

Report on the workshop on fisheries governance in Senegal

By Mamadou FAYE: Biologist - Fisheries and Environment Expert



Group photo: Fisheries governance workshop (Aliou Diallo CAOPA 2021)

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1. Background / justification

In Senegal, the fisheries sector is an essential component of rural development. It plays a strategic role in supporting the growth of the national economy by contributing to the reduction of the balance of payments deficit and unemployment.

Fishing plays a major role in public policy for job creation, particularly in the artisanal sub-sector. Fish is an important source of animal protein for the Senegalese population, providing around 70% of their protein intake. Fishing is therefore an essential component of the State's food security policy.

However, this sector is currently experiencing difficulties due to the strong pressure exerted on the resource. This situation, which is the result of poor management and irrational exploitation of fisheries resources, risks jeopardizing the sustainability of the sector.

The current fisheries management models implemented in Senegal have not been able to adapt to 'informal' artisanal fisheries, which have consistently posed intractable monitoring and evaluation issues and appear to be reduced to isolated resource extraction systems when they should be considered as integrated, diversified systems providing sustainable services.

The solution to this problem must involve virtuous, effective and efficient governance of the sector in order to ensure sound management and sustainable exploitation of the fisheries resource.

Thus, in view of these difficulties and the challenges of the sustainable development of artisanal fisheries, a deep reflection must be carried out in order to institute a governance model that is appropriate and adapted to Senegal's maritime fisheries in general and artisanal fisheries in particular, which constitutes a challenge for the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries in a context of food security and poverty eradication.



For all these reasons, the African Confederation of Professional Organizations of Artisanal Fisheries (CAOPA) has taken the following steps

the initiative to organize a panel of specialists in the various aspects of fisheries management governance and professional actors in the artisanal fisheries sector to reflect on the strategic directions that could be taken to set-up good governance of the Senegalese maritime fisheries sector and mainly for the artisanal fisheries sub-sector.

2. Objectives

The reflection should be focused on finding relevant answers to the question: What governance for artisanal fisheries? The exercise should lead to the analysis of some fundamental aspects of the governance of artisanal fisheries, notably those concerning

- The importance of data collection in the management of fisheries resources.
- The place of research in fisheries ;
- The importance of co-management in fisheries.

To this end, a day of reflection on governance for sustainable artisanal fisheries in Senegal was held on 21 October 2021 in Dakar, at the Ndiambour Hotel.

It brought together forty (40) participants made up of professional actors from the artisanal fisheries sector, the ACPRCG, the national press, NGOs working in the sector, the fisheries administration and the environment

3. Opening ceremony on fisheries governance in Senegal

In his speech, Mr Samba GUEYE, President of CONIPAS, congratulated CAOPA on this wonderful initiative. According to him, *“good governance in a sector as strategic as fisheries is crucial for a coastal country like ours, given our level of dependence on fisheries products.*

The artisanal fisheries sub-sector is sick and the severe diagnosis must go from habitats to consumption, through exploitation, valorisation without forgetting governance and equitable sharing of income.

Good governance in the fisheries sector should be a struggle for all and at all levels. Without it, our multiple actions for sustainable fisheries would be in vain. Both the administrations and the citizens must do everything possible to not only take the right management measures but also to give a true account of our actions in all responsibility.

The predominant place of fishing in public policies, especially in job creation, and the essential role that fish plays as a source of animal protein for about 70% of the Senegalese population, are all relevant elements for the state authorities to make every effort to guarantee food security and curb rampant poverty.

The crisis situation we are currently experiencing is unequivocal. In some localities, and this for at least eight (8) months, the actors do not have the raw material to develop their activities. And to support what I am saying, some landing quays are supplied with fishing products from outside.



Our sector still suffers from a lack of reliable statistical data, but also from a lack of proper implementation of co-management as a tool for sustainable development of fisheries based on development and management plans validated by all. We can make good decisions if we have good information and effective and efficient research, with sufficient means.

