May 2004

منظمة الأغذية والزراعة للأمم المتحدة | 联合国粮食及农业组织 | Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations | Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture | Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Agricultura y la Alimentación

FISHERY COMMITTEE FOR THE EASTERN CENTRAL ATLANTIC

Seventeenth Session

Dakar, Senegal, 24 – 27 May 2004

REGULATING ACCESS AND MANAGING FISHING CAPACITY IN THE CECAF ZONE – WITH REFERENCE TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION ON THE MANAGEMENT OF FISHING CAPACITY IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA[1]

ABSTRACT

This document examines the issue of managing fishing capacity and access to fishery resources in the CECAF zone. It recalls the key elements of the International Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity and also presents the conclusions and recommendations of the Regional Workshop organized by FAO in 2001 on this issue. The Committee is being asked to indicate the progress made and difficulties encountered as well as provide guidance on actions and public policies to be pursued in order to speed up application of the International Plan of Action on the Management of Fishing Capacity in the CECAF zone, including regulating access to artisanal fisheries.

INTRODUCTION

1. The management of fishing capacity, which forms an integral part of fisheries management, involves the drawing up and implementation of policies and measures aimed at achieving a balance between fishing inputs and output in relation to a given production target. Regulating access is a sine qua non for capacity management. Recognized as an important issue

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by the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) since 1997, the management of fishing capacity is aimed at preventing excess capacity and overexploitation of fish stocks. In response to this phenomenon, COFI adopted the International Plan of Action (IPOA) on the Management of Fishing Capacity in 1999.

2. Many national fisheries worldwide as well as high seas fisheries are affected by overcapacity. This manifests itself mainly in the use of large fishing gear and the overexploitation of fish stocks, notably fish of high commercial value. The globalisation of this phenomenon is reflected in the ever-widening gap, since the 1980s, between the world fishing fleet and the relative stagnation in the volume of catches of major commercial species.

3. According to FAO, the nominal size of the world fishing fleet reached maximum levels in the mid-1990s. However, the current fishing capacity has probably continued to expand if one takes into account the improved efficiency of vessels as well as the fact that an increasing number of fisheries seem to be affected by this problem. In short, even if fishing capacity is controlled more effectively in some countries, the overall situation, including in the CECAF zone, raises concern.

4. To support the implementation of the IPOA in the CECAF zone, FAO organised, in close collaboration with the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC), a workshop on the Management of Fishing Capacity in West Africa, in Saly, Senegal, from 25 to 28 September 2001. The recommendations drawn up and adopted by the experts present at the workshop are included in the Annex. Similarly, a supplementary workshop on regulating access was organised in October 2003. FAO has also provided support for a number of national initiatives, such as in Senegal and Mauritania.

5. FAO will organise from 26 to 28 June 2004, a Technical Consultation to examine progress made by its members in the implementation of the International Plan of Action on the Management of Fishing Capacity. It appears, on the whole, that most CECAF coastal countries are engaged in a process of deliberations and studies that are gradually resulting in concrete measures. Good examples of this are the shift in fisheries policy in Senegal and Morocco. Nonetheless, quite a number of countries face considerable difficulty to gradually control access to their fisheries resources and, when necessary, to reduce excess capacity. The main conceptual and practical difficulties encountered in the drawing up and implementation of the needed public policies are discussed in this document.

INTERNATIONAL REFERENCES ON CAPACITY

6. At the international level, two main legal instruments serve as reference in regard to management of capacity: the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) and the International Plan of Action on the Management of Fishing Capacity. The IPOA on the Management of Fishing Capacity clarifies and complements some provisions of the Code adopted in 1995.

7. The Code identifies excess fishing capacity as a key problem (Articles 6 and 7). The Code seeks to prevent overfishing resulting from excessive fishing effort and overcapacity, which are linked to the mobilisation of excessive fishing inputs that may or may not be used to their full potential. The Code also lays emphasis on the elimination of excess fishing capacity as well as prevention of its inordinate increase. Lastly, the Code refers to the levels of targeted stocks, which constitute a very important basis for defining the level of target capacity.

