



**The Western Indian Ocean Large Marine Ecosystems
Strategic Action Programme Policy Harmonization and
Institutional Reforms (WIO LME SAPPHIRE)**

Annual Progress Report 2020

March 2021

Table of Contents

Acronyms.....	3
1. Project Summary	4
2. Project Background.....	5
3. Summary of Project Achievements in 2020.....	6
a) Component 1: Supporting Policy Harmonization and Management Reforms towards improved ocean governance	6
b) Component 2: Stress Reduction through Community Engagement and Empowerment in Sustainable Resources Management	11
c) Component 3: Stress Reduction through Private Sector/Industry Commitment to transformations in their operations and management practices.	12
d) Component 4: Delivering best practices and lessons through innovative ocean governance demonstration	13
e) Component 5: Capacity Development to Realise improved ocean governance in the WIO region	15
4. Communications and Knowledge Products.....	15
5. Monitoring Progress	16
6. Challenges, Opportunities and the way forward.....	16
7. Project Risk Log	17

Acronyms

ABNJ	Areas beyond national jurisdiction
ASCLME	Agulhas and Somali Current Large Marine Ecosystem
AU	African Union
BBNJ	Biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction
CEDARE	Centre for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe
EBM	Ecosystem Based Management
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
IMS	Institute of Marine Sciences
KMFRI	Kenyan Marine and Fisheries Research Institute
LME	Large Marine Ecosystem
MEDA	Marine ecosystem diagnostics analysis
MSP	Marine spatial planning
PSC	Project Steering Committee
NCS	Nairobi Convention Secretariat
NICC	National Intersectoral Coordination Committee
NKB	North Kenya Bank
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
SAP	Strategic Action Programme
SAPPHIRE	Western Indian Ocean Large Marine Ecosystems Strategic Action Programme Policy Harmonization and Institutional Reforms
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
SPP	Science to Policy Platform
SwAM	Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management
TDA	Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
WIO	Western Indian Ocean
WIOMSA	Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association
WIOSAP	Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme for the protection of the Western Indian Ocean from land-based sources and activities

1. Project Summary

Project ID and Title	00094555 The Western Indian Ocean Large Marine Ecosystems Strategic Action Programme Policy Harmonization and Institutional Reforms (WIO LME SAPPHIRE)
Duration	2017 – 2023
Total Budget	Total resources required USD 326,565,994 Total Co-Financing USD 317,799,494 GEF USD 8,766,500 Governments USD 311,040,044 In-kind USD 6,759,450
Annual Budget 2020	USD 1,748,300
Expenditure 2020	USD 1,278,595
Implementing Agency	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
Executing Agency	Nairobi Convention Secretariat (NCS) - United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
Funding Agency	Global Environmental Facility (GEF)
Participating Countries	The Government of Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa and Tanzania

2. Project Background

The SAPPHIRE project aims to support and assist the appropriate and formally-mandated government institutions and intergovernmental bodies in the region to implement related activities in order to deliver the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) and to ensure sustainability of efforts and actions toward long-term management of WIO LMEs, as well as the sustainability of associated institutional arrangements and partnerships. The project builds on the previous work completed under the Agulhas and Somali Current Large Marine Ecosystems (ASCLME) project by UNDP, with the financial support of GEF and in close collaboration with different partners.

The Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) undertaken by the countries of the Western Indian Ocean (WIO) region with the joint support of the ASCLME project and South Western Indian Ocean Fisheries Project (SWIOFP) provided a scientific and technical synthesis report on the status of the Agulhas and Somali Current Large Marine Ecosystems. The synthesis presented in the TDA was used to develop a SAP to address the problems of greatest concern facing the marine and coastal ecosystems of the WIO region. In line with this, the WIO LME SAPPHIRE project was designed to implement the priorities set in WIO LME SAP.

The joint ASCLME-SWIOFP TDA and SAP were intended to be complementary to the TDA and SAP for land-based sources of pollution produced by the WIO-LaB project: Addressing Land Based Sources of Pollution in the Western Indian Ocean (UNEP/Nairobi Convention Secretariat, 2009). Throughout its implementation, the project will coordinate closely with the UNEP GEF WIOSAP project with the intention of harmonizing activities and ultimately combining institutional and administrative process for a single implementation strategy for the two WIO SAPs. This will in turn enhance cost effectiveness and impact at the national and regional levels.

The project will benefit the Governments of Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa and Tanzania. The overall objective of the project is to achieve effective long-term ecosystem management in the Western Indian Ocean LMEs in line with the Strategic Action Programme as endorsed by the participating countries. It has five integrated components, and each is intended to achieve various outcomes:

Component 1: Supporting Policy Harmonization and Management Reforms towards improved ocean governance.

