



COMMISSION SOUS-RÉGIONALE DES PÊCHES
SUB-REGIONAL FISHERIES COMMISSION

PERMANENT SECRETARIAT

**REPORT OF THE 24th EXTRAORDINARY SESSION
OF THE SRFC COORDINATING COMMITTEE**

25-26 March 2013 - King Fahd Hotel - Dakar, Republic of Senegal

OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The Twenty fourth Extraordinary Session of the Coordinating Committee of the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC) was held in Dakar, Republic of Senegal, from 25th to 26th March 2013. The session was attended by all member States as well as representatives of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO/CCLME), the Management and Cooperation Agency between Senegal and Guinea-Bissau (AGC), INFOPÊCHE, the World Bank, the International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea (ITLOS), the Regional Fisheries Commission of the Gulf of Guinea (COREP), the Regional Network of Marine Protected Areas of West Africa (RAMPAO) and World Wildlife Fund (WWF). The list of participants is attached herewith (appendix 1).
2. The SRFC Permanent Secretary, Mr. Kane Cire Amadou, welcomed all participants. He informed them of the tragedy that occurred in Saint Louis, Senegal resulting in the death of several Senegalese fishermen. After observing a moment of silence in memory of the departed, the Permanent Secretary thanked the Director of the Office of the Minister of Fisheries and Maritime Affairs of Senegal for accepting to preside over the opening ceremony on behalf of the Minister. He then thanked the Senegalese authorities for hosting the present session and for the excellent working conditions of the meeting.
3. In his welcome address, Mr. Hassimou Tall, Director of Fisheries of Guinea and current Chairman of the SRFC Coordinating Committee reminded participants of the need to strengthen sub-regional cooperation in order to address the crisis situation prevailing in the fisheries sector. This situation, he indicated, is characterized inter alia by the over-exploitation of fisheries resources, the persistence of IUU fishing, the harsh competition for available stocks, the gradual degradation of marine ecosystems, constraints relating to the enhancement and commercialization of fish products. In order to remedy this situation, States should agree on measures to be taken for an enhanced management of their resources. He further underscored that the presence of Coordinating Committee members and the numerous other participants at this important session is a strong indication of their interest in our organization. After setting the scene for the meeting, he reiterated his gratitude to the highest authorities of the Republic of Senegal for accepting to host this present session.
4. In his address, the Director of the Office of the Minister of Fisheries and Maritime Affairs, Mr. Abdou Fouta Diakhoumpa, expressed his satisfaction in participating at this present session. He also emphasized that this session was being organized in prelude to the Conference of Ministers and the Commemoration of the 28th Anniversary of our prestigious institution. He welcomed the effective participation of member States and partners to this session, a sign of the importance they give to the SRFC. He then urged participants to thoroughly consider all issues on the agenda and informed that member States were looking forward to the results of this meeting. He finally declared open the 24th Extraordinary Session of the Coordinating Committee.

PRESENTATION AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND DESIGNATION OF RAPPORTEURS

5. The draft agenda was reviewed and the following issues raised: the need to include on the list of agenda items (in conformity with the terms of reference of the firm APAVE), the presentation of the report on the pre-selection of candidates for the position of SRFC Permanent Secretary.

Following a lengthy debate, delegations decided to place this issue under the agenda item "Any other business". Participants then reviewed and adopted the agenda (see appendix 2).

6. The Gambia and Mauritania were designated as rapporteurs for this session. They were assisted in this task by the Permanent Secretariat.

PRESENTATION OF THE RESULTS OF THE WORKSHOP ON SMALL PELAGICS (REGIONAL POLICY, ACTION PLAN) HELD IN NOUAKCHOTT IN FEBRUARY 2013

7. The Head of the Department of Research and Information Systems at the SRFC, Mr. Hamady Diop, presented the results of the workshop on small pelagics held in Nouakchott (Mauritania) in February 2013. This meeting, which was organized in collaboration with FAO through CCLME, was an extension of activities initiated by the SRFC to put in place consensus-building processes at the sub-regional level. It was attended by all SRFC member countries with the exception of Cape Verde. An agreement was reached during this meeting on strategic guidelines for a sustainable management of small pelagics.

These guidelines will significantly contribute to promoting the sustainable exploitation and collaborative management of small pelagics. Expected results include abundant stocks of small pelagics in non-degraded ecosystems, the ecosystem approach to fisheries integrated into the management system, and economically viable fisheries that meet the needs of current and future generations.

Following this presentation, discussions focused on:

1. The need for all SRFC member States to benefit from the small pelagics project;
2. Strengthening of scientific cooperation with CECAF;
3. The evolution of the SRFC's mandate from a cooperation institution to an integration institution;
4. The exchange of experiences between countries on the management of small pelagics;
5. A better assessment of the importance of fisheries to national economies;
6. The establishment of an additional protocol to the Convention on Minimum Access Conditions (MAC) on artisanal fisheries taking into account aspects relating to the sustainable management of small pelagics.

