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**REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF  
FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE, BANJUL, THE GAMBIA,  
22 – 25 SEPTEMBER 2010**

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**INTRODUCTORY NOTE**

1. The 1<sup>st</sup> Conference of African Ministers of Fisheries and Aquaculture (CAMFA) was held in Banjul, The Gambia from 21<sup>st</sup> to the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September, 2010 under the theme “*African Fisheries and Aquaculture: Contributing towards Agricultural development and Economic Growth*” The Experts’ Meeting took place from the 21<sup>st</sup> to the 22<sup>nd</sup> of September, 2010 while the Ministerial Meeting was held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September, 2010.
2. Thirty three (33) African Union Member States and Thirty Six (36) organizations including the Regional Economic Communities, Non-governmental and Civil Society Organizations participated in the Conference.
3. The Experts’ meeting reviewed the progress made 4 years after the Abuja Fish for All Summit, Discussed the Wealth Generation Opportunities of African Fisheries and deliberated on Options and Context for Fisheries Policy and Governance Reform in Africa. The Experts’ Meeting also discussed the Role of Fisheries and Aquaculture in the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP).
4. There was a presentation of two films during the Ministerial Meeting on.” Our Fish our Wealth our Future and after which the Ministers, upon concluding their deliberations, adopted the Experts’ Report.
5. The Ministers highlighted the challenges faced within the fisheries and aquaculture sector, and shared measures that their respective countries have taken to address these challenges. They agreed on the need for urgent actions at national and regional levels to deter and eradicate IUU Fishing.
6. The Ministers supported the need for policy and governance reforms within the fisheries sector in order to enhance the contribution of fish to sustainable food and nutrition security and economic growth, within the CAADP framework.

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**FIRST CONFERENCE OF AFRICAN MINISTERS  
OF FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE (CAMFA)  
20-23 September 2010  
Banjul, The Gambia**

**CAMFA/Min/Rpt(I)**

**REPORT OF FIRST CONFERENCE OF AFRICAN MINISTERS  
OF FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE**

Theme

***“African Fisheries and Aquaculture: Contributing towards Agricultural  
Development and Economic Growth”***

## REPORT OF THE FIRST CONFERENCE OF AFRICAN MINISTERS OF FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE (CAMFA)

### I. INTRODUCTION

1. The African Ministers of **Fisheries and Aquaculture** met in Banjul, The Gambia on the 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2010 on the theme ***“African Fisheries and Aquaculture: Contributing towards Agricultural development and Economic Growth”***. ***Some of the objectives included*** reviewing progress made since the Fish For All Summit held in Abuja in 2005, and consider other contemporary matters related to fisheries and aquaculture on the continent mainly wealth-base fisheries; options and context for fisheries policy and governance reform in Africa; and the role of African fisheries and aquaculture in the CAADP, food security and economic development.

### II. PARTICIPATION

2. Thirty three (33) African Union Member States and Thirty Six (36) organizations including the Regional Economic Communities, Non-governmental and Civil Society Organizations participated in the Conference of Ministers of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

### III. OPENING SESSION

#### WELCOME REMARKS

3. Following a word of prayer, the meeting was opened by the Honourable Minister of Fisheries, Water Resources and National Assembly Matters of the Republic of Gambia. He informed the meeting that Gambia was greatly honoured to organize and host the CAMFA Conference and commended NEPAD and the African Union for taking the initiative to organize this meeting. He underscored the important role the fisheries sector in contributing to the national economy and added that the Government of The Gambia was committed to developing the fishing industry. He concluded by welcoming all participants to The Gambia.

4. The Representative of NEPAD Agency read a statement on behalf of the Chief Executive Officer of NEPAD Agency. In his statement he congratulated the Government of The Gambia for putting fisheries and aquaculture high on the national agenda. He stated that the meeting was a landmark event in that it demonstrated the AU leaders commitment to implementing the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) Framework which is the key driver for enhancing agricultural development and sustained economic growth on the Continent, thereby contributing to the eradication of poverty from the Continent. He reminded the meeting of NEPAD's integration into the AU structures as an agency. He added that through CAMFA and

PAF the African capacity to respond to improved fisheries reforms for increased regional integration, wealth creation and economic growth of the fisheries sector is being supported. He hoped that the meeting would offer a good platform to develop real solutions and practical action points to address these challenges.

