

CALL FOR ACTION

for a

MASSIVE ROLLOUT OF MARINE SPATIAL PLANNING IN THE WESTERN INDIAN OCEAN

We, the delegation of experts in marine spatial planning from Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, and Tanzania attending a capacity building workshop on marine spatial planning in the Western Indian Ocean

Appreciating the commitments of Western Indian Ocean countries to international conventions such as the Convention for Biological Diversity 2022 Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Target 3 of conserving 30% of land, waters and seas by 2030, and Decision CP.11/5 of the Nairobi Convention for the protection, management and development of the coastal and marine environment of the Western Indian Ocean on implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework to include marine and coastal biodiversity,

Recognising that ecosystem-based approaches in marine spatial planning for biodiversity conservation, job creation, increased food security from fishery resources, adaptation to impact of climate change and resilient ecosystems and livelihoods,

Committed to addressing the key environmental challenges facing the WIO region and to provide solutions through implementation of the regional ocean governance strategy and the regional marine spatial planning strategy for the Western Indian Ocean

Acknowledging with appreciation the financial support provided by partners including the support provided by the Nairobi Convention, through EU funded African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) Countries Capacity Building of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) programme (ACP MEAs 3 Programme) and partners

Further acknowledging the financial support provided by Swedish Government for the implementation of Phase 2 of the Nairobi Convention and the South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission Partnership Project for resilience coastal and marine ecosystems and livelihoods in Kenya, Mozambique and Tanzania

Appreciating the Swedish Government, through the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management, for the technical support and the multi-stakeholder collaboration that led to the development of the Western Indian Ocean Symphony tool that supports ecosystem-based marine spatial planning in the Western Indian Ocean

Aware of the multiple benefits of marine spatial planning around maritime security; blue economic growth, effective environment and natural resources management, including cross-cutting issues of knowledge and information management, sharing of best practices and institutional capacity building

Therefore,

1. **Call** on Governments to roll out an ambitious marine spatial planning across the Western Indian Ocean (WIO) region to enhance capacity building and provide training in management, administration, assessment, and monitoring of implementation plans developed from ecosystem-based marine spatial planning.
2. **Welcome** Governments and development partners to facilitate and to advance the establishment and expansion to protect and conserve at least 30% of marine areas, and where necessary, to effectively manage the 30% protected areas already established, to promote learning, foster cross-border collaboration and transboundary cooperation for marine spatial planning, promote best practices and knowledge exchange programs within and between countries, and explore strategic partnerships with governments, academia, research institutes, private sector, and civil society to support ecological and socioeconomic assessments for marine ecosystem health.
3. **Call** on Governments and development partners to promote innovative approaches to biodiversity conservation such as blue carbon markets and to increase access to funding for conservation initiatives for sustainable blue economic development.
4. **Invite** all Partners, to support the roll out of marine spatial planning, the development, updating or harmonization of regional and national policy and legal frameworks, including guidelines, plans and toolkits required for effective marine spatial planning, and implementation, in meeting the Global Biodiversity Framework targets in the Western Indian Ocean region.
5. **Call** on the support of all regional, national and local Partners active in the Western Indian Ocean to strengthen the capacity of Contracting Parties to the Nairobi Convention to implement and maintain their biodiversity commitments, especially the 30 by 30 targets and to support the development and implementation of marine spatial plans.
6. **Invite** all partners, to develop, distribute and conduct awareness initiatives on marine spatial planning towards the conservation and restoration of degraded marine and coastal habitats and ecosystems, in meeting the Global Biodiversity Framework targets, and in enhancing the metrics of community livelihoods.
7. **Call** on the Contracting Parties, development partners and donors to support and accelerate financial investments and technical assistance e.g. from SwAM that actively support biodiversity conservation and restoration of degraded habitats, including adaptation and resilience of local communities dependent on the coastal and marine resources.

Adopted this 25 day of October 2024

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