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A regional framework among regional fishery bodies – Scaling up cooperation and coordination towards sustainable fisheries

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Abstract	
<p>This publication aims to consolidate the results of the first two regional consultations and to look at how to advance through concrete initiatives. It provides information on the main outcomes of the Regional Consultation among Regional Fishery Bodies in the Indian Ocean (Maputo, Mozambique, 22–24 June 2022), and of the Regional Consultation among Regional Fishery Bodies in the Eastern Central Atlantic Ocean (Accra, Ghana, 30 November to 2 December 2022) that were held to promote the development and implementation of regional coordination frameworks on matters of common concern in different world regions.</p> <p>Enhancing cooperation and coordination among regional fishery bodies (RFBs) has been on the international fisheries governance agenda for many years through the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolutions on sustainable fisheries. In 2021, the 34th Session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI), reiterated the key role that RFBs play in combatting IUU fishing, and stressed that RFBs should cooperate to ensure common approaches on a number of cross-cutting issues. In response, and supported by regional and subregional offices, FAO convened two regional consultations to support and develop a framework for regional coordination and cooperation priorities among regional fishery bodies towards more sustainable fisheries governance.</p> <p>For the first time, organizations from the same region came together to share views and gain valuable insights on matters and topics of common interest and concern, aiming to find solutions,</p>	

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² Documents available only to members invited to closed sessions.

including through identifying tools and services. Building on the positive outcomes of the two regional consultations, the desired follow up would be a continued collaboration by organizations involved to work towards developing a coordination framework for delivering healthy stocks and securing equitable livelihoods. To fulfil these objectives, members of RFBs and other regional organizations and communities are encouraged to support cooperative approaches that will identify priority areas for technical cooperation and coordination, and find shared solutions to common issues.



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

A regional framework among regional fishery bodies

Scaling up cooperation and coordination
towards sustainable fisheries



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Preparation of this document

This publication provides information on the main outcomes of the Regional Consultation among Regional Fishery Bodies in the Indian Ocean (Maputo, Mozambique, 22–24 June 2022), and of the Regional Consultation among Regional Fishery Bodies in the Eastern Central Atlantic Ocean (Accra, Ghana, 30 November to 2 December 2022) that were held to promote the development and implementation of regional coordination frameworks on matters of common concern in different world regions.

Sarah Fagnani and Piero Mannini (Fisheries and Aquaculture Division, FAO) compiled and edited the outcomes of the regional meetings. The collaboration of Estefania Burgos, Kristín von Kistowski (Fisheries and Aquaculture Division, FAO), of the FAO Regional Office for Africa, the FAO Subregional Office for West and Southern Africa, the FAO representation in Mozambique, and especially of participants in the two regional consultations is gratefully acknowledged. The regional consultations and this publication were made possible through the financial support of the European Union and the Government of Japan.

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Executive summary

This publication aims to consolidate the results of the first two regional consultations and to look at how to advance through concrete initiatives. It provides information on the main outcomes of the Regional Consultation among Regional Fishery Bodies in the Indian Ocean (Maputo, Mozambique, 22–24 June 2022), and of the Regional Consultation among Regional Fishery Bodies in the Eastern Central Atlantic Ocean (Accra, Ghana, 30 November to 2 December 2022) that were held to promote the development and implementation of regional coordination frameworks on matters of common concern in different world regions.

Enhancing cooperation and coordination among regional fishery bodies (RFBs) has been on the international fisheries governance agenda for many years through the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolutions on sustainable fisheries. In 2021, the 34th Session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI), reiterated the key role that RFBs play in combatting IUU fishing, and stressed that RFBs should cooperate to ensure common approaches on a

number of cross-cutting issues. In response, and supported by regional and subregional offices, FAO convened two regional consultations to support and develop a framework for regional coordination and cooperation priorities among regional fishery bodies towards more sustainable fisheries governance.

For the first time, organizations from the same region came together to share views and gain valuable insights on matters and topics of common interest and concern, aiming to find solutions, including through identifying tools and services. Building on the positive outcomes of the two regional consultations, the desired follow up would be a continued collaboration by organizations involved to work towards developing a coordination framework for delivering healthy stocks and securing equitable livelihoods. To fulfil these objectives, members of RFBs and other regional organizations and communities are encouraged to support cooperative approaches that will identify priority areas for technical cooperation and coordination, and find shared solutions to common issues.



Background and introduction

In October 1995, at the Twenty-eighth Session of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Conference, Member Nations adopted the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF). The CCRF sets out principles and international standards of behaviour for responsible practices with a view to ensuring the effective conservation, management and development of living aquatic resources, with due respect for the ecosystem and biodiversity.

Under the terms of the CCRF, states have, within their respective competences and in accordance with international law, the duty to cooperate at subregional, regional and global levels through regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) and regional fisheries advisory bodies (RFABs)¹ to promote conservation and management, ensure responsible fishing and ensure effective conservation and protection of living aquatic resources.

FAO has promoted and supported RFBs for many years. It has participated directly in establishing many of them, which has formalized existing opportunities for sharing experiences within a given region,

or implementing the processes needed for sustainably managing shared resources. These RFBs have benefited from FAO's advice on technical matters as well as from its secretariat, legal, capacity development and process support. FAO is actively committed to bolstering regional cooperation through the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats' Network (RSN)², which provides a forum for promoting consultation and regional dialogue, addressing priority issues of common concern, and fostering ongoing cooperation and exchange of information.

With over 50 RFBs worldwide (including inland water RFBs), as well as many projects, agencies, institutions and organizations active in fisheries matters, the problems of overlapping and fragmentation of mandates, are evident in many areas, such as, *inter alia* in terms of themes, geographical area of application, species covered and activities undertaken.

In addition to the risk of confusion over which rules, conservation and management measures are applicable, and/or technical scientific advice, the main and most relevant problem is one of inefficiency. Indeed, resources may not be

¹ RFMOs and RFABs are collectively referred to as Regional Fishery Bodies (RFBs)

² See: <https://www.fao.org/fishery/en/rsn/en>

used in the most efficient manner if research, regulatory work and/or enforcement are undertaken in duplicate. Preventing duplication, and consequently the waste of human and financial resources, and the resulting increased effectiveness have been highlighted as reasons for increasing collaboration and coordination.

One of the recurrent themes confronting many RFBs is the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. Several RFBs work together in that regard, for example, by sharing their lists of IUU fishing vessels, participating in regional coast guard forums, or developing targeted actions with the involvement of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as well as participating in projects and networks focusing on the fight against IUU fishing.

