



rampao

Réseau Régional d'Aires Marines Protégées en Afrique de l'Ouest



RAMPAO BY-LAWS

ARTICLE 1 – Working language of the Network

The working languages of the Regional Network of Marine Protected Areas in West Africa are French and English. However, the need to translate documents and communications into Portuguese and Arabic will be taken into account.

ARTICLE 2 – Headquarters

The adoption of the by-laws will also set the headquarters of the Secretariat of the Network. The headquarters are currently hosted by the International Banc d'Arguin Foundation located at *Mamelles rue 21 Villa n° F 46 Dakar, Senegal*. However, at the request of the General Assembly, the location of the headquarters can change.

ARTICLE 3 – Values of the RAMPAO Network

Members and partners of the RAMPAO Network undertake to abide by the following values defined for the Network:

- Recognition that the Network is a amalgam of various MPA objectives, functions, management modes, statutes and structures;
- Understanding of the importance and need to develop solidarity amongst MPAs;
- Relations between members and partners are marked by transparency, sharing, capitalization and pooling of experiences;
- The need to actively ensure the improvement of effectiveness, efficiency, and the participation of coastal communities in the management of their MPAs;
- The need to jointly support an efficient African network of marine protected areas conserving the West African marine and coastal ecosystems and the associated natural and cultural resources, and to support the world-wide network of marine protected areas.

ARTICLE 4 – Roles, responsibilities and qualities of network members

Members of the Network undertake to contribute to the life of the Network, notably by:

- Participating in workshops, exchanges of experiences and training sessions organized by the RAMPAO.
- Providing information on individual MPA sites;
- Supporting actions that are of interest to the RAMPAO Network ;
- Support the creation of national networks of MPAs;
- Hosting RAMPAO meetings and/or exchange visits of other members and partners of the Network;
- Participating in the Network's communication efforts;
- Respecting the consensual decisions taken regarding the harmonization of procedures and criteria defined in the context of the Network ;
- Accepting the principle of periodic RAMPAO evaluations;
- Contributing to the improvement and efficiency of MPAs ; and
- Contributing financially to the operation of the Network as listed in Article 5 below.

Full-fledged members

Marine protected areas are full-fledged members of the Network. Those who are considered as full-

fledged members include Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) whose territories are composed of a marine area and possibly an adjacent coastal area and whose main vocation is to protect marine and coastal ecosystems. These marine protected areas must fulfill all the following criteria:

- Belong to the marine and coastal eco region of West Africa;
- Present a major ecological significance;
- Being officially recognized, with geographical boundaries and management objectives. For community MPAs, this recognition can take the form of a decision from decentralized local councils or customary authorities;
- Having an operational and functional management structure;
- Having at least a management and/or development plan or a multiannual plan of activities either adopted or being finalized.

In community MPAs having a participatory management structure, the Chairman of the Management Committee (representing the Committee and the moral persons in the community) and the park managers must adopt a common position and have a single vote during decisions to be made by the General Assembly. In the MPAs or National Parks not having a legal personality and reporting to the Central Administration, the park manager represents the MPA within the Network.

Full-fledged members will work towards a steady improvement of the management of their site according to the available human and material means at their disposal. The Secretariat of the Network and the associate members bring their support to MPAs to back the improvement of the management of their sites. In cases a modification of the management or action plans, management structure or legal instruments occurs, each full-fledge member is responsible for transmitting the said amendments to the Secretariat within a reasonable time frame.

Associate members

Associate members are defined in the Network Statutes as Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs), civil society stakeholders, research experts, Government representatives, donors, or any project or individual or organization interested in the implementation of the Network's actions.

ARTICLE 5 – Financial Contribution

Annual contributions/subscriptions are set by the General Assembly for each forthcoming period. According to the adopted principle, associate members give a contribution that is twice the amount paid by full-fledged members.

