Meeting report on the First Scoping meeting on collaboration between Regional Seas Programme and Regional Fisheries Bodies in the Southwest Indian Ocean, 14 March 2016

Background

1. It has become increasingly clear that cross-sectoral cooperation is crucial and beneficial particularly to the context of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Based on the concept of the ecosystem based management (EBM) and ecosystem approaches to fisheries (EAF), UNEP and FAO have been collaborating through various initiatives to bring the environment and fishery sectors together to strengthen collaboration on issues of common interest with a view to securing sustainable food provisioning underpinned by healthy and functional marine and coastal ecosystems.
2. At the regional level, various experiences of cooperation exist between Regional Fisheries Bodies (RFBs) and Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans (RSCAPs) in different regions including the Collective Arrangements between the OSPAR Commission and North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC).
3. In this context, the East Africa region is one of the key areas where UNEP and FAO can provide technical assistance based on the experiences in the other regions across the world to foster further cooperation between the two types of regional organisations: RSCAPs and RFBs.
4. The First Scoping meeting on collaboration between the Regional Seas programme and Regional Fisheries Bodies in the Southwest Indian Ocean was held on 14 March 2016 via a video conference in order to identify potential areas of cooperation between the Secretariats of the three relevant organisations: the Nairobi Convention (NBC), the South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission (SWIOFC) and the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC).

Opening of the meeting

5. Ms. Merete Tandstad, FAO, welcomed the participants to the meeting, explaining the context of this meeting within the wider framework of the FAO-UNEP cooperation related to RFBs and RSCAPs. She briefly described the workshops conducted in the Western Africa Region in 2014 for the cooperation between the RFBs and Abidjan Convention. A project document entitled "*Securing the Foundation for Fish Food Production through Ecosystem Approaches to Management of Ocean related Activities in Times of Climate Change*" was prepared for strengthening the cooperation between RFBs and RSCAPs. The reports of the workshops are going to be finalized and will be shared with the meeting participants.

Setting the Context for Cooperation

6. Ms. Kanako Hasegawa, UNEP, introduced the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) highlighting Goal 14 which is particularly relevant to the RSCAPs and RFBs. She talked about the current activities relating to the Regional Seas Indicators and African Ocean Governance Strategy as these processes would be highly relevant to both RFBs and RSCAPs in Africa.

7. Mr. Aubrey Harris, SWIOFC, questioned whether the African Ocean Governance Strategy would be developed together with the African Union (AU). Ms. Hasegawa responded that although at present AU has not been involved, it should be developed together with AU. In fact the AMCEN is under the AU, and the development of the strategy is based on the AMCEN's decision.
8. Ms. Gabriela Bianchi, FAO, described the work on the Aichi Target. FAO is currently working with the CBD Secretariat focusing on the Aichi Target 6. The report on the indicator for Target 6 will be finalized within the week and will be submitted to the CBD SABSTTA 20 to be held in April 2016. Recalling the 17th Global Meeting of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans, she stressed that the Regional Seas Indicators relating to fisheries should be informed by this work on Target 6.
9. Mr. Takehiro Nakamura, UNEP, added that fisheries are considered to be a part of an ecosystem-based management. It was possible to conduct the monitoring of different ocean-related goals and targets at the regional level though the RSCAPs and RFBs. Thus in the context of the SDGs, it would be important to engage the RSCAPs and RFBs.
10. Ms. Bianchi added that CBD has its own mechanism for national reporting. FAO also has a reporting mechanism at the national level and this mechanism could potentially be used or improved for reporting to other mechanisms.
11. Mr. Nakamura clarified that implementation of the SDGs should happen at the national level. However, he stressed that the role of monitoring at the regional level could be identified. It would also be possible to bring in the regional aspects at the UN Conference on SDG14 to be held in Fiji in June 2017.
12. Ms. Tandstad introduced the concept of Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF). She stressed that EAF harmonizes fisheries sectoral policies with the national sustainable development policy. This is a conceptual framework to turn the sectoral policy into a more cross-sectoral management.

Presentation by Secretariats

13. Mr. Harris explained that SWIOFC is a FAO Article IX body, which means that it is an advisory body. The geographical coverage is the EEZ of the participating countries, which includes small islands states. The Commission meets every two years while there are other mechanisms such as the scientific committee, working groups and steering committees. The Commission takes a rotating chairmanship among the countries. Currently it is chaired by Madagascar. The Bureau makes decisions for the Commission. The Secretariat is administered by FAO and based in Maputo. There are four staff members in the Secretariat: Mr. Harris, FAO programme assistant and two technical staff from Mozambique. The prioritised themes of SWIOFC are: (1) Review of the status of the marine resources and review of the implementation of EAF by the member states; (2) work on Tuna issues together with IOTC as requested by the member states; (3) Improving governance and productivity; (4) Increased collaboration; and (5) Improved fisheries data and statistics. The Commission celebrated its 10th anniversary. On this occasion, the rule of procedure was revised. The next Commission meeting will be held in October 2016.