Component 2: Stress Reduction through Community Engagement and Empowerment in Sustainable Resources Management.

Component 3: Stress Reduction through Private Sector/Industry Commitment to transformations in their operations and management practices

Component 4: Delivering best practices and lessons through innovative ocean governance demonstration

Component 5: Capacity Development to Realise improved ocean governance in the WIO region

3. Summary of Project Achievements in 2020

a) Component 1: Supporting Policy Harmonization and Management Reforms towards improved ocean governance

i. UN Decade for Ocean Science - Regional Consultation for Africa and the Adjacent Island States

A regional consultation [workshop](#) for Africa and the Adjacent Island States on the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) was held from 27-29 January 2020 in Nairobi, Kenya. The workshop was an opportunity for African States to co-design mission-oriented research strategies and actions in line with the 2030 Agenda and continental and regional initiatives such as Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy 2050. The workshop structure comprised plenary sessions discussing cross-cutting issues and a series of Working Group sessions organized around the six societal outcomes that the Decade aims to fulfil. The Working Groups addressed:

- Both deep disciplinary understanding of ocean processes and solution-oriented research to generate new knowledge needed to achieve a given societal outcome.
- The mapping of existing networks and science initiatives that can contribute, identification of major knowledge gaps hindering sustainable development, and the prioritization of research priorities and data requirements.
- The delineation of a number of potential partnerships with concrete deliverables in terms of ocean sustainability that should be further developed in the framework of the Decade.
- Aspects related to marine technology and capacity development.

The workshop emphasized the need to strengthen and build upon existing mechanisms and frameworks and alignment with African Union initiatives. This includes Agenda 2063, which recognized Blue Economy as a major contributor to continental transformation and growth, and the 2050 African Integrated Maritime Strategy (AIMS 2050), which provides a roadmap for increased wealth creation from Africa's oceans and seas by developing a sustainable, thriving blue economy. Capacity development was identified as a priority, particularly the improvement of infrastructure and facilities for research, the provision of training for scientific and technical staff, as well as the translation of science to policy. Other issues highlighted include the role of youth, job creation, adoption of marine spatial planning, the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change impacts on coastal zones, addressing land-sea interactions and pollution, and innovative financing models for the ocean economy. The consultations provided an opportunity to understand the regional context of ocean governance and the experience and knowledge available to support national efforts in harmonizing policies, legislations and programmes. SAPPHIRE supported IOC-UNESCO and other partners in preparation and running of the workshop and enabled SAPPHIRE representatives from the WIO states to attend.

ii. National Intersectoral Coordination Committee (NICC) meetings

The National Focal Point for Madagascar convened a meeting to launch the process of updating the Marine Ecosystem Diagnostic Analysis (MEDA) on 11 February 2020 with key stakeholders. The L'Office national pour l'Environnement à Madagascar (ONE), the institution leading the MEDA update process, presented its action plan while lead chapter authors presented a gap analysis on the existing MEDA and the required data and information.

On 12 February, the Madagascar NICC met to discuss progress; national initiatives related to the project, such as Marine Spatial Planning (MSP); the design of a blue economy strategy; coastal ecosystem management, etc. The NICC highlighted the importance of the MEDA update and committed to providing the needed support to ONE for its successful completion.

The NICC in Seychelles met on 18 February 2020 and discussed project progress as well as the launching of the MEDA update process. The meeting highlighted the key sectors and potential chapter

authors to be involved in the process. Accordingly, the NICC tasked the National Coordinator with leading the MEDA update process with the support of the national focal point. The NICC also discussed how to scale up existing best practices and enhance coordination between different sectors to harmonize ongoing initiatives in marine and coastal ecosystem management.

iii. Update of National Marine Ecosystem Diagnostic Analyses and the Strategic Action Programme

The process of updating the national Marine Ecosystems Diagnostic Analysis (MEDA) reports is ongoing in all project countries except Somalia, where it is expected to begin in 2021. The Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute (KMFRI) has submitted the first draft of the MEDA for review. Other countries, including Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles, South Africa, Tanzania have reported good progress. The process in Mozambique is quite slow. The Project Coordination Unit worked with the National MEDA Coordinators to extend the timelines for delivery of the MEDA reports, since most activities, especially hosting stakeholder consultation meetings, have been delayed by the restrictions imposed to control the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Both the a) update and merger of the Strategic Action Programme for the protection of the Western Indian Ocean from land-based sources and activities and ASCLME/SWIOFP TDA and b) development of a single SAP for WIO region are in progress. The Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA) has been tasked with leading the process. The exercise will draw information from the updated MEDAs.

