




Impacts of COVID-19, interventions and proposed priority areas for WIOMSA work programme

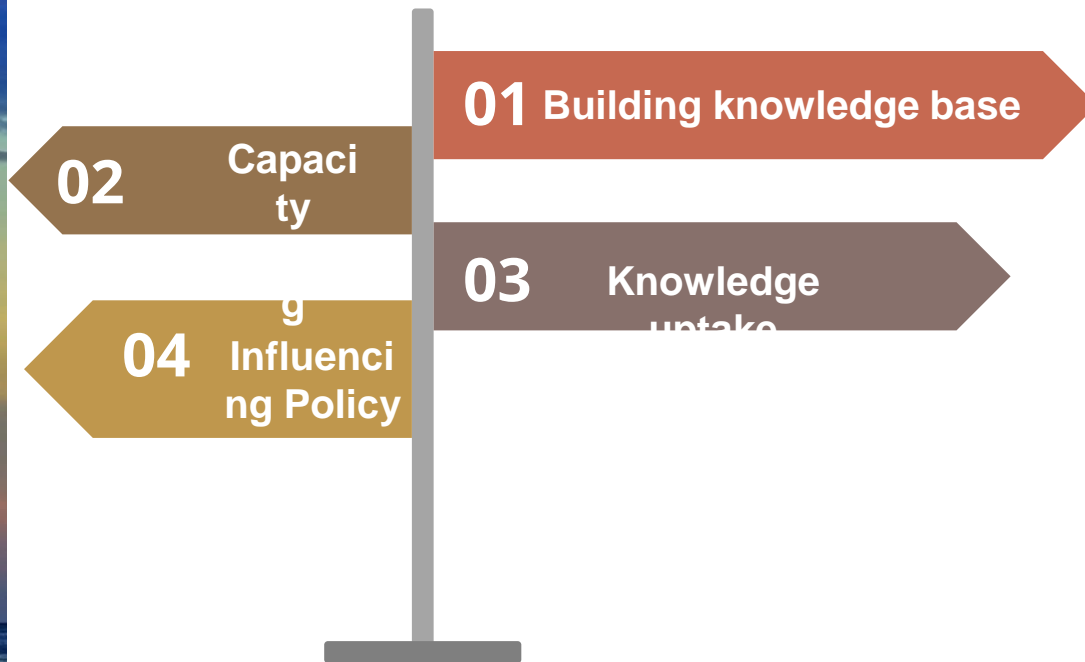


WESTERN INDIAN OCEAN
MARINE SCIENCE ASSOCIATION

Nairobi Convention Partners
Meeting

30 and 31 August 2021

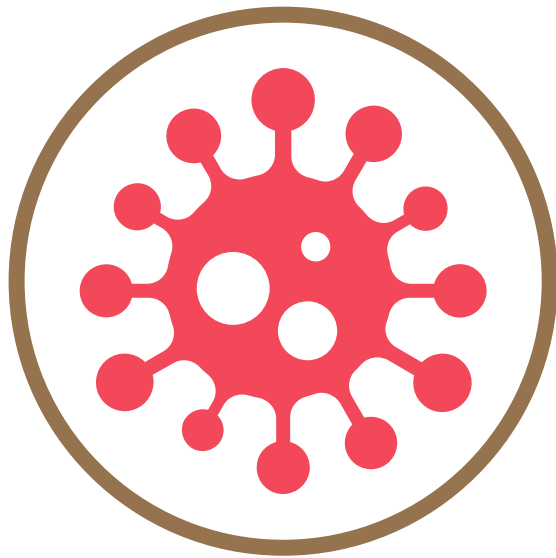
WIOMSA



Support production of science-based knowledge, global and regional agenda

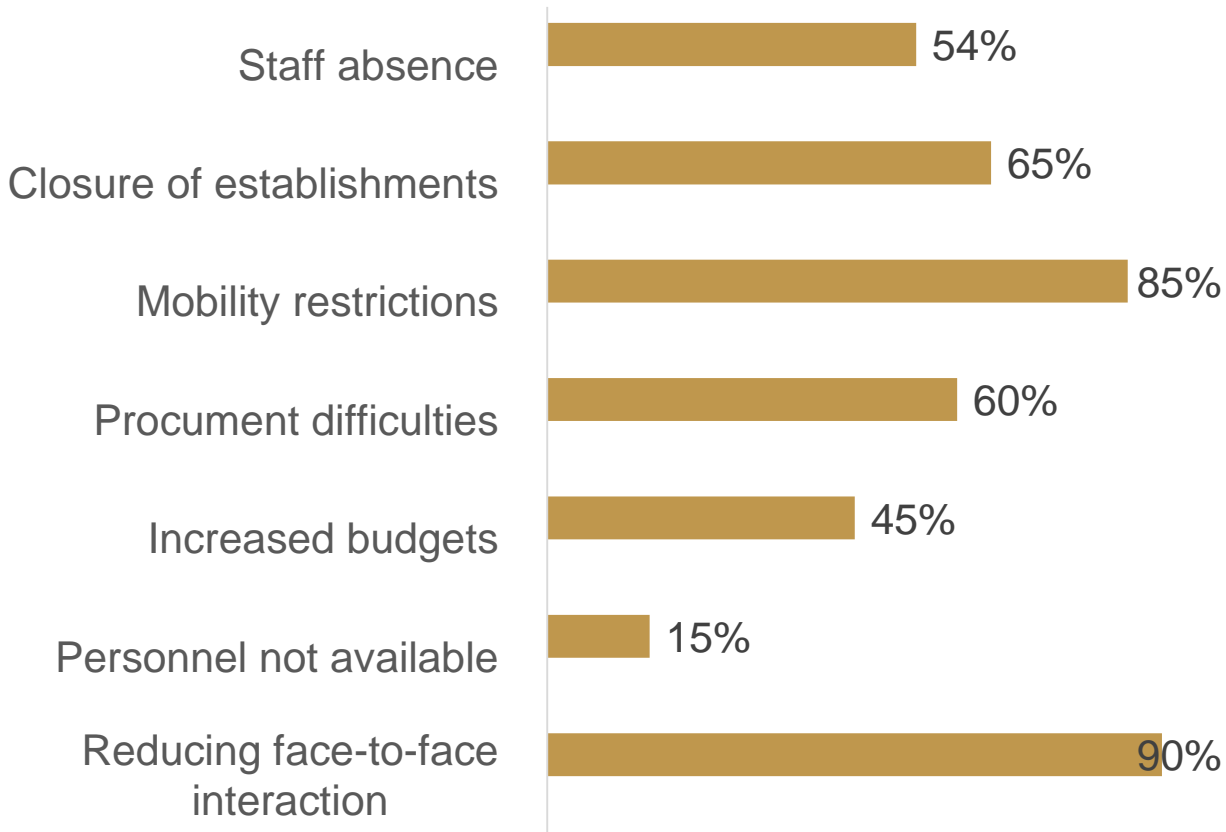
- **13 - Marine environment** - A clean ocean (SDG Target 14 – Pollution, MPAs, OA)
- **8 - Blue Economy** - A sustainably harvested and productive ocean (SDG Targets 14.4 & 14.6)
- **5-- Resilient Coastal cities** - SDG 11
- SDG 1 – Reduce poverty; SDG 8 – Economic growth; SDG 2 – Food security,

Covid- 19 - Impact Assessment



- To explore the impact of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) on WIOMSA funded research programme, we have been tracking impact since March 2021
- Surveys, audits, grantees meetings and progress reports

Impact of Covid-19 of Research projects – Findings

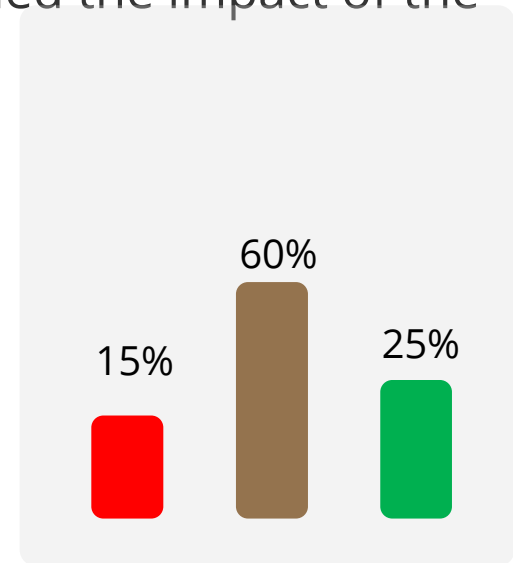


Impact of Covid-19 on Research projects



- Drastic reduction in field activities in the Ocean
- The effect on research activities is asymmetric.
- projects that require interaction with stakeholders, field sampling, etc., have had to postpone these activities
- Pre-existing vulnerabilities have only compounded the impact of the pandemic
- Drop in research output – 40% (data gaps)

Still stalled
Showing progress
Have resumed



Impact of Covid-19 on Policy



- Conferences and workshops postponed to a later date to the COVID-19 pandemic
- Regional cooperation processes (e.g. Kenya-Tanzania TBCA meetings) have been disrupted by the pandemic, as many countries have prioritized national measures to contain COVID-19.

Covid 19 – Management Interventions

Project review

Revision of project workplans and budget - helping projects manage shocks

Upgrade IT system

More interactive website with members , more online communication

Online meetings/ workshop

Virtual meetings with grantees and partners
Support with Zoom platform

Preserving project finances

Timely financing of projects

WIOMSA support to research to minimize impact of COVID-19 on ongoing projects



- Considering budget adjustments and reallocations for research projects
- Commission research on impacts of Covid-19 (2 projects ongoing on pandemic, people and environment)
- Work with regional scientists to produce guidelines on how to prevent/mitigate COVID-19 during field operations
- Include covid and community considerations in new research projects and proposals
- Provide online training for practitioners' e.g. MPA staff ; where training is not online, train in small groups
- Strengthen within-country activities and enhance knowledge cross-transfer

Proposals to WIO Governments



- Governments to consider research as essential service and include research institutions in stimulus packages and other financial support.
- Ocean research and action should not come to a halt while we tackle the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Increase data gathering on impact of covid to inform policies and for assessing impact of policies
- Accelerate digital transformation and enhance data sharing
- equip scientists with new skills to ensure that they have tools they need to support virtual meetings and workshops
- Reduce cross-border restrictions and enhance cooperation for science and policy processes



Thank you!