14. Mr. Dixon Waruinge, NBC, presented the overview of the work done by the Nairobi Convention. The Nairobi Convention currently has 3 protocols and a new protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) is in preparation. The Conference of Parties (COP) meets every two years. The main areas of its work are: (1) environmental management; (2) environmental assessment and (3) legal instruments. The COP gives the directions and the last COP was held in June 2015. The key programmes are: EBM, Blue Economy and Environmental assessment. He highlighted that the Protocol concerning Protected Areas and Wild Fauna and Flora in the East African Region could handle sharks and rays, which could be a common interest between NBC, SWIOFC and IOTC. The African Ocean Governance Strategy could be another area of work where cooperation with the RFBs was crucial. In terms of partnership, NBO has partnerships with WIO, NGOs, UNDP, GPA amongst others. On the oil and gas industry-related issues, NBC is working with UNEP-WCMC. He pointed out that the science-policy platform could not take a sectoral approach. Cooperation between NBO, SWIOFC and IOTC on this area could be explored further.
15. Mr. David Wilson, IOTC, introduced the organisation. IOTC deals with 16 tuna and tuna-like species. It examines the ecosystem's impacts and issues of by-catch. Currently there is willingness towards EBM/EAF. In terms of partners, there is a strong network with NGOs. The Commission has a scientific committee, a compliance committee and the Standing Committee on Administration and Finance. There is a scientific committee on by-catch issues.
16. Mr. Nakamura inquired whether EBM/EAF could be difficult within the IOTC as it handles species-based management. Mr. Wilson responded that it was a big challenge and would require capacity development. It would also be a slow process. He further explained that IOTC has a number of consultancies which would look at the issues of sharks.
17. Ms. Tandstad requested the Coordinators of three secretariats to submit a written paragraph on the outlines of the three mechanisms.

Current cooperation mechanisms

18. Mr. Kuemlangan, FAO, provided an overview of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between FAO and UNEP. For the implementation of the umbrella cooperation mechanism, a Strategic Partnership Plan (SPP) has been set. In SPP, four areas were identified: (1) Sustainable Food Systems; (2) ecosystem services and biodiversity in agriculture, forestry and fisheries; (3) data and statistics; and (4) international legal instruments, legislation and regulatory matters. These thematic areas could be used as guidance for cooperation. Cooperation on information and knowledge management related to international laws has been developed with Ecolex, and they along with IUCN, FAO and UNEP are working together. Ecolex contains all the related legal matters on the environment field. An international join study on the Nagoya Protocol had been conducted between FAO and UNEP.

19. Mr. Rubio, FAO, provided further explanation on Ecolex, which has been developed more than 20 years ago. Approximately 130,000 legal texts on food and agriculture issues are now registered in the database. However, the data are not appropriately used as the users had problems when they wanted to conduct further research such as on best practices. Indicators could be an interesting area of work to make the database more user-friendly. Ecolex has some RSCAPs related legal texts but COP decisions are not included.
20. Expressing appreciation to the explanations provided, Mr. Nakamura proposed that more details on marine and fisheries issues should be discussed and developed under the UNEP-FAO MOU. This cooperation between RSCAPs and RFBs could be considered within the framework of the FAO-UNEP MOU.
21. At the regional level, Mr. Harris, explained that there was an ongoing work to set up a MOU between NBC and SWIOFC. He asked whether it was possible to make a specific MOU between NBC and SWIOFC under the global MOU between UNEP and FAO. Responding to the answer, Mr. Nakamura gave examples of MOUs between OSPAR and NEAFC as well as the GFCM and Barcelona Convention.
22. Mr. Kuemlangan pointed out that among the four cooperation areas in SPP, the legal area could be an easy area to start cooperation in. Although there could be data sharing policies in different mechanisms, this could be an area to demonstrate cooperation. Three RSCAPs are participating in the inforMEA project, of which FAO is a partner organization.

Identification of areas of common interests, common goals for collaboration

23. Mr. Waruinge pointed out three areas for possible cooperation in the future.
    a. Issues related to sharks and rays: SWIOFC has a scientific committee, where NBC could get knowledge and experiences on the issues. This could allow an integrated approach;
    b. Implementation of the Strategic Action Programmes: Important to have an agreement on how NBC, IOTC and SWIOFC could collaborate on their implementation; and
    c. Scientific information sharing.

