



Original: English

Distr.: General

07 June 2019

**Third Project Steering Committee
Meeting for the WIOSAP Project and
First Project Steering Committee meeting
for the SAPPHIRE project**

25-26 June 2019

Durban, South Africa

**THIRD PSC MEETING FOR WIOSAP PROJECT: SESSION VII ON
IMPLEMENTING COPD DECISIONS IN SUPPORT OF THE WIOSAP
PROJECT**

Session VII: Implementing COP Decisions in support of the WIOSAP Project

Part I: Establishment of the WIO Group of Experts for Marine Litter and Microplastics

Decision CP.9/3. Management of marine litter and municipal wastewater in the Western Indian Ocean

1. *To request* the secretariat, in collaboration and cooperation with partners, to develop a regional strategy or action plan or both on the management of marine litter and microplastics and **the establishment of a marine litter regional technical working group** in the Western Indian Ocean region

1.0 Background

The benefits of plastic are undeniable. The material is cheap, lightweight and easy to make. These qualities have led to a boom in the production of plastic over the past century. This trend will continue as global plastic production skyrockets over the next 10 to 15 years. We are already unable to cope with the amount of plastic waste we generate. Only a tiny fraction is recycled. About 13 million tonnes of plastic leak into our oceans every year, harming biodiversity, economies and, potentially, our own health. The world urgently needs to rethink the way we manufacture, use and manage plastic.

Marine litter is today recognized as a global challenge. This problem is affecting not only countries with inadequate waste management systems but, due to waste deposited by ocean currents, even those with good waste management systems are struggling to cope. The United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development addresses marine debris and pollution through Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14 (target 14.1), with a particular focus on sources from land-based activities. Similarly, goals 6, 11 and 12 target untreated wastewater (6.3), municipal and other waste management (11.6), environmentally sound management of chemicals and wastes throughout their life cycle (12.4), and overall waste reduction (12.5). According to [the Ellen McArthur Foundation](#), by 2050 there will be more plastic than fish by weight in our oceans if the business-as-usual-model continues. The latest United Nations Environment Assembly held in 2018 addressed this alarming scenario in its Resolution on Marine Litter and Microplastics.

The members of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) have through UNEA 1, 2 and more unequivocally UNEA 3 Resolution on Marine Litter *stressed* the importance of long-term elimination of discharge of litter and microplastics to the oceans and of avoiding detriment to marine ecosystems and the human activities dependent on them from marine litter and microplastics; *urged* all actors to step up actions to “by 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution” and *encouraged* all Member States to, based on best available knowledge on sources and levels of marine litter and microplastics in the environment, prioritize policies and measures at appropriate scale, to avoid marine litter and microplastics entering the marine environment.

The major coastal cities and towns found in the Western Indian Ocean (WIO) region generate significant amounts of solid waste, some of which reaches the sea to contribute to the marine litter problem. This is exacerbated through the transporting of solid waste/debris via river discharges from urban areas located further inland in their watersheds. Marine plastic debris and microplastics cause a severe threat to marine life by ingestion and entanglement, and possibly threaten human health. At least five major cities on the mainland coast of Eastern Africa; namely Mombasa, Dar es Salaam, Beira, Maputo and Durban, are located on the coast.

Despite marine litter being recognized as a global challenge, its impacts are felt locally, and these impacts vary across populations and ecosystems. Furthermore, the region is experiencing a multitude of national and regional initiatives dealing with different aspects that are related in one way or another to marine litter and microplastics but with little coordination, communication and shared learning between partners working within this space. It is therefore essential that informal and formal mechanisms are initiated to facilitate communication between practitioners and experts and among different initiatives as well as funding agencies. Such communication will assist in minimizing duplication of efforts, building partnerships, improving coordination, and providing a forum/mechanism for sharing of information and knowledge among experts, managers and funding agencies as well as joint planning and implementation.