Cooperation can be the result of geographical proximity, with two or more RFBs adjoining each other and developing partnerships because they share similar characteristics and/or objectives. In most cases, it is useful to stay informed on the measures adopted by one's neighbour.

Cooperation arises sometimes because of geographical overlaps. This can occur where several RFBs have been created for a similar area. In most cases, RFBs focus on different species and/or have different mandates or roles (advisory as opposed to regulatory), but it also happens when, formally, RFBs overlap in all these respects. In such cases, cooperation is crucial.

Overlap can also arise when one species-specific RFB (usually tuna, marine mammals or birds) partly or fully overlap with a geographically-specific RFB. Some RFBs have species of common interest, either target species or bycatch species. Moreover, scientific research can be promoted through cooperation.

Collaborative activities among RFBs are both rewarding and beneficial, and sometimes essential to their functioning. Cooperation increases efficiency in terms of improving the knowledge available and the capacity to adopt science-based management measures, providing technical and financial support, as well as transferring knowledge and technology, avoiding duplicate costs, and making all efforts more cost-effective by combining capacities.

Consequently, cooperation is a method to overcome fragmentation and to allow RFBs to join forces with other institutions that have similar goals and mandates. This is an opportunity to address common concerns, create synergies and to mainstream the global objectives of relevant United Nations bodies. Closer collaboration among RFBs and between some RFBs and other organizations is necessary to efficiently use the available human and financial resources for conserving and managing the fisheries resources in a region.

Enhanced cooperation and coordination among RFBs have been on the international fisheries governance agenda for many years through UNGA resolutions on sustainable fisheries. Since 2022, the UNGA has been calling on states to strengthen cooperation, communication and coordination of measures among existing RFBs by holding joint consultations. Further, the UNGA also calls on states to strengthen integration, coordination and cooperation between RFBs and other relevant regional and international organizations (A/RES/77/118, paragraph 177).

In 2021, the 34th Session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) reiterated the key role that RFMOs and RFABs play in combatting IUU fishing, and encouraged RFMOs to increase



cooperation, called upon FAO to further increase its support to marine and inland RFMOs and RFABs, and reiterated its appreciation of the role of the RSN in supporting RFMOs and RFABs, and stressed that regional fishery bodies should cooperate to ensure common approaches on a number of cross-cutting issues.

In response, and supported by regional and Subregional Offices, FAO convened two regional consultations to support and develop a framework for regional coordination and cooperation priorities among regional fishery bodies towards more sustainable fisheries (and aquaculture where appropriate) governance. The consultations were organized in the **Western Indian Ocean** and in the **Central Eastern Atlantic Ocean** regions respectively and RFMOs, RFABs as well as Regional Economic Communities (RECs) were invited.

The meeting agendas were prepared taking into consideration: 1) matters of common concern to organizations sharing species of interest and having overlapping areas of competence; 2) emerging issues concerning species living in areas under the competence of management organizations but for which they do not have a mandate; and 3) an emphasis on the role of advisory bodies and their contribution to fisheries governance in areas where management organizations do not exist.

Regional Consultation on the Development of a Coordination Framework among Regional Fishery Bodies in the Indian Ocean (22–24 June 2022, Maputo, Mozambique). Participating organizations were:

- Bay of Bengal Programme-Intergovernmental Organization (BOBP-IGO),
- Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT),
- Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC),
- International Whaling Commission (IWC),
- Regional Commission for Fisheries (RECOFI),
- Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA),
- Southwest Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission (SWIOFC),
- African Union-Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR),
- Southern African Development Community (SADC).

Regional Consultation on the Development of a Coordination Framework among Regional Fishery Bodies in the Eastern Central Atlantic Ocean (30 November to 2 December 2022, Accra, Ghana). Participating organizations were:

- Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States Bordering the Atlantic Ocean (ATLAFCO),
- Benguela Current Commission (BCC),
- Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic (CECAF),
- Regional Commission of Fisheries of Gulf of Guinea (COREP),
- Fishery Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC),
- General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM),
- International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT),
- International Whaling Commission (IWC),
- Subregional Fisheries Commission (SRFC),
- African Union-Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR),
- Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS),
- Southern African Development Community (SADC).

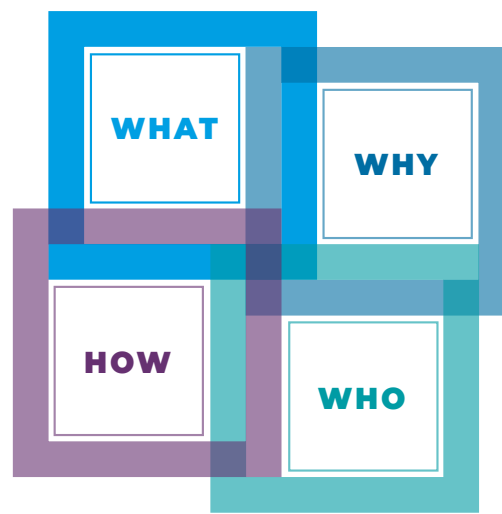


1. Creating a space for collaboration and joint work: the regional consultations approach

Designed to create a space for collaboration among various organizations, the regional consultations focused on geographical connections and overlaps, on species of common interest (both target and bycatch species), on aspects of conservation of biodiversity and on unclear conservation and management measures and advice. A session within the agenda was dedicated to the critical issue of preventing, deterring and eliminating illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, where regional coordination and cooperation is crucial.

FAO presented and suggested the use of a simple matrix **WHAT-WHY-WHO-HOW** to streamline the process and create ownership of actions and common grounds for solving shared problems. The different experiences, knowledge and backgrounds of those around the table when applied to the proposed matrix, revealed focus areas to work on and priority issues to be addressed (what), the reason for pursuing them (why), the relevant regional organizations that should be part of finding solutions, and, as a way forward, using concrete actions to resolve issues (how).

As the key element of the matrix, the “how”, requires political will and action by members of RFBs. The aim of this publication is to promote the merit of this process initiated by FAO, which can be a catalyst for factual cooperation and



coordination among regional players. At the same time, it is addressed to members of RFBs to encourage them to engage in follow-up activities towards developing a regional coordination framework.

Tables identifying areas for cooperation and coordination are in Annex 1 and Annex 2 to this publication.

