



# Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States Bordering the Atlantic Ocean (ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT)

## Key ALAFCO's activities and perspectives



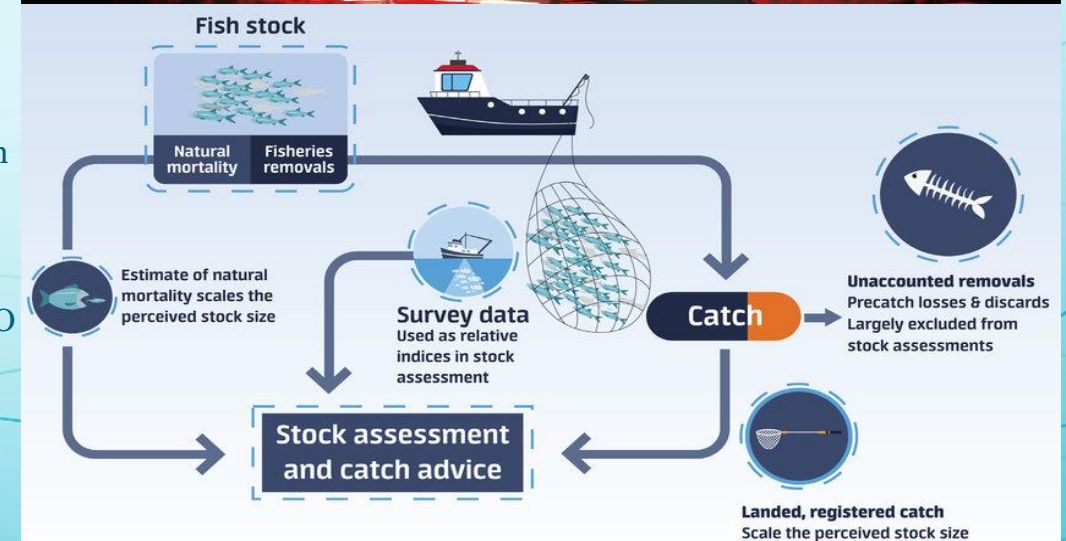
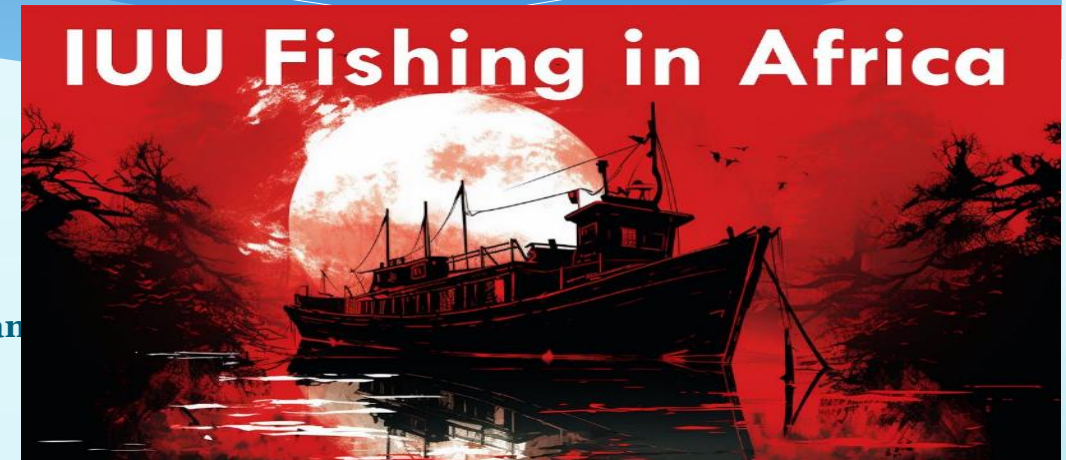
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ATLAFCO Secretariat 12 September 2024

*Harnessing today without compromising tomorrow ...*

# Background

- ❑ With the aim of strengthening regional coordination, for *the fight against IUU fishing, strengthening the Monitoring, Control and Surveillance of fishing activities and improving scientific advice in support of fisheries management by providing new data*, ATLAFCO secretariat had commissioned a study for the establishment in the ATLAFCO region of
  1. **Regional on-board observation program and**
  2. **Harmonized port inspection program**
- ❑ **The conclusions of the study were validated by the experts during feedback workshops and endorsed by the Conference of Ministers which took place in Abidjan in 2018**
- ❑ ATLAFCO made a special focus **on capacity building through training sessions and seminars**
  
