



Workshops for Implementation of the Nairobi Convention 2025 – 2028 Work Programme and COP 11 Decisions

27 – 31 January 2025

Dar es Salaam Tanzania

Concept Note

Background

The Contracting Parties to the Nairobi Convention during the COP 11 held in Madagascar in August 2024 approved and adopted a 10-year new Integrated Programme, a new Programme of Work (2025-2028) and key Policy Decisions to address the triple planetary crises of pollution and waste, climate change and biodiversity loss. The Programmes and Decisions build on many years of investments by the Convention and partners and also aligns to current global policy commitments and regional priorities. In October 2024, hosted by the government of the United Republic of Tanzania as current Chair of the Bureau, the Convention convened two meetings in Zanzibar to formally launch implementation of the Programme of Work (POW) and COP 11 Decisions. Partners were also invited to identify potential areas of collaboration. Several meetings have been planned in December in Tanzania to expedite this implementation through validation of key regional strategic documents and Project Steering Committees to monitor progress.

Regional and national level initiatives have been implemented to acquire baseline data on different aspects of coastal and marine ecosystems such as ocean currents, biodiversity, fish populations, and environmental threats such as pollution and acidification. This baseline data can be used to develop a long-term monitoring programme to track changes in the status of coastal and marine ecosystems. It is in this context that development of continuous monitoring programmes is of paramount importance to ensure the wise use of the rich natural resources of the region, which in turn is a prerequisite for sustainable governance and development.

In order to coordinate regional efforts on coastal and marine issues in the WIO region, the Integrated Programme calls for action on thematic areas such as ocean governance, land-based pollution, coastal and marine ecosystem management, and climate change. In addition, innovative tools such as ocean accounting, area-based planning, and approaches that incorporate a circular economy are promoted throughout the programme (Decision CP.11/1.). The programme's conceptual framework aligns with global commitments like Agenda 2030, the Paris Agreement, and the Decade of Ocean Science, as well as the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) and the recently adopted High Seas Treaty. The programme is supported by frameworks, action plans and guidelines developed through consultative processes with regional experts and Contracting Parties.

To this end, the Nairobi Convention Secretariat is organising a suite of meetings to validate and finalise some of the action plans and frameworks developed; project steering committee meetings to discuss and approve specific workplans which contribute to implementation of the Convention's



PoW 2025 – 2028; as well as a Convention Bureau Meeting to strategize on funding for and implementation of the PoW 2025 – 2028. The planned meetings are:

1. Validation of the Regional Ocean Acidification Action Plan for the Western Indian Ocean from 27 – 28 January 2025
2. Regional Workshop on Ecosystem Monitoring in the Western Indian Ocean (WIO) Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs) on 28 January 2025
3. Project Steering Committee meetings; i) SAPPHIRE; ii) WIOSAP; iii) NOCAMO on 29 January 2025
4. National Focal Points and Bureau Meeting on 30 – 31 January 2025

1. Ocean Acidification Workshop: Validation of the Regional Ocean Acidification Action Plan for the Western Indian Ocean from 27 – 28 January 2025

In the context of the Nairobi Convention for the protection, management, and development of the marine and coastal environment of the Western Indian Ocean region, the ACP MEAs 3 Programme aims at better management of coasts and oceans, enhancing ocean governance and effective implementation of the Convention. The programme supports the strengthening of the governance framework of the Nairobi Convention and its associated protocols, the development of a regionally representative network of marine protected areas and enhances measures for reducing the influx of chemicals and waste entering the marine environment. The Nairobi Convention component of the ACP MEAs 3 Programme has supported the development of a draft regional ocean acidification action plan and a 10-year implementation plan for the Western Indian Ocean countries

- a. The strategic priorities of the Action Plan for the Western Indian Ocean region may include:
 - i. Mitigating ocean acidification such as through restoration of critical marine and coastal habitats and aquaculture approaches
 - ii. Building resilience measures of affected communities, including resilience of shellfish aquaculture and the fisheries value chain
 - iii. Measures to reduce local water-borne and airborne pollution that exacerbates OA
 - iv. Mainstreaming resilience and adaptation measures to OA into policies, planning, and operations
 - v. Collaboration; an OA Observation Network for monitoring and research including sharing of lessons to improve OA efforts
- b. A 10-year implementation plan for the regional ocean acidification action plan aligned to strategic priorities of countries on climate change and ocean acidification with goals and related actions that address:
 - i. the risks that OA poses to the Western Indian Ocean assets and interests are well understood among policymakers, resource managers, affected socio-economic activities of coastal communities, and the public.
 - ii. relevant monitoring information about OA that is widely accessible for decision making, and delivered in a usable form, and routinely applied to climate change decisions across the public and private sectors.

