

Minutes of the

**MEETING OF THE EAF-NANSEN PROJECT REGIONAL STEERING
COMMITTEE FOR THE SOUTH WEST INDIAN OCEAN FISHERIES
COMMISSION AREA**

Sugar Beach Hotel, Flic-en-Flac, Mauritius, 3 October 2012



THE EAF-NANSEN PROJECT

FAO started the implementation of the project “Strengthening the Knowledge Base for and Implementing an Ecosystem Approach to Marine Fisheries in Developing Countries (EAF-Nansen GCP/INT/003/NOR)” in December 2006 with funding from the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad). The EAF-Nansen project is a follow-up to earlier projects/programmes in a partnership involving FAO, Norad and the Institute of Marine Research (IMR), Bergen, Norway on assessment and management of marine fishery resources in developing countries. The project works in partnership with governments and also Global Environment Facility (GEF)-supported Large Marine Ecosystem (LME) projects and other projects that have the potential to contribute to some components of the EAF-Nansen project.

The EAF-Nansen project offers an opportunity to coastal countries in sub-Saharan Africa, working in partnership with the project, to receive technical support from FAO for the development of national and regional frameworks for the implementation of Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries management and to acquire additional knowledge on their marine ecosystems for their use in planning and monitoring. The project contributes to building the capacity of national fisheries management administrations in ecological risk assessment methods to identify critical management issues and in the preparation, operationalization and tracking the progress of implementation of fisheries management plans consistent with the ecosystem approach to fisheries.

STRENGTHENING THE KNOWLEDGE BASE FOR AND
IMPLEMENTING AN ECOSYSTEM APPROACH TO
MARINE FISHERIES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES
(EAF-NANSEN GCP/INT/003/NOR)

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PREPARATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

This is the report of the meeting of the EAF-Nansen project Regional Steering Committee for the South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission area (SWIOFC RSC). The meeting was held in Flic-en-Flac in Mauritius on 3 October 2012. The report captures the discussions at the meeting, the decisions taken and the recommendations made. It was prepared by the EAF-Nansen project management unit in Rome and circulated to all the participants for comments and confirmation.

FAO EAF-Nansen Project/FAO, Projet EAF-Nansen.

Minutes of the/Compte-rendu de

Meeting of the EAF-Nansen project Regional Steering Committee for the South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission area, Flic-en-Flac, Mauritius, 3 October 2012/La réunion du Comité de pilotage régional du projet EAF-Nansen pour la zone de la Commission des pêches pour le sud-ouest de l'océan indien, Flic-en-Flac, Mauritius, 3 octobre 2012.

FAO EAF-Nansen Project Report/FAO, Rapport du Projet EAF-Nansen. No 17. Rome, FAO. 2013. 27 p.

ABSTRACT

The third meeting of the EAF-Nansen project Regional Steering Committee for the South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission (SWIOFC RSC) area was held at the Sugar Beach Hotel in Flic-en-Flac, Mauritius on 3 October 2012. The meeting was attended by representatives from Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, and the United Republic of Tanzania. Representatives of the Agulhas and Somali Current Large Marine Ecosystem (ASCLME) project and the South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Project (SWIOFP) also attended the meeting. The RSC is responsible for assessing the project progress and formulating recommendations to the project coordinating unit regarding requirements, priorities and work-plans for project implementation in the respective region.

The meeting was started with an overview of the composition and mandate of the RSC. Activities undertaken under the project, especially in the preparation of fisheries management plans and some of the achievements made were also presented and discussed.

The recommendations compiled in the course of the meeting were discussed and adopted by the RSC.

INTRODUCTION

1. The third meeting of the EAF-Nansen Project Regional Steering Committee (RSC) for the South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission (SWIOFC) area was held at the Sugar Beach Hotel in Flic-en-Flac, Mauritius on 3 October, 2012
2. All member countries were represented. The meeting was also attended by the Regional Executive Secretary of the South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Project (SWIOFP), the Secretary of the SWIOFC, representatives of the Agulhas and Somali Currents Large Marine Ecosystem project and many observers. The list of participants is given in Appendix 1.
3. The meeting was chaired by Hosea Mbillinyi the Director of Fisheries of the United Republic of Tanzania and assisted by Samueline Ranaivoson of Madagascar.
4. The Agenda for the meeting (Appendix 2) was adopted without any changes.
5. The EAF-Nansen Project Coordinator reminded the members about the composition and Terms of Reference of the RSC. He said that each RSC is to have representatives of fisheries research and management institutions in the partner countries in the region, as well as the Institute of Marine Research (IMR) in Norway, FAO and representatives of the LME Programmes and other partner programmes/projects operating in the area.

