



**REGIONAL KNOWLEDGE FAIR ON BLUE ECONOMY,
SUSTAINABLE SMALL-SCALE FISHERIES AND
AQUATIC BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION**

Leveraging regional cooperation to foster sustainable small-scale fisheries in the EA-SA-IO region

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REGIONAL KNOWLEDGE FAIR ON BLUE ECONOMY, SUSTAINABLE SMALL-SCALE FISHERIES AND AQUATIC BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

MOMBASA 13-16 JUNE 2023

THEME 2: SUSTAINABLE SMALL-SCALE FISHERIES

ECOFISH RESULT 3/WORK PLAN 4: OPERATIONALISING THE PRINCIPLES OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN INLAND AND MARINE SMALL-SCALE FISHERIES THROUGH NINE DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS IN EASTERN AFRICA – SOUTHERN AFRICA AND THE INDIAN OCEAN REGION

1.0 Introduction

The paper has been prepared for the *Knowledge Fair organised by the ECOFISH programme in partnership with AU-IBAR and IGAD in Mombasa on 13-16 June 2023*. The event aims to harness their wealth of knowledge and innovations, policy guidance, experiential learnings and best practices in the field of the *Blue Economy, Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries and Aquaculture Development and Aquatic Biodiversity conservation* to contribute to the political, socio-economic and ecological aspirations of Africa Agenda 2063. ECOFISH champions *Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries* in collaboration with other strategic partners. It underscores the achievements, experiential learning and best practices from nine demonstration sustainable small-scale inland and marine fisheries projects across the EA-SA-IO region to address the prospects and challenges for the socio-economic transformation of the sector.

Additionally, the ECOFISH programme will impart the achievements and learning investments in advancing sustainable management of the inland and marine fisheries such as LVFO, LTA and Marine Fisheries/IOC work plans. The latter consists of several strategic actions to revisit the political economy of the industry. It includes re-engineering the existing policy instruments to transition the small-scale fisheries from open access and informal sector into a sustainable and resilient growth engine for share prosperity; climate adaptation, mitigation and resilience measures in local fishing communities and strengthening coastal biodiversity conservation, restoration of degradation ecosystems and sustainable livelihoods nexus by involving fishing communities.

ECOFISH will also capitalise on the sub-regional and thematic platforms established in the inland and marine fisheries in collaboration with the mandated Regional Economic and Fisheries organisations of the EA-SA-IO region. For instance, the IGAD Fisheries Coordination Platform (IFCP) has been established to facilitate effective collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and strategic alliance among the member states in inland and marine fisheries. Furthermore, the collaborative arrangement between LVFO and LTA has been strengthened as a powerhouse for driving sustainable management of inland shared and internal fisheries resources in the ESA region. Moreover, a sub-regional platform involving these two RFBs and four ECOFISH inland SSF Demonstration Projects is active, providing a hands-holding ecosystem for mutual learning and capacity-building.

2.0 Background

2.1 Principles of Sustainable Development

Sustainable Development is defined as the development that satisfies the needs of the present generations without jeopardising those of the future generations. *Fundamentally, it is not about doing different things but doing things differently*. In other words, Humanity must

thrive within the carrying capacity of the Planet. The global Agenda needed robust rule-based multilateral institutions and a local Agenda to roll it effectively at the grassroots. Also, the concept has been misinterpreted as trade-offs or balancing acts between the **Economy - Society - Environment** from a Top-Bottom perspective. The world is like a cruise ship, irrespective of being on the higher or lower deck. The craft is sinking steadily due to unsustainable behaviours and practices. Unfortunately, those developing countries contributing the least are exposed to existential threats.

The root cause of a dysfunctional world economy is the indiscriminate free economy and ultraliberal capitalism as a recipe for the post-World War II Economic Order for accelerated economic growth, prosperity and peace. However, the expected trickle-down effects have not occurred. Instead, the rich-poor divide has widened, and the world is on the brink of the following human holocaust due to the increasing threats of **climate change, biodiversity loss and inequalities**. Those countries, which have contributed the least to the crises, are now facing existential threats. The process of applying the principles of sustainable development in the land-based natural resource sectors with a human face is referred to Green Economy. It is embedded in **SDG 15 - Life on Land**.

The concept recognised the interdependence between economic growth, social well-being and environmental health. Applied to marine resources and ecosystems, the concept is termed Blue Economy - **UN SDG 14 – Life Below Water**. However, the African Union Blue Economy Strategy 2019 incorporates the inland aquatic resources and habitats without a clear roadmap for its implementation. As a result, the Blue Economy is understood differently by diverse stakeholders. The Small Island Developing States (SIDS) first coined the term since they are primarily ocean-based economies. But it can be relevant to the countries surrounding the African Great Lakes as the **Inland Ocean Economies**. Unfortunately, the international community has been steadfast in developing new concepts and approaches without facilitating their appropriation by the low-income and vulnerable countries mostly found on the African continent.

For Gunter Pauli¹, Sustainable Development is a myth because most consumer products that are good for the environment are expensive and unaffordable for low-income people. On the contrary, which products have negative impacts on the natural environment are cheap. So, therefore the concept of sustainable development must be accessible and affordable (democratised) for the mass to expect significant transformative change. The question is how the market economy can promote sustainable development in Society. There is a need for social innovation and effective behavioural change to adopt the principles of the Moral Economy and high ethical standards evenly. **Blue or Green, the colour of a cat does not matter if it eats the rats! How can it serve the National Development Strategies of the island, coastal and landlocked countries of African countries judiciously?**

2.2 Overview of the Fisheries Sector in EA-SA-IO

The socio-economic significance of small-scale fisheries in the developing and fragile economies of the EA-SA-IO region can hardly be emphasised regarding their contribution to food and nutrition security, employment, cultural diversity, wealth creation and foreign exchange earnings. **Almost 100% of inland and 80% of wild fisheries resources are harnessed by small-scale fisheries, predominantly unregulated subsistence and traditional artisanal fishing in open access and informal.** With the high population growth rate and demand for fish and fishery products, the open access to fisheries resources amount to the Tragedy of the Commons or a resource curse, exacerbating rivalry and social conflicts in local communities. Sustainably managed, natural renewable resources can contribute many folds to the local and national economies. However, the small-scale fisheries in the EA-SA-IO

¹ Gunter Pauli is Belgian Economist who defines Blue Economy as ZERI (Zero Emissions Research and Initiatives) in action. What if we did not produce any more waste? What if production systems regenerated our ecosystems? What if we replaced unemployment with an abundance of jobs and innovations that make sense? What if our economy generated more income and happiness for all?

region are still in a cautious expansive mode. The fish stocks in the nearshore waters near densely populated areas are dwindling due to overfishing and unsustainable fishing practices. But there are underfished and new fishing zones in deeper waters because of inadequate fishing assets, technologies, onshore infrastructure, and logistics. Therefore, the small-scale fishery industry should be promoted as a sustainable growth sector for shared prosperity.

