



COMMISSION SOUS-RÉGIONALE DES PÊCHES
SUB-REGIONAL FISHERIES COMMISSION

PERMANENT SECRETARIAT

**Report of the Sixteenth Special Session of
the Conference of Ministers of the SRFC**

27 - 28 of March 2014 - Dakar, Republic of Senegal

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REPORT OF THE SIXTEENTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF THE SRFC

OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The Sixteenth Special Session of the Conference of Ministers of the Sub Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC) was held in Dakar, Republic of Senegal, from 27 to 28 March 2014. All Member States took part in the session: Cabo Verde, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mauritania, Senegal and Sierra Leone. It was also attended by the representatives of the World Bank, the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the French Cooperation, Regional Partnership for Coastal Zone and Marine Conservation PRCM, IUCN, the West African Economic Monetary Union (WAEMU), the Regional Network of Marines Protected Areas in West Africa (RAMPAO), Embassies of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, the Republic of Cabo Verde and the Kingdom of Morocco. The opening ceremony of the session was chaired by His Excellency Mr. Haidar El Ali, Minister of Fisheries and Maritime Affairs of the Republic of Senegal. The list of participants is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.
2. In her welcoming remarks, Mrs. Marième Diagne Talla , Acting Permanent Secretary of the SRFC , thanked the Conference of Ministers for choosing her to lead the Permanent Secretariat. She, then, highlighted that the present session, held on the eve of the commemoration of the anniversary of the creation of the SRFC, will focus on the fight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing and its adverse effects. In this context, she drew the attention on a number of actions taken by the Permanent Secretariat to fight against this scourge namely i) the implementation of the Convention on the Minimum Access Conditions (MAC), which was the pretext for an advisory opinion put forward on the referral to the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) and; ii) the organization of operational activities that helped to strengthen cooperation in monitoring control and surveillance. Moreover, She informed about the research survey conducted in our sub-region with the vessel "Thalassa" with the goal of knowledge creation and strengthening on small pelagic with a special focus on sardinellas. Before expressing her best wishes for the work session and a happy birthday to the SRFC, the Acting Permanent Secretary thanked the Senegalese authorities for agreeing to host and organize this session. She also addressed her thanks to the technical and financial partners specially WWF for its financial support.
3. On behalf of His Excellency Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal, His Excellency the Minister of Fisheries and Maritime Affairs of the Republic of Senegal extended a warm welcome on the Land of Teranga to the participants. He underscored that the SRFC area is blessed with a miraculous sea where wind currents favor the existence of intense upwelling responsible for the high production of phytoplankton and growth of juveniles. These weather conditions enrich the maritime waters of the region. He stressed the need to preserve both breeding areas that are the Banc d'Arguin in Mauritania and the Bijagos Islands



in Guinea -Bissau. Scarcity of certain previously abundant species in the sub-region is more than worrisome. Indeed IUU fishing vessels, responsible in part of that scarcity, defy the laws of the Member States and threaten food security of the populations in the region. Additionally the fishery resources, including small pelagics, which constitute the staple food of people in the sub-region, are fully exploited or overexploited. He stressed the need for Member States and the SRFC to support efforts to Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS). The Minister finally urged Member States to use all the necessary means to find a consensus on the appointment of a Permanent Secretary before reaffirming that the Government of Senegal will make the necessary arrangements in order to facilitate the success of this session.

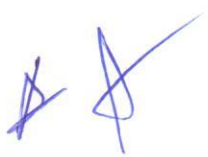
4. On behalf of his peers, His Excellency Moussa Conde, Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture of the Republic of Guinea, Chairman of the Conference of Ministers, in his speech, thanked Senegal for hosting this special session in Dakar. He then underlined the presence of all Member States that is an indication of the importance given to problems of fishing in general and IUU fishing in particular. To tackle those problems, He recommends to pool the resources of the member states to curb the scourge of IUU fishing. He, then, invited all the member states to give both individual and collective starts to the strengthening of our sub-regional cooperation. After reviewing the decisions on the appointment of the Permanent Secretary made during the previous meeting of June 2013 in Dakar, He presented the results of the trips he made through the Member States. He expressed his sincere thanks to the technical and financial partners (TFP) particularly WWF. Finally, he wished success to the meeting and declared opened the Sixteenth Special Session of the Conference of Ministers of the SRFC.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND DESIGNATION OF REPORTERS

5. After review and discussion, the agenda was adopted (Appendix 2 of this report).
6. Senegal and Sierra Leone were appointed as rapporteurs of this session. They were supported by the staff of the Permanent Secretariat of the SRFC.

