**Acceptance of Terms of References (ToRs) for a grant to implement Octopus Fisheries Improvement Projects (FIPs)**

Following the assessment of the Terms of Reference (ToRs) for the grant mentioned above, I am pleased to inform you that TAFIRI has ACCEPTED the grant and assures you that the projects will be implemented accordingly.

We have had learned that the study sites for the projects will be Mafia, Kilwa and Pemba. However, based on the available funds and time, we suggest that the actual sampling should be done at two study sites, namely; Mafia and Kilwa. While in Pemba, the researchers will make one visit instead of doing actual sampling. Such visit will enable us to learn what is taking place in relation to octopus fisheries activities. Kindly note that, Mwambao group in Pemba is amongst the groups which are practicing octopus closure exercise, they also collect octopus data for management purposes. At one point, TAFIRI and Mwambao will discuss on how to harmonize the octopus data collection protocols for the future data collection.

Since, some of the ToRs are the continuation of the stock assessment project done by TAFIRI in 2014/15, we are suggesting having 2-3 sampling trips at Mgao landing site (Mtwara) in order to supplement data of some aspects from this site. The good thing on this is that, Kilwa is closer to Mtwara, thus the proposed sampling will be at low costs.

However, in order to achieve the goal of this project and make the valuable deliverables based on available funds and time, the following are specific suggestions on the ToRs:

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| S/N | **Activity/Terms of reference** | Comments/Suggestion |
| 1 | **Review the recently submitted octopus stock assessment report, identify and address gaps** | **Identified gaps are:**   1. GIS mapping/Reef mapping was not done hence biomass estimation was impossible. 2. Short term data did not fit well with either Fox or Schiffer Models for the estimation of MSY 3. Sample size of mature females was too small for scientifically estimation of fecundity of the species. 4. Environmental variables were not measured/recorded to explain the differences between the sampling sites   The two identified gaps (i & iv) will be addressed during this project at Kilwa and Mafia. We are worrying that the current sampling of three months will not be possible to address the two remaining gaps (ii & iii) |
| 2 | **Undertake a spatial and temporal evaluation of Octopus catches in Tanzania,** | Evaluation of a spatial distribution of octopus catches will be done for both two sites (Kilwa and Mafia). For a temporal aspect, the project will evaluate it only by comparing the status on the current season (this project) with the same season observed in a study of 2014/2015 for Mafia. Since Kilwa is a new study site, the temporal evaluation will not be possible due to short period of data collection; three months. |
| 3 | **Estimate leakages, propose solutions and mechanisms to obtain total mortality and improve traceability of octopus catches** | This seems to be very broad study. However, we will try for our level best to implement it |
| 4 | **Characterize octopus fishery and the potential of the fishery on the reef. Document how does octopus fishers operate/catch octopus; depth at which octopus are caught; method of catching and tide regime. Document the behavior of fishermen on the reef during octopus fishing. Document how catch is handled after harvest.** | This activity will be done without changes |
| 5 | **Assess and quantify primary and secondary by-catch associated with octopus fishery.** | This activity will be done without changes |
| 6 | **Find out if octopus fishers collect lobsters as a primary by-catch and document the extent.** | This activity will be done without changes |
| 7 | **Assess the impact of octopus fisheries on lobster.** | This activity will be done without changes |
| 8 | **Assess stock status of lobster in selected sites in Mafia and Kilwa.** | This activity will be done without changes |
| 9 | **Assess and document the type of gears used in octopus fishing and how they impact the fishery and habitat.** | This activity will be done without changes |
| 10 | **Assess the impact of octopus fishery to the reef system.** | This activity will be done without changes |
| 11 | **Assess the impact of octopus fishery to the ecosystem. Study the trophic impact of removal of octopus and lobster on the coral reef.** | This activity will be done without changes |
| 12 | **Assess the impacts of octopus fishery on Endangered, Threatened, and Protected Species (ETP)** | This activity will be done without changes |
| 13 | **Assess the likelihood that sea cucumbers are illegally targeted by octopus fishers** | This activity will be done without changes |
| 14 | **Assess the effectiveness of sea cucumber fishing ban on the population recovery. Find out which species of sea cucumber is under CITES list of species.** | With available funds and project time, the actual sampling will not be possible. Instead, this activity will focus on the size of selected commercial species. Thereafter, the population recovery of sea cucumber will be derived from comparing the collected data; on the size, with the those from literatures; the time when the ban was announced |
| 15 | **Gather information on sea cucumber stock status. Check existing biological and ecological information related to sea cucumbers. Document effectiveness of data collection for sea cucumbers.** | This activity will be done without changes |
| 16 | **Synthesize information on the current reef status.** | This activity will be done without changes |
| 17 | **Check if Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries is applied to Octopus Fishery Management Plan and implemented.** | This activity will be done without changes |
| 18 | **Develop a Structured Research Programme on Tanzanian Octopus** | This activity will be done without changes |
| 19 | **Develop capacity building packages in artisanal fisheries data collection and statistics in both English and Swahili versions** | This activity will be partially done. Additional funds are needed for testing and validation of artisanal fisheries collection and statistics packages |

I submit for your consideration