8. The IPOA is a voluntary instrument that is based on the major principles of the Code. The immediate objective of the IPOA is for *"States and regional fisheries organisations, within the framework of their respective competencies and consistent with international law, to achieve*

worldwide, preferably by 2003, but no later than 2005, an efficient, equitable and transparent management of fishing capacity". To this end, the IPOA is expected to be implemented in three phases: i) evaluation and diagnosis; ii) adoption of preliminary management measures; and iii) studies and periodic amendments. The IPOA also stipulates that when States and regional organisations are confronted with a problem of excess fishing capacity, they should attempt to limit the current level or gradually reduce the fishing capacity of the fisheries affected by this phenomenon. Generally, the IPOA asks States and organisations to guard against increasing fishing capacity as this threatens the sustainability of fisheries. The IPOA also recommends the use of a global approach, which makes it possible to incorporate all the factors that can affect capacity, while taking into account fleet mobility and technological advances.

9. The IPOA does not mention management objectives as the latter remain within the purview of States and regional organisations. Management objectives can be defined in relation to the sustainability of resources, economic efficiency and for precautionary reasons. A minimum benchmark is to establish a long-term balance between fisheries input and the maximum sustainable yield (MSY), or a catch objective that is commensurate with ensuring the sustainable utilisation of fisheries resources. In this regard, the IPOA fully recommends increased economic efficiency by avoiding the overexpansion of fishing fleets (beyond the required minimum level to catch quantities corresponding to the benchmark). Although the required measures for the management of fishing capacity are not really stated in the IPOA, a balance between fishery inputs and production clearly calls for direct or indirect control of the fleet size and the production capacity.

FISHERIES MANAGEMENT AND CAPACITY

10. The management of fishing capacity should be considered as an integral part of fisheries management. The term fisheries refers to a set of related fish stocks and fishing units that can be managed largely as a separate entity, while taking into account pertinent post-harvest aspects. Obviously, the more (substantive or potential) interactions there are between fish stocks, on the one hand, and between fish stocks and fishing units, on the other, the more difficult it is to isolate and, therefore, identify the management options.

11. Generally speaking, and in somewhat exaggerated terms, fisheries management comprises four types of measures:

- Measures aimed at **protecting and improving stock yield**, for example, by establishing protected areas for nursery grounds or instituting mesh size restrictions.

- Measures aimed at managing **the allocation of fishing effort**, for example, by limiting the fishing effort applied to a stock, when the effort can be targeted at several stocks.

- Measures aimed at **managing fleet configuration**, namely the size of fishing vessels and fishing gear. Such measures include: areas reserved for certain fishing units (for example, small-scale fishing), restrictions on fishing vessel size and the number and size of fishing gear.

- Measures aimed at **managing fishing capacity**. This includes controlling access and the direct or indirect management of fleet size.

12. The four types of measures described above are by and large required for a sound management of fisheries. Each has a specific objective, meaning, among others, that the introduction of new measures aimed at managing fishing capacity would require reviewing existing management measures.

13. It is important to note that the four types of measures imply that the definition and limitation of fisheries can be specific. For example, measures aimed at the conservation and improvement of fish stock productivity can include the limitation of fisheries based to a large extent on a fish stock or stocks showing common characteristics or belonging to a given ecosystem. Measures aimed at controlling the allocation of fishing effort can include limitations confined to specific fish stocks and the corresponding fishing fleets. Measures for the protection of certain production methods can be defined mainly on the basis of the characteristics of the fleet.

14. The management of fishing capacity implies a definition of fisheries that takes account of the key interactions between fish stocks and fleets. It does not only relate to existing interactions but is also definitely aimed, at least initially, at controlling some of such interactions and therefore at redefining fisheries capacity management options. Some CECAF countries, such as Mauritania and Guinea, have already adopted this approach.

