

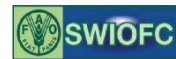
SWIOFC Nairobi Convention Partnership Meeting on the Fisheries Environment Nexus

26-28 September 2022
Mombasa, Kenya

Organized with the support of:

SWIOFC NAIROBI CONVENTION PARTNERSHIP PROJECT (SWIOFC-NC PP)

A Partnership for Marine and Coastal Governance and Fisheries Management for Sustainable Blue Growth



Enforcing Multilateral Environmental Treaties in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Countries- ACP-MEAs III Programme (Nairobi Convention)



An initiative of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States funded by the European Union



SWIOFC Nairobi Convention Partnership Meeting on the Fisheries Environment Nexus

CONCEPT

INTRODUCTION

Healthy ecosystems in the Western Indian Ocean are the foundation for sustaining and maximising the potential of the coastal and marine fisheries in the region in support of economic growth, livelihoods and food security now and in the future. Safeguarding the critical habitats that are essential for fish reproduction, growth and migration from degradation and destruction is key. How we fish has consequences, not only for the species we target, but also on the wider marine ecosystems and the services they provide us. Effective coordination, collaboration and knowledge sharing between fisheries and environmental governance systems is needed to recognise, understand and address these interactions and links. Countries in the Western Indian Ocean have committed to cooperate regionally on the protection of the coastal and marine environment through the Nairobi Convention ¹and on fisheries management through the Southwest Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission, SWIOFC².

The SWIOFC and the Nairobi Convention have initiated a partnership project, with the support of the Swedish government, to strengthen sector collaboration in the region on the areas of shared concern for both fisheries and environmental management. Hence, promoting the uptake and implementation of an Ecosystem Approach to fisheries management, ocean governance and sustainable blue growth. The partnership project shall organise a regional consultation to discuss a process that will link policy makers and key stakeholders in the fisheries and environment sectors, such as scientists, national-regional associations, practitioners, Regional Economic Communities and others (project component 3.1.3). Furthermore, identify priority issues of shared concern and define policy dialogue indicators relevant to fisheries- and marine environment-related management interventions (project component 3.1.4). Moreover, develop a strategy and support knowledge and information sharing among countries, scientific community and other key actors for inclusion of environmental issues in fisheries policy and management and vice versa, (project component 3.2.1).

As part of the “African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) Countries Capacity Building of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) Programme”, the Nairobi Convention Secretariat shall organise a consultation with experts from scientific and research institutions to identify priority issues and define policy dialogue indicators relevant to fisheries- and marine environment-related interventions.

¹ Hosted by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Convention for the protection, management, and development of the coastal and marine environment of the Western Indian Ocean. ([Nairobi Convention](#))

² [SWIOFC](#) – Southwest Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission supported by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

The SWIOFC Scientific Committee gathers regularly to consider the state of fisheries in the area of competence of the Commission and to advise on the scientific basis for possible regulatory measures to be considered for adoption by Members of the Commission.

Recognising synergies between these initiatives and the advantages of joint organisation, this first consultation meeting on fisheries environment nexus will be organised jointly with support of the Nairobi Convention-SWIOFC Partnership project and the ACP-MEAs 3 Programme back-to-back with the 11th session of the SWIOFC Scientific committee.

FISHERIES ENVIRONMENT NEXUS IN THE WESTERN INDIAN OCEAN

The Western Indian Ocean (WIO) is one of the most biologically diverse and productive systems and ranks as one of the world's richest ocean areas. Over 65 million people live within 10 km of the coast in the greater Indian Ocean region. It is home to some of the world's most diverse hotspots of marine life with hundreds of species of reef-associated fishes, molluscs, sharks and rays, turtles, sea and coastal birds, and the last viable population of dugongs. Estuarine and coastal systems ranging from mangroves, salt marshes and seagrass beds to beaches, rocky shores and reefs, coral reefs, nearshore sandy substrata, the offshore shelf and deep-sea environments are the primary assets of the region. They protect the coastline from the damaging effects of wave action and tropical storms, sequester carbon dioxide, provide habitats and shelter for many marine organisms that underpin coastal commercial, small-scale and artisanal fisheries, and support jobs and businesses through fishing, aquaculture, tourism and recreation amongst other sectors.

