



NATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION TO PREVENT, DETER AND ELIMINATE ILLEGAL, UNREPORTED AND UNREGULATED FISHERIES



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Glossary of Acronyms and Abbreviation

Term	Meaning
CCRF	Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries
COFI	Committee on Fisheries
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EU	The European Union
FAO	The Food Agricultural Organization of the United Nations
FCWC	Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoL	Government of Liberia
ICCAT	International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas
IEZ	Inshore Exclusive Zone
IPOA	International Plan Of Action
IUU	Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated
MCS	Monitoring, Control and Surveillance
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
NaFAA	National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority
NPOA	National Plan of Action
RFMO	Regional Fisheries Management Organization
RPOA	Regional Plan of Action
SFPAs	Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements
UN	The United Nations
UNFSA	The United Nations Fish Stock Agreement
VMS	Vessel Monitoring System
WARFP	West Africa Regional Fisheries Project

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Preface



Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing is a major contributing factor to depletion of marine resources and a global threat to sustainable fisheries. The level at which fisheries resources are harvested illegally is alarming and has contributed to the extinction of several species and the adverse effect is hampering the source of livelihood of coastal communities inhabitants in West Africa especially Liberia whose major source of protein of its citizenry is fish. Annually, over US\$23.5 billion is lost to IUU fishing globally and over US\$2.3 billion regionally while Liberia alone experiences over US\$12 million loss. International efforts to combat IUU fishing activities have increased tremendously over the years with the strengthening of regulatory frameworks, monitoring, control, surveillance and enforcement, national and regional collaboration, conduct of due diligence on fishing vessels and information sharing. All the efforts are encouraging though, but failure to fight IUU to a zero level will prove the works carried out by fisheries experts, administrators, managers, consultants and fisher folks over the years futile.

It is evident with the availability of several fisheries instruments that the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations (UN) has displayed high level of concern with the creation and raising awareness on the devastating effects of IUU fishing and the dire need for States to fight, prevent, deter and eliminate this menace. However, much is yet to be done if the world truly intends to fight IUU fishing. The implementation and enforcement of international fisheries instruments both binding and non-binding is paramount and uncompromising to this cause.

The International Plan of Action to combat IUU fishing (IPOA-IUU) is a voluntary instrument that applies to all States and entities and to all fishers. It complements other fisheries instruments including the 1993 FAO Compliance Agreement and the 1995 United Nations Fish Stock Agreement (UNFSA) within the framework of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) of the FAO. The FAO further provided Technical Guidelines to aid in the implementation of the IPOA-IUU at the Regional and National levels using several measures in conformity with international law.

Considering the valuable importance of the IPOA-IUU and the subsequent development of a Regional Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate IUU fishing by the Fisheries Committee for West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC-RPOA-IUU), Liberia continues to display high level of commitment in the fight against IUU with the development of a National Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate IUU (NPOA- IUU) fishing and an urge to its full implementation through intensive analysis of existing actions, efforts and mechanisms.

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1. Introduction

Liberia has several important fisheries that have evolved over hundreds of years both as a source of food and livelihoods through subsistence catches and small-scale commercial activities, as well as larger industrial fisheries over the past century. There are long traditions and a strong sense of resource ownership vested in communities that benefit from the fisheries. Recent studies however show that the fisheries are under considerable pressure globally and in the West African sub-region, particularly from high levels of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing.

Until recently, management of fisheries resources had been given little importance and attention by Governments of Liberia (GoL), resulting in limited legal structure, fisheries enforcement, over-fishing, and conflict between small-scale and industrial stakeholders. Since 2010 the Liberian fisheries management regime, including a monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) component, has received significant support and seen marked improvements through the West Africa Regional Fisheries Project (WARFP).

The renewable fish resources of Liberia can significantly contribute to the national economy and social development of the country and is an important contributor to food security and employment.

Following strengthened government measures, reducing the number of foreign trawling vessels, there has been measurable stock recovery that has shown a significant increase of the landings of the artisanal fishery with positive economic- and social impact on fishing communities.

The improved and strengthened fisheries management and control of the fisheries has transformed the government revenue stream from the resource through sustainable fisheries partnership agreements (SFPAs) with the European Union (EU) and private tuna fishery companies

The government revenue from the fisheries sector has increased enormously due to the recovery of fish stocks, increased monitoring and surveillance, and improved management. and the fishery sector has generated an estimated 13,000 jobs along the value chain where about half are women. For the first time, a private sector investment is starting to pick up with investments in chill stores and ice making plants facilitating and demonstrating improved handling and the potential value addition in the sector.

All necessary measures should be taken to safeguard the important and remarkable achievements made with the clear intention of basing all future measures only on a sustainable approach to secure the long-term benefit to Liberia.

In 2001, members of the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) of the United Nations concluded, within the framework of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF), an International Plan of Action (IPOA) to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing (IPOA-IUU), which complements among others, the 1993 FAO Compliance Agreement and the 1995 UN Fish Stocks Agreement.

To support the implementation of the IPOA-IUU, FAO has prepared Technical Guidelines designed to provide practical advice on how States should implement the IPOA at National and Regional levels using comprehensive, effective and transparent measures in accordance with international law.

In 2009, the member countries of the Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC) developed a Regional Plan of Action (FCWC-RPOA-IUU), based on the principles and provision of the IPOA-IUU, and on an analysis of existing actions, efforts and mechanisms at national and regional levels.

Against a backdrop of Liberia's dependence on fisheries resources for food security, nutrition, employment generation and export earnings, Liberia is committed to the national effort in consonance with the global provisions to combat IUU fishing through a number of measures outlined in this National Plan.

Liberia also recognizes the importance of regional cooperation in combating IUU fishing and commits to active collaboration with its neighbors in the framework of FCWC to develop appropriate regional mechanisms to combat IUU fishing in all its forms.

1.1 Objective

The objective of Liberia's National Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (NPOA-IUU) is to lay out a plan of action that identifies existing gaps in relation to combating IUU fishing and to propose remedial steps to address these gaps.

1. Liberia's NPOA-IUU has been developed in accordance with the principles and provisions of the International Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate IUU fishing (IPOA-IUU) and the IUU Regional Plan of Action developed by the Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC-RPOA-IUU).
2. Liberia's NPOA-IUU is presented in three parts. Part A provides the international and global context of IUU fishing concerns and responses. Part B provides a summary on the specific IUU fishing concerns of Liberia. Part C outlines the range of response actions Liberia will undertake to meet its international and regional obligations to combat IUU fishing.

1.2 Overview of Liberia Fisheries

3. The Liberian coastline is 570 kilometers in length extending from the borders of Côte d'Ivoire to Sierra Leone. The country has an exclusive economic zone (EEZ) that extends 200 nautical miles off-shore, consisting of relatively warm waters with low nutrient content. The continental shelf has an average width of 34 km and the widest part in the central region of Liberia. The Liberian EEZ is part of FAO Catch Area 34, the Eastern Central Atlantic.
4. Fish and other aquatic resources are valuable renewable natural resources of Liberia, which can significantly contribute to the national economy and socio-economic development. Liberia has a relatively narrow continental shelf, with concentration of high value species inshore. Fisheries employs an estimated 15,000 fishermen in fish harvest and a further 25,000 fish processors and traders in processing and marketing, providing at least 10% of national protein requirements. Liberia used to export shellfish to European markets. However, this industry was lost and EU markets are closed to Liberia as there is no recognized health certification system in place.
5. The fisheries sector in Liberia is recovering, with positive impact on fishing communities. As a result of governance measures put in place since 2012 with development partners' support, phasing out foreign demersal trawling, there has been measurable stock recovery, a unique situation in the West African region where all other countries are experiencing overfishing and stock depletion. The establishment of the 6 mile Inshore Exclusion Zone (IEZ), protected for artisanal fisheries, and the restriction on industrial demersal trawling has resulted in at least doubling the landings of the artisanal fishery. Liberia fisheries have shown a positive recovery trend with no catches of juvenile fish or disruption of breeding periods by the industrial fishery. More fishermen, fish mongers, and traders have entered this sector, with increased income, and improved food security, particularly in rural regions where cheap imported food are not available during rainy season.
6. An inshore exclusion zone (IEZ) reserves the six (6) nautical miles closest to shore for the sole use of small-scale (artisanal and semi-industrial) fishing activities. All industrial fishing is banned inside the IEZ. There are presently no other marine management areas and no marine protected areas.

7. The fish resources of the Gulf of Guinea include small pelagic species (sardinellas, anchovy, chub mackerel), large pelagic species (tunas, billfish, sharks), coastal demersal species and deep-water demersal species. The sardinellas contribute about 60% of the overall marine catches.

1.2.1 Liberia Fisheries Sector

8. The capture fisheries zones in Liberia comprises of offshore marine fisheries, coastal marine fisheries and inland fisheries. These are targeted by a mix of industrial, artisanal and recreational vessels, as well as some shore-based artisanal operations. Estimates of landings or production are very limited, although a recent program supported by WARFP aims at improving data capture.

