

THE WIOSAP PROJECT PRESENTS

# MARINE PROTECTED AREAS AND THE REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

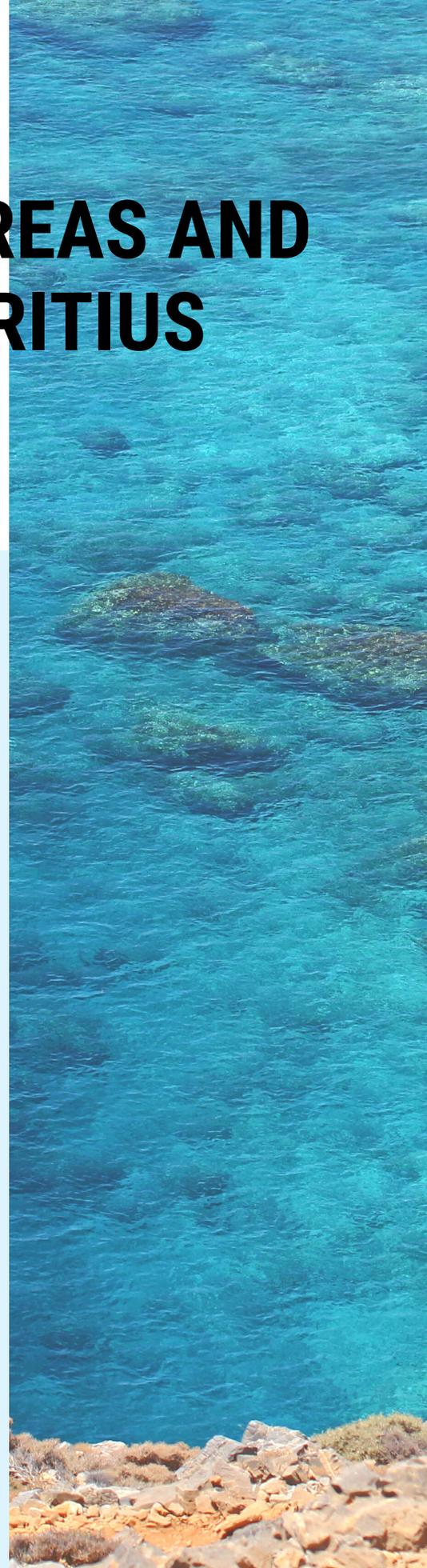
### WHAT IS A MARINE PROTECTED AREA (MPA)?

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 Mauritius, 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:*

- Fisheries employ around 22,000 people and account for 22% of the value of Mauritian exports [1]. MPAs can protect breeding and nursery grounds for fish and prevent over-exploitation of fish stocks, helping **maintain food and job security**
- **Protect jobs linked to the tourism industry**, which contributes roughly 7% to Mauritius' GDP [2].

### *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 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 THE REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS?

The Republic of Mauritius has made significant progress towards increasing the total coverage of MPAs. The current 18 MPAs protecting 0.009% of its EEZ have gone a long way in protecting Mauritius's remarkable natural treasures—thereby contributing to employment opportunities, food security, and biodiversity protection.

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:

- Formally designate the proposed MPA between Flic en Flac and Le Morne
- Further expand MPA coverage to meet future targets under the Global Biodiversity Framework;
- Develop, update and implement MPA management plans
- Collaborate with and build capacity of local NGOs, operators, and other stakeholders on MPA management

### **Regional Recommendations include:**

- Creating a regional framework to develop the capacity of Mauritius 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!](https://www.nairobiconvention.org/)**

[1] Cervigni, Raffaello, and Pasquale L. Scandizzo. "The Ocean Economy in Mauritius: Making It Happen, Making It Last." World Bank, World Bank Group, 2017

[2] Ibid