PRESENTATIONS

7. The Head of the Department of Research and Information System of the SRFC made a presentation on the sustainable exploitation of small pelagics in the subregion. The presentation dwelt on the importance of small pelagic in terms of contributions to the Member States' budgets and revenues, to GDP, to food security and job creation. Due to a heavy fishing pressure, aggravated by the presence of a high IUU fishing, this resource is fully exploited or overexploited. The Head of the Department has indicated that small pelagics are shared resources. Consequently, and in accordance with the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), Member States shall directly or through appropriate subregional or regional organizations, agree upon the measures necessary to coordinate and ensure their conservation and development. To this end, the Permanent Secretariat has accompanied the States in the establishment of consultative committees at both national and regional levels and the development of strategic directions for



sustainable management of small pelagics. The success and effectiveness of these directions are likely to be heavily dependent on the strengthening of the mission and mandate of the Commission as well as the political will of Member States.

8. The Head of the Department of Monitoring, Control and Surveillance of Fisheries Management of the SRFC presented the document on the sub-regional strategy for the fight against IUU fishing. This contribution focused on (i) the context and the problem of IUU fishing in the SRFC area, (ii) the elements of the strategy for the fight against IUU fishing in the sub-region, namely the state of the resource, fisheries management policy instruments and the inventory of SCS means in the SRFC area and (iii) the methodology for the implementation of this strategy with a five years (05) action plan identifying priority activities to be achieved in the first three years.

DISCUSSIONS ON THE PRESENTATIONS

9. His Excellency the Chairman of the Conference of the Ministers thanked the presenters for the quality of their presentations before opening the discussion, after which the following instructions were given to the SRFC:
 - a. Update data on IUU fishing, including those concerning Guinea and take into consideration, the recently adopted management measures by the authorities of that country;
 - b. Update other statistics on fishing, particularly on catches and fishing effort, etc.;
 - c. Learn from the experiences and best practices of other regions and countries on collaborative management on shared fishery resources and the fight against IUU fishing;
 - d. Emphasize on joint fisheries agreements to better manage the fishery resources of the sub-region, especially those on shared resources;
 - e. Involve the SRFC in the negotiations of fisheries agreements initiated by member States whether those agreements are among Member States or with third countries;
 - f. Validate the document on the sub-regional MCS strategy by the Coordinating Committee prior to its adoption by the Conference of Ministers;
 - g. Submit, no later than June 2014, the document on the sub-regional MCS strategy to already identified technical and financial partners;
10. With regard to the validation of the document on the sub-regional strategy to fight against IUU fishing the chairman of the Coordinating Committee reminded the session that the document has already been submitted to the Committee during their Session of March 2013 and recommendations for the approval of the

The bottom of the page features several handwritten signatures and initials in blue ink. From left to right, there are: a stylized 'A' or 'B' mark; a signature that appears to be 'A'; a signature that appears to be 'JP'; a signature that appears to be 'B'; a signature that appears to be 'A'; a signature that appears to be 'A'; and a signature that appears to be 'A'. The number '4' is written in the bottom right corner.

document were already made. Following the decision of the Conference of Ministers to convene the Coordinating Committee for the validation of the document and because of the financial constraints of the SRFC, States have committed themselves to covering their travel costs and accommodation.

11. The Acting Permanent Secretary reported on the ongoing negotiations with Luxembourg on AFR021 project "Support to Monitoring, Control and Surveillance of Fisheries in West Africa". She requested guidance for further action in relation to the fact that Luxembourg is not intending on taking into account in the development of the project the most vulnerable Member States to IUU fishing particularly Guinea, Guinea Bissau and Sierra Leone. The Conference of Ministers instructed the Acting Permanent Secretary to pursue the negotiation with Luxembourg in order to account the member states in the development of the new project on IUU fishing. This will guaranty coherence in the regional approach to fight IUU fishing in the sub region.
12. In addition, after discussions on the presentations, the Member States have drafted a declaration on IUU fishing called the "Dakar Declaration". This latter appears in Appendix 3 of this report.
13. This session was an opportunity for the SRFC to celebrate its 29th anniversary. On this occasion, an exhibition of photos on IUU fishing, Marine Protected Areas, Convention on MAC, fishing practices in the sub-region, among others, was officially opened. This event took place on the afternoon of March 27th and was attended by the delegates and guests.