This is why, Mr. President of CAOPA, dear participants, we are taking part this morning in a workshop of capital importance and we hope that the results and recommendations that will come out of it will allow us to raise awareness and inform all the actors and decision-makers on all sides so that the fisheries sector can have a better future. He then ended his speech by wishing success during this day of exchanges.

Mr Gaoussou GUEYE, President of CAOPA, stressed the crisis in the fisheries sector, the economic and social value of the sector, and the need for better governance, taking into account the existence of the National Advisory Commission for Maritime Fisheries (CNCMP), the Local Artisanal Fisheries Councils (CLPA) and a fisheries code. For him, the recommendations of Mbour in 2013 are still relevant and the reflection must focus on their implementation. Since the National Commission on Small Pelagic has been replaced by the National Commission for the Support of Fisheries Management, the absence of representation of professional organizations poses a problem of transparency, which is a right for the operators of the resource which, according to the law, belongs to people. The stakes and challenges of fisheries are at the national, regional and international levels.

Can responsibility sharing advocated by co-management, the importance of landing statistics, the importance of research and human, technical and financial resources, and the empirical knowledge that has been accumulated, not lead to a better handling of sustainable fishing in Senegal? More and more questions are being asked about the origin of the fish consumed and processed in our country? Responsibilities are shared; the requirements of the consumer impose us to reconstitute the halieutic heritage which is fish.

Mr Sidya DIOUF that represents the Directorate of Maritime Fisheries in his speech, in addition to greetings, the gratitude of CAOPA for its participation in the governance of the fisheries sector, emphasized the place that the President of the Republic His Excellency Mr Macky SALL gives to fisheries in the reference document which is the PES, in the axis 1: *"Strengthening food security and wealth creation ... "*

The strategic axes of fishing in Senegal and especially artisanal fishing are, among others, to

- Fisheries reform in the face of TFP commitments and support ;
- Governance as a key pillar, dynamic IP, IUU, conflicts at sea ;
- The active and constructive participation of POs as a force for proposing inclusive solutions;
- The importance of bodies such as CLPAs and research support ;
- Consideration of the needs of future generations for rational exploitation;
- Raising awareness of good fishing practices among operators;
- The search for synergy of actions and the involvement of the population;
- The method, organization and skills to meet the challenge of coordinating actions.

Mr DIOUF thanked CAOPA for organizing this workshop and the experts for the knowledge they shared before declaring the workshop on *" fisheries governance in Senegal "* open



4. Presentations made during the workshop

4.1 The importance of statistical data collection: By Mamadou FAYE, Biologist, Fisheries Consultant.

Mr FAYE in his presentation addressed the following aspects indicated on the plan:

PLAN

Introduction

1. What is data?
2. Why is data collection important?
3. How to collect data in fishing?

What is data?

Statistical data may or may not be numerical, may be quantitative or qualitative, may be measurable or traceable, may be discrete or continuous, may or may not be derived from living matter and may evolve over time and space.

Why is data collection important?

The collection of data allows relevant questions to be answered, outcomes to be assessed and future probabilities and trends to be better anticipated.

The collection of up-to-date and reliable fisheries data enables fisheries development policies to be put on a sound footing, decisions to be made more rationally and fisheries resources to be managed responsibly.

Data collection is necessary to increase or preserve the welfare of stakeholders, or to generate income, as it reduces the risk of overexploitation and leads to improved exploitation patterns.

How to collect data in fishing?

- Interviews and discussions ;
- Questionnaires and survey forms ;
- Observations and measurements (sampling) ;
- Documents, records and satellite data ;
- Exchange groups (MARP);
- Oral histories and others.

Where to collect data

- At sea, in fishing units ;
- In landing sites and ports ;
- In on shore recovery units ;

- In various administrative departments and airports;
- Etc...

5. Quelques exemples et utilités.



6. Brochure de 126 espèces marines

ESPECES MARINES DE L'AFRIQUE DE L'OUEST

CAOPA

INTRODUCTORY NOTE
NOTE INTRODUCTIVE DE Monsieur Ganssou GUEYE, Président de la CAOPA.

