

Fisheries experts gather in city

WINDHOEK – Fisheries experts from South Africa, Angola and Namibia are engaged in a four-day workshop to review the regional fishing industry and discuss a new concept in fisheries management – Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management (EAF).

Officially opening the event on Tuesday, Fisheries and Marine Resources Minister Dr Abraham Iyambo said EAF would help participants to deal with resources, ecosystems and the consequences of human interference in the marine ecosystem.

“We are faced with what is probably the greatest and most sustained global warming for centuries, if not millennia. This worrying

fact is likely to have far-reaching effects on both terrestrial and oceanic ecosystems,” he said.

Participants will examine modelling approaches that could be useful in understanding the dynamics of ecosystem components, natural resources and fisheries that depend upon them.

Minister Iyambo was optimistic that the workshop would produce consensus on how the respective countries involved can apply the EAF in what he termed a practical, transparent and realistic way.

Iyambo stressed that the Ecosystem Approaches for Fisheries Management project will not be making management recommendations on EAF to the three

countries involved.

Instead, the project would provide information and tools to scientists and managers in the fishing industry.

“This will enable them to begin to apply an ecosystem approach. The success of EAF depends on the availability of expertise on individual fisheries and ecosystems,” he added.

Besides the EAF, participants will also look at ecological risk assessment and identifying scientific tasks to be conducted at the regional level.

The workshop is part of the regional project funded by the Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem Programme. It ends on tomorrow.

- Nampa