



Abidjan, Nairobi, Cambridge & Potsdam

## **Science for Solutions: Bringing Stakeholders Together to Improve Ocean Planning and Governance for ABNJ in the South East Atlantic and Western Indian Ocean**

Over 70% of the surface of the Earth is ocean, comprised of highly dynamic ecosystems, and provide a range of marine ecosystem services that support human society, health and the economy. As of 2019, the global coverage of marine protected areas is 7.59%. There is growing economic and political interest in marine resource use in both national waters and Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ). Marine areas beyond national jurisdiction are areas of the ocean that are not under the jurisdiction of any one country, yet these areas are inherently connected. In this regard, the international community agreed in 2015 to develop a global, legally binding agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction under the UN Law of the Sea Convention (UNCLOS). Pursuant to UN General Assembly Resolution 72/249 of December 2017, the negotiations of this instrument started in April 2018.

It is important that the global community, including all African States, continue to come together to sustainably manage common resources and ensure conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity through a shared vision for areas beyond national jurisdiction. Moreover, by developing a united voice towards these shared interests, African States can strengthen their potential to leverage opportunities for their common objectives of their people in future regional and global discussions. The Conference of the Parties of the Abidjan Convention has already recognised the importance of the preservation and sustainable use of marine areas beyond national jurisdiction and has established a working group to study all aspects of the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction under the Convention's framework (Decision COP 11/10). Similarly, the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Nairobi Convention called on the Contracting Parties to cooperate with existing regional institutions on ocean governance and the conservation of marine biodiversity in adjacent areas beyond national jurisdiction, including preparing a feasibility, options and scenarios for the establishment of marine protected areas in areas beyond national jurisdiction in the Western Indian Ocean (Decision CP9/10).

This workshop will be interactive, aiming at presenting the outputs and outcomes of the two projects active in the areas beyond national jurisdiction and discussing future work, particularly:

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Abou Bamba, Executive Secretary, Abidjan Convention  
Dixon Waruinge, Head, Nairobi Convention Secretariat  
Dr. Nina Bhola, Co-Lead, ABNJ Deep Seas Project  
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Ben Boteler, Co-Lead, STRONG High Seas Project  
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- Present and characterise the state of play for ocean governance in Africa, from both a regional and State perspective, especially with regard to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity, with a focus on areas beyond national jurisdiction and ongoing UN negotiations;
- Present, discuss and review the scientific work done under the STRONG High Seas project, particularly on the legal and institutional framework and ecological status of the Southeast Atlantic;
- Present, discuss and review the scientific work done under the ABNJ Deep Seas project, particularly the draft methodology for cross-sectoral area-based management planning for ABNJ;
- Identify opportunities for the development of long-term strategies and approaches for stakeholder engagement and capacity development in the regions; and
- Exchange and discuss initiatives in other marine regions relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in ABNJ.

### About ABNJ Deep Seas Project

Addressing the need to enhance sustainability in the use of deep-sea living resources and biodiversity conservation in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction, is the ABNJ Deep Seas Project. This project is one of the projects under the [Common Oceans Program](#), supported by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The Project is implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and works in close collaboration with the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) as well as other executing partners including the UN Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs), national governments and NGOs.

The overarching objective of this project is to achieve efficiency and sustainability in the use of deep-sea living resources and improve biodiversity conservation in the ABNJ through the systematic application of an ecosystem approach.

The ABNJ Deep Seas Project is focusing on four areas:

1. Improving implementation of existing **policy** and **legal frameworks**
2. Reducing adverse impacts on **Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VMEs)** and enhanced conservation and management of components of **Ecologically and Biologically Significant Areas (EBSAs)**
3. Improving **planning and adaptive management** for deep-sea fisheries in ABNJ
4. Developing and testing methods for **area-based planning**

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### Partners of the ABNJ Deep Seas Project



### About STRONG High Seas Project

The five-year STRONG High Seas project aims to strengthen regional ocean governance for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction. Working with the Secretariat of the Comisión Permanente del Pacífico Sur (CPPS; Permanent Commission for the South Pacific) and the Secretariat of the West and Central Africa Regional Seas Programme (Abidjan Convention), the project will develop and propose targeted measures to support the coordinated development of integrated and ecosystem-based management approaches for ocean governance in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

The STRONG High Seas project has the following overarching objectives:

1. Facilitate the development of improved management approaches for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction in the Southeast Pacific and Southeast Atlantic regions;
2. Identify best practices and provide support to regional institutions and national authorities for implementing existing regional instruments; and
3. Develop options for regional governance in a future international instrument under UNCLOS and transfer regional lessons learned to the global level to promote ocean governance.

The STRONG High Seas project is part of the International Climate Initiative (IKI; <http://www.international-climate-initiative.com/en/>). The Ministry for the Environment, Nature

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Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) supports this initiative on the basis of a decision adopted by the German Bundestag. For more information about the STRONG High Seas project, please [visit the website](#) or contact: [stronghighseas@iass-potsdam.de](mailto:stronghighseas@iass-potsdam.de)

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International Ocean Institute  
African Region



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