15. In practice, the management of fishing capacity essentially implies effective control of access to fisheries, irrespective of whether such control is direct (e.g. license restrictions) or indirect (e.g. individual transferable quotas). Thus, capacity management is closely tied to the issue of access – a rather sensitive issue, especially in countries that have taken too long to take decisions on the matter.

16. Actually, when fisheries start to develop in a country or a given zone, excess capacity is technically not a problem. If there is localised overfishing, the excess fishing effort can be transferred to other fisheries by introducing appropriate measures. As long as reassignments, at minimum cost, can be undertaken, excess capacity does not really exist and it is still relatively easy to introduce a system of gradually controlling access to fisheries.

17. When a fishery is relatively developed, it becomes increasingly difficult to carry out a reallocation of fishing effort and the fishing capacity gradually exceeds the range of existing opportunities. This often has a snowballing effect, and the excess capacity begins to spread to the whole sector. If measures have not been put in place, countries are often faced with a real challenge: having to introduce measures to control fishing capacity in the face of overfishing of several stocks and virtually generalised overcapitalisation, even as financial problems arising from this situation are already affecting the fishing industry. This is a challenge facing the artisanal fisheries sector in a number of CECAF countries, such as Senegal, Nigeria and Ghana, as well as some demersal fisheries in the northern CECAF zone.

18. One of the major problems in fisheries management is that, in the face of difficulty in introducing effective controls for access to fisheries and fishing capacity, authorities responsible for fisheries management often tend to mix up the objectives of the four types of measures described above. A classical example is that of the extensive use of catch quotas (TAC). In the northern hemisphere, TACs were initially fixed to control the allocation of available fishing effort based on fish stock, but also to gradually reduce the general level of use as a means of curbing excess capacity. When most fisheries are managed in this manner, it results in underutilisation of most fleets, which translates into overcapacity and additional costs. It can also result in excess capacity of onshore facilities.

19. Other measures have also been used to “ineffectively” reduce the impact of overcapacity, namely restrictions on vessel power, fishing gear or authorised fishing days, and extension of closed fishing seasons initially introduced for biological reasons. There are several consequences arising from the inordinate application of such measures: economic waste, increase in the number of rules and regulations but weak enforcement, increased difficulty in addressing the substantive issue, which is that of controlling access and capacity.

REGULATION OF ACCESS AND MANAGEMENT OF CAPACITY

20. Managing capacity implies regulating access and direct or indirect control over fleet size while taking into account the need to maintain a level of adequate utilisation of fishing units. The main instruments available for the implementation of a policy geared towards managing access and fishing capacity are discussed below in relation to their application in the CECAF zone and Sub-Saharan Africa. Constraints and difficulties relating to this have also been highlighted.

Access and Management of Capacity

21. Fishing license restrictions remain the most utilised system of direct capacity management in African fisheries. They are imposed on virtually all national and international industrial fleets operating in the zone.

22. Fishing license restrictions are a very complex tool and their effectiveness depend on quite a number of factors: definition of fisheries, adequate monitoring of fishing levels, terms of allocation and reallocation by fisheries, and terms of issuance, renewal and withdrawal of licenses. It is observed, generally, that most of the countries are gradually fine-tuning their system. However, a lot still needs to be done, for instance, with regard to fisheries evaluation, licensing controls (actual nationality, characteristics of vessels, etc.), monitoring the growing efficiency of fishing units (impact of technological advances and modernisation of fleets) and consideration of interactions between fisheries.

23. Some countries give better consideration to these factors. They include Madagascar, with the evaluation and participatory management of licensing in shrimp fishery; Mauritania and Guinea, for the definition of fisheries and consideration of interactions; and in Senegal, where there are plans to audit flags and the characteristics of the national fleet.