On the African continent, over 70% of the labour force is engaged in natural resource sectors, such as rained-fed agriculture, farming, animal husbandry and fishing. However, they work only about four months a year. The post-harvest physical and economic losses in these sectors are about 40 % due to policy failure and a lack of essential socio-economic services and market logistics. However, ***the objectives of Transforming Africa 2063 cannot be achieved without the sustainable and inclusive modernisation of the primary sectors, including fisheries.*** Moreover, the misconception of the African Common market may negatively impact small enterprises due to indiscriminate corporatisation and financialisation of the primary sectors. Therefore, the local fishing communities must be supported to enhance their income-generating activities and well-being for the present and future generations amidst the growing challenges of biodiversity loss, climate change and inequalities.

From the ECOFISH viewpoint, none of these demonstration projects is tackling all sustainability issues in the small-scale fisheries in their respective constituency. However, they have selected their priorities to usher in the desired transformative changes. However, ***the greatest challenge is anticipating a feasible exit strategy to up-scale and replicate these initiatives.*** In addition, the concept must go viral to mobilise additional resources and partnerships. The ***Community of Practice*** uniting all these projects and relevant institutional stakeholders aims to work and learn together and anchor social and policy labs to design a model project for the sustainable and profitable development of small-scale fisheries across the African Continent. It will also inform donor and development agencies to focus on social and environmental impact investment as a game changer for Africa.

2.3 Synopsis of the ECOFISH Programme

ECOFISH is a cross-regional Initiative of the 11th EDF promoted and administered by EUD Mauritius and implemented by the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) in partnership with the mandated regional economic and fisheries organisation. It leverages effective cooperation to foster sustainable management of the inland and marine wild fisheries resources to contribute to the Blue Economy of Eastern Africa, Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean (EA-SA-IO) region. It attempts to operationalise the fundamental principles of Sustainable Development, i.e., the triple-bottom-line, Economic Efficiency – Environmental Health – Social Well-Being, in the fisheries sector amid the unprecedented challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss and inequalities. It empowers institutional stakeholders at various governance scales to unleash the development potential of sustainable fisheries as a resilient growth engine for shared prosperity across the local and national economies.

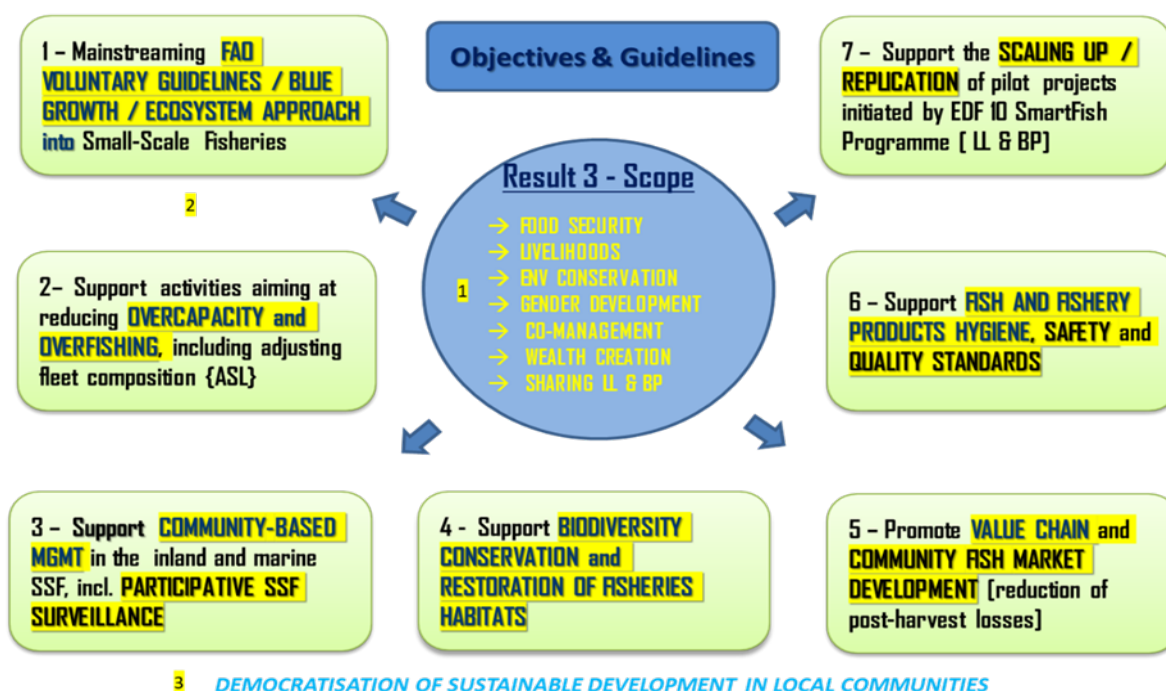
Three expected results, Result 1 drive ECOFISH's global objective - Enhanced fisheries policy, institutional and governance frameworks; **Result 2** - Strengthened fisheries Monitoring, Control and Surveillance capacities and **Result 3** – Call for Proposals for aspirational projects to operationalise sustainable and responsible management of small-scale inland and marine fisheries in local communities. These are delivered by five synergistic work plans diversely managed by EUD - Mauritius through a decentralised project management and governance architecture to ensure ownership and long-term sustainability of actions.

Work Plans 1 and 2 support the sustainable management of the shared fisheries of LVFO and LTA. **Work Plan 3** focuses on the coastal fisheries of the EA-SA-IO region and is implemented by the IOC Secretariat in collaboration with the four African RECs. It also

facilitates consolidating and institutionalising the IOC - Regional Fisheries Surveillance Plan (PRSP). **Work Plan 4/Result 3** relates to implementing and monitoring nine sustainable small-scale fisheries demonstration projects in the inland and marine sector of the EA-SA-IO region. Finally, **Work Plan 5** consists of those functions facilitated by EUD – Mauritius, including a long-term Technical Assistance Team, grants provided to eligible PRSP participating countries to conduct regional sea and air fisheries patrols, capacity building, external evaluation, etc.² Through this event, ECOFISH intends to share the learning investments of its aspirational sustainable inland and marine small-scale projects in the EA-SA-IO region with the rest of the African continent through collaboration with AU-IBAR and FISHGOV 2 and vice-versa. The main objective is to promote hand-holding ecosystems among stakeholders for a V shape transformative change in the African fisheries and Aquaculture on the margin of Africa Agenda 2063 and associated strategic policies such as AU-PFRS 2014, the Blue Economy Strategy 2019 and the AfCFTA 2020, etc.

