

Minutes of the

**MEETING OF THE EAF-NANSEN PROJECT REGIONAL STEERING
COMMITTEE FOR THE CECAF SOUTH AREA**

Accra, Ghana, 29 October 2009



THE EAF-NANSEN PROJECT

FAO started the implementation of the project “Strengthening the Knowledge Base for and Implementing an Ecosystem Approach to Marine Fisheries in Developing Countries (EAF-Nansen GCP/INT/003/NOR)” in December 2006 with funding from the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad). The EAF-Nansen project is a follow-up to earlier projects/programmes in a partnership involving FAO, Norad and the Institute of Marine Research (IMR), Bergen, Norway on assessment and management of marine fishery resources in developing countries. The project works in partnership with governments and also Global Environment Facility (GEF)-supported Large Marine Ecosystem (LME) projects and other projects that have the potential to contribute to some components of the EAF-Nansen project.

The EAF-Nansen project offers an opportunity to coastal countries in sub-Saharan Africa, working in partnership with the project, to receive technical support from FAO for the development of national and regional frameworks for the implementation of Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries management and to acquire additional knowledge on their marine ecosystems for their use in planning and monitoring. The project contributes to building the capacity of national fisheries management administrations in ecological risk assessment methods to identify critical management issues and in the preparation, operationalization and tracking the progress of implementation of fisheries management plans consistent with the ecosystem approach to fisheries.

STRENGTHENING THE KNOWLEDGE BASE FOR AND
IMPLEMENTING AN ECOSYSTEM APPROACH TO
MARINE FISHERIES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES
(EAF-NANSEN GCP/INT/003/NOR)

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PREPARATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

This is the minutes of the meeting of the CECAF-South area Regional Steering Committee (CECAF-S RSC) for the EAF-Nansen Project. The CECAF-S RSC is one of the regional steering committees for the EAF-Nansen Project (Strengthening the Knowledge Base for and Implementing an Ecosystem Approach to Marine Fisheries in Developing Countries). The meeting was held at the Miklin Hotel in Accra, Ghana on 29 October 2009. This report captures the discussions at the meeting, the decisions taken and the recommendations made. It was prepared by the EAF-Nansen Project Management Unit in Rome and circulated to all the participants for comments and confirmation.

FAO EAF-Nansen Project/FAO, Projet EAF-Nansen

Minutes of the Meeting of the EAF-Nansen Project Regional Steering Committee for the CECAF-South area, Accra, Ghana, 29 October 2009/Compte-rendu de la Réunion du Comité directeur régional du projet EAF-Nansen pour la zone sud du COPACE, Accra, Ghana, 29 octobre 2009.

FAO EAF-Nansen Project Report/FAO, Rapport du Projet EAF-Nansen. No 12. Rome, FAO 2012. 26p.

ABSTRACT

The first meeting of the EAF-Nansen Project Regional Steering Committee for the CECAF-South area was held at the Miklin Hotel in Accra, Ghana on 29 October 2009. The meeting was attended by representatives from Benin, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria, Republic of Congo, Liberia, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone and Togo. There were also representatives of the African Union Strategic Partnership for the Fisheries Investment Fund, the Subregional Fishery Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC) and FAO. Mr Séraphin Nadjé Dedi, Secretary-General of the FCWC and Mr Frederick Adeyemi, Ag. Director of Fisheries of Nigeria, were elected Chair and Vice Chair respectively.

The meeting started with an overview of the EAF-Nansen Project by the project coordinator who also elaborated on the basic principles of the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF). Activities and achievements under each component of the project were presented and discussed. Also presented were the project management structure, ecosystem survey activities under the project, the mid-term review of the EAF-Nansen Project and the work plan for 2010. Many committee members bemoaned the fact that the region appears to have fallen behind in the implementation of the EAF-Nansen project. The problem that the Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem (GCLME) project has faced and the effect on the countries as a result of lack of surveys by the Norwegian R/V DR. FRIDTJOF NANSEN in the region was also raised.

The recommendations compiled in the course of the meeting were discussed and adopted by the members.

