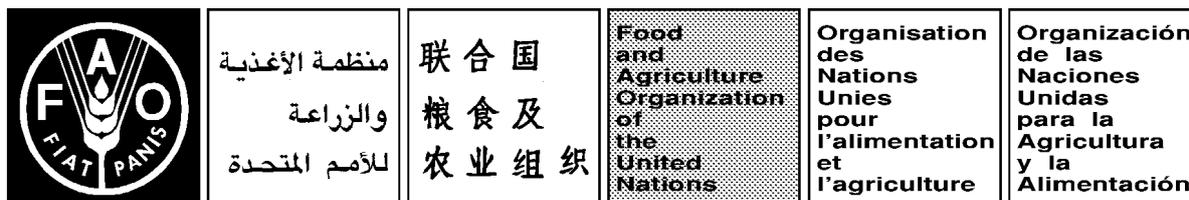


September 2019



FISHERY COMMITTEE FOR THE EASTERN CENTRAL ATLANTIC

Twenty-second Session

Libreville, Gabon, 17-19 September 2019

Action on recommendations from the twenty-first session

SUMMARY

This paper summarizes the actions taken by the Secretariat to address recommendations directed at the Secretariat during the Twenty-first session, as well as general observations and recommendations related to the work of the Committee, Scientific-Sub Committee, and the Working Groups. The focus of the discussions at the Twenty-first session revolved around the need to strengthen the application of the management recommendations by member countries, and to strengthen CECAF's collaborative involvement with other projects and organizations in the region.

The Committee is asked to reflect upon the follow up to the recommendations of the Twenty-first session in the context of the discussions that will take place at the Twenty-second session. The Committee is also asked to provide any additional relevant information from a national perspective.

INTRODUCTION

1. At its Twenty-second Session (Dakar, Senegal, 20-22 April 2016), the Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic (CECAF) made a set of observations and recommendations to the Secretariat and its Members.
2. This paper summarizes the actions taken by the Secretariat since the Twenty-first session to address these recommendations, as well as general observations and recommendations related to the work of the Committee, the Scientific Sub-Committee, and its Working Groups.
3. The recommendations made at the Twenty-first session and related actions are summarized below.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE 21ST COMMITTEE TO THE SECRETARIAT

1. The members encouraged the Secretariat to:
 - a. Complete the action plan for the recommendations of the 2011 technical performance review.
 - b. Establish a work programme for two or three years to better plan activities.
 - c. Ensure that the Committee and the Scientific Sub-Committee meet at regular intervals, according to the agreed schedule (every two years).
 - d. Scientific advice should be shared with all parties involved when it becomes available.
 - e. Publish the outcomes of the meetings quicker than is presently the case.
 - f. Develop an interactive website that may support strengthened communication among partners.

SECRETARIAT OBSERVATION AND ACTIONS: *At the 21st session, the Secretariat provided text on future actions regarding the recommendations of the 2011 performance review. Since the 2016 Committee, the Secretariat has actively worked to pursue and implement various initiatives and projects that address the recommendations of the 2011 performance review, which will be presented to the 22nd Committee. The work programme that was established at the twenty first session was also largely completed. Actions that were not completed or that are incomplete faced limitations regarding funding and institutional human capacity. This has been partially addressed with the application, and subsequent approval, of the PESCAO project that provides for additional staff and consultants to contribute to the overall performance of CECAF for the next three years, as it was designed specifically to address areas of work prioritized by CECAF. During this time, additional sources of funding will be pursued to ensure the gaps in human capacity for the CECAF Secretariat to be filled. The scientific advice from the Working Groups have been shared immediately with members of the Working Group, and presented to the 8th session of the Scientific Sub-Committee for their endorsement. The Secretariat also developed a CECAF webpage, to be hosted on fao.org, that will support strengthened communication among partners. The website is undergoing final clearance and should go online within the next month.*

2. The Committee approved the revised terms of reference for the Artisanal Fisheries Working Group and asked the Secretariat to find the required means to operationalize the Working Group.