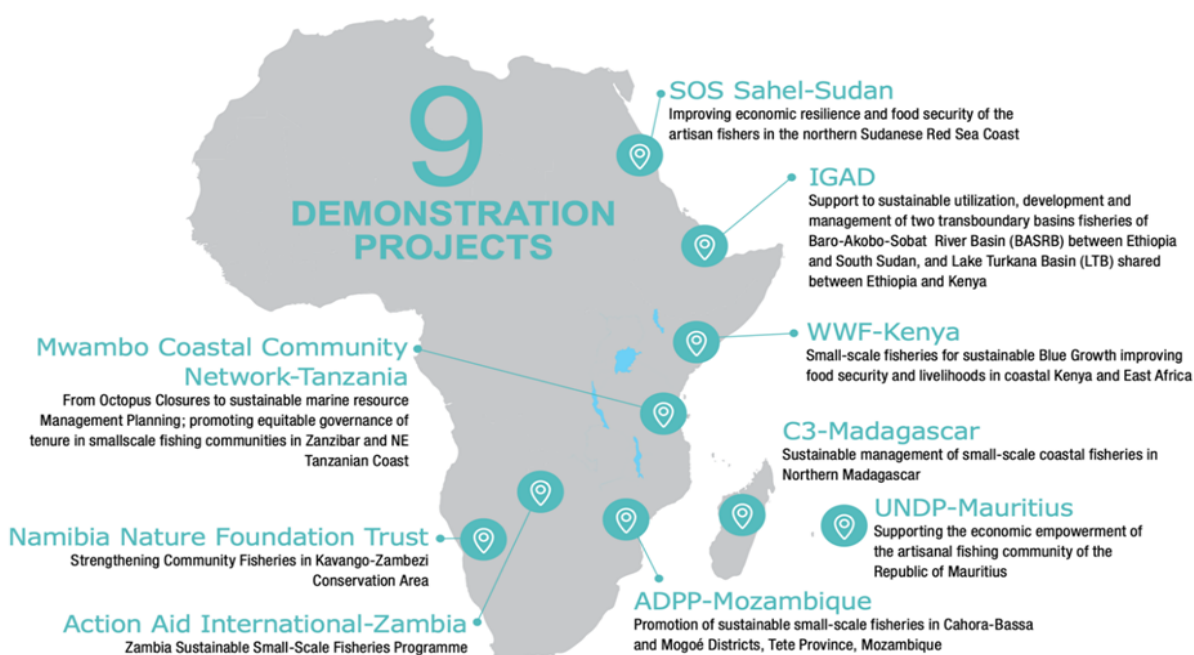
2.4 ECOFISH Result 3 - Experimenting with Sustainable SSF Projects

Built on the learning investments of its predecessor, SMARTFISH, the ECOFISH programme dedicated about one-third of the budget to facilitate nine demonstration projects through a call for proposals. They are part of Work Plan 4, directly administered by EUD-Mauritius and coordinated by the permanent Technical Assistance Team. The main objective of Result 3/Work Plan 4 is to implement concrete actions impacting sustainable small-scale fisheries and the livelihoods and well-being of local fishing communities. They are guided by the principles of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries 1995, Voluntary Guidelines for Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries taken up by the AU Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for the African Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector 2014, including its 10-year plan for securing sustainable small-scale fisheries and the UN Agenda 2030, particularly the SDG 14 – Life Below Water. The mandated objectives and guidelines (non-exhaustive) for Result 3 are summarised in the chart below:



² Visit the ECOFISH's website at www.ecofish-programme.org for an update.

The location of these field projects is shown in the following chart.



3.0 Update on the Demonstration Projects

Project 1 - ActionAid – Zambia

ActionAid Zambia is part of the *ActionAid Global Federation*, working to achieve social justice, gender equality and poverty eradication. The objective of the ECOFISH project is to enhance sustainable management of small-scale fisheries in Zambia by strengthening **the management and governance systems** to protect livelihoods and build the resilience of local fishing communities while contributing to UN Global Agenda 2030 – No Poverty, No Hunger and Nobody is left behind. The project targets about **5,400 artisanal fishers**, both men and women in Zambia, who rely on inland fisheries for food and nutrition security, livelihoods and local economic development, which are still not correctly quantified. It also addresses climate change challenges, imminent drought, illegal fishing, overfishing and unsustainable fishing practices. As of March 2023, the main achievements and milestones are as follows:

Output 1: Enhanced Livelihoods and Food Security of Vulnerable Small-Scale Fishing Communities through Sustainably Managed Small-Scale Fisheries

70% of the targeted fishers now understand the voluntary guidelines for sustainable small-scale fisheries (VG-SSF), and at least 30% demand tenure rights by the end of the project in 2023. The VG-SSF guidelines have been translated into 4 local languages. Over 350 people have been trained, cascaded to 10 committees in each of the 7 districts to achieve 3500 beneficiaries.

Output 2: Women and Youth Small-Scale Fishers have Strengthened Capacities in Value Addition of Fish and Access to Markets Resulting in their Increased Contribution to Sustainable Growth, including to SDGs

Regarding poverty reduction and marginalisation, at least 10% of surveyed small-scale fishers, including 30% of women, recognised improved equity and gender-focused best practices in 2022. Twenty-three (23) Fisheries committees were surveyed and transformed into multi-purpose cooperatives (10 in Southern, 3 in Luangwa and 10 in Western). Of the eight (8) women small-scale fishers surveyed during the monitoring field visit five (5) reported enhanced equity and an increase in income in the range of K 1,300 and K 12,000 from fish farming.

Output 3: Small-scale fishers, especially women and youth, are better able to advocate for the adoption and implementation of national and regional policy and legal instruments

Over 3,486 of 5,400 small-scale fishers, including 215 females from 43 fishponds, had secured access to fisheries resources. There has been a remarkable increase in membership, from 593 to 3,486 people, and 32% of leadership positions occupied in community-level fisheries committees are occupied by women. In addition, the Fisheries department and key stakeholders developed a manual for the governance of fisheries co-management with communities that will be used in Zambia.