24. Management of industrial fisheries by licensing is also impeded by the problem of managing the access of foreign fleets. Besides piracy and illicit fishing, some countries in the region continue to face a problem of governance, which is reflected in the lax manner they manage licenses and / or operate licenses issued to foreign fleets. Countries that have successfully addressed this problem still have to contend with the fact that management of industrial capacity presupposes a joint and harmonised control of national and international fleets. To this end, some African countries try to negotiate more robust access terms that are better suited to the demands of sustainability, such as the adoption of more long-term strategies, adoption of management plans by fisheries, or recourse to improved monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) tools.

25. With regard to artisanal fisheries, this sector continues to be largely characterised by open and free access, even if licenses and administrative authorisations are sometimes issued. Controlling access to artisanal fisheries constitutes a multifaceted challenge: large numbers of participants, multispecificity, mobility, poverty, etc. Hence, the difficulty of introducing measures to control participation in fisheries, in general, and in specific fisheries.

26. Two important trends are worth noting in Sub-Saharan Africa: A move – generally promoted by governments – towards the organisation of communities for the management of fisheries, as is the case, for example, in South Africa, Ghana and Senegal; and a tendency for the communities themselves to react more systematically and jointly to specific management problems, for example, protecting themselves against trawler incursions or reducing their catches in case of periodic overproduction. These trends are increasing and should gradually lead to forms of co-management involving concessionary agreements (granting of user rights coupled with obligations, in the form of specifications).

27. A workshop on regulation of access and development of fisheries in West Africa was organised by FAO in Saly, Senegal, from 7 to 10 October 2003, in close collaboration with the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC). The workshop concluded that it is necessary to systematically devise a policy of breaking away from the paradigm of open access. It was further proposed that the countries adopt a breakaway plan based on:

- A high-level policy statement that would make it possible to notify parties to the breakaway approach, free up public action and determine responsibilities by specifying who does what, to what end and according to what time schedule.

- The mobilisation of stakeholders to adopt a broad-based consensual approach that would permit dialogue and adherence of the stakeholders to evaluation and diagnosis criteria, objectives and respective roles, as well as the principles of access regulation.

- Negotiation and adoption of a transition plan based on the application of immediate measures (for example, the freezing of industrial licences, the registration of artisanal fishing boats, better protection of fishing areas reserved for artisanal fisheries and the promotion of community organisations).

- Search for joint access regulatory mechanisms (consultation and negotiation with respect to the choice of criteria and terms for the definition of rights, forms of applicable rights, and corresponding implementation guidelines).

- Application of such mechanisms, even on an experimental basis, within the framework of specific fisheries (drawing up of a management plan based on access control).

28. Strategically, a comprehensive control of access to fisheries – including artisanal fisheries – should be viewed as an indispensable condition for fisheries management. Interactions between types of fisheries (artisanal, national industrial, and foreign industrial) are important and the systematic management of access is necessary – not only for managing capacity, but also as a basis for redistribution between types of fishing. Cephalopod fisheries in Morocco and Mauritania show, for example, that the effectiveness of industrial fisheries management policies was very much affected by the expansion of artisanal fleets, which were initially not regulated or were poorly controlled. The same goes for numerous shrimp fisheries, for example in Madagascar or Tanzania. Free access in the artisanal fisheries sector gradually frustrates management efforts undertaken elsewhere.

29. The implementation of such a strategy of breaking away involves a lot of work in the area of applied research, analysis and information. This can include, for example, the carrying out of a social, economic and technical assessment of the human, physical and financial outflows and the corresponding dynamics (investment, equipment replacement, financing and incentives, migration, marketing, etc.); analysis of the current and potential role of institutions, including decentralised institutions as well as professional and institutional organisations; or the formulation of a policy for raising awareness in civil society in consultation with direct stakeholders.

