

Demands and Commitments

Participants at the "Workshop for West African Media and Artisanal Sector Professionals to Raise Awareness About Responsible Management of Fisheries Resources", held in Nouadhibou, Mauritania, from 4 to 7 September 2006, recommended that:

Regarding the conservation of resources, States should:

- ensure that responsible fishing practices are respected, in accordance with the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, and ban trawling, dredging and the use of monofilament nets in the coastal zone;
- take all necessary measures to safeguard the environment and the coastal marine ecosystem;
- implement all provisions necessary for transparency, monitoring and control of illegal fishing activities; and
- Make public, through the media, information about illegal fishing practices (details of vessels, crew, flag, fine imposed, ship owner, etc.) as well as the results of the penalties imposed

The Sub-regional Fisheries Committee (SRFC/CSRP) should:

- associate and directly involve artisanal fishing professional organizations in its activities, in the decision-making process and in monitoring its programmes. *(It is worth noting that soon after the*

workshop, the professional organizations that initiated it were invited, for the first time, to participate in a meeting of the SRFC to discuss artisanal fisheries management.)

Professional artisanal fishing organizations should:

- consolidate internal democracy and ensure transparency and good governance in their activities;
- strengthen the participation of women in their decision-making processes; and
- provide facilities for communication (fishermen's centres, etc.), awareness raising, education, information, and training of artisanal fishing communities.

A communications strategy should be put in place for all activities undertaken in the fisheries sector, including:

- the creation of community radio programmes to inform the general public about fishing activities;
- publication of a regional paper devoted to all aspects of fishing;
- the organization of specialized training courses for the media on fisheries issues; and
- popularization of fisheries research results carried out by oceanographic and fisheries-related research institutions.

attitude of some journalists towards fishing communities was also denounced by some, as was the attitude of intellectuals towards those who work with their hands, particularly women fish processors, who are often illiterate.

The lack of communication between professional organizations and their members was also directly referred to as an obstacle in artisanal fishing communities being well informed.

Several factors should be taken into account to explain the media's lack of interest in the sector. Artisanal fishing communities tend to be traditional

societies, with little in the way of novelty value that could attract media attention. The journalists commented that often, fishing professionals did not want to talk with them and there is a certain lack of trust.

The professionals explained that they are often afraid to speak, particularly on sensitive subjects, behind which are hidden important political and economic issues, such as the devastating impacts of illegal fishing in the coastal zone. "Everyone is fishing, the army is fishing, functionaries are fishing, ministers are fishing," said one professional from the artisanal sector.