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**THIS ACTION IS FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**ANNEX 19**

to the Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the multiannual action plan in favour of  
Sub-Saharan Africa for 2023-2025

**Action Document for West Africa Sustainable Ocean Programme (WASOP)**

**MULTIANNUAL PLAN**

*This document constitutes the multiannual work programme within the meaning of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation, and an action plan within the meaning of Article 23(2) of the NDICI-Global Europe Regulation.*

## 1 SYNOPSIS

### 1.1 Action Summary Table

<b>1. Title</b> <b>CRIS/OPSYS</b> <b>business reference</b> <b>Basic Act</b>	<b>West Africa Sustainable Ocean Programme (WASOP)</b>  OPSYS number: ACT - 61880  Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe)
<b>2. Team Europe Initiative</b>	No
<b>3. Zone benefiting from the action</b>	The action shall be carried out in 13 countries in West Africa (Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Cabo Verde, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mauritania, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo).
<b>4. Programming document</b>	Multi-Annual Indicative Programme for Sub-Saharan Africa 2021-2027
<b>5. Link with relevant MIP objectives / expected results</b>	<i><b>SSA Regional Multi-annual Indicative Programme</b></i> <i><b>Priority Area 3: Green Transition</b></i>  <b>Specific objective 4: Improve biodiversity conservation, sustainable use and governance</b>  R.4.4: Partner countries participate effectively in international and regional processes linked to Multilateral Environment Agreements (MEAs) and improve their implementation.  <b>Specific objective 5: Improve the sustainable use and management of oceans, coastal zones, river basins and lakes</b>  R.5.1: Ocean and water governance is enhanced in terms of regional/international cooperation and coordination on policies, Monitoring, Control and Surveillance, research and data sharing for better decision making and sustainable management and inclusive use of ocean and water resources.  R.5.2: Integrated water resource management, sustainable blue economy including integrated coastal zone management are promoted and developed through green and

	<p>innovative integrated regional/transboundary approaches as well as through investments.</p> <p>R.5.3: Conservation and restoration of ocean, coastal, wetlands and inland water ecosystems are reinforced through regional networks and initiatives promoting nature-based solutions.</p> <p><b>Priority Area 5: Sustainable Growth and Decent Jobs</b></p> <p><b>Specific Objective 3: An investment climate in Sub-Saharan Africa conducive to sustainable private sector development and investments, and improved business capacities and access to finance for MSMEs</b></p> <p>R.3.2: Regional support measures for MSMEs business capacities are enhanced at continental and regional level.</p> <p>R.3.3: Improved access to finance and investment readiness at the regional/continental level.</p>
<b>PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION</b>	
<b>6. Priority Area(s), sectors</b>	<p>Priority Area 3: Green Transition</p> <p>313 – Fishing</p> <p>410 – General Environment Protection</p> <p>430 – Other multi-sectors</p> <p>Priority Area 5: Sustainable Growth and Decent Jobs</p> <p>313 – Fishing</p> <p>250 – Business and other services</p>
<b>7. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)</b>	<p>Main SDG: <b>Goal 14</b> (Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development).</p> <p>Other significant SDGs: <b>Goal 1</b> (End poverty in all its forms), <b>Goal 2</b> (End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture), <b>Goal 5</b> (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls), <b>Goal 8</b> (Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all), <b>Goal 10</b> (Reduced inequalities), <b>Goal 13</b> (Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts), <b>Goal 16</b> (Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels), <b>Goal 17</b> (Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development).</p>
<b>8 a) DAC code(s)</b>	<p>41030 – Biodiversity (25%)</p> <p>43010 – Multisector aid (25%)</p> <p>313 – Fishing (20%)</p> <p>41010 – Environmental policy and administrative management (15%)</p> <p>25030 – Business development services (15%)</p>
<b>8 b) Main Delivery Channel</b>	<p>European Fisheries Control Agency (ECFA)</p> <p>Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) – 41301</p> <p>Other (EU agency; EU Member State agency) – 90000</p>
<b>9. Targets</b>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Migration</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Climate</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social inclusion and Human Development</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender</p>

	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human Rights, Democracy and Governance				
<b>10. Markers</b> (from DAC form)	<b>General policy objective @</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Principal objective</b>	
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Aid to environment @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Disaster Risk Reduction @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Inclusion of persons with Disabilities @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Nutrition @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	<b>RIO Convention markers</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Principal objective</b>	
	Biological diversity @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Combat desertification @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Climate change mitigation @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Climate change adaptation @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	<b>11. Internal markers and Tags:</b>	<b>Policy objectives</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Principal objective</b>
		Digitalisation @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
digital connectivity digital governance digital entrepreneurship digital skills/literacy digital services		YES <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		
Connectivity @		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
digital connectivity energy		YES <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		

	transport health education and research	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Migration @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reduction of Inequalities @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Covid-19	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>BUDGET INFORMATION</b>				
<b>12. Amounts concerned</b>	Budget line(s) (article, item) <u>for year N</u> : 14 02 01 20 (West Africa): EUR 10 000 000 Budget line(s) (article, item) <u>for year N+1</u> : 14 02 01 20 (West Africa): EUR 49 000 000 Total estimated cost: EUR 59 000 000 Total amount of EU budget contribution EUR 59 000 000 The contribution is for an amount of EUR 10 000 000 from the general budget of the European Union for year N and for an amount of EUR 49 000 000 from the general budget of the European Union for year N+1, subject to the availability of appropriations for the respective financial years following the adoption of the relevant annual budget, or as provided for in the system of provisional twelfths.			
<b>MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION</b>				
<b>13. Type of financing</b>	<b>Direct management</b> through : - Grants <b>Indirect management</b> with - European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA) - Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) - the entities to be selected in accordance with the criteria set out in section 4.4.4 and 4.4.5.			

## 1.2 Summary of the Action

The Blue Economy (BE) has been declared Africa's Future in the African Union's Agenda 2063, recognising the key role ocean resources play as a catalyst for socioeconomic transformation. Coastal industries, fisheries, cities and ports account for more than 55 % of West Africa's GDP (World bank, 2017). There are however major constraints to unleash the BE full potential. Climate change, biodiversity loss, overfishing, and marine pollution are changing the coastal and open waters ecosystems in West Africa (WA). Lack of capacity, access to finance, transparency and adequate legal frameworks are preventing investments in sustainable blue economy activities. The governance, regulatory bodies and enforcement of regional agreements are weak, leaving critical marine protected areas and coastal zones unprotected and making the overexploitation of marine resources an increasing concern.

The **West Africa Sustainable Ocean Programme** (WASOP) programme will promote the sustainable integrated use and management of marine and coastal resources, through blue economy, in line with the Global Gateway objective of (GG) protection and sustainable use of natural resources, and nature-based solutions as the basis of a

green recovery. These objectives are linked to the commitments made by the EC at the ‘One Ocean Summit’ (Brest, February 2022), the ‘UN Ocean Conference’ (Lisbon, June 2022) and at the ‘Our Ocean Conference’ (Panama, March 2023), and with two of the four objectives - one (strengthening the international ocean governance framework) and two (making ocean sustainability a reality by 2030) - of the new communication on international ocean governance adopted in June 2022, and the focus on key threats (climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution). The programme will also contribute to the NaturAfrica flagship, which main objective is to support biodiversity conservation and socio-economic development in key coastal landscapes/seascapes for conservation and development.

The WASOP will enhance the potential of the BE in WA, through three main areas of intervention: regional ocean governance; innovative and sustainable BE; enhanced marine and coastal resilience. On the first area, the programme will seek ways to strengthen and make more effective marine resources governance structures in WA, through existing Regional Fishery Bodies (RFB), and other regional organisations with the main objective of improving regional coordination, national enforcement of agreements and reduction of red tape to promote investments. It will enhance the collaboration between Regional Organisations, RFBs, EU Delegations (EUDs), Commission services and the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA), ensuring consistency with the EU policies and GG objectives, while enhancing Regional institutions capacities. On the second area, the programme will contribute to creating enabling conditions to boost BE investments in WA. A limited number of sound innovative regional pilot projects in climate-proofed and sustainable marine resources ocean economy will be identified and supported. These will serve as proof concept and will play a pivotal role to inspire other investments in the region. In addition, the programme will set up a Technical Assistance (TA) facility that will enhance a more active role of actors (including EUDs, Regional Organisations, partner countries and the private sector) in the region, to develop concrete climate-proofed and environmentally sustainable BE activities. Emphasis will be placed on supporting the preparation (identification, drafting, presentation, etc.) of bankable proposals, bridging the gap between private/public investors and EDFIs. Under the third area, the programme will support the management (protection and restoration) and monitoring in critical marine and coastal (national and cross border) protected areas. Innovative approaches for effective use, conservation and ecosystem-based adaptation measures will be developed (e.g. ratification support, support to a proposal of creation of high seas MPA, in line with the global agreement on biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction BBNJ) with a view to sustain marine and coastal biodiversity while contributing to economic local development, women’s economic empowerment and climate change adaptation.

With the support of HQs, the WASOP will ensure complementarities with other regional ocean programmes on specific issues (e.g. ocean knowledge, marine biodiversity conservation, maritime security, transport/strategic corridors) and actions (e.g. ‘Scientific and technological support to regional Centres of Excellence related to green transition’, the future ‘Global Ocean Programme on ocean governance, conservation and sustainable use’ and ‘Safe Seas’). The Programme coordination mechanism will act both vertically (through three pillars led by EUDs) and horizontally (through cross-sector tools: steering committee and coordination unit), creating an overall approach to sustain ocean activities integration and complementarity.

## 2 RATIONALE

### 2.1 Context

The West African (WA) coast (from Mauritania to Nigeria) is an area rich in biodiversity of aquatic/coastal resources, contributing to food and nutritional security, livelihoods, employment, exports, and foreign currency. At the same time, it is an area where there are maritime crimes, piracy, Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, environmental degradation and hazard risks, challenging the livelihoods of coastal communities, food security and the sustainability of the resources. Furthermore, marine ecosystems in WA are threatened from the development of uncontrolled human activities on the coast that affect important habitats for biodiversity, including fish spawning and nursery areas and highly threatened mangroves. As such, the contribution of fisheries and other marine related activities to the economic development of WA is sub-optimal and the current management of resources threatens food security, means of subsistence and marine biodiversity. Climate change is exacerbating this situation. African countries/the AU, often with support from and in partnership with the EU and international organisations, have adopted key policy documents in the area of the Blue Economy, Blue Carbon, Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) and Marine Spatial Planning (MSP), maritime security, fisheries, and water.

