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## Western Indian Ocean Regional Science to Policy Workshop

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### Experience of the Indian Ocean Commission in oceanographic data and scientific research (28 May 2019)

The Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) is a regional intergovernmental organisation which focuses on regional cooperation amongst islands States in the Western Indian Ocean, Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles and the Reunion island which is an overseas department of France. IOC provides a platform for these islands States of the Western Indian Ocean to collaborate on matters of mutual interest in the field of environment, social and economic development.

For more than three decades, the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) has been implementing and supporting regional programmes mainly related to coastal and marine resources in which some form of scientific research components were included. Since 2006 more attention has been given to oceanographic data that would contribute towards the improvement of fisheries management and prediction of marine weather forecast. Depending on the need expressed by the countries, data collected may be on a regional scale or country specific and where required regional working groups were established to validate the research findings. The means and methods use for data collection and some research conducted has not always provided the desired results, but it was important for the IOC to work through the national institutions and where competence were lacking, external technical support were sought. Other than the use of bathymetric data for aid to navigation, the region had limited capacity and competency in oceanography. Gradually, there were growing interest in the use of oceanographic data to support socio economic sectors such as fisheries, health, early warning for storms and tourism. Oceanographic data and marine sciences has largely been generated and used in the following IOC projects; RAMP-COI the Marine Highway and prevention of coastal contamination from oil spill project; AMESD, MESA , ISLANDS and Biodiversity project .This will include oceanographic data collected from observation by research vessels; use of satellite and remote sensing and from wave rider bouys. Physical ocean characteristics data and meteorological data such as seas surface temperature, chlorophyll, ocean colour front, wind and waves were collected over the years. These data provide critical information for weather and ocean condition forecast to improve fisheries management and to improve the prediction and warnings for dangerous storms. Some studies were conducted to collect data on marine ecosystems such as coral reef, sea grasses, mollusc, marine invasive species such as crown of thorns. In many cases these researches were possible with the combined efforts of national institutions, NGOs and local communities. Despite the challenges encountered, a few of these research work undertaken has led to policy decisions such as the case of algae blooming in Madagascar and has also influenced the national process for establishment of national coral reef networks .

## **Bio Details**

**Ms. Gina Bonne** holds a Msc in Agronomy (Plant Protection). 12 years of experience in the public service as Head of the Plant Protection Laboratory, Assistant Director of the Plant Protection Section and Director of Agricultural Planning of the Republic of Seychelles. Ms. Bonne has 14 years of experience in regional cooperation as Officer in Charge of the Environment and Climate Department of the Indian Ocean Commission. She has been

developing and managing regional programs in Plant Protection, Fisheries Surveillance, Marine pollution in relation to combatting oil spills, Earth Observation for coastal and marine services, Coastal Zone management, Biodiversity management and Climate Change. Ms. Bonne has negotiated and established partnership with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), International Maritime Organization (IMO), UNEP for the Nairobi Convention, WIOMSA and IUCN. She is the focal Point of the Indian Ocean commission to the UNFCCC, UNFCCD, CBD and the Nairobi Convention.