

**Information to be contributed to FIRMS by
the Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic (CECAF),
a FAO associated partner**

The Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic (CECAF) will contribute to FIRMS along the following lines:

1. *Data and statistical information:*

Types and scope of information to be contributed

Reports on marine resources:

Reports of the four CECAF Stock Assessment Working groups (Demersal-north, Small pelagic-north, Demersal-south and Small pelagic-south) will be structured for uploading and maintained in FIRMS. Links to source documents will be provided.

Reports on fisheries:

Fishery inventories developed under the leadership of CECAF-SC national focal points, validated at national level and further endorsed by both the CECAF-SC and the FIRMS Secretariat will be structured for uploading and maintained in FIRMS. References to bibliography used to structure and update the inventories will be provided.

Data:

Regional Catch and Effort statistics for the CECAF area will be provided at available public domain resolution as determined under the policies of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Department.

Biology, ecology, fisheries and other information:

Marine resources / stocks inventories will be provided at regional level within the CECAF area, with information on their exploitation, assessment methods and state and trends descriptors if available.

Fisheries inventories will be provided at national level with focus on fishing activities including inputs, outputs and management information.

Regulations and management:

Information on fisheries management will be furnished where possible with focus on management regime and status. Fishery Management Units, where formally established, will be created as entities embedding links to the fishing activities covered under such management.

CECAF has mandated responsibility:

- to keep under review the state of the resources within its area of competence and of the industries based on them;
- to promote, encourage and coordinate research in the area related to the living resources thereof and to draw up programmes required for this purpose and to organize such research as may appear necessary;
- to promote the collection, interchange, dissemination and analysis or study of statistical, biological, environmental and socio-economic data and other marine fishery information;
- to establish the scientific basis for regulatory measures leading to the conservation and management of marine fishery resources, to formulate such measures through subsidiary bodies, as required, to make appropriate recommendations for the adoption and implementation of these measures and to provide advice for the adoption of regulatory measures by Member Governments, subregional or regional organizations, as appropriate;

2. Metadata and information management:

Ownership and responsibilities

Marine resources:

The information contributed to FIRMS is elaborated under the aegis of the CECAF-SC. Accordingly, primary ownership of the marine resources inventory lies with CECAF. As FAO article VI body, CECAF is a FAO associated partner in FIRMS and as such, overall responsibility for the published information resides with FAO. This arrangement will be indicated in each fact sheet with the following statement “*This document provided, and maintained by CECAF and owned by Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), is part of CECAF Stock Status Reports data collection*”.

Fisheries:

As decided by the CECAF Scientific Sub-Committee, member countries retain primary ownership (and control) for the content of the fisheries inventory and retain accordingly primary ownership of national inventories. The national inventories are eventually aggregated at regional level according to the harmonized framework set by the CECAF Scientific Sub-Committee which ensures, with the support of the FIRMS Secretariat that agreed conventions, reporting norms, standards and overall consistency for the region are applied. Such role confers to the CECAF Scientific Sub-Committee the corporate ownership of the aggregated fisheries inventory, without which sign-off no information can be published in FIRMS. As above, the overall responsibility for the published information resides with FAO. This arrangement will be indicated in each fact sheet with the following statement “*This document provided, and maintained by CECAF and owned by Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), is part of CECAF Fisheries Reports – <country x> data collection*”.

Standards to be used in this Partnership Agreement.

The information to be contributed by CECAF will conform, where possible, with the Information Management Policy established by the FIRMS Steering Committee.

Methods of collection and processing

Marine resources inventory:

The Marine resource inventory is aggregated and validated under the aegis of the CECAF-SC upon recommendation of the four CECAF Stock Assessment Working groups (Demersal-north, Small pelagic-north, Demersal-south and Small pelagic-south). The Reports of the Stock assessment working groups, reviewed and cleared by CECAF-SC and further consolidated in its session reports, are structured for uploading and dissemination in FIRMS consistently with the validated inventory.

The FIRMS Marine resources inventory template is available as an “information collection mechanism” which countries are encouraged to use for compiling information about any additional resources in the regional inventory. These nationally contributed inventories will be used, amongst others, as sources for possible recommendation by relevant CECAF working groups regarding the inclusion of more marine resources in the CECAF inventory.

Fisheries inventory:

The inventories harmonization process at CECAF level will be achieved as follows: CECAF-SC national focal points will lead the development of the inventory content using the FIRMS excel template and inventory guidelines, while referring to the harmonized framework set out by CECAF Scientific sub-Committee. During this process, any harmonization issue which cannot be resolved will be recorded. The CECAF-SC will examine the regionally aggregated inventory, and discuss and make decisions on the reported outstanding harmonization issues.

A successful outcome of the procedure described in the above paragraph will enable decision by CECAF to publish the inventory in FIRMS. A regional inventory aggregating a minimum of half of CECAF member countries was deemed acceptable for such decision.

Bibliographical sources:

Links to source CECAF reports are provided in the Marine resource fact sheets, while relevant bibliographic sources are contained in these reports; as well, bibliographic sources are clearly listed in the Fisheries fact sheets.

Transmission protocols and dissemination channels.

Marine resources:

Reports of the Stock assessment working groups used as source for marine resources fact sheets, are published periodically as “FAO Fisheries Report” by the FAO-FI department. Electronic copies are stored and accessible through the FI website / CECAF sub-site¹.

Fisheries:

National fisheries inventories on which fact sheets are based are elaborated according to Excel or Word templates, stored within dedicated folders and periodically updated through review sessions of the CECAF-SC. Their public dissemination occurs only through the FIRMS fact sheets, while dissemination of the Excel or Word sources might occur through specific requests to CECAF-SC.

3. Data and Information security

All contributions from CECAF will be in the public domain.

Transparency of the information and results on status and trends of stocks, resources and fisheries presented by CECAF are documented in the course of the scientific peer-review process followed to obtain the results (Working groups on Stock assessment), and the various public CECAF meetings (Scientific Sub-Committee and Scientific Committee) at which the results, and various options for management and resource conservation, are presented and discussed. Details on these meetings and processes are available at FAO-FI web-site.

¹ <http://www.fao.org/fishery/rfb/cecaf/en>

4. Other entitlements

As FAO associated Partner, the FIRMS representative of the CECAF-SC is entitled to participate in the FIRMS meetings (FSC, and TWG). In both the TWG and in the FSC, FAO attends as a single Member and accordingly the CECAF-FIRMS representative will be part of the FAO delegation, and consult with the FAO representative in FIRMS on strategic matters eventually requiring a voting mechanism.