DECISIONS TAKEN DURING THE CLOSED SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS

14. The Conference of Ministers met in closed session on Friday, March 28, 2014. In the absence of a consensus on the appointment to the post of Permanent Secretary, the following decisions were taken
 - Extend the Acting Permanent Secretary mandate for a period of three months, renewable once;
 - Mandate the Acting Permanent Secretary to initiate the procedure for amending the statutory texts of the SRFC;
 - Ask Member States to submit proposals for the amendment of the statutory documents of the SRFC;
 - Leverage on technical meetings of the Coordinating Committee to reflect on the amendments thereto;
 - Mandate the Chairman of the Conference of Ministers, together with at least one of his peers to lead a mission before the Heads of State or Government to facilitate the decision on the appointment of a Permanent Secretary;



CLOSING CEREMONY

15. On behalf of his colleagues, His Excellency Moussa Conde, Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture of the Republic of Guinea, thanked the Government and people of the Republic of Senegal for the hospitality and the special attention extended to the delegations during their stay in Senegal.
16. The Chairman of the Conference of Ministers thanked his colleagues for the quality of their work. He also thanked the technical and financial partners for their continued support to Member States in achieving the objectives of the SRFC.
17. Before closing the meeting, the Chairman of the Conference of Ministers of the SRFC indicated that the adoption of the report of this session will be made electronically.

Dakar, le 28 mars 2014

The Conference of Ministers

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Mr Adalberto VIEIRA



REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA

Mr. Mass Axi GYE



01/05/14

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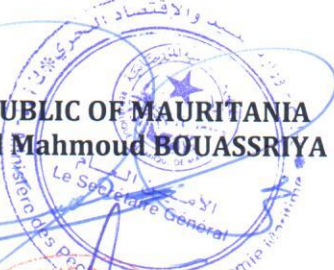

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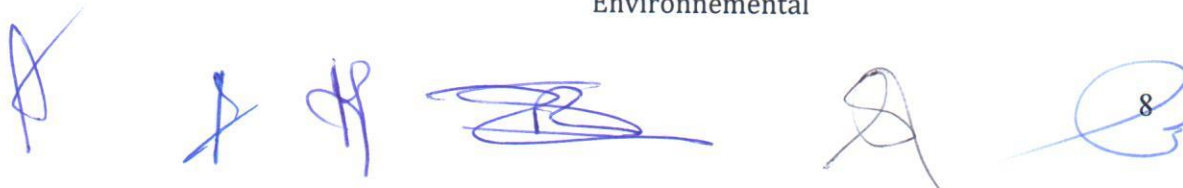
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ANNEX II AGENDA

Thursday, 27 March, 2014

8:30 – 9:00	Arrival of Participants
9:00-9:30	Arrival of Officials
9:30 – 10:00	Opening ceremony <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Speech by the Acting Permanent Secretary➤ Welcome address by the Minister Fisheries of Senegal➤ Opening address by the Chairman-in Office of the Conference of Ministers of the SRFC➤ Presentation of participants of the session
10:30 – 10:50	COFFEE BREAK
10:50 – 11:00	Adoption of the draft agenda and appointment of reporters
11:00 – 11:20	Presentation on fisheries resources (by the Head of the Department of "Research & Information Systems")
11:25 – 11:50	Presentation of the Regional Strategy for struggling against IUU Fishing (by the Head of Department of Monitoring-Control-Surveillance & Management of Fisheries)
11:55 – 2:00	General discussion – Other issues
2:00 – 3:00	LUNCH
3:00 – 4:00	Drafting of the Declaration on IUU (restricted Committee)
4:00 – 4:30	COFFEE BREAK
4:30 – 6:00	Exhibition on the SRFC
8:00	Dinner offered by the Ministry of Fisheries of Senegal

Friday, 28 March, 2014

9:30 – 11:00	Closed meeting of members of the Conference of Ministers
11:00 – 11:30	COFFEE BREAK
11:30 -1:00	Continuation of the closed meeting of members of the Conference of Ministers
1:00 – 3:00	LUNCH
3:00 – 4:00 Conference	Continuation and end of the closed meeting of members of the of Ministers
4:00 – 4:30	Declaration of the closed meeting of members of the Conference of Ministers
4:30 – 6:00	Press briefing / reading of the Declaration of Dakar on IUU fishing



ANNEX III : THE DAKAR DECLARATION

Draft Dakar Declaration On Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing

The Conference of Ministers in charge of fisheries matters of the Member States of the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC)

We, the Ministers in charge of fisheries matters of the Member States of the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC) at the sixteenth Extraordinary Session held from the 27th to 28th March 2014 in Dakar, Republic of Senegal

