

International Symposium on “*Marine fisheries, ecosystems, and societies in West Africa: half a century of change,*” Dakar, Senegal, June 26 – 28 2002.

**Session on “*Socio-economics and governance: diagnostics and new approaches,*”
Friday, June 28, 2002.**

Contribution of fisheries institutional arrangements to the conservation and management of fisheries resources in the eastern central and southeastern Atlantic

Benedict P. SATIA¹

Abstract

This paper highlights significant aspects in the development of the existing regional fishery bodies/arrangements (RFBs) and the regional environmental program established under the Abidjan Convention, the regional seas convention (RSC) for the eastern central and south eastern Atlantic area. The paper outlines the strengths, weaknesses and the achievements of these bodies. The existing bodies and arrangements have made tangible contributions to the conservation and management of fisheries resources and, together with the regional environmental program, referred to in this paper as the RSC program, represent potential cornerstones of sustainable fisheries management, particularly through capacity-building, development of the marine sciences, and wider stakeholder collaboration, the sharing of experiences, improved ocean governance and the adoption of new management approaches. The relationship between the work of the RFBs and the RSC program reflects the growing nexus between fisheries and environmental management. There is, however, a need to look at the delivery mechanisms, probably founded upon principles of ecosystem-based fisheries management, supported with appropriate scientific research, expanded public awareness and stakeholder involvement, so as to achieve effective implementation. The present capacity in the region, however, is insufficient to deal effectively with conventional management of fisheries, and the higher costs implied by ecosystem-based management would represent, therefore, a significant challenge for which long-term concerted assistance is required.

¹ Chief, International Institutions and Liaison Service, Fishery Policy and Planning Division, FAO Fisheries Department, Via delle Terme di Caracalla, 00100 Rome, Italy; Email: benedicte.satia@fao.org.