This action contributes to the Global Gateway (GG) Investment Package (sustainable use of natural resources and biodiversity protection and nature-based solutions as the basis of a green recovery) and to the flagship NaturAfrica. It will contribute to the implementation of the national policies on Blue Economy (existing or under development) in the region. The 11 February 2022, 40 States and the European Commission committed at the ‘One Ocean Summit’, organised by the French presidency of the Council of the European Union, to take actions in favour of the protection of marine ecosystems, the fight against pollution, the mitigation and adaptation to climate change, and global ocean governance. This message was again highlighted at the ‘UN Ocean Conference’ (Lisbon, June 2022) during which the EU pledged 52 voluntary commitments worth up to €7 billion, and this year at the 8<sup>th</sup> edition of the ‘Our Ocean Conference’ in Panama City (2-3 March 2023), during which the EU announced €816.5 million to protect the ocean and joined the IUU Fishing Action Alliance.

This programme supports the Green Transition priorities of the Regional MIP on ocean governance, sustainable BE and conservation, and restoration of ocean and coastal ecosystems (R.5.1-R.5.3) as other areas of green transition (e.g. investment climate conducive to sustainable private sector development). It applies the principles of the GG strategy (Green Alliance and Partnerships; Alliance for Sustainable Growth and Jobs), and NDICI ‘Global Europe’ main objective of reducing poverty. It is also in line with the 2030 Agenda, SDG14 ‘Life Below Water’, SDG1, SDG2, SDG8, SDG10, SDG11, SDG12, and SDG13 as it supports the implementation of the Paris Agreement. In particular, this programme is also aligned with the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture 2022 Global Action Plan, particularly with Pillar 5 ‘Gender equality and equity: Recognise that women and men in artisanal fisheries and small-scale aquaculture are equal’.

In line with its International Ocean Governance Agenda adopted in 2016 and updated in 2022 and with the legal framework established by the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, the EU will continue creating the conditions for a sustainable blue economy internationally. It will continue to push for science-based management of ocean natural resources, including fisheries, by supporting sustainable maritime development within the EU’s partnerships and agreements, and by promoting sustainable fishing in regional fisheries management and advisory organisations. Through its Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements, it will continue to improve fisheries governance in partner countries and help develop local economies.

A high ambition coalition, gathering 52 countries, was launched at the One Ocean Summit 2022 in Brest by President von der Leyen together with the French Presidency of the Council, to achieve an ambitious agreement for the protection and sustainable use of the ocean beyond national jurisdiction. The EU and its Member States have been key players since the very beginning of the negotiations of the global agreement on biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ), which was finally agreed on 4 March 2023 and shall enter into force once 60 States will have ratified it. The EU has pledged €40 million as part of a Global Ocean Programme and will work to ensure this happens rapidly and help developing countries prepare for its implementation, namely: create protected areas in the high seas (target 30% of the ocean by 2030); better assess the environmental impact of economic activities in the high seas; and regulate the sharing of benefits from marine genetic resources collected in the high seas.

The BE is declared as Africa’s Future in the African Union’s Agenda 2063, recognising the key role the ocean plays as a catalyst for socioeconomic transformation. There is a wealth of policies, strategies, conventions and agendas being developed for sustainable BE in WA. Yet little is known on the extent to which these are being applied at national and regional levels. Further synergies between sustainable BE components are rarely developed. Promoting a sustainable BE as a policy objective in WA is a widely recognised and shared concept (International Conference on Sustainable BE, Nairobi 2018).

There is a need to provide a definition of the Blue Economy for the establishment of the scope of the WASOP and its content. It should be specific to the West African context but there is no specific definition proposed yet by any RECs or regional organisations such as the Abidjan Convention. Definitions conceived by IGAD, IOC, EAC or COMESA can be used and adapted to the regional and country situation considering context and BE wishes. In any case, the Blue Economy needs to be embedded within the Circular Economy definition.

The EU considers that Blue Economy encompasses all industries and sectors related to oceans, seas and coasts, whether they are based in the marine environment (e.g. shipping, fisheries, energy generation) or on land (e.g. ports, shipyards, land-based aquaculture and algae production, coastal tourism). Under a *sustainable blue economy*, maritime and coastal activities reconcile economic development, improved livelihoods and social inclusion with fighting the climate crisis, protecting biodiversity and ecosystems, using resources responsibly and achieving the

zero-pollution ambition<sup>1</sup>.

On a more detail basis, the context can be described as follow:

**Regional integration** – There are institutions mandated to promote regional cooperation in fisheries management (e.g. SRFC, FCWC, ICCAT and FAO through the CECAF) but these institutions do not have technical cooperation or linkage with the political organisations mandated for regional integration, the RECs (ECOWAS and UEMOA) or with each other.

**Fisheries** – All fish stocks are fully or over-exploited in the Canary Current Large Marine Ecosystem (CCLME) and Guinea Large Marine Ecosystem (GLME). The arrival of a Turkish fleet in 2015 in Mauritania and the development of the fishmeal industry has significantly affected the exploitation of the small pelagic species (incl. for the EU fishing vessels operating within EU fishing agreements concluded with coastal countries) and the supply to West African markets. Overall, the distant water fleets are considerably reducing their activities in West African waters while the national artisanal and industrial fleets are expanding, especially the migratory fisheries that now account for 20% of all CCLME and GLME catches (about 3.5 million tonnes). Except for tuna and tuna like species managed by the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), no shared stocks are jointly (regionally) managed by organisations able to take binding decisions on its Members (i.e., CECAF is a regional fisheries body, not an RFMO). Management of demersal stocks fall under national regulation, but lack of enforcement and compliance limits the application of measures. The current PESCAO project (2018-2023) is promoting collaboration among national institutions to improve controls at regional level. Also, the initiative of NORAD (IUU Fishing Regional Project) is supporting this collaboration.

**Institutional capacities** – Overall capacities of institutions and organisations dealing with both fisheries and conservation are presenting signs of weakness for the accomplishment of their mandate. The Fishery Commission for the Eastern Central Atlantic – SRFC (Cabo Verde, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Senegal and Sierra Leone) (CSRP in French) is organising joint operations for many years now, but its Regional Control Centre based in Banjul (The Gambia) is not fully operative, while the FCWC (Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Togo) has difficulties to fulfil its increasing list of tasks, including the ones on monitoring, control and surveillance. The RAMPAO (MPA WA network) is in the same position regarding the Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) network despite the wish of expanding in the Gulf of Guinea. The Abidjan Convention tends to disperse itself, losing the focus on the conservation and restoration of marine and coastal ecosystems. MAVA foundation is ending all its activities in June 2023 and only IUCN and Wetland Int. seem in a position to fulfill its current and future duties.

**Scientific advice for fishery management** – Climate change is affecting fisheries (fish tend to migrate further north, including tuna) and overall coastal and marine biodiversity decreased. But little research attention is given to its current and up-coming direct consequences (species distribution) and indirect ones on fish supply for human consumption, on coastal erosion, on soil salinisation, etc. Other areas where research is lacking are the relationship between fisheries and coastal ecosystems; the growing migrant fishery that affect WA coasts; MPA value addition; the restoration of coastal and marine ecosystem using nature-based solutions; as well as algae and seaweed inventory. Coastal countries are poorly equipped with laboratories and research vessels, which overall management would require more dedicated capacities and activities.

**Blue economy** – ECOWAS member States, as well as Mauritania, launched some initiatives for the promotion and development of the blue economy (BE). At the continental level a strategy of blue economy was adopted in 2020 and head of states renewed their commitment to promote blue and oceanic economy creating jobs and growth, which also requires a secure maritime environment. The European Commission supports its implementation through the FishGov project. In WA Region the focus of the BE is diverted towards coastal tourism, above fisheries & aquaculture and energy (which are the prominent sectors in the continent) and shipping & ports, with limited interest in emerging sectors and innovative uses. In terms of the sustainability aspects, WA region focuses on pollution and secondarily on safety and security, whereas at continental level the priorities are driven by social and livelihood concerns.

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<sup>1</sup> [Communication on a new approach for a sustainable blue economy in the EU.](#)

**Fisheries value chains** – There are several interventions in the region aiming to improve fisheries value chains. For instance, the FISH4ACP project is contributing to the improvement of oyster value chains in Senegal, and in The Gambia, promoting innovative production methods cut costs and developing and implementing hygiene standards. The Promopêche Programme is promoting small-pelagic value chains based on artisanal fisheries and targeting domestic markets in Mauritania. The Coastal Fisheries Initiative (CFI) is promoting innovative projects in Cabo Verde to unlock inclusive growth on the tourism-fisheries nexus, e.g. through deep-sea shrimp fishery fleet or integrated fish wholesale auction system.

**Innovative initiatives** – Some innovative projects are currently implemented and others under-development. Among the first category, the current initiative of integrating the seagrasses into the NDC of Cabo Verde provides a strong signal of the use of coastal ecosystems (on the top of mangroves currently used in West Africa) for the achievement of NDC mitigation objective. The MAVA foundation undertakes a broad review of the potential use of seagrasses for Climate change and biodiversity purpose at the scale of West Africa. Under the PESCAO project, the understanding of the relationship between small pelagic fisheries, climate change, migratory fishery and food security is providing key elements for policy formulation (including fish trade). Under development, a GEF project (planned to start in 2023) is associated in the GLME area fisheries and coastal ecosystems using payment of ecosystem services and monitoring of health status of ecosystems.

**Marine ecosystems** – About 50% of the coastal ecosystems (mangroves, seagrasses, mudflats, etc.) are not in a very good ecological condition at the West African level and almost no ecosystem is mapped or assessed. However, ecosystems located in MPAs present a better health status and as such a better resilience to climate change impacts. Thus, the value of MPAs is effective and should be promoted. Land-sea pollution, salinisation of coastal zones and erosion are currently the major factors affecting the coast, alongside direct human impacts (wood collection, overfishing, etc.). Despite this relevance and importance, the MPA area of each West African country is still too small to meet the Aichi target number 11 (10% of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) under protection), and therefore insufficient to meet the upcoming 30X30 CBD target.

**Role of women in fisheries value chains** – Women represent a large portion of the fisheries and aquaculture workforce in Africa, marketing 60% of all seafood. They participate namely in post-harvest activities (i.e., processing and trading) and are heavily involved in mariculture activities, an emerging sector with extensive economic potential. Nevertheless, women contribution in the sector often goes unseen or is considered to be domestic work complicating the understanding of economic balances.