Full-fledged members are called to give their contributions, in the beginning of the calendar year, which are to be transmitted to the Secretariat by the end of the first quarter.

If need be, a member can pay the contribution of another member. Furthermore, an associate member can also 'sponsor' a full-fledged member.

Apart from the subscriptions, members can provide voluntary contributions. Non-member partners do not pay contributions, but reserve the right to provide voluntary contributions to the Network.

ARTICLE 6 – Loss of membership

Based on the reports shared by the Secretariat, full-fledged members monitor the observance of members' obligations and can decide on the exclusion of non-complying members during a meeting of the General Assembly, with a majority of 2/3 of the represented members. The member under the exclusion procedure must be given the possibility of assuring his/her oral and written defense.

Serious reasons that are likely to cause a loss of membership can be the following:

- Any initiative aimed at slandering the Network or its representatives or voluntarily jeopardizing its purpose ;
- Any public stance presented on behalf of the Network and which would not have been approved by the Executive Committee, or the Secretariat of the Network ;
- Any deliberate behavior detrimental to the Network's interests;
- Any member can resign and relinquish its mandates within the Network, or from the Network itself, by addressing to the President a letter of resignation that will be read out during the General Assembly.

ARTICLE 7 – Roles of the Network's governing bodies (see organization chart in Annex)

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The General Assembly convenes in ordinary session every 24 months and in extraordinary session upon proposal of the Executive Committee or invitation of the President.

These meetings are divided in plenary sessions and working group following the structure below:

1. Upon effective election of the president, the Secretariat of the Network presents its technical and financial reports and any other useful communication in the opening plenary session of the General Assembly;
2. MPAs convene on the sidelines of the plenary sessions within the group of full-fledged members in order to:
 - Set by vote the priorities and actions of the Network based on international, regional, national and local needs identified, and decide on proposals submitted by the Secretariat;
 - Validate by vote the Network's operating budget and the specific projects of support for RAMP AO actions;
 - Verify the payment of financial contributions by members and set the amount of annual contributions;
 - Decide by vote on membership applications and exclusions;
 - Evaluate the implementation of priorities and the actions carried out or under way, based on information provided by the Secretariat;
 - Adopt by vote any other useful decision or recommendation;
 - Record the abovementioned elements in a list of decisions and recommendations to be tabled at the plenary session of the General Assembly.

Together, full-fledged Members and Associate Members exchange views in plenary on their respective decisions and recommendations and based on the Secretariat's activity report. They jointly, and in consensus, draft the resolutions of the General Assembly.

THE President of the General Assembly

The President of the General Assembly is elected by the General Assembly, during the first plenary session for a non-renewable mandate of twenty-four (24) months by a vote of a simple majority of all attending members. In case of delay in the organization of RAMP AO General Assembly, the term of the President is automatically extended until the scheduling of the General Assembly.

Candidacies for presidency are submitted to the Network's Secretariat, at least two weeks before the election day. Only an authoritative, legitimate representative of an MPA can hold the position.

The GA President legally runs the chairmanship of the Full-fledge Members Group. His role is to:

- Represent the Network in public events. He/she possesses all powers to act on behalf of the Network;
- Perform all transactions and lodge any appeal whatsoever;
- Call for meetings of the Executive Committee, set the agenda and preside over the meeting;
- See to the application of the decisions made by the Executive Committee;
- Approve expenses, present the annual budgets and control the execution thereof;
- Can be replaced by a member of the Executive Committee in case of an extended or permanent absence.

He/she can delegate, in writing and after informing the Executive Committee, part of his powers and his signature to the Secretary General. Delegations of signature authority must be limited in time, in space as well as in terms of financial limits. An in-house procedure will set the delegation of financial authority.

In the case of the death of the President, a full member who is part of the Executive Committee will replace him/her.

