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Nairobi Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Western Indian Ocean Region

Contracting Parties

Eleventh meeting

20-22 August 2024

Progress in the implementation of the Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Western Indian Ocean Region

Report of the Executive Director

A. The Global and Regional Perspective

1. The global Covid-19 pandemic necessitated a virtual Conference of Parties for the Nairobi Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Western Indian Ocean Region in November 2021. The tenth Conference of Parties (COP10) delved into the achievements made by each Contracting Party to the Convention amidst the constraints of the pandemic. COP10 capitalized on opportunities to renew commitments to a multilateral process for timely and effective actions to protect, develop, and manage the Western Indian Ocean, including the strengthening of partnerships to boost recovery and resilience after the COVID-19 outbreak. The Parties made commendable progress in the implementation of the Convention and, further, in the strengthening of the Convention as a platform for promoting synergies and coordinating implementation of regional initiatives.

2. The Western Indian Ocean (WIO) region, comprising the ten countries of Comoros, France (Reunion), Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, and Tanzania has a total coastline of approximately 15,000 km and a continental shelf of some 450,000 km². The WIO region is renowned for the richness of its marine biodiversity, especially that associated with the region's widespread coral reef systems. The mangroves, seagrasses, rocky and sandy shorelines with associated dune systems and coastal forests, and the deep-sea features such as seamounts, ridges and abyssal plains contribute substantially to the biodiversity of the region. The innumerable islets and atolls scattered across the WIO support extraordinary biodiversity, including vast numbers of often rare, endemic and endangered marine species.

3. The unique biodiversity plays an essential role in water quality regulation, coastal protection, carbon fixation and storage, and increased resilience from climate change as well as providing feeding, breeding or nursery grounds of species of commercial interest for fisheries and endangered or threatened species. The rich marine biodiversity supports burgeoning coastal populations through the provision of a variety of marine resources for economic growth. The region supports an estimated population of 220,000 million people of which over 60,000 million people live

within 100km of the shoreline. The annual “Gross Marine Product” of the WIO region (equivalent to the Gross Domestic Product of a country) is at least US\$ 20.8 billion, showing the substantial economic value of coastal and marine resources in the WIO.

4. The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) that was adopted in December 2022 observed that biodiversity was fundamental to human well-being and a healthy planet. It underpins virtually every part of our lives; we depend on it for food, medicine, energy, clean air and water, security from natural disasters as well as recreation and cultural inspiration, among others. The monitoring framework of the GBF cites coral, algae and fish variables as complementary indicators supporting the calculation of headline indicators, in particular ‘ecosystem extent’. Almost all the 23 targets of the GBF are important in the Western Indian Ocean particularly towards effectively protecting 30% of all ecosystems, placing 100% of marine areas under biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning, supporting restoration of degraded habitats and promoting sustainable use across 100% of areas outside of protected areas, through fisheries, tourism, and other economic sectors.

5. The September 2022 African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) adopted a series of decisions to tackle climate change, the loss of nature, pollution and waste, including the elimination of open dumping and burning of waste towards guaranteeing the health and well-being of Africa’s people. AMCEN recognised the special needs and circumstances of Africa under the 2015 Paris Agreement and the need to fulfil financial commitments to the Paris Agreement on climate change, including on ‘loss and damage’ fund to cushion climate vulnerable countries from the consequences of climate change. Of the 10 countries in the Western Indian Ocean, four are Small Island Developing Countries. Economically, five countries are classified Least Developed Countries by the 2023 United Nations report and five are classified as Highly Indebted Poor Countries by the World Bank and IMF. The region is generally classified as highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

6. Impacts of Climate change in the WIO are already presenting mounting challenges to the sustainable development of the region as evidenced by widespread coral reef bleaching, prolonged droughts, sea level rise and flooding/sedimentation. Recent floods in some countries of the region compounded by the impacts of Cyclone Hidaya caused widespread destruction to infrastructure and loss of human lives with implications on the development of impacted countries in terms of retarded economic growth. The WIO region is projected to experience the largest impacts on economic growth due to climate change, including risks related to health, livelihoods, food security, water supply, human security and slow realization of respective national development targets including SDGs. WIO economies continue to make efforts to transition towards sustainable Blue Economy regimes to reduce pressures on fragile coastal and marine resources, combined with the implementation of ecosystem-based adaptation measures designed to remedy the existing vulnerabilities and pre-empt future climate change impacts. The establishment of a Loss and Damage Fund for climate vulnerable developing countries hit hard by floods, droughts and other climate disasters was a historical decision of the 27th United Nations Climate Conference (COP27). The fund which became operational during COP28 in December 2023 will empower several WIO countries to enhance their adaptive capacity and promote sustainable alternatives for building resilience against climate threats.

7. UNEP’s Regional Seas Programme (RSP) was launched in 1974 in the wake of the 1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment held in Stockholm. It remains one of UNEP’s most significant achievements and operates in 18 geographical regions: Mediterranean Sea; West, Central and Southern Africa; Wider Caribbean; Western Indian Ocean; East Asian Seas; Northwest Pacific; Caspian Sea; Southeast Pacific; Red Sea and Gulf of Aden; South Pacific; Black Sea; Northeast Pacific; South Asian Seas; Baltic Sea; North-East Atlantic; Antarctic Ocean; and Arctic Ocean. The aim of the RSP is to mainstream the conservation and sustainable use of oceans more effectively into policies and programmes, harmonize methodologies for tracking progress, and foster an integrated response to combat the ecological, climate, pollution, and health crisis for achieving long-term health of the ocean, as well as the people who rely on the ocean for subsistence or otherwise. The RSP expects to achieve a diverse, resilient, and pollution-free ocean that supports equitable sustainable livelihoods. This includes climate stability, living in harmony with nature, ocean sustainability and operating within planetary boundaries. At the sixth United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-6) on 29 February 2024, UNEP’s Regional Seas Programme celebrated 50 years of ocean governance

– a journey that demonstrated the value of regional approach to environmental action towards global environmental objectives and targets.

8. The Regional Seas Programme provides overall coordination and facilitation of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans (RSCAP) and in so doing connects the programme to the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA). The annual global meeting of the RSCAP in the Barbados in November 2023 provided a common action for implementation of UNEP's Regional Seas Strategic Directions 2022-2025 and a platform for adoption of global strategies for cooperation. Building upon the outcomes of the 22nd annual RSCAP meeting held in the Seychelles in May 2022, the meeting provided a forum for channelling of UNEP's programmatic support to the RSCAP, particularly in areas complementary to the UNEP's Programme of Work. A notable achievement of the RSCAP November 2023 meeting was on the strengthening of linkages between the RSCAP and other relevant global conventions and agreements, including on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ) under the Convention on the Law of the Sea; implementation of the four goals for 2050 and the 23 targets for 2030 of the Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework under the Convention on Biological Diversity; and the support of the RSCAP to the ongoing intergovernmental negotiations on a Plastics Treaty. The role of the RSCAP in advancing blue economy both at the national and at the regional scale provided an opportunity to share experiences on ocean governance, blue economy, ocean financing and offered a special attention to Small Islands Developing States and Least Developing Countries of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans.

9. Eighty per cent of all plastic waste currently ends up in the oceans, threatening the ecosystems of the ocean and the people who rely on it. The ongoing global negotiations on a instrument to end plastic pollution has set the bar high towards an ambitious, well-designed and inclusive global instrument to spurs incentives for innovation. The negotiations so far highlighted the urgency in addressing the environmental and health risks posed by both plastics and hazardous chemicals to human health and the marine environment and the need for a business transformation that considers the specific needs and circumstances of different countries, supported by smart legislation and fiscal policies. The Western Indian Ocean (WIO) countries reported advances in combating marine pollution from plastics, associated chemicals, and wastes during the December 2023 Seychelles meeting on effective management of plastics and their chemicals.

10. The Contracting Parties in partnership with non-State entities continued to promote strong linkages between science and policy for evidence-based decision-making as well as for providing timely technical advice and policy recommendations. The December 2023 Science–Policy dialogue detailed topical emerging scientific findings for improved ocean governance, and essential synergies for addressing global and regional agreements, strategies and frameworks. The meeting facilitated formulation of policy recommendations for consideration by the Conference of Parties to the Nairobi Convention, identified key areas where countries should invest in to achieve global targets in support of a sustainable blue economy, and strengthening of partnerships between technical experts and policy makers. The meeting highlighted the importance of cooperation and coordinated approaches to ecosystems-based management and conservation of the marine and coastal environment in the Western Indian Ocean. The focus of the Nairobi Convention in the coming years would accelerate ocean governance-decision making, the equipping of institutions, promoting practices that shape decisions and actions with the most relevant scientific information, and providing an effective feedback loop for adaptive governance process.

11. A landmark gathering of the world's top decision-making body on the environment at the sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-6) from 26 February to 1 March 2024, adopted 15 resolutions aimed at addressing some of the planet's most-pressing environmental challenges. The UNEP/EA.6/Res.15 resolution was on strengthening ocean efforts to tackle climate change, marine biodiversity loss and pollution. It encouraged Member States to adopt, ratify or implement the regional seas conventions, protocols and action plans for the protection and conservation of the marine and coastal environment; including the signing and ratifying of the BBNJ Treaty; engagement to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment; efforts to tackle ocean acidification and minimize its impacts; support to Member States on assessment of marine biodiversity within areas under national jurisdiction and regional seas conventions and action plans; and provision of technical support to

Member States for the development of marine and coastal planning and management tools within national jurisdiction, in particular marine protected areas, integrated coastal zone management and marine spatial planning.

The secretariats of the regional seas conventions and action plans were invited, under UNEP/EA.6/Res.15 resolution to support their contracting parties in the ocean and climate change dialogue to consider how to strengthen ocean-based adaptation and mitigation action; implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework; and to implement joint strategies and work on quality status assessments and monitoring programmes to address environmental challenges. The secretariats were also called upon to develop and present joint voluntary actions for the regional seas covered by the relevant convention at the third United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 to be held in France in June 2025; and to support contracting Parties in the negotiations on an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution. Countries were also called upon to strengthen the ocean science-policy interface by promoting research, collaboration and the communication of scientific knowledge to policymakers, private-sector actors and civil society.

B. Marine and coastal biodiversity: threats and response measures

12. The geographic region of the Western Indian Ocean (WIO) comprises the African continental coast from eastern Somalia (excluding Socotra Island) to the tip of South Africa, and east to the Chagos Archipelago and Mascarene Plateau. The vastness of the WIO and its complex oceanographic dynamic create a biophysical mosaic of coastal and offshore environments that spread from temperate to tropical habitats of diverse nature. The region encompasses rich stretches of coast along the mainland countries of Somalia, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique and South Africa, and vast oceanic areas surrounding the island states of Madagascar, Seychelles, Comoros, Mauritius, and the French Territories.

13. The north of the WIO is strongly influenced by the monsoon regime of the Arabian Sea, which pulses seasonally and triggers coastal upwelling and associated biological productivity. In the central WIO, the main equatorial current meets the African continent and splits into two major currents along the continental margins to the north and south. In the Mozambican Channel, the current move southward through complex systems of gyres that meet the Agulhas Current and transports energy to higher latitudes in the southern hemisphere.

14. The tropical Indian Ocean forms one of the major parts of the largest warm pool on Earth and plays a crucial role in influencing the climate system at regional and global scales. The tropical WIO is warming at a faster rate than any other in the world's ocean with expected changes in biological composition in favour of more heat-resistant organisms and changes in the trophic interactions of biological communities. Further ramifications of climate change are due to sea level rise, ocean acidification, changes in oceanic and nearshore circulations. Increased intensity and frequency of storms in the WIO has been and reported leading to increased coastal erosion and changes in sediment dynamics.

15. Based largely on ocean study, productivity of fishing areas, oceanographic processes, management, and governance, there are two major marine ecosystems in the Western Indian Ocean – the Somalia current large marine ecosystem and the Agulhas current large marine ecosystem. These ecosystems are characterized by relatively high biodiversity and high species endemism, as evidenced by their rich and complex populations of marine plant and animal species. Major coastal tropical habitats flourish in the region, such as mangroves, seagrasses and coral reefs. These habitats, particularly in coastal zones with significant runoff, intermingle and form complex seascape mosaics that act as integrated ecological units. Throughout the region, rocky outcrops and sedimentary formations create a diversity of coastal configurations, including extensive sand dune systems on the southern area between Mozambique and eastern South Africa. While oceanic processes do not obey political or other artificial man-made boundaries, integrated transboundary approaches are needed to reach effective regional scale management in the WIO.

16. The WIO region has a diverse assemblage of mangrove forests, seagrass beds and salt marshes, over 350 species of corals and over 2,200 species of fish, including rare and endangered species such as the dugong, coelacanths, marine turtles, sharks, marine birds. The total area of

mangroves in the Western Indian Ocean is estimated to be 1 million hectares representing about 5% of the global mangrove coverage. The best developed mangroves in the region are found in the deltas of Rufiji River (Tanzania), Tana River (Kenya), Zambezi and Limpopo Rivers (Mozambique) and along the west coast of Madagascar. Towards South Africa the mangroves progressively become residual and give place to temperate habitats such as salt marshes.

