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

Eleventh meeting of the Conference of Parties
Antananarivo, 22 August 2024

Decisions of the Eleventh meeting of the Conference of Contracting Parties to the Nairobi Convention

Preamble

We, the Contracting Parties to the Nairobi Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Western Indian Ocean Region (hereinafter referred to as the Nairobi Convention),

Noting with appreciation the progress made in implementation of the work programme for the period 2022-2024, and cognizant of the need for a work programme for 2025-2028, as well as the need for a new Integrated Regional Programme 2025- 2035,

Recalling that the 2022-2024 work programme was funded by the regular payments of assessed and voluntary contributions to the Regional Seas Trust Fund for the Eastern African Region by the Contracting Parties and with contributions by partners through implementation of collaborative projects and activities,

Aware that we, as the Contracting Parties, have a shared common responsibility and concern for ocean health by addressing the emerging issues in the whole ocean space, including ocean governance,

Appreciating the progress made in implementing the decisions and programmes mandated by the meetings of Contracting Parties,

Noting the progress made in ratifying 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,

Welcoming the adoption of the Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management in the Western Indian Ocean region on 12 September 2023 in Antananarivo, Madagascar,

Noting the adoption of the Kunming-Montreal 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,

Further noting the progress made by the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee, as established by UNEP/EA.5.2/Res.14 of the United Nations Environment Assembly on the development of an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment,

Committed to further addressing the key environmental challenges facing the WIO region, including the triple planetary crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution and waste,

Further committed to advancing sustainable blue economy in the WIO region, through the sustainable utilization of ocean resources, including by strengthening relevant frameworks, tools and approaches such as marine spatial planning, economic valuation and ocean accounting,

Acknowledging with appreciation the financial and technical support provided by partners including regional and international organisations towards the implementation of the work programme of the Nairobi Convention,

Stressing the need for further developing and enhancing strategic partnerships to advance the work of the Nairobi Convention especially in the implementation of the new and ambitious integrated regional programme,

Appreciating the support provided by the United Nations Environment Programme, as the Secretariat of the Convention, and partners in the implementation of the work of the Nairobi Convention, its protocols, action plans and work programmes,

Decide,

Decision CP.11/1. Approval of the Integrated Regional Programme 2025- 2035 and Programme of Work for 2025-2028

1. To approve and operationalize the 10-year Integrated Regional Programme for the period 2025-2035 for the Nairobi Convention as the overarching framework to guide the Convention's work.
2. To approve and implement, with the support of partners, the 4-year Programme of Work for the period 2025-2028.
3. To request the Secretariat to finalize the Ecosystem Indicator Monitoring framework for the Western Indian Ocean region and submit it for adoption at the twelfth meeting of the Conference of Parties, in order to guide effective national and regional reporting on the implementation of the Programme of Work.
4. To request the Secretariat, in collaboration with partners, to report on the progress of implementation of the Programme of Work 2025-2028 at the regular meetings of the Focal Points as well as at the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties.
5. To request the United Nations Environment Programme, as the Secretariat of the Convention, to regularly report at the meetings of the Contracting Parties on its support in the implementation of the Programme of Work for the period 2025-2028 in line with UNEP/EA.6/Res.6 of the United Nations Environment Assembly on fostering national action to address global environmental challenges through increased cooperation between the United Nations Environment Assembly, the United Nations Environment Programme and multilateral environmental agreements.

Decision CP 11/2: Financial matters

1. To request the Secretariat to provide timely invoices to the Contracting Parties for their current year's contributions by the first day of January, June or September of every year.

2. To request the Secretariat to continue reporting on the status and expenditure of the Regional Seas Trust Fund for the Eastern African Region at the meetings of the Contracting Parties.
3. To request Contracting Parties and partners to support the Secretariat in mobilizing resources for implementation of the Programme of Work 2025-2028 as well as other projects and activities.

Decision CP11/3: Contributing to the entry into force of 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

1. To urge Contracting Parties to sign and ratify 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 in a timely manner.
2. To request the Secretariat to facilitate development of a common regional vision and framework for the implementation of 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.
3. To request the Contracting Parties, with the support of the Secretariat and Partners, to carry out capacity and technology needs assessments, and support activities such as scientific research, raising awareness and outreach and preparation of environmental impact assessments that are essential to the implementation of 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.
4. To urge Contracting Parties to enhance regional cooperation through partnerships for the management of marine biological diversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction or development of area-based management tools.

Decision CP 11/4: Combating plastics pollution in the coastal and marine environment based on a life cycle approach for human health and the environment

1. To urge Contracting Parties to continue to participate in the intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legal binding instrument on plastic pollution including in the marine environment.
2. To encourage Contracting Parties to support common positions of their respective regional groups in the Inter-governmental Negotiating Committee to advance their region's interests.
3. To request the Secretariat, in collaboration with partners, to support the Contracting Parties to effectively participate in the ongoing Inter-Governmental Negotiating Committee negotiations as well as in the implementation of the legally binding instrument when adopted.
4. To request the Secretariat, with the support of partners, to revise the Regional Action Plan for Marine Litter taking into account the draft regional action plan to combat marine plastics pollution developed by the Indian Ocean Commission, to integrate actions to address plastic pollution.
5. To urge Contracting Parties to strengthen regional networks and collaborations on plastic pollution research such as the Regional Technical Working Group on Marine Litter and Microplastics.