Overall, the project activities are on track, and the total disbursement is about 70%

Project Risks

- i) Kwacha's fluctuation affects the EU project. However, kwacha strengthening did not translate into reduced inflation and goods and services remained high;*
- ii) High cost of fuel for both motor vehicles and speed boats (Some communities are found on islands;*
- iii) Disconnect between local communities and government agencies; [What are the causes? How to rebuild trust and collaboration]*
- iv) Theft – stocks being stolen from fishponds. Incidents reported by 2 communities. Need to secure the fishpond using wire fences. [What is the cost, and how can it be financed?]*
- v) Human-Wildlife Conflict in Luangwa. Farming has disrupted the migration patterns of elephants between Zambia, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. In addition, it may affect attendance at meetings by community members as most are afraid of elephant attacks.*

Project Opportunities

- i) Government's announcement to pass National Animal Health, Aquaculture and Fisheries Policies. It presents an opportunity to advocate for small-scale fishers' rights.*
- ii) Communities' willingness to develop alternative livelihoods.*
- iii) Establishment of National NSA Platform to advocate Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture;*
- iv) The VG-SSF Manual can help improve the relationship between Government and Communities.*

Lessons Learned and Best Practices

- i) Effective collaboration with like-minded NSAs, Government Agencies to build synergies for achieving expected results/goals;*
- ii) Participation of external facilitators from other organisations and Government Agencies is helpful for awareness-building and sensitisation of local communities;*
- iii) Common but varied geometries – different communities on the same landscape may have diverse challenges in terms of livelihoods;*
- iv) Regular engagement and communication with communities can lead to desired behavioural change and social innovations, including inter-community interactions, participation and accountability;*
- v) Involvement of traditional leaders in the project helps build stakeholder engagement.*

Project 2 – ADPP Mozambique

ADPP Mozambique is a Mozambican Non-Governmental Association that works across Quality Education, Health and Well-being, Sustainable Agriculture, and the Environment. Established in 1982, it has grown steadily to employ 3,300 people, implement over 60 projects

across all provinces, and benefit about 6.5 million Mozambicans annually. The objective of the ECOFISH Project, **“to strengthen the economic, social and environmental sustainability of small-scale fishing communities in Cahora-Bassa and Magoé Districts, Tete Province, Mozambique,”** is supported by 3 interrelated expected outputs:

Output 1. Enhanced empowerment and capacity of fishing communities for sustainable resources management. **[Empowerment of Fisher Communities]**

Output 2. Improved integration of fishing groups into value chains through market-related infrastructure and investments to ensure good quality fish handling and marketing under hygienic conditions. **[Fish Value Chain and Market Development]**

Output 3. Increased access to drinking water for human consumption, productive use, and sanitation. **[Basic social service and alternative sustainable livelihoods]**

Implementation Modalities

Fisher Clubs are groups of fishers targeted with training and capacity building. As a result, they can aggregate more fish and supply stable quantities to contract buyers. In addition, they save money as a group and invest in production equipment such as cooling units. The project is working with **500 fishers organised in 10 Fisher Clubs**.

Project Achievements and potential impacts

Output 1 – Empowerment and capacity-building of fishing communities

- i) *Ten (10) fishers’ clubs transformed into fishers associations and cooperatives. They play a prominent role in providing a platform for **awareness-raising and capacity-building**.*
- ii) *531 fishers trained in **community-based natural resources management**. Fishers are complying with authorised/recommended gear (simple gill-netting).*
- iii) *270 fishers participated in **food crop production**. The farms are established in the fishers clubs along with **10 solar water pumps**.*
- iv) *Positive impact on **food and nutrition security**. The project has successfully integrated fishing households into agricultural production to diversify food sources. Last year, about **seven tonnes of vegetables were produced**.*
- v) *The operational capacity of the Community Fisher Councils has been enhanced. The project trained **10 Community Councils in Fisheries Monitoring**.*
- vi) *354 fishers have been licensed.*
- vii) ***2000 harmful fishing gear have been seized**. It is evidence of the project’s contribution to the reservoir fisheries resources and ecosystem protection.*

Output 2 – Enhanced fish value chain and Market Development

- i) *After several meetings with the local fisheries agency and authorities, a sustainable **fish marketplace design was approved**.*
- ii) ***291 fishers received basic literacy training**. It enhances the fishers’ ability to read and count. In addition, they are integrated into the government’s 3-year literacy programme. **[Entrepreneurship, Financial Literacy, Community Values, etc.?)***
- iii) *10 fishers clubs created savings and credit groups. They boost their members’ capabilities to develop small businesses and trade in fishing gear.*
- iv) *Two big buyers/Distributors identified target fresh fish for urban markets after the marketplace construction is completed.*

Output 3 – Increased access to drinking water and improved sanitation

- i) *1500 households have been granted **access to clean water**.*

- ii) **Five (5) water committees** have been created and trained to benefit from the boreholes.
- iii) 100 fishers have been trained in installing and maintaining **solar water pumps**.
- iv) 131 fishers adopted ecological latrines.
- v) Over 500 fishers and 1500 community members were trained in COVID-19 prevention and open defecation.

Project Risks

The main challenges encountered in implementing the project activities are as follows:

- i) *Delay in the construction of the market infrastructure – The **administrative procedure of the National Institute for Fish Inspection** delayed the construction of the fish market. After several meetings with government bodies, an appropriate design has been developed and approved.*
- ii) ***Covid-19 restrictions** also needed change in some implementation strategies, e.g., the project had to do more door-to-door than big community-wide sessions.*
- iii) *The number of boreholes was reduced from 10 as planned to 5 due to a higher cost per borehole. The Water Company had to drill twice or three deeper to find water, yet it was salty or mixed.*

Lessons Learned and Best Practices

- i) **Savings groups and Revolving**
 - a) *Savings and credit group activity in clubs was not planned as one of the critical interventions of the project.*
 - b) *It contributes significantly to building resilience and developing small enterprises as a source of alternative income.*
 - c) *Future projects must consider establishing Savings and Revolving credit or Micro Credit clubs [**Consider Prof Mohammad Yunus' Grameen Bank Model**]*
- ii) **Fishers' Club – Social Cohesion and Gender Dynamics**
 - a) *Behavioural change and social innovations to improve the ability of fishers and fish works to strengthen communities;*
 - b) *Sharing information, awareness-raising and capacity-building, including training in fisheries and agriculture [Local Sustainable Livelihood Approach]*
 - c) *Gender development and increasing women's participation and involvement in the fisheries sector;*
 - d) *Community values, Traditional knowledge, ethical and moral standards, and improved best practices based on cooperation and solidarity among the members;*

Opportunities and Exit Strategies

ADPP has been proactive in resource mobilisation and fund-raising to anticipate upscaling and replicating ECOFISH activities by engaging NSAs, including donor and development agencies:

- i) **EDP** – Energias de Portugal SA, through its A2E CSR Fund Programme, “Renewable Energy Access for Productive Uses,” implemented by ADPP. The project will assist small-scale fishing communities in developing fish value chains in the District of Magoé.
- ii) **UNIDO** – Towards sustainable energy for all in Mozambique, promoting market-based dissemination of integrated renewable energy systems for productive activities in rural areas Call- A project proposal with a budget of \$ 155,000 has been submitted and is awaiting approval: The project aims to improve fish value chain by installing photovoltaic solutions in Magoé District

- iii) **IDEPA** – ADPP is at the advanced stage of signing an MOU with the Ministry of Sea, Inland Waters and Fisheries (IDEPA) to introduce farmed fish in the clubs. It will positively impact women with another source of food and income. In addition, the Ecofish Fishers' Club members will receive cages for fish, training and fingerlings.