30. Finally, the management of capacity also means paying attention to economic rent (economic benefits that can be derived after accounting for costs of production). In the case of free access fisheries, the tendency is to gradually dissipate rent, following an increase in capacity. Any investment incentive or subsidy for the operation of fishing vessels becomes counterproductive while taxation, on the contrary, discourages overcapitalisation. In the CECAF zone, as in the rest of Africa, there is a trend toward more effective control of financial incentives applied in the sector: reduction of subsidies and tax exemptions; increase in access fees in the form of entry charges for industrial fisheries. It is still difficult, however, for the States to impose

taxes on artisanal fisheries, even when such access is regulated and the access fees remain symbolic, as in Mauritania.

31. In some countries, such as Madagascar, the principle of strict regulation of industrial fisheries capacity is presently negotiated between vessel owners and government authorities. In this context, the parties also agree on the principle of sharing any profit that is generated. The States can also use part of the rent generated to finance additional measures, such as research, aid for modernisation, or reduction of capacity, if necessary.

Reduction of Capacity and Transition

32. Fisheries authorities have at their disposal a number of options to reduce capacity in the case of licensed fishery. The first possibility consists of using the natural drop in the number of licenses. After freezing access to a fishery and if licenses are non-transferable, the authorities could leave the number of licenses to decline by itself, either as a result of non-renewal by fisheries operators or through the introduction of rules to eliminate inactive licenses. This approach is used in many CECAF countries to limit the expansion of national trawler fleets. The obvious problem with this approach is that it takes time to show its effectiveness. It is also quite unlikely to lead to improved economic performance.

33. Another possibility for governments is to buy back licenses and eventually vessels. Experience shows that it is very difficult to design buy-back programmes with a measurable impact on capacity at a cost that is not prohibitive. A related matter is that of the withdrawal of vessels. In the absence of eliminating all vessels considered redundant at the national level, buy-back programmes could lead to the transfer of capacity to the high seas or to the EEZs of other countries. The transfer of excess capacity to the EEZs of other countries could be undertaken through the sale of vessels or their redeployment under international agreements. With regard to such transfers, the IPOA asks States to ensure that no transfer of capacity to the jurisdiction of another State is undertaken without the expressed consent and official authorisation of that State (Article 37).

34. The transfer of capacity to developing countries can have significant negative impacts: distortions in the price of inputs; intensified conflicts with artisanal fisheries; and worsening of excess capacity in several fisheries. Even when such transfers take place within the framework of international fisheries agreements negotiated between sovereign States, economic considerations can lead developing countries to opt for immediate gains rather than the sustainability of the resource. This is the case, especially for countries in crisis, such as Guinea-Bissau presently. Generally, this situation does not facilitate the formulation or implementation of fisheries management policies in the CECAF zone.

35. The management of capacity through a mixture of licensing and catch quotas is also beginning to develop in Africa, such as in Namibia, South Africa or Mozambique for shrimp fishery. Such approaches attempt to limit the size of the fleet as well as its fishing power, and to limit target species catches. In the CECAF zone, a similar approach is gradually developing in the form of closed season," as practised in Morocco and Mauritania for cephalopods. In most of the examples cited above, however, there is still overcapacity. As indicated in Paragraph 18, this approach tends to limit the impact of this overcapacity on the resource to the detriment of economic efficiency. For the approach to be effective, it must therefore move beyond simply freezing capacity to instituting a policy of gradual capacity reduction.

36. As a result of the problems associated with the management of capacity through licensing and quotas, some countries are considering, for certain specific fisheries, the possibility of introducing a system of Individual Transferable Quotas (ITQs). Such systems of management have a unique characteristic: that of encouraging beneficiaries to use only inputs needed for the harvesting of their quota and, moreover, in an economically efficient manner. The introduction of

an ITQ system of management is currently on the drawing board in Southern Africa, for cephalopod fisheries in Morocco and Mauritania, as well as shrimp fisheries in Madagascar.

37. There are very few examples of reduction of fishing capacity in purely artisanal fisheries in Africa. A notable exception is Mauritius, where the Government subsidizes the reduction of capacity and fishing effort. When fishermen are, however, confronted with problems of overfishing and overcapacity, they generally tend to organise themselves and to draw up for themselves principles of control that are geared towards reducing catches or fishing effort – in the absence of successfully controlling access and capacity. This is the case in Senegal, Nigeria and Ghana, for example, where fishermen organise themselves to limit fishing time, fishing gear taken on board, or daily landings. As indicated in Paragraph 19, such measures have a mitigated impact.