17. Mangrove forests ecological importance extends from coastal protection to biodiversity maintenance, from mitigation to adaptation to climate-induced changes. Mangrove forests sustain extensive fisheries in the WIO in addition to being directly used, mainly as building material and firewood. Mangroves can store higher amounts of carbon than that accumulated by other terrestrial vegetation systems and sustain tangible livelihoods, including ecotourism, while supporting some of the largest fisheries in the region. Anthropogenic threats to mangroves include habitat destruction for land reclamation and over-exploitation of their resources.

18. Climate change impact mangrove forests and contribute to their degradation, such as sea-level rise and extreme events like storm surges and floods. National agendas on mangroves continue to be mainstreamed, including integrating the wider society in tackling mangrove management challenges in the WIO. In view of local degradation and deforestation rates, the WIO countries are strategizing the implementation of mangrove restoration programs involving local communities. The largest gas reserves in the world have been discovered off Cabo Delgado in Mozambique and extensive exploration has been progressing in the offshore waters throughout the Western Indian Ocean region. This is likely to have an impact on its marine and coastal resources, including mangroves, coral reefs and seagrass beds.

19. Coral reefs dominate the coastal ecosystems of the Western Indian Ocean. They are typically shallow fringing reefs, often enclosing a lagoon, and connected to and interact with adjacent coastal and marine ecosystems such as mangroves and seagrass beds that contribute to the integrated seascape ecological functioning. Coral reefs support a wide range of goods and ecosystem services and generate many benefits for local and national economies. These include the provision of seafood and other resources that are important for the livelihoods of coastal communities. Coral reefs also provide regulatory services such as beach replenishment and coastal protection. They further support important revenues in tourism, fisheries and trade. WIO coral reefs are being threatened by multiple factors, mainly from climate-associated disturbances, fishing, and the interrelated factors of nutrient pollution and sedimentation caused by human influences on land. Marine Protected areas are the most implemented area-based tools in the WIO for coral reefs, supplemented by an emerging decentralised co-management model commonly referred to as other effective conservation measures.

20. Seagrass meadows are distributed along the coastlines of the WIO mainland and the Island States, often occurring in close connection with coral reefs and mangroves. Seagrasses form key components of marine ecosystems, are one of the most productive aquatic ecosystems in the world, supporting productivity through the recycling of nutrients and carbon. Seagrasses also stabilise sediment, thereby reducing coastal erosion and strengthening coastal protection. They provide many important ecosystem services for fisheries (finfish, shellfish, and other fishery-related products) and tourism industries.

21. Most threats to seagrasses in the WIO are a result of human activities, including eutrophication as a result of excessive nutrient input into coastal waters, sedimentation originating from various sources, and physical destruction related to water-based leisure activities. Comprehensive mapping of seagrass coverage has not been achieved yet for most countries in the region. Such information is needed to identify priority areas for conservation as well as opportunities that can be used to enhance seagrass protection. Regional collaboration and joint actions for the conservation of seagrass ecosystems should be promoted, including restoration programs.

22. Salt marshes in the WIO occur mainly on temperate South African shores, being productive ecosystems important for carbon storage, water purification, flood control, refugia, and habitat for other organisms. Salt marsh plants are also increasingly used for human consumption. Threats to salt marshes include sea-level rise at the seaward interface and development at the land interface. The latter include land reclamation for agriculture, seawater evaporation ponds for salt production, shellfish or fish farming ponds or livestock production that restrict tidal exchange and promote the establishment of invasive species. There is a degree of protection in South Africa of the

larger salt marshes and some degree in the legislation of other WIO countries, but overall, there is a need for better attention and research to fill gaps of knowledge regarding the distribution and condition of salt marshes in WIO countries.

23. Estuaries are highly productive natural systems that often form complex ecosystems that include critical habitats such as mangroves, seagrass beds, salt marshes and extensive tidal flats. They export sediments, nutrients and organic matter to the continental shelf thereby enhancing coastal productivity, but also attract the settlement of human communities. Multiple stressors threaten the natural balance of WIO estuaries, such as sea-level rise impacting low-lying estuarine land, and floods from extreme events induce erosion and mangrove destruction. Alterations at catchment areas, such as damming and water abstraction, as well as intensive agriculture and alterations of vegetation cover, put pressure on the natural ecological balance. Widespread pollution and habitat destruction through land reclamation have contributed to the degradation of estuaries. While protection for WIO estuaries is provided by international agreements on shared watersheds and by wetland conventions, integrated management of the catchment (commonly referred to as environmental flows) should be promoted, including developing individually based management and action plans.

24. The offshore habitats and the deep-sea constitute the majority of the WIO, and there are ongoing efforts by Partners to map the ocean floor, to include the benthic fauna, shelf sediments and the deeper seabed ecosystem. Threats to the vast offshore areas and the deep-sea result from extraction of resources (renewable and non-renewable), contamination and pollution, and climate change. Additional threats arise from unsuitable governance, economic factors, insufficient financial resources, and a lack of knowledge besides diverse pressures resulting from population growth especially in the coastal zone. Shipping traffic in the region is also related to the regional economy and extraction of resources, associated increased pollution, ship strikes on cetaceans, and spreading invasive species from ballast water and fouling. Due to the vastness of the offshore areas, there is a need to prioritise conservation areas in the exclusive economic zones (EEZ) and offshore habitats in the WIO.

25. Important to conservation of coastal and marine biodiversity were the negotiations held for amending the 1985 *Protocol Concerning Protected Areas wild flora and fauna in the Eastern African Region* to facilitate policies and rules appropriate to the needs of the Western Indian Ocean. The negotiations continued to build political consensus for addressing marine biodiversity and promoting cooperation in enforcement, monitoring and information exchange. The amended Protocol is expected to elaborate in detail the dangers and threats to marine and coastal areas and the attendant biological diversity, and the interconnectedness of habitats, ecosystems and species. Once finalised the Protocol will acknowledge existing international and regional legal and policy instruments developed after the protocol was adopted and provide a stronger framework for addressing current and emerging threats that have compounded the integrity of coastal and marine biodiversity across the WIO region. The Protocol will detail conservation measures in place against threats of pollution and waste, climate change, and biodiversity loss, ecosystem degradation from rapid urbanization, increased population growth, coastal development, including land reclamation and conversion.

26. The WIO region has been embarking on large-scale socio-economic developments that are equally exerting pressure on the marine and coastal resources. The declaration of marine protected areas (MPAs) has long been considered a key tool in the fight to conserve the marine biodiversity, and the WIO countries have played their part, by identifying and declaring MPAs. The WIO region has established 143 MPAs (or equivalent), covering a total of 555,436.68km², representing 7 percent of the total combined exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of the nine countries covered in the MPA Outlook (UNEP-Nairobi Convention and WIOMSA. 2021¹). Most of the MPAs predominantly protect coastal habitats while a few MPAs have been proclaimed by Seychelles and South Africa over very large areas of deep-sea habitats contributing to a larger proportion of the 7 percent.

27. Area-based conservation measures, particularly MPA, highlighted a need to review the effectiveness of MPA management and to promote a more inclusive approach to MPA management by considering access, use rights, and cultural and historical values of local communities. While the scientific understanding of the coastal and inshore environments is solid, this is not the case with the

¹ UNEP-Nairobi Convention and WIOMSA. 2021. Western Indian Ocean Marine Protected Areas Outlook: Towards achievement of the Global Biodiversity Framework Targets. UNEP and WIOMSA, Nairobi, Kenya, 298 pp.

offshore deep-sea environments, which have only recently been the focus of concerted scientific attention and research. According to the MPA Outlook report, many MPAs across the region are not managed as effectively as they could and should be primarily due to lack of funding for essential staff, equipment and capacity development, and weak institutional support and commitment. However, there is every indication of the willingness and commitment of the Nairobi Convention contracting parties to strengthen marine conservation in areas within their jurisdiction, including through development of new MPA-specific legislation, such as in Comoros, and the declaration of new MPAs in Mozambique, Seychelles, Comoros and South Africa.

28. Madagascar has pioneered other effective area-based conservation measures (OECM) to protect marine areas through a rapid increase in the number of what is commonly referred to as Locally Managed Marine Areas (LMMAs), where coastal communities work in collaboration with government and other stakeholders to protect their coastal resources. A similar approach has been recorded under a variety of names in different countries, across the region. Such approaches have the potential to substantially increase the coastal areas under conservation management in the region.

29. Following the ‘State of the Ocean Governance in the Western Indian Ocean (UNEP and Nairobi Convention, 2020²), the Nairobi Convention and WIOMSA authored a background paper after the adoption of the marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ) Treaty to identify areas with the potential to become MPAs in the areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ). The BBNJ Treaty recognises the importance of the interests, roles and consultation of coastal states in relation to ABNJ adjacent to their maritime zones, based on the concept of 'adjacency' between the high seas and the EEZs, as well as the continental shelf and the Area (Humphries et al. 2020³; Mossop and Schofield 2020⁴). The Nairobi Convention began showing interest in the ABNJ since 2016 through the concept of adjacency and ecological connectivity and through the regional science to policy dialogues for establishing of MPAs in the high seas.

30. The regional Marine Protected Areas Outlook (UNEP-Nairobi Convention and WIOMSA, 2021) provided informed pathways regarding MPA expansion and called for WIO countries to develop a common regional vision and understanding of MPAs beyond national jurisdiction, including a comprehensive regional assessment on mobilising resources, capacity and technology, data needs and partnerships. The Outlook also called on countries to collaborate to manage offshore areas, to share intelligence and resources for enforcement and to monitor activities such as deep-sea fishing, whaling and other activities in the region. To ensure effective management, the Outlook recommended having secure and adequate budgets, human resources, equipment and infrastructure, research and monitoring programmes, management plans and appropriate governance model.

31. Parties to the Nairobi Convention requested that a regional marine spatial planning (MSP) strategy be developed for the WIO to harmonize the different marine and coastal management and spatial planning initiatives in the countries, enhance coordination of blue economy pathways, address transboundary and cross-sectoral marine management challenges, and offer better cooperation on governing Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) and in the Western Indian Ocean. The MSP is expected operate alongside other management mechanisms and tools that address the temporal nature of marine ecosystem services (for example, fisheries management and climate change adaptation). The regional MSP strategy complements national MSP strategies that are at different stages of development and implementation in the countries of the WIO and addresses regional concerns (such as climate change, sustainable fisheries, maritime security and pollution) that cannot be dealt with by nations operating alone.

32. While there are other major threats to coastal and marine ecosystems in the WIO region a significant amount of attention was paid to water quality and land-based pollution. A situational analysis identified a number of root causes contributing to the deterioration of coastal and marine water quality in the region, including population growth, poverty and inequality, inappropriate governance, inadequate knowledge and awareness, and lack of financial resources. The major sectors

² UNEP-Nairobi Convention, 2020. The State of Ocean Governance in the Western Indian Ocean Region

³ Humphries, F., & Harden-Davies, H. (2020). Practical policy solutions for the final stage of BBNJ treaty negotiations. *Marine Policy*, 122, 104214

⁴ Mossop, J., & Schofield, C. (2020). Adjacency and due regard: The role of coastal States in the BBNJ treaty. *Marine Policy*, 122, 103877.

contributing to marine pollution introduce pollutants leading to microbiological contamination, nutrient enrichment (eutrophication), marine litter, suspended sediment loading and toxic pollution (e.g. metals, agrochemicals and petrochemicals), with resultant environmental and socio-economic consequences.

33. Towards addressing pollution threats, the implementation of appropriate strategic frameworks and capacity building was considered important, not only to enhance local socio-economic and environmental benefits, but also global environmental benefits. A regional Strategic Framework for Coastal and Marine Water Quality Management (C&MWQM) was developed as a sound basis for adopting and integrating C&MWQM into national frameworks and best practice. The aim is to meet international standards of coastal and marine water quality in the WIO region by year 2035.

34. Plastics and marine litter pollution continues to be a priority challenge in the region where public and private players are actively engaged in the development of the circular economy initiatives, generating secondary products and recycling waste to benefit waste management. Efforts were made to explore comprehensive management opportunities for plastics, associated chemicals, and wastes in the WIO region including through strengthening the implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm Conventions. The escalating plastic litter poses a threat to marine and coastal ecosystems and marine life, affecting human health and potentially worsening poverty. WIO countries are combating marine pollution from plastics, associated chemicals, and wastes and actively advancing negotiations for development of the international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including a comprehensive life cycle-based revision of the WIO Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter. The comprehensive revision will foster a sustainable and pollution-free marine environment focused on sustainable marine resource management and the overall health of the oceans.

C. Ocean governance and blue economy

35. In implementing the 2022-2024 Programme of Work, countries of the Western Indian Ocean identified a number of environmental priorities including ocean governance, the management of marine protected areas for biodiversity conservation and connectivity, pollution from land-based sources and activities, marine litter and microplastics, climate change, ocean acidification, and the environmental management for the oil and gas industry. Other priorities included marine spatial planning for integrated coastal management and blue economic growth, sustainable fisheries management, the sustainable development of ports and harbours and related coastal and marine water quality assessment & monitoring, and active gender mainstreaming in marine policy and governance.

