



Draft Charter of the Network on Fishery Policies in West Africa

REPAO



**Network on Fishery Policies in West Africa
- REPAO -**

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Content:

The charter contains the vision, mission and principles. It is validated by the Strategic Advisory Committee and inevitably signed by the members who commit themselves in this way to respect it.

REPAO has the ambition of building a large network of fishery stakeholders in West Africa who sign up and share a common vision and accept to conciliate research and competitiveness on the international market, the satisfaction of national people's needs in food and the sustainable preservation of halieutical resources.

Vision:

“Sustainable fisheries managed in a participatory way, taking into account the aspirations and rights of fisher communities, contributing significantly to national economies, sustained by a strong commitment of States as part of a sub-regional cooperation with an eye to ensuring food security, to reducing poverty through a good practice of trade and restoring fisheries.”

Missions:

- Turning fishery into one of the levers in fighting poverty and of sustainable wealth creation for grassroots' communities
- Encouraging the enactment of consulted fishery policies in the halieutical sectors
- Ensuring consistency between markets, production systems and the preservation of halieutical resources at local, national, regional and international levels.

Intervention lines:

- Carrying out communication/awareness-raising, advocacy and lobbying in order to promote political dialogue and urge to greater coherence between fishery, trade and environmental policies.
- Promoting consultation frameworks as regulatory spaces between different categories of stakeholders in order to encourage consulted public policies in the West African halieutical sectors
- Reinforcing the professional and organizational capacities of traditional small-scale fishery players, facilitating their control of political, social, economic and environmental issues relating to fishery.

- Encouraging governance and co-management along the fishery sector and at all levels: local, national, sub-regional and international.
- Producing and arousing prospects for research on themes that can lead to greater coherence of policies, making strategic information available to fishery stakeholders
- Promoting the value increase of halieutical resources in general and of small-scale fishery in particular.

Operation principles

REPAO operates as a network with various levels: local, national, sub-regional and international. This type of operation is based on strong principles such as:

✚ Convergence and synergy

Every member remains autonomous and independent, but commits themselves to endeavor to respect the vision of the network. It is therefore necessary to be in convergence with other members in order to reach coherence in our actions.

For REPAO, convergence is the expression of the necessity for the activities of members to be carried out as part of a common project, allowing for:

- Getting the most profit of the wealth and diversity generated by members in geographical and sociological terms, as well as areas of action, etc.
- Avoiding situations of competition, tension, clashes, etc.

The synergy of stakeholders goes through their decompartmentalization. This does not only relate to fisheries, but also to trade, environment, tourism, etc.

✚ Sharing

Sharing is one of the decisive principles for the success of the network. Actually, it is the basis of the concept of networking. This begins of course with the sharing of common values and vision as illustrated in the current charter.

It is important as well to facilitate the sharing of the practices of members internally at the level of the network, which allows for cross-fertilization and strengthening of our capacities. This adds to information sharing, which is another important aspect, considering that the possession of information represents a source of power for its holder.

✚ Participative democracy

REPAO considers participation as the gist of its mission. Participation applies to all the levels of the network: within its various organs, between members, in projects, etc.

In the running of the network, the following rules are promoted:

- The strategic lines are established in a democratic way, within the Strategic Advisory Committee (SAC).
- Members who do not approve of a decision can, under certain conditions, request consultation on the issue.

Commitment

The commitment of all the members is also one of the fundamentals for the success of our network. This goes of course through our desire to devote necessary time, tangible and intangible resources to the extent of our own possibilities. But a clear example is the participation of every one in the annual forum in order to facilitate communication, sharing, trust (by getting to know each other), etc.

Of course, the coordination and monitoring office of the network is expected to facilitate the running of the network and its mission is to ensure the monitoring of the network. But, in order to properly carry out its tasks, the coordination office will have to lean on the commitment of every one, as expressed for example by the participation in the various meetings, network activities, etc.

The commitment of everyone will be considered as one of REPAO rules, so that it could be manifested through actions, but not only words. We shall avoid passivity and wait-and-see policy of certain members.