5. The Representative of the FAO in his remarks informed the meeting that more than 1 billion people in Africa suffer from malnutrition and hunger and that Africa remained a net importer of foodstuff. He also added that climate change, coupled with challenges like overexploitation and illegal fishing, were major threats to the fisheries sector which was a potential contributor to economic development and poverty reduction.

6. He said that there was need to develop aquaculture and promote it as an income generating activity. He talked of the various initiatives that the FAO was implementing, including the fight against Illegal fishing, the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, among others. He reiterated FAO's commitment to continue supporting sustainable fisheries management and aquaculture development in Africa and called for concerted effort and improved coordination. He concluded by expressing his appreciation to the Government of The Gambia for hosting the meeting and for its commitment to sustainable fisheries management.

7. The representative of the African Union Commission (AUC), the Commissioner for Trade and Industry on behalf of the Chairperson of the AUC congratulated and commended the President of Gambia for hosting the First CAMFA Meeting. The meeting was informed that the potential for marine fisheries and aquaculture was still not fully exploited in Africa and that there was need to develop strategic fisheries management and to increase budgetary allocation to the fisheries sector. The AUC reiterated that fisheries provided nutritional and food security and that the AU was committed to promoting and developing the fisheries sector. He said that AU has put in place various fisheries related initiatives after the Sirte Summit in Libya such as AU Fisheries Protection Agency, the Fish for All Summit, the PAF-CAADP process and the Africa Maritime Integrated Strategy. The Representative hoped that the CAMFA would come up with various options to address these challenges and reiterated the AU's commitment to support the fisheries sector and to provide political leadership.

8. His Excellency the Vice President of the Republic of Gambia, on behalf of His Excellency the President extended his warm welcome to the participants and wished them a pleasant stay in Gambia. She thanked the organizers and sponsors of the meeting and all participants, and said that the large turnout was a demonstration of the commitment of Africa to sustainable fisheries management. She said that the CAMFA offered a great opportunity for Africa to move closer to harnessing optimally, the great potentials of her fisheries and aquaculture to bring about increased benefits to her people.

9. She was concerned about the threats facing the fisheries sector, including declining stocks, IUU fishing, by-catch and inappropriate fishing practices. She hoped the CAMFA would come up with real solutions to the identified challenges. She emphasized the importance of responsible fisheries and aquaculture and that there was need for strengthening regional and international efforts in managing shared fisheries resources.

10. She also stressed the need for sustainable fisheries access agreements and non-trade barriers, and called upon African countries to demand international trade in fish and fishery products, in the interest of sustainable development. She informed participants that Gambia was committed to the development of the fisheries sector and that the government was putting in place various measures and implementing different initiatives to ensure sustainable management of fisheries resources. Thereafter she declared the meeting officially opened.

**a) STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS**

- Development partners

**b) OFFICIAL OPENING**

**IV. COMPOSITION OF THE BUREAU**

11. The Bureau was elected as follows:

Chair:	The Gambia
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice Chair:	Algeria
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair:	Congo Brazzaville
3 <sup>rd</sup> Vice Chair:	Mauritius
Rapporteur:	Zambia

**V. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ORGANISATION OF WORK**

12. The Ministers adopted the agenda and organization of work.

**VI. ADOPTION OF THE EXPERTS REPORTS**

13. The Ministers, after deliberations, adopted the Experts Report.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. On Progress Report on 4 years post-Abuja

**Recognizing** the progress made in the implementation of the Abuja Summit recommendations;

**Recognizing** that new Regional Fisheries & Aquaculture Management Plans have been agreed upon and are being implemented by Member States;

**Recognizing** that despite the challenges some of these plans are moving in the right direction, judged by increased levels of cooperation to address regional fisheries management, such as IUU Fishing, and improvement in fish production, particularly from aquaculture;

**Recognizing** that coherent approach at all levels, national, regional and continental, is gaining momentum as stronger mandate for regional bodies;