PRESENTATION OF THE RESULTS OF THE WORKSHOP ON IUU FISHING HELD IN DAKAR IN FEBRUARY 2013 (Draft MCS action plan, draft resolution on the request for advisory opinion)

8. The Head of the Department of Monitoring, Control and Surveillance of Fisheries (MCS), Mr. Babacar Ba, presented the results of the workshop on IUU fishing organized by the SRFC in February 2013. After presenting the context of IUU fishing in the region, pointing out the opportunities offered by the SRFC and describing the constraints, Mr. Ba presented the MCS-related results of this workshop. These results led to the approval of the SRFC's draft 2013-2015 MCS action plan which mainly centers on seventeen (17) activities including specific objectives and objectively verifiable indicators. The following issues were discussed after this presentation:
 1. the practical modalities for the financing of the action plan;
 2. the lack of means for MCS and appeals for resources to be pooled at the sub-regional level to better combat IUU fishing;
 3. the promotion and harmonization of the VMS system at the sub-regional level both in terms of equipment and legislation, and the coupling of this system with the presence of observers on board fishing vessels.
9. The Head of the Department for the Harmonization of Policies and Legislation, Mrs. Diénaba Bèye Traoré, presented the results of the workshop on IUU fishing relating to the legal aspects. She provided an update on the list of regional and international legal instruments on combating IUU fishing. It was agreed that the expertise available within the Tribunal on the law of the sea (ITLOS) could be used in the best interests of the SRFC and member States more so in the context of reviewing the rights and obligations under international law in general and the law of the sea in particular. The workshop concluded that there is a need to adapt national legislations to these instruments for their proper and effective implementation.

The Head of Department also reported on amendments proposed by this workshop: replacing, in the draft resolution, the term “gives mandate” by “**authorizes**”.

The representative of ITLOS, Professor Tafsir Malick Ndiaye, supported the information provided by the Permanent Secretariat by confirming the advantages of the Tribunal's advisory procedure as well as the numerous innovations contained in the MAC convention:

- 1 Firstly, the referral method (Article 33);
- 2 Then, the definition of IUU fishing contained in article 3.1 of the CCRF of the FAO; and
- 3 Finally, Title IV of the MAC convention (port State measures and IUU fishing) which introduces for the first time the 2009 agreement on port State measures.
- 4 Article 33 of the MAC convention facilitates implementation of Article 138 of the procedural rules of ITLOS which allows for this institution to “give

an advisory opinion on a legal question if an international agreement related to the purposes of the Convention specifically provides for the submission to the Tribunal of a request for such an opinion”.

- 5 The time for a ruling to be made (eight months) is extremely short in comparison to other existing permanent international jurisdictions.

Participants expressed the urgent need to harmonize national legislations on fisheries. The SRFC could, in this regard, play a repository and depository role with a view to making the relevant information available in real time.

PRESENTATION AND REVIEW OF THE AUDITOR’S REPORT ON THE 2012 ACCOUNTS

10. The Auditor presented the audit report on the 2012 accounts of the SRFC. According to the auditor, the financial statements give a true and fair view of the SRFC accounts and accurately reflect the assets, financial position and results of its operation for the 2012 fiscal year.
11. The Coordinating Committee took note of the conclusions of the audit report on the 2012 fiscal year accounts.

OTHER ISSUES

12.APAVE:

The SRFC Permanent Secretary informed the members of the Coordinating Committee that APAVE's report was addressed exclusively to the Conference of Ministers.

13.Co-management/MPA project (AFD):

Pursuant to the decisions of the Conference of Ministers during its session held in Conakry in December 2012, the current Chairman contacted the Director General of AFD to request a six-month extension for the project. The Coordinating Committee was informed that this issue was being examined.

14.MCS project:

States should become more engaged in sub-regional missions to combat IUU fishing. For sustainability purposes, States were requested to accompany the process of drafting the document on the sustainability of MCS financing in the SRFC zone. A meeting of the various stakeholders will be convened by the end of June to harmonize intervention areas in MCS.

15.Workshop on artisanal fisheries:

Participants were informed of the organization from 23 to 26 April 2013 of a workshop on artisanal fisheries. The objective is to present the findings of

diagnostic studies on artisanal fisheries over the past ten years and the study on state-of-the-art in co-management.

The workshop is expected to develop strategic guidelines for SRFC interventions in support of States.

16. Mapping of national fisheries legislations:

A mapping exercise is currently being conducted in Mauritania, Senegal, Gambia and Guinea.

17. MCS cooperation with the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg:

The Permanent Secretary informed of the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg's commitment to support the SRFC in the acquisition of satellite means for communication, detection and monitoring of vessels.

18. Results of the CITES meeting:

Pursuant to the recommendations of the Conference of Ministers and the CITES workshop organized by the SRFC in February 2013, participants were informed of the inclusion of 3 species of sharks (hammerhead, oceanic whitetip and porbeagle) as well as manta rays in Appendix II of CITES. Freshwater sawfish was included in Appendix I.

Participants were also informed that the European Union, through the ACP Fish II programme, financed a study on the harmonization of indicator data collection, encoding and processing to feed the SRFC observatory on sharks. A workshop to present the findings of this study will be held on 9 and 10 April in Dakar. It will be attended by focal points of the strategic action plan for sharks in the seven SRFC countries.