The artisanal fisheries sector in West Africa contributes to food and nutritional security, employment and foreign exchange earnings. This contribution is increasingly threatened by various dimensions (global, regional and national (IRN)) fishing uncontrolled fishing, overfishing, poor management of the post-harvest chain, weak enforcement of laws and regulations, uncontrolled proliferation of fish and fish oil production facilities, climate change, etc.

Thus, in order to face these issues, the African Confederation of Professional Organizations of Artisanal Fisheries (CAOPA), as part of its program of activities directed by its partners, decided to organize a working workshop on the management of the fisheries sector in order to reinforce the knowledge of the fisheries actors on the management, development and conservation of aquatic resources and ecosystems.

The main expected outcomes of the training are the acquisition of knowledge on the status of fisheries development, the need and obligation to better manage and enhance fisheries resources, management tools and processes at different levels, national, regional and international, and the different methods relating to national and ecosystemic management of shared resources (ecosystem, environment and conservation programs and tools for research and aquatic environments).

This guide is one of the tools developed to help fisheries actors to better understand some of the marine species found in West Africa.

We would like to thank in advance our Technical and Financial Partners as well as all the artisanal fisheries actors.

4.2 The place of research in fisheries: Adama MBAYE sociologist researcher CRODT

Mr Adama MBAYE presented the following aspects:



Plan de présentation



- I. Contexte sollicitations de la Recherche**
- II. Domaines d'intervention**
- III. Solutions scientifiques attendues**
- IV. Rôle de la recherche participative**
- V. Expériences avec les projets**
- VI. Conclusion et recommandations**

Panel CAOPA: Quelle Gouvernance pour la Pêche Artisanale ? Hôtel Ndiambour, Dakar (Sénégal), 21 octobre 2021

Context of the research request

- Questioning the role of research during moments of crisis when scientific positions are revised and the limits and shortcomings of fisheries management policies are analysed;
- Actors (Professionals, Administration, Development Partners) are confronted with clear failures in the face of ambitions for management, management or development of fisheries;
- Failure of the actors to organize some activities, to foresee and regulate some conflicts;
- Complexity of the set of interactions of distinct natures that participate in the relationship between the fisheries actors and the fisheries resources;

Areas of research intervention

- Scientific research requested for fisheries management guidance.
- Requests for research on :
 - ✓ Knowledge (data)
 - ✓ How to set up
 - ✓ Relevance, timeliness and feasibility of measures to be taken
- In governance, the aim is to define the means of guiding the process of acceptability of management rules by all stakeholders.

Expected solutions

In the governance of artisanal fisheries, scientific solutions are expected at three levels:

Define the scope and relevance of management measures.

- The role of research is to report on the reality while drawing the attention of the actors (State, development partners, and local populations) to the complexity of fisheries governance.
- The definition of intervention methods; after having reported on the reality, the research is thus oriented towards the proposal of models better adapted to the objectives pursued and to the realities.
- Taking into account the knowledge and know-how of other actors, particularly professionals. Research must therefore adopt a participatory approach

ROLE OF PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

Reconcile the empirical knowledge of professionals and the scientific knowledge of researchers to ensure that management measures are accepted by all stakeholders.

Researchers are required to:



- Learning from local people (Taking into account non-academic knowledge) ;
- Find ways to scientifically document local knowledge;
- Pooling popular and academic knowledge for a more accurate analysis of the environment and better management of natural resources;

EXPERIMENTS CONDUCTED BY CRODT

- Determination of biological resting periods on Cymbium and octopus within the framework of the Resource Management and Assessment Project (JICA):
- Determination of biological rest periods for shrimp in Saloum (GIRMAC),
- Comparison between small and large mesh on the standing net (COGESPAS),
- Comparison between small and large hooks on longline (COGEPAS)
- Determination of protected fishing areas and reefs (GDRH).

