

## General Assembly of the MIHARI network

Fort-Dauphin, Madagascar - July 2017

### **Motion - Creation of an exclusive fishing zone for small-scale fishers on the coastal strip**

Considering that the sea contains significant resources and represents the main source of protein for one billion people around the world according to the World Bank,

Considering the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations on 2 August 2015, Objectives 1 (eradication of poverty), 2 (fight against hunger), 12 (sustainable consumption and production), and 14 (protection and sustainable exploitation of the oceans),

Considering that 80% of global fish production for human consumption comes from small-scale fisheries (FAO, 2014),

Considering that the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of Madagascar is fished by both industrial operators and community fishermen,

Considering that Madagascar has a particularly extensive coastline (more than 5,200 km) with, in general, an open access regime to the sea and its resources,

Stressing that about 500,000 people live off fishing in Madagascar, 83% of whom are members of coastal communities engaged in small-scale fishing and depend directly on marine resources (Soumy 2004),

Stressing that a catch reconstruction exercise<sup>1</sup> has shown an underestimation of total catches in official data of up to 200% over the period 1950-2008, as their calculations did not take into account small-scale fishers which account for 75% of catches,

Emphasizing that coastal populations, who generally do not own arable land, are extremely vulnerable, and that the fisheries sector plays a leading role in their nutritional health and food security,

Stressing that the fishing zone of coastal communities is generally limited to a few kilometres from the coast, and that any excessive pressure on this coastal strip has a direct impact on their social, economic and nutritional well-being,

Considering that there is still no law providing real protection to community fishing zones

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<sup>1</sup> RECONSTRUCTION OF TOTAL MARINE FISHERIES CATCHES FOR MADAGASCAR (1950-2008), Frédéric Le Manach, Charlotte Gough, Frances Humber, Sarah Harper, and Dirk Zeller



(in the decree of 5 June 1922 regarding river fishing and sea fishing in Madagascar, Article 10 forbids trawling within two miles of the coast, but it is insufficient, poorly applied and is subject to exemptions for shrimp fishing),

Considering that in 2015, FAO adopted voluntary guidelines aimed at ensuring the sustainability of small-scale fisheries in the context of food security and poverty eradication, calling on states to establish exclusive fishing zones for small fishermen,

Considering the concern of small-scale fishers about the depletion of coastal marine resources, partly caused by fishing pressure from industrial vessels operating near the coast which in some cases use unsustainable methods,

Considering that certain economic projects (oil or mining exploitation, aquaculture, tourism) put additional pressures on community fishing zones,

Noting that many coastal communities in Madagascar are engaged in major efforts to implement community management tools for their marine areas (Locally Managed Marine Areas - LMMA), that these tools are well adapted to the situation in Madagascar, but that these communities can only secure exclusive rights of access to these areas by setting up a formal Marine Protected Area, which implies a cumbersome, slow, expensive and difficult process,

Considering, therefore, that giving Madagascar's coastal communities exclusive access to their community fishing areas is the most effective way to encourage the development of LMMAs and to fulfill the Sydney Promise made by the President of the Republic in November 2014,

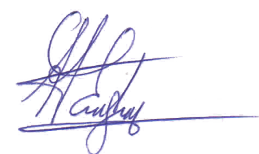
Welcoming the efforts already made by the competent authorities in the field of Integrated Coastal Zone Management, essential for the sustainable management of Madagascar's maritime area for the benefit of the entire population,

**The leaders of the local communities managing marine resources in Madagascar, gathered for the General Assembly within the framework of the National Forum of the MIHARI network from 27 to 31 July 2017 in Fort Dauphin, ask the government of Madagascar:**

1. to grant, by law, to the country's coastal communities the exclusive fishing rights to a coastal strip to be defined according to the regions, as the constitution allows,
2. to reinforce the control of the activities of national and foreign fishing vessels operating in the territorial waters of Madagascar by ensuring that community fishing zones and the norms on gear and fishing techniques are respected,



3. to supervise economic projects (oil or mining exploitation, aquaculture, tourism) to ensure the protection of communal fishing zones and to preserve the rights of public use of the beaches and islets used by local communities as rest areas,
4. to ensure a high degree of transparency in the allocation of fishing permits and other permits for the use of the marine area (mining, tourism, etc.) and to fight against all forms of corruption in the application of laws and regulations affecting territorial waters and the fisheries sector,
5. to pursue policies for the ecological health of community fishing areas, including the national policy on the closure of some fisheries (octopus, crab, lobster, etc.), on a scientific basis,
6. to recognize and give legal status to LMMAs,
7. to include non-compliance with the exclusive community fishing zones defined in point "1" among the grounds provided by law for the withdrawal of industrial fishing licenses,
8. to accompany the creation of exclusive community fishing zones called for in point "1" with strengthening the means and mandate of the Fisheries Monitoring Center (CSP) and the Maritime Information and Fusion Center (CFIM) to ensure the rules concerning these zones are respected.



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