iv. Team Building Workshop for the SAPPHIRE Project Coordination Unit

The SAPPHIRE project organized a three-day team building workshop for its Project Coordination Unit on 11-13 March 2020 in Diani, Kenya. The workshop was held jointly with the team building workshop for the WIOSAP and Nairobi Convention Secretariat staff. The workshop was organized to equip and strengthen the participants with personal and teamworking skills for better working relationships, personal growth and renewal. The workshop was structured around individual and team exercises guided by a facilitator, video material, individual skill development simulations, team assignments self-study, facilitator inputs and case study materials. It was organized strategically to enhance effective communication: verbal and non-verbal behaviours in the Secretariat team for seamless delivery of the Nairobi Convention Work Programme and WIOSAP and SAPPHIRE projects. Participants in the retreat included programme managers, programme assistants, UN Volunteers under the Nairobi Convention, and staff from other departments who closely work with and support the SAPPHIRE project and other Nairobi Convention functions. A major outcome from the retreat was the development of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for tasks and responsibilities, as well as timelines for key processes in the Nairobi Convention Secretariat. Such developments will help enhance performance and efficiency of the Secretariat through promoting individual accountability and by providing a reference point for performance evaluation of the team during the implementation of the SAPPHIRE project.

v. Focal Points Virtual Meeting

The Nairobi Convention Secretariat organised a virtual [Focal Points Meeting](#) on 22nd and 24th April 2020. The meeting discussed the current situation in respective countries as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and how the Focal Points are responding to the situation and the progress in implementation of Nairobi Convention activities in their countries. Various observations were made:

- The global COVID-19 pandemic is affecting all countries of the world and severely impacting all aspects of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP)'s work. Globally, most UNEP staff have been instructed to work remotely to prevent the spread of the virus, including at the Global HQ in Nairobi, where the Nairobi Convention Secretariat is situated.

- The member states of the Convention were all in various stages of responding to this global crisis, with South Africa in total lock-down by then and Seychelles, Mozambique, Mauritius, Tanzania and Kenya in partial lock-down. Other countries had also instituted measures to contain the spread of the virus. These measures have affected implementation of both regional and national level activities in 2020. UNEP and the Nairobi Convention Secretariat are almost exclusively making use of virtual means for communications, with face-to-face meetings and international travel on hold till further notice. This is resulting in delays in implementation and difficulty in planning activities and events for this period and beyond. Only those activities which can be done virtually are being implemented, as explained in other sections of this report.

A Briefing Note was shared to alert partners and stakeholders of the likely impacts that the current slowdown will have on the activities and processes of the Nairobi Convention and present the anticipated scenario regarding our work in the WIO region for the rest of 2020 and beyond.

vi. Third Nairobi Convention Focal Points Meeting held on 08 July 2020

The Nairobi Convention Secretariat, through its projects, organized a [Focal Points meeting](#) on 08 July 2020 to get updated on country status with reference to the COVID – 19 pandemic and how implementation of project activities was being impacted. The meeting also sort to update the Focal Points on the progress made in the implementation of all projects under the Nairobi Convention Secretariat. The meeting noted that WIO countries had varying levels of restrictions put in place to contain the spread of COVID-19. Restrictions in some countries had been eased and some activities have resumed, though with great caution being exercised, while in other countries partial lockdown, complete lockdown and other movement restrictions were still in place. It was noted that implementation of some activities on the ground would resume in some countries, but progress would still be slow while restrictions were eased gradually. The Focal Points highlighted that desktop work and virtual engagements with different stakeholders was ongoing to ensure that activities that are not field-based and do not require face-to-face interactions proceeded unhindered.

The Secretariat was requested to consider the extension of SSFAs for activities that have been delayed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions which have slowed down approval and implementation processes. This is to allow for proper implementation of projects and reporting on activities. The Secretariat was urged to keep the Nairobi Convention Focal Points regularly informed on activities of the ongoing supporting projects in the countries in order to support better coordination of the projects at the national level and help the governments to adequately report on project progress and their contributions to the Nairobi Convention. The meeting noted that the supporting projects were designed to complement not only the implementation of the WIOSAP and SAPPHIRE projects but the Nairobi Convention Work Programme as well, therefore, the Secretariat would work to ensure that appropriate linkages and synergies between the projects were made for effective implementation of all the projects.

vii. SAPPHIRE Focal Points Project Review Meeting

The Project Management Unit (PMU) organised a virtual Focal Points [project review meeting](#) on 12 August 2020. The objectives of the meeting were to a) review project progress and the impact of COVID-19 on the implementation of planned activities at the national and regional levels and b) propose possible acceleration mechanisms and seek joint solutions to problems affecting project implementation. In addition, the meeting reviewed the Annual Work Plan for 2020, discussed co-finance reporting, and national level coordination and implementation of activities.