Decision CP 11/5: Implementing the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

1. To urge Contracting Parties to implement the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and regional biodiversity frameworks, as appropriate, by aligning their policies and laws to the framework, including updating their national biodiversity strategies and action plans to include marine and coastal biodiversity.
2. To request the Secretariat, with the support of partners, to strengthen the capacity of Contracting Parties to implement their biodiversity commitments, especially the 30 by 30 targets.
3. To request the Secretariat, in collaboration with partners, to support the development of regional and national policy and legal frameworks and other tools, as appropriate, for effective, inclusive, and equitably governed seascapes that encompass networks of ecologically representative and connected marine protected areas, other effective conservation measures and locally managed marine areas.
4. To urge Contracting Parties to conduct assessments and improve the effectiveness of existing and newly established marine protected areas.
5. To request the Secretariat to develop awareness initiatives on the role of other effective conservation measures in supporting the region in meeting its Global Biodiversity Framework targets.
6. To urge Contracting Parties to recognize and formalize area-based management systems that are co-managed with local communities.

Decision CP 11/6 Regional Ocean Governance Strategy for the Western Indian Ocean region

1. To urge Contracting Parties to adopt and implement the Regional Ocean Governance Strategy at regional level and align their national policy frameworks to the Strategy.
2. To request the Secretariat, in collaboration with partners, to support the Contracting Parties to harmonize policy frameworks for effective ocean governance across transboundary areas.
3. To request the Secretariat, in collaboration with partners and Contracting Parties, to develop a long-term financing mechanism to ensure sustainable implementation of the Regional Ocean Governance Strategy.

Decision CP11/7: The Information Management Strategy for the Western Indian Ocean region

1. To urge Contracting Parties to adopt and implement the Information Management Strategy for the Western Indian Ocean region.
2. To request the Secretariat to enhance the Clearing House Mechanism of the Nairobi Convention by establishing a secure, centralized database infrastructure to accommodate data and information storage and exchange at both national and regional levels.

Decision CP 11/8: Strengthening the Science-Policy Interface

1. To urge Contracting Parties to integrate the use of science in policy making.
2. To urge Contracting Parties to strengthen the participation of government, private sector, academia and civil society in science-policy platform dialogues to promote research, business and investment decisions.
3. To request Contracting Parties and partners to enhance resources to support scientific research in marine and coastal environment in the Western Indian Ocean region, and uptake of the results to inform policy and decision making for effective conservation and management of coastal and marine resources.

4. To request the Secretariat to continue organising regional and national science-policy dialogues for scientists, practitioners and policy makers to support decision making for improved ocean governance and share the outcomes of such dialogues.

Decision CP 11/9: Ratification of Amended Nairobi Convention and its Protocols

1. To urge Contracting Parties that are yet to sign, ratify or accede to the Amended Nairobi Convention, the Protocol on Land based Sources and Activities in the Western Indian Ocean region, and the Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management, to do so in a timely manner.
2. To note the progress made in the negotiation of the revised Protocol on Protected Areas and Wildlife and request the Secretariat to organize the final negotiation sessions and convene a conference of plenipotentiaries to adopt the revised protocol before the twelfth Conference of Parties.

Decision CP 11/10: Mainstreaming climate change concerns in marine biodiversity protection

1. To urge Contracting Parties to operationalise the Western Indian Ocean Regional Climate Change Strategy at regional and national levels.
2. To request the Secretariat, in collaboration with partners, to strengthen the capacity of Contracting Parties in the development of blue carbon projects and other climate change financing mechanisms.
3. To urge Contracting Parties to advance and support climate finance investments that support the resilience of local communities.
4. To urge Contracting Parties to address climate change through their Nationally Determined Contributions and mainstreaming climate change in integrated coastal zone management in support of, as well as through the Africa Union Climate Change and Resilience Development Strategy and Action Plan (2022-2032), the Nairobi Declaration on Climate Change and Call to Action and the 2023 Moroni Declaration.

Decision CP11/11: Conservation, Restoration and Management of Critical Habitats and Species

1. To urge Contracting Parties to strengthen measures for the protection, restoration and sustainable management of blue carbon ecosystems including seagrass mangroves and salt marshes.
2. To request the Secretariat, in collaboration with partners, to support the development of a regional seagrass strategy, vision, and action plan.
3. To urge Contracting Parties to strengthen institutional arrangements to address knowledge gaps for blue carbon systems in their national ocean management frameworks and national institutions.
4. To urge Contracting Parties to continue protecting highly threatened species including but not limited to sharks, rays, sea birds, dugongs, marine turtles and coelacanths.
5. To request the Secretariat in collaboration with Contracting Parties to finalize the development of the Regional Mangrove Vision and Action Plan.