Accountability

The various network members can share together the resources, knowledge, know-how and strategies. As decisions are made in a consulted manner, the notion of co-responsibility expresses the necessity to collectively be accountable for actions and their consequences.

The implementation of these principles, for the network, implies the necessity to be equipped by steering, monitoring and capitalization instruments in order to be able to account for and realize progresses, failures and impacts.

Fairness and transparency

REPAO values the promotion of transparency and fairness in its actions and in its operation.

In line with the principle of transparency, REPAO provides the possibility to each empowered member, based on their status, to access relevant and necessary information.

The network intends to work for the well-being of the different categories: professional fishery organizations, administrations and States, intergovernmental and international organizations, Research institutes and offices, development partners, development NGOs and Associations, or any other stakeholder in the mission of the network.

All the members agree to provide each other with the information necessary for a common understanding of what they are doing within the network and why they are doing so.

The efforts to respect the principle of transparency serves at the same time to better build fairness within the network.

Respect and increase in Value

Along its action and operation, REPAO gives priority to the full development of members, while respecting their diversities and richness.

The network must also contribute to the value increase members' actions and the latter in turn must promote the network externally. Therefore, the organizational scheme proposed by the network at a sub-regional scale should be duplicated at the national and local scales. It is only in this way that changes can be shared by all and therefore become attainable.

Subsidiarity

According to that principle, apart from everything that relates to its rights and liabilities, no authority can make a decision or carry out an activity, except when this cannot be done by at a lower level. The various bodies (SAC, monitoring and coordination office, country focal points, etc.) must enforce the principle of subsidiarity, meaning that the decisions must always be made at relevant levels, based efficiency that does not sacrifice democratic principles.

The terms and places of subsidiarity are commonly specified in the implementation of the principle of participative democracy (particularly consultation over strategic elements).

Solidarity

Insofar as members are sharing the same vision, contributing to the same mission and jointly building a common project, solidarity between them is a prime policy. It must be enforced within ourselves and prevail in the types of relationships that we are promoting within our society.

Efficiency¹ and effectiveness²

Given the context of precariousness in which they intervene, members must be concerned about efficiency and effectiveness in their actions and operation.

The relevance regarding its mission requires the network to see to a distribution of resources that takes into account the strategic challenges, diversity in rooting, the necessity of acting at various scales.

Innovation

In front of permanent social changes, REPAO must adapt by being equipped with technical, scientific, organizational and political means and policies to influence changes, while avoiding inhibiting the very capacities of communities. Creativity and innovation³ are essential conditions for the achievement of the network's mission.

All the members must be concerned about arousing and promoting innovation. Their innovation capacity involves building hypotheses for changes relating to the observation of the intervention context and checking their relevance through action.

In the implementation framework of this principle, the coordination and monitoring office would have the task of facilitating the creation and monitoring of prospective and innovation promotion spaces.

Capitalization

The capitalization of our networking process, as well as the increase in value of the concept, the capitalization of our actions, and good practices remains the major challenge that we shall overcome so that the process can be duplicated within other circles.

¹ Seen as the optimization of outcomes in line with given contexts and resources

² Capacity to achieving the maximum of results with a minimum of effort, or expenditures

³ Hence, the capacity to propose other ways, other strategies to fight poverties.

 **Respecting the rules**

All the members are required to abide by the principles and rules above stated. Otherwise they may be subject to the removal of the network's support for them. There is a document in appendix about the principles, operation rules and bodies of the network.

Joining the network:

Affiliation to the network goes through sharing its vision, values, missions and objectives, as well as the appropriation of the charter. This therefore means signing the charter in order to become a member of the network, while respecting the principles stated in that charter.

A breach of the principles or the network operation rules can entail the exclusion of the member. At any time, it is also possible for every member to withdraw from the network by notifying their decision to REPAO's coordination office.

Based on the above, the two parties commit themselves to contribute to the success of the clear collaboration.

Made in:

Date:

REPAO member

REPAO delegate