INTRODUCTION

1. The first meeting of the new structure of the EAF-Nansen Project Regional Steering Committee for the CECAF (Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic) South area was held at the Miklin Hotel in Accra, Ghana on 29 October 2009. The meeting was attended by representatives from Benin, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria, Republic of Congo, Liberia, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone and Togo. It was expected that each country would be represented by the Director of Fisheries and the national focal point of the EAF-Nansen project. There were also representatives of the African Union Strategic Partnership for the Fisheries Investment Fund, the subregional Fishery Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The list of participants is shown in Appendix 2.
2. Members participated in the joint meeting of the FAO/CECAF Working Group on Pelagic Resources Subgroup South, and the EAF-Nansen Project Regional Steering Committee for the Guinea Current area held on 28 October at the same venue.
3. Mr Séraphin Nadjé Dedi, Secretary-General of the FCWC and Mr Frederick Adeyemi, Ag. Director of Fisheries of Nigeria, were elected Chair and Vice Chair respectively.
4. The Chairman asked all participants to introduce themselves and the Agenda for the meeting (Appendix 1) was adopted without any changes.

REPORT ON PROJECT ACTIVITIES (SINCE PROJECT INCEPTION)

5. The project coordinator gave a brief overview of the activities that have been undertaken under each output of the project since its inception in December 2006.
6. The coordinator started by reminding the members that EAF is one of the emerging approaches aimed at managing natural resources in a holistic way and that a number of international and regional fisheries-related instruments have established provisions that embrace the principles of the ecosystem approach to fisheries. He gave the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, 1995, UNCED and its Agenda 21, 1992 and the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (LOSC) as examples of such instruments. He said that the LOSC obliges coastal states to take into consideration the interdependence of fish stocks, as well as the effects of their fishing activities on species associated with or dependent on harvested species. He said that EAF was more explicitly addressed in the Reykjavik Declaration adopted at the Reykjavik Conference on Responsible Fisheries in the Marine Ecosystem in October 2001. He reminded members about the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) implementation plan that calls for an ecosystem approach to be implemented by 2010, and the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) endorsement of EAF in 2003 as the appropriate framework for fisheries management.
7. He went over the basic principles of the ecosystem approach to fisheries, including:
 - maintaining ecosystem integrity;
 - improving human well-being and equity;
 - applying the precautionary approach and developing adaptive management systems;
 - ensuring compatibility of management measures (across jurisdictions);

- broadening stakeholder participation and promoting sectoral integration;
- improving research to better understand ecosystems and recognize that conservation and management decisions should be based on the best available knowledge.

8. He then recalled the immediate and long-term objectives of the project and briefly explained the components and outputs as shown below.

Component 1: EAF Policy and Management

- Policies formulated consistent with EAF principles at national and regional levels.
- Revised management plans that include EAF considerations developed.

Component 2: Ecosystem Assessment and Monitoring

- Procedures and methods for assessment and monitoring of key ecosystem properties established, including the development of standardized data collections, sampling methods and appropriate set of scientific indicators.

Component 3: Capacity Building

- Increased capacity at scientific and management level on EAF approaches in partner countries.

Component 4: Support to Regional Research Vessels

- Advice on use of national or regional vessels for EAF-related research including coordinated regional coverage by local or other vessels.

Component 5: Planning and Dissemination

- Project planning and dissemination of information.

9. Under Outputs 1 and 2, he mentioned the familiarization and ecological risk assessment methodology workshops that have been organised in Accra, Ghana (September 2007), Durban, South Africa (June 2008), Casablanca, Morocco (June 2008), Freetown, Sierra Leone (September 2008) and Mombasa (January 2009). He said that the objectives of the workshops were: to (a) introduce participants to concepts and principles relevant to the implementation of an ecosystem approach to fisheries management and (b) to present to partners the EAF-Nansen project, its scope and objectives and to identify overall activities to be carried out with the view to facilitating key processes and activities for the implementation of the ecosystem approach to fisheries in the region. It was noted that participants of the workshops have been introduced to the ecological risk assessment methodology which includes issue identification and prioritization – the necessary inputs for the preparation of fisheries management plans – and also the concept and preparation of the EAF-Baseline reports.