36. The environmental priorities identified aligned with the first comprehensive regional report on the State of Coast for the Western Indian Ocean (2015) which provided insights into the economic potential of the ocean, the rising demand for marine ecosystem goods and services, and the environmental changes that are underway. These concerns reflected the emerging trends in climate change; biodiversity and nature loss; pollution and waste, and the ongoing implementation of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The priorities further aligned with global processes such as the 2021-2030 UN Decade on Ecosystems Restoration, the 2021-2030 UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, the 2022 Global Biodiversity Framework and the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ Treaty) that was finally adopted in June 2023.

37. In November 2021, the Contracting Parties to the Nairobi Convention called for the preparation of a regional ocean governance strategy for the Western Indian Ocean region as a contribution to an African ocean governance strategy, to the sustainable oceans agenda, to development of the blue economy, to addressing climate change and to other African policies and the initiatives of WIO Countries and of the Regional Economic Communities. The strategy seeks to achieve for a peaceful stable Western Indian Ocean region with an environmentally healthy ocean and a blue economy based on the protection and conservation of natural resources that delivers sustainable benefits with due regard to equity and wellbeing. The strategy includes all aspects of the ocean and coastal environment, the blue economy and the related communities, institutions, productive activities, risks and opportunities. In addition, the strategy provides a framework for WIO

countries and regional institutions to cooperate more effectively on their joint priorities, based on a common understanding of the state of ocean governance and the blue economy, empowerment of the regional institutions and adaptation of existing arrangements.

38. The regional ocean governance strategy focuses on substantive priorities clustered around maritime security; blue economy; environment and natural resources; and knowledge management and capacity building. The clusters however have close relationships and overlaps, including cross-cutting issues, such as institutional arrangements and finance. In order to effectively implement the regional ocean governance strategy, strengthened institutional arrangements are required. Mechanisms are also required to facilitate coordination and synergies across the diverse clusters, sectors and themes, including for financing the priorities. The strategy calls on the Nairobi Convention to provide leadership on institutional arrangements, co-hosting of proposed platforms and forums, and the convening of the initial series of financing dialogues.

39. A historic event saw the Nairobi Convention Contracting Parties unanimously agree to, adopt, and sign the Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Protocol for the Western Indian Ocean after thirteen years of dedicated negotiations. This unfolded at a Conference of Plenipotentiaries held 11-12 September 2023 in Antananarivo, Madagascar, and followed four intergovernmental negotiation meetings, generously funded by Contracting Parties and supported by various organizations including the Global Environment Facility, European Union, and the Swedish International Development Agency.

40. The legally binding ICZM Protocol will accelerate efforts of WIO countries to address current and emergent challenges in the coastal areas and adjacent marine ocean areas and refocus coordinated away from fragmented approaches. The Protocol is expected to foster cooperation for sustainable development and ocean governance in the Western Indian Ocean region. It will promote sustainable use and equitable sharing of coastal resources, conservation of ecological integrity, monitoring of natural risks, development of regional ICZM frameworks, involvement of all stakeholders in the ICZM processes, and in addressing the harmful effects of human activities. The Protocol has an array of instruments and tools for ICZM such as marine spatial planning, marine protected areas, and cross-sectoral institutional approaches both at the national and regional levels. The adoption of the Protocol comes at a time when significant advances on blue economy have been made by Nairobi Convention countries amid a fresh wave on marine conservation and sustainable use of coastal and marine resources in the WIO region.

41. The parties to the Nairobi Convention together with the Consortium for the Conservation of Coastal and Marine Ecosystems in the Western Indian Ocean (WIO-C) partners agreed to apply Blue Economy pathways for sustained economic growth, food security, poverty eradication, job creation and environmental sustainability. To promote the blue economy pathways in the WIO region, the parties agreed, through decisions by successive Conferences of Parties (COP8, COP9, COP10) to cooperate in improving the governance of their exclusive economic zones (EEZs) and adjacent waters. Using an ecosystem approach, that recognises the ocean as an indivisible whole the parties continued to build on existing regional management and governance institutions including the Nairobi Convention, to develop area-based management tools for promoting Blue Economy pathways.

42. The Governments of the Western Indian Ocean have established blue or ocean economy ministries or departments in recognition of the potential of their ocean sectors. Economic sectors such as coastal tourism, marine transport, manufacturing activities, including coastal shipping, trans-shipment, boat building, repair and refurbishment; offshore oil and gas exploration; aquaculture and marine protection services and ocean governance can potentially unlock the blue economy and contribute to poverty eradication in the region.

43. In 2014, South Africa's Operation Phakisa predicted that the oceans have the potential to contribute up to 177 billion Rand (US\$14.8 billion) to the country's gross domestic product and to create over 1 million jobs by 2033. An analysis in 2017 by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and Coastal Oceans Research and Development – Indian Ocean East Africa (CORDIO-EA) came up with a figure, considered conservative, for the gross marine product (GMP) of the Western Indian Ocean of US\$20.8 billion annually, which is dependent on the ecological functions of the sea. The largest component of the GMP draws from the adjacent benefits on the coastal zone (US\$14.6 billion

annually), which includes coastal tourism, carbon sequestration and coastal protection. The second in value in the GMP reflects the direct services such as marine tourism which are enabled by the ocean (US\$4.3 billion annually). It is important to note that coastal tourism alone generates US\$10.4 billion annually and is dependent on the physical assets of the coastline and beaches and functioning healthy marine and coastal ecosystems i.e. recreational services, as well as regulating and supporting services. Carbon sequestration provides 14 per cent of the gross marine product, or US\$2.9 billion annually, a value that is of interest due to the increasing relevance of climate change. The third category in the total GMP is from direct output of the ocean, which includes fisheries and aquaculture and totals US\$1.9 billion annually. The figure of US\$20.8 billion would rise if other non-ecological functions of the ocean were included, such as shipping and trade, oil/gas and other extractive sectors, and offshore wind.

44. Healthy, functional marine and coastal ecosystems along the coastlines of WIO countries are intricately woven into the national economy through fishing, playing an important role in food security, job creation, and economic growth. Fisheries is conventionally seen in the Western Indian Ocean as the most important economic sector dependent on the ocean (UNEP-Nairobi Convention 2015⁵), generating 9 per cent of the gross marine product. Of this total value, 87 per cent is from largescale commercial and industrial fisheries, of which tuna is the most important source of national revenue.

45. Small-scale fisheries are critical in supporting livelihoods, food and income security, particularly for the coastal communities and contribute 13 per cent of formally accounted fisheries value, equivalent to just 1 per cent of the gross marine product of the Western Indian Ocean. In Mozambique, two-thirds of country's total population of 31.2 million live in the coastal region where the fisheries sector represents two percent of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and more than 400,000 of its citizens are directly involved in it. The five coastal regions of Tanga, Pwani, Dar es Salaam, Lindi and Mtwara, cover about 15 percent of the country's total land area and are home to approximately 25 percent of the country's total population of 60 million. Small-scale fisheries in Tanzania accounts for 98% of total fish production and contributes 1.3% of GDP.

46. By the time of the 2019 census, some 4.3 million Kenyan were living in the coastal areas. The coastal fisheries have a high potential for growth and Kenya's blue economy currently contributes 2.5% to national gross domestic product (GDP). It is projected to contribute three times its present share of GDP, create jobs and bring prosperity to millions of Kenyans. The offshore and artisanal fishery resources in Somali waters are said to be one of the richest in the African continent with potential to sustainably increase employment, food security, nutrition and revenues. A post-conflict Somalia notes that full economic potential from its productive marine ecosystems, fisheries and the blue economy could play an essential role in the rebuilding and the stabilization of the country and has recently proposed an ambitious plan to grow its blue economy. The National Development Plan 2020-2024 highlights the fisheries sector's potential to contribute to Somalia's economic development and poverty reduction. The country reportedly could harvest well over 200,000 metric tons of fish per year if it reached its sustainable potential according to its Ministry of Fisheries and the Blue Economy.

47. A study from Madagascar showed that small-scale fisheries were responsible for 72 per cent of total fisheries landings (Le Manach et al. 2012⁶, Obura, D. et al. 2017⁷). Seychelles with an exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of approximately 1.4 million km² is one of the world's biodiversity hotspots, with an extremely rich marine biodiversity. Fisheries is the second most important sector after tourism, contributing 20% to the GDP and employing 17% of the population. Seychelles is also a major seafood processing hub with export of consumable fish and fish products making up 96% of the total value of domestic exports. Seychelles is progressively improving the management of fisheries and marine resources to contribute to achieving the Blue Economy strategy of the country;

⁵ UNEP-Nairobi Convention 2015. The Regional State of the Coast Report: Western Indian Ocean. UNEP and WIOMSA, Nairobi, Kenya, 546 pp.

⁶ Le Manach et al. 2012. Unreported fishing, hungry people and political turmoil: the recipe for a food security crisis in Madagascar? *Marine Policy* 36: 218–225

⁷ Obura, D. et al. 2017. Reviving the Western Indian Ocean Economy: Actions for a Sustainable Future. WWF International, Gland, Switzerland. 64 pp.

to diversify the economy, create high value jobs, and ensure food security by sustainably managing and protecting marine resources.

48. The fisheries sector is the mainstay of Mauritius Blue Economy, generating employment, source of foreign income and ensures food security. Fisheries contributes to about 1% of Mauritius GDP and employs some 22,000 people, working directly and indirectly, with the majority operating in the fish processing sector. The Ministry of Blue Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping reported that local fish production in 2019 contributed about 19% of national exports, besides making a vital contribution to the life of coastal communities by supporting livelihoods of coastal communities, tourism, and ensuring supply of fresh fish on the local market. The vision of the country is to double the 'blue' GDP to 20 percent in the medium term, while realizing social economic development and dynamic balance of resources and environment.

49. Comoros' economy is highly dependent on the ocean contributing over 18% of the country's GDP with fisheries accounting for 7.5 of total GDP and employs directly and indirectly an estimated 8,500 people, according to the World Bank. While offshore fisheries for tuna and tuna-like species are currently predominantly exploited by foreign fleets, near shore high-value fisheries have potential for rapid improvement through adequate management system including co-management with coastal communities. France (Réunion) economy is mostly based on services (82%) and secondarily on construction (9%), industry (5%) and 4% on agriculture. Réunion has long served as a base for industrial fishing, as its waters are known for being rich with lobsters and cold-water fish species that contribute to the local economy. Both Réunion and Mayotte islands have aggressively pursued mariculture development to offset undersupply from local fisheries and several farms have produced cultured fish on a commercial basis. Reunion has some of the most advanced technologies in the WIO region in seed and feed production and cage culture.

50. Effective ocean governance in the Western Indian Ocean, in the long run will aim to maximize ecosystem goods and services equitably across generations. In particular, the blue economy cluster in the regional ocean governance strategy has strategic role to play in tourism; fisheries and aquaculture; prevention, reduction and control of marine plastic pollution and development of a circular blue economy for plastics; ports and shipping; salt production and desalination; maritime trade and connectivity; alignment on the deep seabed minerals; managing offshore energy (extractive and renewable); and other emerging areas (IT, marine biotechnology). Contracting Parties are well placed to identify practical, cost-effective regional actions to promote sustainable blue tourism, to build sustainable small-scale and coastal fisheries through regional support for national actions, and to develop and manage sustainable WIO tuna fishery to secure a more equitable share of sustainable benefits for WIO countries. Further, the countries could mainstream and implement a regional marine plastic pollution action plan to prevent, reduce and control marine plastic pollution in the region, facilitate regional cooperation and support for the development and management of sustainable and efficient regional ports, and apply the Africa Mining Vision to offshore extractive industries and related shore-based infrastructure in the WIO.

D. Ecosystems approach to management of marine and coastal systems

51. The Global Environment Facility, with the support of the Contracting Parties to the Nairobi Convention and their partners, has embraced an ecosystems approach to management of marine and coastal ecosystems. Between 2000-2010, the Facility invested over \$78 million to support large marine ecosystem projects in the Western Indian Ocean. The three main projects are the South-West Indian Oceans fisheries project, with a budget of \$35.67 million, implemented by the World Bank; the Agulhas and Somalia Current large marine ecosystem project, with a budget of \$31.186 million, implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); and the project on land-based activities in the Western Indian Ocean, referred to as the WIO-LaB project, with a budget of \$11.413 million, implemented by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

52. These three projects developed two strategic action programmes that were then endorsed by participating countries, with the aim of reducing impacts from land-based sources of pollution and activities for the purpose of achieving effective long-term ecosystem management in the Western Indian Ocean large marine ecosystems. In order to ensure a comprehensive large marine ecosystem management approach (from watershed to outer offshore boundaries), the two strategic action

programmes were being implemented collaboratively and administered by the Nairobi Convention secretariat through a cooperative understanding, while recognizing and respecting the mandates of the various management bodies and institutions. The approach has been effective in addressing the marine biodiversity loss, degradation and conservation, including in the adjacent waters of areas beyond national jurisdiction; tackling offshore and on-shore oil and gas and mining of other extractives; addressing pollution of the marine environment from marine litter and microplastics; and in promoting regional ocean governance.

