

EDITORIAL

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The need to pool efforts for marine resources research



The resources of the oceans dangerously diminish as a result of overfishing, pollution, global warming, and illegal fishing. This decline is particularly worrisome in developing countries where fish is of major importance in terms of food security and a source of income for millions of people.

In its Strategic Action Plan (2002-2010), the SRFC clearly identified among its priorities the promotion and development of scientific cooperation, especially between member States for a more sustainable exploitation of fishery resources and protection of marine and coastal ecosystems in the sub-region. One problem is that fisheries sector in West Africa suffers from inconsistencies between national policies, making it difficult to manage fisheries resources threatened by overexploitation. These distortions are evident in the negotiation of fisheries agreements (with SRFC countries, foreign countries, European or Asian), protection policies, access conditions (to resources, and customs and tax policies).

The positive perception of fisheries sector contribution to GDP, and in the context of the implementation of policies to poverty reduction, is increasing in national governance.

The concept of governance underpins several points including that of "good governance" as a component of development. This is a set of principles specific to the implementation of consistent political strategies, with clearly defined objectives. To achieve this, the redevelopment of the States' role in the governance of fisheries seems necessary. For example, the high mobility of fishing fleets in coastal West Africa is ignoring the local management framework and the issue should be considered on both national and regional level, especially in the context of public-private partnership. The management of natural resources requires a flexible approach that should not be confined within narrow sectoral or institutional shackles. In the fisheries sector, as elsewhere it is the context that should determine the approach.

In the West African region, the SRFC is central to the policy dialogue and technical assistance necessary to facilitate the emergence, expression and implementation of awareness and political will for sustainable management of fisheries. For the countries of the SRFC, there is need for a good legibility of national fisheries policies in terms of priorities, strategies, objectives and planning. Fisheries research must be the engine of this exercise. The development of scientific cooperation in the region must be a deep reflection at all of the SRFC Member States. It should be an essential role for the Permanent Secretariat to define a new strategy for scientific cooperation, which is more dynamic and more responsive to current developments in the fisheries sector, particularly in the artisanal fisheries. Relevant recommendations have already been made during the "Regional Workshop on the Development of Artisanal Fisheries in West Africa" held in Praia (Cape Verde) from 26 to 29 September 2006.

What kind of fisheries research should be in place to address concerns and expectations of different categories of stakeholders / customers, and especially to get to reverse the current trend? This is the major issue to which we should respond immediately with an appropriate and concerted approach.

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PROJECTS UPDATE



Protected Marine Areas (PMAs)

Hamady Diop (DRIS) and Philippe TOUS (Project Coordinator) visited Cape Verde from 4 to 7 May for a mission of framing with institutions and partners involved in creating a network of Fish Aggregating Devices (FAD) nationwide. Meetings was held with the Directorate General of Fisheries (DGP) and FAO in Praia, and with the National Institute for Fisheries Development (INDP) in Mindelo. The output is that support form the project should focus on the legal and institutional aspects of the co-management of FADs, as well as the establishment of a participatory system for monitoring their ecological and socioeconomic impacts. The content and modalities of implementation of this support will be clarified during the next quarter.



SRAP– Sharks

The project team was on a mission to St. Louis (Senegal), on May, 10th to 12th, 2010. The objective was to learn through investigations on the origin of the increase in catches of sharks generally and evidence on recent catches of sawfish in particular. This mission has: (1) noted the increase in catches (targeted and accessories) of shark in the area of St. Louis (2) verified the veracity of landing of particular sawfish species in Saint Louis (3) made a report of the statement of eyewitnesses in the absence of any trace of the specific landing, (4) raised awareness of fishermen on

the urgency of protecting this species in West African waters and (5) mobilized the investigators of the project and other local actors for the establishment of a warning system for the safeguarding of sawfish.

The SRAP-Sharks team has also visited the landing sites of sharks and processing areas of shark products. Eyewitnesses from the observation of sawfish landings were interviewed . They provided evidence to confirm the assumed event. An awareness raising session was conducted for fisheries officers on the importance of safeguarding of the species, and the re-conversion of actors .