REPORT ON PROJECT ACTIVITIES

6. The Project Coordinator presented the conclusions, recommendations and action points from the joint meeting of the RSCs held in Accra, Ghana in March 2011.
7. At the Accra meeting Tanzania was nominated as chair of the SWIOFC RSC with Madagascar as vice chair.
8. The Coordinator informed the meeting that assisting the countries in the region to prepare fisheries management plans using the EAF framework took the centre stage of the project activities in the region. He spoke about the collaboration with SWIOFP and how this has resulted in increased financial and technical support to the countries for this activity.
9. The capacity building activities undertaken in the year were enumerated including the consultation on mainstreaming EAF training in university curricula in Africa, the EAF courses held at Rhodes University in Grahamstown, South Africa from 8 August to 2 September 2011 and at the Université Ibn Zohr in Agadir, Morocco from 12 to 30 September, 2011. Both courses were attended by officers from the SWIOFC region with sponsorship from SWIOFP, the Indian Ocean Commission and the EAF-Nansen project.
10. Activities leading to the future of the EAF-Nansen project were also mentioned including institution of a 3-year Transition Phase and discussions with UNEP, IOC/UNESCO and other partners on possible UN-wide platform to monitor climate-related changes in the marine environment. It was explained that the transition phase is to give sufficient time for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway to assess the situation and take a final decision concerning the research vessel. It is also to give the opportunity to FAO and

IMR to engage in discussions with potential partners regarding the co-financing of the operating costs of the vessel and synergies with other UN Agencies and donors to support activities of common interest.

11. The meeting was then informed about the Norwegian government's decision to finance the building of a new research vessel for the project.
12. In the discussions that followed, a member from Mozambique wanted to know how climate change can be accounted for in the management plans. Gabriella Bianchi of FAO responded that EAF is a good framework to address climate change because if it is an issue of critical relevance to any particular fishery it will come up in the risk assessment exercise, and appropriate management actions have to be proposed to address those issues.
13. Following similar intervention by Rondolph Payet of SWIOFP, it was concluded that if climate change is of high risk to a fishery then management must be proactive and more precautionary.
14. Madagascar wanted to know how to apply the knowledge acquired from the EAF project to aquaculture. Gabriella offered to establish links with the complementary EAA (ecosystem approach to aquaculture) work also being done at the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department.
15. On the university courses, it was noted that since many more people need to be trained because of high staff turnover, the materials should be made available to universities in the region to be included in their programmes. It was noted that FAO is working towards this.
16. Francis Marsac informed the meeting that the INDISEAS Working Group is partnering with SWIOFP in four countries of the region (Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique and Tanzania) and involving ecosystem risk assessment of bycatch. The Working Group is also looking at indicators to identify priorities in the implementation of EAF. Mr. Marsac appealed to the other countries to consider participating in INDISEAS to help capitalize on the knowledge already available on their ecosystems using an indicators approach as promoted by the project.
17. He also noted that some work has been done on environment and recruitment of fish and the results can inform the management plans.

REPORT OF THE EAF REGIONAL TASK GROUP MEETING

18. The Chairman of the EAF Regional Task Group (RTG) for the SWIOFC area, Renison Ruwa reported on the meeting of the RTG held on 1 and 2 October at the same venue.
19. Mr Ruwa noted that in the last two years various encouraging advances have been made in development of management plans based on promotion of capacity building and the synergies between the EAF Nansen project and SWIOFP. These have resulted in the drafting of management plans which are at various stages of finalization. The

management plans are variously based on focusing on fishing gear, fish species or type (demersal or pelagic fisheries) while others are space or area based.

20. Prior to this, the main activities centred on capacity building to empower countries to develop their fisheries management plans based on EAF principles.
21. The RTG Chair reported that to date, with the exception of Comoros and Madagascar which have so far produced only the Baseline and Ecological Risk Assessment reports because they started the process late, the rest of the countries in the region have produced drafts of the management plans and are gearing to finalize them by December 2012. He noted, however, that Comoros and Madagascar are also expected to finalize their management plans by December 2012.
22. Taking into consideration the differences in the processes involved in getting government approvals to implement the management plans, it is expected that all countries will variously start implementation between March and December 2013.
23. It is noted that the National Task Groups which include representatives of government agencies and other stakeholders from private sectors, Community Based Organizations and Non Governmental Organizations have fully participated in the process of developing the management plans making the process participatory with strategies for awareness and education campaigns for the wider community stakeholder groups.
24. The Chairman presented the conclusions and recommendations of the RTG meeting for the consideration of the RSC; these are given in Appendix 3.

