

Focal Points meeting of the Nairobi Convention

Virtual

21-22 October 2021

**FOCAL POINTS MEETING
OF CONTRACTING PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION,
MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE MARINE AND COASTAL
ENVIRONMENT OF THE WESTERN INDIAN OCEAN REGION
(NAIROBI CONVENTION)**

REPORT TO THE FOCAL POINTS

Implementation of the Decisions of the ninth Conference of Parties

Introduction

1. The ninth Conference of Parties (COP9) for the Nairobi Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Western Indian Ocean Region was held from 29 to 31 August 2018 in Mombasa, Kenya. It was divided into two segments: a meeting of Technical Experts on 29 August and a meeting of the Heads of Delegations from Contracting Parties on 30 and 31 August. Fifteen decisions were adopted at the Heads of Delegation meeting. The tenth Conference of Parties (COP10) was to be held in in October 2020 in Madagascar. It was postponed at the request of the hosting Government due to the ongoing global Covid-19 pandemic, to November 2021.
2. The pandemic has affected all countries and impacted all aspects of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP)'s work with most staff having been working remotely, including at the global headquarters where the Nairobi Convention Secretariat is hosted. Contracting Parties to the Convention instituted measures to contain the spread of the virus, with face-to-face meetings and international travel being highly restricted which affected implementation of both national and regional-level activities during 2020 and 2021. A [Briefing Note](#) was shared to alert partners and stakeholders of the likely impacts on the activities and processes of the Convention, presenting the anticipated scenario in the Western Indian Ocean (WIO) region for the rest of 2020 and beyond.
3. The Secretariat organized meetings of focal points to report on the status in the countries and impact on implementation of project activities under the Nairobi Convention. The meetings, held virtually in April 2020 and in July 2020, also updated participants on progress in implementation of ongoing projects, and on new projects.
4. The tenth meeting takes place close to the end of the 2018–2022 Work Programme. It is also coming at the onset of the UN Decade on [Ecosystem Restoration](#) and UN Decade of [Ocean Science](#) for Sustainable Development, as well as the anticipated adoption of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. Contracting Parties will take stock of the progress achieved in the projects and programmes implemented over the 2018–2021 period. Parties will also review decisions from their ninth meeting and will identify new areas that may require decisions at the tenth meeting, and which could from part of the 2022-2024 work programme.
5. The 2018–2022 Work Programme has been funded by governments, through the Eastern Africa Trust Fund. Assessed contributions of the Contracting Parties to the Trust Fund that are outlined in Table below as of 23 September 2021. Additional sources of funding include from donors and partners.

Country	Assessed Annual Contribution	Amounts collected in 2018 (USD)	Amounts collected in 2019 (USD)	Amounts collected in 2020 (USD)	Amounts collected in 2021 (USD)	Unpaid pledges for 2021 and prior years (USD)
Comoros	15,100					483,300
France	78,000	78,000	78,000	78,000		-
Kenya	45,302		271,812			135,906
Madagascar	22,651	248,887		45,302	22,495.84	96,861.47
Mauritius	30,201	30,201	30,201	30,201	30,201	31,005
Mozambique	45,302	181,208				1,013,288.52
South Africa	37,500	37,500	37,500		75,000	-
Seychelles	15,100		15,100			45,300
Somalia	15,100					456,100
Tanzania	45,302					586,629
TOTAL	349,558	575,796	432,613	153,503	127,696.84	2,848,389.99

Decision CP.9/1. Programme Work for 2018–2022

6. The work programme of the Nairobi Convention for 2018–2022 was adopted by Decision CP.9/1 which requested the Secretariat to develop and support the implementation of the priority areas identified. These included: the management of marine and coastal protected areas taking into account biodiversity conservation and connectivity, ocean governance, pollution from land-based sources and activities, climate change, ocean acidification, environmental management for the oil and gas industry, growth of the blue economy, scientific research, fisheries management, marine spatial planning, integrated coastal management and, the sustainable development of ports and harbours. Decision CP.9/1 further invited partners to support the implementation of the priorities.
7. The Secretariat was requested to develop a regional integrated programme for the full implementation of the strategic actions developed under the WIO-LaB project, the Agulhas and Somali Current Large Marine Ecosystems Project, the South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Project and the Climate Change Strategy for the Nairobi Convention area, and their extension beyond their respective lifespans. Moreover, the Secretariat was asked to report on progress on the implementation of decisions and the 2018–2022 programme of work to the Contracting Parties at their tenth meeting.
8. The 2018–2022 Programme of Work was built on four priority areas: assessments and capacity building; management; coordination and legal aspects; and information and awareness. Considering that the tenth meeting will take place close to the end of the programme, it is imperative that the priorities of a new work programme for 2022–2024 be considered by the COP. The proposed work programme would be clustered around:
 - i. Backstopping Contracting Parties in implementing COP10 decisions, the development of approaches to ocean financing and ocean governance.
 - ii. Partner collaboration for the assessment and conservation of critical habitats and endangered species (mangroves/coral reefs/shark and rays).
 - iii. Harnessing multi-stakeholder partnerships in contributing to improved ocean governance, pursuit of sustainable blue economy, marine spatial planning (MSP), reducing and mitigating the impacts of underwater noise.
 - iv. Strengthening partnership in the implementation of projects/mainstreaming strategic interventions into Covid-19 recovery.

9. *Contracting Parties may consider and approve the development and implementation of a new Programme Work for 2022–2024.*

Decision CP.9/2. Ratification, accession, and implementation of the Amended Nairobi Convention and the Protocol for the Protection of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Western Indian Ocean from Land-based Sources and Activities.

10. Decision CP.9/2 urged the Contracting Parties that have not yet done so to initiate and expedite the process of ratification or accession to the Amended Nairobi Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Western Indian Ocean and the Protocol for the Protection of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Western Indian Ocean from Land-based Sources and Activities (LBSA). The decision also encouraged the Contracting Parties and, where necessary and with the support of the Secretariat, to develop, strengthen and harmonize policies, laws, regulations, standards and institutional capacity, and to further enhance implementation of action programmes to tackle pollution from land-based sources and activities.
11. In March 2020, the Secretariat had the honour to notify Contracting Parties of editorial and translation errors in the official texts in French of the amended Nairobi Convention; and the LBSA Protocol. The corrected texts in French, printed in November 2020, (**Annex I**) supersede the texts adopted on 31 March 2010 and provide a step to allow Countries to sign the amended Convention as well as the LBSA protocol. *The COP may consider requesting the Secretariat to continue supporting the implementation of the Amended Convention and the Protocol, and encourage the Contracting Parties to continue developing, strengthening and harmonizing policies, laws, regulations, standards and institutional capacity for implementation of the Convention.*
12. In collaboration with the Global Programme of Action (GPA) of UNEP for the protection of the marine environment from land-based activities, the Secretariat organized a regional workshop on Land Based Sources and Activities (LBSA) in December 2018, in Maputo, to demonstrate the utilization of LBSA monitoring tools in the region. The workshop imparted skills to apply in combating land-based sources of pollution and sensitize countries on the merits of ratifying the Protocol. Additionally, the Secretariat organized a regional training in December 2019 on the application of constructed wetlands as low-cost wastewater management technology, in collaboration with WIOMSA and KMFRI.