## 2.2 Problem Analysis

This action will address the following specific (regional) problems and issues (without repeating the arguments already exposed in the section 2.1 above):

***Lack of coordination of Regional Fisheries Bodies and engagement with ECOWAS*** – The overlap of roles and mandates of Regional Fishery Bodies (RFBs) in the region leads to waste of resources and sometimes competition between bodies, adversely affecting the financing of the RFBs and their ability to carry out their mandates satisfactorily. RFBs lack comprehensive system of observation, inspection, compliance and enforcement, and there is a paucity of reliable assessment data for important stocks. Furthermore, there is limited networking, complementarity, linkages and cooperation between the RFBs and RECs in their areas of competence.

***IUU fishing in the region*** – The Gulf of Guinea is one of the regions in the world most affected by IUU fishing, accounting for up to 37 % of catches, representing up to EUR 1.5 billion per year. In a report published in September 2014, the INTERPOL Environmental Security Sub-Directorate (ENS) identified the main weaknesses in dealing with IUU fishing as being: 1) outdated legal frameworks, not in line with international obligations and providing inadequate sanctions against vessels engaged in IUU fishing; 2) lack of capacity to control fishing vessels in the EEZ; and 3) limited regional cooperation. Consequently, several countries in the region have from time to time been identified by the USA or the EU as inadequately addressing IUU fishing. WA countries constantly demand EU support to build capacity in this area.

***Poor management of fish stocks*** – The status of the fisheries in the Canary Current LME and Guinea Current LME are of concern, as most stocks are either overexploited or fully exploited. Very few stocks in West Africa are managed based on management plans. The countries in the region lack data, scientific expertise and equipment to develop such management tools and management decisions are therefore mostly not informed by evidence.



When management plans have been formulated, they are often not adopted or implemented. The lack of participatory planning approaches leads to ineffective management and discourages compliance.

***Underexploitation of Blue economy potential*** – Overall, the resources of the oceans present for ECOWAS Member States (and Mauritania) have a significant potential for sustainable and inclusive development. Thus, a BE strategy shall contribute to drive inclusive economic growth, social prosperity and environment management and protection. It can also contribute to addressing the challenges those countries face: maritime security, sustainable fisheries, coastal management, potential deep sea mining, climate change and infrastructure development. As such, for the WA countries to fully harness the potential of their Blue Economies, they must exploit the resources in their marine environment sustainably and make the maritime space a secure place to do business. The region presents insufficient planning and legal and regulatory framework to facilitate BE development, with the exception of Cabo Verde, and a deficient situation in terms of supporting tools to promote BE through technology and innovation or skills and capacity. Nigeria and Cabo Verde are the only countries within the WASOP group with a good level of collaboration and partnerships in relation to the BE.

***Lack of financing and investment in Blue Economy*** – Most BE initiatives and programmes in Africa still largely rely on grant assistance and development aid to finance their activities and interventions. African BE opportunities are often constrained by the lack of sufficient and adequate financing and investment, and there is an urgent need to unlock both public and private capital to support BE growth potential in the continent. Few African countries have developed a dedicated financing and investment framework for the BE, leaving its economic and growth potential at the mercy of constrained government budgets and conventional private financing. To finance the typical cross-border, cross-industry and multi-annual BE projects, there is a need to funnel innovative financing and venture capital and build a viable African BE asset class for investors. Innovative financing instruments such as through PPP structures, blended finance and venture capital could bridge this gap and take a lead in financing priority BE projects. Success initiatives – as BlueInvest Africa <sup>2</sup> – can be replicated effectively supporting readiness and access to finance for early-stage businesses, SMEs and scale-ups.

***Threats to marine environment*** – Marine ecosystems in Western Africa are threatened not only from the consequences of overfishing and the use of destructive fishing methods but also from extreme weather events and the development of uncontrolled human activities on the coast causing pollution, eutrophication, and widespread loss and modification of coastal habitats, including fish spawning and nursery areas. Climate change is already affecting the productivity of marine and coastal ecosystems, with a prevision of a 26% decrease of fisheries catches in West Africa. The development of petrol and gas exploitation off the Western African coasts is another source of concerns for the marine environment.

The project will also showcase the potential of innovative actions in Blue economy by means of pilot projects (e.g. in one or more of the following six areas: Blue Carbon; Green/blue ports; Improved value chains; Integrated Aquaculture; Circular economy; Payment for Ecosystem Services).

- ✓ ***Blue carbon/carbon credits*** – The issuance of carbon credits in relation to BE relates to the capture of carbon from the atmosphere and storing it in mangroves, seaweeds or soil through projects of reforestation and afforestation, wetland management (forestry and farming), among others. These credits are sold on the voluntary carbon market. The price of the credits is bigger when the project helps to meet some of the UN's SDGs producing a number of co-benefits and increasing the market value of the credit. For example, community-based projects improve the welfare for the local population and contribute to reduce economic inequality. Blue Carbon development in West Africa has the potential to boost sustainable and inclusive BE investments against carbon credit returns. This implies supporting the preparation of BE projects that can show carbon results in line with blue carbon accounting methods.
- ✓ ***Green/blue ports*** – Several interventions are planned in the context of Team Europe Initiatives to improve the sustainability and/or reduce the carbon footprint and environmental impact of port infrastructures in the Region (e.g. the ports of Cotonou in Benin with contributions of the European Investment Bank and EU Member States). In Senegal, the TEI on Green Economy aims to invest in Strategic transport infrastructure for regional integration focusing in particular on improving the efficiency and sustainability of maritime transport (Dakar Autonomous Port and new ports) and infrastructures for regional corridors in the coastal axes with Mauritania, The Gambia and Guinea Bissau. The BMZ has funded an intervention in Ghana to promote the application of the Port state Measures Agreement (PSMA) to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing in selected African countries.

<sup>2</sup> Enabled by the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, and supported by the Commission.

- ✓ ***Insufficient added value from fisheries*** – The processing industry is underdeveloped, except in a small number of countries (Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, Senegal and to a lesser extent Mauritania and Cabo Verde). Only some countries / operators are authorised to export to the EU, and most products are sold with minimal added value from processing. There is significant room to increase fish supply in WA with particular reference to reducing fish meal products to feed sectors like aquaculture and increasing frozen and/or traditionally processed small pelagics for local consumption. Concurrent national strategies affect the sustainable development of the sector. Regional trade remains hampered by many hurdles. Fishing communities and the artisanal fishing sector are also threatened by adverse impacts of climate change, including in post-harvest activities such as processing and marketing, where women are particularly numerous.
- ✓ ***Underestimation of the role of women in the fisheries value chain*** - Due to complex and discriminatory social, cultural and economic contexts, women in the fisheries and aquaculture sector face gender-based constraints that prevent them from fully realising and benefiting from their activities in the sector. Some of the central problems they experience are: i) limited access to information, extension and financial services, infrastructure, social protection and decent employment; ii) limited access to physical and capital resources; iii) exclusion from decision-making and leadership positions; iv) receiving fewer benefits from their activities and have fewer rights and privileges; and v) limited control over markets, pricing and interactions within value chains<sup>3</sup>.
- ✓ ***Circular economy*** – The concept and its operationalisation has not been deployed yet in the WA region. Only Cabo Verde is developing a circular economy policy framework embedded into its BE policy. This affects the implementation of BE activities that are defined from a very traditional way, without considering the sharing, reusing, repairing, renovating, and recycling principles. Thus, the circular economy is neither the waste economy nor the recycling economy: it brings together a set of practices, prioritised according to their impact, aiming at optimising the use of materials and energies. As such, the development of BE in the region should rely on the circular economy principles to become sustainable.
- ✓ ***Mariculture and aquaculture*** – With dwindling catches from capture fisheries, mariculture offers increasingly sustainable alternatives to meeting the demand for supply to domestic and international markets. International investors are increasingly considering African as a destination for mariculture developments. At the same time, inland commercial aquaculture in African is increasing significantly annually and has benefitted from protective regulation against aquaculture imports. Sustainability needs to be ensured regarding, for instance, the species introduced and their diet, in order to avoid fuelling an unsustainable fishmeal industry.
- ✓ ***Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES)*** – In West Africa, example of PES<sup>4</sup> can be found within the bilateral agreement that Mauritania and Guinea Bissau have with the EU for the funding of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). Even if they are not called PES per se, they have been set-up in recognition of the services provided by coastal ecosystem of both countries and more particularly the ones of MPAs. This conservation financial mechanism is of very limited used in West Africa. It will gain to be deployed to promote the conservation of coastal and marine ecosystems that provide fish production service to the fisheries. A GEF project is currently under preparation on that topic in the Gulf of Guinea and more initiatives should be developed on this area.

The main stakeholders and corresponding institutional and/or organisational issues (mandates, potential roles, and capacities) to be covered by the Action are:

### **Area 1 Ocean Governance**

**SRFC and FCWC:** West Africa subregional fishery bodies (SRFBs) which received support, under the PESCAO programme, to contribute to the mutualisation of ECOWAS Member States, and Mauritania, resources for fighting IUU fishing and building MCS capacities at sub-regional and national levels. Additional reinforcement of their

<sup>3</sup> FAO. 2022. “The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture” 2022. Towards Blue Transformation. Rome, FAO.  
<https://doi.org/10.4060/cc0461en>

<sup>4</sup> There are many different forms of PES payments such as cash payments, conservation easements, awards for protection contracts, land use tenure and ownership rights, labour exchange, production inputs and/or technical support for sustainable livelihoods. The type of PES scheme used should be based on the key ecosystem services identified, the beneficiaries involved and those most impacted using resources by beneficiaries. A cost-benefit analysis of different options and alternative livelihoods should be undertaken. Organisation of PES should generate significantly increased financing for investments that improve livelihoods and coastal and marine biodiversity conservation.

capacities, as well as those of their Member States, will allow them to fully meet the needs of their members, including on joint operations to fight against IUU planned (Output 1.1).

**CECAF/FAO:** Advisory body (established in 1967 under Article VI of the FAO Constitution) with both coastal States and DWFNs (Distant Water Fishing Nations) as members. The FAO (CECAF secretariat) emerges as having a regional comparative advantage in the fields of research, scientific advice and information for fisheries management. It will analyse the prospects of the impact of Climate Change in small pelagic stocks (Output 1.2), advice CECAF implementation of its (non-binding) resolutions on allocation of shared stocks, and collaborate with key stakeholders (e.g. the Coastal Resource Management Centre) in the delivery of this output.