24 regional organizations invited

51 participants

2 world regions covered

2 summary records produced

4 tables with identified priority issues

1 FAO Regional Office

2 FAO Subregional Offices and FAO Country Representation involved

2. Regional priorities and focus areas for cooperation and coordination

The consultations revealed areas of work and priorities for the two regions, which include bio-ecological/ecosystem, governance and fisheries management aspects. Within the regional contexts, similar challenges (e.g. IUU fishing and climate change) were also highlighted as a threat to creating sustainable fisheries and healthy oceans, and they deserve equal attention as well as a call to action.

The following are examples of priorities and key highlights by region identified by the regional consultations (with references in the tables).

2.1. Highlights by region

Western Indian Ocean

Example 1

Northwestern Indian Ocean (NWIO) species lack a regulatory regime

Despite the number of regional fishery bodies, and in particular RFMOs, in the Indian ocean, the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ)/ High Seas of the Northwest Indian Ocean is not managed by any of the existing RFMOs (i.e. not included in either regulatory area or species).³ Currently, purpleback flying squid

³ The regulatory area of the Regional Commission for Fisheries (RECOFI) includes only the Gulf and the Gulf of Oman.

(*Sthenoteuthis oualaniensis*) are a targeted species in this area and, although the fishing activities are taking place in the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) competence area, the species falls outside the mandate of this organization, which covers tuna and tuna-like species. Similarly, the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA) could manage the species but currently does not, leaving the squid fisheries unregulated. This issue has been reported by civil society (<https://bit.ly/3LeOGOe> and <https://bit.ly/3KZBbku>). In addition, the broader eco-system aspect would need to be considered, since squid is a prey for tuna, whereas tuna constitutes a bycatch of squid jagers.

As a priority issue, to avoid overexploiting squid stocks, this topic deserves the attention of relevant states and stakeholders with the aim of finding a solution and preventing such activities from continuing to occur outside of a regulatory framework.

Example 2

Align regulatory frameworks for priority species of common interest

The narrow barred Spanish mackerel or kingfish (*Scomberomorus commerson*) is a species under the mandate of the IOTC, and it has also been identified as a priority species by the Regional Commission for Fisheries (RECOFI). For conservation purposes, RECOFI members have adopted a binding recommendation to impose



an annual closed season on fishing activities in the RECOFI area of competence. By adopting this binding measure by RECOFI, members can help improve the status of the stocks concerned and pave the way for other conservation and management measures on this species in the area. Cooperation, coordination and exchanging information ensure consistency among (existing and future) measures targeting species of common interest, leading to a more efficient use of resources and avoiding duplicate actions.

Multiple memberships

As per IOTC and RECOFI, there are many cases where coastal states of the region are members of one organization or more. In this context, cooperation and coordination may help to streamline a shared vision and create objectives for adopting and implementing conservation and management measures.

Example 3

Work collaboratively to manage shared stocks and non-highly migratory pelagic species

Species such as the oilfish (*Ruvettus pretiosus*), which is under the mandate of SIOFA and is one of the most exploited fish in the SIOFA area, is being harvested in considerable volumes as bycatch by fisheries managed by the IOTC sharing the same fishing areas. There is some existing collaboration between the two regional fishery bodies (IOTC shares bycatch information gathered with SIOFA through the IOTC Online Data Querying Service), which could be reinforced by establishing a proper common management regime and by reporting mechanisms to minimize the risk

of under-reporting and non-reporting oilfish, and the consequent possible impact on the sustainability of resources.

Central Eastern Atlantic Ocean

Example 1

Strengthening RFABs mandate

Except for the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) for the Atlantic tuna and tuna-like fisheries and the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) in the adjacent Mediterranean Sea, the Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic (CECAF) is the only regional fishery body to carry out periodic assessments of the status of the stocks in the Central Eastern Atlantic Ocean area. As a result of its non-regulatory powers though, the implementation of management advice depends on the willingness and capacity of member countries and their cooperation, so their contribution to actual fisheries management is limited.

There is need for binding conservation and management measures for the effective implementation of international fisheries instruments requirements and standards for coastal states laws and procedures.

Example 2

Realize the full potential of cooperation and coordination between RFBs and RECs

The regional economic communities have an important role in supporting their members to develop and implement regional policies.

They have created, and may continue to create, regional partnerships with regional fishery bodies on specific areas and/or topics. Some examples are: the Southern African Development Community (SADC) supporting the Benguela Current Convention (BCC) on monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) supporting both the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC) and the Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC) with regard to a regional approach to fishery management, and the African Union – Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR) providing support through the Fishgov project on policy framework and reform strategy.

Cooperation in the region between fishery organizations and economic communities exists, but more could be done through funding programmes, in support of the implementation of conservation and management measures of transboundary and shared aquatic resources and ecosystems.

2.2 Common themes across the regions

The regional consultations showed that there are a few similar challenges in the Western Indian Ocean and Central Eastern Atlantic regions, all triggered by loose coordination and cooperation, which have downstream impacts on conserving and managing resources under the mandate of the RFBs.

Example 1

Combatting illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing

IUU fishing is a major concern in both regions and efforts are being made to address this issue, including through cooperation and coordination among RFBs as well as with other regional and international organizations in the two regions concerned. Priority areas for coordination and cooperation that would support countries in fulfilling their international obligations and responsibilities as flag, port, coastal and market states to combat IUU fishing were pre-identified and they are reported in Annex 1 and Annex 2.

Overall, concerted actions need to be taken to: 1) harmonize procedures and standards for port inspections in line with the Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA) requirements; 2) support the development of risk-assessment tools for PSMA implementation; 3) improve and increase the level of information-sharing and interagency cooperation and coordination related to MCS, including through formalized mechanisms; and 4) provide training to strengthen the capacity of inspectors and observers.

Regional information sharing, coordination and cooperation play a crucial role in preventing, deterring and eliminating IUU fishing. This requires access to timely and relevant information on fishing operations and the vessels involved as well as concerted action among national agencies within a state and among states to be able to identify effectively IUU fishing activities, to deploy appropriate means for MCS and, in the case of sufficient proof that a vessel has been engaged in IUU fishing or related activities, to coordinate and generate enforcement actions.



Example 2

Addressing the negative impacts of fishing activities on ecologically-related species and endangered, threatened and protected species/protecting biodiversity

The need to work cooperatively to tackle the unintended negative impacts of fishing activities on endangered, threatened and protected (ETP) species, and on ecologically related species (ERS) (e.g. sharks, cetaceans, sea birds, sea turtles) was another cross-cutting topic of concern in the two regions.

