

## **First participation of artisanal professional organisations to a Sub regional Fisheries Committee (SRFC) meeting on artisanal fisheries management**

2 october 2006. Following the proposal of the SRFC (West Africa Sub Regional Fisheries Committee) permanent secretary and the request by artisanal fishing professional organisations from Guinea (UNPAG), Mauritania (FNP-section artisanale) and Senegal (CONIPAS), these organisations were invited to participate to the SRFC meeting on artisanal fisheries management, held in Praia from 26th till 29th september 2006.

Contacted by CFFA, the presidents of UNPAG, FNP-section artisanale, and CONIPAS said they were very happy of the results of their participation to that meeting, which was a first experience. The president of UNPAG insisted on the exchange of experiences between professionals, administrations and scientists that this meeting offered. *"Realities are different in each of the SRFC countries. But some have an experience in a particular area, and others can benefit from it. For example, in the case of Guinea, professionals would like pirogues to be immatriculated, and we have now been able to receive information about how this has been achieved in Mauritania and Senegal. If administrations, professionals and scientists join hands and share professionals experiences from the various countries in artisanal fisheries management, it will be very positive"*.

The president of CONIPAS insists on the fact that *"this opening created between professionals, scientists and administrations from the sub region is key for a sustainable management of the fisheries"*. Organising professionals at the sub regional level is also a goal. Thus, he explains that *"professional organisations attending the SRFC meeting proposed a federation at sub regional level of artisanal professional organisations... One issue being to see how to involve artisanal professionals from SRFC countries where a national organisation doesn't exist yet"*.

The president of the FNP-section artisanale expressed thanks, on behalf of artisanal professional organisations, to the SRFC for allowing their active participation during the whole meeting *"We have been able to express our point of view on all the topics that were discussed, and our concerns have been listened to by administrations, experts and scientists"*. He welcomes this first opportunity which also meets one of the recommendations made by artisanal professionals and media who met beginning of September in Nouadhibou for a workshop on raising awareness about sustainable fisheries.