



## Meeting of the Consortium for the Conservation of the Coastal and Marine Ecosystems in the Western Indian Ocean region (WIO-C)

*Friday 06 September 2019, Mahe, Seychelles*

### Concept Note

#### **Introduction**

The Nairobi Convention, Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA) and Birdlife International are organizing a meeting of the Consortium for the Conservation of the Coastal and Marine Ecosystems in the Western Indian Ocean region (WIO-C) to be held on 06 September 2019 in Seychelles.

The WIO-C meeting is organized pursuant to Decision CP.9/13 of the Ninth Conference of Parties to the Nairobi Convention on *'Enhancing cooperation, collaboration and support with partners'* specifically 13.10 which requested Contracting Parties to *partner with the Consortium for the Convention of Coastal and Marine Ecosystems in the Western Indian Ocean to strengthen linkage between the Consortium and implementation of the strategic action programmes of the Nairobi Convention.*

The meeting seeks to bring together WIO-C members to discuss on how to strengthen WIO-C's support to the projects under the Nairobi Convention and also complement and create synergies with other initiatives in the region in working toward sustainable management of WIO coastal and marine ecosystems. This will in turn support countries towards the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 14 on conservation and sustainable use of oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development, and its targets.

#### **Background of WIO-C**

WIO-C is a consortium of international and regional Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in partnership with intergovernmental organizations that have presence and are active in regional marine and coastal ecosystem management in the WIO region. It was established during the implementation of the project on 'Addressing Land Based activities in the Western Indian Ocean (WIOLaB) to provide a framework for NGOs working in the WIO region to harmonize and advance efforts to protect, conserve, and manage the coastal and marine environment of the WIO region while working to alleviate poverty and attain sustainable livelihoods for the most vulnerable segments of its population. It also aims to support synergy in programmes of work on marine and coastal ecosystem management and promote knowledge and information sharing amongst stakeholders in the WIO region, as well as provide a mechanism for non-governmental entities to anchor activities in the Nairobi Convention and other intergovernmental processes, thus strengthening their implementation. The main activities of the consortium include networking,



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coordination, lobbying, decision support, resources mobilization and programme development and implementation.

WIO-C was formally launched during the 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Contracting Parties to the Nairobi Convention held in November 2007 in Johannesburg, South Africa and is currently hosted by WIOMSA and chaired by Birdlife International.

### **Membership of WIO-C**

WIO-C currently consists of the following institutions: Nairobi Convention, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), WIOMSA, Birdlife International, World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), East Africa Wildlife Society (EAWLS), Coastal Oceans Research and Development-Indian Ocean (CORDIO), Wetlands International, Blue Ventures, Rare, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Flora & Fauna International (FFI), and Conservation International (CI).

### **Achievements of WIO-C**

The WIO-C has promoted partnerships in the implementation of projects such as Resilient Coasts in WIO implemented by Nairobi Convention Secretariat, IUCN, WIOMSA and CORDIO in 2012, the development of the WIO Regional State of Coast report in 2015 by the Nairobi Convention Secretariat in collaboration with WIOMSA and the project on designing a regional network for the Western Indian Ocean Local Fisheries Management funded by the MacArthur Foundation and implemented by WIOMSA, WCS, CI, CORDIO, WWF and Blue Ventures.

The Consortium has been instrumental in supporting and contributing towards the Convention's Science to Policy Forum as evidenced from the Decisions of the 9<sup>th</sup> COP, where a number of policy recommendations informed by WIO-C members contributions led to several key Decisions. The work being undertaken by various WIO-C members also helps in the implementation of various COP Decisions.

Most recently, the WIO-C partnership catalyzed the development of the Integrated Management of Marine and Coastal Resources of the Northern Mozambique Channel (NoCaMo) project, a project funded by Fonds Français pour l'Environnement Mondial (FFEM). The project aims to ensure that the Northern Mozambique Channel's high biodiversity value coral reef, seagrass and mangrove ecosystems are maintained to secure sustainable futures and livelihoods for coastal communities and economies by 2025. The project will be implemented between 2019 -2022 by several members of WIO-C including Nairobi Convention Secretariat, WWF, WCS, CORDIO, CI, TNC, FFI and Blue Ventures.