1.2.2 Marine Small-scale Fisheries

9. Comprised of the semi-industrial, artisanal fisheries and subsistence sub-sectors, this fishery provides livelihoods for approximately 33, 000 full-time fishers and processors located in the nine coastal counties (i.e. Grand Cape Mount, Montserrado, Grand Bassa, Sinoe, Grand Kru, Rivercess, Margibi, Bomi and Maryland). Around 80 % of those working in the sector are Liberians and 60 % are female. They operate from some 114 fish landing sites along the coastline. The largest craft are the motorized semi-industrial vessels that target mainly small pelagic species and some larger pelagic species using ring-nets, drift-nets, set-nets and gill-nets. There are around 500 of these craft registered to fish in Liberia and they are generally referred to as the Ghanaian-design or ‘Fanti’ craft, operated predominantly by Ghanaians. They are built with a combination of whole logs and planks, have a crew of 12 to 20 men and operate with outboard engines ranging from 10–40 horse power. An increasing number of similar craft, built in the Senegalese all planks-design, are also operating in Liberia, with crew from Senegal and Sierra Leone. The inshore small pelagic fish targeted mainly by this fleet consist largely of bonga, bony, sardines and gbapleh. They make up around 60 % of the small-scale catch, providing the main contribution to fish consumption in the country. The artisanal fishers operate the ‘Kru-style’ wooden dug-out non-motorized canoes, generally targeting demersal species using a variety of fishing gears, including: cast-nets, beach-seines, set-net, gill-nets, traps and hook and line. The canoes are mostly made from tree trunks that are sourced from nearby forests and propelled by sail and/or paddles. There are around 3,000 of these canoes fishing in coastal waters and they come in two sizes. The first, is a smaller version less than six meters in length, with a depth of approximately 60 centimeters and mostly operated by one to three men. The second, is a medium-sized canoe, greater than six meters in length, with crews ranging from three to five men. Most of the catch of this sub-sector, estimated to be around 3,000 tons per year, is processed locally, mainly through drying and smoking. Almost all fish and fishery products are consumed locally, small amounts by the fishers’ families and the bulk sold in the local markets, while some is transported for sale inland or in neighboring countries. It is not uncommon for higher value fish to be sold fresh and transported immediately to restaurants or directly to the market or to individual homes.

1.2.3 Marine Industrial Fisheries

10. The marine industrial fishery can be divided into a trawl fishery for shrimp and demersal finfish that provides frozen whole fish and shrimp for the local market and an off-shore large pelagic fishery. The mixed demersal fishery is not operating in an optimal manner. It utilizes out-dated and at times damaged vessels, equipment, ports and processing facilities, within an environment that is often not safe for workers and polluting the environment. The sector lacks the infrastructure, equipment and expertise to process export-quality fish products. It has traditionally been dominated by foreign companies, with only a few Liberian flagged vessels operating. With the introduction of the six-mile inshore exclusion zone in the 2010 fishery regulations, that banned industrial vessels from fishing in this zone, many of the vessels turned to illegally fishing within the zone. Since 2012, this situation has changed and those now licensed to fish are aware that the BNF, with the support of the Liberian Coast Guard (LCG), will not tolerate any infringement of this regulation and will prosecute those caught fishing illegally in this zone. As a result of the improved governance of this sector the number of vessels fishing has decreased, resulting in reportedly improved catches by the small-scale fishers and a reduction in situations of conflict and thus improved safety for the small-scale fishers. Liberia falls within the migratory path of the offshore large pelagic tropical tuna species, including the yellow-fin, skipjack and big-eye species that migrate within the Atlantic Ocean. In 2012 following the fining of 40 foreign vessels for illegally fishing in Liberian waters, discussions were initiated with foreign companies to start a licensing regime to permit access to foreign vessels to fish in Liberian waters. This would include compensation to the government for the permission to fish, and conservation and management measures to regulate the fishing activities of the foreign vessels.

1.2.4 Inland Fisheries

11. The inland fisheries are based on rivers, lakes and wetlands such as swamps and coastal lagoons. The two major lakes are Lake Shepherd and Lake Piso and there is an extensive river network, the largest and longest of which are the Cavalla and St John Rivers. There are six major rivers and 71 % of the land of Liberia falls within one of the international river basins. Rivers are not navigable as they are shallow and rocky and therefore do not support water transport or fishing on a large scale. Monrovia is surrounded by the Mesurado river wetland, which despite high pollution provides a harvest of tilapia. Although, neither the number of people engaged in inland capture fisheries nor the volume nor value of catch is known, it is considered an important seasonal subsistence activity for riverside communities, using mainly traditional fishing gears and traps. Decisions that impact on inland fisheries have historically been driven by interests other than fisheries, such as the water and forestry sectors.

1.2.5 Recreational fisheries

12. Today recreational fisheries are not of great significance but it is a likely area where growth and new opportunities may arise in the future both in marine and inland locations.

1.3 Significance of the Marine Fisheries Sector to Liberia

13. The marine fisheries sector contributes significantly to Liberia’s socio-economic development as demonstrated in Box 1 below.

Box 1: Significance of Liberia’s Marine Fisheries Sector

- It generates US\$1.86 million in revenue for 2017
- It accounts for an estimated 40,000 people employed directly or indirectly in the sector.
- More than 50% of protein requirements in the Liberian diet comes from fish.
- Generates US\$ 136,000 in foreign exchange export of fish and fisheries products in FY 2016/17

14. The low capacity in fisheries management is restricting domestic industry development. The improved status of the fish stocks provides a great opportunity to develop Liberia’s domestic industrial and large artisanal. With proper governance and careful planning, this renewable resource can generate constant economic benefit for the country. This requires the government to provide secured fishing rights, strong law enforcement and consistent stock monitoring and surveillance while using modern multi-purpose vessels equipped with selective fishing methods and landing all products in Liberia for value addition processing. The biggest constraint is the capacity of NaFAA¹, the capacities on fishery management, fishery monitoring, data collection, analysis, and scientific research are weak.

15. The main identified causes of the decline in Liberia’s fisheries production are outlined in Box 2 below:

Box 2: Major constraints on Liberia’s Marine Fisheries Development

- Capacity for fisheries governance
- Lack of onshore infrastructure, Roads, markets, ice and chill storage
- Weak compliance with fisheries controls

PART A: IUU FISHING IN THE GLOBAL AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

Concept of IUU Fishing

16. The term “IUU fishing” has three but interrelated components, namely:

- (a) illegal fishing,
- (b) unreported fishing and
- (c) unregulated fishing. The full scope of IUU fishing, based on the IPOA-IUU is reproduced in **Appendix 1**. A summary explanation of the concept of IUU fishing is provided in **Box 3**

¹ An Amendment of Fishery Act was approved in November which established a new independent National Fishery and Aquaculture Authority (NaFAA).

below.

Box 3: Summary Explanation of IUU Fishing

- Illegal fishing takes place where vessels operate in violation of the laws of a fishery. This can apply to fisheries that are under the jurisdiction of a coastal State or to high seas fisheries regulated by regional organizations.
- Unreported fishing is fishing that has been unreported or misreported to the relevant national authority or regional organization, in contravention of applicable laws and regulations.
- Unregulated fishing generally refers to fishing by vessels without nationality, or vessels flying the flag of a country not party to the regional organization governing that fishing area or species.

International Concerns about IUU Fishing

17. During the past few decades, the international community has become increasingly aware of the growing number of unlawful and irresponsible fishing activities within national jurisdictions and on the high seas; activities collectively characterized as IUU fishing.
18. IUU fishing has been identified by the international community as one of the most severe problems affecting world fisheries and the main obstacle in achieving sustainable fisheries globally. The major impacts of IUU fishing include loss of marine biodiversity and habitats, reduction in food security and economic loss to coastal States. Globally, it is estimated that IUU fishing accounts for almost one third of the total catch in some important fisheries. The economic cost of IUU fishing has been estimated at over US\$10 billion annually.
19. IUU fishing has also been associated with organized transnational maritime crime such as people smuggling, marine wildlife trafficking, drug trafficking and weapons trafficking in some parts of the world. These consequences of IUU fishing suggest that the problem of IUU fishing has to be tackled in a comprehensive way at national, regional and international levels.

International Actions to Combat IUU Fishing

20. Global concerns about continuing IUU fishing and its devastating impacts on the sustainability of fisheries resources world-wide have resulted in concerted international action through the IPOA-IUU which was adopted by consensus at the Twenty-Fourth Session of COFI on 2 March 2001 and endorsed by the Hundred and Twentieth Session of the FAO Council on 23 June 2001.
21. The IPOA-IUU is a “voluntary and non-legally binding instrument”. However, it draws on core principles from other international legally binding instruments and consensus fisheries instruments for promoting responsible fishing practices (see Box 4 below). A summary of these international instruments is provided in Appendix 2.

Box 4 Relevant International Instruments for Combating IUU Fishing

- United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea 1982 (UNCLOS).
- Agreement to Promote Compliance with International Conservation and Management Measures by Fishing Vessels on the High Seas (1994).
- Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December (1982) Relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (1995) (UN Fish Stocks Agreement).
- Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (2009) (FAO Port State Measures Agreement);
- The Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (1995).
- The International Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity (IPOA-Capacity) (1999).
- The International Plan of Action for Reducing Incidental Catch of Seabirds in Longline Fisheries (1999).
- The International Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks (1999).

22. The IPOA-IUU is a comprehensive “toolbox”, which has a full range of measures that can be used to deal with various manifestations of IUU fishing. These measures, which cut across the responsibilities of all States, flag States, coastal States, port States, and market States, include:

- implementation of international instruments;
- application of sanctions of sufficient severity;
- control over nationals;
- elimination of economic incentives for vessels engaged in IUU fishing;
- effective monitoring, control, and surveillance measures;
- measures against vessels without nationality and vessels flying the flags of non-cooperating States to RFMOs; and
- cooperation among States bilaterally, regionally and globally.