10. It was noted that a desk study on available instruments relevant to EAF in Africa, including case studies, is being undertaken in collaboration with the Development Law Service (LEGN) of FAO. The objective of the study is to guide the development or amendment of country legislation relating to EAF and enable the EAF-Nansen Project to assist countries to incorporate the EAF concept in relevant national legislations.

11. Under Output 3, it was noted that 17 surveys with a total of 555 survey days were carried out in 2007 and 2008 in collaboration with the BENEFIT programme (operated in Angola,

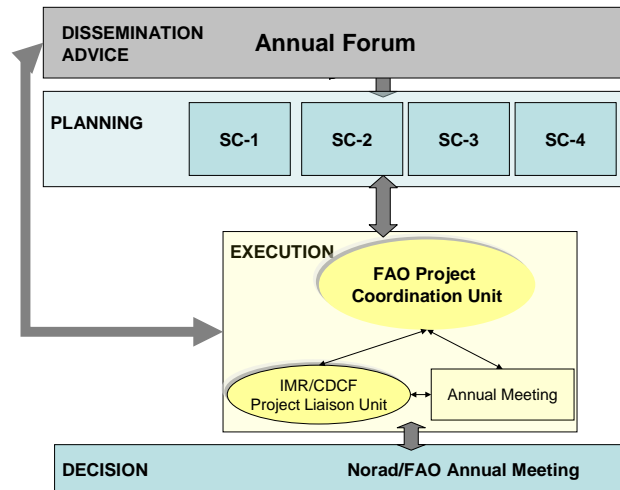
Namibia and South Africa), the Global Environment Facility (GEF)-assisted Large Marine Ecosystem (LME) projects and other partners, and 300 survey days are planned for 2009.

12. The coordinator noted that over 250 national scientists had participated in the surveys and that the results of the surveys have been documented in cruise reports produced by the cruise leaders of the Institute of Marine Research (IMR), assisted by local scientists who participated in the surveys. Post-survey meetings have been organised at which results of the surveys were presented to national authorities (managers, scientists and politicians). In addition, a survey data analysis workshop was held in Accra, Ghana in December 2008 and a similar workshop was planned for 3–12 November 2009 in Mauritius for countries in the Southwest Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission (SWIOFC) region.
13. An Expert Meeting for the development of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) activities in the EAF-Nansen Project was held in Rome, from 30 September to 2 October 2008 in order to assess the potential of GIS as a key tool for facilitating the implementation of the EAF.
14. Under Outputs 4 and 5, the coordinator noted that the project has supported a number of stock assessment workshops and working group meetings in the CECAF area including the Assessment of Small Pelagic Fish – Subgroup South which met in Accra from 19 to 28 October 2009.
15. On the capacity-building component of the project (Output 6), it was mentioned that a trainers' workshop was held in February 2009 in Rome and that the project is exploring possible formal training options with universities in Africa.
16. On project planning, dissemination and communication (Output 6) mention was made of the Annual Tripartite (FAO, Norad, IMR) meetings and also the Annual Forum. The Annual Forum is for progress reporting, dissemination of experiences, identification of best practices and discussion of strategies. The first forum was held in Rome on 16 December 2008. It was reported that a Communication Strategy for the project has been prepared, a project website (www.eaf-nansen.org) is up and running and a project newsletter is under preparation.
17. The coordinator informed the members that earlier in the year the project asked all National Task Groups (NTG) to prepare a concept note that will define the nature of national engagement under the project. He said that the first step in applying the EAF is to ensure that the country is adequately prepared to undertake this process and is realistic about what it can deliver and when. It is therefore essential to define the scope of work, the activities to be carried out, the type of issues to deal with, and also to identify the types of agencies or groups to be involved in the process. The concept note is meant to capture these ideas.
18. He said that some countries in the region have not sent their concept note, nor have they responded to the reminders sent. He also noted that, based on comments sent by the project coordination unit on the concept notes, each NTG has been asked to further develop the concept note into a small project that can be supported by the EAF-Nansen Project. The project is providing an amount of USD 5 000 to each NTG to facilitate this work.

