

Validation Workshop of the Study on the Registration System for
Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Southwest Indian Ocean Region
Venue: Panorama Hotel, Antananarivo – Madagascar
Date: 21-22 May 2024

Summary of Activities

Day 1

1. Welcome address

The meeting started at 09.30hrs with the welcoming address of OPL of Madagascar on behalf of the Minister of Fisheries and Blue Economy, representative of the EUD Madagascar and Mr. Marc Officer-in-charge of IOC-ECOFISH Programme who declared the meeting opened.

2. Introduction of participants and adoption of the agenda

The participants introduced themselves. The consultant and representatives of Kenya were online. The agenda was approved without corrections.

3. Update of the ECOFISH programme

Dr. Sunil Sweenarain, Team Leader gave an update on the ECOFISH programme and added that ECOFISH is a Cross-Regional Initiative of the 11th EDF, sponsored by the EUD-Mauritius and implemented by the IOC in partnership with several Duly Mandated Regional Economic and Fisheries Organisations and Strategic Partners of the EA-SA-IO region.

The primary objective is “to enhance the sustainable management of inland & marine fisheries to contribute to the Blue Economy of the EA-SA-IO region. The programme has a budget of EUR 28 million for 62 months, starting in July 2019, and may obtain an extension of up to 18 months within the budget to achieve its objectives.

There are three Results Areas of the Work Plan 3 and supported by several Strategic Actions:

Result 1 - Enhanced Fisheries Policy, Regulatory and Governance Frameworks

Result 2 - Strengthened Fisheries MCS Capacities (An integral of fisheries Mgmt.)

Result 3 - [CALL FOR PROPOSALS] - Sustainable SSF Demonstration Projects [9]

4. Importance of a registration system in the small-scale fisheries in the SWIO region

The Team Leader gave an expose of the Code of Conduct of Responsible Fisheries and stressed on the importance of the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for the SSF. He gave a comparison between the small-scale and the industrial fisheries. 90% of the fishery resources are exploited by the artisanal fishermen thus the importance of the registration in the SSF. He presented a simplified model for sustainable management of small-scale fisheries.

5. Logical framework and theory of change

Dr Sunil explained the objective is to understand the significance of registration and licensing in sustainable small-scale fisheries. It encompasses legal rights, resource management and socio-economic benefits. Registration in the small-scale fisheries is crucial to move away from open access to a sustainable and inclusive management fishery.

It is essential to formulate a comprehensive registration mechanism tailored to the SWIO region, considering the challenges and opportunities within the local socio-ecological contexts. However, it was stressed that it is important to have an evaluation of the workshop to assess the performance indicators such as attendance rate, participation satisfaction, knowledge shared, quality of outputs and stakeholders' engagement.

6. Introduction of the registration system in the small-scale fisheries in the Southwest Indian Ocean region

The consultant made a presentation on the registration in the SSF in the SWIO region to differentiate between the registration and licence system as following:

- (i) While the registration is free of charge and primarily serves the administration as a way of recording the number of people employed in various activities along the value chain, licences may involve examination before issuing a licence, involve licence fees.
- (ii) Registration might involve socio-economic measures such as capacity building, social security, etc.
- (iii) Licensing might involve fuel subsidies, or other operational benefits.
- (iv) While the license might be suspended, in case of problems (illegal catch, overexploitation, entering closed areas, etc), the registration will continue for the whole lifetime, only in case of changes in activities (moving away from the fisheries sector) the registered fisherfolk can be cancelled from the register. One important issue are the under-aged fishers, they can register as fishers, but cannot receive a fishing license before reaching the age of 18 years.
- (v) The licence should be similar to a driving licence, foreseeing certain capacity building activities such as training in navigation skills, use of cellular phones for GPS functions, identification of fish species, safety at sea fundamentals, etc.
- (vi) the various Laws in the region use registration and licensing almost as synonyms.
- (vii) While for fishing vessels the word registration is widely used, for fishers the word registration hardly ever emerges.
- (viii) This creates quite some confusion, and it is fundamental to clearly spell out the difference, that is registration is practically a listing of fisherfolk while licence is a permission by the administration to carry out legal fishing.
- (ix) The main exception to the confusion between registration and licensing is the New Law of Mauritius, which in fact separates very clearly the two issues.

7. Presentation by participating countries

The participating countries namely Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, United Republic of Tanzania (Tanzania mainland and Zanzibar) made presentations on the fisheries sector in their respective countries. The presentations illustrated on the SSF, challenges, constraint and the way forward.