IUU Fishing in the West African Regional Context

23. IUU fishing is of particular concern in the Gulf of Guinea regional context. With shared fish stocks across maritime boundaries and inadequate fisheries monitoring and management systems in most countries, incentives exist for IUU fishing that are difficult to remove. As such, countries in the region have come to realize that a regional approach is essential in order to constrain the geographical scope of IUU fishing and to enable successful arrest and prosecution. In 2009, the member countries of the Fisheries Committee of the West and Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC) developed a Regional Plan of Action on IUU fishing, based on the principles and provisions of the IPOA-IUU. The regional plan identifies 72 specific actions considered necessary for member countries to be implemented regionally and individually (see Appendix 3).

PART B: IUU FISHING IN THE LIBERIA CONTEXT

Liberia's IUU History

24. Poor management measures coupled with weak governance have eluded the Liberia fisheries over the years and have resulted into illegal fishing vessel operating in large numbers in the coastal waters of Liberia. Liberia, over the years lost over US\$12 million dollars annually to illegal fishing. The new fisheries regime introduced in 2010 brought about improved fishing sector including good governance, strong management measures, effective monitoring, control and surveillance and enforcement system which has resulted in the apprehension of many fishing operatives fishing illegally with punitive measures taken against the culprits as indicated in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Summary of Settled IUU Fishing Cases in Liberia

SUMMARY OF SETTLED IUU FISHING CASES IN LIBERIA				
Year	Vessel Name(s) (Flag State)	Company / Association	Violations	Penalty / Compensation Imposed US\$
2011	F/V SETA 70 (South Korea)	Inter-Burgo Industrial Co.	Various (fishing in the IEZ, others)	125,000
	F/V LIAO ZHUANG-YU 15011 (China)	United Marine, Shipping and Stevedoring Agency (UMASSA)	Various (Fishing without a license, fishing in the IEZ, pair trawling)	\$60,000 (\$15,000 per vessel)
	F/V LIAO ZHUANG-YU 15012 (China)			
	F/V LIAO ZHUANG-YU 15031 (China)			
	F/V LIAO ZHUANG-YU 15032 (China)			
	F/V SETA 70 (South Korea)	Inter-Burgo Industrial Co.	Failure to carry an observer, failure to report	\$25,000
F/V SETA 70 (South Korea)	Inter-Burgo Industrial Co.	Various (fishing in the IEZ, others)	\$150,000 + 6 month license suspension	
2012	F/V DONIENE (Spain)	ANABAC	Licensing Irregularities, Unreported fishing activities	\$350,000 + 1 year license ban
	F/V TXORI URDIN (Spain)	ANABAC	Licensing Irregularities, Unreported fishing activities	\$150,000
	F/V EGALUZE (Spain)			\$150,000
	F/V ALBONIGA (Spain)			\$150,000
	F/V JUAN RAMON EGANA (Spain)			\$150,000
	F/V TXIRINNE (Spain)			\$150,000
	F/V PLAYA DE AZKORRI (Belize)			\$150,000
	F/V AVEL VOR (France)	ORTHONGEL	Licensing Irregularities, Unreported fishing activities	\$150,000
	F/V CAP BOJADOR (France)			\$150,000
	F/V GUERIDEN (France)			\$150,000
F/V VIA EUROS (France)	\$150,000			

	F/V VIA HARMATTAN (France)			\$150,000
	F/V GALERNA (Panama)			\$150,000
	F/V KURTZIO (Spain)			\$50,000
	F/V MATXI KORTA (Spain)			\$50,000
	F/V MAR DE SERGIO (Spain)			\$50,000
	F/V ALBACORA QUINCE (Panama)			\$50,000
	F/V MONTECELO (St. Vincent and the Grenadines)			\$50,000
	F/V MONTEFRISA NUEVE	OPAGAC	Licensing Irregularities, Unreported fishing activities	\$50,000
	F/V ALBACORA NUEVE (Curacao)			\$50,000
	F/V ALBACORA CARIBE (Panama)			\$50,000
	F/V ALBACORA DIEZ (Panama)			\$50,000
	F/V KOOSHA II (now ALBACORA SEIS)			\$50,000
	F/V SANT YAGO UNO (Guatemala)			\$50,000
	F/V CAP FINISTERE	MW Brands	Licensing Irregularities, Unreported fishing activities	\$150,000
	F/V CAP VERGA			\$150,000
	F/V CAP COZ			\$150,000
	F/V ZUBEROA (Spain)	ANABAC	Fishing without a license	Two year licensing ban (2013 & 2014)
	F/V PANOFI DISCOVERER (Ghana)	Panofi Fisheries Co.	Various (Fishing without a license, illegal transshipment at sea. Others)	\$300,000
	M/V VOLTA VICTORY (Ghana)			\$100,000
	M/V VOLTA GLORY (Ghana)			\$100,000
	F/V PREMIER (South Korea)	Dongwon Industries	Various (Fishing without a license, forged license, others)	\$1,000,000
	F/V SOLEVANT (Ivory Coast)			\$1,000,000
	F/V SETA 60 (South Korea)	Inter-Burgo Industries Co.	Various (Fishing without a license, illegal transshipment at sea, forged licenses, others)	Case charged but not yet settled
	F/V SETA 62 (South Korea)			
	F/V SETA 70 (South Korea)			
	M/V SETA No.73 (Panama)			
	HAE JEONG 3 (South Korea)	Hae Jeong Co. Ltd.	Fishing inside the Inshore Exclusion Zone	\$100,000
	HAE JEONG 7 (South Korea)	Hae Jeong Co. Ltd.		\$100,000
	NINE STAR (South Korea)	GLOBAL OCEAN FISHING COMPANY	Fishing without a license, others	(Fish auctioned for \$196,000)
2014	M/V GABU REEFER (Moldova)	Snokri Inc.	Reefer failure to get authorisation to land fish	\$2,000
Sub-Total Fines				USD6,411,000

2017	F/V Sheng Hang 808 (Sierra Leone)	UMASSA	No Entry/Exit Notification	US\$15,000
	F/V Sheng Hang 809 (Sierra Leone)	UMASSA	No Entry Notification	US\$10,000
	F/V Hispasen 7 (Senegalese)		No Entry Notification	US\$10,000
	F/V Shrimper XXV (Nigerian)	Monrovia Fishing Agency	No Entry Notification	US\$100,000
	M/V Lian Run	Trans Ocean Maritime Agency, Inc.	Multiple Offense	US\$100,000
	F/V Labiko 2 (Liberian)	UMASSA	Fishing with wrong gear and fishing in unauthorized zone	US\$60,000
2018	F/V Guoji 809 (Chinese)	Trans Ocean Maritime Agency, Inc.	Fishing with expired license	US\$10,000
			Sub-Total Fines	US\$ 05,000
			Total	US\$ 6,715,000

Cases Not Yet Finalized

	F/V EROS (Portugal)		Various (Fishing without a license, forged license, others)	\$117,500 (not yet paid)
	NINE STAR (South Korea)		(Fishing without a license, others)	Case charged but not yet settled

2014	NANA ANOA 2 (Ghana)	Fishing without a license, others	Case under investigation
	MV GABU REEFER (Moldova)	ILLEGAL IMPORT OF FISH	Case charged but not settle (\$250,000)

Liberia's IUU Fishing Challenges

25 Liberia is not immune from IUU fishing, either as a source State or as victim State. In recent years, there has been instances of non-compliance by foreign flagged fishing vessels with existing fisheries laws and regulations within Liberia's fishery waters and unlicensed fishing by Liberia flagged vessels outside Liberia's fisheries waters.

Gaps Analysis in Liberia's Fisheries Law and Management Practice

26 Liberia's fisheries legislation and management practices require improvement to enable Liberia to adequately combat IUU fishing. These gaps are outlined below under three headings: (a) legislative; (b) fisheries management; and (c) monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS).

National Policy

27 The 2008 Liberian Poverty Reduction Strategy provides the overall policy and strategic framework for the country as it re-builds after the civil conflict, while the Food and Agriculture Policy and Strategy (FAPS) places this within the context of agriculture, including fisheries.

28 The Liberia Fisheries Policy states in Article 3.2.5; '*Implementing effective Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) mechanisms to prevent IUU fishing*' identifies the need to implement effective mechanisms that encourage, enforce and monitor compliance

government will adopt innovative and appropriate technology and tools; appropriate enforcement hardware; information sharing and cooperation at local, national, regional and international levels; and risk assessment, to prevent IUU fishing in a cost-effective and practical manner’.

Legal Framework

29 The fisheries legal framework consists of the Natural Resources Act, 1956 and the Liberia Fisheries Regulations, 2010. There is in addition the Co-Management Charter developed by the CMA and BNF for the Robertsport area, and a MCS Coordination Committee (MCSCC) Memorandum of Understanding between the MOA / BNF, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Finance, National Port Authority, and Liberia Maritime Authority defining inter-agency MCS cooperation. The EEZ has been declared through Executive Order 39 – Delimiting the Maritime Zones of the Republic of Liberia.

30 The current legal framework is considered weak and inadequate. The finalization and adoption of the new Fisheries Act that is currently under development, followed by a review and updating of the Fisheries Regulations, is crucial for effective fisheries management to be achieved. It is also vital that the Liberian Government lodge the EEZ baselines under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) to internationally delineate the EEZ as soon as possible.

