for the fight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing at Sun Beach hotel of Cotonou, Benin from 25 to 27 May 2016.

The following entities took part in the workshop: members of the National Working Group for the fight against IUU fishing coming from the Directorate of Fisheries Production, the Environment Directorate, the Special Unit of River Police, Navy Forces, Customs, the General Directorate of Forestry and Natural Resources, the Directorate of Merchant Marine and Justice.

The list of participants is attached as Appendix 1 and the workshop agenda as Appendix 2.

I- WORKSHOP'S OPENING CEREMONY

The workshop's opening ceremony started at 10:15 am by three (03) speeches namely those of the Director of fisheries production, the Chief analyst of TMT (Trygg Mat Tracking) and the Secretary General of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries.

At the beginning of the opening ceremony, Dr. Gaston DJIHINTO, Director of Fisheries Production, welcomed the participants and thanked all FCWC's partners contributing to the fight against IUU fishing and associated fisheries crimes within FCWC's Member States.

He then stressed that Benin marine waters offer economic potential to fishermen but these waters are now, like other West African waters, the target of an organized plundering of marine resources, which jeopardises the people food security whose nutritional balance depends very much. He also said given the seriousness of this issue which is now considered as part of environmental crime, the fisheries administration cannot ensure alone an effective monitoring, control and surveillance system. Therefore, working with partner organizations is crucial for appropriate solutions. This is what needs to be addressed by the National Working Group to facilitate this multi-agency approach for the fight against IUU fishing.

Mr. Duncan COPELAND, Chief Analyst of TMT, in a brief introduction presented the project "Fisheries intelligence and MCS support in West Africa." He noted his pleasure to be in Benin for the first time and looked forward to seeing how the next two-day interactions would go. He emphasized that this workshop would be an important exchange platform for the Technical Team supporting the Task Force to be able to understand fisheries activities in Benin, and determine the country's capacity needs in order to provide adequate support.

The Secretary General of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, Mr Abdoulaye TOKO in his speech welcomed and expressed sincere thanks to all participants. He particularly thanked the experts, members of the Technical Team of the West Africa Task Force, Mr. Duncan Copeland and Mr. Jude TALMA for attending this workshop.

Addressing the issue of illegal fishing, he mentioned its impact on fisheries development and governance in developing countries, hence the need for interagency cooperation to increase compliance and eliminate IUU fishing.

This workshop is organized in order to provide legal and technical means to ensure that catches, offloading, transshipment, fish and other fishery products import and trade, are carried out legally.

Finally, the Secretary General of the Ministry thanked FCWC and its partners for their support in organizing the workshop and their commitment to support FCWC's member countries in the fight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing.

II- WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES

After the opening ceremony, a Presidium of three members was formed to direct the work. It consisted of:

- Chairman : Mr ALIOU M. Daouda
- 1st Rapporteur : Lt AGOSSOU Régis
- 2nd Rapporteur : Mr AHLLOUMESSOU Thierry

The workshop program and development methodology were presented. For two days, the following key points were discussed:

- Overview of the West Africa Task Force and the project "Fisheries intelligence and MCS support in West Africa" followed by discussions;
- Overview of MCS activities in Benin ;
- Overview of the characteristics of the national fisheries, common fisheries violations and challenges to enforcement actions, followed by debates;
- Fisheries intelligence and analysis ;
- National Working Group;
- Intelligence, cooperation and informations sharing

- Port State Measures Agreement and
- Inspection of reefer vessels.

1) Overview of the West Africa Task Force

Miss Viviane KOUTOB, West Africa Field Coordinator for TMT, made a brief presentation of the West Africa Task Force and addressed aspects related to its composition, purpose, objectives and funding. She did not fail to present the activities of the project.