**Noting** that many countries are beginning to experience increased benefits from global as well as regional fish trade;

#### **The Conference:**

**Urges** Member States and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to Integrate wealth based fisheries best practices into regional and national plans in order to expedite the sector growth and contribute enormously to the economic growth of States;

**Urges** Member States to submit to AU/NEPAD Agency annual progress reports on the implementation of the AU/NEPAD *Action Plan for the Development of African Fisheries and Aquaculture* and AU/NEPAD Agency to develop a mechanism to track progress on its implementation;

**Recommends** that Arrangements for regional cooperation on fisheries management frameworks be developed and included as part of the Minimum Regional Integration Plan by RECs.

### 2. On Wealth Generation Opportunities of African Fish Resources

**Recognizing** the wealth generation potential of African fisheries;

**Concerned** that this potential has not been fully exploited due to lack of awareness;

**The Conference:**

**Calls upon** Member States to reiterate their commitment to develop fisheries and aquaculture sub-sectors in ways that focus on increasing productivity, profitability and sustainability;

**Urges** Member States to include small-scale fisheries in their national strategies aimed at wealth generation;

**Urges** Member States to develop fisheries management plans that integrate rights-based and other economically rational management approaches that foster wealth creation in fisheries;

**Urges** Member States to engage in policy and institutional reforms to create enabling environment for efficient partnerships to foster investment in fisheries and aquaculture;

**Recommends** that Fisheries access agreements be negotiated at regional level and Regional Economic Communities provide a supporting role, in order to increase benefits for African countries;

**Recommends** that Trade barriers be eradicated, including through free trade zones, to facilitate intra and inter regional trade of fish and fishery products;

**Recommends** that an African Fisheries Day be instituted to highlight the potential of fisheries and aquaculture in wealth generation and economic development;

**Proposes** that the next CAMFA be organized under the theme “African Fisheries only for Africans”.

**3. On Options and Context for Fisheries Policy and Governance Reform in Africa**

**Concerned about** ineffective fisheries governance leading to over-exploitation of the fisheries resources economically and beyond the biologically sustainable limits;

**Concerned about** the magnitude of illegal unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing in Africa and its adverse consequences of both the economies of Member States and the fisheries stocks;



**Recognizing** that, to be successful, fisheries policy needs to take resource wealth into consideration in order to secure current benefits and to enhance the contribution of fisheries to economic growth, social welfare and food security;

**Recognizing that** an agreed vision for fisheries should be established to set the scene for the subsequent construction and delivery of policy and success indicators;

**Recognizing** that policy and governance reform offers the opportunity for significant change in the way Africa's fish resources are exploited;

**Recognizing** that management of shared resources to ensure sustainability should be addressed at the regional level;

**The Conference:**

**Urges** Member States and development partners to put in place efforts to improve scientific knowledge and build the capacity of scientists on stocks, ecosystems management processes and aquaculture;

**Urges** the African Union, Member States and development partners to undertake economic evaluation of fisheries resources;

**Urges** Member States consider options for fisheries reforms and strengthened institutional arrangements in order to improve the productivity of fisheries and aquaculture;

**Urges** Member States, RECs and RFBS to adopt and implement the FAO Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate IUU Fishing (IPOA-IUU) and port state control measures;

**Requests** that flag state responsibility be fully implemented by all vessels flying flags of African States in order to curb IUU across the Continent;

**Requests** the RECs to assist RFBS to develop regional strategies for sustainable management of shared water resources, including the straddling and highly migratory species;

**Requests** Member States, RECs and RFBS to mainstream climate change in fisheries policies, development and management programmes;

**Urges** Member States, RECs and RFBs to integrate trade related measures, including sustainable seafood strategies to improve fisheries governance;

**Requests** the AU to ensure that the new EU IUU regulation does not represent a barrier to trade for African States and that Member States are provided with support and advice in dealing and complying with the new rule;

**Requests** the AU to lead discussions with the EU with a view to review fisheries trade-related issues such as rules of origin and related trade issues in order to maximize benefits to African countries;

**Requests** the AU to facilitate harmonized position of Member States in WTO, ICATT, IOTC and other negotiations, and strengthen the capacity of Member States to participate effectively in relevant regional and global fisheries fora;

**Recommends** that Member States and RFBs adopt and integrate ecosystem approaches in their national and regional fisheries management plans;

**Recommends** that Member States, RECs and RFBs strengthen Monitoring, Control and Surveillance and foster regional cooperation to curb IUU fishing.