Monitoring the implementation of mitigation measures to reduce by-catch and entanglement of ERS and ETP species in active and passive fishing gear are particularly good examples of the need for coordination and cooperation among RFBs.

Enhanced data collection and reporting is necessary for protecting biodiversity. This could be achieved through sharing knowledge of existing tools and best practices through workshops and e-learning.

Other priority issues

Climate change and the deterioration of environmental conditions present major challenges for fisheries management and are a threat to food security in both regions. Although this topic was not specifically addressed at the meetings, it has been acknowledged and included among the priorities in Annex 2. As such, the mitigation strategy for climate change deserves an ad hoc session focused on providing guidance to regional fisheries bodies on how can they respond to climate-driven risks and uncertainties.

Emerging themes and terms used by RFBs during the two Regional Consultations

Protect biodiversity and reduce bycatch
Areas for improved cooperation and coordination
Close gaps in knowledge and information sharing
Addressing climate change Regional framework **IUU fishing**
Establish common management regime for shared stocks
Enhanced ecosystem approach to fisheries

3. The way forward: towards developing a regional framework for sustainable fisheries governance

Sharing information regarding adopted measures, advice and activities, increases the level of knowledge of matters of common interest and helps to avoid duplicating initiatives and wasting resources, while the tendency to work in silos or with minimum interaction with others may be less effective for implementing measures.

The value of meetings of this kind was made clear by the results achieved. The outputs (see tables in Annex 1 and Annex 2) were the product of collaborative efforts and openness by each organization with the other, which led to identifying common issues and regional concerns.

Building on the positive outcomes of the first two regional consultations, the desired follow up would be a continued collaboration by organizations involved to work towards developing a coordination framework for delivering healthy stocks and securing equitable livelihoods.

To fulfil these objectives, members of RFBs and other regional organizations and communities are encouraged to support cooperative approaches that will identify priority areas for technical cooperation and coordination, and find shared solutions to common issues.

This publication aims to consolidate the results of the first two regional consultations and to look at how to advance through concrete initiatives.

Specifically, this publication aims to:

- 1) promote and support the extension of the RFBs consultation experiences to other world regions;
- 2) support the uptake of the consultations in the Western Indian Ocean and Eastern Central Atlantic Ocean by operationalizing the workplans of RFBs; and
- 3) promote and support regional meetings with ad hoc focus areas.

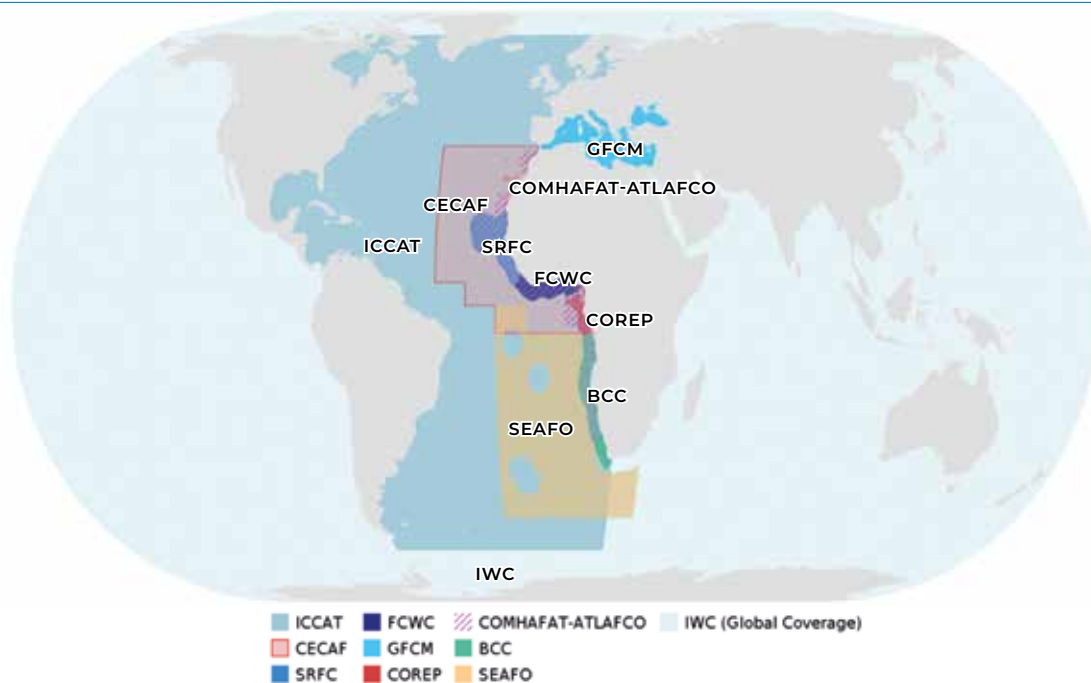
Provided that any future development is subject to the approval and subsequent commitment on selected topics of members of RFBs, there is a clear call for urgent and concrete ways to improve coordination and cooperation that has emerged from these experiences, and it should not be neglected.

The FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture division will continue to play a central role in supporting and assisting the secretariats of RFBs to advance on concrete initiatives of coordination and cooperation. This will be accomplished by involving FAO regional and Subregional Offices and including the work of the RSN, which has proven to be in a unique position to connect regional fishery bodies and other relevant organizations.