24. Mr. Harris, SWIOFC, further explained that NBC and SWIOFC invited each other to their COPs and Commission meetings. However to strengthen the cooperation, it would be necessary to have a MOU as the mechanisms are led by member states. He provided 5 areas of possible cooperation.
    a. EAFs / EBM;
    b. Coastal zone management, including the issues related to external factors impacting on fisheries such as pollutant, oil and gas extraction and exploration and coastal development;
    c. Biodiversity, including loss of species, impact of by-catch, habitat destruction and poison fishing;
    d. Input on the status of fish stocks to NBC, including SWIOFC's reporting on the status of fish stocks as well as scientific data and policy-related information; and
    e. Formulation of projects and programmes, including their possible joint implementation.

25. Based on the discussion above, Mr. Wilson stated an IOTC scientific committee-level discussion could be most useful. Previously, for example, there was an attempt to make a MOU between CMS and IOTC but it was not accepted by the Commission. Considering these sensitivities, a discussion at the technical-level could be the beginning for collaboration.
26. Mr. Mannini, FAO, stated that the ongoing cooperation between MAP and GFCM could provide a good example and lessons for future collaboration. In this case, EAF is adopted by GFCM and areas and membership are overlapping with the Barcelona Convention. Key technical and scientific committees exist for socio-economic issues and scientific matters. The definition and awareness of shared stocks in the Mediterranean Sea among the member states could help it move forward.
27. Mr. Kuemlangan stated that an MOU could be formulated within the wider framework of the SPP for the four thematic areas. Mr. Nakamura agreed with the idea and stated that it was a matter of recognition that these ongoing dialogues and existing collaborations could be framed within the wider framework of UNEP-FAO cooperation. Existing cooperation in different regions including MAP-GFCM, OSPAR-NEAFC and ROPME-RECOFI could provide important lessons and models for collaboration in the East Africa region. Cross region mutual-learning would be important.
28. Ms. Tandstad presented the model framework for cooperation called “collaboration ladder” discussed in West and Central Africa. It was a conceptual model for the development of cooperation and started with information and knowledge sharing towards implementation of joint measures across sectors and levels. She highlighted the importance of recognizing different steps of the cooperation.

Discussion on the approaches for the second workshop

29. Referring to the concept paper and original proposal to organise the second workshop with the countries, Ms. Tandstad asked for opinions and comments from NBC, IOTC and SWIOFC.
30. Mr. Harris responded that it would be difficult to organise a meeting with the participation of the countries. He proposed that it would be better to first prepare an MOU between SWIOFC and NBC and present to the member states. The partnership between NBC and SWIOFC would first need to be agreed between Secretariats. By doing so, it would be easier and smoother for future processes to take place.
31. Ms. Tandstad noted that some discussion at the technical level could be easier to move forward such as on scientific issues and legal levels. She cited an example from GFCM and said decisions on EAF could be one way to move forward. Other themes such as food security issues and blue economy frameworks could be useful. With regards to food security, both UNEP and FAO placed this as a high priority especially after Rio +20.
32. Mr. Harris suggested bringing in the chair of commission and chair of scientific committee. At SWIOFC, the chair and vice-chair of the bureau could be the ones to be invited. Mr. Waruinge also commented that the bureau members could be invited. The expected output would be a draft MOU between SWIOFC and NBO, which could be brought to the COP. The difficulties for IOTC would be the fact that IOTC has membership outside of the region. It would be important to consider how SIOFA can be involved.
33. Mr. Waruinge stated that the presence of IOTC and SIOFA for the second workshop would be advantageous in the framework of EBM. A session could be given to discuss how IOTC-NBC

cooperation could be realized. Thus at the second meeting, elements of MOU could be discussed, from which IOTC and SIOFA could learn the process.

34. Appreciating the proposals, Ms. Tandstad asked how the concept for such a meeting could be developed and asked for an opportunity for a back-to-back meeting with any other planned activities. It was concluded that the second meeting would be a stand-alone meeting as the organisation of a meeting back-to-back with any meeting organised by NBC, SWIOFC or IOTC is not possible. Ms. Hasegawa explained that the second meeting has a budget of USD 30,000, which needs to be spent by the end of June 2016.
35. Given the conditions, the participants agreed to prepare the second meeting (2-3 days) in the East Africa region. The expected number of participants is approximately twenty (20) people.
36. In order to move forward, Mr. Waruinge, Mr. Harris and Mr. Wilson will identify appropriate participants and consult with them on possible dates for the meeting. UNEP and FAO will identify the people who could support the development of the MOU between the two bodies. It was agreed that Ms. Hasegawa, UNEP, would revise the concept note for the second meeting based on the discussion during the meeting.
37. For the implementation of the overarching MOU between UNEP and FAO, it was agreed that Mr. Tandstad and Mr. Nakamura would compile ideas specifically for marine issues.

