



## **CONCEPT NOTE**

### **Consultation workshop for the development of Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) vision and roadmap for the Northern Mozambique Channel (NMC) region**

**Hotel Cardoso, Maputo Mozambique**

**14th - 15th May 2024**

#### **1. Context and rationale**

The Western Indian Ocean (WIO) region is currently embarking on several efforts to promote sustainable blue economy, integrated ocean governance and marine spatial planning (MSP). These have been triggered and are underpinned by various African Union (AU) strategies, related conventions (such as AU Agenda 2063, the African Integrated Maritime Strategy (AIMS) 2050), and the recent decisions of the Nairobi Convention (NC) and the commitments of WIO countries on these subjects. The use of MSP is considered an important tool to achieve sustainability, inclusiveness and equity in all sectors of the coastal and marine domain. The Nairobi Convention developed the WIO regional MSP strategy with the aim of providing a coherent framework for countries and harmonizing national MSP processes, while helping the region address challenges and/or cross-border and cross-sectoral MSP issues. Such an endeavour will also help encourage support from donors and stakeholders and is important in fostering better coordination in the region.

The Northern Mozambique Channel (NMC) – a recognised ecologically or biologically area of significant importance – has long been a haven for marine and coastal biodiversity. The potential of the NMC as a transboundary site for regional conservation was first identified by experts during a regional workshop organized through the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) in November 2009, in Antananarivo, Madagascar. Such transboundary networking of management areas would build on individual sites already in place and under multiple different management entities and authorities. In 2012, an assessment by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre Marine Programme identified the NMC as the highest priority region meeting the design criteria for a World Heritage Site, comprising multiple sites of potential outstanding Universal Value. Also in 2012, the NMC was described as meeting the criteria for Ecologically or Biologically Significant Areas (EBSAs) under the Convention on Biological Diversity. Here, mangroves and seagrass beds act as nurseries for a wide range of fish species, is one of the most



biodiverse coral reef area with some of the world’s most climate-resilient coral species present, and deeper offshore currents, provide a refuge for whale sharks, manta rays, dugong and marine turtles. The area is also home to about 10 million of people who are highly dependent on nature for their livelihoods, which provides food, building materials, income from tourism and protection against climate-related impacts such as storm surges. The growing demand for fisheries resources and the discovery of offshore oil, gas and mining reserves in recent years has created the need for coastal governments of countries part of the NMC to urgently develop legislation and policies to guide how their countries will seize the economic opportunities inherent in the region’s rapidly growing blue economy in a way that benefits all parties. Such policies will need to balance the short-term promise of exploiting oil and gas reserves with long-term development goals and the needs of coastal residents – whose number is expected to double by 2040 and who rely heavily on the food, livelihood and other resources that a healthy ocean can provide. Compounding the challenge is the loss of local fish stocks to distant fishing nations and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

Collaborative work in the region has drawn on the principles of transformative integrated ocean governance to ensure that all stakeholders have a voice in policy dialogues that result in commonly agreed decisions pertaining to blue resources, with the ultimate aim of ensuring that the inherent value of the Northern Mozambique Channel is optimised for the benefit of the WIO and the society as a whole. For this reason, it has been deemed crucial to organize a workshop to develop a regional MSP vision and roadmap for the NMC region so as to ensure coherence with existing frameworks and strategies for the WIO endorsed by the Nairobi Convention. Holding this workshop also builds on previous decisions taken by the 8th and 9th Conference of Parties at the Nairobi Convention through Decision CP8/6(b) and Decision CP9/7(b) on the Northern Mozambique Channel (NMC) integrated ocean management approach. These decisions identified the need for trans-boundary protection and highlighted the NMC as a good example of integrated ocean management approach.

## **2. Objectives**

The objectives of the workshop are:

- To discuss and agree on a common vision for the regional MSP of the NMC region;
- To collect and integrate recommendations for a MSP roadmap from the NMC countries and relevant stakeholders across the region;

- To develop a draft roadmap for the implementation of MSP in the NMC region based on the existing WIO MSP framework.

### **3. Expected outcomes**

At the end of this workshop, it is expected to have:

- An agreed common vision for the regional MSP of the NMC region
- Practical recommendations from participating stakeholders
- Draft roadmap for implementing a MSP in the NMC
- Defined next steps

### **4. Methodology**

Using a participatory workshop approach, facilitated by consultants from the Nelson Mandela University, allowing for collaborative visioning and design of the draft roadmap.

### **5. Participants**

The participation of representatives from entities concerned by Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) in the NMC region is expected during this workshop:

- Nairobi Convention Secretariat
- Project Focal Points from Mozambique, Tanzania, Madagascar and Comoros
- Members of the MSP Technical Working Group (TWG) in the NMC region
- Members of the MSP national coordinators in the NMC region
- Regional bodies: WIOMSA, African Union-IBAR
- Non-governmental organisations: WWF, WCS, TNC, CI, CORDIO etc.
- Donors: FFEM, OFB

### **6. Venue**

The workshop will be held at Hotel Cardoso 707 Avenida dos Mártires de Mueda, Maputo, Mozambique. Some participants will have the opportunity to attend online.