Fishing on the High Seas

38. Management of capacity on the high seas is complicated. Apart from the prevalence of free access, it is observed that coastal States intensify fishing effort in high seas just adjacent to their EEZ. There is also a tendency to transfer excess fishing capacities to the high seas.

39. By virtue of the legal framework relating to the high seas, as reflected in the United Nations Conventions on the Law of the Sea of 1982, management of capacity on the high seas is virtually swallowed up in a system of catch quotas as the regional fisheries organisations administering the quotas are often incapable of regulating the access of vessels of member States and refusing access to non-member States. This situation is, however, fast evolving and a number of regional organisations, such as ICCAT, for example, are organising themselves to impose more effective controls on fishing access.

40. The 1995 United Nations Agreement relating to the Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks does not refer specifically to the management of capacity. Nonetheless, the Agreement has reinforced the responsibility of flag States to adhere to conservation and management measures adopted by regional organisations responsible for fisheries. It also enables these organisations to monitor more effectively the capacity and deployment of fleets and to adjust target reference points in order to take into account factors linked to fishing capacity. In addition, the FAO Agreement to Promote Compliance with International Conservation and Management Measures provides for a system of gathering data at the international level and a system of ensuring compliance and application of authorisations granted. The IPOA points out that for an improved management of high seas fishing, it is urgent to first ratify the abovementioned Agreements.

41. Some issues relating to the problem of States that do not assume their responsibilities under international law, as well as the problem of monitoring fleets in general, were examined under the International Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing, adopted by the FAO Committee on Fisheries in 2001.

Factors of unsustainability

42. The IPOA recommends to States, in the development of their National Plan of Action (NPOA), to evaluate, reduce and gradually eliminate all factors, including subsidies and other economic incentives, contributing directly or indirectly to overcapacity (Article 25).

43. These considerations and other factors of unsustainability have been analysed by FAO. Some of these factors are linked to the prevalence of open access, despite efforts deployed to limit the impact on fish resources. The inadequate conditions of access and participation in the direct or indirect control of inputs, and production appear to be the main factors of unsustainability and overcapacity. Recourse to subsidies and other economic and tax incentives also has a direct

bearing on capacity. The granting of big subsidies certainly contributed to the rapid and often excessive increase in the number of vessels in the 1970s and 1980s. Although this is not sufficiently documented, subsidy programmes appear to have reduced considerably in several countries since the end of the 1980s, including in the CECAF Region.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

44. The management of fishing capacity poses a vital question: that of simultaneously controlling inputs and catches. Management of fishing capacity implies addressing terms of access and participation in fisheries. It is thus connected to two emerging and interrelated notions - that of management plans based on access or user rights and that of co-management. In the immediate future, it will be good to adopt a transition strategy to address matters relating to the reduction of fishing capacity (disinvestment and conversion) and the recovery of stocks, when necessary. Increased control of fleet mobility is also needed.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS FOR THE COMMITTEE

45. The Committee is urged to state the progress achieved and constraints encountered in the implementation of the International Plan of Action on the Management of Capacity. It is also urged to indicate the direction and scope of actions and public policies to be put in place in order to speed up its implementation in the CECAF zone, including the regulation of access to artisanal fisheries.

ANNEXE

RECOMMANDATIONS OF THE WORKSHOP ON THE MANAGEMENT OF FISHING CAPACITY IN WEST AFRICA

The Workshop on the Management of Fishing Capacity in West Africa, organised by FAO, in close collaboration with the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC), in Saly, Senegal, from 25 to 28 September 2001, drew up and adopted a number of recommendations FAO (2001b). They aim to facilitate the implementation of the International Plan of Action on the Management of Fishing Capacity and, more generally, to promote more effective management of fishing capacity in the region. The recommendations are as follows:

a) Sectoral Policy

- Adhere to the International Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity and take the necessary measures for its implementation.

