

# Nairobi Convention Integrated Programme

## Implementation of the Western Indian Ocean Strategic Action Programme to support a sustainable and inclusive regional Blue Economy

### A Summary

The Western Indian Ocean (WIO) region, comprising Comoros, France (Réunion), Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, and Tanzania, is characterized by its rich biodiversity and vital marine and coastal ecosystems. These countries are part of the Nairobi Convention, which aims to protect, manage, and develop the marine and coastal environment. The Nairobi Convention, a UNEP-administered Regional Seas Programme, provides a legal framework for the coordination of its Contracting Parties in protecting, managing, and developing the coastal and marine environment of the WIO). Guided by three protocols addressing pollution from land-based sources, emergencies, and habitat protection, the Convention has facilitated significant regional initiatives. These initiatives, including two Strategic Action Programmes (SAPs) supported by the GEF, have partially been implemented through the WIOSAP and SAPPHERE projects. Key interventions have focused on ecosystem restoration, climate change, marine spatial planning, water quality improvement, and ocean governance.

At the 9th Meeting of the Contracting Parties – COP 9 to the Nairobi Convention in 2018, the need for an integrated regional programme was identified; to coordinate future actions and fully implement the existing SAPs and the 2016 Climate Change Strategy for the Nairobi Convention. This proposed integrated programme addresses issues such as ocean governance, land-based pollution, coastal and marine ecosystem management, and climate change. As per the updated combined 2022 Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA), and SAP under preparation, the programme will build on the progress made under the WIOSAP and SAPPHERE projects, focusing on replicating best practices

and addressing emerging issues. In addition, innovative tools such as ocean accounting, area-based planning, and approaches that incorporate a circular economy are promoted throughout the programme. The proposed programme's conceptual framework aligns with global commitments like Agenda 2030, the Paris Agreement, and the Decade of Ocean Science, as well as the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) and the recently finalized High Seas Treaty. The framework was developed through consultative processes with regional experts and Contracting Parties.



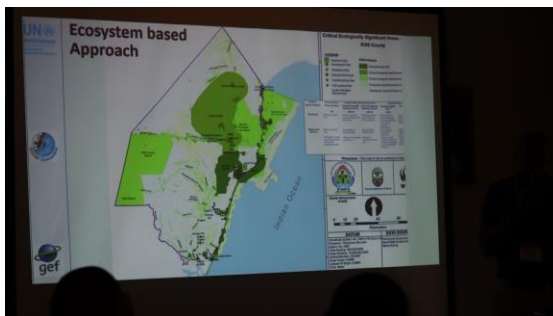
## Key Components of the Regional Integrated Programme

### I. Improved Integrated Ocean Governance (US\$30M)

The *Integrated Ocean Governance* component aims to enhance ocean, coastal, and resource management in the WIO region through comprehensive policy, legislative, and institutional reforms. This effort is guided by the Regional Ocean Governance Strategy (ROGS) and the Nairobi Convention's Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Protocol. Key interventions include the operationalization of ROGS and the ICZM Protocol at both regional and national levels, the development of supportive legal frameworks, and the strengthening of capacity among stakeholders. The outcomes include the establishment of harmonized and operational governance structures, the adoption of national ocean governance strategies aligned with regional goals, and the creation of financing mechanisms to support a sustainable blue economy.

## ii. Improved Area-based Planning (US\$20M)

The *Area-Based Planning* component focuses on improving integrated ocean management in the WIO region through ecosystem-based approaches. It emphasizes the utilization of the regional Marine Spatial Plan (MSP) to support sustainable blue economies and livelihoods. Key initiatives include the domestication of the Regional MSP Strategy, increasing stakeholder engagement, and building capacities through training programmes. Additionally, the component addresses reducing human use conflicts through consistent zonation and effective management of marine areas. It promotes the adoption of conflict analysis tools and ensures stakeholder involvement in decision-making processes. At sub-regional, national, and local levels, the component seeks to harmonize Marine Spatial Plans with the regional strategy, fostering a network of area-based management tools (ABMTs) like Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs). The component also emphasizes the development and implementation of Decision Support Tools (DSTs) to manage the land-sea interface, enhancing the integration of regional and national planning efforts.