Decision CP 11/12: Improving environmental quality through Source-to-Sea approaches.

1. To request the Secretariat, in collaboration with partners, to support implementation of the regional Strategic Framework on Coastal and Marine Water Quality Management and the Toolkit for Sustainable Port Development.
2. To request the Secretariat, in collaboration with partners, to support efforts to control, manage and prevent coastal and marine pollution through Source-to-Sea approaches.
3. To urge Contracting Parties to strengthen their Integrated Water Resource Management frameworks by incorporating Source-to-Sea approaches.
4. To request the Secretariat in collaboration with partners to establish a regional community of practice on Integrated Water Resource Management to support the implementation of relevant existing frameworks, processes, guidelines or strategies.
5. To request the Secretariat in collaboration with Contracting Parties and partners to finalize and implement the Regional Contingency Plan for Preparedness and Response to Marine Pollution Incidents within the Region.

Decision CP 11/13: Strengthening Marine Spatial Planning

1. To request the Secretariat, in collaboration with partners, to develop a regional vision and roadmap for marine spatial plan that will guide sub-regional, national, and local marine spatial plans through the implementation of the Regional Marine Spatial Planning Strategy.
2. To request Contracting Parties to mainstream ecosystem-based marine spatial planning into national development plans, carry out ecosystem and social baseline assessments, and apply systems thinking approaches for purposes of designing marine spatial plans and sustainable blue economy.
3. To request Contracting Parties to use marine spatial planning tools, such as, WIO-Symphony to assess the strategic, cumulative environmental impacts of human activities for evidence-based decision making.

Decision CP11/14: Economic valuation and ocean accounting

To request the Secretariat to collaborate with partners in developing tools and methodologies on ocean accounting and natural capital accounting with the purpose of increasing knowledge, capacity development and harmonizing and use of these tools in tracking implementation of sustainable blue economy and ocean governance.

Decision CP11/15: Environmental impacts of large infrastructure projects

1. To urge Contracting Parties, in planning and executing large infrastructure projects with potential transboundary environmental, social, and health impacts, to take necessary measures to avoid or mitigate such impacts in a collaborative manner.
2. To request the Secretariat in collaboration with partners to assist the Contracting Parties to undertake studies and assessments to inform policy decisions on large infrastructure projects with potential transboundary environmental, social and health impacts and report to the twelfth meeting of the Contracting Parties.

Decision CP 11/16: Support for Projects and Partnerships

1. To urge Contracting Parties to establish partnerships and programmes with partners on ocean action and take advantage of the opportunities under the climate change and biodiversity financial mechanisms and arrangements.
2. To request the Secretariat to support the implementation of ongoing projects and agree to develop new projects, where necessary, including:
 - (a) Consortium for the Conservation of the Coastal and Marine Ecosystems in the Western Indian Ocean region in Northern Mozambique Channel through the Integrated Management of the Marine and Coastal Resources of the Northern Mozambique Channel Project and development of a second phase of the project,
 - (b) European Union Sustainable Western Indian Ocean Programme focusing on ocean governance, business investments and nature-based solutions in the management of coastal and marine ecosystems in the region,
 - (c) Collaboration with the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions on work on plastics and associated chemicals,
 - (d) Ports Management Association of Eastern and Southern Africa in the roll-out of the Toolkit for Green Port Development in the Blue Economy,
 - (e) Food and Agriculture Organization in the implementation of the Partnership for Resilient Marine and Coastal Ecosystems and Livelihoods,
 - (f) Indian Ocean Commission in the development of a regional plastics and associated chemicals strategy through the plastics expedition programme (ExpLOI) as well as the implementation of the Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management through the Coastal Resilience Programme for the Western Indian Ocean (RECOS),
 - (g) Regional Economic Communities in the WIO and Indian Ocean Commission in the implementation of the Regional Ocean Governance Strategy,
 - (h) Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association in the implementation of the Science, Capacity and Assimilation for a Sustainable Blue Future, to enhance Policy Action project,
 - (i) Operation and further development of the WIO Symphony tool in collaboration with Contracting Parties and the Swedish Agency for Water and Marine Management (SwAM),
 - (j) *Institut de Recherche pour le Développement* (the French National Research Institute for Sustainable Development) and other partners through the BRIDGE Programme for the Western Indian Ocean region financed by France for the period of 2023-2032,
 - (k) Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) in the implementation of the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development funded programme of the Western Indian Ocean Governance Initiative project and Our Blue Future Initiative to support operationalization of the Regional Ocean Governance Strategy,
 - (l) International Union for the Conservation of Nature in the implementation of the Great Blue Wall Initiative, and
 - (m) East African Community, Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association in the implementation of the Transboundary Conservation Area between Kenya and Tanzania project.