19. Validation of studies on the Dashboard (West Africa Regional Fisheries Programme-WARFP):

Missions were conducted in each State participating in the WARFP to assess existing information systems and agree on indicators. These assessments were validated in each participating country. The harmonization of the various national databases and the architecture of the information system were validated by WARFP participating countries during a sub-regional workshop.

20. Dissemination of and awareness-raising on the MAC Convention:

The SRFC thanked the PRCM for the constant support provided in the implementation of the MAC convention. Communication materials (posters, leaflets, brochures, CDs, DVDs, films, roadshows) were produced. Support will be provided to member States to raise awareness on the Convention.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the discussions, the Coordinating Committee made the following recommendations to the Conference of Ministers:

21. Recommendation 1: Small pelagics

Instruct the Permanent Secretariat to facilitate the exchange of experiences on the equitable and sustainable management of small pelagics for harmonization purposes by integrating such aspects into the protocol on the implementation of the MAC Convention and relating to artisanal fisheries.

Regarding the strategic policy paper on the sustainable management of small pelagics, the Coordinating Committee recommends its technical validation at the regional level.

It was recommended that the “small pelagics” project should be extended to all member States.

22. Recommendation 2: 2013-2015 MCS action plan

Approve the 2013-2015 MCS action plan.

23. Recommendation 3: Draft resolution on requesting the advisory opinion of the International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea (ITLOS)

Approve the draft resolution on requesting the advisory opinion of the International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) after consideration of the results of the workshop on combating IUU fishing held in Dakar on 25 and 26 February 2013 and additional information provided by the representative of ITLOS.

Submission to the Tribunal of a request can be made as required. This is however subject to the decision of the Conference of Ministers.

24. Recommendation 4: Harmonization of legislations

Establish a mechanism enabling member States to have relevant real-time information on fisheries legislations in order to update these in a rapidly changing international legal context.

25. Recommendation 5: Mapping of national legislations on fisheries

Extend the mapping of national legislations on fisheries to include all SRFC member States.

26. Recommendation 6: Auditor’s report on the 2012 fiscal year accounts

Discharge the Permanent Secretary for the management of the 2012 fiscal year accounts.

27. Recommendation 7: Expiration of the auditor's mandate

Take note of the expiration of the auditor's mandate in conformity with the statutory provisions of the SRFC and recommends that the Conference of Ministers addresses a word of commendation to the auditor for the work accomplished.

CLOSING CEREMONY OF THE SESSION

- 28.** The Coordinating Committee thanked the Government of Senegal for the warm welcome extended to its members and the excellent working conditions of the meeting.
- 29.** The current Chairman of the Coordinating Committee congratulated and thanked all participants before declaring closed the 24th Extraordinary Session of the SRFC Coordinating Committee.

Done at Dakar, on 26 March 2013

THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Appendix I: List of participants

Appendix II: Agenda

**24th Extraordinary Session
of the SRFC Coordinating Committee
(Dakar, 25 to 26 March 2013)**

Draft agenda and work programme

Sunday 24 March 2013

Arrival of experts and guests (check-in at hotels)

Monday 25 March 2013

- 08h30 – 09h30** Registration of participants and guests
- 09h30 – 10h30** **Opening ceremony**
- Introductory remarks by the Permanent Secretary
 - Message of thanks by the current Chairman of the Coordinating Committee, Mr. Hassimiou TALL
 - Opening address by Honourable Papa DIOUF, Minister of Fisheries and Maritime Affairs of the Republic of Senegal or his representative
- 10h30 – 11h00** **Coffee break**
- 11h00 – 11h15** Presentation and adoption of the draft agenda and work programme and designation of rapporteurs
- 11h15 – 12h00** Presentation of the results of the workshop on small pelagics (Regional policy, Action Plan and Co-management & MPA capitalization) held in Nouakchott in February 2013
- 12h-13h00** Discussions and conclusions on the regional policy on small pelagics continued
- 13h00 – 14h30** **Lunch break**
- 14h30 – 16h00** Presentation of the results of the workshop on IUU fishing held in Dakar in February 2013 (Draft MCS action plan, draft resolution on requesting advisory opinion)
- 16h00 – 16h30** **Coffee break**
- 16h30 – 17h30** Presentation and discussions on the Auditor's report on the 2012 fiscal year accounts
- 17h30-18h00** Any other business (for information)
- AFD and MCS projects
 - Workshop on artisanal fisheries
 - Results of the mapping exercise on national fisheries legislations
 - MCS cooperation with Luxemburg
 - Results of the CITES meeting
 - Validation of studies on the Dashboard (WARFP)

- Dissemination of and awareness-raising on the MAC Convention

Tuesday 26 March 2013

09h00-10h30	Drafting of the report of the Coordinating Committee
10h30-11h	Coffee break
11h00 -13h00	Presentation and adoption of the report of the Coordinating Committee
13h00 - 14h00	Closing ceremony
14h00	Lunch break
Afternoon	Free (consultations between experts and their heads of delegation)