



Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States Bordering the Atlantic Ocean

Overview of the challenges of fishing activities and international regulatory instruments for maritime safety



DAY OF THE SEAFARER

— 25 JUNE —



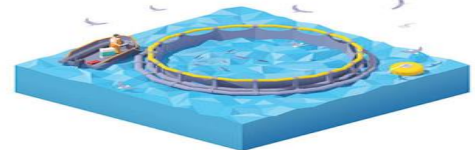
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ATLAFCO Secretariat
Rabat 25 June 2025

Harnessing today without compromising tomorrow ...



Atlantic Africa's fishing challenges and International regulatory instruments

- ❑ Atlantic Africa's fishing activities face numerous challenges, including
 - ❑ **Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing**
 - ❑ **Overfishing**
 - ❑ **Degradation of marine habitats**
- ❑ These issues
 - ❑ **Threaten marine ecosystems**
 - ❑ **Undermine coastal communities**
 - ❑ **Impact global food security**
- ❑ **International regulatory instruments like UNCLOS , IMO,FAO....aim to address these challenges by establishing relevant rules**

Resource exploitation	Pollution impacts	Climate change		Challenges	
 Overfishing Bycatch Illegal, Unreported & Unregulated fishing (IUU) Malpractices in fisheries 	Land-based pollutants  Ocean-based pollutants  Plastic pollution  Ecosystem degradation 	 Reduced reproductive efficiency Loss of genetic biodiversity Species migration, invasion and extinction 			
A shift towards Sustainable Fisheries 					
Responsible aqua-culture/ Mariculture  Conserving genetic stock 	Reduce pollution load  Reduce ship-borne pollution Controlled marine litter 	Less damaging fishing equipments  Altering lifestyles - less (/no) plastic  Fish stock assessment & upgraded research 	Controlled IUU  Fisheries monitoring & management 		Opportunities
Responsible aquaculture	Enhance ocean health	Public awareness & research	Legal protection		



Maritime security threats impacting fisheries and economic development

- ❑ Aggravated by
 - ❑ Poor governance
 - ❑ Inadequate resources for monitoring, control, and surveillance (MCS), and
 - ❑ The destructive practices of some industrial fishing fleets
- ❑ Simultaneously, Atlantic Africa grapples with maritime security threats like
 - ❑ Piracy,
 - ❑ Armed robbery at sea
 - ❑ Illegal trafficking

Impacting both fisheries and overall economic development

- ❑ International regulatory instruments, such as the Yaoundé Code of Conduct, aim to address these challenges, but their effectiveness is often hindered by *limited capacity and resources*



What is the Difference Between Maritime Security and Maritime Safety?

- ❑ While often used interchangeably, maritime security and maritime safety **are slightly different from each other**
- ❑ Maritime security largely focuses on the protection of vessels and their cargo from **external threats such as smuggling and piracy**
- ❑ On the other hand, the goal of maritime safety is to protect people, and in some cases the environment, from **naturally-occurring or accidental hazards**
- ❑ These hazards, however, can be just as **or even more harmful than external threats** if they are **unreported, ignored, or unaddressed by the vessel's crew and captain**





Natural and man
made hazards

**MARITIME
SAFETY**
activities

Accidents

Intentional
threats

**MARITIME
SECURITY**
activities

Criminal acts

Crew & Passengers Marine Environment Vessels, Ports, Rigs Marine Infrastructure Operations Economy Society Functions



Maritime safety and security in the fisheries

- ❑ **Maritime safety and security in the fisheries sector** encompasses measures to ensure the safety of fishing vessels and crews, prevent illegal fishing, and protect marine resources
- ❑ This includes implementing regulations, monitoring fishing activities, and enforcing compliance with maritime laws
- ❑ **Maritime Safety:**
Focuses on the safety of life at sea for fishers, including safe vessel design, crew training, and emergency response
- ❑ **Maritime Security:**
Addresses broader issues like illegal fishing (IUU), piracy, smuggling, and other illicit activities at sea





MARITIME SAFETY

Level 1

THE SAFETY OF LIFE AND PROPERTY AT SEA

PREVENTION OF
POLLUTION OF THE
MARINE ENVIRONMENT
FROM SHIPS

Level 2

TECHNICAL
AND
OPERATIONAL
SAFETY
OF SHIPS

NAVIGATION
SAFETY
OF SHIPS

THE SAFETY
OF PEOPLE
AND SHIPS
IN DISTRESS

- PROTECTION OF THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT.
- PREVENTION OF POLLUTION AND THE FIGHT AGAINST POLLUTION



International Instruments on the Safety of Fishing Vessels and Fishermen

❑ UNCLOS:

Provides a comprehensive legal framework for the oceans, including provisions on fisheries management, marine environmental protection, and the rights and responsibilities of coastal and flag states.