**ECOWAS:** Fishing is within the mandate of the organisation which counts with a regional Ministerial Committee comprising representatives of the ministries of fisheries. In 2021 its Council of Ministers (and Mauritania) adopted the ECOWAS Common Strategic Framework for Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture Development (CSF-SFAD), later endorsed by the ECOWAS Heads of State. In order to develop the full potential of maritime activities, ECOWAS has also developed a region-wide Blue Economy Strategic Framework. Additional reinforcement of their capacities will allow them to fully meet the needs of their members regarding implementation of that policy, and Ocean Policy Integration (Output 1.3).

## **Area 2 Sustainable and inclusive blue economy**

**ECA/IDEP:** Under the auspice of the UNECA, the IDEP (pan-African institution established in 1962 by the United Nations General Assembly) might contribute to capacity development of senior and middle level officials of African governments promoting knowledge management and providing advisory services to the implementation and the monitoring of BE at regional and national level (Output 2.1).

**National** (e.g. Ministries and Agencies of Environment, Sea, Fishery, Port authorities, etc.) and **Regional** (e.g. UNEP/Abidjan Convention) **institutions** will benefit from Technical Assistance provided by the ‘Blue facility’ through EUDs (Output 2.1. and 2.3). The TA aims to meet the specific needs of the institutions concerned, enabling them to achieve the objectives of the WACOMP. **National institutions** will also be involved directly into the implementation of pilot BE initiatives (Output 2.3) possibly alongside with the **Private sector** (sustainable fishing industry, aquaculture business, blue tourism operators).

**Local or regional associations, public institutes, CSOs, and INGOs** will be fundamental to develop innovative pilot projects in blue economy (output 2.3) with regional relevance, tackling complex development priorities iteratively and experimentally. They will participate in the possible development of national policies adding the value of locally owned solutions and context-specific approaches. Special attention will be paid to encouraging the participation of associations led by women and young people.

**IFI (e.g. AfDB, EIB, AFD, WB)** might take part on activities related to the promotion of BE finance growth through the provision of green and blue funds and other ad-hoc mechanisms to support the investments in these areas, notably in activities relating to innovative BE initiatives (Output 2.2).

## **Area 3 Ecosystem Protection and restoration**

Entrusted entity (e.g. IUCN) through its West and Central Africa Office (PACO) will contribute to the scaling up of nature conservation through its thematic programmes, country programmes and multi-country initiatives. It operates in 21 of the 25 countries of Central and West Africa. At multicountry level, it is currently leading the EU project on mangroves conservation from Senegal to Benin (PAPBio C1 Mangroves); the GEF-funded study for the use of marine spatial planning in the Gulf of Guinea for the implementation of payment for ecosystem services and coastal nature-based solutions; and strengthening of transboundary cooperation for improved ecosystem management and restoration in the Senegal delta (Mauritania and Senegal).

**RAMPAO** is a regional association that aims to regenerate marine natural resources and conserve biodiversity for the benefit of local communities through a functioning regional network of MPAs. Its activities focus on capacity building, development of management tools, knowledge sharing, income-generating activities and fundraising to support MPAs.

**Wetland International** is a global not-for-profit organisation dedicated to the conservation and restoration of wetland.

**Local or regional associations, CSOs, and INGOs** will be fundamental to develop a network of local activities in ecosystem protection, conservation and restoration (output 3.2), with regional relevance.

### 3 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

#### 3.1 Objectives and Expected Outputs

The **Overall Objective** (impact) of this action is to enhance the sustainable and integrated use of ocean resources in West Africa boosting inclusive economic growth.

The **Specifics Objectives (Outcomes)** of this action are to:

1. Strengthen West Africa ocean governance
2. Support innovative and sustainable Blue Economy
3. Enhance marine and coastal resilience

The Outputs to be delivered by this action contributing to the corresponding Specific Objectives (outcomes) are:

##### **Contributing to Specific Objective 1**

- 1.1 IUU Fishing in the region diminished.
- 1.2 Scientific advice for better management of shared stocks of small pelagic fishes enhanced.
- 1.3 Regional Ocean Policy improved by integrating aspects of the blue economy, climate change, coastal and marine ecosystems.

##### **Contributing to Specific Objective 2**

- 2.1 Regional and national BE policy, regulatory and monitoring tools, and capacities improved.
- 2.2 Awareness and access to BE financing instruments (e.g EFSD+) and blue finance is enhanced.
- 2.3 The added value of sustainable BE is validated through pilot projects contributing to boost inclusive growth.
- 2.4 Coordination, communication, and awareness of BE potential and innovative activities improved.

##### **Contributing to Specific Objective 3**

- 3.1 MPA network extension and its management is supported, including innovative proposal for creation of High Seas MPA and early implementation of the BBNJ.
- 3.2 Nature-based solutions are implemented to prevent regional ecosystem degradation and/or restore degraded ecosystems.

#### 3.2 Indicative Activities

##### **Objective 1 – Strengthen West Africa ocean governance**

###### ***Activities relating to Output 1.1 – IUU Fishing in the region diminished***

- Organisation of joint patrols between EFCA and the sub-regional fishery commissions (FCWC and SRFC), including cross-checking of vessels' tracking systems with satellite imagery and other sources of information.
- Support to information sharing process through FCWC and SRFC Regional Centres of monitoring, control and surveillance (e.g. Vessel Monitoring System information, lists of authorised vessels, inspection and infringement records) to improve regional coordination and cooperation to fight IUU fishing.
- Enhancing the capacities of the FCWC and SRFC Regional Centres of monitoring, control and surveillance for the use of radar and remote sensing technologies in which officers (women and men) are trained.
- Enhancing the capacity of coastal states to deal with IUU fishing cases by supporting the review of policy/enforcement processes in place, and advocating for the ratification and implementation of relevant international instruments (e.g. PSMA).
- Ensuring the capacity of coastal States to deal with IUU fishing through reinforced capacities in monitoring, control and surveillance.
- Reviewing the migratory artisanal fishery in the region and, with the two sub-regional fishery

commissions, support the set-up a working group to deal with governance issues such as access rights, catches reporting, etc.

- Provide training at regional and national levels, including, possibly, training for trainers, Fisheries Monitoring Centres operators, fisheries inspectors, observers, judges and prosecutors, and officials in charge of the validation of EU catch certificates and catch certification schemes adopted by RFMOs.

***Activities relating to Output 1.2 – Scientific advice enhanced for better management of shared stocks of small pelagic fishes***

- Supporting CECAF task force on the data collection, treatment and analysis to improve the quality of the management advice (e.g. inclusion of migratory fishery catches into the current models and predicted climate change scenarios, localisation of catches, direct use of logbooks, systemisation of the data storage and uniformisation of the analysis), in close collaboration with relevant regional centres of excellence (e.g. universities, research centres).
- Organising workshops within CECAF, and between CECAF and key stakeholders on key areas related with this output (e.g. relationship between climate change and small pelagic stocks and fisheries to contribute to the production of anticipated management measures for share stocks; development of common approach to support allocating of stock shares).

***Activities relating to Output 1.3 – Regional Ocean Policy improved by integrating aspects of the blue economy, climate change, protection of coastal and marine ecosystems and marine spatial planning***

- Supporting the Regional (e.g. ECOWAS) implementation of the BE sectorial Policy and Ocean Policy Roadmap, aiming at a stronger inter-sectorial synergy and the full integration of ocean assets and threats into the policies (e.g. monitoring and reporting tools).
- Support to the development of regional and national Marine Spatial Planning (MSP), in collaboration with on-going projects (e.g. GEF-WACA, IOC-UNESCO with the EU support).
- Organising Annual Policy Dialogues to create opportunities for regional stakeholders to exchange on BE and MSP and ensure dissemination of national/regional initiatives.

**Objective 2 – Support innovative and sustainable BE**

***Activities relating to Output 2.1 –National BE policy, regulatory and monitoring tools, and capacities improved.***

- Support to the development of the BE policy and regulatory framework in WA coastal countries, and its implementation (e.g. consultation processes, support to the creation of national institutional coordination mechanisms).
- Support to the establishment of a BE baseline (characterisation of the BE from the economic, environmental, and social point of view including gender analysis) and monitoring mechanism to record progress of the BE in each country and at the regional level (e.g. ECOWAS)<sup>5</sup>.
- Providing short and long term training and workshops to reinforce national (and when required regional) capacities to implement BE initiatives.

***Activities relating to Output 2.2 – Access to BE instruments and blue finance facilitated***

- Analysis and promotion of BE financial mechanisms and tools, to boost the sustainable funding of BE activities in WA countries (and at multi-country level).
- Providing on-demand technical assistance, including to entrepreneurs or promoters, by preparing, setting-up, follow-up and monitor Blue Finance bankable projects in the WA region (incl. scaling-up projects).

***Activities relating to Output 2.3 – The added value of sustainable and climate resilient BE in WA is validated through pilot projects***

- Preparing, organising and launching selection process for a limited number of large projects in one or more of the six areas that will be proposed (e.g. Blue Carbon; Green/blue ports; Improved value chains; Integrated Aquaculture; Circular economy; Payment for Ecosystem Services).

<sup>5</sup> For instance, by using for instance the BE Valuation Toolkit developed by UNECA.

- Follow-up and monitor of pilot projects, in close coordination with EUDs and governments of concerned countries.

***Activities relating to Output 2.4 – Coordination, communication, and awareness of BE innovative activities improved***

- In support of activities above mentioned (e.g. Output 1.3, Output 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3), provide on-demand Technical Assistance (*Blue facility*) to national and regional institutions in identification and formulation of projects, innovative activities, sector analysis, policy dialogue and gender mainstreaming through EUDs.
- Support through a programme coordination and implementation unit (Blue hub), the follow-up of the several interventions/activities in the three pillars, identifying synergies between different partners/activities/components, and proposing (coordination) actions.
- Promote, using various media channels, BE innovative activities, participation scheme and solicitation of the Blue facility with regional bodies (e.g. ECOWAS), EUDs and governments of countries.
- Communicate and develop awareness of BE/CE, both at country and at regional level.