#### **4. On the Role of African Fisheries and Aquaculture in the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP)**

**Recognizing** the potential of the fisheries sector in achieving the 6% annual growth of the wider agricultural sector;

**Concerned** about the low allocation of national budget to the sector;

**Recalling** the commitment made by Member States to allocate 10% of their national budget to agriculture sector;

#### **The Conference:**

**Calls upon Member States** to comply with the recommendations of the 2003 CAADP Maputo commitment to allocate 10% of their national budget allocation to agriculture, increasing the proportion allocated to fisheries and aquaculture;

**Requests** the AU to support Member States to strengthen policy coherence in national fisheries sector with regard to CAADP in order to enhance the role of fish in food security, poverty alleviation and trade development;

**Requests** the AU to facilitate discussions and engagement with development partners, including Development Finance Institutions (e.g. World Bank, African Development Bank and Regional Development Banks) to review their funding portfolio and increase allocation to fisheries sector investments, including sustainable aquaculture development, within the CAADP framework where formal requests have been submitted by the Ministries of Finance;

**Recommends** that Member States constitute “Fish Expert Pools” to urgently engage in the country CAADP process and respond with Post-Compact fisheries investment interventions.

#### **5. On building Strategic Partnerships and dissemination of best practices in fisheries**

**Recalling** that partnerships were identified by the Fish For All Summit as key ways to strengthen the capacity of Member States in sustainable fisheries management and aquaculture development;

##### **The Conference:**

**Requests** the AU to assist Member States to develop mechanisms which effectively strengthen south-south cooperation in fisheries at all relevant levels, with a view to increasing coherence in best practices between African States;

**Requests** the AU to assist RECs, RFBs and Member States to document and share local and global best practices in fisheries management and aquaculture development and their adoption and adaptation in Africa;

**Recommends** that the AU develop and implement a coordination mechanism among RECs and RFBs to ensure coherence of fisheries policies and initiatives with regional economic integration agenda;

**Recommends** that the AU put in place a mechanism for broad-based participatory policy dialogue and fisheries management, particularly for the non-state actors.

#### **c. ON THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE CONFERENCE OF AFRICAN MINISTERS OF FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE (CAMFA)**

**Recognizing** the importance of the joint periodic review of the status of fisheries resources sector in Africa by Experts and Ministers responsible for Fisheries and aquaculture;

**The Conference:**

**Commends** AU-NEPAD for the successful organization of the First Conference held in Banjul, The Gambia from 20 to 23 September 2010;

**Recommends** that the AU institutionalize the bi-annual Conference of Ministers of Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa (CAMFA);

**Recommends** that the AU develop a draft proposal indicating a functional set-up and necessary structures required for the establishment of CAMA;

**d. STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS**

14. Ministers from the following African Union Members made statements:

Congo	Libya
Mauritius	Liberia
Malawi	Guinea Bissau
Egypt	Zambia
Mozambique	The Sudan
Cape Verde	Libya

**VII. ADOPTION OF MINISTERS' REPORT**

15. The Ministers highlighted the challenges faced within the fisheries and aquaculture sector, and shared measures that their respective countries have taken to address these challenges.

16. The Ministers agreed on the need for urgent actions at national and regional levels to deter and eradicate IUU Fishing.

17. They also supported the need for policy and governance reforms within the fisheries sector in order to enhance the contribution of fish to sustainable food and nutrition security and economic growth, within the CAADP framework.

18. In conclusion, the Ministers thanked the Government of the Republic of The Gambia for hosting the CAMFA, and the organisers for facilitating their participation.

19. After deliberations, the Ministers adopted the report and requested that it be submitted to AU Policy Organs for further consideration and adoption.