- iii. scientific understanding of OA, interactions of OA with other environmental drivers, and how OA affects coastal and marine ecosystems for ocean and coastal management decisions.
- iv. countries integration of OA into decisions and policies, and to mainstream elements of the OA action plan into operations that contribute to minimise impacts of OA on marine biodiversity and communities likely to be affected by OA.
- v. strategic and effectively financed conservation and restoration efforts of mangroves, seagrass meadows, kelp forests, and salt marshes to secure carbon storage benefits and co-location of aquaculture with successful mangrove and seagrass conservation.
- vi. enhanced communication and systematic awareness of OA on efforts for reduction of GHG emissions, options for reducing local sources of acidifying pollutants, tools for assessing water quality indicators for management or regulatory actions, innovative and effective strategies addressing ecosystems and resilience of coastal communities, adaptation through improved technologies and management flexibility, and improving attention to oceans in international climate negotiations.
- vii. a robust regional collaboration on OA-related policy, science, and communications with coordinated responses across the Western Indian Ocean region and strategic partnerships and networks to leverage opportunities for investments necessary to implement the OA action plan.

a. Objectives of the Workshop

The main objective of the workshop will be to validate the Regional Ocean Acidification Action Plan for the Western Indian Ocean region by gathering inputs and finalizing the action plan, ensuring it incorporates resilience, mitigation, and adaptation strategies aligned with regional priorities and international goals. Specific objective will be to:

- i) Validate the Draft Regional Ocean Acidification Action Plan: Experts and stakeholders will review the draft action plan to ensure it addresses critical needs and priorities for the WIO region, including scientific monitoring, adaptation strategies, and policy recommendations.
- ii) Incorporate Regional and National Inputs: The workshop will provide an opportunity for focal points and country representatives to contribute specific feedback and inputs to tailor the Action Plan to national contexts, ensuring ownership and implementation feasibility.
- iii) Promote Collaborative Monitoring and Mitigation Strategies: Participants will discuss collaborative mechanisms for monitoring OA in the region and explore opportunities for joint mitigation efforts, including restoration of marine habitats and sustainable aquaculture practices.
- iv) Enhance Capacity Building and Knowledge Sharing: The workshop will provide a platform for capacity building, focusing on strengthening national institutions' ability to monitor, adapt, and mitigate OA impacts. It will also facilitate the exchange of lessons learned and best practices across countries in the region.

b. Expected outcomes

- a. A validated Regional Ocean Acidification Action Plan that incorporates feedback from experts and stakeholders and aligns with the broader climate action strategies in the WIO region.
- b. A clear roadmap for the 10-year implementation plan, including specific targets, actions, and monitoring frameworks for countries in the region.
- c. Strengthened regional collaboration for ocean acidification monitoring and mitigation, supported by shared research, data, and lessons from different countries.
- d. Enhanced capacity among national focal points and key institutions to integrate OA adaptation measures into national climate and marine biodiversity policies.

2. Regional Workshop on Ecosystem Monitoring in the Western Indian Ocean (WIO) Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs) on 28 January 2025

The Nairobi Convention executed GEF funded projects, the “Western Indian Ocean Large Marine Ecosystems Strategic Action Programme Policy Harmonisation and Institutional Reforms (SAPPHIRE) and “Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme for the protection of the WIO from land-based sources and activities (WIOSAP)”, supported the development of a *Draft Regional Framework for Ecosystem Monitoring in the Western Indian Ocean* (shared as a link here: <https://cutt.ly/V5fN8PJ>). The draft framework aims to provide a standardized approach on the development of national activities to support ecosystem monitoring in the region. A situational assessment of ocean ecosystem monitoring in the region conducted during the development of the draft Framework shows that monitoring programmes are in place in most countries, but the coverage of the programmes and level of implementation differ. Some of the countries with existing monitoring programmes do not support some regional priority issues while in others the national monitoring of the ocean ecosystem’s health is sporadic and associated with projects of finite duration, under development, or has not yet been incorporated into national strategies and programmes. National ecosystem monitoring programmes should incorporate the priority issues of the region to provide data and information on the progress towards global and regional commitments, including those related to the Nairobi Convention. The assessment provides a synthesis of existing national and regional strategies and monitoring structures, policy provisions, and the science-policy interface in each country and provides a shared vision and goals for greater impact.