53. Implementation of the strategic action programme for the protection of the Western Indian Ocean from land-based sources and activities (2017–2024), referred to as WIOSAP presented an opportunity for governments in the region and their conservation partners to jointly implement strategies to protect the coastal and marine ecosystems from land-based sources and activities, with the aim of providing essential goods and services on a sustainable basis. The project is being implemented by UNEP and administered by the Nairobi Convention secretariat, with funding of \$10,867,000. The WIOSAP project addressed the sustainable management of critical habitats through the protection, restoration and management of critical coastal habitats and ecosystems; improvement of water quality in the Western Indian Ocean region to international standards by the year 2035; effecting the sustainable and sound management of river flows in selected river basins in the Western Indian Ocean region; developing a toolkit for climate change vulnerability assessment (CCVA) of near-shore marine social-ecological systems in the Western Indian Ocean; and on providing governance and regional collaboration by strengthening governance systems and raising awareness. Significant achievements, best practices and lessons learnt have been realised by the implementation of the [WIOSAP](#) project.

54. The strategic action programme for the sustainable management of the Western Indian Ocean large marine ecosystems was the product of joint activities under two projects implemented by the World Bank and UNDP respectively. The Western Indian Ocean large marine ecosystem strategic action programme policy harmonization and institutional reforms, known as the SAPPHIRE project (2018–2025) was funded by the Global Environment Facility (\$8,766,500) to implement the strategic action programme jointly developed by the World Bank and UNDP. The SAPPHIRE project has been pursuing four objectives around support for policy harmonization and management reforms for improved ocean governance; reducing stress through community engagement and empowerment in sustainable resource management; delivering best practices and lessons through innovative ocean governance demonstration; and capacity development to realize improved ocean governance in the Western Indian Ocean region. The success stories from the implementation of the [SAPPHIRE](#) project have enormous potential for upscaling.

55. In March 2019, the South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission (SWIOFC) signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Nairobi Convention to provide a framework for cooperation to increase and integrate the services provided by the Commission and the Convention to the member States. Countries in the Western Indian Ocean have committed to cooperate regionally on the protection of the coastal and marine environment and on fisheries management. A partnership project was developed jointly by the Nairobi Convention and the South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission entitled “Partnership Project for Marine and Coastal Governance and Fisheries Management for Sustainable Blue Growth” ([NC-SWIOFC PP](#)). The project received a funding of US\$8.67 million from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) for implementation of the project over the period 2019-2023, with the Nairobi Convention Secretariat being responsible for administration of \$3.065 million of the funding. The project supported the implementation of the two strategic action programmes with the aim of enhancing resilience of coastal livelihoods based on healthy marine and coastal ecosystems, sustainable management coastal fisheries, while promoting cooperation and coordination between fisheries and environmental management institutions in Madagascar, Mozambique and Tanzania.

56. Building further on the partnership between the SWIOFC and the Nairobi Convention, the current project entitled “SWIOFC-Nairobi Convention Partnership for Resilient Marine and Coastal Ecosystems and Livelihoods (SWIOFC NC PP 2)” received funding of US\$14.5 million from SIDA to expand national activities in local sites in Kenya, Mozambique and the United Republic of Tanzania over the period 2023-2027. The Nairobi Convention is responsible for administration of US\$5.815 million of the funding to support the sustainable management of coastal and marine

ecosystems focusing on environmental conservation, restoration, and inter-sectoral spatial planning and strengthening support to capacity development, coordination and collaboration for sustainable coastal and marine environment and fisheries governance in the participating countries.

57. Recognizing that developing countries face considerable challenges in fulfilling their obligations as parties to Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA), a programme on Capacity Building related to MEAs in the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries phase III (“ACP MEAs 3”) was designed by UNEP in partnership with the European Commission (EC-UNEP). ACP MEAs 3 Programme (2020-2025) has been promoting environmental sustainability in ACP countries by strengthening environmental governance and the implementation of MEAs by enhancing capacities to improve enforcement of and compliance with MEAs related to biodiversity, chemicals and waste, and oceans governance. With a total funding of US\$2.1 million, the Nairobi Convention activities have been reinforcing the Convention’s governance frameworks and its associated protocols; supporting the development of regionally representative networks of Marine Protected Areas; and enhancing reduction of the influx of waste (plastics and other forms of human and industrial liquid and solid waste) from entering the marine environment.

58. In the Northern Mozambique Channel (NMC) area within Madagascar, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Comoros a partnership project between the Nairobi Convention, World Conservation Society, CORDIO-EA, and World Wildlife Fund-Madagascar developed in 2018 the project on “the Integrated Management of the Marine and Coastal Resources of the Northern Mozambique Channel Project (NoCaMo). The project received funding from the *Fonds Français Pour L’environnement Mondial* (FFEM) of 1.5 million euros for implementation of the project activities over the period 2021-2025. The project is supporting the institutional and knowledge foundations for the application of Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) in the Northern Mozambique Channel, promoting effective planning best environmental practices in the emerging Oil & Gas sector in the NMC area, and enhance community livelihoods and well-being through the sharing and replication of best practices in community-based marine resource management.

E. Nairobi Convention adoption and ratification

59. Back in 1985 when the Western Indian Ocean (WIO) was still pristine, already leaders of the region together with a number of partners had the foresight to create a mechanism for regional cooperation, coordination and collaborative actions to enable better management of their shared marine space. This coming together was an important step in getting countries of the Western Indian Ocean region to address common priorities through a mechanism that was legally binding with the aim of achieving long term sustainable measures.

60. The First Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern African Region was convened by the Executive Director of UNEP in Nairobi from 17 to 21 June 1985. The conference was attended by the representatives of France, Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique, Seychelles, Somalia, the United Republic of Tanzania and the European Community and adopted the Nairobi Convention and two protocols: Protocol Concerning Cooperation in Combating Marine Pollution in Cases of Emergency in the East African Region, and the Protocol Concerning Protected Areas and Wild Fauna and Flora in the Eastern African Region.

61. The Convention was signed by the Contracting Parties to offer a legal framework for regional cooperation in the protection, management and development of the region’s marine and coastal environment for sustainable socioeconomic growth and prosperity. The Convention provide a forum for inter-governmental discussions for better understanding of regional environmental problems, the strategies needed to address them and solutions; promote the sharing of information and experiences amongst countries; and facilitates the periodic assessment of the state of coastal and marine environment. From the time the Convention was adopted at the national level and entered into force on 30 June 1996, all the Contracting member States of Comoros, France, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, and Tanzania have continually come together to address current and emerging issues of their coastal and marine environment.

Table 1
Ratification of the Nairobi Convention

<i>Country</i>	<i>Date of ratification or accession</i>
Comoros	26 September 1994
France	18 August 1989
Kenya	11 September 1990
Madagascar	26 June 1990
Mauritius	03 July 2000
Mozambique	4 March 1999
South Africa	16 May 2003
Seychelles	20 June 1990
Somalia	1 March 1988
United Republic of Tanzania	1 March 1996

62. The Protocol concerning cooperation in combating marine pollution in cases of emergency remains strong. The protocol is conscious that the region is an active shipping highway, and oil production and refining activities poses the risk of major spillages of oil and other harmful substances into the marine and coastal environment.

63. In 2010 the Nairobi Convention demonstrated the renewed commitment of member States to cooperate in protecting and managing the WIO region, when the countries incorporated the transboundary issues of climate change, marine and land-based pollution, and integrated coastal zone management into the Convention. The countries recognised the vulnerability of small island developing states and the importance of biological diversity, and prioritised a new Protocol that addresses the management of Land-Based Sources and Activities (LBSA) entering the marine pollution. The Convention was amended, and a new Protocol for the Protection of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Western Indian Ocean from Land-Based Sources and Activities (LBSA Protocol) was adopted. The LBSA Protocol provides the framework upon which Contracting Parties seek to address the principal source of pollution of marine and coastal environment, namely: pollution from substances and energy entering the marine environment by run off from land, rivers, pipelines and other outfall structures; and pollution from the atmosphere, generated from land-based activities. The Convention continues to support national ratification of the LBSA Protocol.

64. The Convention prioritised environmental management through a new protocol on integrated coastal zone management. In 2019, the Countries finalised negotiations on the Protocol on Integrated Management of the Coastal Zone (ICZM) and adopted the Protocol at a Conference of Plenipotentiaries held in Antananarivo in September 2023. The ICZM protocol is cognisant of the socio-economic value and the services rendered by healthy coastal and marine ecosystems, including the benefits from sustainable development of coastal resources and calls for its implementation.

65. In September 2022, the Convention initiated the process for the amendment of the Protocol concerning protected areas and wild fauna and flora to mitigate options necessary to minimize the impact of developments on marine biodiversity and critical habitats, and to strengthen management effectiveness of marine protected areas in support of SDG14.2 and SDG14.5.

F. Nairobi Convention coordination arrangements

66. At their first meeting, held in Seychelles in 1997, the Contracting Parties adopted their rules of procedure and the terms of reference for the Bureau, in decision CP.1/2 on institutional matters. By decision CP.1/5 on financial matters, the Contracting Parties approved the financial rules for the management of the Eastern African Trust Fund as provided for under article 21 of the Convention.

67. The Convention's work programme is implemented through a coordination structure comprising the Programme Coordination Office in Nairobi, which provides strategic direction; a Bureau of Contracting Parties, which provides guidance in the implementation of the work programme; a network of national focal points; and thematic expert groups such as the Coral Reef Task Force, the Mangroves Network, and the Legal and Technical Working Group; the Consortium for the Conservation of Marine Resources in the Western Indian Ocean and other partners.

(i) Bureau of Contracting Parties

68. The Bureau is elected at every meeting of the Contracting Parties. The heads of delegation that attended the tenth meeting of the Contracting Parties, held virtually from 23 to 25 November 2021 elected the following members to the Bureau:

Chair: Madagascar
 Vice-Chair (programme of work): Tanzania
 Vice-Chair (resource mobilization): Seychelles
 Vice-Chair (coordination): South Africa
 Rapporteur: Kenya

(ii) Regional Coordinating Unit

69. The Second Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan for the Eastern African Region, held in Nairobi on 7 and 8 September 1993, established a regional coordinating unit in Seychelles to undertake Eastern African projects. At their first meeting, in March 1997, the Contracting Parties conferred the responsibilities of the secretariat of the Convention on the Regional Coordination Unit. At the outset, the plan was to support the Unit by providing its staff, including an interim coordinator, a senior programme officer, a project coordinator and support staff such as an administrative assistant and two secretaries. Owing to the shortage of funds in the Trust Fund, however, the Unit could not meet the cost of key staff members, including a director-level interim coordinator. Therefore, only one senior programme officer was posted to the Unit to act as coordinator. The Unit was severely understaffed and forced to close upon expiry of the coordinator's contract in March 1999.

70. The Government of Seychelles, in consultation with UNEP, appointed a senior government official from the Ministry of Environment to oversee the activities of the Regional Coordinating Unit. Under this interim arrangement, the Unit's responsibilities were devolved to two offices, a Nairobi Convention secretariat, based at UNEP, to provide overall programmatic coordination and strategic direction, and a Seychelles-based office to implement activities that enhanced the political visibility of the Convention. The Unit was also responsible for the mobilization of resources. This arrangement worked well for some time. In 2010, in decision CP.6/4, the Contracting Parties requested a review of the current coordination structures with a view to establishing a new cost-effective coordination structure to deal with the issues of coordination, fundraising and implementation of the Convention protocols. This decision was followed up with decision CP.7/10, CP.8/14 and CP.9/14 on strengthening the operational functioning of the secretariat and further elaborated in a paper on the coordination mechanism for the Nairobi Convention.

G. Implementation of the 2022-2024 Programme of Work

71. The Nairobi Convention holds meetings of its Contracting Parties every two years to review the implementation of their decisions. The tenth Conference of Parties for the Nairobi Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Western Indian Ocean Region (COP10) was held from 23-25 November 2021 virtually on the INTERACTIO platform, which allows for multilingual interpretation in remote

meetings. The meeting was attended by representatives of all 10 Contracting Parties to the Convention, representatives of partner institutions, intergovernmental organizations and United Nations system organizations, non-governmental organizations and other groups. It adopted thirteen decisions, all of which have guided the work of the Convention.

72. COP10 was to take place in Madagascar in October 2020. It was postponed to November 2021 at the request of the hosting Government due to the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic. The pandemic had affected all countries and impacted all aspects of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP)'s work with most staff working remotely, including at the global headquarters where the Nairobi Convention Secretariat is hosted. Contracting Parties to the Convention instituted measures to contain the spread of the virus, with face-to-face meetings and international travel being highly restricted which affected implementation of both national and regional-level activities during 2020 and 2021. A Briefing Note was shared to alert partners and stakeholders of the likely impacts on the activities and processes of the Convention, presenting the anticipated scenario in the Western Indian Ocean (WIO) region for the rest of 2020 and beyond.

73. Countries experienced similar problems trying to contain the spread of Covid-19, leading to rescheduling of events, use of webinars and other novel means, thanks to the advent of technology. The chair of the Bureau (Kenya) observed that during the Covid-19 period in 2020-2021, crucial work aiming to protect and restore critical habitats, improve water management, manage river flows, or enhance ocean governance were halted or delayed. Capacity building, so important to the work of Convention, was also put on hold. In addition, the Bureau had envisaged to visit project sites, but this could not happen due to curtailed local and regional travel. The pandemic had required innovative ideas and patience to continue making progress and commended partners and Contracting Parties accordingly in making remarkable progress under difficult circumstances.