Project 3 – IGAD Co-management of Fisheries Transboundary Rivers

The Inter-Governmental Agency for Development (IGAD) is one of the eight AU recognised Regional Economic Communities and a mandated partner of the ECOFISH programme. It also participated in the Result 3 Call for Proposals and became an awardee.

The project aims to **support the Sustainable Utilization, Development and Management of Two Transboundary Fisheries of the Baro-Akobo-Sobat River Basin (BASRB) between Ethiopia, South Sudan, and Lake Turkana Basin (LTB) shared between Ethiopia and Kenya**. The global objective of the project is to develop gender-responsive and climate-smart sustainable utilisation of fisheries resources and foster the use of fisheries for building resilience and bolstering **food and nutrition security** and local economies, especially for the fishing and “Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs)” communities in the two basins.

Result 1: Finalise, adopt and establish **basin-wide fisheries co-management system** for each of the two basins with the needed “collaboration and communication arrangements” among critical stakeholders for sustainable fisheries exploitation, equitable access to fisheries resources, and efficient fisheries utilisation. The following outputs have been attained:

- i) *Situation analysis and baseline study reports for both basins were reviewed, validated and readied to serve as a background document to develop Co-management Plans.*
- ii) *The Basin Fisheries Co-Management Plans (BFCP) for both basins were prepared and validated by the three project implementation countries;*
- iii) *The BFCPs have become operational in the participating countries;*
- iv) *The Research Sub-Committee Members of the BFCP have developed fisheries data collection templates for both basins;*
- v) *The project facilitated communication between the basin-sharing countries to discuss sustainable management of the underlying fish resources.*

Result 2: Capacity building and integrated database established to address climate-smart, gender-responsive, socioeconomically equitable, and ecologically sustainable fisheries development and management for each of the two basins.

- i) *Training on fisheries co-management principles and practices have been provided to the Co-Management Unit members (fish cooperatives and BMU members) in the three countries (Ethiopia, Kenya and South Sudan)*
- ii) *Three studies in both Basins have been conducted and validated;*
- iii) *Socio-economic Situation, Gender Inclusivity and Indigenous & Traditional Knowledge (ITK) Integration in Fisheries Management in both basins;*
- iv) *Capacity Needs and Gaps Assessment for the fisheries sector, including climate-smart fisheries practices in the two basins done;*
- v) *Capacity Development Plan for fisheries management of Lake Turkana completed;*
- vi) *A Web-based database for BE and Fisheries is in the process of development*
- vii) *ICT equipment procurement is in process;*
- viii) *Participation in two ECOFISH IGAG Fisheries Coordination Platforms;*
- viii) *Two policy briefs on fisheries co-management for the two basins were produced and posted.*

Lessons learned and best practices

- i) Consolidation of Transboundary basin fisheries co-management requires adequate institutional organisation, including regular consultation at all levels;
- ii) Establishment of a Bilateral Fisheries Coordination Platform, composed of fishing community leaders, researchers, and officers of two countries, is a realistic approach to transboundary fisheries co-management;
- iii) Indigenous knowledge (IK) from the local fishing Communities helps regulate the fisheries. For example, “The Fish Father” system in Baro River fisheries in Ethiopia
- iv) Beach Management Units (BMUs) already established in Kenya inland and marine fisheries may be customised accordingly.

Overall Performance

- i) 65 % of the activities have been completed
- ii) 55% of the budget has been consumed.

Project 4 - NNF Strengthening community fisheries in KAZA

The Namibia Nature Foundation is Namibia’s leading conservation and sustainable development organisation. It promotes sustainable development, the conservation of biological diversity and natural ecosystems, and the wise and ethical use of natural resources along the Kavango water systems. The project aims to **strengthen fisheries management in the KAZA region through ecosystem-based adaptation, enhancing the socio-ecological resilience of communities.**

Output 1 – Enhanced community governance [40 % achieved]

- i) Standardised tools and guidelines for increased community governance efficiency and effectiveness developed; [Completed 40%]
- ii) Functional Community Fisheries Committees with at least 2 in each KAZA country in place; [30%]
- iii) Fisheries integrated into existing Community-based Bodies dealing with natural resources management; [40%]
- iv) Well-structured joint venture partnerships with the private sector in place [0%]

Output 2 - Creation of a Community Fish Reserves Network [35 % achieved]

- i) Formal Community Fish Reserves, 2 in each KAZA country established – 60%
- ii) Fisheries Management Plans, 2 fisheries in KAZA (embedding Community Fisheries Reserves in a network) developed – 30%

Output 3: Increased awareness and stakeholder engagement [15 % achieved]

- i) Economic study and documentation of the social and cultural value of fish to the region completed – 25%
- ii) Support making the Zambezi Bream Festival a KAZA celebration and connection to the social and cultural value of fish to the people; – 20%

Output 4 - Strengthening of research, monitoring and adaptive management of fisheries resources [45 % achieved]

- i) *Protocols for joint research and monitoring taking place - 30 %*
- ii) *Standardised community fisheries monitoring and evaluation protocols and actions across KAZA - 30 %*
- iii) *Development and iteration of management recommendations on various levels of interventions for adaptive management - 35 %*
- iv) *Informed and improved decision-making regarding sustainable fisheries management:*
 - a) *Protocol for joint research;*
 - b) *Standardised Community Fisheries M & E;*
 - c) *Informed and improved decision-making;*
 - d) *Recommendations for adaptive management.*

Output 5: Enhanced transboundary collaboration [10 % achieved]

- i) *Effective running of Fisheries Sub-working group in KAZA with at least two meetings per year; [0 %]*
- ii) *Integration of fisheries issues into existing community transboundary forums [40 %]*
- iii) *Joint fisheries enforcement and patrol actions on the Zambezi [25 %]*
- iv) *Transboundary Fisheries Management Plan for the Cubango-Okavango River*