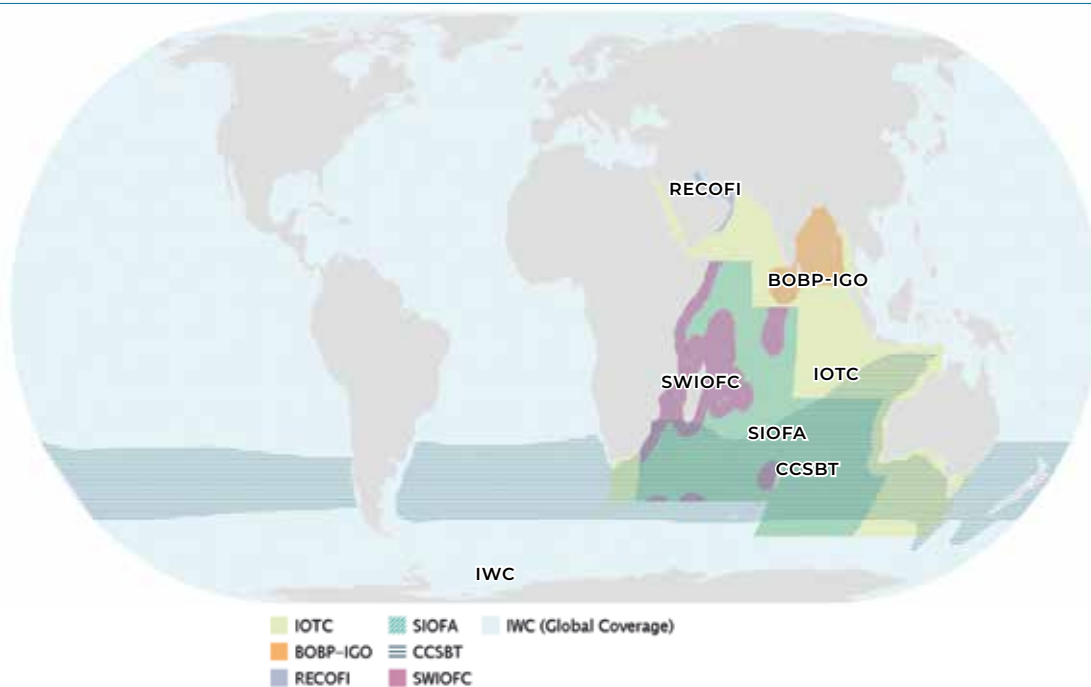


RFBs coverage areas in the Eastern Central Atlantic Ocean



Source: FAO. 2022. RFBs coverage areas in the Eastern Central Atlantic Ocean. Generated from FAO Fisheries GeoNetwork Platform. www.fao.org/fishery/geonetwork/srv/eng/catalog.search?node=srv#/home [Accessed 3 May 2023]

RFBs coverage areas in the Western Indian Ocean



Source: FAO. 2022. RFBs coverage areas in the Western Indian Ocean. Generated from FAO Fisheries GeoNetwork Platform. www.fao.org/fishery/geonetwork/srv/eng/catalog.search?node=srv#/home [Accessed 3 May 2023]



Annex 1

Table 1. Areas identified for improved coordination and cooperation among regional fishery bodies and other regional and international organizations in the Western Indian Ocean region

WHAT	WHY	WHO	HOW	Notes
Agenda item (4.a): Regional fishery bodies (RFBs)* with Convention Areas that geographically overlap or are adjacent				
Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) / area beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ)	Ecological connectivity to minimize the separation of EEZ and high seas marine ecosystem	RFABs and RFMOs	Secretariats permanently invited as observers to RFBs' sessions Ensure that observer status is applied for	<i>Subject to resources</i>
Occurrence of unregulated fisheries in ABNJ, i.e. squid fisheries in Northwestern Indian Ocean (NWIO)	Indian Ocean region/s not included in the regulatory areas of any generic RFMO Squid and tuna fishery are connected (squid is prey for tuna, tuna may be illegally caught in the squid fishery)	States, stakeholders involved in the fishery, Indian Ocean RFBs members	Coastal states and international community awareness Collect and share information on unregulated fisheries, as available (e.g. the EAF Nansen Programme)	<i>Towards finding a solution to regulate the fisheries</i>
Interactions of small-scale and large scale/industrial fisheries	Transboundary resources Species lifecycle Conflicts between small-scale and large scale/industrial fisheries Socio-/economic relevance for coastal fishing communities Fishing gear and devices that may have negative impact on the small-scale fisheries (SSF)	RFABs, RFMOs, Regional Economic Communities (RECs)	Dedicated RFABs/RFMOs cooperation	

➤ Follows in the next page

* Fishery Management Organizations (RFMOs) and Regional Fishery Advisory Bodies (RFABs) are collectively referred to as Regional Fishery Bodies (RFBs).

WHAT	WHY	WHO	HOW	Notes
Other non-highly migratory pelagic species, e.g. oilfish	Shared stock/s Direct relation with tuna stocks Large amounts caught and transhipped in tuna fisheries	RFMOs, RFABs, stakeholders	Knowledge and information exchange	<i>Species managed by South Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA); caught in fisheries managed by SIOFA and Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC)</i>
Demersal species/ fisheries	Very important fisheries for some RFABs, e.g. Southwest Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission (SWIOFC) Transboundary nature of the fisheries resources, and environmental aspects/interactions of these fisheries Some potential overlap between small-scale and industrial fisheries in the high seas Transboundary nature of the fisheries resources, common and transboundary nature of the environmental issues (ecosystem approach), some overlap between SSF and high seas	RFABs, RFMOs	Common focused plan of work/ activities Increase information sharing	
Agenda item (4.b): Species of common interest, either target or bycatch species				
Gaps in knowledge Mapping of shared stocks occurrence	Limited scientific research/survey Lack of comprehensive overview of geographical occurrence of recognized shared stocks	RFMOs, RFABs, relevant research organizations and programmes	Joint research programmes, regular sharing of technical/ scientific information	

➤ Follows in the next page



WHAT	WHY	WHO	HOW	Notes
Knowledge of RFBs' priority species	Lack of information	RFABs, RFMOs	Update and share information on species regarded as priority in the work plan of RFABs and RFMOs.	
Pelagic sharks	Lack of information	RFMOs, RFABs	Research and information exchange	<i>IOTC focus on surface longline caught species</i>
Deep water sharks	Potentially sensitive species to fishing mortality Overlap of area competences between RFMOs	RFMOs, RFABs, relevant research organizations and programmes	Increase knowledge on fisheries and species to support management	<i>There is some risk assessment and relevant conservation and management measures (CMMs) in place in SIOFA for demersal sharks</i>
Coastal sharks	Sensitive species to fishing mortality, ecologically important and subject to IUU fishing and trade	RFMOs, RFABs, relevant research organizations and programmes	Increase knowledge on fisheries and species to support management	
Fishery interactions with protected species	Impacts on stocks of protected species Loss or damage to fishing gear, and lost time Lack of data	RFMOs/RFABs, global and regional protected species organisations, and stakeholders	Information sharing Collaborate on design, testing and implementation of monitoring and mitigating measures.	<i>Towards finding practical solutions to minimize fishery impacts on protected species Cetaceans, Sea birds, Sea turtles, Other Chondrichthyes, Some species of sharks, whale shark</i>
Agenda item (4.c): Conservation of biodiversity including bycatch				
Ecosystem/habitat approach	Promote Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF), holistic approach	RFABs, RFMOs, Regional Sea Organizations/ Conventions (Jeddah Convention, Kuwait Convention, and Nairobi Convention)	Establishment of Joint EAF Working Group	
Participation of relevant regional scientific institutions	Need for increased synergy between scientific, advisory, and management bodies.	RFABs, RFMOs	Participation of and coordination with relevant scientific institutions, as appropriate	

