

MARINE PROTECTED AREAS AND MADAGASCAR

KEY TAKEAWAYS

WHAT IS A MARINE PROTECTED AREA?

A MPA is an area of the ocean or coastline that has been specifically designated for the protection by law of the ecosystems and associated biodiversity and any object of archaeological or historical interest therein for the benefit of nature and people. The world, including Madagascar, 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. They can:

Economic:

- Prevent overexploitation of fish stocks, helping to maintain food and job security and reduce poverty.
- **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:

Madagascar has thousands of plants and animals that can be found nowhere else on earth. More than 22 million people in Madagascar are dependent on biodiversity for their subsistence needs, with 80% essentially entirely dependent on natural resources[1]. MPAs can help protect these species, habitats, and ecosystems—and the people who depend on them.

Madagascar is one of the countries most at risk of cyclones in Africa, a danger potentially made worse by climate change. MPAs can help build resilience to climate change events, like cyclones, floods, or sea-level rise.[2]

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

The *WIO MPA Outlook: Towards achievement of the Global Biodiversity Framework targets* is the first publication ever 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 MADAGASCAR?

Madagascar has made significant progress towards increasing the total coverage of MPAs, thanks in large part to the commitment made during the 2003 Durban conference (at which the government committed to increasing the country's land and marine protected areas from 1.7 million hectares to 6 million hectares).

During the 2014 World Congress Park in Sydney, the government further pledged to triple the surface area of its MPAs by 2025, with the aim of conserving Madagascar's unique biodiversity and promoting Local Marine Management Areas (LMMAs) as a way to involve coastal communities in management). Work to fulfill these two commitments has brought significant economic, social, and environmental benefits to the country.

Indeed, there are now 22 MPAs protecting 1.26% of Madagascar's EEZ [3], which has led to substantial progress in promoting food security and jobs for coastal communities, as well as in protecting coral reefs, seagrass, mangroves, and islands. Yet there are several opportunities to build on this progress and ensure that Madagascar's people, economy, and nature reap even more benefits from MPAs. Opportunities include:

- Formally designate the proposed MPA in Barren Islands and continue to identify potential new sites for protection.
- Further expand MPA coverage to meet future targets under the Global Biodiversity Framework.
- Deepen engagement with all stakeholders in the creation and management of MPAs.
- Provide regular support from administrative authorities and the Forests and Fisheries Services to stop illegal activities within Locally Managed Marine Areas.
- With community participation, establish scientific monitoring programmes of MPAs and implement systems to monitor management effectiveness across all MPAs.

Regional Recommendations include:

- Creating a regional framework to develop the capacity of Madagascar and its neighbors for MPA management
- Ensuring sustainable financing to support equipment, infrastructure, skilled personnel, and effective enforcement of MPA regulations
- Working with other countries in the region, develop 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!

[1]CBD Biosafety Unit. "Madagascar: Country Profile." Convention on Biological Diversity, Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity,

[2]World Bank. "Climate Change Portal: Madagascar Dashboard: Natural Hazards". World Bank Group.

[3]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.