



## CAOPA'S PRIORITIES FOR SUPPORT OF ARTISANAL FISHERIES

### International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture

(IYAFA 2022)

#### A Goal:

Implement Sustainable Development Goal 14.b

"Guaranteeing access to fisheries resources and markets for small-scale fisheries".

#### Three priorities

- Secure access to resources for African artisanal fisheries
- Promoting the place of women in African artisanal fisheries
- Protect small-scale fisheries from the other blue economy sectors



## Contextual

As the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture 2022 (IYAFA 2022) looms, African artisanal fisheries have never been more essential to the survival of coastal communities and the food security of African populations.

During the Covid-19 crisis, with measures that have severely affected, and continue to affect the sector, men and women of African artisanal fisheries have shown their resilience and ability to provide essential food to populations.

The future will be full of challenges for African fishing communities, especially with the effects of global warming already being felt on our activities: more difficult navigation conditions at sea, erosion of the coasts, displacement of resources further offshore, etc.

But the main challenge for the future of our communities is to give our young women and men the prospect of finding decent living and working conditions in artisanal fishing, to avoid, as is too often the case today, that they fall into drugs and crime, or leave on the dangerous roads of illegal emigration.

To address these challenges, the African Confederation of Professional Organizations of Artisanal Fisheries (CAOPA) has a compass: [Voluntary Guidelines for Ensuring the Sustainability of Artisanal Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication](#) and the [Policy Framework](#) and Strategy Reform for Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector in Africa. Since 2018, CAOPA has been advocating for the adoption and implementation, in a transparent, participatory and gender-sensitive manner, of national action plans for these Guidelines.

In our approach, we are encouraged by the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the United Nations in 2015, in particular Goal 14b, to "Ensure access to fisheries resources and markets for small-scale fisheries".

Achieving this goal must be done through concrete actions, and we have identified three priority areas of action for the International Year in 2022 where CAOPA and its members have concrete action experiences to share.

### Priority 1: Secure access to resources for African artisanal fisheries

- States should grant exclusive fishing rights to artisanal fishers in coastal areas. These fishing zones reserved for artisanal fisheries must be delimited in consultation with the artisanal fishermen.
- To ensure the sustainable management of these coastal areas, they should be co-managed by the State and artisanal fishers, and include appropriate ecosystem conservation tools, such as protected marine areas managed in consultation with fishing-dependent communities.



- Measures, and logistical and human resources, for monitoring, control and surveillance should be put in place to ensure that industrial vessels respect these zones reserved for artisanal fishing, including the development of a participatory surveillance system involving artisanal fishermen.
- For all these measures (zoning, co-management, participatory monitoring, etc.) precise legislation must be drawn up in a transparent and participatory manner, ensuring the rapid publication of implementing decrees. These regulations and legislation must be made known to fishermen.
- The signature by African countries and the implementation of Convention 188 of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) will make it possible to improve safety at sea for fishermen, an essential element in securing access to resources for artisanal fishermen. The training of canoes captains, the use of new technologies (geo-location, etc.), and the awareness-raising of fishermen to safety issues are essential.
- As regards strategic fishing resources for food and nutritional security, such as small pelagic, which are shared by several countries, States must put in place a concerted management system that gives priority to sustainable artisanal fishing. This is because small-scale fishing is for direct human consumption.

## **Priority 2: Promote the place of women in African artisanal fisheries**

Women are present at all stages of the artisanal fisheries value chain in African countries. They are also the mainstay of families in artisanal fishing communities, and an essential link in getting the fish to local and regional consumers.

- The participation of women in professional organizations and in decision-making processes must be strengthened; for example, in fisheries management decisions (licensing). To this end, training and workshops should be regularly organized by professional organizations.
- States should give priority attention to improving the working conditions of women working in the artisanal fisheries sector and invest in the necessary services and infrastructure. These will also help to reduce post-harvest losses, improve the supply of raw materials to women, and provide better quality processed products:
  - Access to drinking water and electricity at processing sites;
  - Drainage and sanitary facilities at processing sites;



- Support for innovation: purchase of improved ovens (FTT oven, solar oven);
- Assistance for the purchase of refrigerators for fish storage;
- Assistance in accessing credit, including from commercial banks, suitable for small-scale fishing
  
- States should support women's efforts to better market their products to the population:
  - Exhibition of fishing products, open days;
  - Promote the culinary qualities of artisanal products
  
- To facilitate trade in products at national and regional levels, states should work to remove existing barriers, especially harassment of women along trade routes, particularly at borders between countries, which cause delays and loss of goods for women.
  
- Women are the backbone of communities and families. States must also invest in services and infrastructure that will improve their living conditions and those of their families:
  - Support for the building of decent housing;
  - Setting up day care centres near processing sites
  - Training in the use of new technologies and computers
  
- Women are also involved in artisanal fish farming, which is a good way of supplementing their supply of raw materials, but also of coping with periods when fishing is stopped (biological rest, for example). States should support initiatives in this sector, particularly:
  - Access to quality fish fry and food
  - Access to land and credit for necessary equipment
  - Support for research and development of fish farming integrated with small-scale soil-less market gardening.

### **Priority 3: Protect small-scale fisheries from the other blue economy sectors**

Our concern today is the competition from other sectors included in the blue economy strategies, financially and politically more powerful, such as oil and gas exploitation, tourism, fishmeal factories, which jeopardize the future of artisanal fishing.

- The best way for African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) States to recognize the importance of small-scale fisheries and put them at the centre of the blue economy is to develop transparent, participatory and gender-sensitive national



action plans for the implementation of the FAO Guidelines for Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries.

- The precautionary approach must guide the development of the blue economy. Our States should carry out independent social and environmental impact assessments, with the utmost transparency and with the participation of affected coastal communities. No new ocean use activity should be allowed by States, nor supported by donors, if it negatively impacts ecosystems (e.g. oil pollution) and the activities of communities that depend on them for their livelihood.
- Our States should put in place transparent mechanisms for consultation and conflict resolution between users of maritime spaces, which allow for informed and active participation of affected fishing communities.
- The pollution of marine and coastal ecosystems by human activities, including plastic, is a scourge for our communities. Our States must promote the use of bio-degradable materials, ban the use of single-use plastics that pollute our oceans, and invest in the treatment of the waste that litters our beaches and waters, including by supporting citizen initiatives to clean up coastal areas.

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