The Focal Points reported that restrictions imposed to control the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic had slowed down and/or stagnated the implementation of national activities, thus delays would be expected in achieving results. The Focal Points conveyed their support to the implementation of the planned activities in the 2020 Annual Work Programme and noted those that had to be postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The meeting appreciated the progress made in implementation of planned activities despite such setbacks.

viii. Virtual Ad-hoc Meeting of the Nairobi Convention and Project Focal Points

The Nairobi Convention Secretariat, through the SAPPHIRE and WIOSAP projects, convened a [meeting of Convention and Project Focal Points](#) on Friday 21 August 2020. The meeting followed the oil spill crisis offshore of Pointe d'Esny, south of Mauritius after running aground of MV Wakashio on 25 July 2020. The meeting was organized for the Government of Mauritius to update the Focal Points on the measure already taken to mitigate the impact of the oil spill and agree on the support which should be extended to them. Mauritius was allowed one week to make a formal request to the Convention for specific technical assistance that might be required. It was noted that the Nairobi Convention Secretariat had drafted a framework concept on how to respond to the spill but would wait to respond based on the requirements from Mauritius. The meeting highlighted that there was a need for the member states to take a decision on the Regional Response Mechanism/Centre and build the necessary capacity in order to respond better to future incidents. It was noted that there was a need for a Conference of Parties decision on oil spills preparedness and response in the Western Indian Ocean region.

ix. Discussion on the Economic Valuation of the Transboundary Conservation Areas (TBCA) between Kenya and Tanzania on Wednesday 21 October 2020

The projects executed by the Nairobi Convention Secretariat, including the SAPPHIRE project, are supporting an economic valuation and development of potential investment opportunities for the Trans-Boundary Conservation Area (TBCA) between Kenya and Tanzania, to be led by Prime Africa Institute and Lloyd Capital. The SAPPHIRE and other Nairobi Convention projects [organised a stakeholder consultations webinar](#) on 21 October 2020 to discuss the proposed economic valuation of the TBCA and provide input into the draft concept to guide the assessment. The webinar highlighted that the TBCA evaluation will build on previous work on the ecological structure and functioning of the TBCA system. The webinar ensured that the stakeholders involved in the TBCA have a common understanding on the need, basis and value of the proposed economic valuation of the TBCA and also provided an avenue for stakeholders to present initiatives they were undertaking within the same area for possible alignment. It was highlighted that the WIOSAP and SAPPHIRE projects have acquired the services of a consultant to conduct an economic valuation of the TBCA to serve as a basis for a business case towards the establishment of a collaboratively-managed area between the two countries. The assessment will; i) value the resources within the TBCA, ii) provide future management scenarios to ensure ecological risk management, sustainable use and optimal benefits flows, and iii) provide investment opportunities to optimize the benefits of such an area. The webinar highlighted that the proposed economic valuation work is a government-led process with multi-stakeholder participation. Additionally, the evaluation is policy-oriented and will seek to provide informed investment and sustainable management options in the TBCA area.

x. The Second Project Steering Committee Meeting

The Project Management Unit organised the [Second SAPPHIRE Project Steering Committee](#) on 26 November 2020 to a) review project progress; b) review project progress and the impact of COVID-19 on the implementation of planned activities at the national and regional levels; and c) propose possible acceleration mechanisms and seek joint solutions to problems affecting project implementation. In addition, the meeting was aimed at reviewing and endorsing the revised Annual Work Plan for 2020 and demonstration project proposals submitted by the participating countries, as well as the coordination of national level activities. The PSC meeting approved the project progress for 2020, the amended 2020 annual workplan and the expenditure report. The PSC requested the Project Coordination Unit to prepare a workplan and budget for 2021 and present it for approval at an Ad-Hoc PSC meeting to be held in the first quarter of 2021.

xi. Regional Ecosystem Monitoring indicators and framework

The SAPPHIRE project, jointly with the GEF-funded WIOSAP project, other supporting projects of the Nairobi Convention and stakeholders, is developing an integrated ecosystem monitoring framework for the Western Indian Ocean region for monitoring coastal and marine ecosystems. The framework will identify potential ecosystem monitoring indicators and provide options for a potential framework/programme based on an analysis of current practices, frameworks, and national and regional capacity. The framework is expected to be validated by participating countries and experts in March 2021. This regional monitoring framework will inform development of national monitoring frameworks for countries, which may not yet have their monitoring frameworks in place. The framework is being developed by Rhodes University of South Africa, in collaboration with WIOMSA.

