



*Confédération Africaine des Organisations
Professionnelles de la Pêche Artisanale*

*African Confederation of Professional
Organizations of Artisanal Fisheries*

Transparency in African maritime fisheries – a key component of sustainable development

CAOPA Statement

It is with great hope that we, leaders of the Confederation of African artisanal fishing organizations (CAOPA), which brings together professionals, - men and women- , from 15 African countries, welcome the Declaration of Nouakchott, on '**Transparency and Sustainable Development in Africa**', adopted on January 20th, at the initiative of His Excellency Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz, President of Mauritania and Chairman of the African Union.

On this occasion, Mauritania has committed, and invited the other countries members of the African Union and of the international community, to take measures to increase transparency in the management of fisheries and to tackle illicit financial flows, noting that transparency is an essential element for sustainable development.

The CAOPA fully supports this point of view, and since its seminar on 'Transparency in African Maritime Fisheries', in 2011, has made concrete proposals on this issue. These proposals were presented in various fora, including the European Parliament.

In Mauritania, fishing sector professionals and civil society also put the issue of transparency on the table at a seminar organized two years ago by the Fisheries Ministry, with the support of GIZ.

CAOPA concrete proposals to improve transparency in African maritime fisheries include:

- The publication, with regular updating, of the list of licenses granted to fishing vessels, and the conditions linked of these licenses;
- The publication of fishing agreements signed with third countries or with foreign companies;
- The publication of information on development projects for the fisheries sector.

Transparency on these aspects is not only a way to fight illegal practices and corruption, as pointed by the signatories of the Declaration of Nouakchott, but it is also important for a better knowledge of the fishing activities in our countries, their impacts on our populations and our eco-systems, and for ensuring that adequate measures towards the sustainable development of our fisheries and the well-being of artisanal fishing communities.

Mbour, 23/01/2015