

Proposed Strategic Framework for Marine Water Quality Management in the Western Indian Ocean

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Abstract

In response to the Contracting Parties urging the Nairobi Convention Secretariat to establish a strategic framework for marine water quality management (MWQM) in the WIO region, led by the Regional Task Force on Water Quality the framework has been developed. The framework will ultimately support and trigger development of national level management in countries of the region to ensure coordinated and consistent monitoring and reporting of marine pollution matters. Five basic principles are recommended for the WIO region to provide broad direction within which to position a strategic framework MWQM; 1) Pollution prevention, waste minimisation and precautionary approach 2) Receiving water quality objectives approach 3) Integrated, adaptive assessment approach 4) Polluter pays principle 5) Participatory approach.

Objectives setting in the strategic framework should consider aquatic ecosystem functionality and key beneficial uses, guidelines for Environmental Quality Objectives and Targets (EQOs and EQTs) & identification of potential marine pollution sources. During implementation of the strategic framework, design & implementation of monitoring and evaluation programmes to test for compliance and inform management intervention & action is critical. The following recommendations are proposed to the contracting parties for consideration of implementation of the Strategic Framework for MWQM in the region.

- a) Consider adopting as appropriate the framework for MWQM including guidelines for developing EQOs and EQTs
- b) National MWQM Task Forces be established at national level to feed into the Regional Task Force
- c) Established National MWQM Task Force to facilitate the adoption and implementation of proposed Strategic Framework for MWQM
- d) Established National MWQM Task Forces to compile National level status reports, to feed into overarching regional status reports coordinated by the Regional Task Force, to inform various regional processes such as the WIO State-of-Coast reporting.
- e) The NC Secretariat to work with partners to support capacity building programmes in support of the effective implementation of the Strategic Framework for MWQM (including Monitoring) and associated Guidelines on EQOs and EQTs.

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