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WHAT	WHY	WHO	HOW	Notes
Agenda item (4.d): Coherency regarding conservation and management measures and advice/recommendations				
Awareness of CMMs including RFABs' technical/management advice	Support consistency of CMMs also including advice formulated by RFABs	RFABs, RFMOs	Established system of information sharing on CMMs and technical/management advice	
Information exchange/sharing on fishery and fishery-related data	Management of fisheries resources in a shared region	RFABs, RFMOs	Creation of information sharing framework Capacity building in data collection, analysis, and management Data sharing frameworks Sharing of aggregated data and/or indicators	<i>Consider confidentiality issues and sensitivities, as well as transparency requirements</i>
Confidentiality rules	Need to follow existing rules/confidentiality rules in place	RFMOs, RFABs	Establish the bounds within which specific rules are to be applied in specific cases for information/data sharing	<i>Consider transparency requirements</i>
Collaboration with RECs	Support member states in adopting and implementing relevant international instruments, as well as, in developing and implementing fisheries conservation and management measures and cooperate on shared stock management	RFABs, RFMOs, RECs	Coordination and collaboration between RFMOs and RFABs Technical advice, scientific information RECs developing and informing policy and integrative actions at regional level Capacity development initiatives at national and regional level	
RFBs to consult and align their calendar, as appropriate	Optimization of regional calendars to facilitate participation/timely information flow	RFABs, RFMOs	Regular consultations	

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Table 2. Areas identified for improved coordination and cooperation among RFBs and other regional and international organizations in the region to address illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing

WHAT	WHY	WHO	HOW	Notes
Harmonizing/ Updating illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU fishing) vessel listings, cross-listing	Outdated information, different times of listings	RFMOs that keep an IUU vessel list	Coordination, more regular updates, information sharing	<i>It should be considered that each RFMO has its own varied meeting times and procedures which must be agreed by its own members.</i>
IUU fishing in artisanal /SSF, including through creating awareness among the SSF on the importance of co-management and supportive systems for sustainable fisheries and on the impact of IUU fishing on the overall fishery	Ecosystem considerations, socio-economic relevance, community-based approach / co-management process to combat IUU fishing. SSF, though not significantly contributing to IUU fishing, bear its consequences.	RFABs, RFMOs, Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and members	Capacity development, sharing best practices, partnerships, sensitization/ education, possibly learning from RFMOs	<i>SWIOFC-Nairobi Convention Partnership Project supporting co-mgt at local sites in Madagascar, Mozambique and Tanzania in collaboration with FAO SSF umbrella programme. Assessment of SSF IUU fishing is also raised within Nairobi Convention linked to environmental impacts.</i>
Aligning and harmonizing measures to national context	Improving flag state performance	RFABs, RFMOs	Capacity building, sharing best practices.	
Information-sharing/ reporting on transgressions into EEZs	Improve transparency, improve risk assessment, awareness creation across the region	RFMOs, RFABs members	Database development and strengthened information sharing	
Supporting effective implementation of the FAO Agreement on Port State Measures, including through harmonized standards and procedures	Addressing implementation challenges in port states to effectively combat IUU fishing	RFBs, RECs	Capacity building, e.g., on document verification, development of harmonized inspection procedures	

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WHAT	WHY	WHO	HOW	Notes
Harmonizing of compliance observer standards and procedures*	Ensuring compliance of authorized vessels with CMMs	RFMOs, RFABs, members	Developing harmonized compliance observer standards	<i>Observer programmes already exist in the Indian Ocean region, many of which, however, are for scientific purposes: The Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) has harmonized observer standards; IOTC observer programme is strictly limited to transshipments and is shared with Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT) for transshipments involving southern bluefin tuna; SIOFA is in the process of establishing an observer framework mostly geared towards scientific observation.</i>
Sharing of licensed vessel lists among coastal states	Improve transparency, improve risk assessment, ensuring compliance	RECs with RFBs	Harmonized coordination, information sharing	<i>Sharing of license vessel lists has already been initiated in the Indian Ocean region: Southern African Development Community (SADC) Regional Fisheries Monitoring Control and Surveillance Coordination Centre (MCSCC) integrating FISH-i Africa license vessel lists</i>
Strengthening the implementation of the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement (UNFSA)	Strengthening at-sea inspections	RFMOs	Harmonized at-sea boarding and inspection procedures	

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* Please note that this recommendation on harmonization of observer standards is for the purpose of monitoring compliance with CMMs (not for scientific purposes) as is the case in transshipment observer programme.



WHAT	WHY	WHO	HOW	Notes
<p>Shared repository of information of actions taken against vessel operators / owners engaged in IUU fishing and related activities in the Indian Ocean (sanctions), divided into activities in the waters of the flag state and in areas beyond national jurisdiction of the flag state</p>	<p>Improve transparency, improve risk assessment, ensuring compliance</p>	<p>RFMOs, RFABs and their members</p>	<p>Harmonized coordination and information sharing</p>	

Annex 2

Table 1. Areas identified for improved coordination and cooperation among regional fishery bodies and other regional and international organizations in the Eastern Central Atlantic region

WHAT	WHY	WHO	HOW	Notes
4.a Regional fishery bodies (RFBs)* with Convention Areas that geographically overlap or are adjacent				
Sustainable use of fisheries resources in the area beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ), including the future marine biodiversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ) of an international legally binding instrument (ILBI)	Continuity/ecological connectivity to avoid separation between exclusive economic zones (EEZs) and ABNJ marine ecosystems	Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR), International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic (CECAF), ATLAFCO, and all RFMOs, RFABs and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) dealing with fisheries	<p>Coordinate and consult with RFMOs and RFABs</p> <p>Get to know each other better through meeting and participation</p> <p>Whenever possible, exchange views in fora to ensure that conservation and management of fisheries are not undermined</p> <p>Harmonize different positions into one voice in the international fora (AU-IBAR and ATLAFCO)</p> <p>Ensure relevant measures are supported and implemented by relevant bodies at each relevant level</p>	
Addressing climate change impacts on the fishery sector	Integrate adaptation and mitigation in fisheries management and development across scales (regional, sub-regional, national, local)	All RFMOs and RFABs of the region	Multi-disciplinary working group(s) sharing relevant information and providing guidance on building climate resilience across scales	<i>Need to develop collaboration with the climate fund mobilization mechanism</i>

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* Regional Fishery Management Organizations (RFMOs) and Regional Fishery Advisory Bodies (RFABs) are collectively referred to as Regional Fishery Bodies (RFBs).



