

# INFOPÊCHE

Newsletter



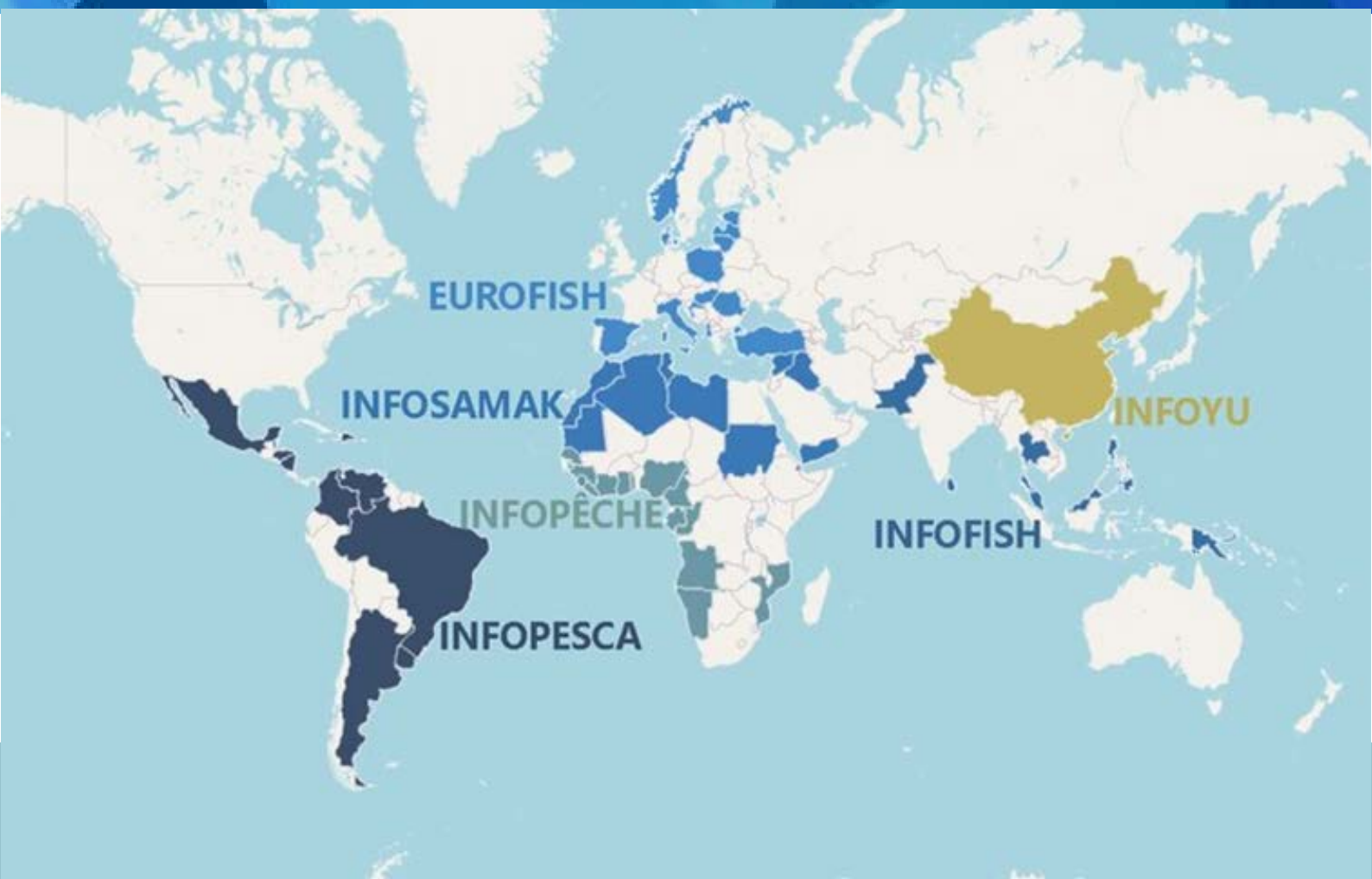
N°2 April / May / June 2025



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# FIN Network (Fish InfoNetwork)



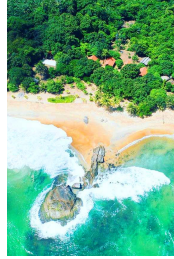
## Member Countries



PAGE **04**

## Editorial

The strategic role of the Ministry of Livestock and Fishery Resources in the Development of the Blue Economy in Côte d'Ivoire.



PAGE **05**

## Latest News

Participation of INFOPÊCHE in SELAB Fisheries Expo 2025



## Main Headline



PAGE **07**

## Main Headline

Participation of INFOPÊCHE in the Blue Economy Investment Forum

PAGE **11**

## MIRAH Press Release

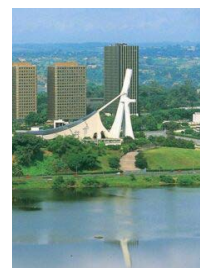
Signing of a new Partnership Protocol between Côte d'Ivoire and the European Union in the fishery sector.



PAGE **15**

## The Expert Point of View

Different types of fishery agreements



PAGE **19**

## File

African states speed up the process for the second biennial in Abidjan

PAGE **21**

## FIN News

INFOFESCA  
EUROFISH  
GLOBEFISH



PAGE **27**

## SARA 2025

Participation of INFOPÊCHE in the High-Level conference on the transformation of livestock and Fishery Resources



# Editorial

The strategic role of the Ministry of Livestock and Fishery Resources in the Development of the Blue Economy in Côte d'Ivoire.



