



## **A new fisheries research team in the fisheries domain: Laboratory in Fisheries Sciences in West Africa 'LEH-AO'**

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### **Abstract**

The Laboratory in Fisheries Sciences in West Africa LEH-AO is resulted from a strong collaboration between five Senegalese research institutes and their partners since over a decade. The LEH-AO was created in 2014 with the support from IRD in order to unroll a research program centered on the interest of Marine Protected Areas as a fisheries management tool. It aims to build an autonomous and sustainable national team to take in charge fisheries research programs initiated in the sub-region through a local collaboration. The purpose of the LEH-AO is related to three key-points: (i) research through the design and implementation of joint research projects, (ii) research and training through academic teaching, students and professionals supervision and scientist's internship, and (iii) expertise through scientific advice needed by institutional decision-makers in charge of the fisheries management as well as the coastal and marine environment. The laboratory deals with four major research priorities in Senegal; (i) the environmental impact on exploited fish stocks, (ii) the biodiversity conservation, (iii) the coastal and estuarine ecosystem management, and (iv) the development and governance issues at national and sub-regional levels. It is a mixed laboratory that has been formed by five education and research institutes. Its team is a multidisciplinary group including researchers and university teachers with various specialties (fisheries ecology, fisheries economics and physical oceanography), PhD and Master students, field and scientific surveys technicians as well as administrative assistants. The LEH-AO's finality is to unify research institutes in ecology and fisheries socio-economics, at the national level first and then at sub-regional scale in order to foster the share of human and logistical resources.

**Keywords:** Laboratory, fisheries ecology, collaboration, West Africa.



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