

# ABIDJAN STATEMENT

## WORLD FISHERIES DAY (WFD)

Abidjan Palace of Culture Palace 21 November 2012

On the occasion of World Fisheries Day on 21 November 2012 organized at the Abidjan Palace of Culture (Ivory Coast), following a conference on “Improving the Contribution Artisanal Fisheries to Food Security: The Role of Women”, organized by the African Confederation of Organizations of Professional Artisanal Fishworkers (CAOPA) in collaboration with the National Fisheries Federation of Ivory Coast (FENACOPECI), and with the participation of the Journalists’ Network for Responsible Fisheries (REJOPRAO), professional artisanal fishworkers from 16 African countries, and representatives from CFFA, ICSF, FAO, BftW, and SSNC.

We, organizations of professional African artisanal fishworkers, thank the Government of the Ivory Coast Republic for having allowed and facilitated us to organize a conference for women and World Fisheries Day. Our discussions have focussed on the essential role that women play in improving food security, and on the development of International Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small Scale Fisheries being led by FAO.

Based on our exchange of views and experiences we have produced recommendations to our governments, to sub-regional, regional, and international institutions;

Conscious that our governments have signed and approved various international conventions, and taking account of economic, social, economic, and cultural dimensions, we call on our Governments and on sub-regional, regional, and multi-lateral organizations to help us to address our problems, by:

- 1- Enabling the free circulation of fishery products between states;
- 2- Reducing and simplifying customs formalities;
- 3- Establishing, developing, and arranging adequate infrastructure;
- 4- Organizing adequate landing sites;

- 5- Providing finance to women processors and petty traders under fair arrangements;
- 6- Involving women in decision taking processes.

We further call on those of our States who have not already done so to ratify the Convention for International Road Transport (IRT/TIR) in order to improve the quality of our products.

With regards to the FAO led process to develop International Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small Scale Fisheries, we call on our States to:

- 1- Participate actively in the Technical Consultations due to take place at FAO in Rome in February 2013.
- 2- To include professionals from the artisanal fisheries sector in the official delegations for these Technical Consultations.
- 3- Request that COFI establish special modalities that allow for the participation of Civil Society Organizations in the Technical Consultations.
- 4- Engage in finalising the Guidelines scheduled for 2014 so as to ensure that they fully reflect the specific realities of artisanal fisheries.

Abidjan, 21 November 2012

### **Participating Countries**

Senegal

Mauritania

Gambia

Guinea Bissau

Guinea Conakry

Sierra Leone

Togo

Benin

Burkina-Faso

Cape Verde

Tunisia

Ghana

Gabon

Congo Brazzaville

Mali

Ivory Coast

**Institutional Observers**

FAO/Rome/Ivory Coast

CFFA-CAPE/Belgium

SSNC/Sweden

Bread for the World/Germany

ICSF-CIAPA/Belgium/Senegal/Guinea Conakry/Ghana