74. As part of preparations for COP10, a science to policy dialogue was held 23-25 March 2021 during which key proposals for potential consideration were made, including some that were of a technical nature for guidance to the Secretariat. The 2021 workshop was held under the theme 'Transition to a Sustainable Western Indian Ocean Blue Economy: Addressing the challenges and seizing the opportunities.' Its objectives were to a) review discussion papers on topical emerging scientific findings with potential policy implications for the management of coastal and marine resources in the region, b) share progress in the development of various regional strategies and frameworks and provide technical input thereof, and c) promote engagement and networking among various stakeholders engaged in the protection, management, and development of marine and coastal resources in the WIO. The workshop report can be found at the Nairobi Convention Clearinghouse [website](#) and the first ever WIO Science to Policy Platform Series to be published launched at the 12th WIOMSA Symposium held in October 2022 in South Africa https://www.nairobiconvention.org/clearinghouse/sites/default/files/WIO%20Science%20to%20Policy%20Platform%20Series_Complete%20Issue_1_Volume_1_2022.pdf

75. To promote networking among various stakeholders in the WIO, a Partners meeting was held on 30 August 2021 with the theme of 'Enhancing resilience and the health of the Western Indian Ocean: 2022-2024 Partnership Programme'. A background paper had been prepared ahead of the partners' meeting, containing a detailed exposition of the progress attained in the implementation of COP9 decisions.

76. The Partners' meeting was followed by a meeting of national Focal Points to the Nairobi Convention on 21-22 October 2021. The meeting set the stage for many of the decisions presented to COP10. In preparation of the Focal Points meeting, initial recommendations for potential decisions were developed from technical/policy briefs, containing the scientific basis for justification of each proposed decision. Reports of the partners and Focal Points meetings are available at the Convention's Clearinghouse [website](#).

77. The tenth meeting reflected on the progress made by Contracting Parties in protecting the Western Indian Ocean (WIO) region since 2018 as part of the 2018–2022 approved programme of work and capitalized on opportunities to a) renew commitments to a multilateral process to take timely and effective action to protect, develop, and manage the WIO, and b) strengthen partnerships to boost recovery and resilience after the COVID-19 pandemic. Parties reviewed decisions from their ninth meeting and identified new areas that required decisions at the tenth meeting and approved the

2022-2024 programme of work. The meeting was held in two segments: a partners' meeting on 23 November and a national Focal Points meeting on 24 November 2021, followed by a high-level segment comprising of Heads of Delegation meeting on 25 November 2021.

78. The Partners segment of COP10, held on 23 November 2021, called for networking and close cooperation between actors from science and ocean policy making. Partners made presentations focused on the protection and conservation of ecosystems and habitats, promoting marine protected areas, climate change risks and vulnerabilities, research, protection of endangered species, ocean governance, enhancing industrial fisheries, combating IUU, improving management of small-scale fisheries, mainstreaming blue economy, promoting MSP, addressing threats from oil and gas, plastics pollution, and deep-sea mining. They provided valuable scientific, technical and policy recommendations for consideration by Contracting Parties. The Partners provided inputs and suggestions on strengthening the preambular statement of the draft decisions, as well as on the inclusion of a monitoring framework, climate refugia, the establishment of a task force on water quality, and a broadening of partnerships and initiatives in the requisite decisions.

79. The Focal Points segment of COP10 was held on 24 November 2021. The Focal Points appraised the progress made in the implementation of the Convention since COP9 and reviewed the financial health of the Convention and the Programme of Work for the period 2022-2024. The Focal Points dedicated considerable time to discussing the proposed draft decisions and carefully revised the decisions in line with proposals by country representatives and interventions received from partners.

80. The Heads of Delegation segment of COP10 delved into the achievements made by each Contracting Party to the Nairobi Convention during the challenging period of the Covid-19 pandemic. The new Bureau of the Nairobi Convention for the intersessional period between COP10 and COP11 was duly elected, presided over by Madagascar (as chair of the Bureau), Tanzania as vice chair for the Work Programme, Seychelles as vice chair for resource mobilization, South Africa as vice chair for coordination, and Kenya as rapporteur. With the approval of the 2022-2024 Programme of Work for the Convention, 13 decisions were adopted at COP10, after which Madagascar extended an offer to host the eleventh Conference of Parties.

81. The approved 2022-2024 Programme of Work (PoW) provided a background, foundational principles, four main objectives and activities to strengthen the role of the Nairobi Convention as a platform for promoting synergies and coordinating implementation of regional initiatives for the protection of the marine and coastal environment. The PoW main components and envisaged activities included management and operational support; assessment, conservation and capacity building; coordination and legal aspects; information and awareness; and financial matters. The partners for each component were briefly outlined.

82. Global and regional events informed the approved PoW 2022-2024, including the 2018 Sustainable Blue Economy Conference, the 2019 and the 2021 Growing Blue Conference, the 2021 World Ocean Assessment, the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and the Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, UNEP's Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2025, UNEP's Regional Seas Strategic Direction 2022-2025, and the recommendations of the Nairobi Convention-organized March 2021 science-policy dialogue.

83. The goal of the PoW 2022-2024 on strengthening the role of the Nairobi Convention as a platform for promoting synergies and coordinating implementation of regional initiatives was informed by a number of specific objectives: i) to promote the Nairobi Convention as a platform for increasing collaboration and implementation of the marine and coastal elements of the environmental programmes of regional organizations and partnerships; ii) to support countries in their commitment to attainment of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 14; iii) to promote integrated management of coastal areas to safeguard coastal habitats and combat physical alteration of the habitats; iv) to contribute to building regional capacities for the integrated management of the coastal and marine environment; v) to support initiatives addressing the reduction of marine pollution, including marine litter, microplastics and microbeads; vi) promote the use of ecosystem-based management approaches; vii) support policy harmonization and management reforms towards improved ocean governance; viii) promote improved coastal livelihoods and empowerment in

sustainable resources management through the engagement of coastal fishing communities; ix) engage stakeholders in the public and private sector in minimizing carbon footprints in operations and management practices for innovative ocean governance; and x) to support countries in the development of institutional, legal and financial mechanisms and instruments necessary for the long-term implementation of the Nairobi Convention and its Protocols.

84. The Bureau of the Nairobi Convention appraised progress in the implementation of the 2022–2024 Programme of Work and the COP10 decisions at a Bureau meeting held in Mombasa on 12-14 March 2024. Progress was also presented to the Partners and national Focal Points meeting on 25-27 March 2024 in Durban. **Table 2** provides a summary of the progress made in the implementation of the four components of the Programme of Work 2022-2024

85. Annexes mentioned in the report are available on the Nairobi Convention [COP11](#) website and include key 9th COP Decisions implemented during the intersessional period.

Table 2

Progress in the implementation of PoW 2022-2024

COMPONENT	OUTPUTS
I. MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONAL SUPPORT	
1. Supporting development of monitoring tools and implementation of frameworks, strategies, guidelines, standards, and methodologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mangrove, Seagrass restoration guidelines • Regional water quality monitoring standards • Ecosystem indicator monitoring framework • Regional information management strategy • Regional ocean governance strategy
2. Supporting the development and implementation of new transboundary protected areas initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At various stages of implementation by Partners
3. Replicating and/or upscaling demonstration projects and activities for the management of land-based activities and sources of marine pollution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several WIOSAP pilot projects implemented in selected sites in the region
4. Supporting the management of marine protected areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several regional capacity development workshops organized by SwAM, Nairobi Convention and WIOMSA
5. Promoting cooperation and coordination among countries sharing transboundary resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dialogues between Kenya and Tanzania on the transboundary conservation area (TBCA)
6. Supporting COVID recovery efforts by enhancing assessment of impacts of COVID-19, climate resilience, ecosystem restoration, water quality management, pollution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Change Vulnerability Assessments (CCVA) in Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique, Tanzania • Mangrove restoration in Mozambique, Madagascar, Kenya • Water quality standards regional capacity building • Assessment and monitoring of coastal and marine water quality in Zanzibar (ongoing)
II. ASSESSMENT, CONSERVATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING	
1. Collecting and synthesizing data on coastal habitats and their threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical Habitats Outlook • Marine Protected Areas Outlook • Marine Spatial Planning at national level
2. Supporting the development of decision support tools related to the WIO regional state-of-the-coast report, the marine protected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mangrove, Seagrass restoration guidelines • Regional water quality monitoring standards • Ecosystem indicator monitoring framework • Regional information management strategy

COMPONENT	OUTPUTS
areas outlook, critical habitats outlook, and ecosystems monitoring frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional ocean governance strategy
3. Assessment of ecosystem goods and services and their economic values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Methodology for assessment developed (ongoing) under the SWIOFC-Nairobi Convention Partnership Project Phase 2 and NoCaMo project
4. Capacity building of environmental flow assessments of key river basins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional trainings held in South Africa and Tanzania
5. Supporting application of marine spatial planning (MSP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A series of capacity building and trainings on MSP and demonstration of MSP at local level in Pemba
6. Supporting the development of strategic environmental assessments in relation to the environmental management e.g., oil and gas development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Background paper on oil spill coordination and preparedness in the WIO by Sapphire project and partners Updating of Mauritius sensitivity atlas
7. Supporting the development of toolkits, and best practices for developments e.g., in ports and harbours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing green (sustainable) ports toolkit
8. Secure community livelihoods well-being through the sharing and replication of best practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constructed wetlands at Shimo la Tewa prison in Mombasa Mangrove restoration in most countries
9. Enhancing capacity for technical experts and decision-makers on assessments for adaptive ocean governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Webinars on Regional ocean governance strategy Leadership trainings of senior officers
10. Enhancing institutional capacity for valuation of ecosystem goods and services, vulnerability assessments and environmental flows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Toolkit for Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment (CCVA) of near-shore marine social-ecological systems in the Western Indian Ocean has been developed Additional capacity building required
11. Boosting the capacity of national academic and research institutions to develop activities to tackle the degradation of water quality, ocean acidification, physical alteration and destruction of habitats and capacity for the environmental management of the oil and gas sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing environment-fisheries nexus Zanzibar water quality monitoring Developing a regional Ocean Acidification (OA) action plan
12. Building partnerships on scientific cooperation to address the impacts of drivers such as climate change and Covid-19 on the resilience of critical habitats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnerships and joint activities with several WIO-C partners
III. COORDINATION AND LEGAL ASPECTS	
1. Preparing and convening meetings of project steering committees, technical and expert meetings and others as provided for in the work programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several meetings of steering committees and working groups held at the projects level
2. Coordinating implementation of partnership activities agreed upon at meetings of the Contracting Parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuous in all projects
3. Promoting implementation of regional and global development initiatives and programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convention's participation and contribution in several initiatives such as the Sustainable Ocean Initiative, Decade for Ocean Science, Ecosystems Restoration, World Oceans Assessment

COMPONENT	OUTPUTS
4. Fostering closer collaboration between the Convention and the AMCEN and the RECs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively demonstrated during development of the Regional ocean governance strategy
5. Developing partnerships with bilateral donors and members of the United Nations Development Group	
6. Supporting focal point institutions, task forces, FARI and the science-policy platform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environment-Fisheries status of interaction in the WIO by FARI FARI in Science-Policy dialogue 2023 Mangrove carbon credits experts' meetings
7. Developing a regional gender strategy to mainstream and operationalize the gender dimensions of ocean governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addressed at projects level Nairobi Convention
8. Organizing training for policymakers, experts, task forces, FARI, the Consortium for the Conservation of Coastal and Marine Ecosystems in the Western Indian Ocean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Various trainings, workshops and experts forums held
9. Supporting the ratification of the LBSA Protocol and setting up of related institutional, policy and legal frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five Member States have ratified. The protocol will enter into force upon ratification by the sixth contracting party
10. Supporting adoption of the protocol on integrated coastal zone management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICZM protocol adopted September 2023
11. Amending of the Protocol Concerning Protected Areas and Wild Fauna and Flora in the Eastern Africa region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two negotiations held in September 2022 and September 2023
12. Supporting the implementation of ongoing and new projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ongoing
13. Supporting the development of the regional ocean governance strategy for the Western Indian Ocean	Regional Ocean Governance Strategy (ROGS)
14. Enhancing current partnerships and, as far as possible, establishing new partnerships with non-governmental organizations, regional economic communities, regional fisheries bodies and intergovernmental mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing: IOTC, IORA, IGAD, CSIR, EAC, COMESA towards ocean governance Updating MoU: IOC-COI, WIOMSA
IV. INFORMATION AND AWARENESS	
1. Reporting on the progress of the work programme and disseminating the results to Contracting Parties and other partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing in meetings of the Convention Regular dissemination in websites and social media
2. Updating information from six-monthly national status reports received from the Contracting Parties, and identifying information and activity gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects half-yearly reports on web Regular gleaning of media for news Contracting Parties reporting on pilot projects
3. Consulting with the Contracting Parties on questions relating to the Convention and its protocols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuous
4. Developing a communication strategy and plan for participation, problem solving, knowledge exchange and awareness-raising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft communication strategy developed
5. Preparing a multi-stakeholder information and knowledge management strategy for knowledge sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional information management strategy developed

COMPONENT	OUTPUTS
6. Enhancing digital connectivity and intelligent data systems to support adaptive management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing migration of nairobi-convention.org to a secure platform
7. Enhancing information gathering and knowledge management on coastal and marine resource and exchange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly news roundup Quarterly newsletter
8. Organizing expert forums for task forces and key partners, to promote scientific and technical information-sharing and exchange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convened for several thematic groups such as MSP, MPA, eflows, water quality, and information management, ocean governance
9. Convening science-policy dialogues for scientists, policymakers and decision makers, civil society and the private sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Science to policy dialogue 2023

H. Implementation of the Decisions of the 10th Conference of Parties

86. The success and sustainability of the Nairobi Convention is dependent on the availability of adequate financial resources for the implementation of (i) priority activities identified in the Convention, and Protocols, (ii) the growing number of decisions taken by the Members States of the Convention during COP meetings, and (iii) operational costs to run the secretariat. The Member States as well as the parties continue to take full responsibility to fund their Convention activities and ensure a financially self-supporting programme. For this reason, a trust fund financed by, inter alia, assessed contributions from the Member States and parties exists, for which UNEP provides secretariat and coordination functions and management of the trust fund. The 2022–2024 Programme of Work was funded by governments, through the Eastern Africa Trust Fund. Assessed contributions of the Contracting Parties to the Trust Fund that are outlined in **Table 3**. There are also additional sources of funding from donors and partners (under Decision CP.10/13).