Recognizing the need to start addressing these challenges, the Ninth Conference of Parties to the Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment for the WIO region (Nairobi Convention) held in Mombasa, Kenya in August 2018, *requested* the Secretariat, in collaboration and cooperation with partners, to establish a marine litter regional technical working group in the Western Indian Ocean region.

Several other related decisions were adopted under 'Decision CP.9/3. Management of marine litter and municipal wastewater in the Western Indian Ocean' including on the development of a regional strategy or action plan or both on the management of marine litter and microplastic and capacity-building programmes on marine litter and microplastics, including microbeads, for a harmonized approach to data generation, monitoring and reporting; conducting outreach and public awareness activities on the impact of municipal waste and marine litter on marine species and their habitats; and encouraging countries to discourage plastic microbeads, take measures within their national capacities to consider phasing out their use in the region and promote the exchange of expertise, best practice and lessons learned.

In response to the 'Decision CP.9/3. Management of marine litter and municipal wastewater in the Western Indian Ocean', especially in respect to establishing a marine litter regional technical working group WIOMSA and the Nairobi Convention Secretariat in

collaboration with other partners working on marine litter and microplastics, is setting up a Group of Experts on Marine Litters and Microplastics.

2.0 Terms of Reference

The broad goal of the Group of Experts on Marine Litter and Microplastics is provide a forum for sharing and exchange of information; providing policy guidance and advice to the Nairobi Convention and other regional frameworks; and synthesizing information on the topic from different sources and produce peer-reviewed publications and other products. The Group's work is planned to be completed in three years or less.

The specific responsibilities are as follows:

- Assess the current status of marine litter and microplastics knowledge in the WIO region by reviewing the literature to assess the policy landscape on marine litter in different countries, institutional frameworks, dominant research foci, their relative coverage, and identify any major gaps and/or limitations. Publish this review as a regional Status Report on Marine Litter and in a peer-reviewed journal.
- Linking to the recently developed Regional Marine Litter Action Plan, facilitate the development of a coherent regional vision and strategy for work on marine litter and microplastics within the context of the Nairobi Convention;
- Facilitate the building of a constituency for work on marine litter and microplastics among formal and informal stakeholders, including governments, management authorities, private sector, communities and encourage dialogue between them;
- Support the development and implementation of regional marine litter and microplastics monitoring programme and studies on bio-accumulation of microplastic related toxicity in the food chain;
- Facilitate and support the identification of capacity building needs, and the implementation of training activities related to marine litter and microplastics for different categories of stakeholders;
- Facilitate and support the development of relevant environmental education and awareness raising programmes related to marine litter and microplastics management;
- Provide and facilitate access to technical advice and information across all levels of work on marine litter and microplastics, including the adoption of appropriate marine litter and microplastics management technologies and their reduction measures;
- Develop regional Guidelines, Best Practices and Procedures for marine litter and microplastics management;
- Provide advice on the strengthening of the legal and institutional framework at all appropriate levels of the management of marine litter and microplastics.
- Provide state-of-the-art science to support policy developments on marine litter and microplastics in the region through the Science to Policy Platform of the Convention and other appropriate for a;
- Offer technical support in the development and review of concepts/proposals in relation to marine litter and microplastics on behalf of Nairobi Convention and WIOMSA in respect to the implementation of the Regional Marine Litter Action Plan;

- Undertake quality assurance of outputs related to marine litter and microplastics produced through the support of both Nairobi Convention and WIOMSA.

3.0 How the Group will work

The Group of Experts for Marine Litter and Microplastics is established by the Nairobi Convention vide 'Decision CP.9/3. Management of marine litter and municipal wastewater in the Western Indian Ocean' and will be hosted by WIOMSA. The core membership of the Group comprise of prominent experts whose selection was based on the strong regional knowledge and experience in marine litter and microplastics as well as a firm commitment to the Group's activities. In its meetings as well as in the implementation of its activities, the Group will invite, consult and involve on the basis of issues representatives of partner organizations and individual experts as well.

The selected Group members elected a Chairperson and a Vice-Chair from amongst themselves at their first meeting. The Vice-Chair shall act as Chairperson of meetings in the absence of the Chairperson.

