MINUTES

FIFTY-FIRST (51st)MEETING OF THE REGIONAL COORDINATION UNIT (RCU)

THE REGIONAL FISHERIES SURVEILLANCE PLAN (PRSP)

FEBRUARY 28, 2022 AT BEST WESTERN HOTEL – WESTLANDS – NAIROBI – KENYA

The 51st meeting of the Regional Coordination Unit (RCU) implemented by the Program – E€OFISH / Result 2 – PRSP, took place on February 28, 2022 at the BEST WESTERN PLUS in Nairobi - Kenya. The session began at 9:15 a.m.

The list of participants appears in **appendix 1** .

The agenda for RCU 51 can be found in **appendix 2** .

The amended administrative arrangement is in **appendix 3.**

The StaRFISH ToR is in **appendix 4.**

The ToR for setting up a MASE-PRSP Technical Committee is in **appendix 5.**

The table summarizing the ongoing activities of the consultants can be found in **appendix 6.**

The meeting was chaired by Marc Maminiaina , Chargé de Mission.

**OPENING :**

Marc Maminiaina , Chargé de Mission responsible for the fishing sector and the E€OFISH Program , welcomed all the participants both in the room and by videoconference. He noted that the PRSP is sovereign as it has its own governance structure, under the aegis of the IOC. He underlined that the membership of Somalia in the PRSP mechanism was validated by the extraordinary Council of Ministers of November 26, 2021 and that the reactivation of the regional VMS is completed and the development of an information exchange protocol. and sharing of fishing data is underway. Finally, he thanked the European Union for its support to the PRSP through the grant contract for the seven Eligible Countries and also to the ERDF/INTERREG for the organization of the 4 joint patrols and also the Kenyan Government for having hosted this RCU meeting.

The round table for the presentation of the delegation by country in alphabetical order was made during which the Comoros announced the crash of a small airliner connecting Grande Comores and Moheli. Present in the room were Comoros, Kenya, Mauritius, Seychelles and Tanzania and online were France/Réunion, Madagascar and the European Union Delegation.

Before moving on to the adoption of the agenda and for participating state to take control of the meeting deliberation, it was necessary to elect a Chairman of the session and the secretariat was left for the IOC. Instead of designating in alphabetical order as usual, this time the Host Country was chosen to take the role and Kenya agreed to chair the RCU meeting.

**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA:**

The agenda was adopted as presented.

**ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF THE 50th RCU MEETING:**

The minutes of the 50th RCU meeting of the was also adopted.

**Point 1 – ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENT AND INFORMATION EXCHANGE PROTOCOL:**

It was recalled that the Administrative Arrangements of 2014 are still valid but depending on the evolution of the exchanges between the participants, it is better to amend them now. The amendments taken at the 50 th RCU meeting were again reviewed, discussed and improved.

Since it has been defined that a single administrative arrangement will be made and signed by all participants, provision must be considered if a new country want to join the PRSP. A flexible approach must be adopted in the framework of cooperation.

For the annual report, a report template should be circulated and it was adopted that in 3 months it would be ready.

This amended administrative arrangement will also be submitted to the working group of observer managers which will meet very soon to integrate their contributions in terms of observation on board fishing vessels.

It was agreed that the amended Administrative Arrangement be provided to all participants on Friday 4th March and the countries will have 30 days to submit their observations and remarks. After these final touches, the Administrative Arrangement will be presented to ERCU for final validation and the signing of the document will take place at the next Ministerial Conference.

As the PRSP has extended to other East African countries, it is necessary to think about adapting the regulatory frameworks or legal tools to the current context to better harmonize the regionalization of the PRSP.

