

## **WIOMSA Statement at the Eleventh Conference of Parties to the Nairobi Convention – COP 11**

### **WIOMSA's Support for the Nairobi Convention Programme of Works**

WIOMSA is spearheading the "*Sustainable Blue Future in the Western Indian Ocean - Institutional Strengthening through Science, Capacity, and Assimilation for a Sustainable Blue Future*" (SCALABLE) project. This initiative aims to bolster a resilient and productive Blue Economy in the Western Indian Ocean (WIO) by advancing knowledge, capacity, partnerships, and resource mobilization. Through SCALABLE, WIOMSA will support WIO regions Ocean Action and also the Nairobi Convention PoW in the following areas:

1. **Enhancing Knowledge and Policy:** WIOMSA will drive research and build institutional capacity to manage ecosystem and coastal biodiversity effectively.
2. **Developing Capacity for Integrated Ecosystem-Based Management:** The project will provide tools and training in Marine Spatial Planning, support the implementation of global commitments such as the Global Biodiversity Framework, and foster the development of Blue Economy sectors through technology transfer and knowledge exchange. Communication strategies and leadership cultivation will also be integral.
3. **Enhancing Knowledge Assimilation and Out-Scaling:** Strengthening the WIO science-policy platform, integrating scientific, Indigenous, and local knowledge will support Blue Economy decision-making. WIOMSA will ensure transparent data sharing and disseminate research findings, best practices, and updates on marine species and ecosystems to policymakers and resource users.
4. **Strengthening Partnerships for Innovative Solutions:** The program will support research, innovation, and coordination across regional Blue Economy programs. This includes enhancing existing networks like WIOMPAN, WIMs, and WIOECN, and promoting expertise and resource sharing to address challenges and solutions.
5. **Addressing Cross-Cutting Issues:** WIOMSA will focus on gender inclusivity and human rights by engaging local communities in conservation efforts and promoting sustainable practices. Special efforts will be made to empower women and youth in Blue Economy sectors.

WIOMSA's key Blue Economy areas of work include:

- Conservation and sustainable use of marine resources, with a focus on managing small-scale fisheries and combating illegal, unregulated, and unreported fishing.
- Integrating blue carbon and ecosystem services into climate change and coastal policies.
- Strengthening institutional frameworks for Blue Economy governance in the WIO.
- Ensuring equitable social, economic, and environmental outcomes while safeguarding natural capital.
- Supporting Green Ports initiatives to mitigate maritime environmental impacts.
- Creating a regulatory environment for sustainable blue energy development.

Through the SCALABLE program, WIOMSA is committed to advancing the Nairobi Convention Programme of Works and fostering a sustainable Blue Economy in the Western Indian Ocean.