Table 3.

Assessed contributions and payments of the Contracting Parties to the Trust Fund as at 18 April 2024

Regional Seas Trust Fund for the East African Region (EA) (in United States dollars)						
Country	Assessed Annual Contribution	Amounts collected in 2021	Amounts collected in 2022	Amounts collected in 2023	Amounts collected in 2024	Unpaid pledges for 2024 and prior years
Comoros	15,100					528,600
Kenya	45,302			362,416		
Madagascar	22,651	68,556.82	22,651			96,101.58
Mauritius	30,201	30,201	91,407		30,201	-
Mozambique	45,302					1,149,194.52
South Africa	37,500	75,000	75,000			37,500
Seychelles	15,100	30,200				60,400
Somalia	15,100					501,400
Tanzania	45,302			45,291.07		677,245
France	78,000	78,000	78,000	78,000		
Total	349,558	281,957.82	267,058	485,707.07	30,201	3,050,441.10

Decision CP.10/1. Approved Programme of Work for 2022-2024

87. The work programme of the Nairobi Convention for 2022–2024 was adopted by Decision CP.10/1 for implementation, with the support of partners, focusing on four priority areas: (i) assessments and capacity building; (ii) management; (iii) coordination and legal aspects; and (iv) information and awareness. The decision requested the Secretariat to report on the progress of implementation of the Programme of Work 2022-2024 at the regular meetings of national Focal Points and at the eleventh meeting of the Contracting Parties. **Table 2** provides a summarized progress in the implementation of PoW 2022-2024 which was reported to the

Bureau and the national focal points in March 2024 and regularly through the respective projects of the Convention and partners.

Decision CP.10/2. Ratification, accession, and implementation of the Amended Nairobi Convention and the Protocol on Land-based Sources and Activities.

88. Decision CP.10/2 urged Contracting Parties that had not ratified or acceded to the Amended Nairobi Convention and the Protocol for the Protection of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Western Indian Ocean from Land-based Sources and Activities to do so to enable the Amended Convention and Protocol to come into effect. The decision request the Secretariat, where necessary and requested, to support contracting parties in the process of ratification. At the national focal points meeting in March 2024, South Africa reported having ratified the LBSA Protocol and the 2010 amended Nairobi Convention. Five Contracting Parties (Mozambique, Mauritius, Seychelles, and Tanzania. South Africa) have ratified the Nairobi Convention and the Land-based Sources and Activities Protocol. Upon the sixth ratification the protocol and the amended Convention will take effect. The secretariat continued to follow-up with France, Comoros, Kenya, Somalia, and Madagascar for expedited ratification. The decision also Contracting Parties that have ratified or acceded to the Amended Nairobi Convention and the LBSA Protocol to strengthen their institutional capacity and develop or harmonize policies, laws, regulations, and standards for the effective implementation of the Convention and the protocol. Interventions to implement the LBSA Protocol ranging from capacity building to on-ground interventions have been supported. The Water Quality Monitoring Framework and Guidelines have facilitated region-wide implementation of the Protocol.

Decision CP.10/3. Adoption of the draft Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management

89. Following the fourth and final negotiations on the Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM Protocol) in March 2019 supported by the GEF funded WIOSAP, the Protocol was adopted and signed through a conference of plenipotentiaries held in Antananarivo by the Government of Madagascar and the Chair of the Bureau of the Convention from 11-12 September 2023 (**Annex I**). The action was in response by Contracting Parties to requesting the Secretariat to convene a Conference of Plenipotentiaries before the eleventh meeting of the Contracting Parties to adopt and sign the Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management in the Western Indian Ocean region. One project piloting of ICZM in Kenya reported encouraging progress while several other pilot projects implemented under the projects of the Secretariat embedded ICZM principles in their implementation.

Decision CP.10/4. Review of the Protocol Concerning Protected Areas and Wild Fauna and Flora in the Eastern African Region and its annexes

90. The first negotiations of the Nairobi Convention Protocol concerning protected areas and wild fauna and flora was held in Antananarivo, Madagascar in 15-18 November 2022 in response to the request by Contracting Parties to the Secretariat to convene an ad-hoc legal and technical working group to prepare a revised Protocol Concerning Protected Areas and Wild Fauna and Flora in the Eastern African Region and its annexes, with priority for conservation action on marine ecosystems and critically endangered, endangered and vulnerable species, for negotiation and adoption, and report progress at the eleventh meeting of the Contracting Parties. The amendment of the Protocol and its annexes is being developed pursuant to pertinent decisions of the Conferences of Parties to the Nairobi Convention that have recommended that this Protocol be reviewed and amended to strengthen its legal framework for an effective regime for biodiversity conservation, and management of marine and coastal ecosystems across sectors and national boundaries.

91. The second negotiations meeting held in Antananarivo, Madagascar, 13–15 September 2023 aligned with the decision’s request to partners, in collaboration with the Secretariat, to support the Contracting Parties in the process of the reviewing of the Protocol Concerning Protected Areas and Wild Fauna and Flora in the Eastern African Region and its annexes. The negotiations considered new and emerging global issues as well as ongoing global and regional discussions on protected areas, wild fauna and wild flora, Sustainable Development Goals, Global Biodiversity Framework Targets, the Paris Agreement, African Union Agenda 2063, and on negotiations for biodiversity conservation in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

92. The second negotiations considered the conservation gains since the Protocol was enacted in 1985 and what contemporary processes were in place to guide future conservation policy and actions at national and regional level. Negotiators reviewed progress made to (i) reduce loss of critical habitats, (ii) to increasing protected area coverage and their representation for ecological connectivity, (iii) efforts made to minimize threats to ecosystems to ensure genetic diversity and maximise conservation and socioeconomic outcomes. National biodiversity status of Marine Protected Areas in supporting conservation strategies that promote persistence of species population, offshore habitats such as seamounts, Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs), and Important Bird Areas provided pertinent inputs in the negotiations. Scientific studies on the percentage of larval fish dispersal corridors and spawning sites of transient reef fish species within each Contracting Party were important sources of information, including the status of locally managed marine areas that support successful socioeconomic outcomes and sustainable fisheries. Knowledge gaps such as on the extent and status of the marine ecosystems including fisheries in the areas beyond the national jurisdiction (ABNJ) were important to promote the significance of the ABNJ on the governance of the marine and coastal resources of a given Contracting Party.

93. The ACP MEAs III Programme supported further improvements on the technical, policy and legal comments and texts contained in the second negotiated draft Protocol during a policy and technical session in Mombasa on 28-30 November 2023. The third negotiations are expected after the eleventh Conference of Parties to the Nairobi Convention (**Annex II**).

Decision CP.10/5. Ocean Governance Strategy

94. Decision CP.10/5.1 requested the Secretariat to finalise the development, in a participatory process, with the support of partners, the ocean governance strategy for the Western Indian Ocean region as a contribution to the African ocean governance strategy. The secretariat supported the established a Task Force to lead the development of the ocean governance strategy for the WIO region. A participatory process led by the Task Force and engaging numerous stakeholder organisations developed inputs to the regional ocean governance strategy for each of the four overlapping and closely inter-related clusters on a) maritime security; b) blue economy c) environment and natural resources; d) knowledge management and capacity building. The task force, Secretariat, the GIZ-funded Western Indian Ocean Governance Initiative (WIOGI) and the Collective Leadership Institute (CLI) organized 10 technical dialogues to provide information for the development of the regional ocean governance strategy. The multistakeholder dialogue on regional oil spill cooperation in the Western Indian Ocean was held on 25 July 2022 and on 2 August 2022 the framework for development of the regional ocean governance strategy was finalized. Other technical dialogues were on the application of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) to ocean governance, the art of collective leadership, information and data sharing, ocean accounting, marine plastic pollution, marine protected areas and other effective conservation measures, water quality, blue financing, the BBNJ Treaty, and on the state of the Western Indian Ocean fisheries. The dialogues were held between June 2022 and April 2024.

95. The regional ocean governance strategy (**Annex III**) is a suite of recommendations prepared for consideration by the Conference of the Parties of the Nairobi Convention. Each of the actions and approaches recommended will require further dialogues and decisions by the

Parties, by the regional institutions involved and by a wide range of other stakeholders, including the business community and civil society organisations. The strategy summarises the state of the Western Indian Ocean in terms of maritime security, the blue economy, the state of the marine environment and ocean knowledge, including marine science and technology, and institutional capacity. An implementation mechanism for the strategy provides for the institutional arrangements, the financing arrangements, and approaches to monitoring and review of the strategy and the principal financing modalities. The strategy calls for effective long-term institutional arrangements capable of addressing all necessary aspects of regional cooperation on ocean governance, where possible by using, adapting, or further developing existing mechanisms. The strategy urges contracting parties to promote regional cooperation provide human and other resources to implement the strategy and by alignment of policies and governance mechanisms related to ocean governance.

96. In response to Decision CP.10/5.2 and CP.10/5.4 on enhancing collaboration with the African Union Commission and regional economic communities on developing the regional ocean governance strategy the Secretariat convened sessions with the Regional Economic Communities (REC) including the 4 December 2023 session that addressed the development of the regional ocean governance strategy and the application of blue economic pathways in the strategy. The strategy developed benefited from the high participation of the RECs (EAC, SADC, IGAD, COMESA), SIOFA, SWIOFC, IOTC, the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC), the African Union Commission (AUC), the Benguela Current Commission (BCC), the Port Management Association of Eastern and Southern Africa Association (PMAESA), and WIOMSA among other partners. The participation enhanced cooperation and collaboration in ocean governance and discussions on biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction. The task force was complemented by representatives of the private sector, civil society and other regional experts co-opted for the purpose.

97. Tanzania and Seychelles co-hosted the Marine Regions Forum 2023, in Dar es Salaam on 5-7 November for experts, policy makers and key stakeholders to exchange knowledge, enhance cooperation, collaborative actions and coordination on ocean governance. Building on shared understanding, inclusivity, and innovation in ocean governance, the forum explored the roles of diverse entities in ocean governance including engagement of the private sector in circular economy, marine plastics pollution, financing sustainable practices, and biodiversity conservation in the high seas. New technologies and tools, data-driven solutions, and the importance of youth voices in ocean governance were amplified.

98. Development of a regional information management strategy (IMS) responded to Decision CP.10/5.3 requesting the Secretariat to strengthen national data centres, through capacity development on information and knowledge management, and in collaboration with partners, to develop a regional information management strategy and mechanisms to address common challenges and take informed decision-making for ocean governance. The strategy was co-created by key stakeholders in the Western Indian Ocean who further committed to own and implement the collective strategy for the viable, innovative, effective and sustainable management of information to improve knowledge and decision making in the region.

99. The heightened demand for marine and coastal governance led to the collaboration between the Nairobi Convention Secretariat and the German Society for International Cooperation under Western Indian Ocean Governance Initiative (WIOGI) project to support the development of the information management strategy. The strategy provides a framework on how marine related information in the Western Indian Ocean can be best collected, stored and analysed for evidence-based decision making from the local to the regional level (**Annex IVa**). The strategy reflected co-creation through vibrant interactions, technical webinars, technical dialogues and dedicated write-shop workshops of regional experts and a multi-stakeholder working group. The Collective Leadership Institute (CLI) and Leibniz Centre for Marine Tropical Research (ZMT) provided further support that enhanced dynamic participation of the multi-stakeholder working group. The strategy plays a pivotal role, aligning strategically with

the regional ocean governance strategy and establishing a synergistic link between scientific insights and policy development.