The Framework identifies gaps and opportunities in the national and regional capacity to establish realistic monitoring strategies, as well as possible partnerships and collaborations in coastal and marine ecosystem monitoring to develop the WIO ecosystem monitoring framework. The framework identifies key national institutions mandated with ecosystem monitoring and implementation.

a. National Consultations

Building on the developed draft regional framework for ecosystem monitoring, the Nairobi Convention Secretariat partnered with Rhodes University to further the discussion on ecosystem

monitoring with the mandated national institutions identified and to generate information to support development/updating national ecosystem monitoring programmes and ultimately finalise the regional ecosystem monitoring framework. This responds to Decision CP.11/1.3 on finalization of the Ecosystem Indicator Monitoring framework for the Western Indian Ocean region ... to guide effective national and regional reporting on the implementation of the Programme of Work.

The implementation of a Regional Ecosystem Monitoring Framework must be seen in the context of a medium-term endeavour. National monitoring varies from country to country and among different agencies within countries. Few agencies have datasets collected consistently over long time periods while the available data is often dispersed and related to individual projects and programs with limited time frames. The current initiative provides the platform and has the potential to both assist countries with national data collection and housing, while setting in place the regional framework. The initiative has developed a website housed through the Nairobi Convention Secretariat which will be populated with the suite of regional ecosystem indicators when formally agreed, and the first of these to be selected for implementation.

b. Objectives of the Workshop

The Nairobi Convention SAPPHIRE project is supporting a regional workshop to promote shared learning and exchange of experiences on ecosystem monitoring for sustainable management of the coastal and marine resources in the WIO region. The workshop will facilitate discussions and ensure consensus on the ecosystem monitoring indicators to be adopted in the WIO region.

c. Expected Outcomes

- i) Information for finalization of the regional ecosystem monitoring framework
- ii) Shared knowledge and information on national ecosystem monitoring processes

3. The Project Steering Committee Meetings on 29 January 2025

3.1 SAPPHIRE PSC

The Nairobi Convention is executing the Western Indian Ocean Large Marine Ecosystem Strategic Action Programme Policy Harmonization and Institutional Reforms (SAPPHIRE) project. The project is implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) with funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The project promotes policy harmonization and institutional reform for the improvement of the management of the Western Indian Ocean Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs). The overall objective of the project is to achieve effective long-term ecosystem management in the Western Indian Ocean LMEs, in line with the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) as endorsed by the participating countries. It has five integrated components, each of which is intended to achieve various outcomes:

Component 1: Supporting Policy Harmonization and Management Reforms towards improved ocean governance.

Component 2: Stress Reduction through Community Engagement and Empowerment in Sustainable Resources Management.

Component 3: Stress Reduction through Private Sector/Industry Commitment to transformations in their operations and management practices.

Component 4: Delivering best practices and lessons through innovative ocean governance demonstration.

Component 5: Capacity Development to Realise improved ocean governance in the WIO region.

The Project PSC

The project is being implemented in nine out of ten contracting parties of the Nairobi Convention: Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, and Tanzania. The participating countries have assigned project focal points who are members of the project steering committee (PSC). The PSC forms the highest decision-making body in the project management structure. The PSC meets at least once annually to review project progress, approve annual work plans and budgets, and provide recommendations, as well as propose joint solutions for identified problems and challenges during the implementation of planned activities, among other duties.

Objectives of the Meeting

This eighth SAPPHIRE PSC meeting will i) review the overall SAPPHIRE project progress; ii) discuss the project expenditure to date; and iii) discuss and approve the workplan and budget for the six-month project extension period from 25 October 2024 to 24 April 2025.

Expected Outcome

- i. Approved project progress and expenditure to date
- ii. Approved workplan and budget for or the six-month project extension 25 October 2024 to 24 April 2025

3.2 WIOSAP PSC

The WIOSAP Project Steering Committee (PSC) comprises National Focal Points, UNEP/DEPI GEF IW representatives, the Nairobi Convention, and donor organizations. The PSC provides strategic guidance on the implementation of the project and meets regularly to review annual work plans and facilitate coordination between the various implementing partners and stakeholders. The PSC also plays a critical role in monitoring and evaluating the project and ensures that the results of evaluations are used for performance improvement, accountability, and learning. On a need basis, the WIO-C, COI, and economic commissions such as SADC, the Chairs of the respective Task Forces and Working Groups, representatives of the private sector, and civil society are invited to participate in the WIOSAP PSC Meetings as observers. Given its project executing role, the Nairobi Convention Secretariat serves as the secretariat of the PSC.

