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**Plenipotentiary meeting of the Contracting Parties to the
Convention on Cooperation for the Protection,
Management and Development of the Marine Environment and
Coastal Areas of the Atlantic Coast of the
West, Central and Southern African Region (Abidjan Convention)**

Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, 2 to 4 July 2019

Terms of Reference of the Focal points' meeting

I. BACKGROUND

Up to the end of the 1990, the Abidjan Convention was severely hampered by a wide range of various problems that significantly affected its proper functioning and progress. Since then, a revitalization process was initiated and has resulted in significant progress, such as:

- The establishment of a regional emergency plan and other mechanisms to prevent and combat pollution incidents (2011)
- Ratification of the Additional Protocol on Cooperation for the Protection and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the West, Central and Southern African Region against Pollution from Land-based Sources and Activities (LBSA Protocol - 2012)
- The setting-up of an Ad Hoc Committee on Science and Technology (2014)
- The establishment of the Regional Coordination Centre for Marine Pollution Emergencies for the Abidjan Convention.

Similarly, the development and COP approval processes have been undertaken for three other additional protocols to the Abidjan Convention, namely:

- Protocol on the Sustainable Mangrove Management
- Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management
- Protocol on Environmental Norms and Standards for Offshore Oil and Gas Exploration and Development

This progress was achieved through the cooperation of the Focal Points, whose roles were deemed to be of key importance by the Abidjan Convention. This is why the Secretariat of the Abidjan Convention decided to convene a meeting of its Focal Points to review the progress made and discuss how best to structure the existing cooperation between the Secretariat and the focal points.

This convening notice also echoes Decision COP 10/4 on the National Implementation Committees of the Abidjan Convention, which states that it is relevant to:

1. recall article 4, paragraph 3, of the Convention, stipulating that: "On the national level, the Contracting Parties shall formulate laws and make regulations to ensure the proper execution of the obligations covered by this Convention and shall endeavor to harmonize their in-country policies in this field".
2. encourage the Contracting Parties to set up national committees, as appropriate for each Party, to serve as a framework for consultation and to act as a framework for the enforcement and implementation of the Convention at national level.;
3. ensure that, where such a committee has been established, governmental and non-governmental organizations and interested persons shall constitute the committee;
4. request the Secretariat to prepare standard terms of reference for National Committees that will be customized to suit the realities of the Parties;
5. The National Committees to inform the Secretariat about the establishment of the committee and present the terms of reference

II. OBJECTIVES

The overarching aim of the Focal Points meeting is to take stock of outstanding issues requiring special attention and the work of the said focal points.

The specific objectives are as follows :

- To discuss openly about the working relations between the Convention Secretariat and the Focal Points and how best to improve them
- To discuss the engagement of sectoral experts in relation to the themes implemented by the Abidjan Convention

III. DELIVERABLES

- Finalization of the amendment of the text of the Abidjan Convention
- Setting-up of a working group to review the WACAF action plan
- Roadmap for the review of the WACAF Action Plan
- Formulation of the Charter of the Focal Point of the Abidjan Convention

IV. METHODOLOGY

- **Session 1:** Amendment of the text of the Abidjan Convention: this session will finalize the work undertaken with a view to updating the existing texts of the Abidjan Convention so as to bring them up to date in today's context.
- **Session 2:** Revised WACAF Action Plan: this session will provide the opportunity to set up a working group to conduct the work of reviewing the Action Plan.
- **Session 3:** Development of the roadmap for the revised WACAF plan: this session will consider the steps to be taken and the timeline for the review of the WACAF action plan.
- **Session 4:** Preparation of the Focal Point Charter: this session will enable the Secretariat and the focal points to lay the foundations for improved functioning based on mutually agreed undertakings.
- **Sessions 5:** Debriefing and closing ceremony: this session will review the main outcomes of the meeting, validate the roadmap and identify the next steps to be taken.

V. AGENDA

08:30-9:00 - Welcoming and registration

9:00 -9:30 Opening of the meeting

9:30-10:00 - Presentation of the work plan and budget of the Secretariat of the Abidjan Convention

10:00-10:30 - Presentation of protocol action plans

10:30- 11:00 Coffee break

11:00-13:00- Working session

- a) Electing the officials
- b) Drafting the Charter for the Focal Points
Establishment of the Abidjan Convention national committees
- c) National consultations to prepare action plans for implementing the protocols and adopting the National Policy for Integrated Ocean Management

13:00–14:00 LUNCHBREAK

14:30 –16:00 working session (continued and end)

- d) Amendment of the Abidjan Convention text
- e) Revision of the WACAF action plan

16:00-16:15 Coffee break

16h 15 – 16:45 Approval of a roadmap

16h 45 –17h: Closing of the workshop.