The Minister of Animal and Fishery Resources, Mr. SIDI Tiémoko TOURE, during his speech at the launch of the Blue Economy Investment Forum.

## Editorial

### The strategic role of the Ministry of Livestock and Fishery Resources in the Development of the Blue Economy in Côte d'Ivoire.

The Blue Economy, a concept covering activities linked to the exploitation of oceans, seas, lagoons, rivers and coastal areas, represents a major opportunity for coastal countries such as Côte d'Ivoire. In this context, the Ministry of Livestock and Fishery Resources (MIRAH) plays a key role in the sustainable development of aquatic resources, contributing to economic diversification, food security

and indirect jobs opportunities. Under the impetus of the Minister, the honorable Sidi Tiémoko TOURE, MIRAH is resolutely committed to this vision through its effective participation in the Investment Forum for the Blue Economy held on 25th April 2025 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire related to Fisheries and Aquaculture Exhibition (SELAB Fisheries EXPO). (INFOPÊCHE)

# Latest News

Participation of INFOPÊCHE in SELAB Fisheries Expo 2025



## Latest News

### Participation of INFOPÊCHE in SELAB Fisheries Expo 2025

The first edition of SELAB Fisheries EXPO was held from 24th to 26th April 2025 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. Organised by Next Sustainable Initiatives (NSI) in collaboration with the Ministry of Livestock and Fishery Resources, the event brought together the main national and international stakeholders, including technical and financial partners of the fisheries sector.

INFOPÊCHE's participation was part of its commitment to promoting the sustainable development and modernisation of fishery and aquaculture sector in its member countries, including Côte d'Ivoire.

INFOPÊCHE's participation was aimed at identifying the latest technological innovations applied in fishery sector in terms of processing and marketing. More specifically, the aim was to establish partnerships with the business operators in the sector, in particular fish producers, traders, exporters and importers of fishery products, fishmeal producers, fish farmers and equipment manufacturers, agents

from the fisheries and aquaculture administrations, training institutes, and so on. INFOPÊCHE's booth was visited by 350 people including students, researchers and fishery business operators. The Representative of INFOPÊCHE was interviewed by the SELAB Fisheries EXPO Communications Department.

### The Blue Economy takes center stage at the SELAB Fisheries Expo 2025

The second day was marked by INFOPÊCHE's participation in the launch of the Investment Forum for the Blue Economy in Côte d'Ivoire. The opening ceremony of this day recorded speeches from Mr. Sidi Tiémoko TOURE, Minister of Livestock and Fishery Resources, the country representative of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations - FAO, the country representative of the African Development Bank - ADB, followed by the presentation of an institutional film on the Blue Economy produced by the FAO Côte d'Ivoire in

# Latest News

Participation of INFOPÊCHE in SELAB Fisheries Expo 2025



Certificate of participation awarded at the SELAB Fisheries Expo 2025

collaboration with the Ministry of Livestock and Fishery Resources of Côte d'Ivoire. We registered also a speech of the President of the Economic, Social, Environmental and Cultural Council and a presentation of the Blue Economy strategy.

The third day was marked by the ceremony for receiving certificates of participation. On this occasion, the Chairman of the Interprofession of the aquaculture sector (INTERAQUA) expressed his satisfaction to the success of the first edition of SELAB, which expresses the salient outlook for increasing national production of fish products and providing jobs opportunities for the young people.

This was followed by a speech by the Executive Director of the Interprofession of fishery sector in Côte d'Ivoire (INTERPÊCHE), who extended his sincere thanks to SELAB and to the Ministry of Livestock and Fishery Resources for promoting and structuring the fishery sector in Côte d'Ivoire.

Following these two speeches, SELAB Commissioner extended thanks to all the fishery business operators, the technical support institutions, the Ministry of Livestock and Fishery Resources. Mr Sidi Tiemoko TOURE, Minister of Livestock and Fishery Resources delivered the closing speech, followed by the presentation of pennants to the leadership countries and to the guest countries. (INFOPÊCHE)



The INFOPÊCHE team at their stand during the SELAB Fisheries Expo 2025

# Main Headline

Participation of INFOPÊCHE in the Blue Economy Investment Forum



Roundtable session at the Blue Economy Investment Forum

## Main Headline

### Participation of INFOPÊCHE in the Blue Economy Investment Forum

The Investment Forum for the Blue Economy in Côte d'Ivoire was held on 25th April 2025 at the SOFITEL Hôtel Ivoire, alongside the first edition of the Fishery and Aquaculture Exhibition (SELAB FISHERIES EXPO 2025).

Organised by the Ministry of Livestock and Fishery Resources (MIRAH) in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) and the African Development Bank (AfDB), this forum marked the end of the first phase of the development of the strategic framework and related documents, and ensured the transition to an operational phase. The main objective of the event was to mobilise the resources needed to implement the first milestones of the Blue Economy.

177 participants representing technical ministries, the private sector, civil society, banking institutions

for Development and technical and financial partners attended the meeting. (INFOPÊCHE)



Dr. AHMED Khan, representative of the Blue Economy at the AfDB, panelist at the Blue Economy Investment Forum.