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

13. The management of marine litter and municipal wastewater is an ongoing concern in the Western Indian Ocean. Decision CP.9/3 requested 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. It also requested the establishment of a marine litter regional technical working group in the region.
14. With the support of the Institute of Marine Sciences (IMS) in Zanzibar, the Convention developed a Western Indian Ocean Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter in October 2018. The 14-point action plan (**Annex II**) enhances knowledge on the prevention and reduction of marine litter and microplastics and their impact on marine ecosystem services, public health and safety through coordinated regional actions. It provides guidance on the monitoring of quantities and distribution of marine litter and microplastics for enhancing knowledge and establishing a regional mechanism

to address marine litter and serves as a guide in accordance with accepted international and regional standards and approaches.

15. The Secretariat and the Western Indian Ocean Group of Experts on Marine Litter and Microplastics is undertaking a regional assessment that will document measures undertaken by different institutions to address marine litter challenges and highlight opportunities which can be harnessed. The First Meeting of the Group of Experts was held 13-14 June 2019, in Cape Town, South Africa.
16. In the context of the regional marine litter action plan, the [WIOSAP](#) project has been supporting implementation of several activities to reduce marine litter, development of a national action plan and implementation of a community level management plan in Madagascar. In South Africa, , WIOSAP is supporting a demonstration project that seeks improvements in the water quality of five river systems in KwaZulu-Natal using a “Source to Sea” approach to both reduce litter generation and recover litter with river basin-wide interventions.
17. A report on the Western Indian Ocean situation assessment on marine pollution and marine water quality management was jointly prepared by the WIOSAP, [SAPPHIRE](#) and the [ACP MEAs 3](#) projects (**Annex III**). The assessment provides an overview of the current situation in countries of the WIO region and informs three other outputs: (1) A strategic framework for coastal and marine water quality management in the WIO region, (2) Revised guidelines for the development of environmental quality objectives and targets for coastal and marine environments in the WIO region, and (3) a policy brief on water quality monitoring for the WIO region. Establishment of a Regional Task Force on Water Quality is proposed to facilitate implementation of the WIO Water Quality Monitoring Framework. *Establishment at the Convention level of a Regional Task Force on water quality is proposed to facilitate the implementation of the WIO water quality monitoring framework.*
18. *The Contracting Parties are urged to mainstream the regional water quality monitoring framework to inform national level interventions as appropriate and supporting implementation of the regional water monitoring guidelines.*

Decision CP9/4. Development of a protocol on integrated coastal zone management

19. In decision CP9/4, the Contracting parties noted the need to expedite the finalization of the negotiations on the draft protocol on integrated coastal zone management (ICZM), and requested the Secretariat to organize negotiations to finalize the text and to convene a Conference of Plenipotentiaries before the tenth meeting of the Contracting Parties to adopt the protocol. Contracting Parties agreed on the final language for the ICZM Protocol on 27 March 2019. **Annex IV** provides the fourth and final negotiated draft Protocol and meeting report.
20. States had started discussing the protocol in 2012, and the March 2019 meeting in Dar es Salaam marked the fourth round of negotiations on the text. The protocol provides a framework to promote regional and national ICZM and enhance cooperation for sustainable development in the Western Indian Ocean (WIO) region. The protocol moves to a physical meeting the Convention’s Conference of Plenipotentiaries for formal adoption, in 2022.

Decision CP.9/5. Amendment of the Protocol Concerning Protected Areas and Wild Fauna and Flora in the Eastern African Region

21. Contracting Parties requested the Secretariat, in collaboration with partners, to organize consultations and support the process of amending the Protocol Concerning Protected Areas and

Wild Fauna and Flora in the Eastern African Region and the annexes thereto, and to report thereon to the tenth meeting of the Contracting Parties.

22. Pursuant to Decision CP.9/5, the Convention's ACP-MEAs 3 project initiated the review of the Protocol in October 2020 to ensure its consistency with the 2010 Amended Nairobi Convention, to make provisions for coastal and marine ecosystem-based management, and to strengthen the Protocol's legal and policy framework for the protection of marine and coastal biodiversity. An expert was contracted to review the Protocol and to justify its need for amendment including Annex I on Protected Species of Wild Flora, Annex II on Species of Wild Fauna Requiring Special Protection, and Annex III on Harvestable Species of Wild Fauna Requiring Special Protection of the Protocol. **Annex V** provides the justification and proposed amendments to the Protocol. *Contracting Parties are urged to support the proposed amendment of the Protocol Concerning Protected Areas and Wild Fauna and Flora in the Eastern African Region and its annexes.*

Status of sharks and rays

23. Decision CP.9/5 also requested the Secretariat and the partners responsible to expedite the process of finalizing and validating the status report on sharks and rays, and roadmap for their conservation. The commitment of a partner - Wildlife conservation Society - (WCS) was secured in June 2021 to complete the status report and roadmap. At the Regional Science Policy dialogue in March 2021 (**Annex VI**), WCS presented a paper which noted that sharks and rays and the related fish species share characteristics that have serious implications for sustainability. They are slow growers, mature at late age, and produce few young at each reproductive event¹. A paper published in Nature described the reduction in the numbers of sharks on the world's reefs and estimated that 25% of the globally distributed lineage are threatened according to IUCN Red List criteria due to overfishing. Large-bodied, shallow-water species are at the greatest risk²³. Eastern Africa is one of the top 5 regions globally with the lowest numbers of reef sharks⁴.
24. Twenty-one (21) shark species and 18 ray species have been recommended for strict protection under Annex II of the Nairobi Convention Protocol which elevated them to species of wild fauna requiring special protection. In addition, 53 shark and 20 ray species have been recommended for protection / regulated harvesting under Annex III - Harvestable Species of Wild Fauna, for which all appropriate measures to ensure their protection are required, including management plans for exploitation.
25. To reduce impacts on shark and ray species populations in the region and to improve on their conservation, Contracting Parties are urged to list appropriate shark and ray species on the Annexes of the Nairobi Convention Protocol Concerning Protected Areas and Wild Fauna and Flora, and to continue implementing their binding global commitments, as a minimum. These should include *inter alia*: addressing the protection of species listed in Appendix I of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), species prohibited in the Resolutions of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) and; trade controls for species listed in the Appendices of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and

¹ Fowler, S.L., Reed, T.M. and Dipper, F.A. (eds). (2002). Elasmobranch Biodiversity, Conservation and Management: Proceedings of the International Seminar and Workshop, Sabah, Malaysia, July 1997. IUCN SSC Shark Specialist Group. IUCN, Gland, Switzerland and Cambridge, UK. xv + 258 pp. ISBN 2-8317-0650-5.