**Point 2 – GRANT CONTRACT:**

Table summarizing the status of the grant contract by country

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Beneficiary country | Amount (EUR) | Pre-financing (Euros) | maritime patrol | Air patrol | Comments |
| COMOROS | 224,803.00 |  | 40 |  | Bank account to send |
| KENYA | 307,992.00 |  | 30 |  | Bank account to send |
| MADAGASCAR | 448,363.36 | 140,983.00 | 38 |  | Pre-financing already sent by the EUD |
| MAURITIUS | 111,966.56 |  |  | 62 | Closing in progress |
| MOZAMBIQUE | 279,204.17 |  | 24 |  | Pre-financing request received by the EUD |
| SEYCHELLES | 493,789.97 | 181,607.26 | 36 | 36 | Pre-financing received |
| TANZANIA | 119,404.40 | 38,559.87 |  | 36 | Pre-financing received |

Not only is Mozambique not physically present in Nairobi, but it also fails in attend the virtual meetings while the RCU meeting was expressly held in hybrid format so that we will have had the maximum chorum .

The participants were unanimous in the recommendation to send a second letter to the Mozambican Competent Authority to understand their problems.

Participating countries have requested EDF training on EU procedures between adapted to their language (French – English) on the use of this grant fund.

**Point 3 – VMS REGIONAL AND StaRFISH :**

Said Mmadi recalled that France/Réunion , Madagascar and Mauritius send their VMS data to SIGMA-COI. For the Comoros, it is necessary to circumvent the system so that it can benefit from the Regional VMS. On the other hand, the Seychelles to date not provided their data..

Seychelles was requested to send their VMS data to SIGMA-IOC to complete the Regional VMS in line with the 2014 pProtocol

The StaRFISH is a tool to facilitate the exchange of information since 2016, a secure format was established and there is a needs to upgrade the system. For the updating of data in StaRFISH , some countries are already complaining about the lack of personnel and also of training.

A ToR is being prepared to recruit a consultancy firm to upgrade StaRFISH. The StaRFISH code is not yet shared and therefore not yet visible to participating countries. For the relaunch, a training of administrators and users is planned.

**Item 4 – MASE COOPERATION (CRFIM & CRCO) – PRSP**

Initiatives to strengthen cooperation with other institutions come from the IOC. A first virtual consultative meeting with the operational structure of each program (CRFIM - CRCO - PRSP) took place on December 01,2021 and with the recommendation to facilitate this coorperation between MASE and PRSP a technical commission must be set up to define the terms of cooperation and with the support of Experts for the implementation of the recommendations.

The ToR for the establishment of the technical commission is ready and to be circulated.

This collaboration must be formalized to have more synergies . The members of the RCU are in complete agreement to develop this collaboration.

PRSP invites the two MASE centres to participate in the UCR meeting as we did during the SmartFish era and to share their experiences.

**Item 5 – SADC MCS CC – PRSP COOPERATION**

The SADC process is to set up the MCS CC in Mozambique (Fisheries Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Coordination Centre).

To get the number of signatures for the Center to come into effect, SADC needs to discuss directly at Country level. Johnny Louis represents the Indian Ocean Islands within the Regional Technical Team (RTT) of the SADC-MCS-CC. A meeting between RTT and countries participating in the PRSP does not pose any problem because E€OFISH can work with the other organisations. The PRSP-SADC MCS CC cooperation is still informal but the E€OFISH provide open door policy for the benefit of the region.

Communication between SADC and the Islands needs to be improved.

SADC RTT must have a meeting with PRSP-RCU to align RTT with RCU.

