



**FCWC**

Fisheries Committee for  
the West Central Gulf of Guinea



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3<sup>rd</sup> International Conférence on Maritime  
Security in the Gulf of Guinea  
Stellenbosch, South Africa,  
5 – 6 September 2024

INTER-AGENCY COOPERATION TO CURB  
IUU-FISHING: EXPECTATION AND  
REALITY IN WEST AFRICA

# Background



- FCWC is an intergovernmental organization created by the Cotonou Convention on 7 November 2007 by six member states (Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Togo) under FAO support.
- FCWC's headquarters and offices are located in Tema, Ghana.
- The FCWC bodies include a Conference of Ministers (COM), an Advisory and Coordinating Committee (ACC) and a Secretariat.

# Background. cont.

- Mission
  - Promote and support cooperation among Member States to build a sustainable fisheries sector and derive high levels of social and economic benefits in harmony with the environment and in line with international standards.
- Vision
  - FCWC to work together to achieve an efficient, very dynamic, inclusive and participative organization for the sustainable development of fishing in the central west of the Gulf of Guinea.



## WELCOME TO FCWC

The Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC) is a regional fisheries organisation with a membership of six West African countries: Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Togo. The Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC) was established in 2007. This is to facilitate cooperation in fisheries management among the member countries. The countries have several shared fish stocks and identified a need for cooperation and shared management of these resources.

[Read more](#)[Strategic Plans](#)

## MEMBER STATES



# LEGAL FRAMEWORKS TO SUPPORT INTER-AGENCY COLLABORATION BY FCWC

## Legal and Policy Documents:

- Convention for the Establishment of the FCWC (2007)
- Convention on Pooling and Sharing of Information (2014)
- Convention on Minimum Conditions of Access (2013)
- Additional Protocol for the Protection of Shared Information
- Protocol for the Establishment of the Regional MCS Centre
- Memorandum of Understanding between ECOWAS, FCWC & SRFC (2021)

# Areas of Intervention

Implementation of the  
Regional Fisheries Resources  
Management Plan (RFRMP)

Consolidation and extension of  
the achievements of sub-  
regional cooperation in the fight  
against IUU fishing and maritime  
safety.

Development of fisheries  
research and the regional  
information system to support  
management measures.

Elaboration and implementation  
of a coordinated aquaculture  
development policy at the level  
of FCWC.

Reinforcement of the  
organizational and human  
capacities of the organs of  
FCWC.

Development of partnerships to  
support sub-regional  
cooperation and policies of the  
Member States.

# REGIONAL COOPERATION STRUCTURE

## Regional level:

- West Africa Task Force
- Cooperation between FCWC Member State on MCS and anti-IUU matters
- Cooperation with ECOWAS and SRFC
- Cooperation with CRESMAO, MMCC Zone E and F
- Cooperation with RMU and ISMI

## National level:

- National Working Groups
- Cooperation between agencies on MCS and anti-IUU matters

## International level:

- Joint Analytical Cell (JAC), EFCA and CECLANT,



# WEST AFRICA TASK FORCE

Establishment of the West Africa Task Force To promote measures for combating IUU Fishing (2015)

- The Task Force meets twice a year to discuss MCS activities, IUU Fishing cases and Lesson Learning in the Region.
- Has a dedicated communication platform (Basecamp) for intelligence gathering, information sharing.
- Exchanges between fisheries agencies to support capacity building to combat IUU fishing.
- Supported by the FCWC RMCSC and Technical Team



# NATIONAL WORKING GROUP

- Country-specific arrangements
- Comprised of the various agencies relevant for fisheries MCS in that country
- Enable information exchange and coordination nationally
- Composition and nature differ between countries
  - In some the structure is formalised through instruments, in others not
  - Not all countries have the same agencies involved
- Each NWG meets annually, as far as possible, with external support through the FCWC and other partners.



# COOPERATION IN ACTION – Port State Measure

- All 6 FCWC Member States are party to the PSMA
- Support in this area through various partners and projects
- Key priority work area for the FCWC
- Layers of cooperation
  - National
  - Regional
  - International



# COOPERATION IN ACTION – Port State Measure cont.

## National cooperation:

- AREP processing and decision making
- Enforcement of decisions
- Successful and efficient inspections
- Taking further action as necessary



# COOPERATION IN ACTION – Port State Measure cont.

Regional and international cooperation:

- Requesting and sharing information on vessels and companies
- Sharing decisions to deny port entry

# COOPERATION IN ACTION – Port State Measure cont.

## Expectations vs reality:

- Legislative gaps hinder implementation despite ratification
- Hurdles putting cooperation on port entry into practice
- Difficult to verify information with non-FCWC coastal and flag States

# COORPERATION IN ACTION – Fisheries Patrol

- National patrols
- Coordinated patrols between the FCWC member states.
- Patrols in cooperation with external partners

## Layers of Cooperation:

- National
- Regional
- International



# COORPERATION IN ACTION – Fisheries Patrol

- Cooperation through three key phases
  - Communication in pre-patrol phase
  - Liaison during the patrol
  - Reflections after the patrol
- Often cooperation facilitated by briefings that all agencies are invited to.
- Parties involved depends on the scale and scope of the operation



# COORPERATION IN ACTION – Fisheries Patrol

## Expectations vs reality:

- Very big interest internally and externally in conducting patrols
- Key personnel and/or agencies not always engaged early on
- Key personnel and/or agencies occasionally not engaged at all
- Degree of engagement during operations varies
  - Participation in set briefings
  - Sharing of information generally through established platforms
- Use of existing coordination networks, including FCWC, is starting.



# CONCLUSION

- Through this inter-agency partnership, FCWC have made significant strides in enhancing Monitoring, Control, and Surveillance (MCS) capabilities, fostering capacity building, and promoting best practices across the region. We are confident that these efforts will lead to a substantial reduction in IUU activities and contribute to the sustainable management of our fisheries resources.

# THANK YOU!