In accordance with the United Nations Environment Programme Evaluation Policy, the UNEP Evaluation Office has conducted a Terminal Evaluation of the WIOSAP project. This evaluation was a critical phase in the project's life cycle, aimed at ensuring accountability for the resources invested and the results achieved while promoting opportunities for learning and operational improvements. As is standard practice, an independent external evaluation expert was selected to lead this process and has produced a Terminal Evaluation report.

The Nairobi Convention will convene the 7th Meeting of the PSC to fulfil the following objectives.

Meeting Objectives

1. To review WIOSAP Implementation Progress
2. To discuss sustainability of the project (DASHBOARD)
3. To receive the report of the Terminal Evaluation report and provide comments for its finalization

Expected Outcome

1. Strategic guidance on the closure of the WIOSAP Project
2. Sustainability opportunities for the project
3. Comments for finalization of the Terminal evaluation report

3.3 NOCAMO PSC

The Contracting Parties to the Nairobi Convention are implementing the French Facility for Global Environment (FFEM) and The French Biodiversity Agency (OFB) funded project on “Integrated Management of the Marine and Coastal Resources of the Northern Mozambique Channel (NOCAMO) Project”. The NOCAMO project is supporting various interventions across the region to address scenarios for development to maximize the opportunities for sustainable development in the Northern Mozambique Channel (NMC), based on preservation of the health of marine ecosystems as a foundation for future prosperity. In this regard, the project uses the holistic approach for Integrated Ocean Management and is assisting the countries in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 14 on conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development. The project covers the Northern Mozambique Channel (NMC), and the beneficiaries of the project are Tanzania, Mozambique, Madagascar and Comoros.

The goal of the NOCAMO Project is to maintain and enhance the Northern Mozambique Channel's high biodiversity value coral reef and associated ecosystems through effective spatial management of marine uses, in particular, the oil and gas sector, to secure a sustainable future for coastal communities and economies. The project has four integrated components, each of which is intended to achieve different outcomes:

- ❖ **Component 1:** By 2026, the institutional and knowledge foundations are laid for the application of multi-stakeholder based Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) across the NMC region,
- ❖ **Component 2:** By 2026, effective planning is promoted and best practices in the Oil & Gas sector are adopted by Governments and private sector champions, leading to mitigation of impacts of the sector to the biodiversity and ecosystem services in the NMC,
- ❖ **Component 3:** By 2026, community livelihoods and well-being are incrementally secured through the sharing and replication of best practices in community-based marine resource management,

The first Partner meeting was held on February 15th, 2023, after a long period of very low activity due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The first Project Steering Committee meeting was held later the same year on 6th December in Maputo, Mozambique. The Project Steering Committee (PSC) forms

the highest decision-making body in the project management structure. The PSC meets annually to review project progress, approve annual work plans and budgets, provide recommendations, and propose joint solutions for identified problems and challenges during the implementation of planned activities, among other duties. The overall objective of the meeting will be to provide strategic guidance for effective implementation of the activities of the NOCAMO project.

Meeting objectives

1. Review of the project progress and expenditure to date
2. Review (and approval) of Annual Work Plan and Budget for 2025

Expected Outcomes

1. Approved workplan for 2025
2. Approved budget for 2025

4. National Focal Points and Bureau Meeting from 30 – 31 January 2025

The first meeting of the Nairobi Convention Bureau and National Focal Points (NFP) will serve as a critical platform for inducting the newly elected Bureau members during COP11, alongside the NFPs, into the recently adopted Programme of Work (PoW) 2025-2028. This meeting aims to build momentum towards realizing the shared vision of sustainable management of the Western Indian Ocean's marine and coastal environment between 2025-2028. Key focus areas will include:

1. **Induction of Bureau and NFP Members:** An introduction to the roles and responsibilities of both the Bureau and NFPs.
2. **Review of COP11 Decisions:** A detailed discussion on the decisions made during COP11 and an overview of the approved PoW 2025-2028 to establish a common understanding of the expectations and responsibilities for advancing the PoW.
3. **Implementation Planning:** A focus on identifying priority action areas, setting timelines for implementation, and assessing the necessary resources to drive the delivery of the PoW 2025-2028.
4. **Coordination and Reporting Mechanisms:** A discussion of the frequency and procedures for future Bureau and NFP meetings, with an emphasis on aligning national strategies with regional objectives and fostering cross-border cooperation.

Expected Outcomes

1. Orientation of the Bureau members and NFPs
2. Strengthened Collaboration and Commitment
3. Implementation Plan Development
4. Coordination and Synergy Building