SECRETARIAT OBSERVATION AND ACTIONS: *The Artisanal Working Group held its fifth session, after some time of inactivity, in July 2018. It was the first meeting since the adoption of the revised terms of reference by the twenty first committee. The meeting reviewed the terms of reference and based on this a workplan was developed which was endorsed by the 8th session of the Scientific Sub-Committee. The Artisanal Fisheries Working Group is planning to have their sixth meeting in early October 2019.*

3. The Committee appreciated the suggestions of the SSC as regards the sharing and communication of the results of the Working Groups, and encouraged the Secretariat to move forward with the suggested approaches (reproduced below):
 - a. The Committee expressed concern that despite the pertinence of the recommendations made by the SSC, there is little communication between scientists and decision makers and that the form of the management recommendations sometimes made it challenging to apply at a national level, in the absence of regional management agreements, in particular for shared stocks for which recommendations for the whole stocks are made. The need to develop a mechanism or dialogue through CECAF between scientists and managers, so that CECAF can better answer management questions, was noted (Paragraph 38 of the 21st Committee report).
 - b. The need to strengthen the application of the recommendations by member states and the question of ownership of the recommendations were noted. In this respect the Committee requests the Secretariat to organize an ad-hoc working group that looks into monitoring and communication issues.

SECRETARIAT OBSERVATION AND ACTIONS: *The new PESCAO project includes a primary outcome for enhanced regional policy and dialogues, improved science-management processes for the CECAF region, and the integration of CECAF management advice into national frameworks. In doing so, the project will improve knowledge on and management advice for the small-scale fisheries sector, and enhance interaction and strengthen linkages to harmonize data and streamline reporting into different global and regional processes. The EAF-Nansen Programme is also providing such support, including in relation to facilitating dialogue on shared stocks. The small pelagics working group has also prepared a summary for managers to facilitate sharing the results shortly after the meeting. The Secretariat has taken action to develop a CECAF webpage, to be hosted on fao.org, that will support strengthened communication among partners. The website is undergoing final clearance and should go online within the next month.*

4. The Secretariat could explore with the different Members how Members could secure funding to CECAF meetings during the next intersessional period.

SECRETARIAT OBSERVATION AND ACTIONS: *The Secretariat liaises with countries on this issue in relation to the different meetings organized. While CECAF, through extra budgetary funds, commonly need to support Members to attend many CECAF meetings, some members continue to support the participation of scientists to the meetings of the Working Groups on Small pelagics. Some members also support the participation in the SSC. Finally, this mechanism is also further discussed in the study on the options for improved function of CECAF that will be presented to the twenty second session.*

5. The Committee recommended a parallel approach to explore how the functioning of CECAF can be improved in its current context, and at the same time explore options that could be considered for the longer term. A study could be commissioned to explore the different options.

SECRETARIAT OBSERVATION AND ACTIONS: *The Secretariat secured funding from the EU to conduct a study on options for improved functioning of CECAF including a cost-benefit analysis. The draft report will be presented to the 22nd Committee and a summary will be shared as a Meeting Document. The report will be finalized after the session, incorporating Members observations and comments.*

REQUESTS TO THE 8th SSC INCLUDING RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE WORKPLAN

6. The Committee approved the Working Groups sessions for the next intersessional period as proposed by the SSC, pending confirmation on funding:
 - a. Demersal species Working Group South –2016 in Gabon
 - b. Demersal species Working Group North – 2016 in Tenerife, Spain
 - c. Small Pelagics Working Group North –2016 in Senegal
 - d. Small Pelagics Working Group South –2016 or early 2017 in Ghana
 - e. Artisanal Fisheries Working Group – to be confirmed.