Fisheries Institutional Framework

31 The National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority is an autonomous body created by Act of Parliament. It is headed by the Director General, and currently comprises of four Divisions: Marine, Inland and Aquaculture, Research and Statistics, and Administration. It is responsible for developing, administering and managing fishery sector policy. As well as senior Division staff, the NaFAA currently supports port and landing site inspectors, industrial vessel observers and research staff.

32 Liberia has the opportunity and challenge to develop its own commercial industrial and semi-industrial fisheries that bring maximum, sustainable benefit to Liberians. Human capital and political support are critical to ensure the transition.

33 Outside of Monrovia small-scale landing site inspectors and enumerators are attached to regional MoA offices, distributed through the coastal regions of the country. Inspectors are responsible for monitoring landing sites and collecting data for species landed as well as monitoring and enforcing compliance requirements. Enumerators collect data only, and do not play an enforcement function, though they can report to inspectors. There is currently no fisheries research institute, although a fisheries curriculum was started at the University of Liberia.

Legislative Gaps

34 The impact of the limited existing management measures are difficult to assess due to limited information about the state of the stocks and the actual fishing pressure applied. The present legislation is inadequate, and although the introduction of the Liberia Fisheries Regulations in 2010 has contributed to improved controls and several high profile illegal fishing prosecutions, they are not enforced consistently and consequently satisfactory levels of compliance have not yet been achieved. The current development of stronger legislation and the subsequent management measures is planned, providing the legal basis and an institutional framework that will be the foundation of future enforcement.

35 Current fisher understanding of the regulations, or at least the most important ones, is difficult to assess. The 2010 Liberia Fisheries Regulations are available for download from the BNF website, information and management decisions are regularly posted. In Robertsport, NaFAA and CMA have effectively raised awareness and understanding of fishers understanding of the Fisheries Regulations. Liberian agents representing industrial fishing vessels, and the agents representing fish importers, are in general aware of and understand the regulations; some agents however have demonstrated active disregard for the requirements and have been implicated in several illegal fishing cases.

36 Prompt and adequate reactions to violations of the Regulations are essential for the State's reputation and ability to deter illegal activities. One major concern raised is that the Regulations only provide for maximum penalties, rather than providing a minimum and maximum penalty range that can better guide NaFAA and MCSCC where there have been violations. Further the penalty structure is 'one size fits all' and does not distinguish between small-scale and industrial fishing sectors, and that relevant penalty structures for each are required.

37 The key gaps in the Fisheries Act and Regulations which require improvement are listed in box 5 below.

Box 5: Gaps in Liberia's Fisheries Legislation²

² Most of the gaps identified in Liberia's Fisheries Legislation would be addressed with the efficacy of the new Fisheries Management Law.

- Absence of legislative provisions to enable Liberia to adequately discharge its flag State duties
- Absence of specific legal measures to prevent, deter or eliminate IUU fishing activities committed by vessels flying the flag of Liberia
- Absence of sanctions of adequate severity to deter IUU fishing
- Inadequate provisions on administrative sanctions for fisheries offences, giving rise to protracted cases in court for IUU fishing offences
- Lack of provisions enabling Liberia to implement its regional fisheries management organization (ICCAT) obligations
- Inadequate satellite vessel monitoring system legislation, particularly tampering with, the monitoring device and evidentiary issues associated with the monitoring device data to be admissible evidence in court
- Lack of provisions to implement catch verification and certification for the export of fisheries products
- Insufficient prosecution and judicial capacity to support fisheries law enforcement

Fisheries Management Gaps

38 A number of improvements are required in Liberia's fisheries management practice to effectively combat IUU fishing. The key gaps which require attention are presented in Box 6 below.

Box 6: Fisheries Management Gaps

- Weak implementation of international obligations
- Lack of fisheries management plans
- Weak data collection and analysis
- Inadequate framework to manage overcapacity in the fishery
- Inadequate framework for catch certification and verification
- Lack of administrative procedures to implement the Fisheries Act
- Lack of comprehensive staff strength and capacity

Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) Gaps

39 At the heart of combating IUU fishing is developing and implementing effective MCS measures. Liberia's MCS framework requires improvement in a number of ways, outlined in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Liberia's MCS Framework

MCS Element	Currently Operational	Challenges
Licensing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industrial Licenses are granted after due-diligence, pre-license inspection, and agreement by NaFAA licensing committee Artisanal Licenses are granted by Marine Division Original copies of licenses are carried aboard industrial vessels All licenses require NaFAA approval Copies of licenses are carried aboard artisanal and semi-industrial vessels Industrial vessel license list is published on NaFAA website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current format of licenses are inadequate, and requires updating Large percentage of artisanal and semi-industrial vessels are not licensed, particularly outside the Monrovia and Robertsport areas The number of small-scale licenses make it impractical for the DG NaFAA to sign them all Consistent due-diligence procedures for license applications not in place Consistent archiving of license application, inspection reports and licenses not in place Industrial vessel license list not kept up to date Recreational fishers rarely licensed Licensing fee regime is reliant on catch data and monitoring
VMS / AIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All licensed foreign industrial fishing vessels carry MTUs consistent with Liberian specifications All licensed national industrial fishing vessels carry MTUs, consistent with Liberian specifications All large foreign commercial fishing vessels equipped with AIS National VMS office, staff and equipment are operational; staff training is ongoing VMS is monitored and potential violations or malfunctions are queried Vessels with non -reporting MTUs are required to return to port VMS and AIS monitored during regular working hours, with weekend reviews on Mondays and nightly reviews each morning AIS SeaVision service presently provided at no cost by the US Navy AIS Exact Earth temporary access for artisanal tracking pilot project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VMS requirement when vessels are licensed is not always enforced Ongoing staff training required Internet and electrical connection at FMC not always sufficient for VMS and AIS operations VMS and AIS is not monitored 24 hours, 7 days a week No budget to maintain FMC Limited capacity to interpret VMS and AIS tracks
Observers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observers have been trained for inshore demersal trawler deployment by NOAA Trained observers are carried on 100% of all fishing trips by foreign industrial demersal trawlers in EEZ Trained observers are carried on 100% of all fishing trips by Liberian industrial demersal trawlers in EEZ Observer reports are entered into dashboard Adequate numbers of observers for current trawler fleet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observer deployment is not well coordinated between Marine Division, Observer Management Team, and MCS Observer de-brief is not well coordinated between Marine Division, Observer Management Team, and MCS Observer duties and data collection is carried out with variable diligence, dependent on individual performance Input of observer data into dashboard is slow Radio communications between observers and FMC have not taken place due to technical difficulties Majority of observers not sufficiently experienced / trained to operate on a pelagic tuna vessel Inadequate numbers of trained observers if significant numbers of tuna vessels are licensed
Port controls and monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most landings and transshipments of fish in port are inspected by officials Transshipments are required to have written authorization from the DG NaFAA, and catches inspected in port ahead of time Import applications are required, and import/export committee established Port inspectors have received some training Port inspectors have been issued authorization by Coordinator Landing site inspectors in some regions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of a dedicated fishing port and offloading area Import requirements and procedures are frequently not followed Import / export committee rarely perform as intended Process to secure annual port access passes often delayed, limiting ability of port inspectors to operate Weak procedures for port inspections

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fisheries inspectors not members the multi-agency port inspection teams • Fisheries inspectors limited to normal working hours; vessels often offload outside these • Vessel agents often refuse port inspectors access to vessels • Limited cooperation between relevant agencies, particularly NaFAA and NPA. • Limited numbers of landing site inspectors. Limited resources and training for landing site inspectors. • Limited resources for wider shore based patrols
Prosecutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licensing committee established and experienced in reviewing illegal fishing cases and negotiating settlement agreements • Suspected violations of the Liberia Fisheries Regulations by industrial vessels are investigated and prosecuted • Suspected VMS violations are investigated and prosecuted • Observer reports of violations are investigated and prosecuted • Fishing violations by surface and aerial surveillance operations are investigated and prosecuted • NaFAA staff have received some training and support, and currently resourced by WARFP • Sanctions levels are consistently improving, and are now generally at the level where they can be considered to be encouraging compliance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prosecution and judicial authorities are not adequately trained and resourced, have limited knowledge of fisheries and maritime law and associated crime • Internal NaFAA processes can be slow • MCSCC working well at a policy, but not operational level • Fines are not always paid, or upheld by NaFAA • Prosecutions of small-scale vessels are generally arbitrary due to lack of realistic fine structures / guidance in the 2010 Regulations • Corruption and conflict of interest experienced in historical IUU cases
Boarding and Inspection, and at sea patrols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LCG receiving training from USCG and US Navy • Four inshore patrol vessels, additional RIBs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inshore patrol vessels hampered by maintenance issues and fuel availability • Inshore patrol vessels limited to operations near Monrovia – majority of IEZ and EEZ not accessible • No capacity to undertake boarding and inspections in EEZ • Coordination between LCG and NaFAA not always achieved • NaFAA staff limited training and experience of boarding and inspection at sea • All fisheries patrols funded by WARFP
Data and MCS coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systems established for acquisition and storage of MCS data within the NaFAA • Processes in place to share data and information with foreign and regional MCS agencies in support of wider MCS operations • Domestic agreement (MoU) established for coordination of MCS operations between relevant agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information-sharing between BNF departments inadequate • Systems established for acquisition, storage and sharing of MCS data between relevant agencies not established • Catch logbook data is not collected • Systems still being established to cross check and verify MCS and fisheries data • Inter-agency coordination not always achieved
Legislation, regulations and Management Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulations are adequate to implement and enforce MCS • Regulations are adequately understood by relevant fisheries personnel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management plan does not currently exist • Fisheries Policy and Act need to be finalized and adopted • Fisheries Regulations need to be updated • Legislation and regulations are not adequately understood by other agencies, judiciary
Regional MCS cooperation and information sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness about benefits of regional cooperation and information sharing high • Individual IUU fishing incidents has proven will to cooperate regionally • Regional Fishing Bodies (RFBs) and Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political will and support to implement the concept not developed sufficiently • Limited regional instruments allowing MCS to be carried out across West Africa • No “Lacey Act” provisions in domestic legislation