Research is expected in the answers to the following questions:

- ✓ What do we know (state of the resource, bio-ecology of species, state of the market, pre-perceptions and representation of stakeholders)?
- ✓ How to manage? (Fisheries Management Plans)
- ✓ What is the right direction for management rules? (Relevance, appropriateness and feasibility of measures)

Research dependent on uncertain projects and programmes, therefore, need for state funding that takes into account current research needs

4.3 The importance of co-management in fisheries: Abdoulaye NDIAYE S.G of PANEPAS Mr NDIAYE in his presentation addressed the following points:

- Definition and Concepts of Co-management
- Legal and regulatory aspects
- Good co-management practices

Co-management: definitions and concepts

Acheson (1989): Mutual adaptation between the Government and the local community in the management of fisheries resources;

Rettig et al (1989): Sharing power and responsibility through delegation of part of the planning process to groups of fishermen;

Feeny et al (1990): Sharing management power and responsibility between the state and fishing communities.

Sen and Nielsen (1995): An arrangement where responsibility for resource management is shared between the government and user groups,



Pomeroy and Rivera-Guieb (2006): Co-management is a process of resource management, maturation, adjustment and adaptation to changing conditions over time. It includes aspects of democratisation, legal and institutional adaptation, empowerment, and sharing and decentralisation power.

Prerequisites for co-management

However, co-management is not simply a matter of delegating responsibilities to fishermen. It is much more about:

Define which management functions will be left to the government and which will be delegated to fishermen

- ✓ Define the appropriate institutional and legal arrangements for the proper functioning of the system;
- ✓ Evaluate the means necessary for the proper functioning of the system and define the origin of these means;
- ✓ Define human resource requirements ;
- ✓ Identify capacity building needs ;
- ✓ Define mechanisms for validation and management of co-management initiatives;
- ✓ Set-up an environment conducive to stakeholder participation (*trust, freedom of expression, fairness, justice, etc.*)

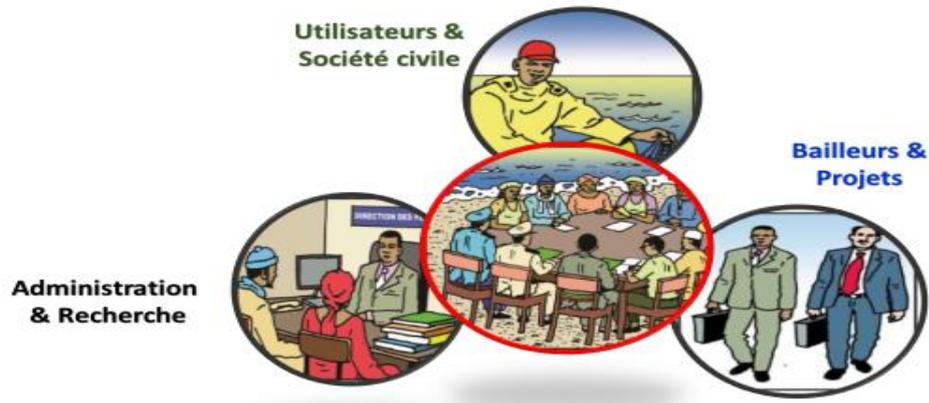
Co-management: Sen and Nielsen's classification (1996)

- ✓ Directive. It is characterised by a minimum of exchange between the Government and the fishermen, with the Government informing the fishermen of the decisions it intends to take. A system is in place to facilitate dialogue between the Government and users.
- ✓ Consultative. The government, while providing ample space for consultation with fishermen, actually makes all the decisions.
- ✓ Cooperative. Fisheries management is based on cooperation between fishermen and the government, with fishermen being treated as equal partners.
- ✓ Advisor. The fishermen play the role of decision-makers while the government functions as a rubber stamp for the fishermen's decisions.
- ✓ Informative. Fishermen have delegated authority with the responsibility to inform the Government of the management decisions they take

Diversity of co-management approaches in Senegal

- ✓ JICA interventions
- ✓ The Integrated Coastal and Marine Resources Management Programme ICMRM
- ✓ The Sustainable Management of Fishery Resources Project GDRH
- ✓ The West African Regional Fisheries Project (WARP)
- ✓ USAID/COMFISH and Dékkal Geej Projects
- ✓ The Sustainable Fisheries Management Project in Senegal (ADuPeS)
- ✓ Other stakeholders (MPEM, IUCN, IDEE Casamance, etc.)