- ❑ Within the **framework of 02 tripartite agreements**
  1. Between the National Institute of Fisheries Research (INRH), **The National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority (NaFAA) of Liberia** and COMHAFAT/ATLAFCO, a fish stock assessment and marine ecosystem prospecting campaign was carried out by the INRH at the level of the Liberian EEZ from January 26 to February 9, 2024
  2. Between the National Institute of Fisheries Research (INRH), **The Fisheries and Oceanographic Research Institute of Benin (IRHOB)** and COMHAFAT/ATLAFCO (ATLAFCO), a fish stock assessment and marine ecosystem prospecting campaign was carried out by the INRH at the level of the Benin EEZ from February 16 to February 25, 2024



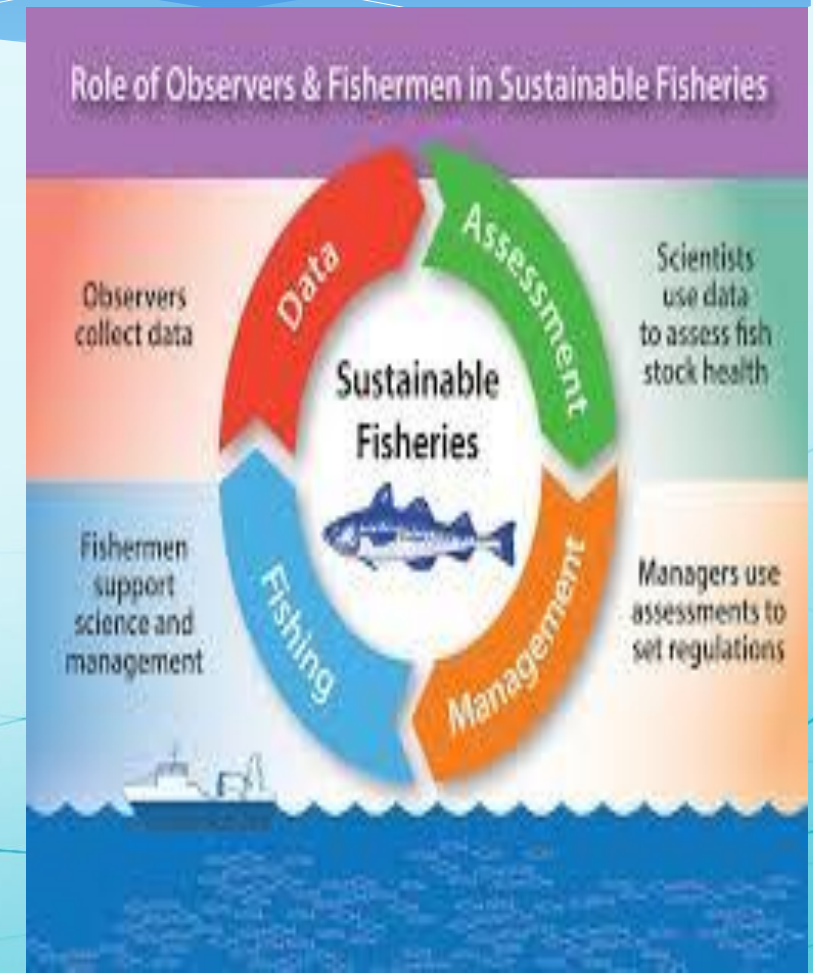
# The two programs and the development of human skills

- ❑ **The development of human skills through harmonized, relevant, effective and efficient training** is a major focus for the successful implementation of the two programs
- ❑ To this end, ATLAFCO has undertaken with the assistance of the Grouping of African Maritime Training Institutions (REFMA), a set of activities for **«The development of reference systems for the engineering of the training of port inspectors and on-board observers with regional competence in the ATLAFCO region»**
- ❑ The training programs developed by **ATLAFCO and REFMA refer to their respective expertise and good practices in this area**