## iii. Improved Environmental Quality (US\$20M)

The *Environmental Quality* component focuses on improving water and sediment quality in the WIO region through a source-to-sea (S2S) approach and innovative techniques. It aims to reduce marine pollution from land and sea-based sources by creating conducive legislative environments, developing and implementing national frameworks and plans for Coastal and Marine Water

Quality Management (C&MWQM). Key interventions would include operational monitoring programmes, adoption of sustainable port development practices, and innovations like nature-based and circular economy solutions. The component also promotes regional collaboration, engaging the private sector, and enhancing emergency preparedness for oil spills, supporting a comprehensive response to marine pollution.

Furthermore, the component addresses marine litter reduction by finalizing and implementing a Regional Marine Litter Action Plan and operational monitoring programmes for plastic waste, leveraging harmonized methodologies. The component recommends educational and awareness programmes to engage society in combating marine pollution and litter. Additionally, integrated water resource management is emphasized to improve river basin management.

## iv. Improved Biodiversity Conservation (US\$35M)



The *Biodiversity Conservation* component focuses on enhancing ecosystem health and community livelihoods through habitat management, restoration, and the implementation of MPAs and OECMs, including Locally Managed Marine Areas (LMMAs). Key interventions include mapping degraded areas for targeted restoration, using proven restoration techniques, and supporting community livelihoods through nature-based solutions like beekeeping and mariculture, as well as investigating the opportunities for benefitting from blue carbon schemes.

The component also emphasizes biodiversity protection by increasing the spatial coverage and management effectiveness of MPAs and OECMs, with a goal of achieving the GBF 30/30 targets through policy reforms, biodiversity

monitoring, and the establishment of transboundary conservation areas (e.g., between Kenya and Tanzania). Additionally, the component focuses on the protection of biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ) by establishing regional MPAs that maintain biological connectivity between areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ) and national waters. This includes developing a marine connectivity conservation plan, capacity building, and creating a database on BBNJ, with countries encouraged to sign and ratify relevant agreements.

## v. Improved Regional Coordination, Collaboration, and Knowledge Management (US\$15M)

Component 5 focuses on *improving regional coordination, collaboration, and knowledge management*. Despite positive environmental impact in the region, the Convention faces challenges such as insufficient funding, inadequate coordination, and limited private sector involvement. The coordination aspect involves strengthening the Convention's structures and ensuring predictable financing, though this remains a challenge due to inconsistent contributions from Contracting Parties. Regional collaboration is essential for the success of the Convention's work programmes, requiring effective partnerships across governments, civil society, communities, development partners and the private sector, with a growing emphasis on political engagement due to increasing environmental threats. Knowledge management is crucial for accessible and understandable information on the coastal and marine environment, which supports decision-making and public awareness. The Convention has established a clearinghouse mechanism to consolidate regional data, with plans to further develop it through a regional Information Management Strategy.

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## The Draft Western Indian Ocean Regional Ocean Governance Strategy

### A Summary

The development of the Western Indian Ocean Regional Ocean Governance Strategy (ROGS) was mandated by the decisions of African Environment Ministers (AMCEN) and the Nairobi Convention Conference of Parties. This strategy aims to enhance regional cooperation on ocean activities through a participatory process, involving representatives from various stakeholders, including Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the Indian Ocean Commission, private sector, and civil society.

The ROGS is designed to address environmental, social, and economic targets in the region. The strategy, to be adopted at COP11, aligns with the principles of the African Union, the UN Charter, the Law of the Sea Convention, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 14 on marine life.

The ROGS is structured around four key clusters: Maritime Security, Blue Economy, Environment and Natural Resources, and Knowledge Management and Science. Each cluster identifies regional priorities and outlines actions required to achieve these goals, emphasizing the need for enhanced regional cooperation, leadership, and financing. The strategy also includes mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating progress through an ocean financing and accounting framework, which will help in facilitating and tracking regional investments and the effectiveness of ocean governance.

The ROGS has been developed through a participatory process, based largely on the work of a regional Task Force (TF). The Task Force members were appointed by the Contracting Parties to the Convention, the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) and by the African Union (AU). The task force was complimented by representatives of the private sector and other regional experts co-opted by the Task Force.

The Task Force members participated in numerous

Technical Dialogues, workshops, training sessions and forums. In total, about a thousand WIO stakeholders participated in the process. The outcomes of these dialogues informed and guided the ROGS.

The Convention has convened a Roundtable during the COP 11 to engage development partners to appreciate past and ongoing support to the Convention and discussions on possible future resourcing of this strategic programme.