DISCUSSIONS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLANS IN THE SWIOFC AREA

24. Discussions opened on how the management plans being prepared with the support of the EAF-Nansen project and SWIOFP and will be implemented. Aubrey Harris of FAO reminded the meeting that the EAF RTG is a subsidiary body under the Scientific Committee of the Commission and that at the RTG meeting, the task group was asked to refer to the Commission the issue of endorsement and implementation of the management plans. He noted that partners will not support implementation of the plans unless they have been endorsed by the countries and the Commission.
25. Mr. Harris gave an example of the structures used in Australia to implement management plans including the preparation of annual operational plans. He said that each plan has a manager who in a way takes lead in the management of the fishery in question.
26. The SWIOFP Regional Executive Secretary, Rondolph Payet, asked the countries to make special efforts to finalize and endorse the management plans. He noted that the methodology used should be replicated in future work and must be anchored in the national fisheries administrations.
27. Many of the countries committed themselves to completing their plans by the end of the year or latest end of January 2013. Mr. Payet informed the meeting that since SWIOFP funding to the countries will end on 31 January 2013, the work must be given some priority and the countries must be firm on their commitments. It was pointed out that after

that date, funds made available by SWIOFP that are not used will have to be returned by countries.

28. The RSC agreed that all the management plans should be completed and endorsed by the end of January 2013. A member from Mozambique remarked that they endorsement process is not totally within the power of the fisheries administration and could take two to three months to complete.
29. On the issue of how SWIOFC is going to monitor the implementation of the plans, Aubrey recalled the work done on the use of the EAF Tracking Tool to establish EAF implementation baselines in the countries of the region.
30. Gabriella Bianchi noted that it will be essential to monitor progress towards achievement of the targets set during the planning process. She said that it is important also to relate this to tracking and assessing the implementation of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.
31. There were suggestions of local structures to ensure implementation of the plans. Mauritius informed the RSC that it intends to set up a Banks Fishery Management Committee within the framework of the fisheries law. Tanzania is considering converting the EAF National Task Group into a management plan coordinating committee.

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

32. The EAF-Nansen Project Analyst-Operations Officer, Kyriakos Koukouliotis made a presentation on financial and administrative matters related particularly to the implementation of the in-country activities.
33. Mr Koukouliotis said that in 2008, the EAF-Nansen and SWIOFP projects entered into a strategic partnership/collaboration through which eight in-country EAF projects were co-funded by the two projects in Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles and Tanzania.
34. FAO financial support is channelled through a Letter of Agreement signed between the fisheries administration of the countries and the FAOR. Funds allocated to the countries through the LoAs cover mainly organisation of meetings at the national level, recruitment of national consultants, travels to participate in ERA workshops and validation meetings in other countries of the region to share their experience. In addition to the contribution provided through the LoAs, the EAF-Nansen grants complementary funds to recruit international consultants to support countries in the preparation process of their management plans. These funds are directly managed by the EAF-Nansen project.
35. The total funding for the projects in the SWIO area amounts to 462,000 USD, broken down as follows:
 - EAF-Nansen: 223 000 USD
 - SWIOFP: 199 000 USD
 - Countries: 40 000 USD
36. The RSC was informed that with the exception of a few countries, the progress reports and financial statements have not been submitted as required. Members were made to understand that LoAs are contractual arrangements and that the technical progress and financial reports have to be submitted according to the terms of the LoAs.
37. Mr Kourkouliotis also informed the RSC that in addition to the financial support provided for the in-country projects, the EAF-Nansen project has made available to the

countries USD 5,000 through another LoA for the functioning of the NTG of some countries. The objective of these LoAs is to organize workshops to promote EAF in the countries, to provide a mechanism for liaison with the national fisheries management agency and other agencies as necessary, to facilitate consultation with different stakeholders where required, to ensure that stakeholder opinions are reflected in the work and results of the in-country projects and to identify and prioritise in consultation with stakeholders EAF issues requiring attention within the national marine fisheries sector.

38. He noted that technical and financial reporting for this LoA should be kept separate from the reporting on the in-country EAF projects.
39. After the presentation some members expressed appreciation for the support given.