"Small pelagic" Project

A one day meeting organized by the Small Pelagics Project with partnership of Fisheries department of the Republic of the Gambia was held at the Conference Room of the Surveillance Operations Coordinating Unit in Banjul on Wednesday, 7th April 2010. The objective of the meeting is to support the creation of an advisory committee for small pelagic resources in The Gambia.

The SRFC delegation made of M. Hachim EL Ayoubi, the Project coordinator and Dr Hamady Diop, Head of Department of research and information system undertake a mission to the Republic of the Gambia from 06 to 09 April 2010 and participate to the workshop. The meeting was chaired by M. Asberr Mendy, Focal point of the Project near Gambia fisheries department.

Participants were drawn from Fisheries Department staff in the office and in the field. M. Dawda Saine, the Executive Secretary of the National Associations of Artisanal Fisheries Operators (NAAFO), and M. Ousman Bojang, Coordinator, GAMFEDA plus fishermen from the 7 landing sites along the Atlantic Coast were present.

The project coordinator informed the meeting that due to the success of the first phase of June 2007 to June 2009 the project is been extended for another 18 months from July 2009 to December 2010 by the SRFC through the financial support of the Dutch and French Cooperation. He highlighted some activities of the Project during the first phase including the workshops and seminars.

The extension phase has the same objective as the first phase and the planned activities will focus on strengthening management tools and cooperation among the four countries through supporting the establishment of national and regional advisory committees.

Recall that the project, implemented by the SRFC, aims to support the process leading to coordinated policies and management of the small pelagic fisheries between the major countries bordering the Canary Current upwelling system: Gambia, Mauritania Morocco and Senegal. Basically, the project focuses on strengthening the institutions and instruments of cooperation for the joint management of these shared stocks among the Kingdom of Morocco and Senegal, Gambia and Mauritania, three Member States of the SRFC.

EVENTS

Sub-Regional workshop on Vessels Monitoring Systems (VMS)

A sub regional workshop on the Tracking System (VMS) was held in Conakry on 12 and 13 May 2010. The opening ceremony was chaired by the Colonel Mamadou Korka Diallo, Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture of the Republic of Guinea.

The workshop aimed to feed back on the results of different missions to member states on the inventory of Control, Surveillance and Monitoring (SCS) systems. It was also an opportunity to review the rudiments of strategy and SRFC sub-regional action plan on Vessels Monitoring System (VMS) in the fight against illegal unreported unregulated fishing.

The workshop resulted in recommendations that include:

- Analysis results of the missions inventory of Monitoring Control and Surveillance (MCS) in the sub region, conducted by consultants on the basis of recommendations from the workshop in Nouakchott and responses to a questionnaire initially administered in visited countries;
- States members to communicate to Department of Monitoring, Control and Surveillance, the listing of the boarding, in perspective of the establishment of a sub regional register of Fisheries,
- Adoption of a three-step timetable from 15 June to end September 2010. The consultants will send a first draft of the action plan (June-July) to SRFC and FAO, followed by consultations in Member States. The revision of the action plan on the basis of comments of Member States is scheduled for August. The final version will be presented in September at a workshop in Praia, Cape Verde (tbc).

Remember that each member state should be represented at the workshop in Conakry by his national lead CBS. With the exception of Cape Verde and Sierra Leone, all Member States have responded to the invitation. Also participating in the workshop, the ambassadors of Guinea-Bissau, Senegal, Sierra Leone, FAO Resident Representative in Guinea, members of the Cabinet of Ministry of Fisheries of Guinea

.4th session of the AU Regional Advisory committee (RAC)

In the framework of the Strategic Partnership Investment Fund for Sustainable Fisheries (SPFIF), the 4th session of the Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) was held from 1 to 3 June 2010 in Walvis Bay (Namibia). The objective was to provide a platform where regional fisheries organizations and LME programs, discuss, share and comment on their concept notes, review reports on approved projects, build relationships and identify synergies between their programs and disseminate lessons learned from their implementations. The African Union and International Bureau of Animal Resources (AU-IBAR), and the regional fishery commissions and some African Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs) were represented.