	<p>ready to test cooperation and information sharing concepts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common dashboard set up in all WARFP-supported countries in the region for improved and harmonized data collection and sharing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional cooperation and information sharing at a very early conceptual start • Regional flag States upholding their responsibilities critical to the cooperation • Language barriers
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Supporting Institutions

40 Five (5) Government Agencies are planned to support MCS functions through a formalized Memorandum of Understanding. Together these form the MCS Coordinating Committee (MCSCC)

41 **The Liberia Coast Guard (LCG)** of the Ministry of National Defense patrols the territorial waters of Liberia. They have four Defender class inshore patrol vessels currently only operating out of Monrovia, although Forward Operating Bases (FOB) are planned; there are in addition a small number of motorized RIBs. They conduct targeted fisheries patrols with fisheries inspectors generally on board, previously with support from WARFP-Liberia. Both inshore coastal areas and river / lagoon areas are patrolled, however these are currently limited to the northwest of the country due to range limitations from Monrovia.

42 **The Liberia Maritime Authority (LMA)** are responsible for vessel safety and seaworthiness, national and regional coordination of search and rescue functions, crew training and conditions, and support to fisheries operation where relevant.

43 **The National Port Authority (NPA)** are responsible for port management and controls.

44 **The Ministry of Finance (MoF)** ensures that the Customs and Excise functions of the GOL are upheld and enhanced.

45 **The Ministry of Justice (MoJ)** including the Liberia National Police, Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization, and the Prosecution Department, is responsible to ensure effective prosecution of all violations.

46 The Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF), a UK-based NGO, provides support to community surveillance through local staff and assets. The organization has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the then MoA, now NaFAA, to support fisheries research, capacity building and monitoring.

Regional co-operation

47 Liberia is a member of the Fisheries Committee of the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC), along with Ivory Coast, Ghana, Togo, Benin and Nigeria. The FCWC has a regional plan of action on IUU fishing and is currently developing conventions on minimum terms of access and data sharing. The FCWC has been supportive of Liberian actions to combat IUU and has facilitated communications with member States.

b. The Fisheries Monitoring Centre (FMC) staff of NaFAA and the National Working Group (Liberia) of the FCWC West Africa Task Force (WATF) benefited from several training in the area of vessel monitoring and data analysis under the EU-PESCAO project. 48

Liberia is a member of the Mano River Union (MRU), along with Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone and Guinea. Although the MRU does not have any fisheries specific function, it does contain provisions on regional cooperation on resource management, and has been utilized to facilitate cooperation on fisheries enforcement between members, particularly Liberia and Sierra Leone.

49 Liberia is a member of the Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States Bordering the Atlantic (COMHAFAT-ATLAFCO). The main objectives of this organization are the promotion and strengthening of regional cooperation on fisheries development and the coordination and harmonization of efforts and capacities of stakeholders for the conservation and exploitation of fisheries resources. It includes all countries from Morocco in the north to Namibia in the south.

49 Liberia is a member of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) and a cooperating non-contracting party to other RFMOs including the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC); Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), Southern Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organization (SPRFMO); Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) and Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC). This will require Liberia to cooperate on the management of tuna and tuna-like species, be assigned quota for certain species and imbed the RFMOs recommendations into national legal frameworks and management decisions.

50 WARFP-Liberia is administered through the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC). Therefore, although Liberia is not a member of the SRFC, MCS staff has taken part in several WARFP linked regional programs and therefore have a good relationship with this organization.

51 In 2013 Liberia cooperated closely on an illegal fishing case with the member countries of the FISH-i Africa initiative in the Western Indian Ocean (Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, and Seychelles). This was conducted through the Stop Illegal Fishing (SIF) working group of NEPAD.

52 Liberia has recently cooperated bilaterally with the European Union, the United Kingdom, Spain, South Korea and the United States on MCS initiatives, including on illegal fishing cases.

PART C: LIBERIA'S IUU FISHING NATIONAL RESPONSE ACTIONS

53 The objective of this part is to lay out a plan of remedial action to address the gaps identified in Part B of this document. In doing so, Liberia's NPOA-IUU will be responding to the IPOA-IUU and, the FCWC-RPOA-IUU. An implementation schedule is also provided to enable progress to be assessed.

54 The IPOA-IUU divides its actions into 8 categories as follows:

- a. All State Responsibilities
- b. Flag State Responsibilities

- c. Coastal State Measures
- d. Port State Measures
- e. Market-related measures
- f. Research
- g. Regional Fisheries Management Organizations
- h. Special requirements of developing countries.

55 Liberia's NPOA-IUU actions will follow the IPOA-IUU format.

Actions to Combat IUU Fishing

ALL STATE RESPONSIBILITIES

<p>Action 1: Give legal effect to international fisheries agreements to which Liberia is party:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ratification and implementation of UN Fish Stocks Agreement • Ratification of FAO Port State Measures Agreement
<p>Action 2: Strengthen the regulatory framework for operational fisheries management in Liberia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen VMS legislation so all large vessels must use VMS as a licensing condition, including foreign vessels in Liberia's EEZ and Liberia-flagged vessels outside the EEZ
<p>Action 3: Effectively control activities associated with IUU fishing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the Fisheries Monitoring, Control, Surveillance and Enforcement Unit • Coordinate fisheries enforcement tasking with the MCSCC
<p>Action 4: Identify and monitor IUU vessels and share information with neighboring States</p>
<p>Action 5: Identify and quantify illegal catches</p>
<p>Action 6: Contribute to improved global information on IUU fishing vessels</p>
<p>Action 7: Communicate with fishing communities, fisheries officers and others about IUU fishing</p>

FLAG STATE RESPONSIBILITIES

Action 8: Exercise flag state responsibility by implementing the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Flag State Performance

- **Revise legislation to include provisions on licensing, data collection and control of operations by the NaFAA**
- **Require IUU assessment against clearly defined criteria before vessels are accepted for registration, to ensure that vessels with a history of IUU fishing are not reflagged to Liberia**
- **Require evidence of license to fish in other countries, including any associated conditions, and require registration of this license with the NaFAA**
- **Revise legislation to strengthen control of nationals**
- **Introduce sanctions with severe penalties**
- **Make provisions for the deregistration of Liberia-flagged vessels that are discovered to have a history of IUU fishing**

Action 9: Enforce relevant fisheries regulations for Liberian flagged vessels on the high seas and in the jurisdiction of other States

COASTAL STATE MEASURES

Action 10: Improve management of all marine fisheries sectors, consistent with FAO Code of Conduct on Sustainable Fisheries; eliminate overfishing; minimize risk of irreversible damage to ecosystems.

PORT STATE MEASURES

Action 11: Incorporate FAO Port State Measures Agreement and ICCAT Recommendation 97- 10 into domestic legislation and enforcement action.

MARKET-RELATED MEASURES

Action 12: Ensure that IUU fisheries products are not imported or exported from or into Liberia

- **Revise legislation to comply with regulations on catch certification, to improve traceability of fisheries products**
- **Requirements for validation and penalties on vessel masters, operators and officials for not complying with validation requirements**
- **Administrative strengthening for authorisation of catch certificates; records to be verified**
- **Implement penalties for public officials who fail to comply with established legal and administrative procedures**

RESEARCH

Action 13: Enhanced systems for fisheries monitoring, data collection (catch, effort, socio-economic data, ecosystem impacts), digitisation and analysis; collaborate within ICCAT for assessment of shared stocks, and with other agencies, universities and development partners for related research

REGIONAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

Action 14: Participate fully in ICCAT, including domestic implementation of ICCAT Recommendations and cooperation with other ICCAT Contracting Parties:

- **Establish process for integrating ICCAT Recommendations into domestic management**
- **Review legislation against all ICCAT Recommendations and amend accordingly**
- **Legislation to implement ICCAT Recommendation on transshipment prohibition at sea**
- **Develop Management Plans for implementing ICCAT Recommendations**
- **Review National Observer Programme against ICCAT Requirements to ensure compliance**

Action 15: Collaborate within FCWC on regional responses to ongoing and emerging IUU issues

Action 16: Further develop the regional framework for cooperation, especially in relation to IUU fishing, by establishing clear lines of communication and coordinating actions with other states

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

Action 17: Collaborate with development partners to improve fisheries management in Liberia and the wider Gulf of Guinea, especially regarding monitoring, control, surveillance and enforcement

Action 18: Capacity building for officials in fisheries management, including training in fisheries law, monitoring, control and surveillance, fisheries science, and international trade.

Action 19: Collaboration with development partners for infrastructure development and international sourcing of relevant technical expertise

REPORTING

Action 20: Improve reporting of management performance in terms of effectiveness of regulations, degree of compliance, biological status of fish stocks and bio-/socio-economic status of fisheries.