² *ibid*

³ Dulvy, N. K. et al., (2014). Extinction Risk and Conservation of the World's Sharks and Rays. eLife 3:e00590 DOI: 10.7554/eLife.00590

⁴ Samoilys, M et al., (2021) Mainstreaming community managed marine areas into the Western Indian Ocean's governance frameworks Nairobi Convention Science to Policy Platform March 2021.

Flora (CITES). *Contracting Parties are further encouraged to voluntarily implement species protection and/or catch restrictions for threatened species and species subject to trade controls.*

26. The Secretariat and partners were also requested in Decision CP.9/5 to develop a concept paper on mitigation options to minimize the impact of developments on biodiversity and the natural environment, with recommendations for consideration at the tenth meeting of the Contracting Parties. The Secretariat, in collaboration with the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association, the Maritime Technology Cooperation Centre (MTCC), Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Port Management Association of Eastern and Southern Africa (PMAESA), and the Macquarie University of Australia, are developing scenarios and a toolkit for Green Port development for the region for reporting between sessions.

Decision CP.9/6. Ocean Governance

27. Decision CP.9/6 requested the Secretariat, in collaboration with the Secretariats of the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention), the Convention for Cooperation in the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Atlantic Coast of the West, Central and Southern Africa Region (Abidjan Convention) and the Regional Convention for the Conservation of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden Environment (Jeddah Convention), to participate in and contribute to the development of an African strategy on ocean governance in the context of Sustainable Development Goal 14 on conserving and sustainably using the oceans, seas and maritime resources and the 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy and Agenda 2063. Decision CP.9/6 further urged the Secretariat to work with partners to develop an ocean governance strategy for the Western Indian Ocean region that will contribute to the African ocean governance strategy.
28. The initial steps in the process of developing an Ocean Governance Strategy for the WIO region have been supported by the SAPPHIRE project and informed by the assessment report on the State of Ocean Governance in the region. The report was launched virtually on 16 September 2020 (**Annex VII**). The report further noted that effective ocean governance is among the key factors needed to help conserve and sustainably use marine biological diversity beyond national jurisdiction⁵. It comprises a combination of rules, laws, institutions, and political measures⁶, and encompasses diverse approaches including, among others, voluntary guidelines for securing sustainable small-scale fisheries, “debt for blue nature” swaps, and negotiations for an international legally binding arrangements⁷. Heavy reliance on the ocean necessitates rules to regulate the conduct of human activities⁸. Many approaches advocate for substantial growth of the ocean economy in order to boost recovery and resilience in light of the Covid-19 pandemic⁹. In order to

⁵ rik J. Molenaar, Chapter 40 - Ocean governance beyond boundaries: origins, trends, and current challenges, Editor(s): Andrés M. Cisneros-Montemayor, William W.L. Cheung, Yoshitaka Ota, Predicting Future Oceans, Elsevier, 2019, Pages 419-423, ISBN 9780128179451, <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-817945-1.00040-X>.

⁶ Singh P.A., Ort M. (2020) Law and Policy Dimensions of Ocean Governance. In: Jungblut S., Liebich V., Bode-Dalby M. (eds) YOUMARES 9 - The Oceans: Our Research, Our Future. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20389-4_3

⁷ Blythe Jessica L., Armitage Derek, Bennett Nathan J., Silver Jennifer J., Song Andrew M. The Politics of Ocean Governance Transformations. *Frontiers in Marine Science* 8 2021 <https://www.frontiersin.org/article/10.3389/fmars.2021.634718> DOI=10.3389/fmars.2021.634718

⁸ Tanaka Y (2015) *The international law of the sea*, 2nd edn. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge ISBN:9781139946261 DOI:<https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139946261>.

⁹ Northrop, E., Frost, N., Konar, M., and Hollaway, E. (2020). *A Sustainable and Equitable Blue Recovery to the COVID-19 Crisis*. Report. Washington, DC: World Resources Institute.

achieve this, it is critical to establish rational and sustainable use of marine and coastal ecosystems and ensuring that they continue to meet current and future demands as well as interests.

29. It is recalled that Decision CP.9/6 urged 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. Contracting Parties are urged to (a) designate a national science and research institution to support improved ocean governance and sustainable blue economy development, (b) designate representatives in the proposed regional inter-sectoral expert panel/strategy development team, and (c) to support the knowledge management strategy currently under development. In 2020 and 2021, and in support of the Nairobi Convention's commitment to making all data and information products as open and as accessible as possible via the Clearinghouse Mechanism, capacity building was provided for nine National Data Centres (NDCs) housing national Marine Ecosystem Diagnostic Analysis (MEDA) data. *The Secretariat is requested to continue support the strengthening of NDCs through further capacity development and mentoring initiatives and linkages with regional mechanisms.*
30. The synergistic Consultative Meetings on the Development of an African Strategy for Ocean Governance were held in [November 2018](#), [October 2020](#) and [June 2021](#). The meetings identified possible elements to be included in the strategy and built consensus among Member States on the strategy. Member States and stakeholders provided guidance and direction on the scope and content of the strategy from member States and stakeholders. Consequently, UNEP developed a draft for the Africa Oceans Governance Strategy.
31. In April 2020, the Nairobi Convention advanced a partnership with the Western Indian Ocean Governance Initiative (WIOGI) bringing together Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Commissions (SADC, IGAD, EAC), Contracting Parties, civil society and key partners in the Western Indian Ocean Region. The 3-year [WIOGI](#) project of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) seeks to strengthen the cooperation among relevant actors at regional, national and local levels. A virtual partnership meeting was held in April 2021 to strategize on developing a Regional Ocean Governance Strategy which has advanced through encouraging cooperation, participatory development and ownership by all actors. An Action Plan has been prepared to guide the process towards completion by the end of 2022. The strategy is expected to contribute to the process of developing AMCEN/AU led African strategy for Ocean governance and provide a regionally contextualized guiding document for improved ocean governance in the WIO.
32. The WIOGI project is also spearheading the development of a multi-stakeholder initiative (MSI) that will play a key role in ensuring that as many stakeholders as possible are included in the ocean governance strategy development process and in collective aspirations towards achieving a sustainable blue economy. The Contracting Parties are urged to support the ongoing process of co-creating a regional ocean governance strategy for the WIO through active participation in the preparatory activities leading up to its completion.
33. Decision CP.9/6 also urged the Secretariat and the South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission (SWIOFC) to complete the formulation, validation and implementation of the project on "partnership for marine and coastal governance and fisheries management for sustainable blue growth" in the Western Indian Ocean region. The project was approved for funding by Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) in December 2018 for joint implementation by FAO/SWIOFC and UNEP/Nairobi Convention at a total cost of US\$ 8,679,954. A UN Agency to UN Agency funds contribution agreement between the FAO/SWIOFC and

UNEP/Nairobi Convention was signed in September 2019 signalling the inception of the project. The Regional Inception Workshop for the project was held on the 4-5 May 2021 and attended by participating countries, donor and other interested organizations. Project implementation is ongoing with the timeframe of 2019 to 2023.

