

KEY TAKEAWAYS

FROM "THE STATE OF OCEAN GOVERNANCE IN THE WESTERN INDIAN OCEAN"



REGIONAL OCEAN GOVERNANCE MATTERS

Sustaining a healthy ocean cannot be achieved by one country alone. By their very nature, several issues that threaten the health of the Western Indian Ocean (WIO) – such as marine pollution, declining fish stocks, climate change, ocean acidification, and more - require cross-country cooperation to address.

DEVELOPING A REGIONAL OCEAN GOVERNANCE STRATEGY COULD BE BENEFICIAL FOR THE WESTERN INDIAN OCEAN REGION.

Marine and coastal resources in the WIO region are currently managed by several different national and regional institutions, organizations, agreements and commissions with independent and often overlapping mandates. A cross-sectoral, holistic approach to managing marine and coastal resources, on the other hand, could address conflicts and deliver sustainable benefits for all. A strategy endorsed by national governments and relevant regional institutions could provide an umbrella framework to allow stakeholders to coordinate and cooperate more effectively on issues that have an impact on all countries in the WIO. This could mean more effective management of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction, for example. Or it could lead to more success in curbing illegal fishing or the effects of climate change or the management of oil spills. Furthermore, regional ocean governance mechanisms can help countries share resources, exchange knowledge, secure financing for common objectives, and contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.



A REGIONAL OCEAN GOVERNANCE STRATEGY WOULD NEED TO INCORPORATE SEVERAL SECTORS AND THEMES.

The ocean has stakeholders invested in the use or conservation of its resources, from shipping companies to tourism operators to fishers to mining companies, among others. The publication assesses the governance structures involved in these different sectors – sectors that would be beneficial to incorporate in a comprehensive regional ocean governance strategy – such as maritime security or fisheries. The publication also outlines regional ocean governance modalities that exist to address threats to the ocean, like marine pollution or biodiversity loss.

COUNTRIES IN THE WIO HAVE ALREADY MADE NATIONAL-LEVEL PROGRESS ON OCEAN GOVERNANCE UPON WHICH PROGRESS AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL COULD BE BUILT.

Several countries in the Western Indian Ocean have already developed ocean policies, strategic plans, and/or blue economy strategies. The publication summarizes these kinds of features and achievements of national ocean governance initiatives in certain thematic areas. It illustrates potential gaps and opportunities for countries to align their governance instruments. Selected national initiatives which may provide models, lessons or opportunities for greater regional cooperation and illustrate the diversity of challenges facing different countries are also highlighted.

**THERE ARE MANY
INTERNATIONAL BEST
PRACTICES AND LESSONS
TO LEARN FROM ON OCEAN
GOVERNANCE.**

Around the world, many regional institutions or approaches to ocean governance have been attempted. These include the European Union's Marine Policy, High Seas Marine Protected Areas in the North Atlantic, the Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries, and Food Security, and more. The publication highlights the merits and challenges of applying some of these approaches to the WIO.

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PROTECTION!

