

THE WIOSAP PROJECT PRESENTS

MARINE PROTECTED AREAS AND FRANCE

KEY TAKEAWAYS

WHAT IS A MARINE PROTECTED AREA?

A Marine Protected Area (MPA) is an area of ocean or coastline that has been specially-designated for protection for the benefit of nature and people. The world, including France, committed to conserving at least 10% of its marine and coastal areas by 2020 under Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14.5. The *WIO MPA Outlook: Towards achievement of the Global Biodiversity Framework targets* further assesses and analyzes these efforts in order to guide and strengthen marine conservation in the region towards the achievement of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

WHY ARE MPAS IMPORTANT?

Healthy oceans are critical to human survival. Oceans feed us, regulate our climate, generate most of the oxygen we breathe, and serve as the engine for much of the world's economy.

Yet the ocean and its rich resources are being damaged and depleted faster than ever before. Soon, we may no longer be able to count on the many jobs, health, and economic benefits provided by the ocean.

Marine protected areas offer one of the best options to maintain our oceans' health and avoid further degradation.



WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF MPAS?

MPAs can bring social, economic, and environmental benefits.

Economic:

- Protect breeding and nursery grounds for fish and prevent over-exploitation of fish stocks, helping **maintain food and job security**
- **Create and protect jobs** linked to the tourism industry in coastal communities

Social:

- Help keep alive **cultural and heritage practices** intricately linked to the ocean

Environmental:

- Help **protect species, habitats, and ecosystem** functions
- **Build resilience to climate change** events, like floods, tsunamis, or sea-level rise

WHAT IS THE WESTERN INDIAN OCEAN (WIO) MPA OUTLOOK?

The *WIO MPA Outlook: Towards achievement of the Global Biodiversity Framework targets* is the first-ever government endorsed publication to examine the current and future status of MPAs on a regional level. It documents the progress made by nine countries in the WIO region in increasing MPA coverage, highlights best practices and challenges faced by governments in managing MPAs, and provides recommendations for how to make the impact of MPAs even greater.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE MPA OUTLOOK FOR FRANCE?

France has made significant progress towards increasing the total coverage of MPAs in its WIO territories. Currently, France has proclaimed 5 MPAs covering 10.8% of its Exclusive Economic Zone across Réunion, Iles Esparses, and Mayotte [1]. These protected areas have given the French territories the opportunity to maintain food and job security; protect their remarkable biodiversity; and safeguard their cultural heritage.

Yet there are several opportunities to build on this progress and ensure that people, the economy, and nature reap even more benefits from MPAs. Opportunities include:

- Participation in the creation of a regional framework to develop the French territories and neighboring countries' capacity for MPA management
- Assisting in ensuring sustainable financing across the region to support equipment, infrastructure, skilled personnel, and effective enforcement of MPA regulations
- Collaborating in the development of a standard, region-wide approach to assess management effectiveness of MPAs.

[READ THE WIO MPA OUTLOOK: TOWARDS ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK TARGETS AT NAIROBICONVENTION.ORG!](https://www.nairobiconvention.org/)

[1]The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the Nairobi Convention concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.