- Adhere to the International Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing, and contribute to its implementation.

- Acknowledge that overexploitation of fisheries involves both overfishing and overcapacity: two important interrelated but distinct factors. Therefore, States should not wait to be confronted with a problem of overfishing before implementing a capacity management policy.

- Acknowledge the need to take into account the coherence between macro-economic objectives and the requirements of capacity management.

- Analyse, in the above-mentioned context, how the exploitation of fisheries resources can contribute to macroeconomic development objectives, while recognizing the natural limitations of production. Promote a broad-based national debate on these issues.

- Develop, depending on the conclusions, an appropriate sectoral policy that includes a clear strategy for the management of fishing capacity.

- Promote national dialogue on policies and instruments for the management of capacity by involving all stakeholders concerned.

b) Basic elements for the management of fisheries capacity

- Acknowledge that the problem of capacity is essentially economic (even though it can have a broader impact) and initiate a dialogue on appropriate management tools.

- Develop a programme to define the units of management (fish stocks and fleets) while ensuring that such definitions encompass all stakeholders potentially involved.

- Calculate for each management option, the economic rent at the different levels of exploitation «Maximum Economic Yield (MEY) », etc.).

- Strengthen national expertise in the management of fishing capacity

c) Special problem of Artisanal Fisheries

- Define the most appropriate approach, depending on the interactions between artisanal fisheries and the other types of fisheries, either by incorporating this fisheries into the different management options or managing it separately.

- Analyse applicable management tools and reflect on the most appropriate institutional structure for their application. Explore, particularly, the advantages and cost of the implementation of an effective system of participation or even co-management. A «best practices » approach may be useful to identify the most applicable options.

- Acknowledge the need to address the problem of capacity, not only at the level of the fishing activity itself, but also at the level of fish processing and marketing and other related activities.

d) Capacity and evaluation indicators

At the sectoral level
Adopt a simple and single capacity indicator (for example, GRT, for industrial fisheries, and number of fishing boats, for artisanal fisheries) for the monitoring of the total capacity.

At the fisheries level
- Approach the monitoring and evaluation of capacity on the basis of defined or redefined fisheries in order to take account of the main interactions between fish stocks and the different segments of the fleet.

- Assess (even as an indication) the possible level of overcapacity that may exist in such fisheries, based on a common reference point and other reference points considered more relevant to each fisheries concerned.

- In the absence of the above, develop simple indicators that can help to observe over time, signs of overcapacity or overfishing.

- Assess the quality of monitoring fishing vessels (register) and the relevance of the system used to monitor capacity by fishery.

- Define a classification of Artisanal Fisheries units (or reassess this classification, if it exists) in order to determine more effectively the participation of artisanal fisheries units in the various fisheries.

Fishing Agreements and Transfer of Capacity
- Examine the potential impact of the international transfer of (excess) capacity within the framework of fishing agreements.

- Verify the accuracy of information relating to the simple and sole indicator adopted (for example, GRT).

- Set out fishing agreements within the framework of a specific long-term policy (in terms of development strategy for national fleets and in terms of economic rent).

Regional Collaboration
- Include the management of capacity as a major subject of analysis at the bilateral and regional level, particularly within existing regional fisheries organisations.

- Strengthen bilateral and regional mechanisms for the monitoring and evaluation of the capacity of shared and common interest fisheries.

- Promote regional dialogue on policies and instruments for the management of capacity.

- Strengthen regional cooperation mechanisms directly or indirectly linked to the regulation and control of capacity.

- Promote the development of appropriate tools (methods, approaches, information networks, etc.).

- Promote training and exchange of information in the area of monitoring-evaluation-regulation of fisheries capacity.

- Seek funding for the formulation of national and regional plans for the management of fishing capacity, possibly based on specific projects.