

FAO AND PARTNERS HOLD THIRD EAF-NANSEN PROJECT FORUM TO ASSESS PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ECOSYSTEM APPROACH TO FISHERIES IN AFRICA



Hon. Dr. Benedict Ole Nagole (Second left), Deputy Minister of Livestock and Fisheries Development of Tanzania with Ms Lise Stensrud, Minister Councillor of the Embassy of Norway in Dar es Salaam, Mr. Soren Dalsgaard Ag. FAO Representative to Tanzania and Dr. Yohana Budeba, Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries Development of Tanzania

From October 8th to 10th, 2013 the third Forum of the EAF-Nansen Project was held in Dar es Salaam, the United Republic of Tanzania under the theme *“Implementation of the ecosystem approach to fisheries – progress made in Africa”*.

The first and second Forums were held in Rome, Italy (2008) and Accra, Ghana (2011), respectively. The Forum was opened by Hon. Dr. Benedict Ole Nagole, Deputy Minister of Livestock and Fisheries Development of Tanzania in the presence of Ms Lise Stensrud, Minister Councillor of the Norwegian Embassy in Dar-es-Salaam and Mr. Soren Dalsgaard Acting FAO Representative in Dar es Salaam. In his opening address, Hon. Ole Nagole noted that

“The EAF-Nansen project is addressing sustainability issues in the marine environment while ensuring a broader range of ecosystems services and functions, which will in turn provide economic and social benefits to humans”.

The three days Forum brought together 85 participants from 28 African countries namely Benin, Cameroon, Cabo Verde, Comoros, Côte d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco,

Objectives of the Forum

The EAF-Nansen Project Forum provides an opportunity for progress reporting, dissemination of experiences, identification of best practices and discussion of strategies pertaining to the project. The Forum also provides the means for partners to exchange views regarding the past activities and on proposals for future collaborative work.

At the 2013 Forum, partners had the opportunity to make input into the preparation of the next phase of the EAF-Nansen project. Important discussions were held on the new science, management and capacity development programmes.

Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Tanzania and Togo.

Also in attendance were representatives of the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad), the Institute of Marine Research (IMR) of Bergen, Norway, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO's Sub-Commission for Africa and the Adjacent Island States (IOC-Africa), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). Others are Regional Fisheries Commission of the Gulf of Guinea (COREP), the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (CSRP) of Northwest Africa, the South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission (SWIOFC), regional and sub-Regional partners projects like the Canary Current Large Marine Ecosystem (CCLME) project, Nansclim, the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA), World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and World Bank assisted fisheries projects in Kenya (KCDP) and Sierra Leone (WARFP-SL). The African Union Commission's Inter African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR), NEPAD and the Southern African Development Commission (SADC) were invited but were unable to attend for various reasons.



Some representatives of partner agencies keenly follow proceedings at the opening session of the Forum

Since 2010, the EAF-Nansen project has been assisting the EAF National Task Groups in the project countries to prepare fisheries management plans using the ecosystem approach to fisheries (EAF) framework. Some of the countries (representing area clusters) presented the progress made and results achieved. Dr Salvador Ngoande of Cameroon, for example made a presentation on the management plan for the industrial shrimp fisheries in the Central African region also involving Gabon and Nigeria. Other presentations were on the management plans for the Banks fishery of Mauritius, small and medium pelagic fisheries of Kenya and Tanzania, Linefish fishery of Mozambique, demersal fishery of Comores and Madagascar, the beach seine fishery in the western Gulf of Guinea (Côte d'Ivoire to Benin)

and the small scale fishery sector of Liberia and Sierra Leone. The presentations showed that significant progress has been made by countries in adopting the EAF framework as manifested in the quality of management plans presented at the Forum. The country teams acknowledged the opportunity provided by the EAF-Nansen project and FAO for capacity development, which has enhanced the technical competence of many fisheries managers and scientists across Africa. The project's effort in facilitating the creation of active networks among countries and with regional fisheries bodies was highly commended and go to underscore the contribution of EAF Nansen project towards the new fisheries management regime in Africa.

Also showcased was the contribution of surveys carried out with the research vessel *Dr Fridtjof Nansen* to the knowledge base for the implementation of the ecosystem approach to fisheries and to the transboundary diagnosis analysis (TDA)/strategic action plan (SAP) process followed by the LME projects. Over the years, the project has carried out several ecosystem surveys in partnership with all the LME projects in sub-Saharan Africa. The time series of data and information emanating from monitoring of the hake stocks in the Benguela Current Commission area (Angola, Namibia and South Africa) was presented as a case study of transboundary surveys and management of shared fishery resources.

Presentations by representatives of the partners and invited experts also highlighted other initiatives that are relevant to the implementation of the ecosystem approach to fisheries in Africa. These include progress made in the development of GIS tools in support of EAF management planning and the links with the outcome of the Nansclim project that investigated possible trends in ocean climate and corresponding changes in marine biodiversity and fisheries in the Benguela Current system, using data collected through the *R/V Dr Fridtjof Nansen* surveys and other regional datasets.

An important session in the Forum was a presentation on the experience of Norway in developing the oil and gas industry in the North Sea without compromising sustainable fisheries in Norwegian waters. The work done in Ghana and Angola in the last five years, including the databases developed on marine biodiversity, was given as an example. The speaker noted that important lessons are there to be learnt by many African countries that are vigorously prospecting for oil or are producing oil and gas in commercial quantities in their maritime waters. The participants concluded that although the development of the oil and gas industry is a blessing to the continent it could have adverse impacts on critical habitats and the fauna and flora of the coastal and marine environment. The presentation on the Norwegian experience demonstrated, however, that it is possible for the oil and gas sector in Africa to co-exist harmoniously with vibrant and sustainable fisheries as well as other uses of the sea, if the sector is well understood, planned and properly regulated.



Fisheries experts from African countries deliberate the way forward during one of the Working Group discussion

Brainstorming on the Development of the Second Phase of the EAF-Nansen project

In 2012, the government of Norway decided to build a new research vessel for the EAF-Nansen project. The vessel will be ready in 2016 for the start of a new phase of the project. A special session of the Forum, chaired by Ms. Cathrine Martens of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was dedicated to discussion on the framework and scope of the new phase of the project. FAO and IMR have constituted a Task Force made up of experts from Africa and Europe to formulate a new science programme in consultation with stakeholders. The initial thoughts of the Task Force were presented for discussions in working groups which featured, climate change and fisheries, policy and management, capacity development and pollution in the marine environment. The outcome of the discussions will be considered in the elaboration of the new phase project document.

The climax of the Forum was the panel discussions moderated by the EAF-Nansen Project Coordinator. The panel of six comprising three women and three men gave their opinion on a number of topical issues ranging from their (the panellists) take-home messages from the Forum, their expectation of the Second Phase of EAF-Nansen Project, and views on what and how gender issues should be mainstreamed in project activities. The panellists also gave their views on how stronger links could be created in the new phase between the two central pillars of capacity development for management and the R/V Dr Fridtjof Nansen surveys, in particular the use of the survey data in the management of the fisheries.

At the end of the Forum, many participants expressed their satisfaction with the outcome in particular the experience shared on the fishery management plans, the invaluable information received on the oil and gas sector and the input made into the preparation of the second phase project document. The Forum was closed by the Mrs Fatma Sobo (representing the Director of Fisheries of Tanzania) with an address also given by Mrs Brit Fisknes, a Senior Advisor of NORAD.

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