THE SECRETARIAT OF THE NETWORK

The Secretary General sees to the proper operation and the administrative and legal running of the RAMPAN Network. (S)He drafts, or orders the writing thereof under his/her control, the minutes of the meetings and deliberations of the Executive Committee and General Assemblies. (S)He ensures, directly or under his/her supervision, the execution of formalities prescribed herein. The Secretariat of the Network submits to the administrative and financial procedures of FIBA, and will endeavor to meet the specificities of the Network.

Composition of the Secretariat

The Secretariat is composed of a Secretary General, a Research and Database Officer, and a Communication Officer. An administrative and financial support is currently provided by FIBA as part of a convention signed between the two entities. Depending on the needs of the Secretariat, RAMPAN can recruit additional staff remunerated with secured funds for projects managed or entrusted to the Network.

The Secretary General performs the following:

- He/She assures the functioning of the Secretariat and supervises the work of his/her aides;
- He/She prepares the operating budget of the Network and specific projects to support the capacity-building actions of the Network, for which he/she assures the financial follow-up [This will be done in compliance with the operating rules of the donor, notably in relation to reporting and financial audits];
- He/She is responsible for the preparation and organization of General Assembly meetings ;
- He/She is responsible for the drafting of reports and other documents to be submitted to the General Assembly ;
- He/She assures the implementation of decisions (recommendations and resolutions of the General Assembly), and takes into account the Scientific Committee's guidance ;
- He/she seeks collaborations with technical and financial partners, and raises funds for the implementation of activities and work plans;
- He/She secures technical assistance from technical partners and associate members ;
- He/She is empowered to open and operate an account (with the support of FIBA, which represents the administrative identity of the Network) in any credit or financial

- institution;
- He/She presents the annual activity report to the General Assembly.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Formerly known under the name Advisory Committee, the Executive Committee is in charge of guiding and giving recommendations to the Secretariat as part of the implementation of decisions made by the General Assembly and the work plan. It is in charge of monitoring the Secretariat's work between two General Assemblies.

The Executive Committee is presided over by the President of the General Assembly and is composed of three full-fledged members, the FIBA Managing Director and a representative of associate members. These members are elected by the General Assembly.

It plays three major roles: orientation, advice and control of the management of the Secretariat and the Network in the implementation of GA recommendations. Members of this Committee convene physically once a year and, if need be, virtually at the invitation of the President.

Once the work plan and annual budget of the Secretariat are validated by the Executive Committee, the necessary decision-making powers are delegated to the Secretariat for the execution of the said work plan, between one General Assembly and another, under the supervision of the President.

THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Functions

The Scientific Committee gives scientific, technical and legal guidance to the Network in the identification of priorities of common interest, and in relation to the purpose and objectives of the Network. Consultation of the SC will be optional or mandatory [in cases specified by the GA]. The candidacies of full membership, presidential candidates and draft conventions and MOUs must be submitted to the Scientific Committee for their consideration. Any recommendations made by these members are not binding for the President and the Executive Committee but instead helps clarify the decision-making processes.

The Scientific Committee is composed of a minimum of 6 members, at least one of whom shall work in the West African sub region, who are known personalities renowned for their skills and experiences in domains related to the conservation and management of marine and coastal natural resources. The disciplines and number of SC members will be adapted to the evolution of RAMPAO, upon proposal of the Secretariat.

Meetings

The Scientific Committee convenes every 24 months, on the sidelines of the General Assembly. The chairman is elected by his/her peers and his/her mandate is renewed during each meeting. But, Scientific Committee members can convene at their own initiative, or upon invitation of the Secretariat, by using new Information and Telecommunication technologies.

Mandate

The mandate of Scientific Committee members is 54 months. The appointment of SC members is done in ordinary General Assembly, upon proposal of the Secretariat. The renewal of SC members' mandate is voted at the simple majority of members attending the first plenary session of the General Assembly, every 36 months upon proposal of the Secretariat. SC members can seek renewal of their membership at the end of their first term.

Appendix: RAMP AO Organization chart