Time Frame for Implementation of Actions

	Action	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
1	Give legal effect in Liberia to international fisheries agreements to which Liberia is party	X	x			
2	Strengthen the regulatory framework for operational fisheries management in Liberia	X	x	X	X	
3	Effectively control activities associated with IUU fishing	X				
4	Identify and monitor IUU vessels and share information with neighboring states	X	x	x	x	x
5	Identify and quantify illegal catches	X	x	x	x	x
6	Contribute to improved global information on IUU fishing vessels	X	x	x	x	x
7	Communicate with fishing communities, fisheries officers and others about IUU fishing	X	x	x	x	x
8	Exercise flag state responsibility by implementing the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Flag State Performance	X	x			
9	Enforce relevant fisheries regulations for Liberia-flagged vessels on the high seas and in the jurisdiction of other States	X	x	x	x	x
10	Improve management of all marine fisheries sectors, consistent with FAO Code of Conduct on Sustainable Fisheries; eliminate overfishing; minimize risk of irreversible damage to ecosystems	X	x	x	x	x
11	Incorporate FAO Port State Measures Agreement and ICCAT Recommendation 97- 10 into domestic legislation and enforcement action	X	x	x		
12	Ensure that IUU fisheries products are not imported into Liberia or exported from Liberia	X	x	x	x	x
13	Enhanced systems for fisheries monitoring, data collection (catch, effort, socio-economic data, ecosystem impacts), digitization and analysis; collaborate within ICCAT for assessment of shared stocks, and with other agencies, universities and development partners for related research.	X	X			
14	Participate fully in ICCAT, including domestic implementation of ICCAT	X	x	x	X	X

	Recommendations and cooperation with other ICCAT Contracting Parties:					
15	Collaborate within FCWC on regional cooperation	X	X	X	x	x
16	Further develop the regional framework for cooperation, especially in relation to IUU fishing, by establishing clear lines of communication and coordinating actions with other States	X	X			
17	Collaborate with development partners to improve fisheries management in Liberia and the wider Gulf of Guinea, especially regarding monitoring, control, surveillance and enforcement	X	X	X	X	x
18	Capacity building for officials in fisheries management including training in fisheries law, monitoring, control and surveillance, fisheries science and international trade	X	X	X	X	X
19	Collaboration with development partners for infrastructure development and international sourcing of relevant technical expertise	X	X	X	X	x
20	Improve reporting of management performance in terms of effectiveness of regulations, degree of compliance, biological status of fish stock and bio-socio-economic status of fisheries	X	X	X	X	x

Appendix 1: Definition of IUU Fishing From IPOA-IUU

3.1 Illegal fishing refers to activities:

3.1.1 conducted by national or foreign vessels in waters under the jurisdiction of a State, without the permission of that State, or in contravention of its laws and regulations;

3.1.2 conducted by vessels flying the flag of States that are parties to a relevant regional fisheries management organization but operate in contravention of the conservation and management measures adopted by that organization and by which the States are bound, or relevant provisions of the applicable international law; or

3.1.3 in violation of national laws or international obligations, including those undertaken by cooperating States to a relevant regional fisheries management organization.

3.2 Unreported fishing refers to fishing activities:

3.2.1 which have not been reported, or have been misreported, to the relevant national authority, in contravention of national laws and regulations; or

3.2.2 undertaken in the area of competence of a relevant regional fisheries management organization which have not been reported or have been misreported, in contravention of the reporting procedures of that organization.

3.3 Unregulated fishing refers to fishing activities:

3.3.1 in the area of application of a relevant regional fisheries management organization that are conducted by vessels without nationality, or by those flying the flag of a State not party to that organization, or by a fishing entity, in a manner that is not consistent with or contravenes the conservation and management measures of that organization; or

3.3.2 in areas or for fish stocks in relation to which there are no applicable conservation or management measures and where such fishing activities are conducted in a manner inconsistent with State responsibilities for the conservation of living marine resources under international law.

Appendix 2 Summary of Relevant International Instruments Supporting the IPOA-IUU

United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)

UNCLOS provides the basic legal framework that regulates all marine sector activities, including the utilisation of the resources of the sea, the preservation of the marine environment and relations among States in so far as marine sector activities are concerned. The most important aspects of UNCLOS with regard to fisheries relate to the establishment of the exclusive economic zone (EEZ), requirements for conservation and management measures for fish stocks in the EEZ, requirements for cooperation among States to manage fish stocks and provisions on the conservation, management and utilisation of high seas fisheries such as the implementation of flag State duties, as well as the duty to cooperate among States to manage high seas fisheries. UNCLOS establishes varying degrees of rights and duties of States with respect to the conservation and management of fisheries resources in accordance with the maritime zone where such resources are located. UNCLOS provides for the determination of the allowable catch and the establishment of conservation measures on the basis of best scientific evidence available which maintains or restores populations of harvested species at levels which can produce the maximum sustainable yield, as qualified by relevant environmental and economic factors. This determination should take into account the special requirements of developing States, fishing patterns and generally recommended international minimum standards.

FAO Compliance Agreement

The *Agreement to Promote Compliance with International Conservation and Management Measures by Fishing Vessels on the High Seas* (FAO Compliance Agreement) was unanimously approved, subject to acceptance, at the 27th Session of the Conference of the FAO in November 1993 and entered into force on 24 April 2003. The FAO Compliance Agreement was developed in order to address concerns over the practice of reflagging of fishing vessels in order to avoid high seas conservation and management measures determined by regional fisheries organizations. The Compliance Agreement strengthens the duties of flag States by improving the regulation of fishing vessels on the high seas. This is done through the obligation of parties to maintain an authorisation and recording system for high seas fishing vessels and to ensure that vessels registered under their flags do not undermine international conservation and management measures.

The Compliance Agreement applies to vessels used or intended for fishing on the high seas. However, a party may exempt fishing vessels less than 24 metres in length, unless the exemption undermines the effectiveness of international conservation and management measures. The Agreement requires a State Party to maintain a record of fishing vessels entitled to fly its flag and authorized for use on the high seas, and to take such measures as are necessary to ensure that all such vessels are entered on that record. It also provides for international cooperation, specifically exchange of information, port state cooperation, and for parties to enter into cooperative agreements or arrangements of mutual assistance on a

global, regional, subregional or bilateral basis in order to achieve the objectives of the Agreement.

UN Fish Stocks Agreement

The Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (UN Fish Stocks Agreement) was adopted on 4 August 1995 by the United Nations Conference on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks and entered into force on 11 November 2001. The UN Fish Stocks Agreement seeks to ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable use of straddling and highly migratory fish stocks by strengthening the legal framework for their conservation and management through global, regional and sub-regional fisheries management organisations. The Agreement provides that conservation and management of straddling and highly migratory fish stocks must be based on the precautionary approach and the best available scientific information. Further, the measures in areas under national jurisdiction and in the adjacent high seas must be compatible. It recognises the special requirements of developing States, and there are effective mechanisms for compliance and enforcement of those measures on the high seas.

FAO Port State Measures Agreement

The Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (Port State Measures Agreement) was approved by the FAO Conference at its Thirty-sixth Session on 22 November 2009. The objective of the Agreement is to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing through the implementation of effective port State measures, and thereby to ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable use of living marine resources and marine ecosystems.

The Port State Measures Agreement respects the sovereignty of Parties over their internal, archipelagic and territorial waters or their sovereign rights over their continental shelf and in their EEZs and allows Parties the exercise of their sovereignty over ports in their territory in accordance with international law, including their right to deny entry thereto as well as to adopt more stringent port State measures than those provided for in the Agreement.

FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing

The Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries was initiated in 1991 by the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) and unanimously adopted on 31 October 1995. While the Code is voluntary in nature, parts of it were based on relevant rules of international law, including those in UNCLOS, FAO Compliance Agreement, and the UN Fish Stocks Agreement. It is global in scope, and is directed toward both members and non-members of FAO, fishing entities, sub regional, regional and global organizations, whether governmental or non-governmental, and all persons concerned with the conservation of fishery resources and management and development of fisheries, such as fishers, those engaged in processing and

marketing of fish and fishery products and other users of the aquatic environment in relation to fisheries. The Code provides principles and standards applicable to the conservation, management and development of all fisheries. It also covers the capture, processing and trade of fish and fishery products, fishing operations, aquaculture, fisheries research and the integration of fisheries into coastal area management. Within the framework of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries four international plans of action (IPOAs) have been developed to date.

The International Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity

The *International Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity* (IPOA-Capacity) addresses the issue of excess fishing capacity in world fisheries as a problem that contributes substantially to IUU fishing, overfishing, the degradation of marine fisheries resources, the decline of food production potential, and significant economic waste. The objective of the IPOA-Capacity is for States and regional fisheries organizations, to achieve an efficient, equitable and transparent management of fishing capacity. In order to achieve this end, the IPOA-Capacity encourages States and regional fisheries organizations with an overcapacity problem to endeavour initially to limit at present level and progressively reduce the fishing capacity applied to affected fisheries. The above objective may be achieved through a series of actions related to four major strategies: (a) the conduct of national, regional and global assessments of capacity and improvement of the capability for monitoring fishing capacity; (b) the preparation and implementation of national plans to effectively manage fishing capacity and of immediate actions for coastal fisheries requiring urgent measures; (c) the strengthening of regional fisheries organizations and related mechanisms for improved management of fishing capacity at regional and global levels; and (d) immediate actions for major transboundary, straddling, highly migratory and high seas fisheries requiring urgent measures.