❑ IMO Cape Town Agreement (CTA):

Focuses on the safety of fishing vessels, including design, construction, and equipment standards, aiming to reduce casualties and improve working conditions.

❑ FAO's IPOA-IUU:

Provides guidelines for countries to prevent, deter, and eliminate IUU fishing through measures like port state control, vessel monitoring, and improved fisheries management.

❑ Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs):

Organizations like the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) of ICCAT play a crucial role in managing shared fish stocks and addressing regional challenges, including IUU fishing

❑ ILO Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (No. 188):

Sets international standards for working conditions on fishing vessels, including minimum requirements for crew accommodation, food and water, and health and safety protection.

These international instruments, along with national regulations and regional cooperation, are essential for promoting sustainable fishing practices and ensuring the safety and well-being of those who work in the fishing industry



THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF THE SEA (UNCLOS)

OVERVIEW



- An international treaty adopted in 1982
- Defines rights and responsibilities of nations regarding use of the world's oceans
- Provides a legal framework for marine and maritime activities

ZONES



TERRITORIAL SEA
Up to 12 nm



CONTIGUOUS ZONE
Up to 24 nm



EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE
Up to 200 nm



CONTINENTAL SHELF
At least 200 nm

KEY PROVISIONS



Freedom of navigation



Sovereign rights over resources



Protection of marine environment



Scientific research rights

DISPUTE SETTLEMENT



- Taken to the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea
- Arbitration



Special or other



4 PILLARS OF INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION

Safety at Sea



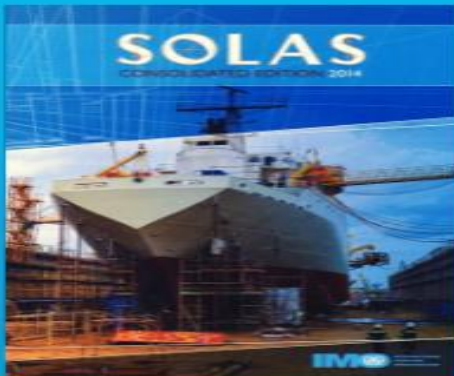
Training & Certification



Pollution Prevention



Seafarer Rights



SOLAS

International
convention for the
safety of life at sea.



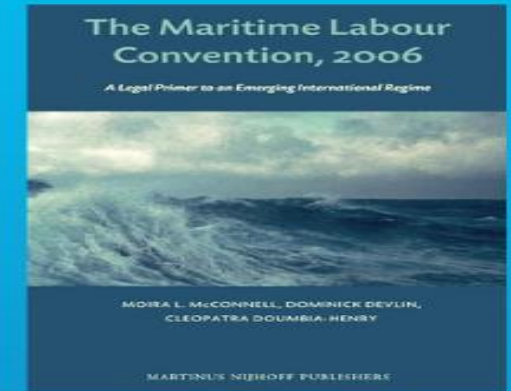
STCW

Standards of training,
certification &
watchkeeping for
seafarers



MARPOL

International
convention for the
prevention of
pollution from ships



MLC

Maritime Labour
Convention.



Regulatory Frameworks: Safeguarding the Seas

- ❑ Central to the preservation of maritime safety **are robust regulatory frameworks enforced by international maritime organizations and national authorities**
- ❑ Conventions such as the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) Safety of Life at Sea (**SOLAS**) and the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (**MARPOL**) set forth **comprehensive guidelines governing vessel construction, equipment standards, and environmental protection measures**
- ❑ Compliance with these regulations ensures that **vessels adhere to stringent safety protocols, minimizing the likelihood of accidents and environmental degradation**





MARITIME LAW TERMS

1 CONVENTION



- A formal treaty between signatory states.
- Adopted by IMO before ratification by member states.
- Binding once ratified.

EXAMPLE

SOLAS CONVENTION
MARPOL CONVENTION

2 PROTOCOL



- A supplementary treaty modifying a Convention.
- Enhances existing conventions.

EXAMPLE

MARPOL 73/78

- 1973 CONVENTION
- 1978 PROTOCOL
- CAME INTO FORCE 1983

3 CODE



- Part of a Convention.
- Contains technical details and elaborates on the Convention's contents.
- Cannot exist standalone.