# Main Headline

Participation of INFOPÊCHE in the Blue Economy Investment Forum



## A High-Level round table on Blue Economy

A high-level round table brought together representatives from the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the European Union (EU) Delegation and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Global Environment Facility (GEF), BCEAO, UNESCO, the Ministry of Finance and Budget (MFB), the Ministry of the Economy, Planning and Development (MEPD) and the Ministry of Livestock and Fishery Resources (MIRAH).

At the round table, the financial partners expressed their strong commitment to supporting Côte d'Ivoire in implementing its Blue Economy strategy. MIRAH, the FAO and the ADB are actively pursuing discussions with all the technical and financial partners present and those who were unable to attend

(World Bank, Islamic Development Bank, WAEMU, ECOWAS, BOAD, AFD, GIZ, IFAD, ILO, UNEP, etc.) in order to mobilise the resources needed to finance the National Investment Plan for the Blue Economy in Côte d'Ivoire, valued at XOF 848.61 billion. (INFOPÊCHE)



# Main Headline

Participation of INFOPÊCHE in the Blue Economy Investment Forum



## Côte d'Ivoire commits to support the Blue Economy

Group photos from the Blue Economy Investment Forum.

At the end of the round table, the Investment Forum for the Blue Economy was marked by the declaration of commitment by the Ivorian government to the Blue Economy, expressed by the Ministry of Finance and Budget (MFB), and by a declaration of intention to finance by the Technical and Financial Partners, delivered by the FAO, amounting to XOF 159.429 billion. Of these commitments, XOF 16.159 billion are specifically dedicated to financing of the Competitive Aquaculture and Sustainable Fisheries Value Chain Development Project (ProDeCAP/Blue Economy) by the African Development Bank (AfDB).

ProDeCAP/Economie Bleue should start operation in 2025 and run for five years.

## INFOPÊCHE at the core of Blue Economy

INFOPÊCHE, the Intergovernmental Organisation for Marketing Information and Cooperation services for

Fishery Products in Africa, works to improve the capacity of stakeholders in the fisheries sector by providing information on markets, international standards applicable to fishery products, commercial opportunities and technological innovations. (INFOPÊCHE)



Awarding of participation certificates at the INFOPÊCHE booth during the SELAB Fisheries Expo 2025

## Member Countries

-  Angola
-  Cameroon
-  Congo
-  Côte d'Ivoire
-  Gabon
-  Gambia
-  Ghana
-  Guinea
-  Guinea Bissau
-  Liberia
-  Morocco
-  Mauritania
-  Mozambique
-  Namibia
-  Nigeria
-  Senegal
-  Sierra Leone
-  Togo

**Support,  
Innovate,  
Succeed**  
together





# MIRAH

Ministère des Ressources  
Animales et Halieutiques

## Press Release



Signing of a new Partnership Protocol  
between Côte d'Ivoire and the  
European Union in the fishery sector.

.....  
**DIRECTION DE LA COMMUNICATION  
ET DES RELATIONS PUBLIQUES**  
.....

*Le Directeur*  
.....

N/Réf: **0130**/MIRAH/DIRCOM

**Union - Discipline - Travail**  
.....

Abidjan, le **13 JUIN 2025**

## Press Release

### Signing of a new Partnership Protocol between Côte d'Ivoire and the European Union in the fishery sector.

ABIDJAN, CÔTE D'IVOIRE - 13 June 2025 - The Republic of Côte d'Ivoire and the European Community (EC) announce the signature of a new protocol (2025-2029) to replace the previous one, which expired on 31st July 2024.

This protocol on the implementation of the 2008 Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement (SFPA), signed on 6th June 2025 in Brussels, marks an important step in sustainable cooperation between the two parties.

Fishery relations between Côte d'Ivoire and the European Union go back several decades, evolving over time towards more balanced, win-win 'partnership' agreements focused on sustainability.

#### 1. The first agreement (before 2008) :

- **Year 1990:** The first fishery agreement between the European Union (then the European Economic Community) and Côte d'Ivoire was signed in 1990. It focused mainly on access to resources for European fleets, in exchange for financial compensation. It often covered tuna species, but could also include other species, notably crustaceans and certain fish species also targeted by local fisheries.

#### 2. Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement 2007-2008 (SFPA):

- **Change of approach:** From the 2000s onwards, the EU gradually changed its fisheries policy with third countries, moving from 'right of access' agreements to 'sustainable fisheries partnership agreements'. This new generation of agreements aims to integrate dimensions of sustainable development, support for fisheries governance, the fight against illegal fishing (IUU) and local capacity building.

- **Signature of the SFPA:** The current partnership agreement between the European Union and Côte d'Ivoire was signed in 2008 and implemented by periodically renewed application protocols (2007-2013; 2013-2018; 2018-2024; 2025-2029).

### 3. Implementation of the protocols (6-year and 4-year cycles):

These protocols define the precise terms of the agreement for a given period, in particular the fishing opportunities granted, the financial contribution, and the sectoral support allocated.

- **First Protocol (from 2007-2008):** The first protocol implementing the SFPA, signed in 2008, launched this new era of cooperation.
- **Protocol 2018-2024 :** An important protocol covered the period from 1st August 2018 to 31st July 2024. It granted fishing opportunities to:
  - 28 freezers tuna seiners
  - 8 surfaces longliners

The financial contribution for this period was approximately EUR 682,000 per year, i.e. a total of EUR 4,092,000 over six years.

**The protocol 2025-2029:** it contains several key points, including:

▶ **Access to the fishing zone:**

The agreement grants access to Côte d'Ivoire's fishing zone to 32 European tuna vessels, including 25 freezer tuna seiners and 7 surface longliners.