2) Overview of the characteristics of the national fisheries, common fisheries violations and challenges to enforcement actions

Challenges of artisanal and industrial fisheries were then identified during a participatory exchange as follows:

a. Artisanal fishing

Operational challenges:

- MCS
- Development of landing sites
- Development of management plans
- Implementation of management plans
- Identification of marine areas
- Participatory Monitoring
- Fisheries surveillance mechanisms at sea and at land
- Vessels registration
- Issuance of fishing licenses

Investigation challenges:

- Identification of investigative agencies
- Synergy between institutions
- Means and mechanisms to carry out investigations
- Implementation of a formal institutional framework

Legal challenges :

- Fisheries Decrees
- Establishment of professional cards for fishermen

b- Industrial fishing

Operational challenges:

- Issuance of fishing licenses to all fishing vessels

- Obtaining intelligence on IUU vessels
- Implementation and coordination of institutional and organizational framework for MCS

Investigation challenges:

- Sending observers on board fishing vessels
- Periodic inspection
- Permanent monitoring system

Legal challenges :

- Fisheries Decrees
- Establishment of professional cards for fishermen

3) Overview of MCS activities in Benin

A presentation on fisheries monitoring, control and surveillance in Benin was conducted by Mr. Ghislain Sossa, MCS Officer in Benin. Issues related to the organizational and legal framework and implementation means were addressed.

4) Fisheries intelligence and analysis

Some definitions of intelligence, its usefulness, sources and fisheries intelligence tools were given.

The different stages of intelligence collection are:

- Definition of the mission
- Intelligence gathering
- Processing
- Analysis
- Dissemination for operational planning, investigation and management decisions.

5) National Working Group

The objective of the National Working Group is to effectively combat IUU fishing through communication, collaboration and cooperation between fisheries administrations and agencies. Discussions focused on key issues of the implementation of the National Working Group, the benefits of inter-agency cooperation and the usefulness of such cooperation.

Basecamp is the regional communications platform. The system was presented and the role of Benin participants were discussed. Following further discussion, the agencies and the individuals from those agencies were identified to become participants on Basecamp.

6) Port States Measures Agreement

A short movie on Port States Measures Agreement was shown by the Benin Fisheries team. The agreement aims to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing by engaging and indicating the obligations of port States like Benin. Its adoption and implementation would contribute to the sustainable conservation and exploitation of marine resources. These measures are intended to be applied widely and effectively by the parties, acting as port States towards vessels not entitled to fly their flag, when they seek to enter or when they are in one of the ports of the parties. This document is a cost-effective and significant inter-agency tool which needs to be highlighted. Ratification by Benin of the agreement would enable Benin, as provided in Article 21, to receive support dedicated to developing countries regarding the management of their fisheries.

7) Inspection of reefer vessels

The last point of the program was the inspection of reefer vessels. There was a discussion on challenges related to reefers control, practical needs and knowledge on how to write the inspection report. The analysis of the reefers' activities by TMT was presented to enable participants to understand the current gaps in understanding reefer operations in Benin and the wider region, the links between illegal vessels and reefers, and the increasingly important role Benin played in fish imports. With transshipments at sea being prohibited by many legislations such as Benin's, monitoring the activities of reefer vessels is crucial to develop better controls and compliance of reefers operating in the region.

III- RECOMMENDATIONS

At the end of proceedings, the following recommendations were made:

- Share with other institutions, the Framework Law No. 2014-19 on fisheries and aquaculture in the Republic of Benin and other provisions governing fishing in the Republic of Benin;
- Examine opportunity to implement AIS as a licensing condition for obtaining a fishing license
- Train sailors of Naval Forces on fisheries regulation
- Implement the Benin National Working Group of the West Africa task Force
- TMT to return to register and provide targeted training to the NWG on Basecamp

IV- CLOSING CEREMONY

The closing ceremony was marked by speeches by the Director of Fisheries Production and the Representative of the Secretary General of the Ministry.

After thanking all the participants and especially **FCWC** and its partners for organizing this workshop, the Director of Fisheries Production announced that Benin, through the implementation of

the National Working Group and the completion of this workshop, has just made a big step in the establishment of the inter-agency cooperation to eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing. Finally, he said he was happy about the full satisfaction of participants after the workshop.

During his speech, the Representative of the Secretary General of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, Mr. Irénée ADJE, Technical and Legal Advisor of Minister, thanked most sincerely the Secretary General of FCWC and TMT for their technical and financial support.

He also thanked all participants for their commitment and the diligence they have shown during the two (02) working days. He felt convinced that the various debates facts will strengthen inter-agency cooperation in the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

Finally, he stated that he hoped for a permanent support of **FCWC** and the project “**Fisheries intelligence and MCS support in West Africa**”, to support Benin in its determination to fight against this scourge.