xii. Establishment of the Regional Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) Technical Working Group (TWG)

The establishment of the regional MSP TWG stems from decisions adopted by the Contracting Parties to the Nairobi Convention, particularly Decision CP.9/10 on Marine spatial planning for the blue and ocean economy. The MSP TWG was established to: i) provide a regional forum for information sharing and exchange; ii) provide technical guidance and advice to the Nairobi Convention and other regional frameworks to inform policy and decision making on MSP at the national and regional levels; iii) support capacity building on MSP at the regional level as appropriate; iv) synthesize information on MSP from different sources, which includes engaging stakeholders and participatory approaches; and v) produce peer-reviewed publications, decision support tools, and other knowledge products in relation to MSP. All Contracting Parties have appointed experts to represent them in the MSP TWG. The First Virtual Meeting to operationalize the MSP TWG was organised on 28 July 2020.

xiii. Regional Marine Spatial Planning Strategy

The SAPPHIRE project and other Nairobi Convention implemented projects are supporting the development of a regional MSP Strategy, which will capture regional experiences and possible pathways on MSP implementation. The Regional Strategy could inform some national level actions, especially for countries at the early stages of their MSP implementation process. The projects jointly developed the terms of reference for this activity and established a technical working group. Nelson Mandela University in South Africa is leading the development of the Strategy while working with the Regional MSP Technical Working Group. The strategy will be presented for further regional input during the March 2021 Science to Policy Meeting.

xiv. Demonstration projects on review of national policy, legislative and institutional reforms and facilitate realignment in support of SAP implementation

The Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF) in South Africa submitted a project proposal entitled 'Support for a coordinated ocean and coastal ecosystem management approach in South Africa'. The project was reviewed and shared with the members of the Project Steering Committee for review and approval. The project requested a budget of USD 380 000.00 to SAPPHIRE. The project will be implemented from 2021 – 2022. This demo project will contribute to objectives under both component 1 and 4.

b) Component 2: Stress Reduction through Community Engagement and Empowerment in Sustainable Resources Management

The project has encouraged participating countries to develop demonstration project proposals that strengthen communities and artisanal fisheries engagement in ecosystem-based management (EBM) through sensitizing communities on the values of ecosystem goods and services and enhancing their engagement in livelihood-improving initiatives. Some countries were given technical support to develop proposals for review by the NICCs before submission to the project management unit and subsequently to the PSC for approval. The project proposals developed/ being developed for funding under this component are summarized in the table below:

List of Demonstration Projects

Demo Project Proposal Title	Partner	Country	Total Cost (USD)	Status
Strengthening sectoral policy and co-management of natural resources for better conservation of marine and coastal ecosystems	Directorate General of Fisheries Resources	Comoros	120,000.00	First Instalment of 60,000 disbursed
Climate-Smart Design for Diani-Chale Marine Ecosystem management and Improved Livelihoods for Coastal Communities	Kenya Wildlife Service	Kenya	85,160.00	Final comments submitted to partner
Demonstration Project of a local governance method on fishing resources in ten villages from the Sofia Region -Madagascar: Mangrove crab <i>Scylla serrata</i> sector's case	Direction Générale de la Pêche et de l' Aquaculture	Madagascar	80,000.00	Project under review by NICC
Community Based Project for Mussel Aquaculture on Inhaca Island-Maputo Province	Instituto Nacional De Desenvolvimento Da Pesca E Aquacultura	Mozambique	80,000.00	Proposal under development
Strengthening community-based EBM approaches in Subsistence and Small Scale Artisanal Fisheries for Sustainable livelihoods and Management of Pemba Channel Conservation Area (PECCA), Zanzibar, Tanzania	Department of Environment, Second Vice President's Office	Zanzibar, Tanzania	124,284.00	Proposal under review by PMU
Strengthening community participation in management of the fisheries resources in coastal areas of Tanzania		Tanzania		Proposal to be submitted to the PMU

c) [Component 3: Stress Reduction through Private Sector/Industry Commitment to transformations in their operations and management practices](#)

The private sector is one of the key actors in the utilization as well as management of coastal and marine resources. It is one of the key partners in the project's efforts to reduce stress from excessive exploitation of resources.

i. **Stakeholder consultation Webinar to discuss the draft Framework for Private Sector Engagement 30 October 2020**

A stakeholder consultation meeting on the Framework for Private Sector Engagement for the Western Indian Ocean Region was organised on 30 October 2020. At the meeting, the draft framework was presented to the Nairobi Convention focal points and key stakeholders to receive inputs and feedback.