Human activities on the coast in the region focus largely on gleaning the available resources, resulting in intense exploitation of nearshore resources by recreational and subsistence fishers. Over 70% of the fisheries in the WIO region consist of artisanal, small-scale fisheries operating from the nearshore habitats, yet they are a major contributor to sustaining livelihoods in many coastal communities. The artisanal fisheries and related semi-industrial and industrial subsectors target molluscs, small pelagic fish, demersal fish and crustaceans (such as shrimp, lobster, crab, langoustine). Large pelagic fish such as tuna and tuna-like species are of great economic importance, constituting some 70 to 80% of offshore tuna catches in the Western Indian Ocean. Mariculture, involving farming of algae, finfish, shellfish, sea cucumbers, mangrove crab and other marine organisms, presents a significant emerging opportunity for future food security and livelihoods to complement capture fisheries.

In the recent years, the marine and coastal ecosystems and resources of the WIO region are under pressure from anthropogenic activities such as coastal development, habitat destruction, overfishing, sand mining, dredging and pollution from land and offshore sources. These pressures are compounded by climate change and a rapidly increasing coastal population, combined with a lack of effective resource management strategies, poverty and inequality among the coastal communities in the WIO region. These pressures have direct consequences to the social and economic stability of coastal communities, disproportionately affecting poor women and youth.

The ongoing and planned large-scale infrastructural developments in the Western Indian Ocean region are critical in unlocking the much-needed economic opportunities for the region. Countries of the WIO appreciated the need for inter-sectoral ecosystems-based approaches to management, including ecosystems approach to fisheries, marine spatial planning (MSP) and other area-based

management tools to promote integrated ocean governance. Development or enhancing of sustainable spatial marine management plans, capacity building in ecosystem-based management for marine and fishery resources, and economic valuation of ecosystem goods and services is an important frontier to reduce multiple anthropogenic pressures on coral reefs, mangroves and other marine ecosystems to sustain their integrity and the ecosystem services they provide.

Governing the use of marine and coastal assets, resources and services, requires information sharing and coordination between sectors, stakeholders and geographic remits. Several ministries, agencies and intuitions in each country have a role in marine and coastal resources management, spanning across sectors and mandates, from tourism to transport, mineral extraction, oil and gas, scientific research, land use planning, fisheries and environment. Policy harmonization and institutional reform for the blue economy sectors would provide a unified governance structure at the national level to enable sustainable development.

The fisheries-environment nexus is a crucial node in the wider context of ocean governance and sustainable blue economy, contributing to livelihoods and food security for coastal communities in the region and often functioning as a safety net for the most vulnerable. Empowering communities and resource users to engage in the management of coastal resources and ecosystems is recognised as fundamental to securing the future of these assets. Diverse efforts to protect and restore biodiversity and the ecosystem services that underpin the economic and social values of marine systems are underway at local level to enhance provision of ecosystem goods and services, functioning, carbon stock and sequestration.

OBJECTIVES

- To identify priority issues of shared concern in the marine fisheries-environment nexus where there is a need for further collaboration, coordination and exchange.
- To explore how processes and modalities for recognising and addressing these issues can be organised in a way that links policy makers and key stakeholders from the fisheries and environment sectors.
- To explore how knowledge and information sharing mechanisms in the marine fisheries-environment nexus can be enhanced to underpin coordinated policies and management interventions.
- To explore modalities for the possible co-development of a regional marine fisheries-environment status report.
- To inform the upcoming EAF Nansen programme.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Outcomes of this first fisheries-environment nexus consultation meeting will inform further policy dialogue and development of knowledge sharing mechanisms within the framework of the SWIOFC-Nairobi Convention partnership and related processes.