These tuna vessels can only target tuna species (a highly migratory species that travels throughout the Atlantic Ocean) beyond 12 nautical miles, i.e. more than 22 km from our coast line, a zone that is inaccessible to local fishing units that are technically ill-equipped. This prevents any competition for access to the resource between European vessels and the latter.

▶ **The annual financial contribution:** this amounts to EUR 740,000 per year compared with EUR 682,000 (2018-2024 protocol), i.e. an increase by 8.5%. The overall amount of EUR 2,960,000 over the four years, based on a reference tonnage of 6,100 tonnes, includes a contribution for access to resources (EUR 305,000 per year) and specific annual support (EUR 435,000 per year) to support Côte d'Ivoire's sectoral fisheries policy.

▶ **Shipowners' contributions:** Operators contribute financially for the access of their vessels to the Côte d'Ivoire fishing zone.

- **Tuna seiners :**

EUR 12,000 per year for the first two years compared with EUR 7620 per year (Protocol 2018-2024) per vessel, i.e. an increase by 57.48%;

EUR 12,750 per year from the third year onwards compared with EUR 8890 per year under the previous protocol, i.e. an increase of 43.41%.

- **Surface longliners :**

EUR 4,000 per year per vessel for the first two years, compared with EUR 2,400 per year under the old protocol, i.e. an increase by 66.66%;

EUR 4,250 per year from the third year onwards, compared with EUR 2,800 per year under the old protocol, i.e. an increase by 51.78%.

▶ **Increase in the price of a tonne of tuna :** The price of a tonne of tuna has risen from EUR 110 to EUR 135, an increase by 22.73%.

**This protocol offers economic and strategic advantages in terms of :**

**Increasing the activities of the Port Autonome d'Abidjan (2nd tuna port in the world):** The agreement will help to increase the number of visitors to the fishing port of Abidjan, thereby strengthening its privileged position as the world's second largest tuna port after Japan, thanks to its high-performance port infrastructure.

**Supplying canneries:** Fishery products from these tuna vessels contribute to the development of our canneries and cold stores.

**Supplying the Ivorian market:** tuna is a fish widely consumed by the low-income population of Côte d'Ivoire. Unfortunately, Côte d'Ivoire does not currently have a tuna fleet. With the signing of this protocol, a regular supply of sufficient quantities to our markets is ensured, making it possible to keep the cost of buying this widely consumed fish at an affordable price for household

**Jobs opportunities:** The activities linked to this agreement offer employment opportunities in the fisheries sector and related industries. They generate just over 28,000 jobs, of which 8,000 are direct and 20,000 indirect.

**The particularity of the protocol:**

- Some African countries, notably Senegal, Guinea-Bissau and Mauritania, have agreements covering several species, thereby creating competition for access to resources for small-scale fishermen in these countries. The Côte d'Ivoire agreement, on the other hand, which is exclusively for tuna species, takes place on the high seas and has no negative impact on local fishing units.
- This protocol provides significant support for fighting against IUU fishing, the development of aquaculture and small-scale fishery

In view of all the above, Côte d'Ivoire, aware of securing its interests, is committed to review the various agreements linking it to any country or institution, including the EU, in the fisheries and aquaculture sector.

To this end, on 19th January 2022, the government adopted the National Policy for the Development of Livestock, Fisheries and Aquaculture (PONADEPA), the framework document for intervention through its national fisheries management strategy (SNGP), which provides for the development of the tuna fleet, inviting the private sector to invest in this sector and thus contribute to achieving the objective of food sovereignty.

**DIAKITE Ibrahim**



*Ibrahim Diakite*

# The Expert Point of View

Different types of fishery agreements



## The Expert Point of View

### Different types of fishery agreements

#### Bilateral public agreements

Bilateral public agreements between states or political entities are agreements negotiated between two states or political entities (the EU, for example) which define the conditions of access for vessels to the fisheries resources of the coastal state. The Fisheries Partnership Agreements (FPAs) drawn up by the EU are of this goal. This type of agreement may involve financial participation of shipowners (in the case of European FPAs) or not (in the case of certain Chinese agreements, for example with Mauritania).

#### Private agreements

Private agreements between a producer organisation (PO) or shipping company and a State are based on the principle of paying an access fee defined either

according to the fishing capacity of the vessel or the volume of catches made. EU tuna POs gain access to the EEZ of West African coastal countries that do not have an FPA with the EU through this type of arrangement.

Private agreements between two companies essentially take two forms: that of a joint venture created from foreign and national capital in the fishing country in order to benefit from the same access conditions as national shipping companies, and that of chartering, which enables national fishing companies to use foreign vessels to exploit domestic resources, in exchange of remuneration (fixed or variable depending on the contract). A number of French and Italian fishing companies operating in Senegal set up joint ventures at the end of the 1970s in order to benefit from the same advantages as their national counterparts.

# The Expert Point of View

Different types of fishery agreements



**Fisheries agreement and a Protocol or a memorandum of understanding** are two separate but related documents in the context of fisheries cooperation. The fisheries agreement establishes the general framework for cooperation between two parties (for example, a country and the European Union) for fishing in the waters of one of the parties. It defines the general principles, objectives and procedures for cooperation, including institutional aspects.