Decision CP.9/7. Developing and supporting implementation of projects

34. Decision CP.9/7 requested the Contracting Parties, the Global Environment Facility, the Green Climate Fund and other partners, as appropriate, to further support implementation of ongoing projects and agree to develop new projects or studies, subject to the approval of all Contracting Parties concerned. Projects identified included: (a) The transboundary marine protected area between Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania; (b) The Northern Mozambique Channel integrated ocean management approach; (c) Sustainable fisheries management and biodiversity conservation of deep-sea living marine resources and ecosystems in the areas beyond national jurisdiction by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the United Nations Environment Programme; (d) The conservation and sustainable exploitation of seamount and hydrothermal vent ecosystems of the South-West Indian Ocean in areas beyond national jurisdiction and collaboration in the management of activities in their adjacent waters by the International Union for Conservation of Nature; (e) Environmental management in the context of a rapidly developing oil and gas industry in the Western Indian Ocean region; (f) A collaborative partnership project to promote responsible ocean governance and fisheries management for sustainable blue growth in the Western Indian Ocean region; (g) The Climate Change Strategy for the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Nairobi Convention area; (h) The impact of anthropogenic underwater noise and shipping activities on marine animals and the prioritization of projects relating thereto. Further Decision CP.9/7 urged the Contracting Parties, in partnership with stakeholders, to develop and implement new transboundary initiatives for the management of shared resources; and requested implementing partners to provide progress reports on projects and initiatives at the next meeting of the Contracting Parties;
35. In line with Decision CP.9/7 the Nairobi Convention is currently implementing five projects as follows:
- a. WIOSAP Project, whose goal is to reduce impacts from land-based sources of pollution on the WIO and sustainably manage coastal and river ecosystems,
 - b. SAPPHIRE Project, which addresses effective, long-term ecosystem management in the WIO Large Marine Ecosystems,
 - c. Partnership Project between the Nairobi Convention and the South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission (SWIOFC) for marine and coastal governance and fisheries management for sustainable blue growth in the WIO,
 - d. Multilateral Environmental Agreements in Africa, Caribbean, and the Pacific (ACP) countries – Phase III (ACP MEAs 3) Programme which seeks to improve ACP countries capacities for the management of coasts and oceans in line with the related Regional Seas conventions, including the Nairobi Convention.
 - e. Integrated Management of the Marine and Coastal Resources of the Northern Mozambique Channel (NoCaMo) Project. The project is entering its inception phase following the signing by the French Facility for Global Environment (FFEM) of a number of financial agreements with project Partners.

36. A further collaboration was established with the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management (SwAM) through the WIO Symphony (WIO Sym) project to enhance the collation of spatial data on human activities, and marine ecosystems data. This data would help support cumulative impact assessment and ecosystem based Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) in the region. WIO Sym is a decision support tool for ecosystem-based MSP designed for both the regional and national scales.
37. The Secretariat is supporting an economic valuation and development of potential investment opportunities for the Trans-Boundary Conservation Area (TBCA) between Kenya and Tanzania. The WIOSAP project organised a stakeholder consultation on 21 October 2020 to guide the assessment and, identify other initiatives and serve as a basis for a business case towards the establishment of a collaboratively managed area. The economic valuation model will be extended at pilot sites in Madagascar, Mozambique and elsewhere in the WIO by the partnership project between the Nairobi Convention and SWIOFC, as well as the SAPPHERE Project.

Underwater noise

38. The March 2021 regional science-policy dialogue noted that over the last half century, increased commercial shipping, energy exploration and recreation have expanded offshore and deeper into the ocean creating noise which can travel long distances. While ambient noise levels are increasing in the Western Indian Ocean (WIO) where 30% of global tanker traffic passes through the Mozambique Channel, threats from shipping-related noise are poorly understood and rarely considered in development plans and in Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA). The global number of ships rose by a factor 3.5 between World War II and 2008¹⁰ while the ship density increased by a factor 4 between 1992 and 2012¹¹ with the greatest increase in the Indian Ocean¹². Negative impacts have been reported for many marine species (cetaceans, teleost fishes, marine turtles and invertebrates), with the potential to mask biological signals and to cause behavioural, physiological and physical injuries or mortality. Slabbekoorn *et al.* (2010) called attention to a ‘noisy spring’ in the underwater environment and the possible detrimental impact of increasing levels of anthropogenic noise on fishes¹³.
39. Decision CP.9/7.1(h) specifically called for support to the development of projects that address the impact of underwater noise and shipping activities. Convention partners, academic and research institutions are best placed to undertake targeted regional and collaborative work on underwater noise levels including the potential impacts emanating from maritime trade on marine habitats and species.

Decision CP.9/8. Environmental management for oil and gas development

40. Decision CP.9/8 requested (i) the Contracting Parties to support partnerships and resource mobilization in the regional capacity-building programme on environmental management of oil and

¹⁰ Frisk, G. (2012). Noiseconomics: the relationship between ambient noise levels in the sea and global economic trends. *Sci. Rep.* 2:437. doi: 10.1038/srep00437.

¹¹ Erbe, Christine and Marley, Sarah A. and Schoeman, Renée P. and Smith, Joshua N. and Trigg, Leah E. and Embling, Clare Beth, The Effects of Ship Noise on Marine Mammals—A Review}, *Frontiers in Marine Science* 6 2019 DOI 10.3389/fmars.2019.00606.

¹² Tournadre, J. (2014). Anthropogenic pressure on the open ocean: the growth of ship traffic revealed by altimeter data analysis. *Geophys. Res. Lett.* 41, 7924–7932. doi: 10.1002/2014gl061786

¹³ Hans Slabbekoorn, Niels Bouton, Ilse van Opzeeland, Aukje Coers, Carel ten Cate and Arthur N. Popper(2010) A noisy spring: the impact of globally rising underwater sound levels on fish. *Trends in Ecology and Evolution* 25 419–427 doi:10.1016/j.tree.2010.04.005.

gas; (ii) the Secretariat, in collaboration with partners, to implement the regional oil and gas capacity-building programme and (iii) the United Nations Environment Programme and other partners to support the Contracting Parties in their efforts to enhance partnerships in developing and harmonizing regional mechanisms for compliance, monitoring and response in oil and gas activities. The decision invited the Contracting Parties to take note of and consider for implementation, as appropriate, the reactivation of the sub-regional centre on combating marine pollution from oil spills and hydrocarbons, based in Madagascar as was recommended by the Ministerial Conference on Maritime Security in the Western Indian Ocean, held in Balaclava, Mauritius, on 28 and 29 April 2018, and invite partners to support that initiative.