Anticipated results from the interactive meeting sessions include:

Priority issues and collaborative approaches in the fisheries-environment nexus

- Priority issues of shared concern in the fisheries-nexus identified
- Gaps and opportunities for collaboration on priority issues of shared concern identified
- Lessons learned for collaboration on priority issues of shared concern exchanged
- Recommendations for process/modalities to link policy makers, scientists and stakeholders from fisheries and environment

Knowledge and information sharing in the fisheries-environment nexus

- Outline of a possible roadmap for the co-development of a regional marine fisheries-environment status report
- Key existing mechanisms for knowledge and information sharing in the fisheries-environment nexus showcased, highlighting best practice and challenges
- Key gaps and opportunities for knowledge and information sharing in the fisheries-environment nexus identified
- Recommendations for actions and modalities to enhance knowledge and information exchange needed to address priority issues of shared concern
- Recommendations for process/modalities to engage and link policy makers, scientists and stakeholders from fisheries and environment in the generation, management and sharing of knowledge and information to inform policy and management interventions

Consultation for upcoming EAF Nansen Programme

- Representatives from environment and fisheries research institutions and experts present at the meeting are informed of the process for developing the upcoming EAF Nansen programme
- Proposals for priority outcomes, outputs and activities for the western Indian Ocean that could be incorporated into the upcoming EAF Nansen programme

PARTICIPANTS

Members and observers to the SWIOFC Scientific Committee and select experts invited by the Nairobi Convention.

VENUE

Mombasa, Kenya (conference venue tbc).

PROGRAMME/AGENDA

Monday 26 September 2022	
08:30-09:00	Arrival and registration
Session 1: Welcome and introductions	
09:00-10:30	Opening and introductory presentation to the meeting context, objectives, expected outputs and programme.
10:30-11:00	<i>Health break</i>
11:00-13:00	<p>Session 2: Introduction to the fisheries-environment nexus</p> <p>Introductory presentations and plenary discussion to the fisheries-environment nexus in the context of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concepts, tools and processes for ocean governance • Coastal and marine environment and fisheries management in the WIO – state of play and interactions
13:00-14:00	<i>Lunch break</i>
Session 3: Priority issues and collaborative approaches in the fisheries-environment nexus	
14:00-15:30	<p>Thematic interactive sessions with introductory presentations and group discussions to explore priority issues and inter-sectoral collaboration in practice in the fisheries-environment nexus specifically in context of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Mitigating fisheries impacts on vulnerable species and critical habitats</u>
15:30-16:00	<i>Health break</i>
16:00-17:00	Continuation of session 3 – plenary discussion on fisheries-environment collaboration for mitigating fisheries impacts on vulnerable species and critical habitats.
Tuesday 27 September 2022	
08:30-09:00	Arrival and registration
09:00-11:00	<p>Thematic interactive sessions with introductory presentations and group discussions to explore priority issues and inter-sectoral collaboration in practice in the fisheries-environment nexus specifically in context of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Protecting and restoring critical habitats essential for marine fisheries production</u>
11:00-11:30	<i>Health break</i>
11:30-13:00	Continuation of session 3 – plenary discussion on fisheries-environment collaboration for protecting and restoring critical habitats essential for marine fisheries production.
13:00-14:00	<i>Lunch break</i>

14:00-15:30	Thematic interactive sessions with introductory presentations and group discussions to explore priority issues and inter-sectoral collaboration in practice in the fisheries-environment nexus specifically in context of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Coastal communities' livelihoods, resilience and stewardship</u>
15:30-16:00	Health break
16:00-17:00	Plenary discussion on fisheries-environment collaboration for supporting coastal communities' livelihoods, resilience and stewardship.
Wednesday 28 September 2022	
08:30-09:00	Arrival and registration
09:00-11:00	Session 4: Knowledge and information sharing in the fisheries-environment nexus Presentations and group discussions on needs, priorities and arrangements for knowledge and information sharing to underpin implementation of an ecosystem approach in the fisheries-environment nexus, focussing on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status assessments to inform policies on coastal and marine management • Information and analyses for policy implementation and adaptive management • Addressing priority issues of shared concern identified in previous session
11:00-11:30	Health break
11:30-12:30	Plenary presentation of group results and discussions on knowledge and information sharing in the fisheries-environment nexus.
Session 5: Conclusions and closure	
12:30-13:00	Conclusion Summary of conclusions from the meeting, recommendations and follow up actions. Closure of the meeting.
13:00-14:00	Lunch break
14:00-17:00	Separate meeting: Regional consultation for the preparation of phase VI of the EAF-Nansen programme (2023-2028) See separate concept and programme