Les acteurs de la cogestion



Role of local actors

- Identify and propose local initiatives for co-management of the resource that promote local knowledge;
- Participate in the implementation and popularisation of management rules;
- Respecting and contributing to the respect of management rules
- Participate in (participatory) research, data collection and analysis;
- Identify and apply EU sanctions ;
- Identify and implement social activities and IGAs;
- Participate in the monitoring and sustainability of activities;

Role of the LERCs

- Identifying, Sharing and Validating Initiatives ;
- Carrying forward initiatives at national level ;
- Participation in the issuing and dissemination of by-laws;
- Information and awareness-raising for stakeholders ;
- Dissemination and extension of activities ;
- Preparation of local management plans and development plans;
- Sustainability of activities
- Conflict prevention and management

Roles and responsibilities of the members of the CCI (Decree implementing the Fisheries Code)

- To advise on all matters relating to artisanal fishing activities in the locality concerned and on matters relating to fisheries management at national level;
- To ensure that artisanal fishermen are informed of all measures relating to marine fisheries in their locality;
- To organize the local fishermen in such a way as to reduce and resolve conflicts between fishing communities and between fishermen using different fishing methods;
- Participate in the development and implementation of local fisheries management plans and the local fisheries monitoring, control and surveillance system;



- Promote local initiatives in fisheries co-management.
- Promote good hygiene, health and conservation practices for fishery products;
- To seek advice from the National Advisory Council for Marine Fisheries on all matters relating to fisheries in their respective localities;
- To request assistance from the National Advisory Council on Marine Fisheries in solving fisheries-related problems in their respective localities.

Role of the Administration & Research

- Setting-up the prerequisites for co-management
- Support the co-management process by (Technical and scientific support,
- Provide appropriate legal support for the implementation of co-management (*legality and legitimacy of initiatives, conditions of intervention of actors, etc.*)
- Monitoring and evaluation of co-managed resources;
- Develop Participatory Research activities;
- Set-up an effective participatory monitoring system;
- Strengthen the capacity of agents and actors;
- Ensure that initiatives are coordinated with national policy;
- Prevent and manage inter-community conflict ;
- Contribute to the sustainability of activities (funding, supervision, etc.)
- Facilitating and framing community participation in co-management
- Ensuring that the benefits of co-management are shared fairly

Role of the donors and Partners

- Financial support ;
- Material support ;
- Technical support ;
- Lobby for change

Problems & risks of co-management

- Administrative and financial problems: slow, cumbersome procedures;
- Legal problems: some of the problems posed by co-management are not sufficiently addressed by the current law;
- Sociological problems: poor fishing habits, lack of tradition in resource management;
- Technical problems: divergence of vision (between stakeholders and State) in the selection of management measures, failure of research to address some concerns of local stakeholders;
- Institutional problems: conflicts of responsibility ;
- Risks: discouragement of actors, insufficient means;



Legal aspects of co-management

- Article 5. -When defining policies for the sustainable development and management of marine fisheries activities, the State shall take appropriate measures to facilitate the consultation and participation of organisations of professionals in the sector, marine fisheries communities and all other actors concerned.
- Article 6. The State shall promote the co-management of fisheries with the organizations of professionals in the sector, the maritime fishing communities and all other actors concerned. The modalities and conditions for the implementation of fisheries co-management shall be determined by regulation.
- With regard to the consultative bodies that can intervene in the implementation of co-management, in addition to confirming the creation of the National Advisory Council for Maritime Fisheries (CNCMP), the law provides for the possibility of setting-up Local Artisanal Fisheries Councils (CLPA).
- However, the modalities and conditions for implementing fisheries co-management as well as the conditions for exercising participatory monitoring are referred to regulatory measures. This presages a major regulatory effort on the part of the central and decentralized authorities