19. Concluding his presentation, the coordinator informed the committee about the following projects that the EAF-Nansen Project is preparing with the Benguela Current Commission (BCC), and will be assisting the commission to implement on top of the ecosystem surveys with the R/V DR. FRIDTJOF NANSEN:
- Provide guidance on institutional arrangements which support an ecosystem approach to fisheries.
 - A strategy to develop and integrate the human dimension of an ecosystem approach to fisheries in the region.
 - Implement a process which allows the review (auditing) and tracking of EAF.
20. He asked if such projects could be replicated in the South West Indian Ocean (SWIO) region in collaboration with the Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem (GCLME) project and the Subregional Fisheries Commissions (namely FCWC and COREP).
21. Many committee members expressed various opinions on the update given on the project and bemoaned the fact that the region appears to have fallen behind in the implementation of the EAF-Nansen Project. Salient points from the discussions are given below:
- Concern was raised on the absence of the GCLME project at the meeting.
 - The problem that the GCLME project has faced and the effect on the countries as a result of lack of surveys by the R/V DR. FRIDTJOF NANSEN in the region.
 - Similar concern was raised about the inactivity and lack of participation of the sub-regional fisheries body for Central Africa, COREP.
 - Attention of the meeting was drawn to the commencement of implementation of the new EU-financed ACP FISH II Programme “Strengthening Fisheries Management in ACP Countries Programme” and advised that the EAF-Nansen project seeks partnership with the ACP project.
 - It was pointed out that the project document does not clarify the role (i.e. financial and technical contribution) of the countries in the project some even saying that the countries have not been sufficiently informed.
 - Some countries wanted to know how best to benefit from the project, especially for the preparation and implementation of fisheries management plans.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE AND ROLES

22. The project coordinator introduced this agenda item. He said that under institutional arrangement for the project, the project management structure is shown in the figure below with provision for a RSC for each of the four operational areas of the project namely; the Canary Current LME area, the Guinea Current LME area, the Benguela Current LME area and the Agulhas and Somali Currents LME area (referred to in this report as the South West Indian Ocean area).



23. He said that each RSC is to have representatives of fisheries research and management institutions in the partner countries in the region, as well as IMR in Norway, FAO and representatives of the LME Programmes and other partner programmes/projects operating in the area.
24. The RSC is responsible for assessing the project progress and formulating recommendations to the project management regarding requirements, priorities and work-plans for project implementation in the respective region. The coordinator noted that the regional steering committees are now being operationalized.
25. An advisory group has been established to play the role of a global “Steering Committee”, assessing project progress across regions, and advising managers to ensure effective implementation of the project.
26. An EAF Regional Task Group (RTG) has been established in each of the four operational regions of the project. Each RTG is composed of one member (and an alternate) from each country and representatives from relevant regional projects and subregional fisheries commissions/committees where applicable. The RTG is a forum for learning and exchange of ideas and advice in relation to EAF in a given region.
27. The project is facilitating the establishment of an EAF NTG in each participating country. The NTG is to assist in the implementation of the project but will not be totally responsible for it since EAF is a fisheries management issue for which the Fisheries Department is responsible. The coordinator took members through the terms of reference of the RTGs and NTGs.

R/V DR. FRIDTJOF NANSEN SURVEYS

28. Merete Tandstad of FAO traced the history of the Nansen Programme and recalled the surveys that have been conducted in the southern CECAF region over the years – both in subregions with FAO support and also in partnership with the GCLME project. She said that both pelagic and demersal surveys have been conducted. She gave the objectives of the surveys as:
- Mapping the distribution and estimating the abundance of the main pelagic and demersal fish stocks.

- Mapping the general hydrographic regimes.
 - Sampling of zooplankton.
 - On-the-job training on survey routines.
29. She said that stomach samples (food and feeding habits) and bottom sediment samples were taken in recent surveys for benthic biodiversity mapping. She explained the methods used in the surveys and gave a brief overview of some of the findings.
 30. Ms Tandstad explained that the cost of the vessel's operations is shared between the EAF-Nansen Project and requesting partners and that access to the vessel and the cost to partners are determined by a minimum set of conditions. The conditions include the nature of work to be done, the geographical location, the possibility for capacity building and local ownership.
 31. The problem of surveys with the GCLME project was raised again but the project coordinator advised that this should be shelved since the GCLME project was not represented at the meeting. Nevertheless, members called for a greater level of collaboration between the GCLME project and the EAF-Nansen Project.
 32. Some committee members raised the issue of access to the data survey collected by the R/V DR. FRIDTJOF NANSEN. FAO explained that the data, first and foremost, belongs to the countries and the EAF-Nansen Project can make them available on request and with the approval of the country concerned.
 33. A committee member expressed concern about the low daily subsistence allowance paid to scientist who participate in the surveys and requested that the project looks into this.

