



**International Women's Day 2016**

*Photo: World Fish - "fish and food security in Africa"*

*"A lot of women involved in the fish trade are single parent. For them, fish represents the main and sometimes the only source of income; the survival of the family depends on it".*



COMMISSION SOUS-RÉGIONALE DES PÊCHES  
SUB-REGIONAL FISHERIES COMMISSION



**CAPE-Coalition pour des Accords de Pêche Équitables**



**Naturskyddsforeningen**



### Declaration of Nouakchott

We, the African women working in the fishery sector and, members of the African Confederation of Artisanal Fisheries Professional organizations (CAOPA), gathered in Nouakchott on the (08) of March Two Thousand and sixteen (2016), on the occasion of the Women’s International Day:

- **Whereas** the African Union has declared 2016 the African Year of human rights;
- **Whereas** the Universal Declaration of Human rights adopted by the UN General Assembly on the 10<sup>th</sup> December 1948 in Paris claiming the fundamental human rights and in equality of women and men rights ;
- **Whereas the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights** adopted by the eighteenth Conference of Heads of State and Governments, in June 1981 in Nairobi, Kenya, whereby Member States recognize that the State has the duty to ensure the elimination of discrimination against women and to ensure the women and children rights’ protection;
- **Considering that** African Union has declared 2016 « Human Rights Year »; with a particular focus on the women’s right ;
- **Whereas the Sustainable Development Agenda by 2030 : ‘Transforming our World’,** adopted by the United Nations in September 2015, which aims at achieving human rights for all, equality between the sexes and the empowerment of women and girls;
- **Considering the FAO Voluntary Guidelines on Sustainable artisanal fisheries** advocating for responsible fisheries governance and socio-economic sustainability, to the benefit of present and future generations, with a particular focus on vulnerable and marginalized groups and people - such as women, children and the elderly, indigenous peoples and groups in dire situations of food insecurity - therefore advocating a human rights-based approach;
- **Whereas Political framework and Reform Strategy of fisheries and aquaculture** adopted by the African Union aiming at similar goals;





- **Whereas, through these instruments, the FAO and the African Union acknowledging equality and non-discrimination between men and women, participation, inclusiveness of men and women in decision-making;**
- **Considering that Small scale fisheries employ, at the global level, more than 90 percent of workers, half of which are women, thus supporting the local economies;**
- **Considering that the majority of artisanal fishing communities in Africa keep on being marginalized and their potential contribution to food security, to poverty alleviation , to sustainable development and use of resources - benefiting these communities as well as others - is not fully achieved ;**
- **Whereas African artisanal fishing communities are often located in remote and land locked areas and generally have only a limited or difficult access to markets, not to mention that they have often only basic access to health, education and other social services.**
- **Reminding that coastal pollution, deterioration of the environment, effects of climate change and natural and man-made disasters are additional threats to those already weighing on our communities.**

**We, Women of African artisanal fishing communities, present at all the stages of the African artisanal fishing value chain: from preparation and financing of fishing trips, fish reception and fish processing and up to the marketing.**

**We are also the pillar of the family, in charge of the education of children and household management. Therefore, we play, equally as men do, a key role in ensuring food security and nutrition, and in alleviating poverty, and ensuring sustainable development and use of resources;**



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- In order to allow us to fully participate in the economic and social development of Africa, we do call on taking into account, in any small scale fisheries development policy, as well as developing welfare infrastructure in the coastal areas such as (electricity, running water, hospital, schools).
- We also wish that the women in the artisanal fishing communities have easier access to training in management, entrepreneurship and value addition to our products, in order to enhance our incomes and our living conditions

We therefore request the :

- the African Union Member States to efficiently implement the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for sustainable artisanal fisheries in its Policies' reform strategy for African fisheries and aquaculture;
- On the other hand ; we, the African women in Artisanal Fisheries , support the request submitted by CAOPA by the African Union to Declare an « African year of artisanal fisheries ».

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