The consortium is supposed to play a significant role in ensuring an inclusive regional network in the WIO region which builds on the synergies and complementarities of the different organizations to provide a wholistic approach to the sustainable management of coastal and marine ecosystem of



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the region and to maximize efficiency, effectiveness and impact of resources available under the various initiatives in the region.

## Meeting Rationale and Objectives

The WIO-C is identified as a key partnership in the implementation of the two GEF-funded projects under Nairobi Convention namely the WIO Large Marine Ecosystems Strategic Action Programme Policy Harmonization and Institutional Reforms (WIO LME SAPPHIRE) which builds on previous work completed under the Agulhas and Somali Current Large Marine Ecosystems (ASCLME) project of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Project on Implementing the Strategic Action Programme for the protection of the Western Indian Ocean from land based sources and activities (WIOSAP) which builds on previous work implemented under the Project on Addressing Land-based Activities in the Western Indian Ocean (WIOLaB) project. WIO-C will also work to create linkages with other supportive programmes to be implemented under the Nairobi Convention which currently include the NoCaMo project, the project on 'Partnership for marine and coastal governance and fisheries management for sustainable blue growth' implemented by Nairobi Convention and South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission (SWIOFC) and funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), and the European Union funded project for African, Caribbean and Pacific countries Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs)-Phase 3. The partners under the Consortium are also identified as observers in the Project Steering Committees (PSCs) of the two Projects.

One of the mandates of the SAPPHIRE project is to collaborate with relevant regional projects, Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs) and non-Governmental Organizations in development of (and benefit from) public/private sector partnerships in Ocean Governance. In this respect, WIO-C will serve as a coordinating 'hub' to facilitate cooperation of project-NGO activities. WIO-C also provides a vital link to communities as several members of the consortium have activities in which they work directly with communities on the ground. WIO-C will thereby support activities under component 2 of the SAPPHIRE project on stress reduction through community engagement and empowerment in sustainable resources management.

During the First Project Steering Committee (PSC) meeting for the SAPPHIRE project held on 25-26 June 2019 in Durban, South Africa, the PSC members agreed that the project would support in strengthening of the WIO-C, which has an established structure, to build on the previous arrangements under the Western Indian Ocean Sustainable Ecosystem Alliance (WIOSEA), which was established through the Agulhas Somali Current Large Marine Ecosystems (ASCLME) project.

The WIO-C meeting will provide a platform for initial discussions on the engagement of the consortium with SAPPHIRE project activities. The consortium will also be a forum to discuss the linkage of partner initiatives to the work of the SAPPHIRE and WIOSAP projects and support to countries to implement the Nairobi Convention work programme.



The objectives of the WIO-C meeting are to:

- a) Discuss mechanisms for enabling the Consortium to support projects and initiatives for protection, conservation and management of the marine and coastal ecosystems in the WIO region,
- b) Identify opportunities for leveraging on synergies among existing programmes of work of its members on marine and coastal ecosystem management,
- c) Support efforts of local and regional organizations in order to create a unified voice in the international community on issues related to sustainable marine and coastal management.
- d) Explore linkages and discuss mechanisms for strengthening WIO-C to effectively support complimentary SAPPHIRE and WIOSAP project activities as well as the implementation of the Nairobi Convention work programme,
- e) Discuss and propose actions on continued support to the Science to Policy Platform

### **Expected Outputs**

The expected outputs for the meeting include:

- a) Key opportunities identified for synergies in the existing work programmes of WIO-C members including proposed activities for joint implementation with WIOSAP and SAPPHIRE.
- b) Recommendations and actions on WIO-C support to the SAPPHIRE and WIOSAP projects
- c) Actions on coordinated support and contribution to the Science to Policy Platform
- d) Effective collaboration, coordination and partnerships developed for implementation of SAPPHIRE project