**Objective 3 – Enhance marine and coastal resilience**

***Activities relating to Output 3.1 – MPA network extension and its management is supported, including developing a proposal of MPA in areas beyond national jurisdiction and implementation of the BBNJ***

- Develop awareness of the importance of MPAs for coastal states (including for climate change adaptation and mitigation) and promote the implementation of the BBNJ Treaty and its ratification.
- Reinforcing the capacity of regional organisations (e.g. RAMP AO), CSO and local organisations to support WA MPAs from a Regional approach.
- Identify coastal and marine (incl. offshore) sites that may benefit of being under a specific protection scheme (using a multi-criteria approach).
- Support coastal countries to possibly establish MPAs in the identified sites within the frame of the Regional Network for MPAs (e.g. through RAMP AO) in coordination with the MSP activities (output 1.4).
- Support the identification of potential set of offshore sites (located on canyons for instance) for high sea MPA in West Africa<sup>6</sup>. Support the development of a proposal of regulatory framework to be submitted to the future BBNJ Scientific and advisory body and COP.
- Concertation among users (fishermen, women, young people, fossil fuel industry, etc.), stakeholders (environmental agencies and NGOs, etc.) and authorities for the establishment of potential offshore MPAs.

***Activities relating to Output 3.2 – Nature-based solutions implemented to prevent degradation and restore degraded ecosystems***

- Support the identification of the major threats to MPAs and sensitive areas, factors of vulnerability (external pressures including climate change and pollution from watersheds) in West Africa.
- Preparation, organisation and launching of a selection process for consortium of national/regional CSOs/NGOs with regional approach for protection of marine ecosystems. Promote the implementation of NBS in selected sites.
- Awareness of the NBS and the scaling-up perspectives.

### 3.3 Mainstreaming

**Environmental Protection & Climate Change**

**Outcomes of the SEA screening** (relevant for budget support and strategic-level interventions). The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening concluded that no further action was required.

<sup>6</sup> In some countries – e.g. Mauritania – the preparatory work has already started.

**Outcomes of the EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) screening** (relevant for projects and/or specific interventions within a project). The EIA (Environment Impact Assessment) screening classified the action as Category C (no need for further assessment).

**Outcome of the CRA (Climate Risk Assessment) screening** (relevant for projects and/or specific interventions within a project). The Climate Risk Assessment (CRA) screening concluded that this action is climate no or low risk (no need for further assessment).

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### **Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls**

As per OECD Gender DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as G1. This implies that the proposed action will recognise the different ways in which women and men can be affected by the degradation of marine and coastal resources, as well as the importance of their particular contributions to a sustainable blue economy. Consideration will be given to diverse ethnic, cultural and political norms in participating countries affecting the role of women and vulnerable groups. This will inform approaches at local and national level to improve their inclusive involvement in decision-making processes and the implementation of private and public investments. The supported pilots and field activities will be supported by gender-disaggregated analyses such as basic needs and strategic interests, sexual division of labour, access to and control of resources, with a close link with opportunities for poverty alleviation. Equal rights and decent conditions will be promoted in any community contracting, notably those involving women.

The programme will indirectly benefit women through the result of improved regional fisheries governance, sustainable blue economy and improved marine protected areas. According to FAO, women represent close to 60% of the actors in the post-harvest activities of the seafood value chain (women are actively involved in the downstream activities, such as post-harvest handling, selling fresh fish, processing, storage and marketing).

### **Human Rights**

The programme is aligned with the EU's Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2020-2024. The action will apply a human rights-based approach by ensuring respect of all human rights, participation, non-discrimination, accountability, and transparency in all phases.

Further, sustainable Blue Economy principles strictly align with the SDGs, embracing inclusive and leaving no one behind approaches to avoid unintended negative impacts in terms of human rights.. During implementation, this will be supported by: the participation of local communities at all levels including in the planning, implementation, monitoring and management of local projects; intended economic, social and environmental benefits in terms of food security, health and sustainable management of local natural assets; the recognition of the role of women in the Blue Economy and pro-active consideration of women in decision-making processes.

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### **Disability**

As per OECD Disability DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as D0. Vulnerable groups will be considered and targeted through local analyses and planning, aiming at increasing potential social benefits. Yet, disability is not targeted per se.

The Action will also strengthen participative and inclusive practices and governance, safeguarding that the most vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, are included in planning, implementation and monitoring processes.

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### **Reduction of inequalities**

Due to its horizontal vision, the Blue Economy approach offers a good basis for providing equal opportunities to all persons and avoid potential discrimination patterns. The proposed Action will adopt a beneficiary approach, targeting sustainable social and environmental improvements to poor and vulnerable communities, including the bottom 40 per cent. Under Component 1, improved blue governance will be based on improved accountability and transparency on the use of natural resources and ecosystems, including on the status of fisheries. Under Development additionality will also be promoted in Component 2 and 3, incorporating social equity considerations into the design and execution of local and pilot projects. Practical capacity building programmes in Components

2 and 3 will also promote equality in economic opportunities related to a blue economy. Mainstreamed throughout the Action, increased climate adaptation capacities will lead to improved structural resilience at coastal level.

All of the above will contribute to SDG target 10.2 on empowering and promoting the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.

### **Democracy**

Under its Component 1, the Action will directly promote enhanced multilevel governance, at local national and regional levels. The capacity building and technical assistance provided will also directly strengthen government institutions, thereby supporting efficient democratic institutions. Performance indicators related to updated and improved policies, leading to clarified national blue economy systems, will be included in the Action performance framework, and monitored on a regular basis.

Further, the Action also intends to support social accountability through civil society organisations (CSOs) and citizens engagement, thereby strengthening democracy by way of voicing the needs of vulnerable groups, especially women, young people and people with disabilities, and communities and holding public officials accountable (demand-side accountability).

### **Conflict sensitivity, peace and resilience**

The surveillance activities will directly support vessel controls at sea, encouraging synergies with national entities dealing with illegal trade, maritime trafficking and security issues. The support to international negotiations over marine and fishing resources will also contribute to improve bilateral and multilateral dialogues and ease potential tensions over access to natural and productive resources.

### **Disaster Risk Reduction**

The foreseen support to coastal ecosystems management intends to provide protection against coastal erosion, flooding from storms, increasing sea levels and potential damages caused by wave action. Further, specific Disaster Risk Reduction procedures and tools such as early warning systems will be supported through the Governance component. DRR will also be included in the priority areas for the selection of pilot projects, for instance, allowing to build the DRR readiness and capacity of coastal communities. In addition, technical assistance and capacity building support will be potentially provided to regional, national and local entities allowing to improve linkages blue economy planning with DRR, notably in disaster prone coastal areas and on aspects related to climate change adaptation.

## **3.4 Risks and Lessons Learnt**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Risks</b>	<b>Likelihood (High/ Medium/ Low)</b>	<b>Impact (High/ Medium/ Low)</b>	<b>Mitigating measures</b>
1	Political or economic instability preventing a regional focus on sustainable economic development and aggravating pressure on natural resources.	Medium	Medium	Maintain regular high-level political and economic dialogue, with Regional institutions (ECOWAS, RFBs, etc.) and WA countries to encourage sustainable and resilient BE. Adapt programme implementation if new priorities emerge.



2	Complexity of the programme due to the participation of a larger number of countries, beneficiary institutions and administrations, together with a very wide policy scope.	Medium	Medium	Coordination and liaison is built into the programme design: Specific EUDs will act as pillar coordinators, and a centralised hub will act as a centre point for information and communication.
3	Lack of coordination between similar simultaneous projects and initiatives of relevant regional cooperation.	Medium	Low	A technical coordination mechanism will be integrated in the organisational set-up of the project (see below). Existing regional coordination mechanism (e.g. ECOWAS; Abidjan Convention) may be supported if needed.
4	Low engagement (interest) from relevant actors (private sector, INGOs, etc.) in the BE call for innovative proposals.	Medium	High	Awareness and communication will be deployed before the call of proposals. Pre-identification of potential partners will be done.

#### Lessons Learnt:

- Causes of the failures observed: (i) insufficient consideration of the visions, needs and constraints of national actors (fishermen, women, young people, coastal residents, sea and coastal users, etc.), (ii) insufficient use of win-win solutions for the coastal environment-livelihood and (iii) BE current approaches that are too sectoral or even sub-sectoral and not inter-sectorial with a strong integration of environmental and social concerns.
- Main keys to success: (i) spatial concentration of actions, resulting in optimal synergies and leverage effects, (ii) sufficient duration, (iii) integrated approach and (iv) gradual approach of the 'project cycle' type, the lessons learned from previous achievements and similar initiatives within the African BE and Ocean Continental Programme used to optimise and scale up the rest of the action.
- Factors favouring the success of actions: (i) the active involvement of women (coastal activities, fishing, management of natural resources, health and consumption habits), (ii) young people (innovative producers and potential entrepreneurs), (iii) the importance of economic sustainability (value chain study – integration of business opportunities) and (iv) sustainable exchanges between peers (effective transfer of know-how and knowledge and emulation of local dynamics).
- Actors directly concerned by these lessons: (i) inclusive mobilisation of local and institutional actions (ii) need for technical assistance ensuring the coherence of the programme (methodological and technical support), (iii) selection and supervision of actors responsible for the implementation of components and (iv) steering committees (active monitoring).

### 3.5 The Intervention Logic

This action ultimately aims at enhancing the sustainable and integrated use of ocean resources in West Africa to boost inclusive economic growth (OO). To achieve this, the programme embraces three inter-related Specific Objectives (SO): (SO1) Strengthen West Africa ocean governance; (SO2) Support innovative and sustainable BE; (SO3) Enhance marine and coastal resilience.

- Under the **SO1** the programme will focus on ocean governance and seek ways to strengthen more effective marine resources governance structures in WA, with the main objectives of promoting the sustainability of the fish stocks, improving the health of the marine environment, strengthening science-based decisions and promoting regulatory frameworks for sustainable investments and the fight against IUU fishing. This will entail improving regional coordination (and operations), mainstreaming 'sustainable oceans' approach in regional policies, the effective implementation of international agreements and strengthening the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. In that context, technical assistance will be provided to Regional Organisations, in on-demand basis, to fulfill those objectives.

Under SO1 support will be given to the two main RFBs: SRFC (Cabo Verde, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-

Bissau, Mauritania, Senegal and Sierra Leone) and the Fishery Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea – FCWC (Benin, Cote d’Ivoire, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Togo). It is envisaged to provide TA to these bodies and their Member States, through EFCA (contribution agreement), which has proven to be an effective partner ensuring operational support and capacity building to strengthen the fight against IUU fishing in the region. The Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic (CECAF) has been identified as the sole regional body with a mandate in the areas of research, scientific support and scientific advice to the members in the region. It will be supported through a dedicated (contribution) contract with FAO (entity responsible for CECAF secretariat). It is expected that FAO will collaborate with relevant regional centres of excellence contributing to research and body of scientific knowledge in this particular subject.