41. The Nairobi Convention's SAPPHIRE project collaborated with IMO and the IOC-COI in organising a regional workshop on cooperation in preparedness and response to marine spills in Eastern Africa and the Western Indian Ocean in Zanzibar in March 2020. The workshop generated a series of recommendations focussed on increasing regional cooperation. In May 2021, the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) through the MASE programme organised a consultative meeting to discuss the way forward in the implementation of the recommendations of the MARPOL exercise held in Diego-Suarez in October 2019, and in the [March 2020](#) workshop in Zanzibar on cooperation and preparedness. The meeting was informed by a [background report on regional oil spill preparedness](#) in Eastern Africa and the Western Indian Ocean. The meeting agreed on an action plan supporting updating of national contingency plans to inform the draft regional contingency plan (RCP) which provides the operational tool for effective regional cooperation against marine pollution, among other actions. The Secretariat created a database of contact points responsible for receiving alerts on oil spills in the region.
42. The July 2020 grounding of *MV Wakashio* in Mauritius highlighted the challenges presented by a significant marine oil spill in the region. An Ad-hoc Meeting of the Nairobi Convention Focal Points was organised virtually in [August 2020](#) in response to the oil spill. A presentation by Mauritius provided an overview of the extent of the oil spill, measures taken to reduce the risk, and mitigation options to address impacts on the ecologically sensitive areas located in the area. The initial appeal to the Nairobi Convention was to provide a team of experts to assess the ecological health of marine ecosystems impacted, to conduct a social impact assessment and to initiate plans for the restoration of degraded habitats. Due to assistance being provided from other sources, including UN agencies, this request has been modified to focus on support for consultation around the updated National Oil Spill Contingency Plan and improvement of sensitivity mapping for certain sections of the Mauritian coastline.
43. At the ad-hoc meeting in August 2020, *focal points observed the need for member states to make a decision on oil spills preparedness and response, the activate of the Regional Response Centre/s, develop a feasible Regional Oil Spill Response Coordination Mechanism, and building of the necessary capacity to better respond better to future oil spill incidents.*
44. In September 2021, the Secretariat sought the services of a consultant to review the national oil spill contingency plans of the Contracting Parties and finalize the draft regional coordination and cooperation framework on oil spill preparedness for the WIO region. This was a first step towards addressing the deliverables envisaged in Component 3 of the SAPPHIRE project around the development of a regional coordination mechanism for oil spill response. The assessment of (a) national oil spill contingency plans (NOSCPs) for preparedness, (b) assessment of the presence of up-to-date sensitivity maps/atlasses in national plans, and (c) a review of national policy/legislations linked to oil spill response will allow comprehensive capacity building programmes on oil spill response at the national and regional level to be proposed.

Decision CP.9/9. Climate change adaptation and mitigation

45. Decision CP.9/9 urged the Contracting Parties to take note of and support the Climate Change Strategy for the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Nairobi Convention area; Contracting Parties were urged to address the impact of ocean acidification, including through capacity development and the enhancement of scientific cooperation in partnership with research and academic institutions, regional monitoring and adaptation activities. Contracting Parties were urged to consider undertaking climate change vulnerability assessments of their urban coastal areas, including urban spatial planning processes, and consider working towards integrating marine natural capital; and to collaborate to establish contingency emergency framework plans for disaster risk management. The decision also requested the Secretariat to develop programmes and projects on the resilient blue economy and blue growth in the context of climate change adaptation and mitigation to support implementation of the Climate Change Strategy. The Secretariat supported the development of a climate change vulnerability assessment toolkit, which has been applied to the assessment of the impacts of climate change and associated anthropogenic impacts on mangroves in four countries: Tanzania, Mozambique, Kenya and Madagascar. Currently, assessments are ongoing to determine the impacts of climate change on communities dependent on coastal and marine resources in these countries.
46. At the March 2021 Science – Policy dialogue, a paper by the Stimson Centre and WIOMSA noted that as climate change escalates, coastal cities are facing a variety of climate-related risks are interconnected with the existing social, economic, and political challenges with profound consequences for sustainability. Climate and ocean risk vulnerability profiles have been completed for Dar es Salaam and Mombasa. The critical data and insights can be used to prioritize resilience actions, provide evidence to upscale projects, and access additional climate finance.
47. Last year, the Kenyan Government requested the Nairobi Convention to facilitate the development of a Global Climate Fund (GCF) project (a) on enhancing blue carbon ecosystems and community resilience to protect and restore coastal and nearshore terrestrial ecosystems and (b) improving ecosystem health and service provision of targeted areas and associated reliant communities. The Concept Note is under preparation.
48. Climate change is particularly projected to have large-scale impacts. The Convention has further supported ocean acidification observation systems in the field through ApHRICA Project-Practical Training Course on Ocean Acidification (OA); Applied Training Course on OA Advanced Study; WIOMSA-IOC-UNESCO OA Funded Projects in East Africa on the implementation of the SDG 14.3.1 indicator methodology. Priority actions identified during the OA workshop in Zanzibar in 2019 is to be included in an Action Plan for the region.
49. A paper titled ‘Ocean Acidification - a hidden risk to sustainable development in the Western Indian Ocean’ presented at the regional science – policy dialogue in March 2021 indicated a clear need for policymakers to recognize the threat posed by Ocean Acidification (OA) and advocate for political support for the further development, expansion, and enhancement of this area of research in the region. *Contracting Parties are urged to develop and implement an action plan that includes mitigation and adaptation solutions to address and minimize impacts of OA as part of their wider climate change intervention strategies.*
50. The Secretariat, working with partners, is *requested to support the development of a regional action plan for capacity building bringing together scientists, policy makers and ocean users; and to establish a community of practice in the WIO focused on OA.*

