



## **Indicators for an ecosystem Approach to the management of fisheries and the marine environment in West Africa waters: The IndiAWA project**

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### **Abstract**

The IndiAWA project is a research and expertise network focussing on indicators and ecosystem approaches for fisheries and global change in West Africa. The long term objective of the indiAWA working group is to develop and promote regional solutions for an Ecosystem Approach to the management of fisheries and the marine environment in West Africa waters. This general objective comes in several components including scientific research, capacity building and communication: - The scientific objective of IndiAWA includes three steps or sub-objectives. The first one is to develop and propose a set of ecosystem indicators *sensu lato* (from simple data-based indicators to integrated model-based approaches) adapted for the monitoring of the potential changes that occurred or can occur in the future in West-African coastal ecosystems, their resources and fisheries. The second one is to test the applicability of these indicators according to the data available in the region, and eventually to adapt them in case of data-poor situations. The third step is to use these indicators to describe, track and better understand the influence of global changes (of both anthropogenic and environmental nature) on the related West African systems, and further to improve the scientific knowledge on their global and/or specific functioning, in order to produce scientific advices for management purpose. - The capacity building objective of IndiAWA is to structure, enlarge and re-inforce the research and expertise community working on indicators and models for the management of the marine environment and fisheries in West Africa (indiAWA network). This will include the organisation of thematic workshops and training courses and to establish periodical links with other international consortia of experts working on the same subjects worldwide. The communication objective of indiAWA is to transfer the scientific knowledge resulting from this approach to



the public and to the West African managers. This will be done by the use of several communication supports, including the construction of a devoted website and the organisation of vulgarisation meetings and public conferences.

**Keywords:** Indicators, modelling, fisheries, marine environment, ecosystem status, global change, management, research network, West-Africa.



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