- Under the **SO2** the programme will create the enabling conditions to boost innovation and BE investments in WA. The programme will provide technical expertise through a TA facility, upon demand from EUDs and partner countries, with the objective of enhancing regional and national policy dialogue and design, project and investment opportunities identification, management plans, country fiches, and sector analysis. Specific support will be given to support the preparation of private and public investors’ bankable projects wanting to access (green and blue) finance through EDFI’s and IFI’s, matching investor’s needs and financial institutions eligibility criteria. The programme will build on success and lessonslearn from experience like ‘Blue InvestAfrica’.

Through a selection process (e.g. a call for proposals managed by an EU Member State organisation), the programme will identify and support a limited number of innovative pilot projects, in pre identified areas (e.g. Blue Carbon; Green/blue ports; Improved value chains; Integrated Aquaculture; Circular economy; Payment for Ecosystem Services). These projects will link regional policies, (public and private) investors, EUDs and organisations in the ground. Priority will be given to underfunded topics in the area of blue economy, areas in which projects are not ab initio attractive for private investment due to their long maturity or risks associated and to those initiatives with stronger potential for contributing to climate change adaptation as well as to biodiversity conservation. Public grants will serve to show case on the environmental, social and economic feasibility of interventions, paving the way for their scalation, private sector implication or replication.

A pre identification phase will be needed to identify potential partners including the possibility to scale-up ongoing projects (e.g. Fish4ACP project). The selection will prioritise projects with a regional relevance, such as: i) targeting multi-country with a regional approach (e.g. promoting cooperation, data exchange and governance at regional level); ii) building up on successful experiences from the region or beyond (favouring cross fertilisation from outside); iii) having a cross-cutting approach addressing to the extent possible the development of profitable economic activities and business models in blue economy while contributing to the protection of natural resources and biodiversity, fighting climate change and improving the governance of blue economy in the region; iv) promoting gender equality and women empowerment, ensuring proper gender analysis prior to the final design of the implementation and creating decision making processes.

In consultation with all concerned EUDs, SO2 will be attained through a contribution agreement with an EU Member State agency responsible for identifying and contracting, under the guidance of the EU, innovative flagship projects, with regional relevance; providing local and international expert services through the TA facility; and provide support, for the overall coordination of components and EUDs to ensure regional synergies, information and cross fertilisation. It is proposed that this contract is led and managed by the EUD of Cabo Verde ensuring EU leadership, visibility and liaison with all involved EUDs.

- Under the **SO3** enhanced marine and coastal resilience will be achieved through improved regional and local ocean conservation measures including support (protection and restoration) or creation of marine protected areas (MPA) and other area-based management tools or effective conservation measures. Strong emphasis will be placed in promoting climate change adaptation, cost efficient enforcement and sustainable benefits sharing mechanisms. This will include support to specific regional projects linking development of sustainable economic activities and effective protection and conservation measures, underpinned by strong marine science-based guidance. Initiatives around circular economy strategies, payments for ecosystem services, pollution monitoring and management, regional strategies to fight plastic pollution, ridge-to-reef approaches and nature-based solutions with mitigation, adaptation, and risk reduction co-benefits will be key in this area and mainstreamed in the programme.

The entrusted entity (e.g. IUCN) will be responsible for implementing regional protection, conservation and restoration initiatives, possibly under a contribution agreement. It will also provide capacity building and technology transfer in support of these activities to other actors (e.g. Réseau régional d'Aires Marines Protégées

en Afrique de l'Ouest - RAMPAO). There are three ongoing large contracts with IUCN managed by EUDs in the region which have proved to be effective. The programme will also factor-in contributions from other ocean conservation regional actors such as Wetland International, in line with the 4 priority landscapes identified under ongoing EU regional projects (e.g. project on 'Mangrove Protection from Senegal to Benin'). Through a selection process (e.g. a call for proposals) the entrusted entity will fund (new and/or existing) regional projects for protection of marine ecosystems to be implemented by consortium of national/regional CSOs/NGOS with national/regional relevance. EUDs will be associated, through the pillar led, to the CfP procedures and follow-up.

A focus on gender and youth will be ensured through policy support at governance level (SO1) and in supported field interventions with local or regional women-led and youth associations. The intervention will contribute to the implementation of the EU Gender Action Plan III, notably its key thematic priority 3 (strengthening economic and social rights and the empowerment of girls and women), priority 4 (advancing equal participation and leadership) and priority 6 (Addressing challenges and harnessing the opportunities offered by the green transition and the digital transformation).

### 3.6 Logical Framework Matrix

This indicative logframe constitutes the basis for the monitoring, reporting and evaluation of the intervention.

On the basis of this logframe matrix, a more detailed logframe (or several) may be developed at contracting stage. In case baselines and targets are not available for the action, they should be informed for each indicator at signature of the contract(s) linked to this AD, or in the first progress report at the latest. New columns may be added to set intermediary targets (milestones) for the Output and Outcome indicators whenever it is relevant.

- At inception, the first progress report should include the complete logframe (e.g. including baselines/targets).
- Progress reports should provide an updated logframe with current values for each indicator.
- The final report should enclose the logframe with baseline and final values for each indicator.

The indicative logical framework matrix may evolve during the lifetime of the action depending on the different implementation modalities of this action.

The activities, the expected Outputs and related indicators, targets and baselines included in the logframe matrix may be updated during the implementation of the action, no amendment being required to the Financing Decision.

PROJECT MODALITY (3 levels of results / indicators / Source of Data / Assumptions - no activities)

Results	Results chain (@): Main expected results (maximum 10)	Indicators <sup>7</sup> (@): (at least one indicator per expected result)	Baselines (values and years)	Targets (values and years)	Sources of data	Assumptions
<b>Impact</b>	To enhance the sustainable and integrated use of ocean resources in West Africa boosting inclusive economic growth	1. Percentage of the increase of contribution of Blue Economy Sectors to GDP of WA countries 2. GEF 2.7: Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions avoided (tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> eq) with EU support* 3. Percentage of WA EEZ under protection	1. To be defined (2023)  2. 0 (2023)  3. On average 3% (2023)	1. 10% (2030)  2. To be defined (2029)  3. On average 10% in 2029	WA National BE accounts  WA National Greenhouse emission account  WA CBD national protected areas Report	<i>Not applicable</i>
<b>Outcome 1</b>	1. Strengthen West Africa ocean governance	1.1. Percentage of IUU fishing	1.1 Estimated to 30% of catches / 1.5bn EUR (2020)	1.1. Reduction to 20% (2030)	Interpol and other international / regional	Political will amongst Member States (e.g. ratification of

<sup>7</sup> Noted: \*GERF indicators, \*\*OPSYS core indicators, \*\*\*Results and indicators for development validated by DG INTPA - <https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/results-and-indicators>

					organisations Reports	SCS/CSRP convention) and willingness amongst regional institutions
		1.2. Number of dialogue (and monitoring) mechanisms on BE/CE (including supported by the EU-funded intervention)***	1.2. 0 (2023)	1.2. 2 each year (from 2025-2030)	1.1	Political will amongst Member States and adequate cooperation among stakeholders
		1.3. SDG 14.4.1 Percentage of fish stock within biologically sustainable levels in WA**	1.3. 30% (2023)	1.3. 20% (2030)	1.2 FAO COPACE Reports	Capacity to enforce management measures
<b>Outcome 2</b>	2. Support innovative and sustainable BE	2.1 IPA PF 2.11 - Number of public policies developed and/or revised with internal and external consultations with EU supporting Ocean governance**	2.1. 0 (2023)	2.1. 8 (2030)	2.1. Country BE Policy adopted	Political will amongst Member States and adequate cooperation among stakeholders
		2.1 Number of innovative BE initiatives supported as pilot projects	2.2. 0	2.2. 3 (2030)	2.1 WASOP Annual Reports	Political will of ECOWAS Member States and Mauritania
<b>Outcome 3</b>	3. Enhance marine and coastal resilience	3.1 GERF 2.8 Marine areas under a) protection, b) sustainable management with EU support (km <sup>2</sup> )*	3.1. 3% on average (WA level) but baseline study to be carried out for each country	3.1 15% on average at the WA level (2030)	3.1. World Database on Protected Areas and national data	Willingness amongst regional institutions
		3.2 Proportion of important sites for biodiversity that are covered by protected areas, by ecosystem type**	3.2. Number of km2 (to be defined)	3.2. Number of km2 to be defined (2030)	3.2. Annual Reports	

<b>Output 1 relating to Outcome 1</b>	1.1 IUU Fishing in the region diminished	1.1.1 Number of sub-regional fisheries patrols surveillance carried out by FCWC and/or SRFC with EFCA support	1.1.1. 0 (2023)	1.1.1. Two per year	1.1.1. Patrol Reports	Political will amongst Member States and willingness amongst regional institutions
		1.1.2 Number of trainings provided to national authorities (or exercises with regional working groups on data and information sharing) related to control, monitoring and surveillance	1.1.2. 0 (2023)	1.1.2. Two per year	1.1.2. Operational Reports	
<b>Output 2 relating to Outcome 1</b>	1.2 Scientific advice for better management of shared stocks of small pelagic fishes is enhanced	1.2.1 Number of fishery management working groups active at local, national and regional level to support the CECAF task force	1.2.1. 2 per year (2022)	1.2.1. 4 per year (from 2025 onwards)	1.2.1. FAO CECAF workshop Reports	Effective involvement of Member States in the process; Cooperation and collaboration amongst regional institutions and Member States
<b>Output 3 relating to Outcome 1</b>	1.3 Regional Ocean policy improved by integrating aspects of blue economy, climate change, coastal & marine ecosystems	1.3.1. Number of Regional prospective climate change adaptation and mitigation BE policy	1.3.1. 0 (2023)	1.3.1. 1 (2030)	1.3.1. ECOWAS BE Reports	Political will of ECOWAS, its Member States and Mauritania
		1.3.2. Number of institutional coordination mechanisms on BE established with support of the EU-funded intervention***	1.3.2. 1 (2023)	1.3.2. 8 (2030)	1.3.2. National policy documents	Political will of ECOWAS, its Member States and Mauritania
<b>Output 1 relating to Outcome 2</b>	2.1 National BE policy, regulatory and monitoring tools, and capacities improved	2.1.1. GERF 2.10a Number of national policy frameworks developed for supporting BE initiatives**	2.1.1. 0 (2023)	2.1.1. 8 (2030)	2.1.1 National BE report	Political will of ECOWAS, its Member States and Mauritania

