**Terms of Reference for the Regional Coordinating Unit**

1. **ESTABLISHMENT**

Based on the recommendation of the Fisheries Ministers Conference in July 2017 in Antananarivo, Madagascar to institutionalise the IOC-PRSP, and in doing so review the governance framework, this TOR serves to define the role and function of the PRSP Regional Coordination Unit (RCU) that has been operating informally since 2007, in the context of the new PRSP governance framework.

1. **COMPOSITION**

The RCU shall consist of representatives of the PRSP/ Regional Fisheries Monitoring Control surveillance and Observation Centre (RFMCSOC) participating States to include:

1. a person responsible for MCS at national level;
2. a senior MCS officer as alternate;

Shall also include;

1. representative(s) of the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC); and
2. Representative of the RFMCSOC.

The RCU may accommodate representative of other organisation such as RFMOs, other MCS or maritime security organisation in the EA-SWIO region, as observers or partners.

1. **TERM**
2. The term of the RCU shall be for two (2) years.
3. If, however there is a change of member by a participating State, the latter shall notify the IOC to accommodate the new nominee.
4. Renomination by participating states shall take place at least one month before the end of the two years term.
5. **OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the RCU are to develop and implement and manage MCS activities of the PRSP/RFMCSOC to improve compliance with the relevant Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) of RFMOs, national legislations and fisheries agreements for sustainable exploitation of the fishery resources. In doing so prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing in the participating states zone of cooperation and beyond.

**5 FUNCTIONS**

The RCU will have to rely on the work of operational centres of participating States (operators only) in order to define the chronology of the various actions and plans, and decide on the choice of actions. In practice, the RCU should be able to use the facilities offered by an operational centre with facilities for communication and monitoring of the action of the States at sea (protected radio communications in particular). This unit must have all the necessary mandates from the authorities of their countries.

Overall, the mandate of the RCU shall not be limited to, inter alia, ensure that the following relevant issues are addressed:

1. Identify the requirements for effective MCS in the EEZs of the participating States;
2. Develop and update Standard Operating Procedure for activities being undertaken;
3. Plan aerial/sea joint patrols based on fishing activities in the region, based on available data and intelligence as per approved SOPS
4. responsible for information exchange as per agreed framework for fisheries information sharing and VMS data exchange through the sub-regional VMS.
5. The RCU will create platforms for fisheries data sharing and ensuring confidentiality and shall be responsible for development a web base fisheries information exchange system.
6. Develop risk analysis methodology;
7. responsible to carry out risk analysis as per adopted risk analysis methodology to detect possible IUU fishing activities and draw lists of suspected high risk fishing vessels.
8. The RCU will be responsible for regional operational coordination and to ensure activities at operational level while decision taking will be entrusted at higher levels;
9. shall coordinate activities of the Observer Working Group for the development and implementation of collaborative Observer activities and thereby improve the catch and effort data collection and compliance with the relevant Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) of RFMOs and fisheries agreements.
10. Develop any other tools that may be agreed by the RCU and approved by the ERCU;
11. Collaborate with other regional MCS, observation and maritime security initiatives in the region and internationally;
12. Provide capacity building to its participating states
13. Develop annual and multi annual action plans;
14. Develop annual and multi annual budget and
15. Advice the ERCU on the acceptance of new participating states and observers.
16. **MEETINGS**

The RCU shall be chaired and Co-Chair by representative of participating States on a rational basis on an annual basis.

The Assistant MCS Expert of the PRSP/RFMCSOC shall assist the Chairman with the meeting preparation and act as secretary during meetings to record the minute of proceedings. An assistant secretary may be appointed by the members on a simple majority process to assist the secretary in a meeting**.**

1. The RCU shall meet at least three times each year and may choose to hold additional meetings virtually as necessary to carry out its responsibilities. The RCU shall meet at least three times per year. Additional meetings may be considered and shall take place virtually.
2. The Chairman in consultation with the IOC / RFMCSOC shall decide on the date and venue of the meetings.
3. The duration of meetings shall not be more than two days
4. The Chairman may meet more frequently with the secretary in order to manage the Committee agendas, receive reports and determine the priorities to discuss at the RCU meetings
5. Quorum will be determined by a simple majority of RCU members.
6. Decisions will be made via a simple majority of attendees.
7. **RCU PERFORMANCE**
8. Provide a report of the PRSP action and budget plan and results, to the ERCU/Steering Committee.
9. Pre-validate and/or peer review any technical assistance work whose outputs affects the work of the RCU.
10. Actively participate to the selection process of appointment at operational level of the PRSP/RFMCSOC:
	1. Draft the ToR for the appointment at operational level.
	2. Evaluate and shortlist candidates based on their technical proposal.
11. **PROCESS**

a) Agenda

1. The Chairman of the RCU, in consultation with the members, is responsible for finalizing the agenda.
2. Input into Agenda items may include items tabled by the members and the IOC secretariat; and
3. The final agenda and meeting materials should be made available at least five (5) business days in advance of each meeting.

b) Minutes

Minutes of each meeting should be circulated to the Members within fourteen (14) working days after an RCU meeting for validation before forwarding to the IOC officers in charge of fisheries matters.

c) Secretariat Services

The IOC PRSP/RFMCSOC will provide secretariat services to the RCU