Decision CP.9/10. Marine spatial planning for the blue and ocean economy

51. In Decision CP.9/10, Contracting Parties were urged to continue to advance blue and ocean economy approaches in the context of Sustainable Development Goal 14 as pathways for sustained incomes and economic benefits from natural blue capital, including fisheries, tourism, oil and gas development, offshore renewable energy and other maritime activities. Contracting Parties, within the framework of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, were urged to cooperate with existing regional institutions on ocean governance and the conservation of marine biodiversity in adjacent areas beyond national jurisdiction to, among others, build and develop area-based management tools, such as marine spatial planning. The Secretariat, in collaboration with partners, was requested to develop capacity-building programmes on marine spatial planning as a tool for sustainable economic growth; and to prepare a report on the feasibility, options and scenarios for the establishment of marine protected areas in areas beyond national jurisdiction and report thereon at the tenth meeting of the Contracting Parties.
52. Parties to the Nairobi Convention and partners meeting in Dar es Salaam, in March 2019 requested the Secretariat to work with partners to develop a regional MSP strategy.
53. The regional MSP strategy developed during 2020 and 2021 identified strategic priorities that would contextualise the global blue economy narrative for the WIO region, provide for harmonisation of legal instruments for blue economy practices, and improve mapping of biophysical environment and human activities.
54. The First Meeting of the Western Indian Ocean Marine Spatial Planning Technical Working Group (MSP TWG) in July 2020 followed recommendations of the Convention Focal Points and other partners at the MSP meeting held in March 2019 in Tanzania. Twenty-one experts have been nominated to the MSP TWG through the support of the national focal points from the Contracting Parties.
55. From the ambitious vision, goal and objectives of the WIO MSP strategy, Contracting Parties are *(a) requested to promote an enabling policy environment for in-country MSP legislation and to assist with establishment and support of in-country and regional cross-sectoral forums, committees, or working groups, including the Regional MSP TWG. Contracting Parties are called upon to (b) develop in-country knowledge management systems, and a communication and stakeholder engagement plan that brings big industry and smaller interest groups together. At the regional level, Contracting Parties are urged to (c) agree to mainstream the regional MSP strategy (Annex IX), harmonise in-country MSP development with the regional strategy, to secure funding and develop MSP capacity, and to develop or enhance regional partnerships (e.g. SADC, RFMOs, IOC, etc.) to ensure that MSP follows an ecosystems-based approach.*

CP.9/11. Development of marine protected areas and critical habitats outlooks

56. While urging the Contracting Parties to support and promote blue ocean carbon schemes in the management and protection of critical marine and coastal ecosystems and habitats, including mangroves, sea grasses and salt marshes, Decision CP.9/11 urged the Contracting Parties to promote and support monitoring of coral reefs for signs of stress or recovery and make appropriate management responses. The Secretariat, in collaboration with partners, was requested to revitalize and strengthen coral reef networks and other critical habitat networks, including other collaborative arrangements across the Western Indian Ocean region; and working jointly with the Contracting Parties, to periodically prepare thematic outlooks on the state of the marine and coastal

environment, including marine protected areas, and critical habitats such as coral reefs, seagrass and mangroves.

57. On the assessment and conservation of critical habitats identified as areas of the planet with the highest biodiversity value based on criteria such as level of threat, endemism, congregatory and migratory species, and key evolutionary processes¹⁴ and endangered species, the Science – Policy dialogue in March 2021 observed that the greatest threat to WIO is posed by future warming. Aware that climate change is particularly projected to have large-scale impacts, the Convention has supported Ocean Acidification observation systems. The actual risk to coral composition because of past bleaching events may be underestimated since it is masked by some levels of recovery and has not been assessed. The prioritization of reef areas requiring effective protection is critical so as to address international conservation area targets in a way that is compatible with sustainable use and equity at local levels. These priorities and threats facing coral reefs should be incorporated within national Marine Spatial Plans (MSP) and in the implementation of sustainable blue economy processes. Promoting the inclusion of the Red List of Ecosystems, as an indicator in the Global Biodiversity Framework is relevant to monitoring SDG 14 and constitutes a vital contribution to national reporting. *Parties are further encouraged to mainstream the Ecosystem Indicator Monitoring Framework (Annex VIII) developed by the Nairobi Convention Secretariat.*
58. Establishment of marine protected areas remains a key solution to local and global stressors that result in environmental degradation. While most WIO countries have established MPAs mainly around nearshore ecosystems, they are committed to the Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) Aichi 11 target to protect 10% of coastal and marine areas. The action of establishing large-scale MPAs such as transboundary conservation areas (TBCAs) and other large wilderness sanctuaries was one of the few tools available to achieve Aichi target at the ecosystem and landscape spatial scales.
59. Protection of such climate refugia in the TBCAs not only confers the benefits of managing at a large spatial scale, but also serve as potential climate mitigation measures. Potential climate refugia and mitigation measures could be achieved in the established or proposed trans-frontier conservation marine areas. *Environment and Finance ministries are encouraged to further integrate climate risks into their city planning and development. Contracting Parties are encouraged to implement approaches that ensure coordination, integration and inclusion of all sectors in developing local and national MSP and BE initiatives.*
60. The [Marine Protected Areas Outlook](#) for the Western Indian Ocean was launched on 16 July 2021 in a meeting that was attended by stakeholders from the WIO region and beyond. The outlook documents the progress made by countries in the region towards the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 14.5 target (to conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas) and provides lessons and opportunities to increase momentum for achieving post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework targets.
61. The MPA Outlook recommends the need for (i) dedicated budgets for MPA management; (ii) adopting proactive law enforcement and compliance strategies to ensure MPA regulations and guidelines are being respected which could be informed by the best practices in fishery reserves like in Mauritius, which have helped to restore fish stocks and protect biodiversity; (iii) incorporating research and monitoring programmes on biodiversity and ecosystems into decision-making in MPAs; and (iv) strengthening community engagement in marine protection by

¹⁴ UNEP-WCMC (2017). Screening for Critical Habitat. UNEP-WCMC. Technical Briefing Note. Cambridge, UK.

implementing lessons learned by the MIHARI Network, which brings together more than 200 Locally Managed Marine Areas (LMMAs) in Madagascar.