ACTIVITIES OF THE PROJECT DURING THE TRANSITION PHASE

40. The RSC was informed that in the transition phase (2012 – 2014) the implementation of the ecosystem approach to fisheries would remain the main focus and the project would continue working towards the implementation of EAF at different levels, including collecting relevant information on the present ecosystem state and use of the same for the management of the resources.
41. It was also noted that Norad has requested that the field research activities be expanded to serve broader needs for monitoring the state of the marine ecosystem in terms of changes in biodiversity and productivity that may result from impacts of climate change and pollution.

DR FRIDTJOF NANSEN SURVEYS IN THE SWIOFC AREA

42. The RSC was informed that due to the piracy situation the Region no surveys were carried out there by the *R/V Dr Fridtjof Nansen* in the year and no new surveys are anticipated until the situation improves.

TRAINING AND FELLOWSHIPS

43. The opportunity for training and fellowships within the EAF-Nansen project were recalled. The project will continue to run the EAF courses with a course in Portuguese planned for 2013. The mentoring programme for individual training will also be continued.

FINAL OBSERVATIONS AND CLOSING

44. Gabriella Bianchi remarked that the RSC meeting has given her assurance that working together, the objectives set for the individual projects can be achieved. She said that she was also encouraged by the renewed sense of commitment and demonstration of ownership of the process by the countries and greatly appreciated the effort made. She pledged FAO's continued support to the countries towards implementation of the management plans.
45. Rondolph Payet reiterated the benefit of the collaboration between SWIOFP and the EAF-Nansen project. He noted that if we are to surmount the challenges and make sure

that things work as planned then the countries are expected to make an even greater commitment and thanked FAO for the support.

46. Aubrey Harris underscored the usefulness of holding the meetings back-to-back.
47. The delegate from Somalia noted with satisfaction the recommendations of the RTG meeting, especially as concerning the call for greater participation of his country in the EAF-Nansen project. He said that with the political situation returning to normalcy in Somalia, they would like to participate actively in all future activities of the project.
48. Francis Marsac underscored the scientific contribution that the INDISEAS project can make towards the implementation of the ecosystem approach to fisheries and encouraged countries to join the initiative.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

49. This was left to the beginning of the next RSC meeting

Date and venue of the next meeting

50. Members were informed that since the RSC meetings were planned to be held back-to-back with SWIOFC, SWIOFP and ASCLME project meetings the venue and date of the next RSC meeting will be communicated to members in due course.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

51. The following recommendations were made for the consideration of the SWIOFC.
52. The RSC of the EAF-Nansen project for the SWIOFC area:
 - Appreciates the support provided by the Norwegian Government (Norad) and GEF through FAO and the World Bank respectively, to help countries in the region to develop fisheries management plans in accordance with the EAF principles.
 - Appreciates the presentation on the objectives, activities carried out and results achieved for the promotion and implementation of EAF and note with satisfaction the partnership established with the projects in the region such as SmartFish and SWIOFP to coordinate respective efforts, define actions in areas of common interest and avoid duplication.
 - Appreciates the activity carried out by the EAF-Nansen project to assess the fisheries legislation in a number of countries and how these take on board EAF, as well as the work conducted by SWIOFP on the harmonization of legal texts. The Committee requests SWIOFP to share the findings of their study as they become available.
 - Notes the good collaboration between the EAF-Nansen project and some universities in Africa to organize training on EAF and expresses its satisfaction that a core course is being finalized which will be made available to interested universities for inclusion in their curriculum.
 - Given that the major partner project SWIOFP is expected to end in March 2013, requests that the recommendations of the RTG be amended to reflect that the management plans must be ready by end of December 2012 and approved by end of January 2013.

- Bearing in mind the closing date of SWIOFP, requests SWIOFC to impress upon member countries the need to have the management plans finalized and approved as soon as possible.
- Requests countries that have received financial support from FAO to submit to the EAF-Nansen Project Coordination Unit and FAO Representation in their respective countries the progress reports and financial statements as stipulated in the Letters of Agreement (LoAs).
- Recognizing the necessity to set up an effective and sustainable structure for the management of fisheries in the countries, the RSC requests that a manager, and if possible a coordination and management Unit be put in place to operationalize the management plans and report back to SWIOFC on progress. The RSC requests countries to integrate the coordination and management unit in their management process and welcomes the proposal of the EAF-Nansen project to assist countries undertake needs assessment for implementation of the plan, including setting up the coordination and management Unit.
- Requests the SWIOFC to monitor the state of implementation of the EAF in the region and to seek assurance of its members that all subsequent fisheries management plans take into account the EAF principles.
- Notes with interest Norad's decision to continue funding the EAF-Nansen project beyond the transition phase with the construction of a new research vessel. The RSC welcomes also the decision of the donor to continue in the second phase of the project its support to consolidate and strengthen capacity of countries for the implementation of EAF.
- Concerned about the potential impact of climate change on fisheries resources and ecosystems with possible consequences for their conservation and management, participants ask the EAF-Nansen project to include the SWIO region in the future project activities, and request to be associated with the preparation of the second phase of the project.
- Takes note with appreciation the initiative taken by the EAF-Nansen project to seek and broaden collaboration with other partners with specific mandates to create a UN-wide platform for monitoring climate-related changes in the marine ecosystems, especially in developing countries.
- Notes that the EAF-Nansen project is not intended to work in the aquaculture sector and welcomes the offer of the project to relay issues from countries with respect to aquaculture, to the appropriate Service in the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department.