Project Risks

- i) *Visibility of short-term benefits;*
- ii) *Success rates of different models;*
- iii) *Invisible influential residents;*
- iv) *Law enforcement to be improved and formalised;*
- v) *Transboundary collaboration due to COVID-19;*
- vi) *Rivers are open access*
- vii) *Equitable sharing of benefits*
- viii) *Sustainable financing mechanisms*

Lessons Learned and Best Practices

- i) *Fisheries contribute to socio-ecological resilience;*
- ii) *New rules are often traditional rules;*
- iii) *Adaptive management combined with traditional knowledge and (citizen) science;*
- iv) *Peer-to-peer approach is the most successful;*
- v) *Window of opportunity due to depleted stocks*

Conclusions

- i) **Harmonised policy and practices** for the management of shared rivers and resources;
- ii) **Ownership of communities** pivotal to successful management and governance of reserves;
- iii) *Long-term sources of funding are needed;*
- iv) *Strategic documents for the Network of Fisheries Reserves;*
- v) *Capacity-building of partners and stakeholders required to create such a network;*

Overall Performance

- i) Overall Budget execution – 46%;
- ii) Overall achievement – 45%
- iii) Fish stock enhancement – 10%

Project 5 - Mwambao Coastal Communities Network

Mwambao Coastal Community Network brings together coastal communities & other partner stakeholders to improve sustainable coastal resource management. It is guided by principles of equity, empowerment and stewardship. It was one of the beneficiaries of SMARTFISH's pilot projects. The global objective of the project is **to transition from octopus closure to sustainable marine resources management planning** in selected communities in mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar. A total of € 349,088.40 was used to finance the project activities, where ECOFISH contributed € 231,949.61, which is equal to 66.4%, and other matching grants contributed € 117,138.78 which is equivalent to 33.6%

Output and Rate of Achievement

Output 1 - Sufficient knowledge and incentives are imparted to enable 4 BMUs (Tanzania mainland) and 7 SFCs (Zanzibar), including 25% women membership, to engage equitably in collaborative marine resource management – [Achieved 81% / Disbursed 71%]

Output 2 - Local marine resource management plans implemented for 4 BMUs (Tanzania mainland) and 8 SFCs (Zanzibar) (including fisheries closures where relevant), and the condition of marine resources improved - [Achieved 49 % / Disbursed 17%]

Output 3 - Knowledge and perception of the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fishers (VG-SSF) is improved amongst policymakers and small-scale fisheries stakeholders in North Tanzania - [Achieved 26% / Disbursed 7%]

Project Risks

- i) Community-based marine resource management approach takes a long time for the community to recognise, accept and adopt;
- ii) A lack of alternative sustainable livelihood opportunities in the local communities undermines conservation measures;

Opportunities

- i) Establishment of a Collaborative Fisheries Management Area (CFMA) for mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar;
- ii) Support alternative sustainable livelihood and economic opportunities to reduce community dependence on marine resources.

Lessons Learnt and Best Practices

- i) Establishing marine resource management measures can vary from one community to another. However, the need to have neighbouring communities and other users on board cannot be underestimated;
- ii) Marine resource users' conflicts within and outside of the community hurt the locally-led community's marine resources management.
- iii) Effective stakeholder engagement and collaboration enhance livelihood opportunities and social mobility;
- iv) Awareness raising and education is a long-term process to address community marine resources management and conservation challenges.

Project 6 - Community Centred Conservation – Madagascar [C3M]

C3M is a registered non-profit organisation in Madagascar. The project's overall objective is to enhance the sustainable management of small-scale fisheries at three locally-managed marine areas in Northern Madagascar.

Expected Outputs

Output 1 - Small scale fisheries at the Bay of Rigny, Ambodivahibe and Nosy Hara were assessed for more effective management and monitoring measures. [25% achieved]

- i) *Situation analysis reports describing the small-scale fisheries at each site and management recommendations, including monthly catch assessments and socio-economic surveys of artisanal fishers.*
- ii) *Long-term community-based monitoring protocol was developed, followed by training 30 landing site surveyors at each site and analysing data collected by enumerators.*

Output 2 - Local fishing associations and management bodies trained in fisheries and marine ecosystem conservation and management, where relevant. [25% achieved]

- i) *Improved capacity of communities for protected area management and monitoring, including training of fishers in basic marine ecology and the importance of fisheries management and community-based fisheries management structures;*
- ii) *Evidence-based policies for local management bodies recommending best practice management interventions, including documenting lessons learned in the community enforcement programmes and development of policy briefs in collaboration with local fisheries management bodies;*
- iii) *Awareness raised about LMMA and fisheries management needs supported by training of local junior eco-guard teams (30 per site), with a focus on fisheries management and quarterly sensitisation events held at each site.*

Output 3 - Management interventions implemented, focusing on opportunities yielding rapid, measurable results. LMMA and fisheries management programmes executed on the ground. [25% achieved]

- i) *Community and local management structure consultations and to identify critical areas to focus fisheries management and development of community-endorsed management plans, including:*
 - a) *At least 1 fisheries management measure implemented at each site;*
 - b) *Consensus attained on the most likely management measure for success;*
 - c) *Measures implemented.*
- ii) *Ongoing monitoring of implementation success and impacts on fish stocks and catch, including Exchange visits held with other LMMAs through the MIHARI national network to share success stories and lessons learned and encourage replication of successful models;*
- iii) *Collaboration with MIHARI to promote exchange meetings with other successful LMMAs ;*

Project Risks

- i) *Uncertainties regarding coordination of activities on sites, competition and reluctance to communicate openly;*
- ii) *Weak awareness of fisheries resources and marine biodiversity in local communities to build trust and cooperation for rolling out the project activities;*
- iii) *Conflict of interest with international NGOs causing delays in implementing the project activities simultaneously at all sites.*

Opportunities

- i) Working with local fishing communities demanding assistance on the ground;*
- ii) Progressive approach to build trust and demonstrate results;*
- iii) A collaborative arrangement (MOU) with the Ministry of BE and Fisheries;*
- iv) A four-year MOU signed with the Ministry of Education for the C3M's Junior Eco-guard programme*

Conclusion

The overall implementation level is about 25%.

Project 7 - SOS Sahel – Sudan

SOS SAHEL is an African-born grassroots organisation with over 40 years of experience ensuring food and nutrition security in rural communities of Sub-Saharan Africa. The project's overall objective is to improve the economic resilience and food security of the artisanal fishers on the northern Sudanese Red Sea Coast.

Expected Outputs

Output 1 - Improved practices and techniques applied

Target: 1015 fisheries. Achieved 906. [89%]

Output 2 - Packages of appropriate fishery inputs and technologies

Target: 725 fishers. Achieved: 1535. [212%]

Output 3 - Improved capacities of artisanal fishers to break highly dependent relationships with traders and gain access to services (financial, social, legal).