Since the Group will be operating under the Nairobi Convention, it will be reporting directly to the Focal Points of the Nairobi Convention as well as the relevant Regional Task Forces established under the Global Environment Facility (GEF)-funded programme 'Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme for the protection of the Western Indian Ocean from land-based sources and activities' (WIOSAP).

4.0 Priority operational themes

The Group will provide a coordinated and cooperative approach involving key partners in the region as well as individual experts to facilitate the implementation of the priority activities under following themes:

- **Research.** The Group as a technical group will conduct a review of the existing gaps in knowledge with the aim of setting up a research agenda that responds to the information needs of marine litter and microplastics in the region.
- **Capacity building for improved management of marine litter and microplastics.** Capacity building in marine litter and microplastics management is needed since there is unequal distribution of expertise in management of these problems throughout the region. The Group input will be essential in facilitating the designing and delivery of different types of capacity building programmes.
- **Influencing policy and decision-making processes.** The Group aims at bridging the gaps between science and policy processes, through providing well synthesized information in a form of brochures, manuals, toolkits and other media, to decision-makers, managers, practitioners and general public.
- **Contributing to the regional and global discussions.** On request, the Group will also provide advice to the countries and regional bodies participating in regional global discussions on marine litters and microplastics.

5.0. Nomination process

The Group of Experts for Marine Litter and Microplastics is established by the Nairobi Convention and hosted by WIOMSA. The process over the last 4 months:

1. Development of TORs for the Group
2. Open Call for expressions of interest by regional experts.
3. 30 applications received and we established a criteria for evaluation, which included technical competency, regional balance and gender
4. 9 experts selected and already communicated to through formal nomination letters by the Convention
5. 1st meeting held in Capetown in June 13th to 14th 2019 to operationalize the Group and develop draft work-plan

6.0 Nominated experts

Nine experts were competitively selected based on criteria given above and 4 institutions/agencies invited as Observers because of the regional/global footprint in marine litter and microplastics work.

List of Invited Members and Observers

	Name	Country
1	Peter Ryan	South Africa
2	Catherina J Schenck	South Africa
3	Maria Perpétua J. Scarlet	Mozambique
4	Stefan R. Knights	Seychelles
5	Linda Godfrey	South Africa
6	Lydia Gaspare Kanyairita	Tanzania
7	Eric Ochieng Okuku	Kenya
8	Zara Pardiwalla	Seychelles
9	Margot Thibault	Reunion
	OBSERVERS	
1	African Marine Waste Network	
2	IUCN	
3	Indian Ocean Commission	
4	UNEP/GPA	

Part II: Partnership with Regional Economic Communities and Commissions in Western Indian Ocean Region

1.0 Preamble

The Nairobi convention seeks to establish working relationships with RECs, Commissions, Fisheries bodies and regional scientific bodies in the WIO region to support and facilitate regional economic integration, promote sustainable development and governance in the member states. The Contracting Parties to the Nairobi Convention appreciate the need for collaboration and cooperation with regional economic communities supported by a number of decisions, some of which are captured hereunder:

1. Decision CP8/13.2: To agree to establish additional partnerships, including with regional economic communities, such as the East Africa Community, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, Southern Africa Development Community, Indian Ocean Commission

2. Decision CP9/6.1. To urge the Contracting Parties to work with regional economic communities, regional fisheries management organizations and other appropriate regional initiatives to implement the Cairo Declaration on Managing Africa's Natural Capital for Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication, adopted by the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment at its fifteenth session in 2015, the 2050 Africa Integrated Maritime Strategy and the provisions of Agenda 2063 on ecosystem-based management approaches for marine resources in the exclusive economic zones and adjacent waters

3. Decision CP.9/13.2 To agree to establish additional partnerships, including with regional economic communities, such as the East African Community, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, the Southern African Development Community and the Indian Ocean Commission

The WIOSAP Project has a specific action on collaboration with RECs, which will have significant synergy with the SAPPHERE Project on policy harmonization and institutional reforms.

