

S A P P H I R E

PROJECT

Regions of the world's oceans, otherwise known as Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs), are under threat from overfishing, pollution, invasive species, climate change and other human activities. Because LMEs are either shared by multiple countries or beyond any one country's national jurisdiction, fighting back against their degradation requires strong ocean governance.

The Nairobi Convention, whose ten member states formed a partnership to combat ocean degradation and strengthen the protection and sustainable management of the Western Indian Ocean (WIO) region, is a natural platform through which cross-country governance issues can be addressed.

The Nairobi Convention's SAPPHIRE project promotes policy harmonization and institutional reform to help improve the management of the WIO LME. It will build capacity among governments, conventions, regional economic communities (RECs), partners, inter-governmental organizations, and the private sector in sustainable resource management and ocean governance.

Implemented by UNDP, executed by UN Environment

Progress (as of July 2019)

- **Scoping Meetings and National Inception Workshops:** SAPPHIRE has held national level inception and scoping meetings in all nine participating countries to introduce the project, identify country priorities and build partnerships. Accordingly, through the leadership of the focal institutions, countries have identified their priorities and established National Intersectoral Coordination Committees (NICC), whose role is to coordinate the implementation of planned activities at the national level.
- **Call for proposals for demonstration projects:** Participating countries are submitting their proposals that contribute to achieving Component 1 (Policy Harmonization and Management Reforms). Technical committees are now reviewing submitted proposals against set criteria.
- **Strengthening the Science to Policy interface in WIO:** SAPPHIRE has supported the Nairobi Convention's convening of science to policy forums in the region, in recognition of the need for science-based policy formulation, decision-making and adaptive management. The workshop recommended the establishment of a Science to Policy Platform to support the Nairobi Convention's work programme and the WIO region in general. The platform will facilitate information sharing, provide technical and scientific advice on priorities for management and assessment, and enhance cooperation among stakeholders.
- **Partnership Building for Oceanographic Data and Research Management in the WIO region:** The SAPPHIRE project has held five partnership meetings on oceanographic data and scientific research between March and June 2019. The sessions brought together scientists, policy makers, and partners to discuss the status of national data centers; identify priorities of countries in using, managing and owning data findings; and agree on mechanisms and partnerships to improve data collection, sharing, and archiving, among others. Accordingly, a small scale funding agreement with the Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute and the Institute of Marine Sciences—which will support data collection and research in North Kenya and the Pemba channel of Tanzania—is ready to be signed.
- **Developments on Marine Spatial Planning (MSP):** several workshops have been held on MSP, which have provided a platform to examine MSP practices and tailor the implementation of MSP to maritime domains. At the last workshop in Tanzania, organized by the SAPPHIRE and WIOSAP projects, governments and partners asked the Nairobi Convention Secretariat to lead in the development of a Regional MSP strategy and a regional MSP technical working group.
- **First PSC meeting held:** the first-ever Project Steering Committee (PSC) was held in June in Durban, South Africa. The PSC endorsed and commended project progress, approved the Terms of Reference for itself and the NICCs, the 2019 Annual Work Plan and multi-year project budget. Additionally, PSC members reviewed the project result framework and recommended developing new outcome indicators, giving a mandate to the Nairobi Convention Secretariat to do so.

Coming up:

- MSP training for Somalia in November 2019 (organized with WIOSAP project)
- "Smart Oceans/Smart Industries" conference to be held, bringing together private sector, scientists, and governments to build partnerships for improved ocean governance.

QUICK FACTS:

- **Objective:** To achieve effective long-term ecosystem management in the Western Indian Ocean LMEs in line with the Strategic Action Programme (SAP), as endorsed by the participating countries.
- **Participating countries:** Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, Tanzania, and France (non-project beneficiary)
- **Project Period:** 2017-2023
- **Projected outcomes:**
 1. Policy, legislative, and institutions reformed and realigned for the effective implementation of the Large Marine Ecosystems SAP.
 2. Improved capacity for effective ocean governance
 3. Ecosystem-based management approach integrated into existing Local Economic Development Plans and blue economy strategies at local and national level
 4. Artisanal and subsistence fisheries supported through ecosystem-based practices to reduce over-exploitation of natural resources
 5. Effective private sector engagement to reduce pollution and stress over the LME
 6. Innovative management options for High Seas areas identified and demonstrated