

The role of Forum of Academic and Research Institutions (FARI)

WIOMSA

Background

- Established during the Fourth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Nairobi Convention held in Antananarivo, Madagascar in July 2004.
 - the Secretariat of the convention (UNEP) was directed to facilitate the establishment of a network of academic and research institutions in the Convention area in collaboration with other organizations.
 - The Secretariat was also directed to “take the offer made by WIOMSA to serve as the Secretariat of such a network”.

- In 2015 (COP 8)
 - Decision 8/12 *urged* Contracting Parties to the Nairobi Convention to promote science to policy interface in order to enhance informed decision making.
 - It also urged the Parties to *agree* to establish a dialogue platform to strengthen the links between science, policy and action and to mandate the FARI to act as the technical and advisory body of the platform.

Objectives

- To communicate, collaborate and co-operate in support of marine and coastal research that contributes towards the wise use of marine and coastal resources and the provision of sustainable opportunities for people of the Western Indian Ocean region, in a healthy environment,
- To advise the Nairobi Convention and its Contracting Parties, in the assessment, monitoring and science-based management of marine and coastal environment of the Western Indian Ocean region.

FARI provides a framework for:

- **Sharing of information** between institutions, the Nairobi Convention and other regional processes;
- **Offering scientific and technical advice** on priorities for management, assessment and information dissemination to the regional initiatives;
- **Enhancing cooperation** among universities and research institutions in the region;
- **Identifying opportunities** for collaborative research;
- **Serving as pressure point** for enforcing sustainable utilization of coastal and marine resources.

Roles and Responsibilities

- Provide peer review of documents produced from the Work Programme of the Nairobi Convention.
- Identify relevant and emerging fields of *research* that require remedial or policy action.
- Highlight urgent or emerging *issues* arising from science that require management action.
- Promote the application of new technologies and innovative research approaches.
- Provide expert technical support in the peer review of development projects, management decisions and policies.

Roles and Responsibilities

- Facilitate the sharing and exchange of data and information between partners and stakeholders.
- Stimulate high quality science by facilitating the undertaking of co-operative national, regional and international scientific research programmes.
- Contribute to capacity and career development, inter alia, through benchmarking and facilitating training opportunities, including for young scientists.

Roles and Responsibilities

- Contribute to the policy and practice of ethics in research in marine science, by acting as honest brokers and through science advocacy.
- Advocate for good practice in the protection of intellectual property rights (IPR) and showcasing where research has been successfully commercialised as a result of effective management of IPR.
- Provide support to the preparation of the Nairobi Convention's Work Programme and reviewing, debating and assessing the activities undertaken by, or under, the auspices of the Nairobi Convention.

Membership

- Membership is institutional and different experts of a member institution can attend the meetings of the FARI depending on the issue or issues under discussion. The invitation letter to any FARI meeting shall be addressed to the Head of the Institution and shall be explicit about the expertise required.
- Academic and research institutions will submit a full list of all relevant staff and their profiles through an application form from WIOMSA as the Secretariat of FARI.

Membership is open to:

- Research institutions in countries that are Contracting Parties to the Nairobi Convention and working in the coastal and marine sector in the Western Indian Ocean (WIO) region.
- Academic institutions in countries that are Contracting Parties to the Nairobi Convention and that have departments with relevant expertise in the assessment and management of the coastal and marine sector in the WIO region.
- Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) registered in any of the Contracting Parties country that is a member of WIOMSA and is working in the coastal and marine sector in the WIO region may apply for membership following endorsement by the Nairobi Convention's National Focal Point Institution.

Current Members

- KMFRI
- Pwani University
- Nairobi University
- Technical University of Mombasa
- Institute of Marine Science, Zanzibar
- State University of Zanzibar
- School of Aquatic Sciences & Fisheries Technology, University of Dar es Salaam
- ORI
- TAFIRI

Current Members

- IRD
- University of Seychelles (Blue Economy Research Institute)
- IIP Mozambique
- Eduardo Mondlane University
- Cape Peninsula University of Technology

Major achievements

WIO-LaB/WIO SAP

- Provided technical support to the WIO-LaB project – Technical Working group membership
- The review and validation of the WIO-LaB Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) was undertaken by a Scientific and Technical Review Committee established within the framework of FARI
- Participated in the preparation of the SAP
- Recognized as an important mechanism for coordination of the implementation of the SAP
- The review and validation of the State of the Coast Report, MPA Outlook and Manuals

ASLME/SAPPHIRE

- The review and validation of the Marine Ecosystems Diagnostic Analysis (MEDA) for eight countries
- The review and validation of the updated Marine Ecosystems Diagnostic Analysis (MEDA) for nine countries

Issues for discussion

The FARI Meeting held in December 2017 raised a number of issues that were captured in the Revised Terms of Reference including:

- **The membership to FARI :** Membership is institutional and open to different experts of a member institution
- **Organizational structures of the Forum.** Organizational structures specified in the TORs should be operationalized. These include- recruitment of a part-time coordinator of FARI that can be based at WIOMSA or Nairobi Convention or one of the FARI member institutions; election of a chairperson and appointment of the Executive Management Board
- **Establishment of national structures.** These include: FARI National Focal Points and National FARI Chapters
- **Formalization of the FARI contribution to the Nairobi Convention structures and its initiatives.** These include: FARI's role in the Science to Policy Platform and its contribution to initiatives such as WIO SAP, SAPPHIRE etc