**Item 6 – SUMMARY OF CONSULTANTS' WORK IN PROGRESS FOR THE YEAR 2022**

* Immediately following this RCU meeting, there will be the validation of Professor Judith Swan's report on the Comprehensive Review of Fisheries MCS Legal Capacity in the Eastern Africa, Southern Africa and Indian Ocean Region for March 01 and 02, 2022.
* Followed immediately by validation of Per Erik Bergh's report on the comprehensive review of MCS of fisheries in the Eastern Africa, Southern Africa and Indian Ocean Region and development of a dashboard SCS for March 03, 2022.
* Validation of Teresa Athayde's reports on the development of standard operating procedures (SOPs) for observer programs and Memorandum of Understanding for the harmonization of regional coordination procedures.
* Validation of Vincent Lucas' report on the comprehensive review of the status of national and regional observer programs in the Eastern Africa , Southern Africa and Indian Ocean Region.
* Development of a formal governance framework for the Regional Fisheries Surveillance Plan (PRSP) in the context of Institutionalisation
* ToR under development for StaRFISH uprade.
* Tender launched for evaluation of the performance of the regional FMC, need to re-design the regional VMS including review its related protocol.
* A ToR being developed for feasibility study associating fisheries Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) tools and processes with those of EU-funded Maritime Security (MASE) programme under a collaborative architecture.
* A ToR under development for the development of a standard operating procedure (SOP) for the joint patrol at sea.
* Tender launched for Development and/or strengthening national fisheries MCS interagency cooperation in the EA-SA-IO countries.
* A ToR being developed for the legal formatting of the protocol for the exchange of information and the sharing of data on fisheries.
* Purchases of equipment and materials for fisheries inspectors are underway.
* Following the request of the EUD, a report carried out by EURONEWS on illegal fishing will be carried out during the 57th regional mission and filming will take place on board OSIRIS II, in the Seychelles and in Mauritius for the purposes of visibility and communication on current activities.
* E€OFISH will call on a professional cameraman to partly cover the needs of EURONEWS the other hand and of the PRSP to document their activity at sea.

The next Observer Program managers Working Group and two workshops will be scheduled for early May, PRSP Participating Countries are requested to nominate their National Focal Point Observer Manager and alternate.

The participating countries recommended delivering of equipment and materials for inspectors directly to the Competent Authorities and sticking to the quality and durability of the equipment. Comoros has added waterproof bags to the list.

**Item 7 – SOM’LIA'S INTEGRATION INTO THE PRSP MECHANISM**

The last Extraordinary Council of Ministers of the IOC of November 26, 2021 validated the integration of Somalia within the PRSP mechanism. The General Secretariat has officially notified Somalia of this agreement. This membership will be effective after the finalization and signature of the documents: Administrative Arrangement and Protocol for the exchange of information and the sharing of data on fisheries. Comoros raises the question if these administrative formalities only slow down the entry of Somalia?

This integration will be gradual and the terms of collaboration with Somalia remain to be defined . To begin with, Somalia must formally respond to the notification made and then appoint their representative to the RCU and ERCU. Cooperation remains in the area of information exchange and capacity building while reactivating Somalia's observer program.

**Item 8 – PRESENTATION OF FISHERIES MONITORING ACTIVITIES BY COUNTRY**

* COMOROS

The activities of the CNCSP were 100% financed by the World Bank.

Structuring of cooperatives and awareness component : 10 activities carried out from 2016 to 2021.

SCS component : missions on land, coastal surveillance missions with the coast guard and surveillance missions in the ZEE with CROSS Réunion.

Security component : the responsibility lies with the CNCSP. 53 accidents recorded, more than twenty dead including 11 bodies found and 9 missing. Main causes of accidents: weather, mechanical and boats design problems, hence there is an effort to approve shipyards. Out of 20 sites visited, only 9 have been approved. Pilot project: safety kit to be distributed and beacon test campaign carried out for search and rescue.

Boat registration component : A Mauritanian consultant set up the database in the Cloud system and set up the statistics, the structuring of the sector and the licensing system.

No fishing agreement has been concluded with the European Union , however there are some with the private sector.

1 Iranian ship was seized and abandoned at the port of Moroni.

Control at sea and coastal surveillance are carried out with the Coast Guard .

Mohéli Marine Park is monitored in collaboration with the Protected Marine Area (AMP).

There is a co-management agreement on the 3 islands: 1 mission/quarter/island, i.e. 15 days in total.

On average 30 canoes checked, the types of offense are: unauthorized nets, dynamite fishing, poaching of sea turtles.

No checks on land were carried out.

Proposed solutions: set up branches of Fisheries Monitoring and Control Centre on each island and include the CNCSP budget in the national budget.