SECRETARIAT OBSERVATION AND ACTIONS: *The following Working Group meetings have taken place, with the results presented to the 8th Scientific Sub-Committee in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire in October 2018.:*

- a. *Demersal species Working Group South –2017 in Libreville, Gabon*
- b. *Demersal species Working Group North – 2017 in Tenerife, Spain*
- c. *Small Pelagics Working Group North –2018 in Banjul, The Gambia*
- d. *Small Pelagics Working Group South –2018 in Elmina, Ghana*
- e. *Artisanal Fisheries Working Group – 2018 in Dakar, Senegal.*

Furthermore, the Small Pelagics working Group North met in 2019 in Casablanca, Morocco. The outcomes of this group have not yet gone through the SSC, but a management summary has been prepared and will be made available to CECAF 22.

7. The Committee endorsed the decision of the SSC to approve a proposal from Spain to include assessments of some small pelagic species of the Canary Islands into the assessments conduct by the small pelagic Working Group North.

SECRETARIAT OBSERVATION AND ACTIONS: Action has been taken to include these among those assessed by the small pelagics working group North.

8. A regional CECAF workshop on bottom fisheries and VMEs was supported, with proposed dates in 2016. This workshop will be funded by the FAO Deep-sea Fisheries programme.

SECRETARIAT OBSERVATION AND ACTIONS: The workshop took place in Senegal and was funded by the FAO Deep-sea Fisheries programme. The workshop report can be found here: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i7609b.pdf>.

9. The importance of basing management on science was stressed, as well as the need to continue and intensify the work of the SSC and its working groups.
10. The Committee requests the SSC to present a proposal for a revision to the format of the advice and the management recommendations, which should integrate information related to the quality of data, the models used, and other pertinent information that might affect the management advice given.

SECRETARIAT OBSERVATION AND ACTIONS: With extra budgetary assistance from the EU and with the support of the EAF-Nansen Programme and the Small-scale fisheries Programme the work of the SSC and its working group was strengthened, and all working group met. The PESCAO project is expected to facilitate the continued discussion on how to improve the management recommendations

11. Several delegations supported the call for improved data quality and reliability as they are submitted to the Working Groups and SSC, and for more harmonized and standardized research programmes, including surveys. It was suggested to look into providing an overview of the current research capacity in the region.
12. The need to revise the species/stocks to be assessed and the type of assessments used by the Working Groups was mentioned.

SECRETARIAT OBSERVATION AND ACTIONS: Research work has been strengthened through the collaboration with the EAF-Nansen Programme and the work undertaken will be presented to the CECAF 22. The eight session of the SSC also proposed an outline for a questionnaire to be sent to Members to map the current research capacity within CECAF. The Secretariat was also granted funding by the EU to implement a project with the overall objective to improve the quality of assessments and management advice produced by the Working Groups for consideration by the Scientific Sub-Committee, and subsequently lead to improved management of fish stocks and ecosystem health in the CECAF region.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

13. CECAF was strongly encouraged to integrate itself into the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods to ensure coherence of fisheries development policies as defined by this pan-African policy.

14. The visibility of CECAF should be increased, particularly since ECOWAS and the African Union are also developing programmes and activities in the fisheries sector.
15. Several delegates expressed the need to strengthen the CECAF Secretariat and revise the statutes.
16. The Committee stressed the need for closer collaboration between CECAF and the various organizations operating in the CECAF region (both Regional Fisheries Bodies and Regional Economic Groupings) to facilitate the efficient use of human and financial resources to conserve and manage fisheries resources in the region.
17. The delegates from the countries involved in the development of the framework for the management of small pelagic fisheries off Northwest Africa highlighted the pertinence of the topic for the committee as well as the pertinence of the development process for the small pelagic management framework in Northwest Africa. They reaffirmed the importance of working on the development of management mechanisms for shared pelagic stocks and indicated the importance of finalizing the framework in order to benefit the sub-region and other countries that have shared stocks. Other participants welcomed the presentation of the management mechanism for shared resources and indicated that this is an example to follow.
18. The Committee agreed to act as the regional steering committee for the CECAF region for the next phase of the EAF-Nansen Programme. It also suggested that the SSC could begin to identify scientific priorities for the new EAF-Nansen programme.