62. The need to develop and support policies and strategies on the establishment of LMMAs was highlighted at the March 2021 Science - Policy meeting and again at the Partners meeting held in August 2021. LMMAs provide an additional tool for enhanced fisheries management and achieving protected areas targets under the post-2020 GBF. *It is recommended that the role of LMMAs in fisheries management be expanded, legal frameworks and long-term sustainable financing mechanisms be developed and adopted to streamline community engagement.*
63. The future of Ocean Sustainability is an overarching global and regional concern. Setting up and implementing new common guidelines and principles that help define sustainable investment is critical. Equally important is strengthening knowledge, data and capacity in ocean health and finance. *Accordingly, there is need for countries to explore new financing mechanisms and tools and develop best practices to incentivize sustainable behaviour.*
64. Echoing the MPA Outlook report, the Science – Policy meeting in March 2021 noted the need for reducing the threats to mangroves as a way of meeting the wider coastal and marine conservation goals. The proposed development of a Regional Mangrove Vision (RMV) encapsulates the region’s commitments and priority needs for coordinated action, particularly with regard to the climate change agenda. The current momentum on Nature-based Solutions (NbS) provides additional impetus and leads to opportunity for a common vision and synergy between various Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA). In collaboration with the Secretariat, ministries of environment and specialized institutions in *Contracting Parties are urged to develop the RMV encapsulating the region’s commitments and priorities for promoting a regional dialogue for a joint mangrove action. Contracting Parties are also urged to facilitate the mainstreaming of mangroves in national development planning.*
65. Pursuant to Decision CP.9/10, noting that most WIO countries have not met their CBD marine and coastal area target of 10% MPAs by 2020, *Contracting Parties are urged to continue advancing MPA approaches in the context of Sustainable Development Goal 14. A crucial policy window exists to better protect nature and the planet in the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, currently being negotiated by the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in October 2021, to increase protection to 30% by 2030.*
66. When undertaking developments such as ports and oil and gas, *Parties are urged to take into account climate refugia, and to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of MPAs with a focus on the MPAs in the areas identified as climate refugia. Contracting Parties are urged to stimulate more support for national policy processes related to marine ecosystem conservation and sustainable management e.g. national coral reef action or management plans and strategies. Contracting Parties are also encouraged to routinely review current guidance and regulation.*

CP.9/12. Science-Policy dialogue

67. Decision CP.9/12 urged the Contracting Parties to promote a science-policy interface by holding regular dialogues between scientists and policymakers in the Western Indian Ocean to exchange science-based information and to support the development of appropriate policies and innovative solutions to address current and emerging threats to the coastal and marine environment. Contracting Parties requested the Secretariat to enhance support for the science-to-policy platforms, including the Forum for Academic and Research Institutions in the Western Indian Ocean, to review

and expand the structure and scope of the Forum to include planning authorities and other relevant sectors, and the Secretariat and partners to convene regular science-policy dialogues.

68. The dialogue would facilitate exchange of science-based information and support the development of appropriate policies and innovative solutions to address current and emerging threats to the coastal and marine environment. Contracting Parties requested the Secretariat and partners to convene regular science-policy dialogues, and the Secretariat to enhance support for other science-to-policy platforms, including the Forum for Academic and Research Institutions in the Western Indian Ocean, to review and expand the structure and scope of the Forum to include planning authorities and other relevant sectors.
69. The 23-25 March 2021 Science to Policy workshop (**Annex VI**) themed '*Transition to a Sustainable Western Indian Ocean Blue Economy: Addressing the challenges and seizing the opportunities*' received 31 presentations with many key proposals for potential consideration. The objective was to promote the linkages between science and policy for evidence-based decision-making and to provide timely technical advice and policy recommendations. Policy related recommendations were made on (i) Financing the transition to a sustainable ocean economy, (ii) assessment and conservation of critical habitats and endangered species, (iii) climate change adaptation and mitigation, (iv) establishing and managing area-based conservation measures, (v) emerging strategies and frameworks in support of regional ocean governance, and (vi) on the role of the private sector in the management of marine plastic pollution.
70. Response to Covid-19 is complicated by the interplay of three other interconnected crises – climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. While a plummeting economy and forced isolation might have been beneficial to nature in some instances, the pandemic has also had far-reaching negative impacts on conservation efforts – such as instances of illegal fishing in MPAs, reduced financial resources for MPA management due to restricted travel and thus limited tourist activities. UNEP's Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) 2022–2025 represents a vision for reversing the trajectory, articulating UNEP's role in delivering the promises of the 2030 Agenda (adopted by the General Assembly in September 2015), and the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20).
71. *Contracting Parties are urged to support and strengthen science-policy dialogues and information and knowledge management at all levels to on marine and coastal issues and their interactions ensuring that policy/decision-making for ocean action is informed by the latest science-based analysis and data generation.*

Decision CP.9/13. Enhancing cooperation, collaboration, and support with partners

72. Decision CP.9/13 requested the Secretariat to build broad-based strategic partnerships by enhancing existing partnerships and establishing additional partnerships for the development and implementation of the decisions of the Contracting Parties, including: (a) Shared programmes with one or more partners to support joint implementation; (b) Partnerships with organizations that have a track record in providing solutions; (c) Partnerships with organizations that will leverage funding and guidance and with those that will invest in, support and implement the work programme; and (d) Partnerships with Governments, intergovernmental organizations and United Nations agencies.
73. Decision CP.9/13 urged Contracting Parties to establish additional partnerships involving regional economic communities such as the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, the East African Community, the Indian Ocean Commission and the Southern African Development Community; with the United Nations regional commissions; on sustainable fisheries management

with regional fisheries management organizations such as the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission and the South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission; on environmental assessment with the Western Indian Ocean Coastal Challenge; on the conservation of and trade in sharks and rays with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals and the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations; with those responsible for ecologically or biologically significant marine areas; and also with the sustainable ocean initiative.

74. The Decision invited (a) the Contracting Parties and request the Secretariat to collaborate with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association and other partners in the areas of capacity-building, implementation and sharing of experiences in integrated marine spatial planning in support of the blue economy; (b) encouraged the Secretariat to continue its partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities in dealing with matters of marine litter, waste and wastewater for the West Indian Ocean region, and to report thereon to the tenth meeting of the Contracting Parties; and (c) encouraged collaboration and communication between Contracting Parties and civil society, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, local government and municipal authorities in the implementation of the work programme of the Nairobi Convention to ensure its increased impact and commitment, with a view to harnessing the benefits of synergies and collaboration. Further, the Decision called on the Contracting Parties (d) to promote joint programming between the Contracting Parties, the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Economic Commission for Africa, partners, civil society and the private sector for the implementation of priority areas and mobilization of resources; and (e) requested the Contracting Parties to form partnerships with the International Maritime Organization to identify and designate as “particularly sensitive sea areas” marine areas which are of significance in terms of ecological, social, economic or scientific criteria and are vulnerable to damage by international shipping activities; and requested the Secretariat to collaborate with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme and other partners to develop a regional action plan and road map to assist Contracting Parties to integrate the New Urban Agenda into coastal cities in the Western Indian Ocean region for the protection of the marine and coastal environment. Also the Decision (f) requested the Secretariat, in collaboration with the International Maritime Organization, the Port Management Association of Eastern and Southern Africa and other partners, to undertake a baseline study and scenario analysis, and develop a toolkit for green port development and expansion in the Western Indian Ocean region and report on progress thereon at the tenth meeting of the Contracting Parties; and requested the Contracting Parties to partner with the Consortium for the Conservation of Coastal and Marine Ecosystems in the Western Indian Ocean to strengthen linkage between the Consortium and implementation of the strategic action programmes and the work programme of the Nairobi Convention.
75. Implementation of Decision CP.9/13 advanced cooperation with members of the Consortium for the Conservation of Coastal and Marine Ecosystems in the Western Indian Ocean ([WIO-C](#)). WCS has been finalising the status report and regional roadmap for conservation of sharks and rays in the WIO. Cooperation with WIOMSA has been diverse in the implementation of the Strategic Action Programmes by the WIOSAP and SAPPHERE projects. Collaboration with SwAM (the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management, SwAM) rolled out capacity building on marine spatial planning (MSP) by the Nairobi Convention in November 2019 to promote the application of MSP for integrated planning and development at national and sub-national level in Somalia. The cooperation continues to deliver capacity development for adaptive management of marine protected areas and further advanced a partnership with the newly launched (June 2021) Western Indian Ocean marine protected areas network ([WIOMPAN](#)). The Convention has continued to advanced outreach to the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) including IGAD, COMESA,