Criteria for good co-management practice

- Quality of frameworks (legality, legitimacy, gender, equity, operability, efficiency, transparency, good governance, social accountability, institutional coherence, etc.)
- Quality of initiatives (Valorisation of endogenous knowledge, legal value, efficiency, sustainability, visibility, economic and/or biological profitability, appropriation, replication, etc.) ;
- Quality of support/supervision :
- Preserve the achievements and results of co-management on the targeted resources and stakeholders,
- Prevent/reduce various conflicts related to the implementation of co-management initiatives and the distribution of benefits (biological and economic) arising from co-management;
- Reduce the costs/means of implementation and reduce the risks and adverse effects of co-management initiatives on other resources and communities.
- Putting in place strategies for the sustainability of measures

Successful" co-management initiatives of fisheries resources and sharing of experiences

- Ngaparou
- Cayar
- Joal
- Mbour



5 . Discussions

The various interventions focused on different salient points of fisheries governance in Senegal, namely

Thanks are expressed to CAOPA for organising this workshop on such a crucial topic for the survival of the sector.

Confirmation of the pernicious crisis situation since independence, demersal resources crisis, pelagic species crisis, social crisis, loss of confidence between the actors, broken dialogue, lack of results, effect of the landings which are increasing in the Senegalese EEZ because more and more fishing is taking place outside our EEZ.

Research is not working anymore; the research boat "ITAF DEME" is not functional. We need a new research boat, without research there is no relevant policy, looking at fisheries is an oversight for politicians. An analysis of the functions assigned to fishing is crucial, collapse of stocks, giving work (pirogue for sale and engine for sale). Re-establish trust between actors, participatory research, and transparency e.g. publish the list of vessels allowed to fish.

One wonders why the recommendations of the 2013 meeting on the same theme have not been implemented. The young generation must be integrated through capacity building, and data collection techniques and tools must be popularised. A climate of trust must be created between the actors.

More explanations must be given for certain actors and statistics concerning women processors must be taken into account in order to move towards a professionalization of the trades.

To solve the scarcity of resources, a political will is needed, the difficulties are numerous, and the actions must go towards the restoration of resources, the reconstruction of coastal habitats, the UUI Fishing

It is necessary to relay information, disseminate studies and reports on the artisanal fisheries sector. Attention must be paid to aspects related to socio-economic development and to the professionalization of the fishing industry.

The lack of transparency is decried, the lack of knowledge of the stocks that must be regularly assessed, what is the contribution of fishing to the PES? The migration crisis is a consequence of the lack of resources. We need to restore the resource, take charge of the statistics, professionalise and issue cards for fishermen, women processors and other trades.

There is an underestimation of the actors involved, the administration lacks human and logistical means, and however, there is still hope for artisanal fishing. We need to improve living conditions and protect the environment, co-management should be promoted.

As the resources belong to the people, the sector needs to be better managed, and the lack of respect for a key sector is deplorable. The fisheries sector is very poorly administered. The presidential council announced for fisheries has not yet been held. For a sector that employs thousands of people, that secures food and nutrition, that gives billions to the population with a catalytic role, we must not witness the degradation of the sector. We must defend fish, which is a



strategic asset; its disappearance could lead to a deterioration of the social fabric. The importance of CRODT must be emphasised and transparency must be promoted. It is important to take care of this strategic sector to avoid implosion. The FITI commitments must be put into practice.

CRODT must be given more resources and advocacy. ECOWAS and the SRFC must give impetus to a dynamic at the West African level. Emphasis must be placed on the governance of artisanal fisheries for sustainable solutions.

Often decisions are difficult to make, the role of the DAMCP to restore resources and habitats. For the EU agreement the vessels involved are certified. Research campaigns with Guinea Bissau and Mauritania are carried out at sea and funded by the EU. The real problems must be tackled. Experimental fishing is carried out with quotas and management measures are applied.

Research must be supported at all levels, national, sub-regional and international.