The meeting highlighted that the Framework for Private Sector Engagement was being developed against the backdrop of increasing recognition at the international level that the private sector should be encouraged to transform its business practices by mainstreaming the use of greener technologies and sustainable practices in its operations. Such actions would help stakeholders enhance ecosystem conservation and protection and meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The meeting highlighted that the private sector could make considerable contributions towards governance and conservation efforts through contributing expertise, advocacy, innovation, business models and financial resources to accelerate the transformation towards sustainability. The meeting clarified that the framework for private sector engagement sought to facilitate private sector partners by providing a structure and platform for collaboration and information-sharing.

The draft Framework for Private Sector Engagement was submitted to the PMU and will be presented at the Science – Policy Dialogue scheduled for March 2021 for further input and finalisation.

ii. **Regional workshop on 'Cooperation in preparedness and response to marine pollution incidents' from 3 - 5 March 2020**

A regional [workshop](#) on 'cooperation in preparedness and response to marine pollution incidents' was organized in collaboration with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) from 3 - 5 March 2020 in Zanzibar, Tanzania. The workshop aimed at building on the progress made in regional cooperation in response to marine pollution incidents by bringing together governments and focal points responsible for oil spill preparedness and response issues to promote the implementation of the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation (OPRC) and OPRC Hazardous and Noxious Substances (HNS) Protocol. The protocol obliges countries to establish measures for dealing with pollution incidents, either nationally or in cooperation with other countries. The workshop promoted the establishment of a regional mutual assistance agreement for cooperation and response during pollution incidents and the development of a draft regional plan to implement this agreement, under the Global Environment Facility (GEF)'s Western Indian Ocean Marine Highway Project.

The workshop used a mix of technical presentations, information exchanges, network-building and working groups to review previous work and the current status and options for enhancing regional cooperation in preparedness and response to marine pollution incidents for Eastern Africa and the WIO. The primary workshop output was a series of short- and medium-term recommendations for further actions.

d) **Component 4: Delivering best practices and lessons through innovative ocean governance demonstration**

i. **Science to Policy Platform Planning Meeting on 14 December 2020**

The Science to Policy Platform (SPP) is a multi-stakeholder platform comprising of representatives of formal and informal knowledge-generating institutions, practitioners, policymakers, communities and the private sector within the WIO region. It serves as an intermediary body to bridge the gaps between science and policy and catalyze implementation. The SPP is intended to support the efforts of the Contracting Parties of the Nairobi Convention to integrate relevant scientific evidence and findings into their efforts to protect, manage and develop their coastal and marine environment sustainably. The SPP is expected to provide the necessary information for evidence-based decision-making as its primary role of knowledge generation and dissemination, as well as dialogue and consensus-building.

The Nairobi Convention Secretariat and WIOMSA, which serves as the Secretariat of the SPP, organized a meeting on 14 December 2020 to plan the 2021 SPP meeting. At the planning meeting, participants agreed that this year's science to policy meeting would be held virtually over three days for three hours on the third week of March 2021 in the light of the COVID – 19 restrictions. Additionally, the meeting agreed that the SPP meeting will comprise three main parts, namely: 1) presentation on discussion papers, 2) breakout groups to canvass policy recommendations and report back to plenary, and 3) draft policy recommendations to be presented on the 3rd day. The meeting agreed that participants will be required to register so that only those registered can be invited to the meeting to manage wide distribution of the meeting link to unauthorized individuals. It was agreed that a consultant will be hired to capture and refine policy recommendations from the meeting and support preparations for the 10th Conference of Parties.

ii. **Demonstrating Marine Spatial Planning within a Blue Economy framework in selected areas within participating countries for further replication and transfer of lessons**

The Blue/Ocean Economy is an emerging concept for developing and managing coastal and marine resources for sustainable economic development. It offers wide opportunities for responsible and sustainable economic growth from the traditional sectors of shipping, tourism, fisheries, and boat building, as well as new industries including aquaculture; marine renewable energy technologies for wind, wave and tidal energy; bioproducts (pharmaceutical and agrichemical); and blue or ocean carbon (carbon storage in mangroves, sea grasses and saltmarshes).

The SAPPHIRE and the NC-SWIOFC Partnership projects are supporting a demonstration project in Kenya which seeks to prioritize key maritime sectors that can help the Government at both the national and county levels to provide policy and regulatory direction towards the realization of the blue economy promise. The project will (i) support the advancement of knowledge on the ocean economy/maritime sectors and resources in Kenya, particularly the definition, classification and status, capacities, potential and values, and governance frameworks in the ocean/maritime sectors, (ii) support the Government of Kenya to prioritize high-potential sectors and strengthen its policy orientation towards the blue economy for wealth and employment creation, food security and reduction of poverty; (iii) Provide input into the development of the National Blue Economy Strategy; and (iv) contribute to Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) and Ecosystem Based Management (EBM) approaches in the maritime sectors.

iii. **Launch of the Background Document on the State of Ocean Governance in the Western Indian Ocean region on 16 September 2020**

The SAPPHIRE project, through the Nairobi Convention, convened a [virtual meeting](#) to launch the background document on the [State of Ocean Governance](#) in the Western Indian Ocean region on 16 September 2020. The objective of the meeting was to present and launch the background document on the State of Ocean Governance in the Western Indian Ocean (WIO) region and to discuss the utility of the background document within the framework of the respective Regional Economic Communities.

