

23rd May 2024 | Bread for the World, HQ | Berlin

CONCLUSIONS

This Seminar was a starting point. The objective was above all to better understand each other's positions and issues, and we received a lot of information.

The debate on this subject begins today. All presentations will be shared with everyone¹. In the coming months, we will continue the debate on this subject within the LDAC, with the aim of gradually providing an answer to the questions of the European Union, by involving our partners from COMHAFAT, the African Union and Afrifish-Net.

Examples of good practices were presented showing that joint ventures cover not only catching activities, but also processing activities and marketing. Examples were given about [Mauritania](#), [Nigeria](#), [Namibia](#), [Mozambique](#), [Senegal](#) and the [Indian Ocean](#). These activities have contributed to jobs², food security and the culture of these countries.

We have seen that these activities can be a source of added value locally, but we have also observed cases where joint ventures have weakened food security, for example concerning the processing of fish into fish meal and fish oil or the use of irresponsible fishing practices.

Today, we shared the vision of African countries regarding the set up and operation of joint ventures, with areas for consideration that should apply to all joint ventures regardless of the foreign partner country of origin:

- the need to enforce the rules and laws concerning the constitution and operations of joint ventures.
- the development of a legal framework at the level of African countries, applicable to all, whatever the country of origin of the effective owner. So that, boats which constitute joint ventures respect the principle of surplus and are not in competition with the local artisanal fishing sector and that they contribute to local economies and food security.
- Support for infrastructure development and capacity building.
- Support for sustainable investments that benefit both African and EU countries, including the transfer of technologies.
- Improving access to markets, for example by developing certification.

Transparency is essential to ensure that joint ventures operate sustainably. In this context, it is necessary to revise, at the African level, the uniform act on commercial companies and Interest

¹ All the presentations are available at: <https://ldac.eu/en/meetings/archive/ldac-cffa-seminar-on-the-role-of-fishing-companies-with-investments-and-operations-in-third-non-eu-countries>

² The economic activity involves an estimated **139,245 jobs** (page 51 of the report "Estimation of the Economic and Social Impact of Joint Fishing Ventures in Spain" carried out by the research department of the Vigo Free Trade Zone, within the framework of the ARDÁN Chair of the University of Vigo, 2024)

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Economic Groups (GIEs), to introduce the legal form of joint ventures and the collection of information on the owner and effective operator of these joint ventures.

Spain's past commitment to the register of fishing joint ventures has been welcomed, although these efforts need to be renewed. It was hoped that all European countries would follow this example, collecting and publishing information on fishing joint ventures.

As for the European Union, it was recalled that Sustainable Fisheries Partnership agreements (SFPAs) promote the creation of joint ventures given the role they play in third countries. It was suggested to include standards to ensure that the constitution of these joint ventures meet sustainable fisheries standards promoted by the EU.

It is hoped that the European Union will take joint ventures into consideration, value their role and find ways to promote their sustainable operations and actions in third countries:

- Appraise and recognise their role within the external dimension of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), including for example: food supply, employment, research, innovation, know-how, knowledge sharing...)
- Provide incentives to promote sustainable investments in third countries, such as privileged custom treatment.
- Include Joint Ventures within the [Global GATEWAY program](#).
- Enhance legal certainty in third countries, particularly those receiving development aid.
- Access to the financing of the European Investment Bank (EIB)