



LDRAC RECOMMENDATION ON IMPROVING GOOD GOVERNANCE AND FIGHT AGAINST IUU THROUGH THE LDRAC- COMHAFAT DIALOGUE

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BACKGROUND

The Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States Bordering the Atlantic Ocean (ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT) is an inter-governmental organization created in 1989 and composed of 22 States, from Morocco to Namibia; the Convention establishing ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT, "The Atlantic Regional Convention for Fisheries Cooperation," was adopted in 1991, with the main objectives to promote and strengthen the regional cooperation on fisheries development; and to coordinate and to harmonize efforts and capacities of stakeholders for the conservation and sustainable use of fisheries resources. The headquarters is in Rabat (Morocco).

The first contact between the ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT and the LDRAC, occurs in 2011 in the framework of the COFI, where both organizations were actively engaged in the promotion of the sustainability of the fisheries at the international level. After finding that they shared very similar objectives, they decided to look for ways of cooperation which would be beneficial for both parties.

After a series of further meetings between the two organizations, building a mutual trust up, it was decided to work on the draft of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) that established a stable framework of cooperation between the LDRAC and the COMHAFAT.

The MoU was finally signed on May 29th in Tangier (Morocco).

The LDRAC together with the ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT organized jointly a workshop on "Improving good governance and fight against IUU through the LDRAC-COMHAFAT dialogue", in the framework of the MoU signed by both organizations. The meeting was held in Brussels



on 29th and 30th October 2013. The liaison MEP for the LDRAC, Ms. Carmen Fraga hosted this event in the European Parliament.

The aim of the Workshop was to look at ways to develop a dialogue for improving fisheries governance in West and Central Africa, including transparency and the strengthening the Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) standards of the coastal states, which would be the best tool to fight against IUU fishing. It was also an opportunity for the EU tuna sector to present to participants the 'Tuna Transparency Initiative', - wholeheartedly supported by all the LDRAC members-, as a tool which can help improve governance in tuna fisheries relations with these countries.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Given that:

Fisheries are an important issue for both African countries and EU and deserve an intensified focus in all EU-Africa relations

- Fighting against illegal fishing is shared concern/priority
- To improve governance and the fight against IUU fishing, a MCS declined both at the national and regional levels is necessary
- A shared understanding of the issues and of what should be done to improve governance and the fight against IUU fishing is necessary

The existence of a key platform which is the ATLAFCO-LDRAC MoU is an opportunity; We want to go forward and agree that this meeting should express some recommendations to do concrete progress

Recommendation 1

- Establishment of a Atlantic African-EU fisheries task force through the ATLAFCO-LDRAC MoU in order to give advices to the countries regarding:
 - a) The transparency
 - b) The harmonization (of rules and procedures for licensing for tuna fisheries and other trans-EEZ fisheries)



- c) The coherence (policies, use of development aid funds, ...)
- d) The regionalization (development of a common African fisheries strategy and reform framework, regional MCS, regional control procedures, hot pursuit, ...)

Recommendation 2

- The LDRAC would like to request the EU better coherence between the policies of the different DG and development cooperation objectives: DG DEVCO, DG TRADE, DG RELEX and DG MARE. The LDRAC should promote (among EU Institutions) support to ATLAFCO as a regional key player –

Recommendation 3

- The tuna fisheries could serve as a case study to assess the efficiency of a regional and harmonized approaches for the management of these fisheries, knowing that such a program would be facilitated by the existing bodies which are the ICCAT, the LDRAC, ATLAFCO, AU, CSRP, ...
- Issues to be addressed could be:
 - a) Harmonization of procedures and rules
 - b) Regionalization of some features (observers, inspections, ...)
 - c) Regional capacity building (crewmen training, MCS cooperation and reinforcement, IUU fight, research, ...)

Recommendation 4

- The presentations, minutes and recommendations of the workshop should be gathered and published in a book to be widely distributed and serve as a mile stone for the close future work of the ATLAFCO-LDRAC.