WORK PLAN FOR 2009/10

34. Introducing the agenda item, Kyriakos Kourkouliotis, Operations Officer of the EAF-Nansen Project recalled the duration of the project, the total budget, contributions by Norad and the partners (FAO and LME projects) and the funding gap that exists in the project. He reminded the RSC members that the total budget covers vessel operations and implementation of the ecosystem approach to fisheries at both national and regional levels. He said that the latter involves incorporating ecosystem consideration into management, policy formulation, capacity building, GIS, information dissemination, etc. He said that so far support to countries, have been in the areas of bringing scientists and managers to meetings and workshop and informed members that the next steps will be through the concept notes that NTGs are preparing and are expected to develop these into small projects that the EAF-Nansen Project can fund.
35. Mr Kourkouliotis said that since funds for in-country activities are limited, there is no specific budgetary allocation to each country and that disbursement is demand driven. He explained that the project has been designed with strong linkages to the existing relevant GEF projects and funding of activities is therefore considered incremental.
36. He explained the procedure to access funding from the project for the work of the NTGs. He also explained the nature and essence of the Letter of Agreement (LoA) required by FAO, the guidelines for the use of the funds and the technical and financial reporting expected from the countries. He further explained that the USD 5 000 that the project is

now working to transfer to the countries is only to facilitate the work of the NTG and should not be seen as the only funding from the project to the country.

37. Mr Kourkouliotis ended by saying that the work programme for the coming year is therefore a composite of the work programme of each NTG and the activities that will be undertaken at regional level by the project coordination unit in Rome.
38. Some committee members told the meeting that in some countries it is not easy to open a new bank account to receive funds from abroad as required under the EAF-Nansen Project. The procedure could be cumbersome and even where this is possible it will take too long to access the funds.
39. Mr Kourkouliotis informed the committee that the project will seek ways of lodging the money with the FAO Representation in the recipient country.

MID-TERM REVIEW

40. Introducing the agenda item, the project coordinator informed the meeting that an internal mid-term review (MTR) of the EAF-Nansen Project (GCP/INT/003/NOR) was carried out in June/July to provide an assessment of the implementation status of the project, to make recommendations for changes in overall design and orientation, to make recommendations for the work plan for the remainder of the project (2009–2011), and to provide elements in the process for discussing possible continuation of the project.
41. The meeting was informed that FAO found that the mid-term review report was well written and that it addressed the key issues of the project. It was noted that the project has raised significant high level awareness of EAF concepts in the target countries but there has been variable progress on integrating the EAF into fisheries management and environmental policy, marine, fisheries and environmental law. It was also noted that given vessel and human resources, the project has to elaborate detailed criteria for deciding the priorities for engagement, including country need and commitment, the social and economic importance of marine ecosystems and the threats to and fragility of the marine ecosystem.

TRAINING AND FELLOWSHIPS

42. The meeting was informed that the capacity building component of the project is still not fully developed but training and capacity building have been undertaken with activities in connection with the R/V DR. FRIDTJOF NANSEN surveys and the workshops/meetings organised on ecological risk assessment and elaboration of fishery management plans. The project coordinator briefed the meeting on planned capacity building programmes including a formal course at the University of Ghana, Accra.
43. The coordinator informed members that the advisory group has asked the project to distinguish between short term and longer term courses and training programmes and that the EAF-Nansen Project should not be expected to fill the vacuum for all kinds of fisheries training as is perhaps perceived by the participating countries.
44. Members commended the project for these training initiatives and advised that ample notice be given before the commencement of the course at the University of Ghana. They

also suggested a similar collaboration be established with a university in Morocco for the francophone course.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