EAC, SADC and AU and partners to strengthen cooperation on ocean governance and blue economy issues. Collaboration exists with the UN-Habitat in developing a regional action plan and roadmap for integrating the New Urban Agenda (NUA) into coastal cities as gateways of trade and transport and infrastructure.

76. Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) were concluded with the Ports Management Association of Eastern and Southern Africa PMAESA (2020) with regard to sustainable port development, Macquarie University (2020) to strengthen the science-policy dialogue and between UNEP and SADC (2021) for cooperation in the support of environment and natural resources management.

Partners Meeting

77. Themed ‘*Enhancing resilience and the health of the Western Indian Ocean: 2022-2024 Partnership Programme*’, the Nairobi Convention Partners meeting (**Annex X**) held in August 2021 delved into mainstreaming strategic interventions related to Covid-19 recovery into the programme of work 2022-2024. The Secretariat, Contracting Parties and partners were called upon to incorporate scenario or ‘future thinking’ approaches into project development and adapting to the Covid-19 pandemic to ensure inclusive, blue, sustainable approaches. They are encouraged to identify how one or more of the strategic interventions can be mainstreamed into Covid-recovery and other projects and processes. Such interventions should build resilience of people and ecosystems to withstand future shocks, embrace interconnectivity and complexity, and leverage digitalization
78. The August 2021 Partners meeting focused on partners efforts in addressing existing and emerging regional issues in the Western Indian Ocean, implementation of projects, activities, and initiatives, and explored possible synergies and joint actions towards conservation, management, and sustainable use of the Western Indian Ocean coastal and marine resources. Representatives of WIO-C members, representatives of regional economic communities (RECs), regional fisheries bodies, Forum for Academic and Research Institutions (FARI), representative of regional commissions, representative of Nairobi Convention Contracting Parties, active regional projects in the WIO region, networks and associations were in attendance. The meeting charted a way for strengthened and targeted approach towards partnerships for regional protection of the coastal and marine environment, management, and development around (i) promoting other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs), (ii) enhancing partnerships for conservation of critical habitats and endangered species, (iii) enhancing the capacity of member States on maritime security-based agreements and protocols, (iv) tackling illegal, unregulated, and unreported (IUU) fishing, (v) multi-stakeholder coordination and integration in marine spatial planning, ocean governance and blue economy, and (vi) on mainstreaming strategic interventions into Covid-19 recovery.
79. Multi-stakeholder partnerships are key to increasing the access to new resources for sustainable solutions to cross-cutting issues such as ocean governance, marine spatial planning, knowledge management and in advancing blue economy approaches. *Contracting Parties to the Nairobi Convention are urged to strengthen collaboration with the private sector and other stakeholders for conservation and sustainable utilization of coastal and marine resources in the context of a sustainable blue economy.* Contracting Parties are further urged to note the strategic framework for engagement of the private sector in the WIO and the recommendations therein including: (a) to develop an implementation plan and a framework for reporting on progress in adopting and implementing the strategic framework for private sector engagement (b) assess the feasibility of a WIO Blue Economy Platform (WIO-BEP) or similar structure to support more effective private sector partnerships in the region, and (c) establish focus groups to assess and drive forward the proposed partnerships contained in the strategic framework for private sector engagement.

80. In addition the *Contracting Parties are requested to support the strategic regional process of developing a Multi-Stakeholder Initiative (MSI) to create an easy entry point for private sector engagement in coastal and ocean stewardship, encouraging companies to provide resources and influence through individual actions and multi-stakeholder partnerships, and consider supporting the Seychelles' concept entitled 'Western Indian Ocean Resilience and Prosperity Initiative (WIO-RPI)'. In this regard, it is recommended that the Contracting Parties recognize the synergies that are apparent between the WIO-RPI, the MSI and Regional Ocean Governance Strategy development process described elsewhere in this document. It is emphasized that the MSI will provide critical support to the process of ensuring meaningful stakeholder engagement in the development of effective regional ocean governance regimes and sustainable blue economy pathways, which are key elements of the WIO-RPI.*

Decision CP.9/14. Strengthening the operational functioning of the Secretariat

81. Decision CP.9/14 requested the Secretariat, in consultation with the Bureau, to consider and implement the recommended options of Strengthening the operational functioning of the Secretariat and report thereon to the tenth meeting of the Contracting Parties.

82. The adopted analysis report provided options for in-UNEP, (in-house) personnel and funding support and for external support to the Secretariat including in: i) project funding, ii) secondments of national officers from the Contracting Parties and partners, iii) appointment of JPOs from Contracting Parties supported by Contracting Parties or third party countries, iv) UN Volunteers from Contracting Parties and v) internships. Within the provisions of the WIOSAP Project the Project competitively recruited in October 2018, and directly supported, a dedicated national project officer, to work with the Nairobi Convention National Focal Points, and provide coordination for the implementation of project activities. National UN Volunteers continue to be engaged to support implementation of projects of the Convention.

83. In December 2020, a Memorandum of Agreement between UNEP and Expertise France was re-initiated in which France was to loan to the UNEP/Nairobi Convention the services of an expert on a non-reimbursable basis, in connection with the implementation of the 2018-2022 programme of work for the Nairobi Convention. The agreement is awaiting action by Expertise France.

Decision CP.9/15. Financial matters

84. Decision CP.9/15 requested the Secretariat to explore various options to ensure sustainable financing for the Trust Fund, including considering investing \$2 million of the principal of the Trust Fund as an absolute minimum investment, based on continued efforts to recover arrears without increasing assessed voluntary contributions. The Secretariat was requested to invoice Contracting Parties annually for the current year's contributions, and to continue reporting on the status and use of the Trust Fund at the meetings of the Contracting Parties. The Secretariat in response to decision CP.9/15 sent 2019, 2020 and early 2021 invoices to all the Contracting Parties.