2.0 Background

Oceans and seas cover over two-thirds of the earth's surface supporting economic growth, food production and mitigating global climate change. Oceans play a major role in contributing to achieving sustainable development, economic growth, and livelihoods. The oceans/blue economy encompasses a sustainable economy for the ocean-based marine environment, related biodiversity, ecosystems, species and genetic resources, while ensuring their sustainable use and hence, conservation. The value of the global ocean-based economy is estimated between USD 3-6 trillion/year and more than 3 billion people rely on the oceans for their livelihoods. In the last few years, coastal and marine ecosystems have begun to show signs of degradation due to unsustainable utilization of living and non-living resources, infrastructure development, extractive industries and pollution which threatens the livelihoods of many ocean-dependent communities. This calls for effective ocean governance to coordinate various uses of the ocean and protection of the marine environment through globally-agreed international rules and procedures, regional action based on common principles and national legal frameworks and integrated policies. The Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) establishes fundamental legal principles for the governance of the marine environment and its resources.

3.0 Ocean Governance in Africa

Africa's Oceans and seas play a key role in supporting socio-economic growth and development across different sectors. Beyond the traditional maritime industries dominated by shipping and fishing, emerging industries such as oil and gas, mariculture and wind and wave energy, are constantly increasing pressures on coastal and marine resource base hence the need for new forms of regional policy and cooperation.

The African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) through the Cairo Declaration of 2015 agreed to support efforts aimed at protecting the marine ecosystems through various initiatives such as the development of Ocean Governance Strategy for Africa, in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea through the Regional Seas Conventions for effective management of the region's shared ocean resources. Consequently, the sixteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) held on June 2017 in Libreville, Gabon requested the United Nations Environment Programme and the secretariats of the

regional seas conventions to enter into cooperative agreements with the regional bodies in order to enhance application of ecosystem-based approaches in ocean governance in Africa, and to support coastal States in integrating innovation and value-addition approaches into all ocean-based economic sectors. This will support Agenda 2063 aspiration one which aims for a prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development focusing on exploiting the vast potential of Africa's blue/ocean economy for accelerated economic growth.

In the first 10 years of implementation of the Agenda 2063, African Union Assembly has appointed the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to serve as focal points for the facilitation of the adoption, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all development initiatives of member states related to Agenda 2063. One of the priorities of Agenda 2063 is on sustainable utilization of marine resources and promote sustainable ports operations and marine transport. RECs charged with African economic integration, development and governance recognize that a clean and healthy environment is a prerequisite for sustainable development and support regional integration to enhance cooperation among countries in the management and utilization of the shared waterways, lake basins as well as oceans and seas. The RECs have supported programmes to promoting blue/ocean economy due to its great promise for economic growth, improved livelihoods and jobs while preserving the ocean ecosystem.

4.0 Ocean Governance in the WIO Region

Ocean Governance in the WIO Region is based on the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) which provides the basis upon which to pursue the protection and sustainable development of the marine and coastal environment and its resources. Marine and coastal resources in the WIO region are managed by different national institutions, organizations, agreements and commissions which have independent and often times overlapping mandate.

The Western Indian Ocean (WIO) region comprises 10 countries Comoros, France (Réunion), Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa and Tanzania which are contracting parties to the Nairobi Convention. The region has an estimated population of 220 million people, of which over 60 million live within 100km of the shoreline and rely on coastal and marine resources and their ecosystem services. The major coastal and marine features in the region include coastal forests, estuaries, mangrove forests, salt marshes, sea grasses and coral reefs which support an array of biodiversity, economic and cultural activities. Within the UNEP regional seas programmes, the WIO region is covered by the Nairobi Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the WIO region.