45. The coordinator of the African Union Sustainable Fisheries Investment Fund project, Nancy Gitonga, explained the nature of the fund and how countries can take advantage of the opportunities that it offers. She encouraged countries to seize the opportunity that the various projects in the region are offering and the possibility of packaging the various contributions as cofinancing is necessary to access bigger funding from the Investment Fund for country-level projects.
46. She also informed the meeting about the African Fisheries Ministers conference scheduled to take place in Banjul, the Gambia in December 2009. She said that in the past the AU did not give fisheries the importance that it deserves and was happy to note the change that is coming. She also encouraged the Fisheries Directors present to work hard to get their ministers to attend the Banjul meeting.
47. Participants commended the project for the communication strategy that has been developed and asked that the document be sent to all the EAF-Nansen national focal points and partner projects for implementation.
48. To improve visibility of the countries' support in the EAF project, it was suggested that the in-kind contribution by the countries be clearly shown in the project brochure and the communication strategy.

DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

49. FAO explained that to minimize project expenditure meetings of the project are usually planned back-to-back with other meetings of FAO or partners. Therefore, the date and venue of the next meeting will be decided in consultation with CEEAF and the partners and will be communicated to members in due course.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

50. FAO presented a set of recommendations compiled in the course of the meeting for consideration by the members. After discussions the following recommendations were arrived at.
51. The EAF Nansen Project RSC for the GCLME area:
 - Appreciated the support provided by Norad through FAO and noted that the assistance provided is helping the countries in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and WSSD targets relevant to the fisheries sector.
 - Appreciated the presentation made on the mid-term review findings and recommendations and expressed its appreciation to the reviewers.
 - Strongly urged participating countries of the region to accelerate the establishment of the NTGs.

- Encouraged the NTGs to develop Concept Notes that reflect potential synergies and complementarities with other regional and national initiatives with a view to promoting the development of collaborative activities in a cost-effective and efficient manner.
- Noted the administrative difficulties of opening a bank account to receive funds for the operation of the NTGs and proposed that the EAF-Nansen project funds be channelled through the FAO Representation in each country.
- Recognised the importance of promoting regional cooperation in the management of marine resources in the GCLME area and welcomed the initiative by the EAF-Nansen Project to enter into a strategic partnership with the GCLME project for activities of common interest. In this regard the steering committee expressed concern about the absence of the GCLME project in the meeting.
- Noted the importance of the resource surveys in informing the fisheries management processes in the region and proposed that the EAF-Nansen Project get in touch with the GCLME project management to explore possibilities of resuming surveys by the RV DR. FRIDTJOF NANSEN in the region as soon as possible.
- Noted with appreciation the communication strategy developed by the EAF-Nansen Project and requested that the document be sent to the NTGs to allow them develop their own publicity and sensitization actions and materials at the national level.
- Requested the EAF-Nansen project management to make visible in all communication materials the contribution provided by the participating countries (staff, equipment, offices, etc.) in the implementation of the EAF-Nansen Project. This information is missing in the Project Document and if available it could be helpful to the NTGs to mobilize additional inputs from their respective governments to support the work of EAF NTGs.
- Appreciated the presentation made by Ms Nancy Gitonga on the African Union Sustainable Fisheries Investment Fund and the Conference of African Ministers of Fisheries scheduled to take place in Banjul, the Gambia in December 2009. The focal points and Directors of Fisheries were encouraged to adequately inform the Ministers of Fisheries about the ecosystem approach to fisheries before the Ministers go to the Conference.

APPENDIX 1

AGENDA

08:30–09:00	Registration
09:00–10:30	Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening and administrative arrangements • Election of Chair, Vice Chair and Rapporteurs • Agenda • Introduction to the EAF-Nansen Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Update on activities ○ Project management structure and roles
10:30–11:00	Coffee Break
11:00–13:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R/V DR. FRIDTJOF NANSEN surveys <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Surveys in the GCLME Region ○ Survey plan for 2009/10 • Work Plan for 2009/10 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In-country activities (Project Concept Notes) ○ Finance and administration issues
13:00–14:00	Lunch
14:00–16:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid-Term Review • Training and Fellowships • AOB <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ African Union Investment Fund ○ Africa Ministers' Conference • Conclusions and Recommendations
16:00–16.30	Coffee Break
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • END

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