# The Regional on-board observation program

- ❑ The ATLAFCO Secretariat has launched several training courses for the executives of the administrations in charge of fisheries enforcement in the Member States
- ❑ These cycles have allowed the training of 32 observers
- ❑ These additional staff will undoubtedly contribute to the strengthening of the capacities of the MS in the area of MCS, but in order to be in phase *with the Final Declaration of the 10th Conference of Ministers, i.e., coordinated action to combat IUU fishing, there is still an important political step to be taken, which would lead to a regional observer program that could implement an observer regime:*
  - ❑ **Common**, in order to meet the various regulatory or voluntary requirements;
  - ❑ **Unique**, by having a mandate recognized by the different entities involved
  - ❑ **Permanent**, in order to cover all the tides of the concerned vessels
- ❑ The establishment, through a specific agreement between the parties, of a *mechanism for the mutual recognition of observers with regional competence, will allow the observers designated by their States to be accredited to validly observe fishing activities regardless of the fishing zone of the vessel*



# The Harmonized Regional Port Inspection Program

The Existing port inspection programs in the ATLAFCO region are largely guided by the prescriptions of two major international agreements:

- ❑ The FAO Agreement on **Port State Measures (PSMA) entered into force in 2016**, and
- ❑ ICCAT Recommendation 12-07 concerning an ICCAT system of minimum standards for port inspection applicable to ATLAFCO member states that are contracting parties to the organization(17 countries)
- ❑ ATLAFCO with the collaboration with ISPM of Agadir has organized:
  - ❑ The first session of training program for fisheries inspectors for the benefit of participants from French speaking countries in the ATLAFCO region that took place at the ISPM ISTPM in AGADIR **from 25 November to 09 December 2021**
  - ❑ The second session of that program was organized with the collaboration of the ITPM of Larache in which it took place from **30 November to 11 December 2022**



**The 14 participants in this training** are candidates who already have basic training in inspection tasks and who have professional experience of at least a few months of actual practice (the managers will be the best candidates to ensure the transfer of knowledge and coaching of their subordinates afterwards)

## Other capacity building and training activities

- ❑ **Capacity-building workshop for national observers on scientific observation missions (March 15-17, 2023, Assinie-Mafia, Côte d'Ivoire)**
  - ❑ This training was part of the development of the **capacity building plan for Member (COMHAFAT)**, in order to comply with ICCAT regulatory requirements, particularly in terms of data collection and communication.
  - ❑ The training workshop was mainly aimed at strengthening the capacities of national observers of Member States (MS), **for the conduct of scientific observation missions as prescribed by ICCAT Recommendation 16-14**
- ❑ **Training workshop for improving tuna fishing statistical data (October 18 - 20, 2023, Rabat Morocco)**
  - ❑ This training is part of the development of a **capacity building plan for Member States in order to comply with ICCAT requirements**
  - ❑ intended for candidates working in a **government administration in charge of fisheries and having effective professional experience at the national level and knowledge of fisheries statistical data**



# Access Agreements to Fisheries Resources in Atlantic Coastal States

- ❑ **Regional Workshop Access Agreements to Fisheries Resources in Atlantic Coastal States** (October 25-26, 2023, Abidjan Côte d'Ivoire)
  - ❑ Evaluation of the **agreements on the basis of the objectives assigned to them in order to ensure if they really contribute to the sustainability of biological resources, economic development and equity**
  - ❑ Exploration in a second phase, the ways and means of improving these fishing agreements in order to maximize the benefits for African coastal States, local populations and other parties concerned



# Scientific prospecting campaigns

- ❑ A scientific prospecting campaign was launched on January 26, 2024 at the fishing port of Monrovia, Liberia and another on launched on 16 February 2024 in Cotonou, Benin
- ❑ **The initiative coordinated by ATLAFCO, involves assessing fish stocks in Liberia's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), with a view to sustainable fishing**
- ❑ Both sea campaign were conducted aboard the oceanographic research vessel Al Hassan Al Marrakchi (AHAM), a Fishery Research Vessel with IMO no. 9867061 that was built in 2020 (4 years ago) and is sailing under the flag of Morocco.
- ❑ She has carrying capacity is 293 t DWT, a draught of 4.8 meters, a length of 48.5 meters and a width of 12 meters
- ❑ **Equipped for ecosystem prospecting of the marine environment, including the assessment of marine resources, oceanography and the prospecting of marine habitats**
- ❑ **post-ecosystem campaign training in Benin and Liberia and the results restitution workshop has been held on May 27 to 29, 2024 at the INRH Regional Center in Agadir (Morocco)**

- The scientific campaign at sea off the coast of Liberia was conducted by a staff of 31 people on board, including 19 crew members between officers and sailors and 12 scientists, 8 experienced scientists and technicians from the INRH were tasked with carrying out the multidisciplinary activities of this sea campaign jointly with 4 Liberian scientists who actively participated in the scientific sampling of the sea mission