* France/REUNION

In 2021, there was an adaptation of local tuna fishery legislation and an extension of nature reserves. It was carried out 400 days at sea over the entire Indian Ocean and 15 checks by air means. Satellite surveillance is deployed in Kerguelen and the TAAF and also for the landing of toothfish. The control on the high seas by applying the SIOFA protocol made it possible to carry out 3 controls on board. Control on the Banc de Saya de Malha is possible thanks to the SIOFA

* KENYA

Kenya uses the patrol vessel "DORIA" for the control of fishing vessels at sea. The Kenya Fisheries Service ( KeFS ) works with the coast guard to achieve different objectives (fight against IUU fishing, crimes, immigration, marine pollution , human trafficking, maritime piracy, search and rescue, etc.).

* MADAGASCAR

39 trawlers were inspected at the port. The autonomy of the patrol vessel "ATSANTSA" is 15 days while that of "TELONIFY" is 12 days at sea. Due to a lack of budget, no mission at sea was carried out during 2021. On the other hand, on land, 19 missions of 10 days on average were carried out and made it possible to check 17 fishmongers, 7 markets and 1674 collectors. 2 cases of offenses in the hotel business and 131 cases at the collector level were noted and fined. No aerial surveillance was carried out either. The observers were able to carry out 22 missions aboard national fishing vessels, accounting for 996 days at sea.

* MAURITIUS

Fisheries surveillance is the responsibility of the National Coast Guard ( NCG ). However, Mauritius is committed to the fight against IUU fishing and in 2021, a Mauritian vessel, an Iranian vessel and two Taiwanese ferry vessels were arrested.

**Number of mission at sea:** 485

No of Longliners inspected: 73

No of sports fisher, catamaran and pirogue inspected: 28

No of contravention established/cases of illegal fishing: 50

No of pick up/illegal fishing implement: 49

**Number of aerial surveillance mission:** 153 of 4 hours of flight on average

No of vessels observed: 5,663 including 490 catamaran and 1,100 artisanal boats

* MOZAMBIQUE

Absent.

* SEYCHELLES

Within the framework of the PSMA, 10% of industrial vessels were able to be inspected in port compared to 100% for the national fleet. Control at sea is the responsibility of the National Coast Guard (NCG). COVID 19 has slowed surveillance activities. The EMS ( Electronic Monitoring System) or electronic observer is under discussion with the longliners and the industrial fleet. In fishing agreements, there is a legal requirement and since January 2022, a commitment was made by foreign vessels. For the national artisanal fishing fleet (8 m) with 480 boats, 10% of these boats are covered by a GSM system with solar panel. The IOTC supported a capacity building program (PSMA). Standard operating procedures have been updated, ship registers and certificate have been digitalized.

* TANZANIA

8 activities are supported by SWIOFISH/World Bank.

52 hours of aerial patrols.

3 port inspections.

17 inspectors trained in VMS/AIS.

36 agents (port, fishing, marine service) trained in PSMA, training organized by SIF (Stop Illegal Fishing ).

2 observers on board ALMEIDA with 30 days at sea.

28 authorizations and licenses issued.

1 vessel coming from Iran in violation with 1Ton of cocaine on board, 2 monofilaments nets and shark fins.

Fisheries in Tanzania has three Competent Authorities: DSFA – Zanzibar surveillance mission with Police, Marine Service and other Fisheries Department, Navy – Zanzibar Coast Guard; activities carried out by 2 other departments. Fish-i Africa and the SADC MCS CC also contribute to information sharing.

Each Country must send the completed template to the secretariat and the deadline is March 31, 2022.

**Item 9 – 57th PRSP REGIONAL MISSION**

Andry Rasoanindrainy, the Head of Communication and Visibility of the E€OFISH project made a brief introduction on the reporting carried out by EURONEWS and the media coverage of the PRSP for its 15 th year of existence. To do this, the EURONEWS team will shoot in the Seychelles and Mauritius and a cameraman will be recruited by E€OFISH to cover the entire 57 th Regional Mission on board OSIRIS II. As a result, EURONEWS will produce an 8 mn film on the fight against illegal fishing and will be shown to the public towards the end of June and the cameraman on board will provide some footage for this film in part and the latter will also produce the image of the 15th year of existence of PRSP.