WHAT	WHY	WHO	HOW	Notes
Structured coordination between CECAF, Sub-regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC) West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC), Commission of Fisheries of Gulf of Guinea (COREP), Benguela Current Convention (BCC) and ATLAFCO	Maximize synergies and cooperation. Pooling of resources	RFABs of the region	Establish a coordination framework Invite relevant overlapping bodies	<i>Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC) Memorandum of Understanding for Interim Coordination of Sustainable Fisheries</i>
Make use of the regional network of research institutes	Improve dissemination and sharing and use of results from research programmes and initiatives	SRFC, FCWC, COREP, BCC and ATLAFCO	Coordinate and consult on different research programmes on transboundary issues in the Eastern Central Atlantic Ocean	<i>Use some existing project and programmes (Ecosystem approach to fisheries [EAF]-Nansen Programme Agreement, the Canary Current Large Marine Ecosystem CCLME, etc.)</i>
Coordination of the interventions/actions of RFMOs and RFABs	Improve collaboration on implementation of respective programmes of work at sub-regional and national level	All RFMOs RFABs, RECs and AU-IBAR	Share information on planned and ongoing action for involvement of all relevant stakeholders	
Coordination/ optimization of meetings calendar	Better coordination and exchange of information	All RFMOs and RFABs of the region, RECs and AU-IBAR	ATLAFCO to establish, and keep up to date, a shared calendar to ensure attendance at relevant meetings	
4.b Species/stocks of common interest, either target or bycatch species				
Improving the stock assessment coverage and methodologies	Knowledge sharing, capacity building programme	BCC, CECAF, ICCAT, International Whaling Commission (IWC), ATLAFCO and AU-IBAR	Create ad hoc technical workshops Share reports, attend relevant meetings Build capacity for protected species abundance estimation, including surveys and other data collection	<i>Support stock assessment working group in the region</i>

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WHAT	WHY	WHO	HOW	Notes
Maximize the use of available data on stocks and their fisheries	Inadequate/fragmented knowledge base	CECAF, Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC), FCWC, ICCAT and ATLAFCO	Create/maintain regional information repository Support the collection of relevant data	
Ecosystem approach to fisheries	Enhance inclusiveness (e.g. social and economic dimension) and relevance of fisheries management, including the use of multi-disciplinary knowledge of fishery systems	All RFMOs and RFABs of the region	Include implementation of EAF in RFB workplans	<i>EAF-Nansen Programme and CCLME Programme</i>
Capacity for species identification	Improve data collection quality to enhance resource knowledge base	All RFMOs and RFABs	Use available capacity development programme and tools (e.g. ICCAT, General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean [GFCM], IWC, CECAF and AU-IBAR) FAO Guidelines on sea bird, sea turtles, marine mammal bycatch	
Regional coordination on small pelagic fisheries management	Inadequate and weak/insufficient coordinated management practices for shared stock	All RFBs, RECs and AU-IBAR	Establish working group for regional coordination Invite overlapping bodies to the workshops	
Monitoring, Control and Surveillance of fisheries	Deterring, preventing and eliminating illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing is still a challenge for the sustainable use of fisheries resources	All RFBs, RECs and AU-IBAR	Build capacity to implement the Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA) Inter-agency collaboration at national level and regional observers programme Equip with operational assets and coordination of efforts	

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WHAT	WHY	WHO	HOW	Notes
4.c Conservation of biodiversity including bycatch				
Protect biodiversity and reduce bycatch of protected species in active and passive fishing gear	Protected species are components of marine biodiversity Interactions can lead to loss or damage of fishing gear Market access Eco-tourism	RFABs, RFMOs and scientific institutions addressing bycatch	Participation and coordination with relevant scientific institutions Work collaboratively across organizations (including those with a mandate for sea birds, turtles and cetaceans) and with fishery operators to design, develop, test and implement possible measures	<i>EAF-Nansen Programme and CCLME Programme IWC, ACAP and Sea Turtle Agreements</i>
Share knowledge of available information and tools	Benefit from all the information and knowledge available in the region	FAO, IWC, Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) and sea turtle organizations, and RFMO and RFABs	Organize workshops and online/e-learning to share knowledge of existing tools and best practices Facilitate/ensure the availability of public information	<i>GFCM "Good practice guides on reducing the incidental catch of vulnerable species" FAO Guidelines for seabirds, sea turtles and cetacean bycatch and identification guides prepared by FAO and others RFMOs relevant measures</i>
Data collection and reporting	Necessary to better assess the impact of the bycatch, inform the stock assessments and improve decision making	RFMOs, RFABs and RECs	Develop capacity for identifying species and reporting Enhance monitoring and data collection through capacity building for observers and other monitoring systems	
4.c Conservation of biodiversity including bycatch				
Support to fisheries management advice through cooperation of RFBs	Optimize complementarity of RFBs work particularly in cases of multiple membership	SRFC, FCWC, BCC, CECAF, ATLAFCO	Secretariats to liaise with members and inform them about adopted RFMO conservation and management measures (CMMs) and RFAB management advice	

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WHAT	WHY	WHO	HOW	Notes
Uncoordinated fishery management measurers	Collateral effect of fisheries management measures, i.e. re-allocation of fishing effort in areas not affected by specific management measures	RFABs, RECs and AU-IBAR	Work collaboratively with RECs and AU-IBAR	
Cooperation and coordination to facilitate RFB Contracting Parties and members to implement CMMs and fisheries management advice	Strengthened support at country level to comply with and implement fisheries management measures	All RFMOs and RFABs of the region, RECs and AU-IBAR	Develop communication/ information strategy in cooperation with RECs to effectively inform about newly adopted measures	
Performance reviews as tool to improve services delivered to members	Support enhanced RFB performance	All RFMOs and RFABs of the region	Carry out performance review of RFBs in the region and share information at relevant levels	
Strengthen cooperation and coordination between RFABs with RECs to discharge management/ regulatory functions	Support the effectiveness of RFABs function and role	RFABs, RECs and AU-IBAR	RFBs and RECs develop a funding programme to support implementation of CMMs of fisheries in the region	
Widen the scope of consultation	Involve key stakeholders in various fisheries processes to improve the implementation of measures	RFMOs, RFBs RECs and AU-IBAR	Better identify relevant stakeholders at appropriate levels	<i>Depends on available funds</i>