The meeting highlighted that the purpose of the document was to inform the process of developing an Ocean Governance Strategy for the WIO region and served as a verified source of current information on Ocean Governance for the region and globally. The meeting appreciated that the background document was a foundation to build on in the development of an effective and efficient ocean governance strategy for the WIO region that is in line with the practices being undertaken through the RECs and African Union.

iv. Western Indian Ocean Governance Initiative (WIOGI) Project Meeting on 19 November 2020

Because the WIOSAP, SAPPHIRE and other projects executed by the Nairobi Convention are implemented in a partnership manner, they are thus open to collaboration with other partners implementing initiatives in the WIO region with similar objectives for greater impact. The Western Indian Ocean Governance Initiative (WIOGI), implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), has formed a partnership with the Nairobi Convention to strengthen the cooperation among relevant actors at the regional, national and local levels on the protection and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity in the WIO region. The projects [organized a meeting](#) to agree on the mechanism of implementation of joint activities on 19 November 2020. The meeting identified mutually beneficial focus areas and agreed on working arrangements between the Nairobi Convention Projects and the three components of the WIOGI project, which include strengthening policy dialogue, strengthening the involvement of the private sector in regional ocean governance and a national, multi-stakeholder partnership in Mozambique.

v. Collaborative and cooperative mechanisms agreed and strengthened between national, regional and global partners and stakeholders

The SAPPHIRE project is working with regional institutions to strengthen national and regional research institutions to collect data, analyse and inform policy makers and development practitioners to improve ocean governance and enhance the sustainable use of resources. Specifically, the project is working with the Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institution (KMFRI) and Institute of Marine Science (IMS) in Tanzania to undertake oceanographic research and scientific data collection in the North Kenyan bank and Pemba channel of Tanzania, respectively. The data from the oceanographic surveys will be used to inform decision-making and policy formulation to ensure the sustainable utilization of resources in the study areas. The information will also guide resource allocation to stakeholders and partners. A summary of the agreements signed with the two institutions is shown below:

Demo Project Proposal Title	Partner	Country	Total Cost (USD)	Status
Understanding the current and future status of the upwelling system of the North Kenya Bank under the influence of climate change	Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institution	Kenya	150,000.00	Total disbursed USD 142,500
Carrying out oceanographic surveys in Northern Tanzania Marine waters	Institute of Marine Science	Tanzania	150,000.00	Total disbursed USD 142,500

vi. Oceanographic Data Management in the WIO Region

Understanding and managing WIO marine resources requires implementation of an ecosystem-based approach informed by scientific data, local knowledge and socio-economic information. The Nairobi Convention Secretariat has established a Clearing House Mechanism (CHM), based on COP Decision CP4/8. The clearinghouse was designed to enable countries develop a comprehensive information

base and access services to provide information to decision-makers for the improvement of the management of the coastal and marine resources. In support of the CHM and data sharing, the SAPPHIRE has organised partnership meetings with the institutions charged with collecting and managing oceanographic data and undertaking scientific research in the WIO region. The engagement seeks to cement collaboration among these actors to ensure that the best available scientific data and local knowledge are shared and incorporated in planning and policy development at the national and regional levels. The Project contracted the Center for Environment and Development for Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE) to enhance visualization of the national Marine Ecosystem Diagnostic Analysis data and carry out capacity building for nine national data centers drawn from the nine countries participating in the SAPPHIRE project. CEDARE has also developed data pages for each country to ensure that data is shared by the national data centers then migrated to the Nairobi Convention Clearing House Mechanism for access by all countries and partners.