CAOPA has 26 member countries, CONIPAS is a member, the problems remain on the meal factories which should not even exist or at least respect the regulations by not processing fresh fish initially intended for women processors and the poorest families, overexploitation is a reality. Thanks were expressed for CAOPA,

6 Recommendations

- Support research with human, financial and logistical resources to move towards regular stock assessments;
- Support management actions at all levels to restore resources and habitats;
- Strictly apply the maritime fishing code and its application decree and make the legal texts more widely available;
- Fight against the exploitation of juveniles and IUU fishing.
- Professionalize all the fishing trades and carry out studies to renew the figures concerning the contributions of fishing, especially small-scale fishing;
- Promote co-management with transparency and respect for FITI commitments;
- Disseminate information on all fisheries agreements with the EU and others and build the capacity of stakeholders;
- Addressing the artisanal fisheries sub-sector in the face of oil and gas development.

7 Annexes

Annex 1

Declaration on Transparency for Sustainable Artisanal Fisheries in Africa

Transparency is essential to enhance the value of African artisanal fisheries

The African Confederation of Professional Organizations of Artisanal Fisheries (CAOPA) has been working on transparency since 2011. It has also played a leading role in design and support of the Fisheries Transparency Initiative (FiTI). The FiTI is the first initiative to set minimum standards on what governments



should publish and how. It was particularly important for CAOPA to ensure that the FiTI standard included sections on small-scale fisheries and the role of women in the sector.

Recently, we have seen the Seychelles and Mauritania publish their first FiTI reports demonstrating their level of compliance with the standards. The government of Madagascar has now publicly committed to implementing FiTI. Other African governments, such as those of Senegal, Guinea and Sao Tome and Principe have also announced their intention to commit to FiTI: there is still much work to be done to ensure that they deliver on their promises.

Unfortunately, while there are success stories, a lack of transparency remains the norm in many African fisheries. As the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAFA 2022) approaches, CAOPA makes the following recommendations to African governments, the African Union and their international partners to advance transparency, particularly in African marine fisheries.

1. Transparency is not a voluntary act. It is a right.

Transparency is too often seen as a voluntary act. This is a mistake. Transparency should be approached as a right for citizens, and in particular for those whose lives depend on fishing. This is described in the [Voluntary Guidelines](#) for Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication and the [Policy Framework](#) and Strategy for Reform of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector in Africa.

CAOPA believes that initiatives such as the [FiTI are in line with the](#) African Union Policy Framework and Guidelines. If countries commit in FiTI, they have an obligation to publish information and to ensure that information they publish is credible.

However, Freedom of Information should be seen as a legal obligation for governments. Many countries have signed legally binding conventions on access to information, which means that a lack of transparency can be challenged in court. The most important convention in this respect is called the "[Aarhus Convention](#)" [finalised in 1998](#), i.e. the "Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters". This convention ratified by European countries is also applicable to the European Union. In 2018, Latin American and Caribbean countries established their own version of the Aarhus Convention, known as the [EscazuConvention](#).

In collaboration with partners in Europe, CAOPA has used the Aarhus Convention to ensure that the EU publishes its previously confidential studies on the impacts of European fisheries access agreements in African countries since 2015. CAOPA and its partners are also using the Aarhus Convention to obtain information on the beneficial owners of European industrial trawlers operating in West Africa.

The African Union should redouble its efforts to develop an African equivalent of the Aarhus Convention. As a first step, the African Union should endorse the FiTI and support its implementation by African countries.

2. Companies and foreign governments impose secrecy on fisheries agreements

Most governments prefer not to share so-called confidential information with fishing communities, as they fear that this information will reveal their decisions and actions that often do not respect the interests of these communities.

However, confidentiality is also a requirement of foreign companies and governments. For example, confidentiality is written into investment contracts and fisheries agreements. The European Union has done this in the past, but it is improving. Some Asian countries and Russia are fishing in African maritime waters.



But the fishing communities do not have access to the information that links their governments and these third countries.

African countries should not favour foreign-owned fishing companies over artisanal fishing communities.

3. Transparency and the blue economy

So far, CAOPA has mainly campaigned for transparency in the licenses of foreign industrial fishing vessels. Frustratingly, this demand is still refused by many national authorities in Africa. This therefore remains one of CAOPA's main demands. In recent years, CAOPA has also called for more transparency regarding investments and permits for industrial fish processing plants. Fishmeal and fish oil plants are proliferating in West Africa and have a significant impact on artisanal fishing communities. However, ownership and licensing of these plants remain confidential.