**The Protocol is a more specific document** that sets out the practical details of how the fisheries agreement will be implemented. It specifies, among other things, the fishing zones concerned, the types of vessels authorised, the quantities of fish authorized to be caught, the financial and technical conditions, and the monitoring and surveillance measures.

**In short, the fisheries agreement lays the foundations for cooperation, while the protocol sets out the implementation procedures. The fisheries agreement can be seen as a framework contract and the memorandum of understanding as an implementing contract.** (INFOPÊCHE)



## Good to know

### Fishery agreement:

#### Nature:

An international agreement, often bilateral, which lays the foundations for long-term cooperation in the fisheries sector.

#### Content:

It defines the general principles, the objectives of the cooperation, the rights and obligations of the parties, and the consultation procedures.

#### Duration:

Fishery agreements are generally concluded for a relatively long period (several years).

### Protocol

#### Nature:

A more specific document detailing the application of the fisheries agreement

# The Expert Point of View

Different types of fishery agreements

## Content:

It sets out the specific conditions for fishing, such as authorised fishing areas, target species, quantities of fish to be caught (quotas), minimum fish sizes, authorised fishing gear, closed seasons, monitoring measures, etc.

## Duration:

The protocol is generally concluded for a shorter period (a few years) and may be renewed or amended more frequently than the fisheries agreement itself.

In other words, a fisheries agreement is like a framework contract, while the memorandum of understanding is like an implementation contract that details the practical details of the framework contract. Fisheries agreements are often concluded as part of broader international conventions on the conservation and sustainable management of fisheries resources.

## Joint fishery agreement:

A joint fishing agreement, also known as a fisheries cooperation agreement, generally involves two or more states. These agreements allow fishing vessels from one country to operate in the Exclusive Economic zones (EEZs) of another, often in exchange for financial compensation, technology transfer or other forms of cooperation.

Key elements of a typical joint fishery agreement

### Scope of application:

Definition of the fish species concerned, authorized fishing areas and periods of activity

### Types of fishery de pêche:

Specification of authorized fishing methods (e.g. trawling, seining, line fishing) and specific fishing gear.

## Quotas :

Determination of the quantities of fish that foreign vessels may catch in the other country's EEZ.

## Financial terms and conditions:

Definition of the fees or taxes paid by the fishing country to the coastal state, which may be fixed or variable depending on catches.

## Monitoring and surveillance:

Establishment of control mechanisms to ensure compliance with the terms of the agreement (e.g. on-board inspections, catch monitoring).

## Scientific and technical Cooperation:

Provisions for joint research projects or knowledge transfer to improve the management of fishery resources.

## Duration and terms of modification or termination :

Setting the duration of the agreement and the procedures for amending or terminating it.

General principles:

### - Sustainable management of resources:

Agreements must aim to ensure sustainable fishery and preserve marine ecosystems.

### - Mutual benefit:

The agreements must benefit both parties, the coastal state and the fishing country.

### - Transparency and good governance:

Agreements must be transparent and comply with the principles of good fisheries governance. (INFOPÊCHE)

 **INFOPÊCHE**

Intergovernmental Organization for Information and  
Cooperation for the Marketing of Fishery Products in Africa

# At the Core of Fisheries Development in Africa

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[www.infopeche.co](http://www.infopeche.co)





## File

# African states speed up the process for the second biennial in Abidjan

The FishGov2 project plays a key strategic role in strengthening the governance of fisheries and aquaculture in Africa, by supporting the processes of domestication and implementation of the relevant instruments within the member countries of the African Union. It aims to enhance the contribution of fisheries and aquaculture to the achievement of the African Union's Agenda 2063, particularly in terms of food security, livelihoods and wealth creation.

The specific objectives of FishGov2 are as follows :

**(i) Evidence-based policies:** The aim is to ensure that AU decisions on sustainable fisheries and aquaculture are based on sound data and information,

**(ii) Policy coherence:** The aim is to ensure that fisheries and aquaculture policies in Africa are

coherent with each other and with other AU policies, notably those related to agriculture, rural development and the environment,

**(III) Regional cooperation:** FishGov2 aims to strengthen regional cooperation in fisheries and aquaculture, working with regional economic bodies and regional fisheries management organisations,

**(IV) International dialogue:** The project seeks to amplify Africa's voice in international discussions on fisheries and aquaculture governance, by promoting a common African approach,

**(v) Sustainable Development:** Ultimately, FishGov 2 aims to contribute to food security, livelihoods and wealth creation in Africa through sustainable fisheries and aquaculture management.

That is why the second biennial forum devoted to regular consultations on monitoring compliance with international and continental instruments, in accordance with the African Fisheries Reform Mechanism (AFRM), was held from 27 to 29 May 2025 at the Hôtel Vaisseau in Abidjan, in the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire.

Organised by the African Union's Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR), in collaboration with the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) and the Ivorian government, the event was part of the second phase of the FishGov fisheries governance project, funded by the European Union.

The forum brought together forty-four participants representing a wide range of stakeholders from African Union member states, including Burkina Faso, Ghana, Congo, Gabon, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritania, Zimbabwe, Tunisia, Chad, Egypt, Liberia, Somalia, Tanzania and Côte d'Ivoire.

Regional Economic Communities (RECs) such as ECOWAS also took part, as did a number of Regional Fisheries Organisations (RFOs), including the Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States bordering the Atlantic Ocean (ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT) and the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT).

The Abidjan Convention and major networks of non-state actors, such as PRNFAA, AWFISHNET and AFRIFISHNET, were also represented.