It is on this note of hope that he declared the close of the workshop of the Benin National Working Group for the fight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing.

V- Port inspection

A practical exercise was conducted on May 27, 2016 at the Port of Cotonou on a reefer vessel, namely the FRIO ATLANTIC, by a small group mainly composed of fisheries inspectors.

It also served as an opportunity to test the effectiveness of the inspection checklist developed by the Project Technical Team.

A small focus session before the inspection of the reefer enabled to review the inspection procedure of vessels in Benin, from the port entry to the inspection by fishery officers.

The following points were noted:

- No information is provided to fisheries officers before the entry of the vessel at the port
- Lack of communication between fishery officers and the port when a vessel requests to have access to the port
- Information on the vessel are provided by the owner or the local representative of the ship owner
- No vessel inspection is performed except sanitary inspection which is not intended to control the legality of the catches on board the vessel or the compliance with the vessel regulatory requirements

Several challenges were addressed by the agents but the most recurrent proved to be the lack of resources and equipment to effectively carry out inspections. A MCS capacity needs assessment was conducted, towards identification of equipment needs to support effective MCS fisheries officers activities.

APPENDIX 1

West Africa Task Force – Benin National Working Group

National workshop

Cotonou, Bénin 25-27 May 2016

List of participants, 25 May 2016

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APPENDIX 2



West Africa Task Force

National Working Group Engagement and Training Programme

BENIN

PROGRAMME AND TIMETABLE

date		
Participants: Inter-agency National Working Group		
Time	Activity	Presenter / Facilitator
09:00	Welcome remarks	
09:15	- Introductions - Overview of Programme Agenda	
09:30	Overview and discussion of West Africa Task Force and 'Fisheries Intelligence and MCS Support' project objectives and activities	
10:15	Coffee and tea Break	
10:30	Benin – MCS Overview, Capacity and Cooperation - Presentation - Discussion	National representative
11:30	Review and discussion of national fisheries characteristics and most common fisheries violations and enforcement challenges - by different fisheries - by MCS challenges - identification	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - investigation - operational - legal 	
12:30	Lunch	
13:30	Fisheries Intelligence and Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - what is it and why important - IUU trends - Review of vessel movements in Benin waters 	
15:00	Coffee and tea Break	
15:15	Illegal Fishing vs. Fisheries Crime, and what this means for inter-agency cooperation	
16:15	Review of following days activities	
17:00	End of the day	

date		
Participants: Inter-agency National Working Group		
Time	Activity	Facilitator / Presenter
09:00	Brief recap	
09:10	Task Force National Working Groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why National Working Groups? - Mapping out inter-agency cooperation in Benin - Where is inter-agency cooperation most crucial? What agencies are represented in the National Working Group, and why are these the key agencies - Fisheries inter-agency cooperation strengths and weaknesses (SWOT) - What is needed to implement? 	
10:30	Coffee and tea Break	
10:45	Cont.	
11:30	Intelligence, cooperation and information sharing – introducing Basecamp	

12:30	Lunch	
13:30	Port State Measures - a cheap and crucial inter-agency tool	
14:00	Reefer inspection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reefer control challenges - Practical needs - PSMA Inspection Report - Inspection checklist - Practise exercises 	
15:30	Coffee and tea Break	
15:45	Cont.	
16:30	Introduction of port exercise on Day 3 (if this is going to take place)	
17:00	End of the day	

date		
Time	Activity	Facilitator / Presenter
09:00	Depart for Port from Fisheries Building parking lot, <i>briefing on port security requirements?</i>	
09:30	Port Exercise – review of vessels and operations in context of intelligence and controls challenges	
10:30	Reefer inspection exercise	
13:00	Lunch, Return to Training Facility	
14:00	Debrief from Port Exercise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Group discussion on what was observed - Identification of areas where improved intelligence will assist fisheries enforcement - Identification of areas where inter-agency cooperation is crucial and can be built on 	
15:30	Break	
15:45	Basecamp - registration on platform and training for identified representatives	
15:00	End of the day	