CAOPA has also expressed concern about the lack of transparency and consultation surrounding foreign aid projects. International organizations such as the World Bank, the African Development Bank and the EU provide millions of dollars to reform fisheries and promote sectors that are part of the blue economy. But the transparency surrounding this flow of money is often very low. We are concerned about the growing influence of some Asian countries on fisheries management, as well as new and innovative forms of financing for ocean conservation, including "blue bonds" and "debt swaps".

We are increasingly aware of the high demand for exploration and mining licences in coastal and offshore areas. Our governments are contracting to aggressively develop offshore mining for oil and gas, as well as other precious minerals and metals. Access to information about all this is very limited. And without it, it is almost impossible for fishing communities to oppose developments when they have a negative impact on fishing.

The African Union should prioritize transparency in blue economy strategies in Africa. This includes significantly improving information and opportunities for public scrutiny of investments and activities in other sectors that impact on fishing communities and the procedures surrounding social and environmental impact assessments.

4. Transparency and visibility for African artisanal fisheries

It is essential to recognize that transparency is not just about the visibility of what governments and foreign companies are doing. CAOPA wishes to emphasize that transparency is also about increasing the visibility of the artisanal fisheries sector.

In most African countries, public information on the artisanal fisheries sector is almost non-existent. Government reports can and should include estimates of the number of fishers and their catches, the number and production of post-catch cluster actors, but this information is either outdated or unreliable. Women in the fishing sector are particularly neglected in official statistics. This means that governments have very little information on the importance of fisheries to people's livelihoods and food and nutrition security, and do not monitor vulnerabilities in the fisheries sector, such as access to education, health services, poverty levels and working conditions.



The failure to collect this information leads to the marginalisation of our sector and a lack of support from governments. We also find that without detailed information on the small-scale sector, social and environmental impact assessments of new investments, such as fishmeal processing or mining, are not credible in understanding the costs to our communities.

African countries need to significantly improve studies on the artisanal fisheries sector and ensure that this information is well disseminated. Governments should consider how existing national surveys of their economies can better incorporate information on small-scale fisheries, particularly on women involved in the sector.

Transparency is not an end in itself. It is a necessary part of responsible fisheries management and an important element in respecting the rights of small-scale fisheries. If the same interest were shown in fisheries as in mining (Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative EITI) the sector would be better off.

Conventions such as the Aarhus Convention do not focus on transparency in isolation, but strengthen all aspects of democracy.

CAOPA is therefore campaigning not only for transparency, but also for improved participation and accountability, so that the voice of small-scale fisheries is taken into account in decision-making processes at all levels.

Annex 2 BOROOM XAM XAM

Ki du xam daraa

Day xam ni ki moom mooy boroom daaraa

Dina root ca moom dootul doyal

Lumu doon lu ne mu bay du booyal

Xam xam day lu neex di diri boroom

Da lay diri jème la ca moom

Dal ak woyaf doon sa dog nga sol

Buum goo ca jël doo nangu mu dog

Nit ku ne doon alibe ci yaw

Bu nee sa xel nga jël ko raw

Xam xam bi fii da lay lëjël

Lijjën ti fee day doon sa jël

Boo faboo ba di goob

Nit ku baax ku ne am fa soob

Loo wox lu ne mu doon jukki

Dootoo soxla lii di tukki

Jukki ba gën doon ba jëkk



Beneen bumu mu doon rëkkë

Boo tasseek boroom xam xam bul ko dog

Teeyal te xam da lay jukkil buum dootu dog

Not lay doon

Nga xam ki nga doon

Mandargaam doon ku xamul

Suuxatam doon ku manul

Lamu yore ñepp ka moom

Bu tassaroo aar ñoñ yi oom

Du ca jel dara ndax day yërem

Lu mu ca dolli loolooy mbëndëm

Xam xam du jeex

Da set te weex

Jarul nit di xeex

Mu boole ca lëndëm

Yooyu yepp war doon lii di taabax