

Committee on Fisheries (COFI)
35th Session (5 – 9 September 2022)

AGENDA ITEM 14.1 Development of regional action plans for the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy (2022 – 25) (for information and discussion (COFI/2022/12.1, COFI/2022/INF/16

Mr. Chairperson,

Eritrea, Ghana, Nigeria and Sudan take the floor on behalf of the African Regional Group regarding the Development of regional action plans for the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy (2022-25).

The ARG welcomes the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy endorsed by the FAO Council 170th Session, as a tool to advance knowledge and accelerate implementation of the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31. The ARG does so because It provides Organization-wide guidance, coherence and alignment on science and innovation.

We take note that the Strategy is based on recognition that science and innovation can be a powerful engine to transform agrifood systems when they are accompanied by strong institutions, good governance, political will, enabling regulatory frameworks and effective measures to promote equity among agrifood systems actors.

Africa appreciates the work done by FAO to support Member States but in addition it is imperative that the following elements be taken into consideration in FAO's Strategic Framework in the 2022 to 2031 work plan:

Biosecurity issues;

- Innovative products to reduce post-harvest losses,
- Environmental management for fisheries and aquaculture;
- Coastal and regional management of shared aquatic resources to support sustainable fisheries and commercial fisheries and aquaculture production;
- Strengthening aquaculture marketing capacity for small and medium-sized enterprises;
- Data collection, management for the development of evidence-based policies;
- Put in place support mechanisms for climate change adaptation and mitigation and
- Promote resilience among small producers.

Finally, we acknowledge the FAO's approach to develop regional action plans for implementation of the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy and encourage the FAO to continue to collaborate closely with African Member states and their regional and continental institutions to align the regional action plans with continental priorities and frameworks. In particular, we wish to see a strong alignment between the processes for the development of

the FAO's regional action plans and next Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063 that is currently under development.