The International Plan of Action for Reducing Incidental Catch of Seabirds in Longline Fisheries

The *International Plan of Action for Reducing Incidental Catch of Seabirds in Longline Fisheries* (IPOA-Seabirds) arose out of concerns over the impacts of the incidental catch of seabirds in various commercial longline fisheries in the world. The objective of the IPOA-Seabirds is to reduce the incidental catch of seabirds in longline fisheries where this occurs. Thus, the IPOA-Seabirds applies to States in the waters of which longline fisheries are being conducted by their own or foreign vessels and to States that conduct longline fisheries on the high seas and in the EEZ of other States. The IPOA-Seabirds provides that States implementing the IPOA should carry out a set of activities in conjunction with relevant international organizations based on an assessment of the incidental catch of seabirds in longline fisheries. The States with longline fisheries should conduct an assessment of these fisheries to determine if a problem exists with respect to incidental catch of seabirds and adopt a National Plan of Action (NPOA) for reducing the incidental catch of seabirds in longline fisheries, if such a problem exists. On the other hand, States which determine that an NPOA is not necessary should review that decision on a regular basis, particularly taking into

account changes in their fisheries, such as the expansion of existing fisheries and/or the development of new longline fisheries. The IPOA-Seabirds encourages States to cooperate through regional and subregional fisheries organizations or arrangements, and other forms of cooperation, to reduce the incidental catch of seabirds in longline fisheries, including through bilateral and multilateral arrangements in research, training and the production of information and promotional material.

The International Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks

The *International Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks* (IPOA-Sharks) arose out of concerns over the increase of shark catches and its consequences for the populations of some shark species in several areas of the world's oceans. The objective of the IPOA-Sharks is to ensure the conservation and management of sharks and their long-term sustainable use. The IPOA-Sharks encompasses both target and non-target catches and defines a shark as including all species of sharks, skates, rays and chimaeras (Class Chondrichthyes), and the term "shark catch" is taken to include directed, bycatch, commercial, recreational and other forms of taking sharks. The IPOA-Sharks applies to States in the waters of which sharks are caught by their own or foreign vessels and to States the vessels of which catch sharks on the high seas. The IPOA-Sharks provides that States should adopt a national plan of action (Shark Plan) taking into account the experience of subregional and regional fisheries management organizations for the conservation and management of shark stocks if their vessels conduct directed fisheries for sharks or if their vessels regularly catch sharks in non-directed fisheries. The IPOA-Sharks provides that States should carry out a regular assessment of the status of shark stocks subject to fishing so as to determine if there is a need for development of a shark plan. It provides that States which implement the *Shark-plan* should regularly assess its implementation at least every four years for the purpose of identifying cost-effective strategies for increasing its effectiveness; while States which determine that a *Shark-plan* is not necessary should review that decision on a regular basis taking into account changes in their fisheries, but as a minimum, data on catches, landings and trade should be collected.

IPOA-IUU

The *International Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter, and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing* (IPOA-IUU) was adopted by consensus at the Twenty-fourth Session of COFI on 2 March 2001 and endorsed by the Hundred and Twentieth Session of the FAO Council on 23 June 2001. The objective of the IPOA-IUU is to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing by providing all States with comprehensive, effective and transparent measures by which to act, including through appropriate regional fisheries management organizations established in accordance with international law.

Appendix 3: Management Measures agreed under the FCWC Regional Plan of Action aimed at Preventing, Deterring and Eliminating IUU Fishing

1 OBJECTIVE OF THE REGIONAL PLAN

The Regional Plan of Action is based on the principles and provisions governing the IPOA-IUU, and on a relatively objective analysis of existing actions, efforts and mechanisms both at national and regional levels in the zone of the countries of the Fisheries Committee for the Gulf of Guinea.

The plan identifies 72 measures whose implementation according to the degree of urgency expressed by the number of asterisk is considered necessary or indispensable in certain cases.

2. MEASURES OF THE REGIONAL PLAN OF ACTION

2.1. RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL STATES

2.1.1 International instruments

Measure.1*: All the states are strongly urged to sign and ratify the United Nations agreement of 1995 and that of the FAO of 1993 relating to straddling stocks and compliance with international management measures respectively;

Measure.2*: All the FCWC member States are urged to include the relevant standards and principles of these agreements in their national laws and ensure their application;

Measure 3* : All the States are urged to be party to the international conventions relating to safety at sea, compensation in case of pollution and the protection of endangered species.

2.1.2. National laws

Measure.4*: All States are urged to review and adopt deterrent enforcement laws and provisions that can facilitate control operations and reduce IUU fishing activities in the Committee's zone. These laws must cover fishing on the high seas, flags of convenience, the right of pursuit and responsible fisheries practices applicable to all legal personalities or entities.

Measure 5*: All States are urged to harmonize their national and regional regulations especially concerning the status of the vessel, registration, flags of convenience and to envisage special provisions relating to the exercise of the right of pursuit.

2.1.3. Control of the State over their nationals

Measure.6*: The States are urged to include in their national legislation (law and enforcement measures) specific provisions to help control and monitor and to judge if need be, the nationals and (persons and vessels) operating in other zones beyond their sub- jurisdictions if it turns out that these persons or vessels have committed illegal fishing acts including the use of flags of convenience

Mesures.7* : The States are urged to sign regional agreements and conventions among FCWC States, helping to subject to control and trial any person or vessels having committed serious offenses in the waters of one of more of the member countries.

2.1.4. Vessels without nationality

Measure.8*: Organize, and develop national registries of vessels and include in the sections any data necessary to establish the traceability of fishing vessels in the waters of each country. The registers must be maintained in duplicate and initialed on electronic cards

developed on a database software to facilitate the search for and analysis of data and their exchange with the Regional Register of the FCWC.

Measure.9** : Organize, computerize and update, under the same conditions as those for industrial fisheries, registers specific to artisanal and inland fisheries and register all artisanal and inland fishing vessels by adopting a participatory approach involving the local authorities, fishers' communities and local authorities.

Measure 10***: Envisage a provisional registration or number certification system (in Liberia) for boats of FCWC countries which wish to continue flying their original flag knowing that during their stay in the country, these boats are subjected to the regulations of the port country. For these boats we can think of a registration which reflects the fact that the boats belong to the FCWC countries.

Measure.11* : Ban access to the waters of FCWC member countries to all vessels whose flag origin has not been established.

2.1.5. Sanctions

Measure.12* : Prepare at regional level, a set of sufficiently deterrent penalties for each offense according to the gravity of the act and likely benefits to be obtained by the offenders. Integrate these penalties in a harmonized manner into the national laws to take care of conflicts of jurisdictions.

Measure.13* : Consider fishing by foreign vessels [in this regional plan the notion of foreign vessels or persons refers to persons or vessels not belonging to the FCWC zone] without license, and the access of vessels without nationality as very serious offenses giving countries to right to stop and inspect the vessel, equipment, capture and to take legal action in the competent courts against the captain, crew and shipper for violation of sovereignty.

Measure.14* : For vessels of FCWC countries which commit the same offences mentioned in the previous paragraph, envisage severe penalties and a term of imprisonment from 12 to 36 months for the captain, crew and shipper in the event of a subsequent offence.

Measure.15** : Create at regional level (under the FCWC) an arbitration committee to deal with offences committed by vessels of a member country in the waters of another member country and or foreign vessels having committed serious offences in several FCWC countries;

Measure.16* : Introduce specific clauses against physical persons or legal entities directly or indirectly engaged in the commission of an offence upstream or downstream from the IUU fishing sector;

Measure.17* : Adapt the system of penalties to the realities of artisanal fishing in the zone of the Committee using seizure and penal sanctions, ban on operating for an appropriate period;

Measure.18* : Develop and undertake a regional management and awareness programme on the harmful effects of irresponsible fishing practices on the member countries for the benefit of the perpetrators of these actions;

Measure.19* : List in a regional file and at national level, the vessels which commit illegal fishing acts that are duly established and exclude them from any possibility of operating in the waters of FCWC member countries;

2.1.6. Non cooperating States

Measure.20** : Urge the FCWC States which are not yet members of the ICCAT to join and ensure compliance with the ICCAT measures including the non -issuance of licences to non-member countries and the refusal to market tuna products from vessels of non- member countries

2.1.7. Economic Incentives

Measure.21* : Suspend all support in kind or in administrative facilities to the vessels, boats or organizations and persons involved in IUU fishing and envisage appropriate provisions to deprive them of administrative or financial facilities (loans and funding) in all countries of the Committee.

2.1.8. Monitoring, Control and Surveillance

Measure.22* : Assist the countries at national level to obtain the necessary and minimum resources to carry out the MCS mission and in particular the procurement of equipment for the Surveillance Centre and its installation, fast launches (patrol boats) for the coastal interception, by the ground mobile teams, of radar stations.

Measure. 23* : Generalize the obligatory installation of beacons for the transmission of data to national and regional surveillance centers on board industrial fishing vessels and ensure that the equipment is compatible.

Measure.24** : For the marine artisan fishers, disseminate the use of VHF and the obligation to record all fishing departures and entries in a register regularly maintained and agreed upon between the professional administrations and organizations.