Furthermore, the SAPPHIRE project, through the Nairobi Convention Secretariat, has collaborated with the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management (SwAM) through the WIO Symphony project to enhance the collation of data to support Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) in the region. The WIO Symphony (WIOSym) is a decision support tool for ecosystem-based MSP aimed at the regional and national scales. The work is being co-developed with experts from the Convention's MSP TWG and led by SwAM, with technical support from several other Swedish governmental agencies and financial support from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. WIO Symphony will combine spatial data from human activities and the marine ecosystem into information products to support ecosystem-based MSP. The project is committed to making all data and information products as open and as accessible as possible via the Nairobi Convention's Clearinghouse Mechanism.

e) [Component 5: Capacity Development to Realise improved ocean governance in the WIO region](#)

i. **Advanced Leadership Workshop (2) for Senior Leaders, Officials and Policy Makers (Women) in Marine Policy and Ocean Governance**

Phase two of the Advanced [Leadership Workshop](#) for Senior Leaders, Officials and Policy Makers (Women) in Marine Policy and Ocean Governance was organised. The workshop took place over two hours a day for two days a week from 13 October to 26 November 2020. The workshop facilitator noted that the participants who completed most of the modules gained valuable insights and capabilities, notwithstanding the considerable logistical, technical, attendance and delivery challenges posed by offering the workshop virtually. The [participants](#) acknowledged the value of the ongoing development and expressed unanimous support for a follow-up workshop if resources allow.

4. Communications and Knowledge Products

With the objective of enhancing awareness of the wider stakeholders and partners about a) the status of the WIO LME and b) the need for coordinated effort for sustainable management of the coastal and marine ecosystem and improved ocean governance, the SAPPHIRE project has used different stages to introduce the project and produced and disseminated various knowledge and communication products.

In addition, the project has organized major events and accomplishments have been communicated via the website, videos and educational tools, national and social medias, quarterly updates, and reports. Some of the analytical products include an assessment of data and research management in the WIO region and the state of ocean governance in WIO region.

5. Monitoring Progress

Over the reporting period, quarterly and annual progress reports, as well as mission and partnership meeting reports with actionable recommendations have been prepared and shared with responsible stakeholders, participating countries and the Secretariat team for follow-up and timely action. Moreover, recommendations and adaptive management interventions have been adopted in the implementation of activities for the achievement of the intended outcomes.

Several Project Focal Points meetings were organized virtually due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions for the purpose of reviewing project progress, evaluating the impact of COVID-19 on the implementation of planned activities at the national and regional levels, and seeking joint solutions to identified problems. The second Project Steering Committee meeting held virtually on 26 November 2020 approved the amended 2020 Annual Workplan and expenditure. In addition, the PSC meeting reviewed progress made in project implementation despite the setbacks occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic. The National Intersectoral Coordination Committee (NICC) established in all countries met (some virtually) to discuss national priorities and alignment with SAPPHIRE activities, as well as to review demonstration project proposals and support the coordination role of the National Focal Point (NFP).

6. Challenges, Opportunities and the way forward

6.1. Challenges

Implementation of project activities slowed down significantly and even stagnated in some countries due to restrictions imposed to control the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Some countries in the region went into lockdown, while in others there were cessation of movement orders, thus curtailing implementation of project activities. Cancellation of international travel resulted in postponement of regional activities with stakeholders and partners, delaying project delivery. Ultimately, the delays in implementation of project activities at the national and regional levels culminated in reduced project expenditures over the reporting period.

6.2. Opportunities and Way forward

The commitment of the national focal points and institutions to support the implementation of the project is one of the key success factors for the project. Against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Focal Points have been instrumental in coordinating national activities, though albeit slowly due to pandemic restrictions. Most engagements have been moved online, which is turning out to be the new normal.

The Nairobi Convention Secretariat, in executing the SAPPHIRE project among other projects, has encouraged the organization of joint activities in cross-cutting thematic areas, such as Marine Spatial Planning, Blue Economy, Ecosystem Monitoring and Ocean Governance, inter alia. The Secretariat has also encouraged consolidation of demonstration projects in these areas where possible to enhance impact at the national level. This has accelerated project implementation and enhanced coordination and cost effectiveness. The Secretariat has embraced online engagement with partners and stakeholders, thus ensuring continuity of project activities even as COVID-19 related restrictions were imposed regionally.

The project has engaged with an array of stakeholders and partners specializing in different thematic areas to ensure development of quality national and regional strategies and products. Some of the key partners include the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA), Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC - COI), the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management (SwAM), Nelson Mandela University, the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA), the University of Nairobi, the Kenya Marine and

Fisheries Research Institute (KMFRI) and the University of Dar es Salaam, among others. The project intends to strengthen these working relationships and build more to ensure high quality project outcomes and the amplification of project impacts for the benefit of the participating countries as well as partners and stakeholders.

7. Project Risk Log

Representatives at the Second Project Steering Committee were informed of the project delays occasioned by the COVID-19 restrictions. The PSC meeting approved the development of a revised workplan and budget for 2021, taking into account the postponed activities and unspent budget. The revised workplan would be discussed at an Ad-hoc PSC meeting in the first quarter of 2021.