

Western Indian Ocean Regional Ocean Governance Workshop

04 - 05 September 2019, Mahe, Seychelles

Concept Note

Introduction

In recognition of the importance of proper management of coastal and marine resources, the Nairobi Convention is organizing a workshop on Ocean Governance for the Western Indian Ocean (WIO) region to be held on 04 - 05 September 2019 in Mahé, Seychelles. The workshop will bring together key stakeholders in the WIO region to achieve the following specific objectives for improved ocean governance in the WIO region and African Oceans:

1. Discuss the structure of the ocean governance strategy for the WIO region and ensure alignment with national and regional priorities
2. Align the development of the WIO ocean governance strategy with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); the ongoing global discussions on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ); the ocean dimension of the Paris Agreement; the UN Decade for Ocean Science; and other global ocean governance initiatives
3. Identify the different governance needs among WIO countries and priorities of the region
4. Discuss the message to be presented at the Marine Regions Forum¹ in Berlin in September, as well as the Ocean Conference in Lisbon in 2020, as an example of how regions are working to deal with the complexities of ocean governance
5. Discuss a mechanism to contribute to ocean governance discussion at the Africa continent level in the African Union (AU)

Background

In the last few years, coastal and marine ecosystems around the world have begun to show signs of degradation due to unsustainable utilization of living and non-living resources, infrastructure development, extractive industries and pollution. Such complex threats call for effective ocean governance to coordinate the multiple uses of the ocean and the protection of the marine environment through policy instruments, regional actions and national legal frameworks. The governance of the ocean should evolve from sector-by-sector management

¹ <https://www.prog-ocean.org/our-work/prog-marine-regions-forum-2/>

to integrated ocean management, as the ocean is a single dynamic, inter-connected global ecosystem².

Much is at stake—the value of the global ocean-based economy is estimated to be between 3-6 trillion USD/year, while more than 3 billion people rely on the oceans for their livelihoods. Effective and sustainable governance of the global ocean is therefore essential to achieving a balance between the growth and development of the ocean economy and maintaining the health and productivity of the global ocean.

Ocean Governance in Africa

Emerging industries (such as oil and gas, mariculture, and wind and wave energy), together with the traditional maritime industries of fishing, shipping, and transport, have multiplied the pressures on Africa’s marine and coastal resources. It is on this premise that the 2015 Cairo Declaration of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) agreed to support efforts for the protection of the marine environment. The 16th session of AMCEN, held in Gabon in June 2017, requested the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Secretariats of the Regional Seas Conventions to enter cooperative arrangements with regional bodies in order to enhance the application of ecosystem-based approaches in ocean governance in Africa. At the 7th special session of AMCEN, held in September 2018 in Nairobi, African states were urged to promote growth and development of the ocean sector in the context of the sustainable blue economy pathway and the mainstreaming of aquatic biodiversity in all productive sectors. As a follow-up to these measures, the AMCEN Secretariat undertook background studies to support member states in developing an Africa Ocean Governance Strategy.

These undertakings will support the African Union’s Agenda 2063 aspiration for a prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development. In the first 10 years of Agenda 2063 implementation, the 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 member state initiatives related to Agenda 2063.

Ocean Governance in the Western Indian Ocean (WIO) region

Marine and coastal resources in the WIO region are managed by various national institutions, organizations, agreements and commissions, all of which have independent and often overlapping mandates. The WIO region is comprised of ten countries: Comoros, France

² <https://www.oceancouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/WOC-White-Paper-Ocean-Governance-and-the-Private-Sector-final.pdf>

(Réunion), Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa and Tanzania, all of whom are contracting parties to the Nairobi Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Western Indian Ocean Region. The region has a total coastline of more than 15,000 km, a continental shelf area of some 450,000 km² and an estimated population of 220 million people, of which over 60 million live within 100km of the shoreline. The WIO region's annual gross marine product (equivalent to the Gross Domestic Product of a country) of least US\$ 20.8 billion illustrates the significant economic value of the region's coastal and marine resources.

However, the coastal and marine environment of the WIO region has started showing signs of degradation and biodiversity loss. Such trends can be attributed to both natural factors, such as climate change, and anthropogenic activities such as coastal development, overfishing, sand mining, dredging and pollution from land based sources and activities. In line with these growing threats, stakeholders in the region are viewing ocean governance as an effective mechanism for addressing the sustainable use of marine and coastal resources.

The Nairobi Convention offers a legal framework and a forum for intergovernmental discussions, under which the efforts of its contracting parties in the protection, management and development of their coastal and marine environment are coordinated. The Convention is keen to promote ocean governance through cooperation, collaboration and partnerships between governments, intergovernmental organizations, Regional Fisheries Management Organization and Regional Economic Communities. Such readiness was highlighted at the 2017 UN Ocean Conference, at which the Nairobi Convention and a large group of regional and international actors committed themselves to developing a partnership approach for implementing SDG 14, "Life under Water" in the Western Indian Ocean³. The approach is also consistent with SDG 17, which encourages building partnerships between governments, the private sector, and civil society to achieve the SDGs.

Rationale of the Ocean Governance Workshop

In August 2018, the Ninth Conference of Parties to the Nairobi Convention adopted *Decision CP.9/6 on Ocean Governance*, urging parties to work with regional bodies to implement AMCEN's Cairo Declaration, the 2050 Africa Integrated Maritime Strategy, and the provisions of Agenda 2063 on ecosystem-based management approaches. The decision also requested the Secretariat to contribute to the development of an African strategy on ocean governance. The workshop follows a Special Session on Ocean Governance in the Western Indian Ocean Region, organized by the Nairobi Convention and other partners in July 2019, Port Louis

³ <https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=18313>

Mauritius, at which participants outlined several priorities, challenges, and recommendations for a regional ocean governance strategy.

The planned workshop will incorporate the outputs from the Special Session and work towards an Ocean Governance Strategy for the WIO region, which will act as a strategic document to guide countries in their development agenda.

Expected Outputs

- 1) Overview of stakeholders and actors involved in the WIO ocean governance strategy
- 2) Working document detailing the status, gaps, challenges and opportunities of ocean governance in the Western Indian Ocean developed for the planned regional ocean governance workshop
- 3) Agreement on the structure of the ocean governance strategy for the WIO region to be developed based on the best available scientific data and local knowledge as well as incorporating national, regional and global perspectives
- 4) A background paper on ocean governance to be prepared and presented at the Marine Regions Forum in Berlin in September and the Ocean Conference in Lisbon in 2020
- 5) A mechanism for contributing to the African Ocean Governance Strategy

Expected Participants

- 1) Senior Policy makers/ decision makers, (Government Representatives, RECs, Partners)
- 2) Marine and Coastal Ecosystem Experts.
- 3) Nairobi Convention Secretariat representatives