Conclusion of the meeting

38. The meeting participants agreed that:

    a. Ms. Hasegawa and Ms. Tandstad would finalize the meeting reports on the "Securing the Foundations for Fish Food Security in a Changing Ocean in West, Central and Southern Africa" held in 2015 and would circulate them for the participants of the present meeting by 31 March 2016;
    b. Mr. Waruinge, Mr. Harris and Mr. Dave would identify appropriate participants to the second meeting and consult with each other on possible dates of the second meeting by 31 March 2016; Mr. Waruinge would take a lead in this consultation;
    c. Ms. Hasegawa would revise the concept note for the second meeting and circulate it to the participants by 31 March 2016;
    d. The second workshop needed to be held before June 2016 within the budget of USD 30,000. The expected outcome would be a fully developed MOU between NBC and SWIOFC and possible elements of their cooperation with IOTC and SWIOFC;
    e. Mr. Waruinge, Mr. Harris and Mr. Dave would provide a written paragraph to FAO (Ms. Merete Tandstad) on the presentations they made by 31 March 2016; and that
    f. Ms. Trasdad and Mr. Nakamura would compile and exchange ideas for cooperation between UNEP and FAO particularly on marine and coastal issues. Mr. Nakamura would send an initial idea to Ms. Tandstad by 31 March 2016 to start the dialogues between the two organisations and respective internal consultation to be completed by 31 May 2016.

Annex 1: Provisional Agenda

Timing	Activities	Responsible
14 March 2016		
08:30-08:45	Opening of the meeting Objective of the meeting	FAO / UNEP
08:45-09:15	Setting context for cooperation • SDGs, Aichi Target • EBM, EAF • African Ocean Governance Strategy (AIMS 2050, Agenda 2063)	FAO / UNEP
9:15-10:15	Presentation by Secretariats • Institutional mechanisms, Strategies • Priority themes • Highlight of recent activities Comments	Participants (NBC, SWIOFC, IOTC and TBC : SIOFA, IOC)
10:15-10:45	Current cooperation mechanisms • Overview of current cooperation mechanisms Comments	Participants (NBC, SWIOFC, IOTC, and TBC : SIOFA, IOC) Participants
10:45-11:45	Identification of areas of common interests, common goals for collaboration	Participants
11:45-12:15	Discussion on the approaches for the second workshop	Participants
12:15-12:30	Closure of the Meeting	FAO / UNEP

Annex 2: List of participant

1	**SWIOFC** **Mr. Aubrey Harris** *Secretary* FAO Sub-Regional Office for Southern and Eastern A O. Box 3730, HARARE, Zimbabwe Email: aubrey.harris@fao.org	2	**NBC** **Mr. Dixon Waruinge** *Head* Nairobi Convention Division of Environmental Policy Implementation (DEPI), P. O. Box 30552, Nairobi, Kenya Email: dixon.waruinge@unep.org
3	**IOTC** **Mr. David Wilson** *Executive Secretary* IOTC Secretariat, Le Chantier Mall (2nd floor) PO Box 1011, Victoria Mahé - SEYCHELLES Email: david.wilson@iotc.org	4	**FAO** **Mr. Blaise Kuemlangan** *Chief, Development Law Service* Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 00153 Rome, Italy Email: Blaise.Kuemlangan@fao.org
5	**FAO** **Ms. Gabriella Bianchi** *Senior Fishery Resources Officer* Fisheries and Aquaculture Department Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 00153 Rome, Italy Email: Gabriella.Bianchi@fao.org	6	**FAO** **Ms. Merete Trasdad** *Fishery Resources Officer* Fisheries and Aquaculture Department Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 00153 Rome, Italy Email: Merete.Tandstad@fao.org
7	**FAO** **Mr. Piero Mannini** *Senior Fishery Officer* Fisheries and Aquaculture Department Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 00153 Rome, Italy Email: Piero.Mannini@fao.org	8	**FAO** **Mr. Andres V. Rubio** FAOlex Team Development Law Branch Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 1 00153 Rome, Italy Email: andres.rubio@fao.org
9	**UNEP/DEPI** **Mr. Takehiro Nakamura** *Chief* Marine & Coastal Ecosystems Unit Division of Environmental Policy Implementation PO Box 30552, 00100 Nairobi, Kenya Email : Takehiro.nakamura@unep.org	10	**UNEP/DEPI** **Ms. Kanako Hasegawa** *Associate Programme Officer* Regional Seas Coordination Unit, Division of Environmental Policy Implementation PO Box 30552, 00100 Nairobi, Kenya Email: kanako.hasegawa@unep.org