The 57th Regional Mission aims to control IUU fishing in the Mozambique Channel and the waters of the PRSP zone of cooperation and the 2022 purse seine fishing campaign. This mission will last one month, from March 15 to April 14, 2022 with the participation of inspectors from Comoros, France/Réunion, Madagascar, Seychelles and Tanzania. The inspectors will be embarked at the port of Hell - Ville in Nosy Be and Moroni. As promised during the 55th Mission, France will distribute some materials to the Mohéli Park and will be included in this mission.

Mauritius asked "why it is not taking part in this mission?" The answer was simple because from now on the participation of inspectors are funded under the EUD grant for joint fisheries surveillance and the mission is predominantly in the Mozambique Channel. In addition, the E€OFISH Project does not have support such as time from SmartFish to bear the additional costs of the inspectors on the one hand and to date Mauritius has not closed the previous SmartFish grant to facilitate the EUD to disburse fund to mauritius under the present grant, in another hand.

If the Seychelles DORNIER is available, there will be aerial cover when the patrol boat enters Seychelles waters. This tool can also be used by the EURONEWS team to complete its report.

The Seychelles is not yet sharing their VMS and for the conduct of this 57th Regional Mission, the data will be sent by e-mail .

A reminder on the role of tactical controllers and the timely sharing of VMS data and other information was made.

To trace the way points of the 57th Regional Mission, the 5 participating countries completed the task the following day of the 1st March 2022..

**Item 10 – 58th PRSP REGIONAL MISSION**

In the operational plan 2020 – 2024, the 58th Regional Mission should be scheduled for this 2nd quarter but as Mozambique is not present, what to do? The debate was launched on Mozambique's commitment to the PRSP. This mission was planned for 12 days at sea and using the subsidy granted by the DUE to Mozambique and the nautical means of Madagascar to control the longline fishing in the southern part of the Mozambique Channel. A solution was proposed if Madagascar could replace itself by using the 12 days of the 4th quarter instead of this 58th Regional Mission but the participants opted to wait for the opinion of the Mozambicans.

A second official letter should be sent to the Competent Authority of Mozambique to better understand the prevailing situation.

**Item 11 – MISCELLANEOUS**

* Jérôme Lafon informedon the workshop to be organized by IORA and financed by AFD on action to combat IUU fishing remotely towards the end of March 2022. The monitoring of Indian Ocean fisheries, in this case the PRSP , will be cited as an example. The Seychelles, Experts and NGOs will take part but the Seychelles have not yet received their invitation. In principle, the IORA will send the invitation through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to reach the competent Ministry.
* CSIRO (Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization) - Australia's National Science Agency is an IORA project funded by AFD which aims to estimate illegal fishing at the regional level of the Indian Ocean basin. For this he asks for the support of the members of the RCU to answer the questionnaire online and to return once completed to the attached e-mail address.
* Stamp for inspection reports at sea: Should the PRSP have its own stamp during a regional mission at sea? It was agreed tha it is better for the Territorially Competent Inspector to take his official Stamp and stamp all inspection reports and records drawn up in his own Waters.

The Chairman of the session closed the 51st meeting of the RCU by thanked all the participants, both those in the room and those online, as well as the interpreters who brought the meeting to life. He did not omit to mark the fifteenth year of existence of the PRSP which must be celebrated in one way or another.

Finally, the IOC Chargé de Mission, Marc Maminiaina , underlined that the discussions are coming to an end and that the meeting was fruitful. He did not fail to thank all the Participants and in particular the Chairman of the session who for the first time in the history of the PRSP is provided by the host country, thus marking the beginning of institutionalization. Thereupon, he officially declared the 51st meeting of the RCU closed.

After exhaustion of the agenda, the session was closed at 6:33 p.m.