Target: 735 fishers. Achieved 125 %; [29 %]

Opportunities

- i) Many importers and traders supply various types of fishing gear;*
- ii) Increasing demand for seafood;*
- iii) Availability of ports for fish exports;*
- iv) Existing financing institutions, especially microfinance;*
- v) Support of donor and development agencies to the fisheries sector;*
- vi) Extensive coastline of more than 740 km;*
- vii) Policy and Regulatory Frameworks to drive sustainable fisheries;*
- viii) Inter-agency and cross-sector collaboration (Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Red Sea University, Marine Security);*

Project Risks

- i) Political instability resulting in contradictory policies and regulations;*
- ii) Unsettled international maritime boundaries with neighbouring countries;*
- iii) Illegal fishing activities carried by foreign boats;*
- iv) Land-based pollution;*
- v) Organised crimes and security issues;*

Lessons Learnt and Best Practices

- i) Assisted people in taking time to change their mindset ;*
- ii) Entrepreneurship and private sector participation are critical to ensure sustainability beyond the project;*
- iii) Fisher Associations have access to financing more easily than individuals;*

- iv) *A proper enabling environment and value chain approach are necessary for the sustainable development of small-scale fisheries;*
- v) *Stakeholder engagement is a significant determinant of the project's success.*

Overall project performance

- i) *Total Disbursement: 83%*
- ii) *Activities to expenditure: 93 %*
- iii) *Beneficiaries: 106 %*

Impact indicators

- i) **Target fisheries have increased their fish yields** - 51 % of the target fishers increase their catch from 70 kg to 171 kg per trip.
- ii) **Target fishers have increased their net income** - 36% of them raised their net income for SDG 20,200 to SDG 194,500 per day trip.
- iii) **Food security in target fisher households has been reduced because of increased purchasing power** - The food gap in target fisher households has been reduced from 66.5 % to 37.5%

Project 8 - WWF – Kenya [KECOFISH]

World Wide Fund for Nature Kenya (WWF-Kenya) is a locally registered non-governmental conservation organisation affiliated with World Wide Fund for Nature International (WWF). WWF has been working in Kenya since 1962 alongside the government, civil society, private sector organisations and local communities to provide an enabling environment for sustainable natural resource management. The project title is “**Small-scale Fisheries for Sustainable Blue Growth improving food security and Livelihoods in Coastal Kenya and East Africa**”. It aims to enhance the capacity of small-scale marine fisheries in Kenya and the Coastal East African region **to contribute to sustainable Blue Growth, Poverty Reduction, Food Security and Job Creation**. It focuses on two demonstration sites to deliver **organised and effective co-management and innovative solutions** to address sustainability challenges faced by local communities.

Output 1.0 - Community-led, low-cost fisheries data collection system implemented in at least 10 BMUs

- i) *Improved fisheries data collection system (Catch Assessment Survey) in 7 key strategic locations in Coastal Kenya;*
- ii) *Rolling out the mobile phone for data collection system to at least 7 new BMUs;*
- iii) *Use of data by local communities to make informed fisheries management decisions.*

The key achievements and works-in-progress are as follows:

- i) *Training of data enumerators;*
- ii) *Monthly data collection initiated in 7 BMUs;*
- iii) *Mobile phones and associated equipment acquired;*
- iv) *Regular analysis of the data collected;*
- v) *Fisheries data to be used in creating the Joint Co-Management Area in Lamu*

Output 2.0 - 20 Village Savings & Loan Associations (VSLA) established (5 in Lamu and 15 in Shimoni-Vanga for increased financial literacy

- i) *Adaptation and roll out of the VSLA Model to form 20 new VSLAs, in the Lamu Seascape and the Shimoni-Vanga Seascape;*

- ii) Roll out financial literacy and small business training for women and youth participating in the VSLAs;*
- iii) Developing 4 bankable business plans and facilitating linkages to financial services*

The following activities have been undertaken:

- i) A consultancy study was commissioned to review and document the achievements and impacts of VSLAs in the Lamu Seascape to establish relevance and key lessons;*
- ii) 17 and 7 VSLAs selected in Shimoni-Vanga and Lamu seascape, respectively;*
- iii) Business plans developed; One has been funded by the KEMSFED project approx— \$ 2500.*

Output 3.0 - Capacity is built for at least two joint Fisheries Co-Management Areas (JCMAs)

- i) Building capacity of members and leaders of the 10BMUs;*
- ii) Train at least 30 TOTs, who will then train 2500 fishers in both Lamu and Shimoni-Vanga Seascapes on responsible fishing;*
- iii) Operationalising ecosystem-based co-management in the two existing JCMAs*

The progress is as follows:

- i) 25 ToTs in Lamu (13) and Kwale (12), followed by the training of at least 16 BMUs (9 in Lamu and 7 in Kwale);*
- ii) Mentorship program to the BMUs underway; mentorship programme developed and rolled out;*

Output 4.0 - New and innovative prototypes to address post-harvest losses and improved market access

- i) Building on lessons from other projects on efficient cooling solutions;*
- ii) Demonstrate successful technologies prototypes;*
- iii) Building capacity on post-harvest handling of fish and fisheries products;*

The progress made is as follows:

- i) Consultative meetings organised by relevant partners;*
- ii) Demonstration site selected, and the off-grid cooling solutions chosen;*
- iii) Business plan developed for the proposed cooling system;*
- iv) Training on fish post-harvest handling techniques and value addition (25 ToTs in Lamu (13) and Kwale (12), followed by the training of at least 16 BMUs (9 in Lamu and 7 in Kwale);*

Project Opportunities

- i) BMU Leadership Training and mentorship programme;*
- ii) Cross-fertilisation - Synergies with other WWF practices such as food, Climate Energy and Oceans to facilitate a robust cross-learning in Kenya*

Lessons Learnt and Best Practices

- i) The need to hire additional project staff in the marine programme;*
- ii) Engage County Government officers who are not involved in ongoing projects;*
- iii) Significance of manual data collection realised when the ODK system crashed;*

- iv) *Provision of species guide to data enumerator to ensure species identification for uniformity in the name of the species across different regions;*
- v) *Suggested re-allocation of funds to other more sustainable interventions;*
- vi) *Request for project extension at no additional cost.*

Project 9 – UNDP - Mauritius

As the UN's development agency, UNDP plays a critical role in helping countries achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. It works in about 170 countries and territories, helping to eradicate poverty, reduce inequalities and exclusion, and build resilience so countries can sustain progress. The EUD-Mauritius has signed a contribution agreement with UNDP-Mauritius for the project – "**Supporting the economic empowerment of the artisanal fishing community of the Republic of Mauritius**". The main objective of the project is **to support the artisanal fishing community in the sustainable management of coastal fisheries and to improve their economic situation**, which will be achieved by:

Output 1 - Development of a community of empowered and environmentally responsible artisanal fishers who are economically independent

Output 2 – Support artisanal fishers' cooperatives to inform fishers of available financial support and to add value to their catch by the post-harvest process.

