

**The ongoing role of the Nairobi Convention in delivering well-connected and effective systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures through capacity development, networking and knowledge management, in turn supporting implementation and reporting on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.**

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**Abstract**

The Western Indian Ocean (WIO) coastal and marine resources are essential for livelihoods, island sustainability, and economic stability, from local to national levels. The Nairobi Convention promotes the effective management, sustainable use, and protection of the marine and coastal environment of the WIO region as a core objective under a dedicated theme on Coastal Management. This includes development and implementation of ecosystem-based management programmes and activities that seek to reduce or prevent degradation of the coastal and marine environment and strengthen functioning and resilience of marine ecosystems. However, at the same time, challenges remain in scaling-up success. Most notably there are significant difficulties in sustaining resources and financing, technical capacities, in securing policy gains beyond pilot projects, and in matching governance models to the context and practicalities of the region. The objectives of many protected and conserved areas remain poorly defined and even out of context with the rapidly changing climate and coastal ecosystem dynamics. Additionally, systems of protected and conserved areas can lack vitality to adapt to the demands of globalization and geo-political shifts in demography, economics, and culture. Key recommendations provided include:

- Enable more diverse, inclusive and robust governance frameworks that support *effectiveness* of protected and conserved areas, including ‘other effective area-based conservation measures’ (OECM).
- Enact policies and programmes that promote region-wide scale and integration of systems and networks of effective protected and conserved areas into marine spatial planning, climate change adaptation programmes and other nature-based solutions for ecosystem protection and restoration, including regional and transboundary processes as well as for the development of a blue economy.
- Align networks and expert commitments, such as through WIOMSA, IUCN and the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas, to mentor agencies and site managers, communities and their representatives, in achieving and maintaining standards for effectiveness.

Encourage Parties to adopt ‘next generation’ tools for measuring and reporting effectiveness, including good governance and management effectiveness. In doing so, support WIOMSA to adapt the IUCN Green List Sustainability Standard and criteria for the WIO region, to include regionally defined, locally applicable indicators and evidence.