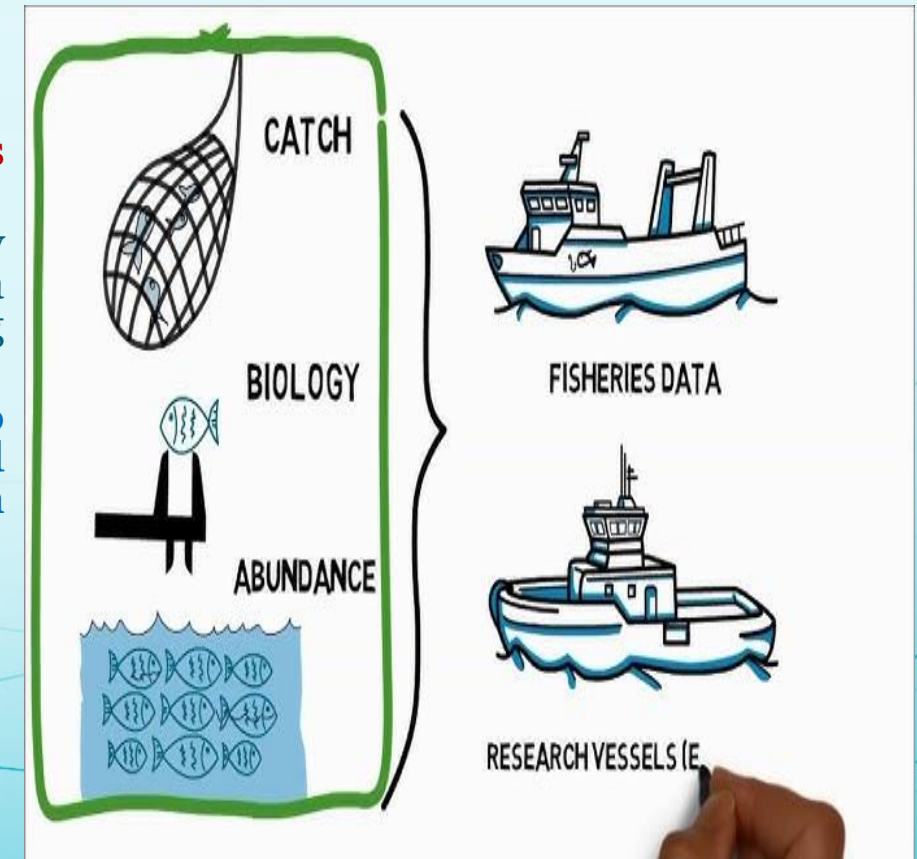


- The scientific campaign at sea off the coast of Benin was conducted by a staff of 33 people, including 19 crew members between officers and sailors and 14 scientists, 8 experienced scientists and technicians from the INRH were tasked with carrying out the multidisciplinary activities of this sea campaign jointly with 6 Beninese scientists who actively participated in the scientific sampling of the sea mission



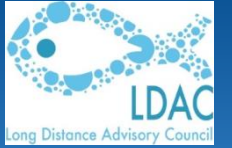
# The objectives of the sea campaigns

- ❑ scientific objectives of the campaign consist **firstly in the assessment of the abundance and biomass indices of the main pelagic and demersal exploited stocks of the Liberian continental shelf:**
  - ❑ the study of their biology,
  - ❑ the survey of an inventory of marine biodiversity
  - ❑ the study of the oceanographic state of the area
- ❑ **Knowledge exchange and training are also high-priority components programmed in the mission**
- ❑ Training sessions on the various aspects of the prospecting were regularly organized on board for the benefit of local scientists who took part in the sea campaign, in particular in acoustic assessment, biology, plankton sampling and hydrological samples
- ❑ **In addition, the Liberian and the Beninese scientific team who took part in the sea campaign contributed their experience and knowledge on the exploited species to facilitate the identification of locally known species**
- ❑ This missions *"aim at effective and active cooperation between member states for the preservation of fishery resources and the sustainable development of fisheries in our regions. Under these conditions, our policies can only be built through effective and dynamic fisheries research"* explains Sidi Touré, the Ivorian Minister of Animal and Fisheries Resources, and current President of ATLAFCO





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THANK YOU



Plateforme de coordination