100. Set for adoption at the eleventh Conference of Parties (COP11) the information management strategy aims to promote data and information sharing and collaboration by recognising the value of evidence-based, data-informed policies and decision-making processes in ocean governance. The strategy encourages providing high quality, timely, and relevant information services, ensuring that decision-makers have access to the best meaningful data and actionable data at the right time. The strategy supports accountability and compliance on metadata standards, quality assurance and policy guidelines, and a robust oversight of governance actions, encouraging transparency and responsibility in management and ocean governance.

101. The ocean governance cluster on ocean accounts led to development of an ecosystem economic valuation methodology for the valuation of coastal and marine ecosystems and for a cost benefit analysis (**Annex IVb**). The methodology and guidelines were tested within the transboundary conservation area (TBCA) between Kenya and Tanzania and will be upscaled in other demonstration sites in the Western Indian Ocean under the NoCaMo project and phase two of the Nairobi Convention – SWIOFC partnership project in Kenya, Mozambique and Tanzania. With an estimated value of nearly US\$1.8 billion, tourism and recreation had the highest ecosystem services value contribution to the TBCA. Services related to the maintenance of rare habitats has a total asset value ranging between US\$700 million and US\$1.4 billion for the TBCA. Gathering of raw resources has an asset value of up to US\$18 million, and the provisioning of food has an asset value of US\$200 million and annual benefit flows of around US\$12 million to US\$14 million per year. The regulation of extreme events has an estimated annual benefit flow of between US\$564,000 and US\$940,000 for the TBCA. The overall asset value of ecosystem services supplied was estimated to exceed \$3.8 billion. The TBCA ecosystem valuation promotes conservation and incorporation of more community-led marine conservation measures to reduce degradation of ecological resources, reduce the area's destructive fishing practices, and for developing alternative employment opportunities.

Decision CP.10/6. Oil Spill Preparedness and Response

102. Decision CP.10/6 called on the Secretariat, as part of the efforts to strengthen the regional response centres and oil spill coordination mechanisms, to support the review of national oil spill contingency plans, identify capacity gaps in oil spill preparedness and response, and prepare oil spill sensitivity maps for Contracting Parties, that required such support. The SAPPHERE project assessed the status of national oil spill contingency mapping (NOSCP) and sensitivity maps for the contracting parties. National Action Plans (NAP) were also developed for each of the participating contracting parties (except South Africa) (**Annex V**). The NAP provides recommendations for the development of the national oil spill preparedness and response system using standardized tools including multi-national training and capacity building programs.

103. The secretariat organized from 9 – 12 May 2023 a regional training on incident command system for oil spill response in collaboration with the Disaster and Conflicts Branch of UNEP, the International Maritime Organization, and the Government of Norway's Oil for Development (OfD) Programme. The training was attended by officials involved in oil spill issues from the nine Western Indian Ocean countries, Ghana, and Uganda. The training was followed closely from 22- 24 May 2023 in Mauritius by a workshop on the effects of oil pollution in the marine environment. The workshop for senior managers and administrators involved in the country's response to oil pollution incidents advocated for effective national framework for responding to oil spills, harmonization of existing sensitivity maps, modelling of oil spills and capacity building on data analysis. The workshop was organised by the IMO's Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme in collaboration with the Ministry of Blue Economy, Marine

Resources, Fisheries & Shipping of Mauritius, and the Ministry of Local Government and Disaster Risk Management and the Government of the People's Republic of China.

Decision CP.10/7. Regional Action Plan to address Ocean Acidification

104. The Regional State of the Coast Report (2015) and the Climate Change Strategy for the Nairobi Convention area (2018) identified ocean acidification as one of the potential threats that the Western Indian Ocean region will need to face. The Ninth Conference of Parties identified ocean acidification as a priority and called for multifaceted actions, capacity development, scientific cooperation, regional monitoring and adaptation activities (Decision CP.9/9.). Decision CP.10/7 requested the Secretariat, with the support of partners, to develop a regional action plan to monitor and support national climate change intervention strategies to minimize the impacts of ocean acidification.

105. In 2022, WIOMSA and partners published “*The Ocean Acidification monitoring report*⁸” from monitoring projects in Kenya, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, South Africa and Tanzania. The report recommended enhanced collaboration and coordination, mapping of capacity and capabilities, and early warning on impacts of ocean acidification on the vulnerabilities of people, food security and ecological degradation of marine ecosystems, social conflicts, and associated policy responses to their interactions. The secretariat initiated in April 2024 the process to develop a regional ocean acidification action plan to be validated by stakeholders for adoption after the eleventh Conference of Parties. The plan factors the baseline interventions, mitigation and adaptation measures, and resilience of socioecological systems against the impacts of ocean acidification, including measures for assessing progress in its implementation, communication, and outreach.

Decision CP.10/8. Area-based Planning Tools for Sustainable Blue Economy

106. The Secretariat and partners (WIOMSA, Nelson Mandela University, and Macquarie University) delivered a regional marine spatial planning strategy in the Western Indian Ocean in response to Decision CP.10/8 that requested the Secretariat to finalise development of a regional marine spatial planning (MSP) strategy for adoption at the eleventh meeting of the Contracting Parties (**Annex VI**). Contracting Parties acknowledged in Decision CP.8/10 and CP.9/10 that a regional MSP strategy was vital to harmonize the different marine and coastal management and spatial planning initiatives in the countries to coordinate on blue economy pathways and to cooperate on governing Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) region. The Marine Spatial Planning Strategy was developed with input from the MSP regional Technical Working Group and wider stakeholders underpinned by sound science, a precautionary approach and a commitment to adaptive and inclusive management. The strategy promotes an interdisciplinary management approach that acknowledges the complex nature of ecological systems and integrates social, ecological, and governance principles to achieve sustainable use of marine resources in an equitable way. The strategy recommends Contracting Parties to mainstream marine spatial planning and the ecosystems-based approach into national development planning processes, including the sustainable blue economy in accordance with Decision CP.10/8.1

107. Capacity building in marine spatial planning was organized for national data institutions and partners from 28 November to 1 December 2022 in Dar es Salaam to enhance key issues and information update on the regional MSP strategy and to promote adoption of the strategy in national processes. The workshop was convened by the secretariat, with the support of the ACP MEAs 3 Programme, the Nairobi Convention-SWIOFC Partnership project the SAPPHERE project, the Western Indian Ocean Governance Initiative (WIOGI) project and the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management (SwAM). A follow up capacity building on

⁸ WIOMSA (2022). Report on Ocean Acidification Monitoring in the Western Indian Ocean. WIOMSA Series (Online), No. 2. pp xii + 62 Zanzibar Town: WIOMSA.

marine spatial planning and information management held from 20-24 November 2023 in Mombasa, Kenya created awareness of the regional MSP strategy and enhanced national capacities for MSP and capacities for handling MSP data. The WIO Symphony tool for assessing cumulative impacts of human activities in the marine environment was further promoted. Marine spatial planning pilot activities were being implemented in Kenya, Tanzania and South Africa under the Nairobi Convention-SWIOFC Partnership project and the WIOSAP project. Additional capacity building webinars, seminars and training modules on marine spatial planning were conducted over the period 2022, 2023 and 2024 by the ocean programme of the SwAM focusing MSP and blue growth, data collection, the MSP process, transnational MSP and impact assessment.

108. The development of the scoping study of the state of marine spatial planning in Tanzania⁹ in 2023 provided a strong basis for the preparation of the country's Marine Spatial Planning Framework to mainstream sustainable blue economy into national development planning framework. The report put forward 23 recommendations to address the critical gaps and potential barriers to the effective implementation of MSP across the country's exclusive economic zone and provided a roadmap for implementation plan with actions to address the 23 recommendations for future MSP activities.

109. Decision CP.10/8.2 urged Contracting Parties to establish a network of marine protected areas, and other effective conservation measures, such as, locally managed marine areas, community fisheries management areas, taking into account climate refugia for threatened habitats and species. In support, the Nairobi Convention through its ACP-MEAs 3 project in collaboration with partners (FAO, WIOMSA, IUCN, Varuna, Minderoo Foundation) convened a capacity development workshop in Dar es Salaam on effective management of marine protected areas in the Western Indian Ocean Region. The workshop on 1-4 November 2023 focused on enhancing capacities for management effectiveness of MPAs. It entailed a regional diagnosis of challenges and priorities facing MPAs, the process of MPA certification and of developing and implementing adaptive management and monitoring plans. Innovations on setting new MPA management standards were also addressed, including reporting in line with SDG 14 and the Global Biodiversity Framework.

Decision CP.10/9. Monitoring of the marine and coastal ecosystems

110. *The Regional Framework for Ecosystem Monitoring in the Western Indian Ocean (Annex VII)* was developed as a guideline for the Contracting Parties of the Nairobi Convention and partners to provide a standardized approach on the development of national activities to support ecosystem monitoring in the region. The framework encourages the development and review of long-term monitoring programmes through integrated, coordinated, collaborative and effective partnership across the Western Indian Ocean region. The framework benefited from 30 ecosystem indicators identified from national marine ecosystems diagnostic analyses and the regional transboundary diagnostic analysis ranging from water quality degradation, habitat and community modification, declines in living marine resources, environmental variability and extreme events. The framework supports efforts by contracting parties towards ecosystem health, conservation of biodiversity, sustainable blue economy and economic development and responded to Decision CP.10/9 requesting the secretariat to develop a regional coastal and marine ecosystem indicator monitoring framework, to support Contracting Parties to periodically assess the state of the marine and coastal environment and for adoption by a meeting of national Focal Points before the eleventh meeting of the Contracting Parties.

⁹ URT 2023. Scoping Study: the state of Marine Spatial Planning in Tanzania. No. 1. No. 2. Pp xvi + 230. DODOMA.

Decision CP.10/10. Water Quality and Marine litter

111. Marine litter in densely populated areas has been exacerbated by increasing coastal developments and upstream urban areas in the region. Responding to Decision CP.10/10 the Secretariat in collaboration with partners established a marine litter regional technical working group for develop a regional strategy or action plan for the management of marine litter and microplastic and capacity-building programmes in the WIO region. The group of experts on marine litter and microplastics produced four marine litter assessments on the state of knowledge on marine litter and microplastics in the Western Indian Ocean region; economic consequences of unmanaged plastics and economic opportunities in the Western Indian Ocean; Effectiveness of measures undertaken and opportunities on marine litter plastics; and a synthesis report. These reports provide critical information for the region to support the contracting parties in these global negotiations on biodiversity and plastics pollution. The action responded to Decision CP.10/10.1 requesting the Secretariat to establish a regional task force on water quality to support the development of a water quality monitoring framework and guidelines on national interventions, and for adoption by a meeting of national Focal Points before the eleventh meeting of the Contracting of Parties.

112. Co-organized in Seychelles in December 2023 by the Nairobi Convention, the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm (BRS) Conventions, and the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA) the Western Indian Ocean Plastics and Chemicals meeting brought together governments from the region, the private sector, research institutions and the civil society. The meeting identified common interests and potential joint activities between the Nairobi Convention and BRS Conventions and agreed to initiate a comprehensive life cycle-based revision of the Western Indian Ocean Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter to include downstream plastic life cycle aspects, chemical issues and the role of ocean currents impacting even countries with robust waste management systems. The potential partnership between the Nairobi Convention and the BRS Conventions is expected to equip WIO countries with improved capacity to negotiate and implement the legally binding instrument on plastics (when it comes to effect) and in line with the streamlined Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter plastics and hazardous chemical wastes. The meeting was in response to Decision CP.10/10.2 urging the Secretariat and partners to finalise the preparation of a regional action plan to address marine litter and plastic pollution for adoption at the eleventh meeting of the Contracting Parties.

113. The secretariat through the WIOSAP project supported the development of a strategic framework for coastal and marine water quality management (C&MWQM). The framework included a situation assessment on marine pollution and set guidelines for water and sediment quality targets for coastal and marine areas (**Annex VIII**). Country-level training workshops for implementation of the strategic framework and plans were convened virtually in February 2024, in-person training from 4 to 8 March 2024 in Durban, South Africa. A related training held 15-20 April 2024 in Mbeya, Tanzania accelerated the uptake of integrated source-to-sea system thinking to address challenges linked to inadequate environmental flows, impacts of land-based activities, marine water pollution and decision support models for land-sea planning.

114. Over the period 2024-2025 and with support from the ACP MEAs 3 project the Zanzibar Fisheries and Marine Resources Research Institute (ZAFIRI) was implementing a water quality assessment for marine and coastal waters around Zanzibar Archipelago to provide baseline data for coastal water pollution monitoring. The coastal and marine water quality monitoring focuses on achieving seawater water quality fit for all designated uses such as marine aquaculture, industrial use, recreational use, as well as the protection of biodiversity and ecosystem functioning. The project aligns with the Zanzibar Development Vision 2050 and the Zanzibar Blue Economy Policy of 2022 integrating Zanzibar into the Indian Ocean cluster of small island economies, a cohesive blue economy framework, that involves effective maritime governance and sustainable management of Zanzibar's coastal and marine environments.

Tourism and fisheries sectors are among the fundamental sectors of the Zanzibar economy and are dependent on a healthy ocean.

