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Joint UNEP-FAO- Norway meeting
“Securing the Foundations for Fish
Food Security in a Changing Ocean
in West, Central and Southern Africa”
in Nairobi, Kenya, 4 – 6 November 2014

Concept Note

Project Title

Securing the foundations for fish food security in a changing ocean

[the first phase is a region within Africa, but later could be any region]

Expected Outcome

Integrated management is underway in selected regions that addresses the multiple threats to the sustainability of fisheries and ensures their ecological foundations to enhance the contribution of fish to food security and poverty alleviation. This project is to be implemented as a collaborative effort between FAO's Regional Fisheries Bodies (RFBs) and UNEP's Regional Seas Programme. The approach will be piloted in East Africa and after analyzing lessons learned, the project will be up-scaled and replicated in other selected marine areas.

Background and rationale

In addition to their importance to the economies of many countries in terms of income and creation of employment, fishery resources make a major, irreplaceable contribution to nutrition and food security, particularly in developing countries. In a large number of African countries fish is the only affordable source of several essential nutrients and therefore of overwhelming importance for food and nutrition security.

However, the capacity of the marine environment to produce the food on which many human communities depend is currently being threatened, fishing and other human activities and/or by human induced activities such as climate change. Irresponsible and illegal conduct, including IUU fishing and toxic dumping, are having major impacts on fish stocks and marine biodiversity. Habitat loss, particularly in nursery grounds can impede recruitment of larvae and juveniles as well as spawning of adults. Similarly, pollution can affect fish during their life cycle and result in the presence of chemical contaminants, making affected fish unsuitable for human consumption. Other human impacts from shipping and unsustainable aquaculture can introduce diseases and modify habitats, which undermine ecosystem health and adversely impact fish and associated food security. Studies of the impacts of climate change on marine and coastal habitats and fisheries also suggest that detrimental change is occurring in some areas.

There is broad agreement that such pressures on marine resources, biodiversity and ecosystems are increasing and it is expected that they will continue to do so, particularly with a growing human population. The impacts are often locally compounded, poorly documented and very seldom managed, particularly in developing countries. On the other hand there is usually very limited coordination and collaboration across agencies and sectors to ensure the necessary

harmonization of policies, goals and management frameworks. This project supports an integrated approach.

Integrated and ecosystem-based ocean management is today seen as a prerequisite for maintaining the health of the oceans so that they can deliver the full potential for food (fish) production. This will in turn result in an increased ability of the oceans to contribute to food security and reduction of poverty.

Experience exists in some regions of the world at maintaining or recovering the sustainability of the oceans through an integrated ocean management approach and through arrangements for cooperation between the Fisheries and Environmental agencies, both supported by a common or coordinated advisory science framework that underpins regulation and policy. This connection does not exist or is still very poorly developed in many developing regions.

This first proposal intends to develop an integrated approach to facilitate implementation of Ecosystem-based management in East Africa through a collaborative effort between RFBs and RS, which together form the major institutions with a legal basis for a holistic EA at the regional level. If successful, the concept developed and tested through this proposal will be further developed and extended to other regions.

The Proposal

Phase 1: Planning Phase (October 2013-June 2014)

Outputs: a) Report on lessons learnt; b) Full Project Proposal

Activities:

- Preparing background material, including a thorough analysis of the modalities as well the causes for successes and failures in the cooperation between existing Regional Fisheries Bodies and environmental conventions;
- Consultation meeting with relevant stakeholders – member states, relevant regional institutions;
- Writing workshop;
- Writing of the full proposal including targets and indicators (consultant);
- Launch of the Project (possibly at COFI, June 2014 and at UNEP's second full UNEA scheduled for May/June).

Budget: 5 mill NOK

Phase 2: Development of the cooperation framework (April 2014 to December 2014)

Outputs: 1) A revision of the main marine environmental and food security issues in the East African region related to fish as food and a basis for livelihoods; 2) a concept paper on a framework for collaboration between Regional Fisheries Bodies and Environmental Conventions for the management and resilience of marine ecosystems to support ocean-based food production systems

Activities:

- Review and analysis of the key marine environmental and food security issues in East Africa related to fish as food and source of livelihoods and gaps in addressing these issues including the science-policy gap
- Sharing of experiences and exploration of possible modalities of cooperation between RFBs and RSs [and other relevant regional organizations – e.g. regional economic bodies, or LME] in Africa and overseas (facilitated regional workshops)
- Developing the concept and framework for cooperation between RFBs and RSs in East Africa on integrated (ecosystem-based) ocean management for climate-change resilient ocean-based food security and poverty reduction with technical and programmatic support from OSPAR and NEAFC
- Establishment of the necessary agreements between the relevant RFBs and RSs in East Africa
- Establish baseline for targets and indicators as agreed by stakeholders, and set up monitoring and reporting system.

Budget: 8 mill NOK

Phase 3: Pilot Testing/Proof of Concept (January 2015 to December 2016)

Output: joint EA program between RFBs and RS executed, with national implementation in selected pilot areas (within the East Africa region).

Activities:

- Stakeholder workshops at regional level (to validate concept and select pilots)
- Stakeholder workshops at national level in selected pilots
- Development of integrated management plans and joint Programme of Work [RFBs/RS] in selected pilots
- Implementation of Joint RFBs /RS PoW in selected pilots

Budget 28 mill NOK

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