



Mbour World Fisheries Day Declaration
21 November 2011, David Boilat Training Centre, Mbour, Senegal.

The African Workshop on Securing Sustainable Small Scale Fisheries hosted and organized by the African Confederation of Professional Artisanal Fisheries Organizations (CAOPA) in collaboration with the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF), the Mbour Association for the Promotion of Responsible Fisheries (APRAPAM), and the Coalition of Economic Groupings from the Mbour Fish Landing Centre (CPPAM).

We, 120 participants representing artisanal fishworkers, civil society organizations and the journalists' network REJOPRAO from 16 countries in Africa and from 4 countries in the European Union met in Mbour, Senegal to celebrate World Fisheries Day and to share our commitment towards securing sustainable small scale fisheries.

Congratulate and applaud:

- The pupils of the primary school of the David Boila training centre who have excelled in their brilliant awareness raising campaign on fishery resource conservation.

Express thanks to:

- The Prefect of the department of Mbour and his adjutant who agreed to preside over the official opening ceremony.
- The Director of the David Boila Training Centre whose guidance enabled the pupils to make their remarkable contribution.

Our discussions focussed on artisanal fisheries in the African context and the development of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small Scale Fisheries (VG SSF), on which we exchanged perspectives and experiences to make recommendations to the FAO on the content of these Guidelines.

The main issues we discussed were:

- the technical, social, economic, cultural and political aspects that characterize artisanal and small scale fisheries in African countries;
- those aspects that make artisanal fisheries the preferred model for the EEZ – focusing on its good practices, community based activities and co-management ; and
- the most serious problems facing artisanal and small scale fisheries in the African context.

We celebrated the diversity and heterogeneity of artisanal, small-scale, and traditional fisheries on the African continent, a diversity which makes any single definition inadequate and inappropriate. We recognized that fishing is a key part of an integrated fishery production system that is dependent on a chain of mutually dependent pre- and post-harvest activities that require adequate infrastructure, and where women and men play equally important and complementary roles . We highlighted the important role of small-scale fishworkers in sustaining food and livelihood security and in preserving the marine environment according to centuries-old traditions.

We characterised artisanal fisheries as being small in scale, low in environmental impact, diverse and versatile, producing fresh fish for direct human consumption, for both export and local markets. The lack of cold chain and storage facilities, and the dependence on traditional handling and processing techniques often lead to losses of product and income.

Our fishing communities are vulnerable and exposed to risks, lack access to training and education, and have high levels of illiteracy.

Our recommendations for the VG SSF are as follows:

With reference to the particular characteristics of small scale fisheries, the VG SSF should:

- Recognize that the artisanal fishing sector is a dynamic and social sector that contributes to feeding the world. The integration of the sector into local, regional, and international markets should also be taken account of in the VG SSF, whilst ensuring that supplying international markets and meeting global demands for fisheries products is not at the expense of local food security and domestic consumption.
- Recognize the solidarity and community spirit of artisanal fisheries whilst promoting the organization and strengthening the capacity of the men and women actors to engage in co-management.

- Recognize the over exploited state of resources, encourage the bottom-up development of management plans, and include measures that discourage illegal fishing;

As regards good practices, the VG SSF should consider:

- Strengthening the capacity of men and women actors, especially as regards functional literacy;
- Improving the support function of technicians and others who intervene in the fisheries sector;
- Creating awareness and building capacity in community based institutions through “bottom up” approaches for adopting such measures as fishery management plans, exclusive artisanal fishing zones and Territorial User Rights (TURFs);
- Recommending that small scale fishworkers should form an integral part of the management and decision-making structures for marine protected areas;
- Include fishing communities in the design and implementation of fishery development projects;
- Promote the integration of human rights’ commitments into national legislation;
- Enable civil society to participate fully in fishery decision taking processes and establish protocols within the FAO Committee on Fisheries that enable civil society organizations to participate fully with representatives of Member States, as is the case in the Committee on Food Security;
- Encourage Member States to incorporate artisanal, small-scale and traditional fishery representatives on their delegations to the technical consultations that develop the VG SSF Guidelines.
- Promoting responsible fishing, notably through:
 - Establishing fishery closures (biological rest periods for reproduction etc.) in artisanal fisheries as a management measure;
 - Providing education and support to develop best practices in fishing communities;
 - Increasing mesh size (of nets) to improve selectivity;
 - Limiting fishing effort to conserve stocks, and restricting catches to balance supply and demand;
 - Respecting justice and equity in the regulations
 - Reducing marine pollution.

As regards the problems facing the sector, the VG SSF should:

- Recognize that overfishing is a problem for both the artisanal and industrial fishing sectors, and that tackling overfishing needs a differentiated approach;

- Recommend the elimination of destructive fishing practices and develop good artisanal fishing practices as the preferred model for the entire EEZ without compromising sea safety or decent working conditions;
- Recognize the rights of migratory fishers and establish conflict resolution mechanisms for disputes arising between migratory fishers and local communities, including for the brokering of trans-border fisheries access agreements between such communities;
- Promote access to justice, and consider the establishment of an international tribunal where artisanal fishing communities can claim compensation for damages inflicted by transnational capital and foreign fishing fleets through land and sea grabbing;
- Recommend the improvement of working conditions and the establishment of social security systems for fishers and fishery sector workers, and promote health and safety on both land and sea;

.....*Mbour, Senegal, 21 November 2011*

Participating Organizations:

SLAFU/ Sierra Leone
 LAFA/ Liberia
 NACOFAG/WFF/ Gambia
 FENACOPECI/ Ivory Coast
 TransparentSea/ Kenya/ Ivory Coast
 ATDEPA/ Tunisia
 FNP Artisanal Fishing Section/ Mauritania
 GIZ/RIM/ Mauritania
 ROPA/ Guinea Bissau, Cape Verde
 FENAFIP/Burkina Faso
 REJOPRAO/ Burkina Faso/ Guinea / Senegal/ Nigeria
 CPPAM/ Mbour, Senegal
 CONIPAS/ Thiaroye Quay, Senegal
 APRAPAM/ Senegal
 ICSF/ Belgium, Guinea, Mauritania, Senegal.
 CFFA-CAPE/ Belgium
 FAO
 SSNC/ Sweden
 MASIFUNDISE/ South Africa
 COASTAL LINKS/ South Africa
 Cerad International/ Togo
 UNFFPG/ Guinea
 FENAPECHE/ Benin