Finally, centres of excellence, academic and research institutions such as the University of Cape Coast, the University of Ibadan, Rhodes University, the Regional Academy of Marine Sciences and Technology (ARSTM), as well as independent experts and technical partners - notably the FAO, the African Union Commission and AUDA-NEPAD - contributed to this strategic meeting.

The meeting was officially opened by Colonel Serge Deleuse, Deputy Director of Fisheries Surveillance in

Côte d'Ivoire, representing the Minister of Livestock and Fishery Resources. He wished participants fruitful discussions, reaffirming the importance of regional commitment to sustainable governance of the fisheries sector.

Mr Rafiki Nouaili, AU-IBAR expert, presented the objectives of the FishGov2 project and the forum. In particular, he stressed the need for Member States to incorporate international instruments into their national frameworks, while taking account of their specific realities. He recalled that the AFRM aims to promote the appropriation of treaties and instruments relevant to the sustainable management of fisheries and the development of aquaculture, in particular the UNFSA, the PSMA, the CCRF and the International Plans of Action.

He outlined the specific objectives of this second edition, focusing on assessing the progress made since the first forum, updating compliance data, strengthening the participation of Member States in fisheries governance, developing domestication strategies, and identifying sustainable funding mechanisms.

Finally, he presented the expected outcomes, including the adoption of the draft mechanism for the biennial forum, the establishment of strategic approaches to participation and feedback, and the drafting of roadmaps to support the implementation of the AFRM.

The biennial Forum marked a decisive stage in building coherent African governance of fisheries resources and aquaculture. It established a dynamic for collective action around a common strategic framework (PFRS), operational tools and a consensual institutional mechanism. The event also strengthened the determination of Member States and technical partners to work towards harmonising policies, making the most of international instruments and integrating African priorities into global agendas. (INFOPÊCHE)



## INFOPESCA

### INFOPESCA participated in Seafood Expo Global and Seafood Processing Global

*As in previous years, INFOPESCA took part once again in the renowned Seafood Expo Global/Seafood Processing Global, held from May 6 to 8 at the Gran Via venue of Fira de Barcelona.*

Recognised as the world's largest and most diverse seafood trade event, the fair marked its 31st edition with the attendance of over 35 000 industry professionals and a total of 2 187 exhibiting companies from 87 countries, spread across 68 national pavilions. For three days, suppliers and buyers from across the globe explored the latest food trends and innovations, while discussing solutions to the major challenges facing the seafood industry.

The event also featured a strong conference program, with more than 20 information sessions led by over 80 international experts, covering key topics such as aquaculture, sustainability, traceability, regulations, seafood processing, marketing, consumer behaviour, market trends, tariffs, and trade flows.

At the event, INFOPESCA held a series of meetings with key stakeholders in the fisheries and aquaculture sector.



The aim was to further strengthen regional and international cooperation and identify joint opportunities to support the sustainable development of the industry in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The next edition of the event will take place in Barcelona from April 21 to 23, 2026.

### Empowering Consumers with Verifiable Information on Seafood Sustainability

#### Introducing VeriFish: A Horizon Europe Initiative for Smarter, Transparent Seafood Choices



*Unveiling the prototype of the upcoming verifish app, scheduled for launch in 2026*

In a world of increasing environmental concerns and complex food supply chains, making informed decisions about seafood consumption is anything but simple.

The Horizon Europe-funded project VeriFish is addressing this challenge by developing a framework of verifiable sustainability indicators that make it easier for consumers, retailers, and producers to evaluate the environmental, nutritional, and social impacts of seafood products.

Seafood plays a critical role in both planetary and human health, yet the sustainability credentials of many products remain difficult to verify, and trustworthy information is scattered or inconsistent.

VeriFish is creating tools that consolidate reliable data into accessible formats, helping shift the market toward responsible production and consumption.

Running from May 2024 to April 2026, VeriFish unites 10 European partners with deep expertise in fisheries

science, nutrition, sustainability policy, communication, and data integration. Together, they aim to make seafood sustainability transparent, traceable, and actionable—from catch to farm to consumer.

#### **Making Informed Seafood Choices Is Not Straightforward**

Seafood is an essential part of a healthy and sustainable diet. Rich in high-quality proteins, essential micronutrients, and—especially in oily species—beneficial omega-3 fatty acids, it offers clear advantages over other animal-based protein sources.

Yet despite these benefits, seafood consumption in Europe remains below recommended levels, often due to confusion about its health value, environmental impact, and origins.

At the same time, promoting seafood without addressing its sustainability challenges is not a viable solution.

Fisheries and aquaculture face significant environmental and social issues—from overfishing and illegal catches to habitat degradation, bycatch, and disease management. While aquaculture holds great promise for feeding a growing global population, its potential comes with risks, including the use of antibiotics, feed sustainability, and impacts on local ecosystems.

For consumers, understanding how their seafood is produced—and what the environmental, social, and health trade-offs are—is difficult. Information is often fragmented, inconsistent, or inaccessible. Labels and certification schemes can be costly, complex to interpret, or lack transparency, especially for smaller producers. As a result, both buyers and suppliers struggle to make evidence-based decisions aligned with sustainability goals.

To shift consumer behaviour and support responsible producers, clear, standardised, and verifiable indicators are needed. These must account for the diversity of seafood species, production methods, and sourcing practices, while remaining understandable to the public and usable by stakeholders throughout the value chain.

