# **StatBase**, a generic approach to fisheries statistics management

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Many services (administrative, technical and scientific) produce statistics on fisheries in the six countries that are part of the Sub Regional Fisheries Commission. Everybody agrees that these statistics are not accessible enough nor used enough. A study, in several steps, has been done in order to conceive and build a computer system that provides a better management as well as an easier access to these statistics.

In the first step, we identified the expected features of such a computer system. We based that identification on a precise inventory of the different actors in fisheries statistics, on their activities and on their needs.
That study showed that while the technologies used varied widely, the needs were strikingly similar. In the following, we sum up these needs:

1- Intuitive handling of the data with a tool that would be interactive, user-friendly and integrated to the user's working environment,
2- Being able to produce information easily (statistical bulletin, graphics, maps) for different uses and in different scales,
3- Being able to manage information from different sources and precision levels.
4- Providing backup and access to the old data and linking information to that data so that it can be interpreted correctly.

Traditionally, when integrating heterogeneous data in a common database, we analyze in detail the structure of existing databases and define a structured data model that encompass all of the data. This approach leads, most of the time, to models that are complex, counter-intuitive, unflexible, and expensive to maintain.
For all these reasons, we have decided to base StatBase on an epiphyte model and on a generic and intuitive abstraction of fisheries statistical data.
This document present the main results from the study, as well as the main technical characteristics of the StatBase software.

Key words : Information, Fisheries statistics, software