EXAMPLE

ISPS CODE (SOLAS)
LSA & FSS CODES (SOLAS)

4 ANNEX



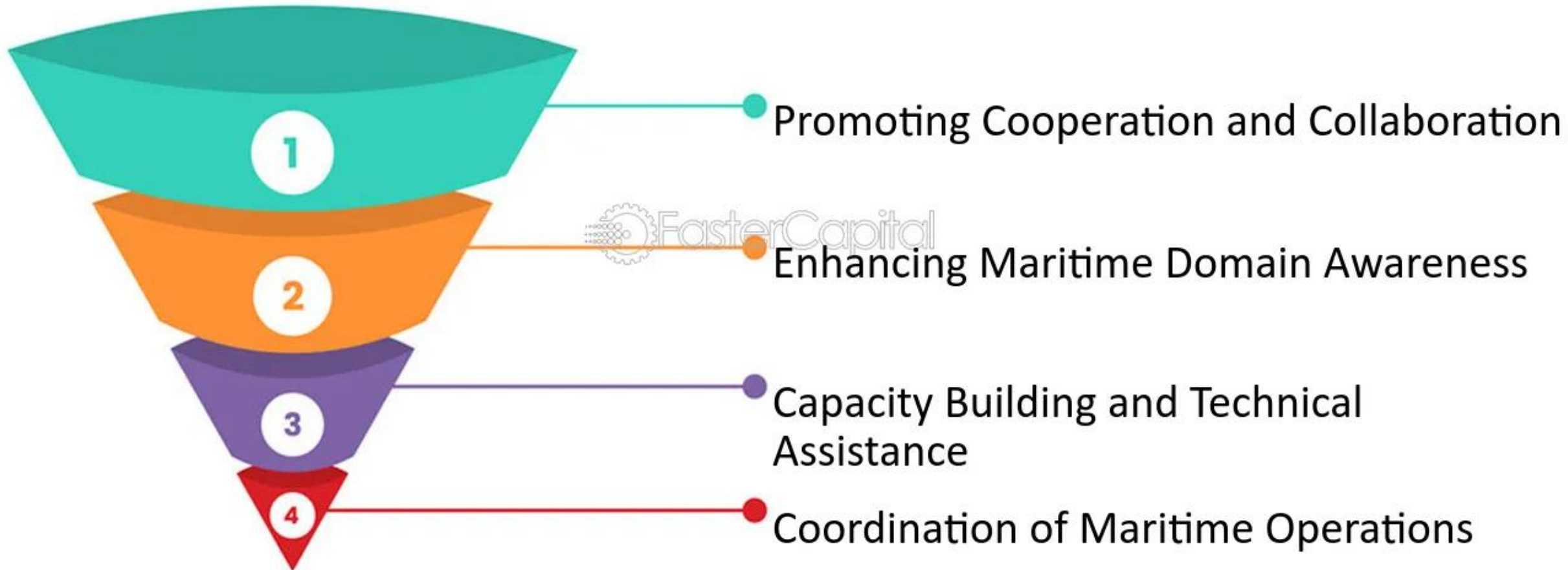
- Part of a Convention introduced post-formalization.
- Needs separate ratification to be legally binding.

EXAMPLE

MARPOL HAS SIX ANNEXES
RATIFIED AT DIFFERENT TIMES.



The Role of International Organizations in Maritime Security



The Importance of Maritime Safety



Safety Standards and Regulations



Technology and Innovation



Training and Education





Conclusion

- ❑ **Fishing is one of the most dangerous occupations in the world**
- ❑ **Enhancing health and safety in the fishing industry is a major challenge for international organizations dealing with the issue**
- ❑ **One way of addressing the matter is to establish principles and to provide guidance which may be used to formulate and implement international agreements and other legal instruments**
- ❑ **But ultimately the instruments need to be implemented and enforced, and this is mainly the responsibility of governments**

It is a task that calls for political will and commitment



Recommendations

- ❑ **Fostering a Culture of Safety**: At the heart of maritime safety lies a steadfast commitment to fostering a culture of vigilance and responsibility
- ❑ **Harnessing Technological Innovations**: In the ever-evolving landscape of maritime safety, technological innovations serve as indispensable allies in fortifying the resilience of seafaring operations
- ❑ **Regulatory Frameworks: Safeguarding the Seas**: Central to the preservation of maritime safety are robust regulatory frameworks enforced by international maritime organizations and national authorities
- ❑ **Collaborative Partnerships: Strengthening Resilience**: The pursuit of maritime safety transcends national boundaries, necessitating collaborative partnerships among stakeholders across the maritime sector



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THANK YOU