1. **Convinced with** the important role of the fisheries resources in the socio economic development of the countries of the sub region in terms of food security, poverty reduction and sustainable development;
2. **Strongly aware of** the persistence of Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing which result in overfishing, destruction of coastal and marine ecosystems, major stocks depletion, reduction of the sustainable livelihoods of fisheries stakeholders, unemployment, closure of several fishing companies and a threat to food security;
3. **Aware of** the lack of capacity of national and regional bodies in charge of monitoring, control and surveillance and the need to use national means for effective and efficient management of IUU fishing in the SRFC area;
4. **Reaffirming** our commitment to standards and norms in accordance with relevant international legal instruments including (i) the *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea*; (ii) the *Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, FAO*; (iii) the *International Plan of Action to Prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing*; and (iv) the *Agreement on Port State Measures to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing*;
5. **Taking into** account the legal instruments of the SRFC, including: (i) the Convention on the determination of the minimum conditions for access and exploitation of marine resources within the maritime zones under the jurisdiction of the Member States of the SRFC, commonly called "MAC Convention"; (ii) the Convention on Sub-Regional Cooperation in the exercise of hot pursuit and its Protocol on the practical arrangements for coordination of surveillance in the Member States of the SRFC;
6. **Reaffirming** our commitment to strengthen sub-regional cooperation by pooling our legal, scientific and operational means, and to take all appropriate measures to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing in the sub-region;

Commit Ourselves To:



- a) **Reaffirm** the sub-regional and international cooperation in the fight against IUU fishing and encourage the exchange of data and information among institutions;
- b) **Develop** and implement a regional Strategy in the fight against IUU fishing;
- c) **Strengthen** governance at (institutional and legal levels) of fisheries in our respective States by:
- Integrating the Convention of the SRFC on minimum conditions of access (MAC Convention) into national laws, as it fits, no later than July 2015 and ensure its implementation;
 - Signing protocols under the Convention on the Law of Maritime hot pursuit of the SRFC and Member States if not already done;
 - Signing the 2009 Agreement on Port State Measures to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing;
- d) **Deny** access to vessels which are recognized by the international community to have carried out IUU fishing;
- e) **Engage** the Permanent Secretary of the SRFC in bilateral and international negotiations on fisheries agreements undertaken by the Member States on request;
- f) **Take** all options to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing;

Urge all Member States to report on the progress of the implementation of these commitments in the next Ordinary Sessions of the Conference of Ministers;

Solemnly appeal to the international community to support the SRFC and its members States in their fight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing.

Done in Dakar, Republic of Senegal, March 28, 2014



The Conference of Ministers of the Sub Regional Fisheries Commission

**For the Republic
of Cabo Verde**



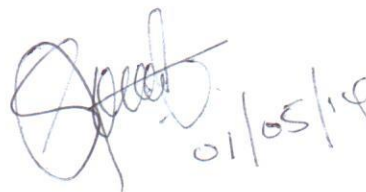
A blue ink signature is written over a circular official stamp. The stamp contains the text "Gabinete do Secretário de Estado dos Recursos Marinhos" and "O Secretário de Estado" around a central emblem.

**For the Republic
of the Guinea**



A blue ink signature.

**For the Republic
of The Gambia**



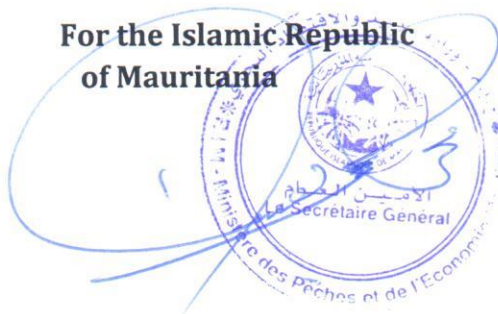
A blue ink signature followed by the date "01/05/14".

**For the Republic
of Guinea Bissau**



A blue ink signature followed by the date "17/05/2014".

**For the Islamic Republic
of Mauritania**



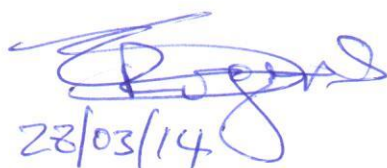
A blue ink signature is written over a circular official stamp. The stamp contains the text "الامين العام" and "Le Secrétaire Général" around a central emblem.

**For the Republic
of Senegal**



A blue ink signature is written over a circular official stamp. The stamp contains the text "REPUBLIQUE DU SENEGAL" and "Le Ministre" around a central emblem. Below the stamp is a red rectangular nameplate with the text "Haydar El Ali".

**For the Republic
of Sierra Leone**



A blue ink signature followed by the date "28/03/14".