APPENDIX 1

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APPENDIX 2

AGENDA

8:30–9:00	Registration	Action
9:00–11:00	Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening and administrative arrangements • Welcome and TOR of the RSC • Chair, Vice Chair & Rapporteurs • Agenda • Action Points from the Joint meeting of the Regional Steering Committees • Update on project activities • In-country activities – updates and lessons learnt (report from the RTG meeting) 	
11:00–11:20	Coffee Break	
11:20–13:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions on implementation of the fishery management plans in the SWIOFC area • Administration and Finance • Activities of the EAF-Nansen project during the transition phase • <i>R/V Dr Fridtjof Nansen</i> surveys in the Western Indian Ocean Region • Training & Fellowships • AOB • Conclusions and Recommendations 	
	Lunch	

APPENDIX 3

Conclusions and Recommendations of the RTG Meeting held on 1–2 October 2012.

The following recommendations were discussed and approved for submission to the RSC.

Participants at the EAF-Nansen RTG for the SWIO area:

- Appreciate the support from the EAF-Nansen project to help the countries of the region to adopt and implement the EAF and meet their commitments to the Millennium Development Goals and the World Summit on Sustainable Development relevant to the fishery sector.
- Appreciate the technical and financial assistance provided by FAO/EAF-Nansen project and SWIOFP to develop management plans in the countries of the region.
- While acknowledging the efforts made by the EAF-Nansen to create synergies and complementarities with other partners in the region such as the SWIOFP, ASCLME and SmartFish projects, participants reiterate the importance of strengthening these strategic partnerships to promote the implementation of the EAF in the region.
- Call on the EAF-Nansen project to include Somalia in its activities at national and regional levels.
- Are aware that decisions and measures taken in a country to manage shared stocks and stocks of common interest have an impact on the other bordering countries, participants acknowledged the need to cooperate with each other and at the regional level through their regional organization (SWIOFC) for the implementation of harmonised management frameworks in line with the EAF principles and to ensure political commitment and harmonization of legislations.
- Request that SWIOFC, as part of its mandate, monitor the status of implementation of the EAF in the region.
- Request the countries to solicit technical and financial support from other sources in addition to the EAF-Nansen project to implement the management plans. For this the RTG recommends that countries strengthen their cooperation and working collaboration with other projects such as SmartFish programme to mobilize additional funding in support of the implementation of the management plans.
- Take note of the initiative of certain countries to use the expertise and skills available within the NTG for the preparation of the draft management plan, which helped strengthening the internalization of the EAF and ownership. However, where and if needed, participants requested the EAF-Nansen project to assist the NTGs to finalise their management plans.
- Appreciate the presentation made on the several steps of the preparation process of management plans that are consistent with the EAF, and note that there is a need to further structure the management plan documents to make them more concise with a logical framework including indicators that will allow the monitoring of progress made in terms of impacts. Participants undertake to integrate the comments and finalize the management plans by early 2013, the latest, for their adoption by the national authorities.
- Propose carrying out an annual review at the operational level to assess progress made and difficulties encountered and general revision after a period of five years. Countries were requested to include this point in their management plans.
- Concerned about the importance of helping managers to assess and compare different options and decide on best measures to implement the management plan, participants acknowledged the need to include in the management plans an analysis of economic

and social costs/benefits, and of potential impacts per management measure. A preliminary analysis is being carried out and incorporated in the plans before their adoption. The EAF-Nansen proposed to organise a regional training on cost/benefit analysis.

- While recognizing that the preparation and the execution of management plans is a prerogative of the fisheries authorities in collaboration with other relevant entities, participants agreed that a management plan can only be considered sustainable if it is supported with a long term financing. Likely funding sources are the budget allocation of the Ministry in charge of Fisheries, fisheries funds and external resources including private sector.