## The VeriFish Solution: A Framework of Verifiable Indicators

The VeriFish project provides a pragmatic response to the challenge of communicating seafood sustainability in a clear, consistent, and scientifically grounded manner. Funded by the European Union under the Horizon Europe programme, VeriFish is developing a comprehensive indicator framework to assess and communicate the sustainability, nutritional quality, provenance, and potential health impacts of seafood products.

Rather than reinventing existing tools, VeriFish integrates already established, publicly available datasets and indicators. These are selected based on criteria such as measurability, transparency, scientific robustness, and alignment with regulatory and industry standards.

Data sources include ICES, FAO, FishBase, SeaLifeBase, the Global Record of Stocks and Fisheries (GRSF), AquaGRIS, EuroFIRFoodEXplorer, and others. The indicators address environmental and social sustainability, nutrition, and traceability across both wild-caught and farmed seafood.

The structure of the framework is modelled on internationally recognised systems. For example, it aligns with the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF) and uses the GRSF to determine the state of fish stocks. For aquaculture, where a global database equivalent to the GRSF does not yet exist, indicators are derived from sources like ISO 12875 and 12877, ASC and GlobalG.A.P standards, and FAO datasets.

By combining multiple dimensions of sustainability into a single, coherent framework, VeriFish enables all actors—from fishers to policy makers—to communicate product attributes more effectively and to guide consumers towards responsible seafood choices. Importantly, it ensures the framework remains adaptable to evolving data sources and stakeholder feedback throughout the project's development.

## Turning Data into Action: Tools and Visualisations

To ensure that the VeriFish framework is more than just a technical tool, the project is developing a suite of outputs that translate complex data into accessible, actionable formats for diverse audiences. At the core is a prototype web-based app, designed to deliver clear sustainability insights tailored to individual preferences and information needs.

The app will allow users—including consumers, chefs, retailers, and sustainability officers—to search for seafood products and access standardised factsheets presenting sustainability, nutritional, and provenance indicators. These factsheets will not only summarise performance based on EU-wide and international data sources but also explain how indicators are calculated, how often data are updated, and what the results mean in context.

In addition to descriptive tables and definitions, interactive visualisations—such as radar (spider) charts—will enable users to weigh different sustainability aspects based on their own priorities. For example, one user may prioritise low carbon footprint, while another may focus on social standards or stock health. VeriFish will support both approaches.

The underlying logic is simple: making informed decisions about seafood should not require specialist knowledge. Instead, the app will provide an intuitive, visual interface that supports users in understanding trade-offs, making value-based decisions, and ultimately contributing to a more sustainable seafood system.

To extend the reach of the framework, VeriFish is also developing a range of communication tools—from infographics to social media visuals, from explainer videos to educational games. These tools will complement the app and serve to raise awareness across generations and sectors.

## **Guidelines, Policy Contributions and the CWA**

Beyond its technical and digital outputs, VeriFish aims to influence the way sustainability is communicated and operationalised across Europe's seafood sector. To support this, the project is producing a set of practical guidelines and policy contributions to facilitate the use and interpretation of its indicator framework.

At the heart of this effort is the development of a CEN Workshop Agreement (CWA)—a pre-standardisation document that represents a European-level consensus on good practices. This CWA will consolidate key lessons from the project and offer actionable guidance for anyone seeking to design, implement, or evaluate campaigns promoting sustainable seafood consumption.

Unlike more prescriptive standards, the VeriFish CWA is intended to be adaptable and user-friendly. It provides recommendations for tailoring communication strategies to different types of consumers, seafood categories, and media formats.

Whether the goal is to promote underutilised species, highlight nutritional benefits, or explain environmental impacts, the CWA gives structure to what is often a fragmented process.

The guidelines will be especially relevant for retailers, consumer organisations, fisheries cooperatives, policymakers, and educators—essentially anyone who plays a role in shaping seafood narratives. They also act as a stepping stone for future policy development at EU level, offering a common reference point that aligns sustainability communication efforts across member states.

Ultimately, the CWA and accompanying guidelines reinforce the project's core ambition: to make seafood sustainability easier to understand, trust, and act on—whether at the supermarket, on a restaurant menu, or within national seafood policies.

## **Engaging Communities and Building Awareness**

A core element of VeriFish is its commitment to inclusive engagement. Raising awareness about sustainable seafood requires more than information—it requires dialogue, collaboration, and shared ownership. This is why stakeholder engagement is embedded in the project's DNA.

To facilitate this, VeriFish has launched its Community of Practice (CoP)—a multi-stakeholder forum designed to bring together fisheries professionals, retailers, NGOs, policymakers, data providers, and communication specialists. Members of the CoP are not passive recipients of information. Instead, they are invited to contribute actively: validating the framework, sharing datasets, providing feedback on the usability of tools, and ensuring that real-world perspectives shape the project's outcomes.

The CoP is not limited to professionals. Through social media, interactive formats, and outreach campaigns, the project has also begun building a wider public-facing community. Campaigns such as "2 Questions, 6 Perspectives" offer insight from

project experts in an accessible, human way. Challenges like the VeriFish Photo Competition, storytelling workshops, and educational games ensure that citizens, including younger generations, are not only reached but engaged meaningfully.

At the same time, VeriFish maintains a strong presence at events—from Seafood Expo Global and European Ocean Days to local co-creation workshops and academic conferences—bringing its messages to targeted and broad audiences alike. These activities are not only about visibility but about strengthening networks that will endure beyond the life of the project.