The Strategic Partners Meeting that followed on June 4, allowed each participating institution to report focusing on development strategies, priorities and experiences to share. The SRFC informed on its important institutional reforms, the increasing portfolio of projects with various technical and financial partners (European Union, World Bank, FAO, Germany, France, Netherlands, FIBA, PRCM). It reported also learned about the Large Marine Ecosystem Project of the Canary Current (CCLME), the Regional Programme for Fisheries in West Africa (WARFP) and the draft MCS / WAEMU / SRFC / EU project. Its priority areas were cited: the evolution of its mandate to become a regional e integration body, the reduction or elimination of illegal, unreported, unregulated (IUU) fisheries, the management of shared and common interest stocks, and strengthening of the cooperation between Member States to adopt common positions in international and regional fora.

Recall that the AU emphasized the need for a better definition of competency areas of regional economic, political or technical organisations in change of fisheries and communicated its intention to raise it up in a meeting, in the coming months.

The CSRFP was represented by Mrs Dienaba Bèye Traoré, Head of Policy and Harmonization of Laws Department in the SRFC.

Co-operation and Partnership agreement between EMUWA and the SRFC

West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) and the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC) has decided to establish partnership and cooperation agreement to promote the consistent implementation of development programs in the fisheries sector. The document of agreement was signed on June 3, 2010 respectively by Mrs. Soumaila Cisse, President of the WAEMU Commission and KANE Ciré Amadou, Permanent Secretary of the SRFC. The agreement targets cooperation and coordination in the development and implementation of programs and regional action plans to fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fisheries, management of fisheries, surveillance operations, the development of capacities for scientific research and technical capacity of Member States for a sustainable management and conservation of fisheries resources.

INTRODUCTION TO ...

The Department Research and Information Systems

As part of the restructuring of its Permanent Secretariat, the PRSP has established a new organization with three and two Departments Technical Services. The Department of Research and Information Systems is responsible for coordinating research activities on the fisheries of common interest, shared stocks and ecosystems. It oversees the development of scientific excellence, structuring expertise of the SRFC and ensures the establishment and management of comprehensive databases and structured integrating all information related to fishing (statistical, biological, economic and oceanographic). The Department is headed by Mr. Hamady DIOP

DIARY....

Periods	Activities/Events	Focal point	Venues
10-12 May	Mission to Saint Louis to investigate on sawfish landings	SRAP-Sharks Senegal	Saint Louis
10-15 May	Field work on the interaction between marine ecosystems and poverty	Renaud	Saint Louis
11-12 May	Mid term meeting of the regional project against costal erosion	Philippe et Hamady	Dakar
11-14 May	Workshop on Vessels Monitoring Systems (VMS),	Kane Ciré/ Dienaba/ Sylla	Conakry, Guinea
17 May	Deadline for submission of contributions to Ecology 2010 colloquium – Understanding of interactions in the marine ecosystem (2-4 September 2010).	Philippe	Montpellier (colloquium)
19-22 May	Parliamentarian and local leaders awareness raising workshop on fisheries hydrocarbons and mangroves.	Renaud	Dakar
25-29 May	Visit of exchange between Joal, Kayar and Saint Louis PMAs on the principal of shared governance	Renaud	Jaol
01-04 June	4th Session of the Regional Consultative Committee on the strategic partnership for the Sustainable Fisheries Investment Fund.	Diènaba	Walvis Bay, Namibia
06-12 June	International Sharks Congress	Mika	Cairns, Australia
07-14 June	Mission to support research on small scale fishermen migration in the sub-region	Renaud	Bissau Guinea
14 - 16 June	AMPHORE project meeting	Philippe	Toubacouta (Senegal)
21 - 25 June	3rd international SIZEMIC workshop	Philippe	Barcelona (Spain)
28- 01 Juil.0	Forum du PRCM	Hamady	Nouakchott
29-30 June	CLS/SATCOM seminar on ARGO beacon	Diènaba	Abidjan
02-03 July.	3rd general assembly of WAPMAN	Philippe	Nouakchott