The Nairobi Convention and its protocols offers a legal framework and coordinates the efforts of the 10 contracting parties in their capacity to protect, manage and develop their coastal and marine environment. It provides a forum to facilitate intergovernmental discussions on the region's environmental problems and how to address them. The convention is keen on promoting ecosystem-based approaches such as marine spatial planning to promote ocean governance for blue economy through cooperation, collaboration and partnerships with RECs, Commissions, regional fisheries management organisations, related intergovernmental organisations and between states. Among the eight RECs charged with African economic integration development and governance, four of them have mandate in the WIO region namely: Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), East African Community (EAC), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and Southern African Development Community (SADC). Other organisations promoting sustainable utilization and management of marine resources with the WIO region include Southwest Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission (SWIOFC), Indian Ocean Commission - Commission de l'Océan Indien (IOC - COI), Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC), Port Management Association of Eastern and Southern Africa (PMAESA) and Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA) among others.

A meeting of these RECs and Commissions was held on 11th to 12th of April in Durban, South Africa to explore potential opportunities for collaboration.

5.0 Objectives of the meeting

- Seek opportunities for collaboration with RECs for sustainable management of coastal and marine resources in the WIO region.
- Engage RECs on a road map for establishing a regional collaborative mechanism to promote ocean governance and blue economy in the WIO region

6.0 Meeting Outputs

- Potential area of collaboration and partnership on ocean governance identified
- Roadmap for development of a regional Ocean Governance Strategy defined

Annex 1: Proposed way forward and areas of collaboration with RECs

The Nairobi Convention through the support of the WIOSAP and SAPPHERE Projects will facilitate implementation of the areas of collaboration identified from the RECs Partnership Meeting.

	Proposed Area	Who	When
1.	a. Development of Blue Economy Strategies (Inland countries..) b. Blue Economy Decision	Interested RECs/partners IGAD/EAC/COMESA/PMAESA SADC/UNEP-ROA	Ongoing Immediate for August meeting
2.	Participation in Policy harmonization	All RECs/partners	To be initiated
3.	Participation in Science to Policy Platform. This Platform can report to the AMCEN StP Platform	NC/WIOMSA/IOC/All RECs	Annual/WIOMSA Symposium – every 3 yrs
4.	Development of Green Port Development Guidelines	PMAESA/NC/WIOMSA/UN Habitat/All RECs	Ongoing
5.	Implementation of Global Monitoring for Environment & Security Africa initiative	IOC with AU/partners	Ongoing
6.	Implementation of Marine/Coastal Biodiversity conservation actions	RECs and partners	Ongoing
7.	Develop/Implement interventions towards a Climate resilient BE	Interested RECs/Partners	To be defined
8.	Management of Marine plastics	Interested RECs/IUCN/WIOMSA/IOC	Ongoing
9.	Participation in ABNJ/BBNJ processes	NC/RECs/IUCN/SAIIA	June meeting
10.	Development of Regional Ocean Governance Strategy - AMCEN	UNEP Africa Office NC with RECs/partners	To be agreed
11.	Supporting AMCEN Decision making around BE	RECs to lead and supported by NC/partners	Immediately

12.	Promoting partnership with RECs - Products	NC/WIOMSA with RECs	Immediate
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Other proposals:

1. Core Group for this partnership: The representatives who attended the meeting, but can bring in appropriate expertise depending on subject matter
2. Communication: Communication from the NC secretariat to go to Executive Secretaries of RECs or relevant people in partner institutions
3. RECs engagement: Engagement will be at different levels depending on subject matter i.e. Technical, Inter-sectoral committees, Ministerial Councils. Major level will be at Inter-sectoral Committees.
4. Frequency of meetings: - A combination of physical and virtual meetings.
 - Opportunistic: Leverage on major meetings of mutual interests e.g. on the sidelines of AMCEN, IGAD BE, CC COP in Chile etc. In these meetings and may not attend all of them, impact should be the focus.
 - Standard Joint Annual meeting: For joint planning, linkages on ongoing and planned projects/programmes
5. RECs to utilize their convening power of governments in accessing appropriate policy makers and providing thought leadership.
6. Resources for the partnership: From the partnership, NC, WIOMSA and RECs themselves as a demonstration of mutual partnership. Mandate and synergy great among RECs should offer a great opportunity for resource mobilization