The project comprises three (3) components

Component 1 Harvest Phase

- i) *Procuring 2 sets of single Buoy FADs fitted with satellite imagery devices. They were deployed in December 2022;*
- ii) *Relevant data is being received from deployed Single Buoy FADs;*
- iii) *Development of Mobile application for fisher community;*
- iv) *Training fishers in coastal FAD tuna long-line fishing started in February 2023;*

Component 2 - Post-Harvest Infrastructure Development

- i) *Supply, Installation and commissioning of solar-powered ice flakes-making machines. A containerised system has been recommended;*
- ii) *Procurement launched in November 2022 & Evaluation is ongoing, and award expected shortly;*

Component 3 - Post-Harvest Processing

- i) *Training of fishers, especially women and young people, in fish hygiene, fish processing and marketing;*
- ii) *Training syllabus and training materials submitted by Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) and have been approved after incorporation of comments received;*
- iii) *The focus will be on training and capacity-building during 2023;*
- iv) *Sensitisation and awareness raising on reducing post-harvest waste through appropriate communication and social innovation strategies.*

Project Updates as of December 2022

Total fund disbursement of EUR 720,926.00

Total expenditure: EUR 398,034.46 + EUR 114,000 in the Pipeline

Expected expenditure by 2023: EUR 789,187.41 and EUR 210,812.53 available for re-allocation.

Project 10 – ECOPECHE – OI

The project is promoted by the small-scale fishing community of France/Reunion in collaboration with the ECOFISH TAT and facilitated by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF/INTERREG) since the latter as an EU territorial in the Indian Ocean is not eligible for European Development Fund reserved exclusively for ACP countries. The project will enable Reunion to participate in various components of the ECOFISH programme, mainly Result 1 of the Marine Fisheries work plan and Result 3 / work plan 4. It embeds a pro-business approach to promote sustainable small-scale fish value chains through innovative financing and partnerships in the SWIO countries. The project is still in starting block because the 7th ERDF programme will be operationalised in mid-2023. Its high-level log frame is presented as follows:

Overall objective

To improve the socio-economic and ecological conditions of artisanal fishing communities and Society through the sustainable and inclusive development of small-scale fish value chains in Reunion Island and neighbouring countries in the South-West Indian Ocean.

Specific objective

To undertake sustainable, responsible, and inclusive modernisation of small-scale marine fishery value chains and supply chain logistics to optimise socio-economic benefits, including the creation of wealth, jobs, and cultural diversity by emphasising the protection of marine biodiversity and adaptation to climate change of the Blue Economy Strategy within the framework of the Regional Fisheries Program – ECOFISH.

Strategic Action 1 – Project/Business Incubator

Activity 1.1 - Promote an improvement in the Business Climate

Activity 1.2 – Facilitate public-private projects and investments.

Activity 1.3 – Set up a Techno-Economic Observatory / Technological Watch

Strategic Action 2: Technical and Human Capacity Building

Activity 2.1 - Professionalize and enhance the fishing professions.

Activity 2.2 - Strengthening Professional Organisations

Activity 2.3 - Exchange of knowledge and experience

Strategic Action 3: Valorization of Fishery Products

Activity 3.1 - Raise awareness of market-related health and hygiene standards.

Activity 3.2 - Create a Regional Quality Label for targeted products.

Activity 3.3 - Develop a regional strategy for the marketing of export products.

Strategic Action 4: Awareness and Communication

Activity 4.1 - Create the Branding/Branding of the project and a website.

Activity 4.2 – Develop a Communication Strategy for Strategic Actions 1 to 3

Activity 4.3 - Raise awareness of the need for adequate policy and institutional frameworks.

Strategic Action 5 – Governance and Project Management

Activity 5.1 - Install the Project Office and governance procedures.

Activity 5.1 - Ensure the implementation of strategic actions at the regional level.

Activity 5.3 - Organise statutory and technical meetings.

Conclusion and the Way Forward

The documentation of lessons learned and best practices is part of the certified deliverables of a project. These projects have been implemented by different Non-State Actors in diverse socio-ecological contexts across the EA-SA-IO region. Apart from delivering tangible benefits to target beneficiaries, these flagships aim to provide concrete examples or models to showcase the feasibility of sustainable practices that can be replicated and upscaled. They shined a spotlight on innovative approaches that enhance resource conservation, reduce environmental impacts, and promote social and economic well-being. Moreover, these projects raise awareness and knowledge about sustainable development principles among fishing communities, stakeholders, and policymakers. They help bridge the information gap by providing concrete examples and sensitised stakeholders about the benefits of sustainable fisheries management. These projects have involved active engagement of local fishing communities, industry representatives, government agencies, NGOs, and other stakeholders. They have been instrumental in building effective collaboration and ownership of sustainable practices to influence decision-making.

These demonstration projects provide a big picture of the prospects and challenges the small-scale fisheries sector faces and practical approaches to address them effectively. The artefacts of these projects are valuable materials for constructive discussion on the way forward to progress sustainable and integrated fisheries management at the grassroots level. The projects have shown the potential for sustainable resource management and improved livelihoods by combining traditional fishing practices with modern scientific insights. Recognising the indigenous knowledge of local communities and incorporating it into policy and management frameworks is crucial for the success and resilience of small-scale fisheries. These projects have paved the way for a more inclusive, resilient, and ecologically responsible approach to small-scale fisheries management.

By implementing measures such as gear restrictions, closed seasons, and size limits, the projects have demonstrated positive impacts on fish populations and the overall health of the ecosystems. These findings emphasise the need for effective management strategies that balance conservation with the socio-economic conditions of the local communities. In addition, they underscored the importance of involving local communities in decision-making processes, empowering them with knowledge and skills, and fostering collaboration between fishermen, scientists, and other stakeholders. A participatory approach has improved the acceptance and compliance of fishing regulations and enhanced the overall well-being of fishing communities.

Moving forward, it is essential to build on these findings, scaling up successful initiatives, and promoting knowledge sharing to ensure the long-term sustainability of small-scale fisheries in the region. The Knowledge Fair is an interdisciplinary and multistakeholder forum that will assess the learning investments of these demonstration projects to determine their scalability and replicability. It will also examine factors that may hinder or facilitate up-scaling successful interventions in other areas of the African continent.