Measure.25* : Develop a regional surveillance center whose role is to ensure coordination with the national centers and other centers at international level to exchange information concerning illegal fishing vessels found in the zone of FCWC countries;

Measure 26* : Support the adoption of regional conventions in favor of joint surveillance operations between the countries and mobilize from development partners, the necessary resources to strengthen the capabilities of the countries in this area.

Measure.27** : Set up a regional observation programme at sea and at the markets to deter the capture and sale of illegal fishery products. Envisage a training component in this programme to strengthen the capabilities of the observers and upgrade their knowledge with regard to regional approaches;

Measure.28** : Introduce in the national laws and regional protocols and agreements, the obligation for the transmission of electronic data and the possibility of using beacons on board industrial vessels and the use of electronic evidence for establishing the offence;

Measure.29* : Coordinate, design, adopt and disseminate the fisheries logbook and its transmission at the end of the operation. Send every six months a summary report to the Fisheries Committee on fishing activities based on a model that the Committee should prepare and distribute;

Measure.30*** : Develop a regional programme of meetings, awareness campaigns and training of socio-professional organizations in order to ensure their involvement in the strategy to combat IUU fishing activities;

Measure.31** : Prepare a regional inspection programme whose role is to support the

exercise through annual audit reports on the development of regulations and illegal fishing practices in the member countries and urge them to adopt and apply measures against IUU fishing;

Measure.32*: Propose to the countries a unique license model for each type of fishing so as to have consistent information capable of being used in the analysis and monitoring and control of IUU fishing; such a model would considerably facilitate the management of a regional file.

2.1.9. Cooperation among the States

Measure.33*: Establish multilateral protocols and conventions among the surveillances structures in the various countries for carrying out joint operations and exchange of data and information likely to help arrest the perpetrators of IUU fishing.

Measure.34***: Establish and develop a communication network between the countries and the FCWC surveillance and coordination center (proposal) to share information and provide a monitoring system against IUU fishing practices;

Measure.35***: Ensure the inventory and annual communication of the state of IUU fishing in the region to regional and international organizations and development partners. That could be done through the publication of a magazine every six months. The magazine will publish the list of vessels flying flags of convenience, the vessels having committed serious and very serious offences, the list of illegal fishing vessels considered on the black list that all countries are urged to exclude from all fishing activities in their waters, the list of shippers of countries having committed IUU offences.

Measure. 36*: Develop support programs for member countries for strengthening their capacity to combat illegal fishing: acquisition of motorboats, a national center for communication, computerization of license registers, formulation of deterrent and coherent legal and political instruments;

III.2.1.10. Publicity

Measure.37*: Develop a web site at regional level (FCWC) and keep it updated. Put on this site the main and necessary information including laws, regulations, fisheries policies, IUU fishing control plans, and regional conventions and agreements linking the 6 countries including in particular the FCWC convention;

Measure 38***: Organize commercials, notices, meetings and reports on IUU fishing in FCWC countries and its economic and social consequences;

2.1.11. Technical capacity and resources

Measure.39***: Encourage the strengthening of national capabilities in research, fisheries management and marine surveillance and training through the search for funding of regional programs, especially the procurement of a research vessel which would be at the disposal of the 6 countries for undertaking stock evaluation campaigns;

Measure.40***: Develop community awareness programs for a better awareness of the need for sustainable management and participation in the fight against IUU fishing;

2.2. RESPONSIBILITY OF FLAG STATES

2.2.1 Registration of fishing vessels

Measure.41*: Harmonize the procedures and conditions for the registration of fishing vessels in the FCWC zone and establish the obligation for certification of documents necessary for the registration of vessels. Before the registration of a vessel all the

competent Administrations should get information and ensure from their counterparts and in relation with the FCWC that the vessel seeking registration is not on the black list and is not the subject of legal proceedings in court;

Measure.42**: Assist and encourage the States to adopt a harmonized system of registration of artisanal and inland boats and to develop databases to monitor the activities of these small fishing boats. The example of the identity card or the electronic card can be extended to artisanal fisheries;

III.2.2.2. Register of fishing vessels

Measure.43**: Develop computerized application for a national register of fishing vessels with a related register of the black list of vessels engaged in IUU fishing and excluded from national registers and the regional register in a manner compatible with those to be used by national registers;

2.2.3. Fishing authorization

Measure.44*: Standardize fishing license by introducing all the headings necessary for the effective control of fishing capacity and the monitoring and control of IUU fishing practices;

Measure.45** : Harmonize the procedures and conditions of access to tuna fishing on the high seas by taking into account the relevant provisions of the FAO Agreement of 1993, aimed at promoting compliance with international measures, and the Agreement of 1995, of the United Nations relating to major migratory and straddling stocks;

Measure.46**: Ensure regular monitoring of the list of vessels fishing straddling stocks in the high seas authorized by the member countries.

III.2.3. RESPONSIBILITY OF COASTAL STATES

Measure.47*: Promote and coordinate the conclusion of agreements between the member countries for strengthening multilateral cooperation and exchange of necessary data and information (VMS);

Measure.48*: Institute the right of hot pursuit (Article 111 UNCLOS) and mutually delegate the power of establishing, reporting petty offences and penalizing IUU fishing vessels in the port country where the vessel is found at the time of the establishment of the offence;

Measure.49**: Encourage the member countries to put in place plans to manage their domestic resources and promote the emergence and coordinate the search for financing to carry out the regional plans for shared stocks;

2.4. RESPONSIBILITY OF FCWC PORT STATES

Measure.50*: Harmonize the regulations relating to the entry, departure and stay, landing and transshipment of vessels in the ports of member countries;

Measure .51**: Organize training sessions and exchange visits for strengthening the capabilities of port control officers and provide them with a manual of practical, transparent, coherent and harmonized procedures;

Measure.52*: Prepare and adopt regional regulations in relation with the port authorities in the various countries to prevent access to the ports of vessels flying flags of convenience or whose identity is not well established and prevent the landing or transshipment of their products in the ports of member countries;

Measure.53*: Introduce in accordance with international regulations the obligation to include the IMO code in the licences of fishing vessels authorized to fish in the waters of member countries;

III.2.5. INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Measure.54**: Prepare and have adopted by the FCWC Conference of Ministers measures and regulations for the certification of origin of captures of products unloaded in the ports of the States and/or those that pass through there;

Measure. 55**: Promote the emergence, at national and regional levels, of organisations of wholesale fish merchants and strengthen their capabilities for a better participation in the fight against illegal fishing practices through the control of products on the market;

Measure.56*: Integrate into the national regulations harmonized clauses instituting 'serious to very serious' penalties in the event of the sale, transportation, processing or marketing of products from illegal fishing;

Measure.57**: Harmonize and have adopted by the Conference of Ministers the international system of description and codification of fishery products and by-products.

2.6. FISHERY AND OCEANOGRAPHIC RESEARCH

Measure.58***: Initiate a medium and long term strategy to strengthen the research capabilities of FCWC countries by taking into account the urgency for the sub-region to have a research vessel for the evaluation of marine resources, as well as the strengthening of human capacities through training, short-term courses and joint missions. The use of regional expertise better adapted to the reality of the countries is strongly recommended (see Measures 39 and 49).

Measure.59** : Initiate and have adopted and coordinate the studies and programmes on fishing techniques in the sub-region by using existing capacities of the technology laboratory of the Institute for Oceanographic and Fisheries Research of Nigeria.

Measure.60**: Disseminate the research results to the operators by using simple and easily assimilated methods. That could be done by holding, every two years, a meeting with the presidents and Secretaries-General of marine fisheries federations in one of the member countries. The contribution of the operators to the expenses of these meetings is strongly recommended in order to increase their involvement and responsibility vis-à-vis the recommendations.

2.7 REGIONAL MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION

Measure.61*: Strengthen the organization of the Fisheries Committee for the Gulf of Guinea by creating within this Committee departments in charge of the regulation, and fight against illegal fishing and the development of approaches and strategies for regional fisheries development. Envisage even its transformation into a commission and broaden its mission relating to high seas activities and inland fisheries.

Measure.62*: Provide the Committee with a communication and surveillance centre and a regional register of fishing vessels authorized to fish in the waters of the Committee.

Measure.63***: Strengthen the Cooperation of the Committee with the Regional and International Organizations of the FAO, COFI, ICCAT, COMHAFAT, and the ALM Programme;

Measure.64***: Prepare a directory of the institutional and human capacities in the sub-region of the Committee in order to better evaluate and establish future strategies;

Measure.65*: Encourage the countries to introduce in their laws and policy documents, the obligation to ensure close cooperation for the sustainable management of shared resources in accordance with the provisions of the United Nations convention and its relevant agreements;

Measure.66**: Ensure that all the States of the Committee, after ratification of the ICCA convention, give full effect to the collaborative mechanisms provided for by the said convention;

Measure.67***: Ensure with the competent Regional Organizations, a wide dissemination and regular exchange of data and information on sustainable management and illegal fishing in the countries of the Committee;

2.8 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RPOA-IUU

Measure.68*: Ensure a wide dissemination of the proposed plan for study and comments; Measure.69*: Submit the proposal to the FCWC Conference of Ministers for adoption;

Measure .70*: Ensure that the resolution for the adoption of the plan is effective and immediate and binding;

Measure.71*: Print the plan in sufficient copies (in collaboration with the FAO) and organize a round table meeting for its presentation to the partners by preparing specifications for the principal projects.

Measure .72**: Produce a regular annual report on the status of the implementation of measures of the plan which will be presented at each meeting of the FCWC Conference of Ministers.