By combining technical innovation with participatory communication, VeriFish aims to build more than just tools. It is helping to build a culture of transparency and trust—one that empowers people to make sustainable seafood a shared priority.

## Future Outlook and Call to Action

While VeriFish was initiated as a two-year Horizon Europe project, its long-term ambitions extend far beyond its initial scope. With the foundational framework nearing completion, the next phase involves testing, refinement, and scaling the solutions developed to ensure their relevance and usability across Europe's highly diverse seafood landscape.

The indicator framework, once finalised and validated, will be made openly available for integration into digital tools, retailer platforms, certification schemes, and consumer-facing applications. This framework will also inform the development of a CEN Workshop Agreement (CWA)—a consensus-based European Good Practice guideline that may serve as a springboard for future ISO standardisation.

Alongside this technical work, VeriFish is expanding its Community of Practice, encouraging producers, supply chain actors, and policy experts to collaborate and co-create better ways to inform consumers. This growing community will help ensure that the solutions developed are both practically useful and widely adopted.

As the project heads toward its final year, several deliverables, campaigns, and events are on the horizon, including:

- A stakeholder-tested prototype of the VeriFish Web App;
- The publication and launch of the CWA;
- The release of media products including factsheets, short videos, and communication materials tailored for different target groups;
- A final project conference, which will showcase project outcomes and promote long-term adoption.

VeriFish invites everyone across the seafood value chain—fisheries managers, seafood companies, retailers, educators, and consumers—to become part of this movement. Join the Community of Practice, test the tools, help validate the indicators, and share your perspectives.

Together, we can move beyond fragmented claims and build a trusted foundation for transparent, sustainable seafood—so that every fish on every plate tells a story we can believe in.

Ixai Salvo, Eurofish, [ixai@eurofish.dk](mailto:ixai@eurofish.dk)

### FAO GLOBEFISH SESSION AT 3<sup>rd</sup> UN-OCEAN CONFERENCE

At the Green Zone of the 2025 UN-Ocean Conference (UNOC3), held at The Whale in Nice, France, FAO's GLOBEFISH team hosted an informative session titled "Navigating Global Fish Trade Products: Trends, Policies, Instruments and Market Intelligence." The event offered participants a comprehensive look at the evolving landscape of international fish trade, with a focus on key policy tools, market trends, and the role of data in trade facilitation.

The session began with an overview of global trade flows presented by Stefania Vannuccini, Senior Fishery Officer at FAO, who shared insights on current trends in fisheries and aquaculture products, major producing and trading countries, key commodities, and the important contributions of small-scale fishers and developing nations.

Bhakti Anand, International Trade Consultant at FAO, followed with a comprehensive presentation on basic concepts related to international fish trade such as non-discrimination and transparency, and introduced key global and FAO instruments

influencing trade policy. These included UNCLOS, WTO Agreements, and FAO instruments such as the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, SSF Guidelines, Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA), and various ecolabelling and certification guidelines.

The session concluded with a presentation on GLOBEFISH as a market intelligence tool. Shirlene Anthonysamy, GLOBEFISH Coordinator and Fishery Officer, demonstrated how GLOBEFISH supports timely data, analyses, and information tools that assist FAO members and all stakeholders in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors. The presentation also highlighted the role of the FISHINFONetwork in supporting the dissemination of information produced by GLOBEFISH.

To engage participants and reinforce key messages, the session also featured a series of interactive quiz questions covering topics on global fisheries and aquaculture. The quiz added a dynamic and participatory element, allowing attendees to test their knowledge while deepening their understanding of the subject matter.

# SARA 2025

Participation of INFOPÊCHE in the High-Level conference on the transformation of livestock and Fishery Resources



\*High-Level Panel on Fishery Products Processing.

## SARA 2025

### Participation of INFOPÊCHE in the High-Level conference on the Transformation of Livestock and Fishery Resources

As part of the International Agricultural Show (SARA-2025), the Intergovernmental Organization for Marketing Information and Cooperation Services for Fishery Products in Africa (INFOPÊCHE) took part in a high-level international conference on Tuesday, 27th May 2025, a day dedicated to fisheries and aquaculture, on the topic : 'Transformation of the animal and fishery resources sector: levers for food sovereignty'.

Represented by Mr Assoumany GOUROMENAN, Cabinet Director at the Ministry of Livestock and Fishery Resources, Mr KOIZAN Aimé Kablan, Director General of Internal Trade at the Ministry of Trade and Industry and Mr. Laurent BOMISSO, Head of the DAI Department at the Côte d'Ivoire Investment Promotion Centre (CEPICI).

Organized under the aegis of the Ministry of Livestock and Fishery Resources, the conference brought together researchers, professionals from the

sector and development partners. The aim of the meeting was to find sustainable solutions to transform the fisheries and livestock sectors into engines of food sovereignty. In his speech, Mr. GOUROMENAN stressed the need for sustainable resource management: 'To ensure food security, we need to modernize our practices while protecting our ecosystems. Sustainability is not an option, but an obligation', he said.

For INFOPÊCHE, this vision must be implemented through the stimulation of major levers such as the training of fishermen and fish farmers to improve production systems, the development of value chains while reducing post-harvest losses and above all the introduction of new information and communication techniques in fisheries and aquaculture sector to modernize the marketing technique of fish products, which will contribute to the real sustainability and traceability of the sector. (INFOPÊCHE)



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