



**IORA Sustainable Development Programme (ISDP)
"IORA Trainer's training programme on Marine Aquaculture"
Antananarivo – Madagascar, 2-3 May, 2016**

Press Release



Marine Aquaculture is one of the key sectors in IORA Member States, millions of people who are living mainly in coastal areas in the Indian Ocean region depend on this sector for their livelihoods. At the regional level, IORA Member States have committed to further enhance their cooperation to develop this sector in the region.

In this connection, representatives from across the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Member States, Dialogue Partner, and experts gathered at the Ibis Hotel in Antananarivo, Madagascar on 2-3 May 2016, for IORA Trainer's Training Programme on Marine Aquaculture to advance knowledge through the sharing of experience and best practices in marine aquaculture. The inauguration of this programme was also attended by IORA head of missions in Tananarive.

The IORA Trainer's Training Programme on Marine Aquaculture was jointly organised by the Government of Madagascar, namely the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Halieutic Resources and Fishery, in collaboration with the Indian Ocean Rim Association. The training programme saw the participation of 14 IORA Member States and one Dialogue Partner, that were all grouped on a common platform to share best practices and experience on sustainable marine aquaculture development in the Indian Ocean region.

This event was organised at an opportune time given the launch of the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 14 which targets the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources for development, through fisheries management and aquaculture to sustain long-term prosperity for all the coastal community. Being part of IORA's Blue Economy agenda, this training programme was organised under the IORA Sustainable Development Programme (ISDP) to advance participation of less developed countries through peer-to-peer learning, capacity building, and sharing of best practices.

In his opening speech, Mr Firdaus Dahlan, Director of the IORA Secretariat said that “the Blue Economy, including fisheries management and aquaculture, represents significant opportunities for extending the socio-economic development of the rim countries of the Indian Ocean in an inclusive manner”. Citing the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), Mr Firdaus indicated that the world aquaculture production continued to grow in 2013, reaching 97.2 million tonnes with an estimated value of USD157 billion. The significant role of women in the aquaculture sector was highlighted indicating that “IORA, with women’s economic empowerment as a cross-cutting issue, can contribute mainstreaming women in aquaculture development efforts”.

Mr Tilahy D. Andrianarantsoa, the General Secretary of the Ministry of Halieutic Resources and Fishery noted that the aquaculture sector is growing in Madagascar and forms an important part of Madagascar’s economy. He indicated that Madagascar has high potential to develop aquaculture due to its geographical and climatic situation. The different challenges faced by the sector was highlighted namely lack of access to finance, to market, skills and expertise as well as technology.

Understanding the best management practices of aquaculture in the Indian Ocean region and the different steps involved in aquaculture system including production cycle, hatchery production, feeding, monitoring, maintaining good water quality, harvesting, processing and storage and identifying and handling of common disease were components discussed during the seven sessions of the two-day training programmes.

The deliberations of the above topics were substantiated through the intervention of a number of regional experts from the aquaculture sector and the key recommendations of the event included *inter alia*: the compilation of information on best practices related to sustainable marine aquaculture activities in the Indian Ocean Rim region; the promotion of capacity building programmes to enhance knowledge and skills of Member States in the hatcheries and aquaculture systems, as well as on food safety and quality of aquaculture products to ensure that product quality meets regional and international standards; research and technology development on sustainable aquaculture feed production; the strengthening of collaboration with existing research institutions and private sectors to enhance technology transfer for assessing and monitoring water quality in aquaculture systems; strengthening research for better understanding, identification and handling of common disease outbreaks in aquaculture systems; and promoting cooperation with existing regional organisation and other relevant stakeholders for better management and assessment of environmental impacts on marine resources.

In his closing remarks, Mr Tilahy D. Andrianarantsoa, the General Secretary of the Ministry of Halieutic Resources and Fishery, congratulated the delegates from IORA Member States and Dialogue Partner for their active participation during the training programme. He further thanked delegates for sharing knowledge and experience in the aquaculture sector. He also expressed his gratitude to the organiser, as well as the IORA Secretariat who contributed to the success of the event.

On behalf of the Secretary General of IORA, Mr. Firdaus Dahlan, the Director extended his gratitude to the Government of Madagascar for the excellent arrangements made for the Trainer’s Training Programme on Marine Aquaculture and thanked the delegates for their participations. He pointed out that the training programme gave rise to valuable discussions and recommendations as way forwards to the sustainable development of the aquaculture sector in the Indian Ocean Rim region.

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