<b>Output 2 relating to Outcome 2</b>	2.2 Awareness and access to BE financing instruments (e.g EFSD+) and blue finance is enhanced	2.2.1. Number of TA services provided to prepare, set-up, present, follow-up and monitor Blue Finance projects in the WA region	2.2.1. 0 (2023)	2.2.1. (to be defined for 2030)	2.2.1. Verified Blue facility Reports	Public and Private Awareness and interest in BE facility well made
<b>Output 3 relating to Outcome 2</b>	2.3 The added value of sustainable BE is validated through innovative pilot projects contributing to boost inclusive growth	2.2.2. Number of BE innovative projects implemented in one or several of the six proposed areas <sup>8</sup>	2.3.1. 0 (2023)	2.3.1. 3 (2030)	2.3.1. WASOP annual Report	Active participation of NGOs and the private sector
<b>Output 4 relating to Outcome 2</b>	2.4 Coordination, communication, and awareness of BE potential and innovative activities improved	2.4.1. Number of policy makers and other stakeholders trained by the EU-funded intervention with increased knowledge and/or skills on BE issues, disaggregated by sex and sector**	2.4.1. 3 to be defined (2023)	2.4.1. To be defined (2030)	2.4.1. Training Reports	Interest and availability of leading training institutions (e.g. UNECA/IDEP)
		2.4.2. Number of BE knowledge products and tools developed with support of the EU-funded intervention***	2.4.2. 0 (2023)	2.4.2. (to be defined for 2030)	2.4.2. Verified Blue Hub Reports	Active participation of NGOs and the private sector
<b>Output 1 relating to Outcome 3</b>	3.1 MPA network extension and its management is supported, including innovative proposal for creation of High Seas MPA and early implementation of the BBNJ	3.1.1. Number of MPAs within the networks of MPAs 3.1.2. Number of MPA management plans made operational with EU support 3.1.3. Number of high seas MPA proposed with EU support	3.1.1. 39 (2023) 3.1.2. 5 (2023) 3.1.3 0 (2023)	3.1.1. 50 (2030) 3.1.2. 35 (2030) 3.1.3 2 (2030)	3.1.1. RAMP AO Website 3.1.2. Assessment study 3.1.3 Entrusted	Full commitment of WA countries for conservation

					entity Report	
<b>Output 2 relating to Outcome 3</b>	3.2 Nature-based solutions (NBS) are implemented to prevent regional degradation and restore degraded ecosystems	3.2.1. Number of NBS initiatives undertaken at local level with EU support, by type of initiative	3.2.1. 1 (2023)	3.2.1. 6 (2030)	3.2.1. Entrusted entity Report	Full commitment of WA countries for restoration

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<sup>8</sup> The indicator may need to be reviewed and completed after the selection of pilot projects.



## 4 IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

### 4.1 Financing Agreement

In order to implement this action, it is not envisaged to conclude a financing agreement with the territory.

### 4.2 Indicative Implementation Period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 3 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 84 months from the date of adoption by the Commission of this Financing Decision.

Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's responsible authorising officer by amending this Financing Decision and the relevant contracts and agreements.

### 4.3 Implementation of the Budget Support Component

N/A

### 4.4 Implementation Modalities

The Commission will ensure that the EU appropriate rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures<sup>9</sup>.

#### 4.4.1 Direct Management (Grants)

##### 4.4.1.1 Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC)

###### **(a) Purpose of the grant:**

We envisage the signature of a grant that will contribute to achieving part of Output 1, namely Output 1.1 in SRFC geographical area of competence (i.e. Mauritania, Senegal, The Gambia, Cabo Verde, Guinea Bissau, Guinea and Sierra Leone). With the support of EFCA, SRFC will be in charge of strengthening regional cooperation in the fight against IUU fishing. It will achieve it through the coordinating of Member States activities (including meetings of the SCS commission, identification of training needs, planning of training activities, establishment of a regional network of observers, etc). SRFC will also be responsible for planning and coordinating surveillance campaigns at sea and will have the possibility of chartering vessels through contracts.

###### **(b) Justification of a direct grant:**

Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the grant may be awarded without a call for proposals to the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC).

Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the recourse to an award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified by the beneficiary's legal monopoly situation as per Article 195 c) of the Financial regulation. According to the Convention of 29 March 1985, amended on 14 July 1993 in Praia, SRFC is the only inter-governmental organisation that has the mandate to ensure coordination in the field of fisheries Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) in the ECOWAS Est maritime area. SRFC is an institution with diversified expertise to enforce the mechanisms of sustainable governance of fisheries resources. It is in line with strengthening the regional cooperation to enhance the sustainable management of fisheries resources in maritime waters under the jurisdiction of member States.

<sup>9</sup> [www.sanctionsmap.eu](http://www.sanctionsmap.eu). Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website it is the OJ version that prevails.

#### 4.4.1.2 Fisheries Committee for the West and Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC)

##### **(a) Purpose of the grant:**

We envisage the signature of a grant that will contribute to achieving part of Output 1, namely Output 1.1 in FCWC geographic area of competence (i.e. Liberia, Ivory Coast, Togo, Benin, Ghana and Nigeria). With the support of EFCA, FCWC will be in charge of strengthening regional cooperation in the fight against IUU fishing. It will be in charge of coordinating all the activities (including meetings of the SCS task force, identification of training needs, planning of training activities, regional communication platform, etc.).

##### **(b) Justification of a direct grant:**

Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the grant may be awarded without a call for proposals to the Fisheries Committee for the West and Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC).

Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the recourse to an award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified by the beneficiary's legal monopoly situation as per Article 195 c) of the Financial Regulation. The Convention for the Establishment of the Fishery Committee approved by the first Ministerial Conference in Cotonou, Benin in November 2007, establishes that FCWC is the only inter-governmental organisation that has the mandate to ensure coordination in the field of fisheries Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) in the ECOWAS West Zone. It has set up a regional MCS task force that has already been supported by the EU through the PESCAO Programme.

#### 4.4.2 Indirect Management with an entrusted entity

A part of this action may be implemented in indirect management with the European Fisheries Control Agency. This implementation entails supporting the organisation of joint patrols within the respective geographic areas with the 2 subregional fishery commissions (FCWC and SRFC), supporting the Regional Centre of Monitoring, Control and Surveillance, enhancing the capacity of national entities to deal with IUU by adopting/improving the regulations and providing training, and strengthen mechanisms of governance regarding migratory artisanal fishery in the region (Outcome 1 - output 1.1).

The envisaged entity has been selected using the following criteria:

- Successful experience in coordination of MSC activities in the EU, and in West Africa.
- Capacity to implement tasks like chartering of vessels and airplanes, possible recruitment of complementary technical assistance, etc. Previous experience include the successful implementation of similar activities in the PESCAO programme.

In case the envisaged entity would need to be replaced, the Commission's services may select a replacement entity using the same criteria. If the entity is replaced, the decision to replace it needs to be justified.

#### 4.4.3 Indirect management with an entrusted entity

A part of this action may be implemented in indirect management with the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). This implementation entails the organisation of data collection, treatment and analysis to improve the quality of the management advice, capacity building activities for the mainstreaming of environmental and climate considerations on the management of small pelagic stocks and fisheries in the framework of CECAF Scientific sub-committee (Outcome 1/Output 1.2).

The envisaged entity has been selected using the following criteria:

- outstanding applied research capacities on fish stocks;
- advice capacity in the management of small pelagic management in West Africa;
- experience providing advisory services and secretariat to CECAF sub-committees.

In case the envisaged entity would need to be replaced, the Commission's services may select a replacement entity using the same criteria. If the entity is replaced, the decision to replace it needs to be justified.

#### 4.4.4 Indirect management with an entrusted entity

A part of this action may be implemented in indirect management with an entity, which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria:

- excellent records on the design and implementation of international technical cooperation projects in West Africa region with field presence;
- technical, financial and operational capacity to manage EU-funded programmes with a budget above EUR 10 000 000;
- experience leading Technical Assistance projects in regional, national and local public policies aimed at increasing environmental protection, climate resilience and marine governance;
- capacity to leverage funds from EDFIs and/or the private sector.

The implementation by this entity entails contributing to Regional Ocean Policy improved by integrating aspects of the blue economy, climate change, coastal and marine ecosystems (output 1.3); Regional and national BE policy, regulatory and monitoring tools, and capacities improved (output 2.1); Awareness and access to BE financing instruments (e.g EFSD+) and blue finance is enhanced (output 2.2); The added value of sustainable BE is validated through pilot projects contributing to boost inclusive growth (output 2.3); Coordination, communication, and awareness of BE potential and innovative activities improved (output 2.4).

#### 4.4.5 Indirect management with an entrusted entity

A part of this action may be implemented in indirect management with an entity, which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria:

- experience working with regional organisations and international conservation NGOs;
- experience in the support to MPA networks at national and regional level;
- experience in support to MPA and the use of nature-based solution linked to the coastal area.

The implementation by this entity entails activities relating to the expansion and reinforcement of the MPA network in the region, the identification (and implementation of nature-based solutions to prevent degradation and restore degraded coastal and maritime ecosystems, and support to the development of high-seas MPA contributing to achieve Output 3.1 and Output 3.2.

#### 4.4.6 Changes from indirect to direct management mode (and vice versa) due to exceptional circumstances (one alternative second option)

Should the implementation through direct management (grants) of the activities mentioned under point 4.4.1, reveal not possible due to circumstances outside of the Commission's control, the Commission will revert to an alternative second option, entailing a change from direct to indirect management.

In such case, parts of this action may be implemented in indirect management with an entity, which will be selected by the Commission's service using the following criteria: i) Successful experience in coordination of MSC activities in the EU, and in West Africa; ii) Long term partnership with West African RFBs; iii) Capacity to provide technical assistance to West African RFBs. The implementation by this entity entails contributing to IUU Fishing in the region diminished (output 1.1).

#### 4.5. Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

The geographical eligibility in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement and grant award procedures and in terms of origin of supplies purchased as established in the basic act and set out in the relevant contractual documents shall apply.

The Commission's authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of services in the markets of the countries or territories concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where application of the eligibility rules would make the carrying out of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult (Article 28(10) NDICI-Global Europe Regulation).