Table 2. Areas identified for improved coordination and cooperation among RFBs and other regional and international organizations in the region to address illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing

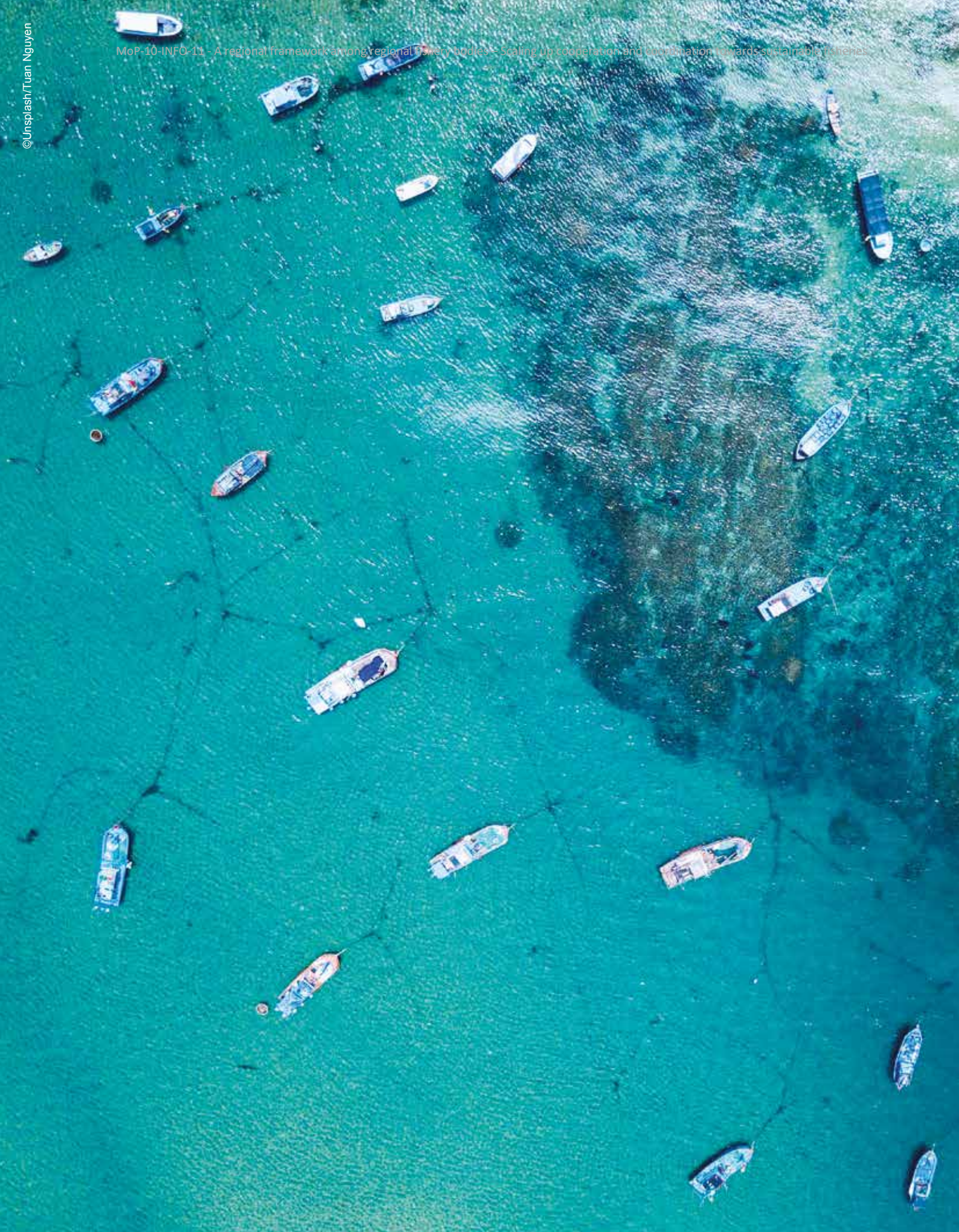
WHAT	WHY	WHO	HOW	Notes
Conduct risk assessment for the effective implementation of the PSMA	Target vessels with high risk of being engaged in IUU fishing activities to prepare informed decisions about entry into port, use of port, inspections and port state actions	Regional monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) centres and all RFBs supporting their members in MCS	Learn through cases in the region, share information on high-risk vessels and characteristics, support development of risk assessment tools (advance request for port entry (AREP), prioritization for inspection), develop communication platforms, support use of global information exchange tools (FAO Global Record, Global Information Exchange System (GIES))	
Interagency cooperation to implement MCS	MCS is not a fisheries issue alone and requires effective information-sharing and cooperation of authorities with clear roles and responsibilities	All RFBs and regional MCS centres	Support the establishment of interagency mechanisms at national levels in RFBs members	
Harmonized port inspections in the region in line with the minimum standards of the PSMA	Provide equally strict port state measures across the region to close all ports to vessels engaged in IUU fishing and related activities	All RFBs	Support members in the effective implementation of PSMA with minimum standards, strengthen capacities on legal, institutional and operational levels, in case of non-Parties, encourage ratification of the PSMA	

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WHAT	WHY	WHO	HOW	Notes
Build and maintain a database and share available information on vessels operating in the region	Increase transparency of vessel identities and histories	RFBs and regional MCS centres	Share information about vessel records (flag state) regionally, share lists of licensed vessels (coastal state), support use of global information exchange tools (Global Record)	
Implementation of FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Transshipment	Support the effective monitoring, control and regulation of transshipment in the region to reduce the risk of IUU fishing entering the supply chain	RFMOs and RFABs	Support measures in line with the Voluntary Guidelines for Transshipment and support MCS operations	
Regional observer programme	Taking a regional approach to increase observer capacity in the region and address the fact that fishing vessel operate across EEZs	ATLAFCO, SRFC, FCWC, COREP	Harmonize existing national observer programmes Establish a regional observer programme and improve coordination among RFBs	
Capacity development with a focus on inspectors and observers	Strengthen capacity to identify and take action to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing activities, following procedures, and to verify information	All RFBs	Provide training for inspectors and observers, including through building on resources developed by ICCAT and by pooling training resources	







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