Decision CP.10/11. Science-Policy dialogue

115. Decision CP.10/11 requested the Secretariat to continue organising regional and national science-policy dialogues for scientists and policy makers to support decision making for improved ocean governance. The 5-7 December 2023 Science–Policy dialogue held in Maputo, Mozambique detailed topical emerging scientific findings for improved ocean governance, and essential synergies for addressing global and regional agreements, strategies and frameworks (**Annex IX**). The regional dialogue was organized in collaboration with the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA) and the Oceanographic Institute of Mozambique and delivered progress in the development of various regional strategies and frameworks under the Nairobi Convention. It also provided an opportunity for policy and decision makers to engage with scientists on the best ways to consider scientific data and information in policy formulation and implementation. The dialogue outcomes were several scientific, technical and policy recommendations for consideration by the contracting parties.

Decision CP.10/12. Projects and Partnerships

116. The Secretariat supported the implementation of an array of projects and developed new projects proposals for donor funding. A private sector engagement strategy was developed (**Annex X**) while discussions were ongoing for cooperation and strategic partnerships with IOTC, SIOFA, BRS Conventions, IORA, IGAD, CSIR, EAC, and COMESA. Memoranda of Understanding with partners such as with IOC, WIOMSA were being updated.

COP 9 Decisions implemented during the intersessional period

Decision CP.9/1. Work programme for 2018–2022

117. Decision CP.9/1 Part 3. Request the Secretariat to develop a regional integrated programme for the full implementation of the strategic action programmes developed under the WIO-LaB project, the Agulhas and Somali Current Large Marine Ecosystems Project, the Southwest Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission and the Climate Change Strategy for the Nairobi Convention area and their extension beyond the lifespan of the Strategic Action Programme for the protection of the Western Indian Ocean from Land-based Sources and Activities and the Western Indian Ocean Large Marine Ecosystems Strategic Action Programme Policy Harmonization and Institutional Reforms project, for the efficient and harmonized delivery of project outputs and outcomes, and to report on progress to the Contracting Parties at their tenth meeting.

118. The Secretariat working with partners and regional experts initiated development of a regional integrated action programme that was to merge and update the two Transboundary Diagnostic Analyses (TDA) and the two Strategic Action Programmes (SAP) for the Western Indian Ocean into a programme entitled: *Implementation of the Western Indian Ocean Strategic Action Programme in support of a sustainable regional Blue Economy*¹⁰. The new strategic action programme is expected to align to important regional, continental and global policy commitments and processes including the: Kunming-Montral Biodiversity Protocol, UN Decade of Ocean Science, UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration, Paris 2015 agreement and subsequent UNFCCC commitments, Agenda 2030 on SDGs, Agenda 2063 on the Africa We Want, Africa Integrated Maritime Strategy (AIMS 2050) and the BBNJ Treaty.

¹⁰ Updated TDA and New Strategic Action Programme to be provided as **Annex XI**

Decision CP. 9/9. Climate Change adaptation and mitigation

119. Decision CP.9.9 Part 3, requested the Secretariat to develop programmes and projects on resilient blue growth in the context of climate change adaptation and mitigation to support implementation of Climate Change Strategy for the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Nairobi Convention area. In 2019, the Nairobi Convention developed a regional Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment (CCVA) toolkit to address the urgent regional challenge of enabling countries in the Western Indian Ocean region to adapt more effectively to climate change and variability impacts. For validation purposes, the toolkit was applied in conducting ecological vulnerability assessments of mangroves in four countries (Madagascar, Mozambique, Tanzania and Kenya). In addition, national assessments in the four countries have been completed to document the social-adaptive capacity of the local communities that depend on coral reefs, seagrass beds and mangroves to the effects of climate change, leading to the production of four country reports stipulating the sensitivity and adaptive capacity of selected coastal communities. A synthesis report (2022) offered recommendations to increase adaptive capacity and reduce the sensitivity of vulnerable communities to climate change in the WIO region (**Annex XII**).

Decision CP.9/11. Development of marine protected areas and critical habitats outlooks

120. Decision CP.9/11 Part 4, requested the Secretariat, working jointly with the Contracting Parties, to periodically prepare thematic outlooks on the state of the marine and coastal environment, including marine protected areas, and critical habitats such as coral reefs, seagrass and mangroves. The MPA Outlook for the Western Indian Ocean was launched in 2021 as a contribution to regional progress towards SDG 14.5 and served as a baseline for the Global Biodiversity Framework 30x30 target. A sister Critical Habitats Outlook has been produced to offer options for enhancing the management and protection of coastal and marine resources in the WIO region as part implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework (**Annex XIII**).

Decision CP.9/13. Enhancing cooperation, collaboration and support with partners

121. Decision CP.9/13 Part 9 requested the Secretariat in collaboration with International Maritime Organization, the Port Management Association of Eastern and Southern Africa and other partners, to undertake a baseline study and scenario analysis, and develop a toolkit for green port development and expansion in the Western Indian Ocean region and report on progress thereon at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. The Maritime Technology Cooperation Center (MTCC), the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Macquarie University and WIOMSA partnered with the Secretariat to conduct a situation analysis/baseline (**Annex XIV**), scenarios for port development (**Annex XV**) and a Toolkit for Port Development in a Blue Economy (**Annex XVI**) through a very participatory regional process. They are ready for endorsement at the 11th COP of the Convention.

Decision CP.10/13. Financial matters

122. The 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024 invoices for the assessed contribution to the Trust Fund were disbursed in accordance with the annual financial cycles of Contracting Parties. The financial tables below provide expenditure reports on the status and use of the Regional Seas Trust Fund for the Eastern African Region and for projects implemented by the Convention. Pursuant to decisions CP.5/8, CP.6/5, CP.7/20 CP.8/15, CP.9/15 and CP.10/13 the Contracting Parties are urged to continue to make both assessed and voluntary contributions to the Eastern Africa Trust Fund

Table 3

Expenditure report for the Eastern Africa Trust Fund for 2021–2023 for preparation and implementation of ongoing and proposed projects

Expenditure Report for the Eastern Africa Trust Fund for 2021-2023 (by calendar year in United States dollars)			
Expenditure	2021	2022	2023
Personnel component			
Coordinator (P5)	242 421.82	243 789.27	244 841.83
Administrative Assistant (G5)	32 012.52	31 712.81	30 978.91
UNV		-2 254.35	
Consultant		1.00	
<i>Sub-total personnel</i>	274 434.34	273 248.73	275 820.74
Operational costs			
Operational costs	39 674.70	8 308.67	14 415.46
<i>Sub-total operational costs</i>	39 674.70	18 308.67	14 415.46
Activity cost			
Contract Services			
Travel		23 502.25	13 985.74
<i>Sub-total activity costs</i>		23 502.25	13 985.74
Total	314 109.04	315 059.65	304 221.94
Programme Support Costs (PSC)	40 905.39	41 109.69	39 368.15
Grand Total	355 014.43	356 169.34	343 590.09

Table 4: Expenditure and budget for SAPPHIRE project
(by calendar year, in United States dollars)

Expenditure and Budget Report for the SAPPHIRE Project (by calendar year in United States dollars)					
Expenditure	2021	2022	2023	Total Expenditure	2024 budget
Personnel component					
Staff Personnel and Consultants	429 027.68	336 845.63	291 127.66	1 057 000.97	867 842.00
<i>Sub-total personnel</i>	429 027.68	336 845.63	291 127.66	1 057 000.97	867 842.00
Operational costs					
Operational costs	3 896.36	12 834.91	14 656.35	31 387.62	49 961.00
Supplies	790.71	3 793.67	-4 327.79	256.59	20 500.00
Equipment and furniture	6 789.72	1 860.02	-7 367.43	1 282.31	12 689.00
<i>Sub-total operational costs</i>	11 476.79	18 488.60	2 961.13	32 926.52	83 150.00
Activity cost					
Contract Services	-6 712.70	8 768.28	12 027.38	14 082.96	141 473.00
Transfer/Grant to Implementing Partner	185 660.00	764 185.64	352 934.05	1 302 779.69	473 687.00
Travel	-138.00	185 839.81	294 173.73	479 875.54	767 705.00
<i>Sub-total activity costs</i>	178 809.30	958 793.73	659 135.16	1 796 738.19	1 382 865.00
Total	619 313.77	1 314 127.96	953 223.95	2 886 665.68	2 333 857.00
Programme Support Costs					
Grand Total	619 313.77	1 314 127.96	953 223.95	2 886 665.68	2 333 857.00

Table 5: Expenditure and Budget for WIOSAP project
(by calendar year, in United States dollars)

Expenditure and Budget Report for the WIOSAP Project (by calendar year in United States dollars)					
Expenditure	2021	2022	2023	Total Expenditure	2024 Budget
Personnel component					
Staff Personnel and Consultants	362 486.78	473 498.61	212 907.46	1 048 892.85	411 000.00
Sub-total personnel	362 486.78	473 498.61	212 907.46	1 048 892.85	411 000.00
Operational costs					
Operational costs	2 356.09	19 833.70	30 768.13	52 957.92	15 000.00
Equipment and furniture	190.00			190.00	
Supplies		3 674.00	-3 674.00	-	5 000.00
Sub-total operational costs	2 546.09	23 507.70	27 094.13	53 147.92	20 000.00
Activity cost					
contract Services	-6 730.00	13 498.12	5 616.92	12 385.04	10 000.00
Transfer/Grant to Implementing Partner	466 492.68	871 750.00	230 009.95	1 568 252.63	75 000.00
Travel	-437.24	252 925.78	357 970.37	610 458.91	268 298.14
Sub-total activity costs	459 325.44	1 138 173.90	593 597.24	2 191 096.58	353 298.14
Total	824 358.31	1 635 180.21	833 598.83	3 293 137.35	784 298.14
Programme Support Costs					
Grand Total	824 358.31	1 635 180.21	833 598.83	3 293 137.35	784 298.14

Table 6: Budget for project on integrated management of the marine and coastal resources of the Northern Mozambique Channel (NoCaMo project)
(by calendar year, in United States dollars)

Expenditure	2023	2024	2025	2026
Personnel component		Expenditure	Budget	
Coordinator		52 000.00	52 000.00	52 000.00
UNV	19 889.88	20 000.00	20 000.00	20 000.00
Sub-total personnel	19 889.88	72 000.00	72 000.00	72 000.00
Operational costs				
Operational costs				
Sub-total operational costs	-			
Activity cost				
Contract Services		32 000.00		
Transfer/Grant to IP	116 752.00	80 600.00		
Travel	8 560.80	12 000.00	8 000.00	1 000.00
Sub-total activity costs	125 312.80	124 600.00	8 000.00	1 000.00
Total	145 202.68			
Programme Support Costs (PSC)	18 876.37	18 213.00	6 832.00	7 003.00
Grand Total	164 079.05	18 213.00	6 832.00	7 003.00

Table 7. Expenditure Report for the Partnership project for Marine and Coastal Governance and Fisheries Management for Sustainable Blue Growth (Component 1) for 2021-2023
(by calendar year in United States dollars)

Expenditure	2021	2022	2023	Total expenditure
Personnel component				
Staff Personnel and Consultants	106 888.53	151 739.98	184 660.65	443 289.16
Sub-total personnel	106 888.53	151 739.98	184 660.65	443 289.16
Operational costs				
Operational costs		152.03	1 652.93	1 804.96
Sub-total operational costs	-	152.03	1 652.93	1 804.96
Activity cost				
contract Services		2 059.89	-792.87	1 267.02
Transfer/Grant to Implementing Partner	52 060.32	481 042.36	204 000.00	737 102.68
Travel		103 863.64	12 129.45	115 993.09
Sub-total activity costs	52 060.32	586 965.89	215 336.58	854 362.79
Total	158 948.85	738 857.90	401 650.16	1 299 456.91
Programme Support Costs	35 170.48	51 720.11	27 976.70	114 867.29
Grand Total	194 119.33	790 578.01	429 626.86	1 414 324.20

Table 8. *Expenditure and Budget Report for Capacity building project related to Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA) in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Countries - Phase three - (ACP-MEAs 3)*
(by calendar year in United States dollars)

Expenditure	2021	2022	2023	Total Expenditure
Personnel component				
Programme personnel	64 603.75	19 867.90	4 085.74	88 557.39
Sub-total personnel	64 603.75	19 867.90	4 085.74	88 557.39
Operational costs				
Operational costs	15 778.00	4 080.00	7 189.48	27 047.48
Equipment and furniture	4 060.62	1 896.00		5 956.62
Supplies	64.96	3 663.00	-3 663.00	64.96
Sub-total operational costs	19 903.58	9 639.00	3 526.48	33 069.06
Activity cost				
Contract Services	6 675.00	28 545.89	663.74	35 884.63
Transfer/Grantor IP		129 998.00		129 998.00
Travel		173 821.92	216 994.84	390 816.76
Sub-total activity costs	6 675.00	332 365.81	217 658.58	556 699.39
Total	91 182.33	361 872.71	225 270.80	678 325.84
Programme Support Costs (PSC)	6 382.77	24 660.74	15 987.45	47 030.96
Grand Total	97 565.10	386 533.45	241 258.25	725 356.80

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