For this multi-country action, natural persons who are nationals of, and legal persons who are effectively established in the following countries and territories covered by this action, are also eligible: Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Cabo Verde, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mauritania, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo.

#### 4.6. Indicative Budget

<b>Indicative budget components</b>	<b>EU contribution year N (amount in EUR)</b>	<b>EU contribution year N+1</b>
<b>Implementation modalities – cf section 4.4</b>		
<b>Specific Objective 1 (Strengthen West Africa ocean governance) composed of</b>	<b>17 000 000</b>	
Direct management		
- Grant to SRFC – cf. section 4.4.1.1		4 000 000
- Grant to FCWC – cf. section 4.4.1.2		2 000 000
Indirect management with an entrusted entity		5 000 000
- EFCA – cf. section 4.4.2		
- FAO – cf. section 4.4.3		3 000 000
- entrusted organisation – cf. section 4.4.4		3 000 000
<b>Specific Objective 2 (Sustainable and inclusive Blue Economy approaches are boosted) composed of</b>	<b>25 000 000</b>	
Indirect management with entrusted organisation – cf. section 4.4.2	10 000 000	15 000 000
<b>Specific Objective 3 (Marine and coastal ecosystems are better preserved and restored) composed of</b>	<b>17 000 000</b>	
Indirect Management with entrusted entity – cf. section 4.4.5		17 000 000
<b>Grants – total envelope under section 4.4.1</b>	<b>6 000 000</b>	
<b>Evaluation</b> – cf. section 5.2 <b>Audit</b> – cf. section 5.3	may be covered by another decision	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>10 000 000</b>	<b>49 000 000</b>

## 4.7. Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

The programme will be coordinated by a Steering Committee co-chaired by the European Commission and ECOWAS. Participating stakeholders will include regional institutions, all implementing partners and the European Commission, as well as potential public bodies involved in specific interventions (e.g. innovative BE pilot projects) as proposed by the Technical Committees. The Steering Committee will meet at least annually and provide strategic guidance to the action ensuring the regional approach of the overall intervention and its coherence with the policy priorities of the sectors concerned, as well as the operational monitoring of the programme and the approval of the annual reports.

A programme coordination and implementation unit (foreseen under SO 2), indicatively composed by Project Manager, M&E Officer, Communication and outreach Officer will support both the Steering Committee and the Technical committee meetings, facilitating the horizontal/vertical exchange of information between and within the three components. It will also support EUDs (namely those leading the coordination of each one of the three pillars) coordinating strategic alignment with other organisations, and enabling participation of key stakeholders, including national ministries, civil society (including effective participation of women organisations) and regional actors. Complementary, the coordination unit will feed-in and manage a 'WASOP' network of knowledge/practitioners, enabling more informal knowledge sharing and information flow.

The sector-leading EUDs (indicatively three) will be actively involved in WASOP coordination, to ensure a good implementation and follow-up of respective component, and contribute to inter-component (horizontal) coordination. The EUDs will chair a Technical Committee that will meet at least twice a year, encompassing all implementing partners involved in the corresponding pillar, in coordination with relevant Regional Entities (identified together with ECOWAS).

All EUDs will be associated with relevant (in the country) WASOP activities (e.g. pilot projects), ensuring national appropriation and, when appropriate, political dialogue with country or regional authorities.

The sector-leading EUDs will coordinate among themselves the participation in any formal or informal coordination mechanism established at HQs level with other parties (e.g. DG INTPA, FPI, DG MARE) to align/enhance synergies between this programme and other regional programmes on specific issues, notably maritime security and BBNJ processes.

As part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union, the Commission may participate in the above governance structures set up for governing the implementation of the action and may sign or enter into joint declarations or statements, for the purpose of enhancing the visibility of the EU and its contribution to this action and ensuring effective coordination.

## 5 PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

### 5.1 Monitoring and Reporting

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process, and part of the implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its results (Outputs and direct Outcomes) as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the logframe matrix (for project modality) and the partner's strategy, policy or reform action plan list (for budget support).

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

Pillar-leading EUDs will be responsible for coordination and consolidating monitoring data regarding their own pillar, collected by the implementing partners, in closed collaboration with other EUDs, and to report on the Logical Framework matrix with support from M&E expertise provided by the implementation unit.

Specific surveys/studies can be financed under the regular budget of the action, and if needed through specific budget lines identified for this purpose (see Outcome 2).

Monitoring and reporting shall assess how the action is considering the principle of gender equality, human rights-based approach, and rights of persons with disabilities including inclusion and diversity. Indicators shall be disaggregated at least by sex.

## 5.2 Evaluation

Having regard to the importance and nature of the action, a mid-term and a final evaluations may be carried out for this action or its components via independent consultants, through implementing partners or contracted by the Commission.

The mid-term evaluation will be carried out for problem solving and learning purposes, in particular with respect to coordination of activities and the effectiveness of the implementing scheme in place for each component.

The final evaluation will be carried out for accountability and learning purposes at various levels (including for policy revision), taking into account in particular the fact that strong articulations of the implementation of BE activities at national and regional levels should have occurred, and each country is in a position to implement key BE innovative activities. It should be highlighted that the actions comprises several pilot projects that are being tested.

Evaluations shall assess to what extent the action is taking into account the human rights-based approach as well as how it contributes to gender equality and women's empowerment and disability inclusion. Expertise on human rights, disability and gender equality will be ensured in the evaluation teams. The Commission shall inform the implementing partner at least 1 month in advance of the dates envisaged for the evaluation missions. The implementing partner shall collaborate efficiently and effectively with the evaluation experts, and inter alia provide them with all necessary information and documentation, as well as access to the project premises and activities.

The evaluation reports may be shared with the partners and other key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, apply the necessary adjustments.

The financing of the evaluation may be covered by another measure constituting a Financing Decision.

## 5.3 Audit and Verifications

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audit or verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

# 6 STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

The 2021-2027 programming cycle will adopt a new approach to pooling, programming and deploying strategic communication and public diplomacy resources.

In line with the 2022 '[Communicating and Raising EU Visibility: Guidance for External Actions](#)', it will remain a contractual obligation for all entities implementing EU-funded external actions to inform the relevant audiences of the Union's support for their work by displaying the EU emblem and a short funding statement as appropriate on all communication materials related to the actions concerned. This obligation will continue to apply equally, regardless of whether the actions concerned are implemented by the Commission, partner countries, service providers, grant beneficiaries or entrusted or delegated entities such as UN agencies, international financial institutions and agencies of EU member states.

However, action documents for specific sector programmes are in principle no longer required to include a provision for communication and visibility actions promoting the programmes concerned. These resources

will instead be consolidated in Cooperation Facilities established by support measure action documents, allowing Delegations to plan and execute multiannual strategic communication and public diplomacy actions with sufficient critical mass to be effective on a national scale.



## Appendix 1 REPORTING IN OPSYS

A Primary Intervention (project/programme) is a coherent set of activities and results structured in a logical framework aiming at delivering development change or progress. Identifying the level of the primary intervention will allow for:

Articulating Actions or Contracts according to an expected chain of results and therefore allowing them to ensure efficient monitoring and reporting of performance;

Differentiating these Actions or Contracts from those that do not produce direct reportable development results, defined as support entities (i.e. audits, evaluations);

Having a complete and exhaustive mapping of all results-bearing Actions and Contracts.

Primary Interventions are identified during the design of each action by the responsible service (Delegation or Headquarters operational Unit).

The level of the Primary Intervention chosen can be modified (directly in OPSYS) and the modification does not constitute an amendment of the action document.

The intervention level for the present Action identifies as (tick one of the 4 following options);

<b>Action level (i.e. Budget Support, blending)</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Single action	Present action: all contracts in the present action
<b>Group of actions level (i.e. top-up cases, different phases of a single programme)</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Group of actions	Actions reference (CRIS#/OPSYS#):
<b>Contract level</b>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Single Contract 1	Grant to SRFC – cf. section 4.4.1
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Single Contract 2	Grant to FCWC – cf. section 4.4.1
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Single Contract 3	Indirect management with an entrusted entity (EFCA) – cf. section 4.4.2
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Single Contract 4	Indirect management with an entrusted entity (FAO) – cf. section 4.4.3
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Single Contract 5	Indirect management with an entrusted entity – cf. section 4.4.4
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Single Contract 6	Indirect Management with an entrusted entity – cf. section 4.4.5
<b>Group of contracts level (i.e. series of programme estimates, cases in which an Action includes for example four contracts and two of them, a technical assistance contract and a contribution agreement, aim at the same objectives and complement each other)</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Group of contracts 1	

## List of Acronyms

- AIS: Automatic Identification System
- AU-IBAR: Afircan Union – Interafrican Bureau for Animal resources
- BBNJ: Treaty of the High Seas
- BE: Blue Economy
- CBD: Convention on Biological Diversity
- CECAF: Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic
- CCLME: Canary Current Large Marine Ecosystem
- DWFNs: Distant Water Fishing Nations
- DRR: Disaster Risk Reduction
- ECOWAS: Economic Community of West African States
- EDFI: European Development Financing Institutions
- EEZ: Exclusive Economic zone
- EFCA: European Fisheries Control Agency
- EFSD+: European Fund for Sustainable Development Plus
- EUD: European Union Delegation
- GHG: Greenhouse Gas
- FAO: Food and Agriculture Organisation
- FCWC: Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea
- GG: Global Gateway
- GLME: Guinea Large Marine Ecosystem
- ICCAT: International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas
- IFI: International Financial Institutions
- IUCN: International Union for the Conservation of Nature
- IUU Fishing: Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing
- ICZM: Integrated Coastal Zone Management
- LME: Large Marine Ecosystems
- MCS: Monitoring, Control and Surveillance
- MIP: Multiannual Indicative Programme
- MPA: Marine Protected Area
- MSME: Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises
- MSP: Marine Spatial Planning
- NBS: Nature based sollutions
- NDC: Nationally Determined Contribution
- NORAD: Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
- PESCAO: Improved regional fisheries governance in western Africa
- RAMP AO: Réseau régional d'Aires Marines Protégées en Afrique de l'Ouest (West Africa Network for MPAs)
- REC: Regional Economic Community
- RFB: Regional Fisheries Body
- RFMO: Regional Fisheries Management Organisation
- SRFC: Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission
- TA: Technical Assistance
- VMS: Vessels Monitoring System
- WA: West Africa
- WACA: West Africa Coastal Areas Management Program
- WASOP: West Africa Sustainable Oceans Programme