

## Regional workshop on cooperation in preparedness and response to marine spills

Zanzibar, Tanzania

03-05 March 2020

### Concept Note

#### Background

Recognizing that the risk of major oil spills, while significantly reduced over the last number of decades, continues to be a significant threat to the fragile ecosystems and coastlines of littoral States around the world, time and experience has demonstrated the success in tackling a major spill is in ensuring a good level of preparedness for a timely, efficient and coordinated response.

Various COP Decisions of the Nairobi Convention have supported the need for a regional approach in capacity building in the oil and gas sector. Decision CP8/7: Environment Management for Oil and Gas development and Decision CP.9/8. Environmental management for oil and gas development gives emphasis to this regional commitment by the Contracting Parties especially in respect to requesting the Secretariat, in collaboration with partners, to implement the regional oil and gas capacity-building programme, with specific reference to resource and data management, environmental and social safeguards and management, safety management, revenue management, and technology development and research.

The GEF-funded projects; '*Western Indian Ocean Large Marine Ecosystems Strategic Action Programme Policy Harmonisation and Institutional Reforms*' (SAPPHIRE), and the '*Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme for the Protection of the Western Indian Ocean from Land-based Sources and Activities*' (WIOSAP) Projects, implemented by UNDP and UNEP respectively, and jointly executed by the Nairobi Convention, will support the COP decisions through several targeted activities. Specifically, one of the SAPPHIRE Project Deliverables is to address the potential impacts of the growing oil and gas sector in the region through support to the development and implementation of a full Strategic Environmental Assessment for the sector, and through the negotiation, identification and implementation of a Regional Response Centre, which can effectively and swiftly coordinate regional responses to emergencies. Oil spill preparedness and response is also being addressed by the WIOSAP Project through components relating to Critical Habitats, Water Quality and Improved Governance. Additionally, regional co-operation in preparedness and response to marine spills, as enshrined in the International Maritime Organization (IMO)'s International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation (OPRC 1990) and Protocol on

Preparedness, Response and Co-operation to pollution Incidents by Hazardous and Noxious Substances, 2000 (OPRC-HNS Protocol), backstopped by a solid base of national level capacity, is the best means to achieving this outcome.

## Objectives

Taking the above into account, this workshop, implemented by the IMO in cooperation with the Nairobi Convention, will bring together governments and focal points responsible for oil spill preparedness and response issues to promote the implementation of the OPRC Convention and OPRC HNS Protocol by strengthening regional cooperation in response to marine pollution incidents.

The workshop will aim to build on the progress previously made in the region with the conclusion of a regional mutual assistance agreement for cooperation and response during a spill incident and the development of a draft regional plan to implement this agreement, coordinated by the countries party to the Nairobi Convention.

The workshop further plans to address the issue of the establishment of a regional centre for spill preparedness and response, an issue which continues to be raised by Member States as a priority need for the region, and the present meeting will seek clarification and agreement on both the remit or mandate, as well as the likelihood of a sustained funding mechanism for the establishment of such a Centre.

## Outputs

Participants will be provided with enhanced knowledge and understanding on the effective implementation of the OPRC Convention and OPRC HNS Protocol, on the benefits of regional cooperation and coordination in preparing for and responding to marine spills and further progress towards a sustainable regional approach in this field. In addition, the requirement for, mandate of, feasibility and sustainability of a regional centre on spill preparedness and response for the East Africa - Western Indian Ocean region will be discussed.

The institutional framework, namely the regional mutual assistance agreement for cooperation and response during a spill incident and the development of a draft regional plan to implement this agreement, will also be clarified.

## Format of the Workshop

The training will be a 3-day course held from 03 – 05 March 2020. The training will comprise of lectures, case studies and group exercises. There will be no field trip organized for this training. The working language throughout the training will be English.



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## Workshop logistics

The UN Environment Programme will facilitate travel of participants by providing an economy class air ticket and daily subsistence allowances for the duration of the workshop. Participants are responsible for applying and meeting visa requirements for travel to Zanzibar, Tanzania.

## Workshop Participants

The workshop is intended for individuals who have responsibility for oil spill preparedness and response activities in their respective administrations and have the authority to express the view of their administration to promote the implementation of the OPRC Convention and OPRC/HNS Protocol by strengthening regional cooperation in response to marine pollution incidents. In addition, the workshop will include focal points of the Nairobi Convention, WIOSAP and SAPPHIRE Project, who will ensure follow-up of recommendations from the meeting as appropriate.

## Main Contact Information

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