**DRAFT**

**Terms of Reference for the Regional Coordinating Unit (RCU) of the Regional Fisheries Surveillance Plan (PRSP)**

1. **ESTABLISHMENT**

These terms of reference define and formalise the role, functions and procedures of the Regional Coordination Unit (RCU), which has been operating informally since 2007, based on the recommendation of the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) Fisheries Ministers Conference held in July 2017 in Antananarivo, Madagascar to institutionalise the Regional Fisheries Surveillance Plan (PRSP), and in doing so review the governance framework.

1. **COMPOSITION**
2. The membership of the RCU shall consist of:
3. one representative from each Participating State who participates in the PRSP/ Regional Fisheries Monitoring Control Surveillance and Observation Centre (RFMCSOC).
4. a representative(s) of the IOC; and
5. a representative of the RFMCSOC.
6. An alternate shall be designated by each Participating State to represent the representative designated under 1(a) when s/he is unable to attending meetings, who shall be a national responsible for MCS.
7. Representatives of other organizations may participate in the RC as observers or partners, including regional fisheries management organizations, and other MCS or maritime security organizations in the EA-SWIO region.
8. **TERM**
9. The term of each member of the RCU shall be two (2) years.
10. A Participating State may replace a member appointed under section 2(1)(a) at any time, and such replacement shall take effect upon notification by the Participating State to the IOC.
11. Where the member serves a full two year term, Participating States shall notify IOC of any extension or replacement of the member at least one month before the end of the term.
12. **ROLE AND OBJECTIVES**

The RCU shall:

1. have an advisory role;
2. develop, implement and manage MCS activities of the PRSP/RFMCSOC to improve compliance with the relevant Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) of RFMOs, national legislation and fisheries agreements for sustainable exploitation of the fishery resources and in doing so prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing in areas and vessels to which the PRSP applies, including the Zone of Cooperation and flag vessels of Participating States in areas beyond national jurisdiction; and
3. prepare a report on the implementation of the PRSP for transmission to the Ministers responsible for fisheries in the Participating States and relevant donors.

**5 FUNCTIONS AND MANDATE**

1. In performing its functions, the RCU should have access to the facilities offered by operational centres of Participating States with facilities for communication and monitoring of the actions taken by such States at sea, and in particular protected radio communications. and to ensure access shall liaise with Participating States to provide the necessary mandates.
2. Overall, the mandate of the RCU shall be to *inter alia*:
3. identify the requirements for effective MCS in the exclusive economic zones of the participating States;
4. develop and update Standard Operating Procedure for activities being undertaken;
5. plan aerial/sea joint patrols based on fishing activities in the region, based on available data and intelligence in accordance with approved standard operating procedures (SOPS);
6. be responsible for information exchange in accordance with an agreed framework for fisheries information sharing and VMS data exchange through the sub-regional vessel monitoring system (VMS);
7. create platforms for fisheries data sharing and ensuring confidentiality and be responsible for development a web based fisheries information exchange system;
8. develop risk analysis methodology;
9. be responsible to carry out risk analysis in accordance with adopted risk analysis methodology to detect possible IUU fishing and fishing related activities and draw lists of suspected high risk fishing vessels;
10. be responsible for regional operational coordination and ensure activities at operational level mindful that decision making will be entrusted to higher levels;
11. 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 of RFMOs and fisheries agreements.
12. develop any other tools that may be agreed by the RCU and approved by the ERCU;
13. Collaborate with other regional MCS, observation and maritime security initiatives in the region and internationally;
14. provide capacity building to its participating States;
15. develop annual and multi annual action plans;
16. develop annual and multi annual budgets; and
17. advise the ERCU on the acceptance of new Participating States and observers.
18. **MEETINGS**
19. The Chair and the Co-Chair of the RCU shall be representatives of Participating States on a rotational basis and elected to serve for a one year term.
20. The Assistant MCS Expert of the PRSP/RFMCSOC shall assist the Chair with the meeting preparation and act as secretary during meetings to record the minutes.
21. An assistant secretary may be appointed by the members to assist the secretary in a meeting**.**
22. The RCU shall meet at least three times each year and may decide to hold additional meetings virtually as necessary to carry out its responsibilities.
23. The Chair in consultation with the IOC / RFMCSOC shall decide on the date and venue of the meetings.
24. The duration of meetings shall not be more than two days.
25. The Chair 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.
26. A quorum shall be determined by a simple majority of RCU members.
27. Decisions shall be made by a simple majority of RCU members.
28. **ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES**

The RCU shall be responsible for:

1. providing a report of the PRSP action and budget plan and results, to the ERCU/Steering Committee;
2. pre-validating and/or peer reviewing any technical assistance work whose outputs affects the work of the RCU;
3. actively participating in the selection process of appointment at operational level of the PRSP/RFMCSOC by:
   * 1. drafting the terms of reference for appointments at operational level; and
     2. evaluating and shortlisting candidates based on their technical proposal.
4. **PROCEDURES**
5. Procedures for the agenda shall include the following:
6. the Chair of the RCU, in consultation with the members, shall be responsible for finalizing the agenda;
7. input to agenda items may include items tabled by the members and the IOC secretariat; and
8. the final agenda and meeting materials should be made available at least five (5) business days in advance of each meeting.
9. Minutes of each meeting shall 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.
10. The IOC PRSP/RFMCSOC will provide secretariat services to the RCU.