



The Western Indian Ocean Marine Protected Area Professional Network (WIOMPAN) Regional Knowledge Sharing Workshop

1 – 4 November 2023, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania



Contents:

- [Background:](#) 1
- 3
- [Workshop process:](#) 3
- [Objectives:](#)..... 3
- [Defining management effectiveness](#) 4
- [Challenges to achieving effectively managed MPAs and CMAs](#) 5
- [Approaches to enhance sound design, planning, and effective management of MPAs and CMAs](#)..... 5
- [Scaling up site assessments and certification](#)..... 6
- [Regional priority actions to increase management effectiveness of MPAs and CMAs in the Western Indian Ocean](#)..... 7
- [Key outputs](#) 8
- [Way forward](#) 8

Acknowledgements:

The First Regional WIOMPAN Knowledge Exchange Workshop was the result of global, regional and national coordination with multiple partners. Several partners, including the Nairobi Convention, the Minderoo Foundation, the Blue Nature Alliance (BNA), the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA), the VARUNA Biodiversity Programme, the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) provided financial support. Technical support was provided by other partners through the facilitation of sessions during the workshop and WIOMPAN would like to acknowledge these essential contributions from the Minderoo Foundation, Advanced Conservation Strategies, Global Conservation Solutions, the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management (SwAM), Foundations of Success (FOS Europe), the International Union for Nature Conservation (IUCN) and the Wildlife

Conservation Society (WCS). A special thanks to the host of the event, the Marine Parks and Reserves Unit of Tanzania.

WIOMPAN appreciates the contributions from these various partners and will continue working with partners towards increasing management effectiveness of conservation areas in the Western Indian Ocean (WIO).

Citation:

WIOMSA, 2023. WIOMPAN regional knowledge exchange workshop report: No. 1. Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Background:

Area-based protection, through marine protected areas (MPAs) and other effective conservation measures (OECMs), can help to maintain ecosystem health and productivity, while safeguarding social and economic development. The coverage of MPAs and OECMs (mainly OECMs for fisheries) has grown rapidly in the Western Indian Ocean (WIO) region in the last decade, with now about 8% of WIO's EEZ being under MPAs and OECMs¹. The main form of marine OECMs is those for fisheries management as community managed areas (CMAs). In the WIO 143 MPAs and more than 300 CMAs protect marine biodiversity and sustain coastal communities' food and income.

MPAs and CMAs are expected to increase in the WIO region as Nations of the WIO have pledged to protect more marine areas by 2030 under the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF). The WIO countries' commitment to the GBF aims to address the unprecedented loss of marine biodiversity, which threatens ecosystem function and human life. Various regional initiatives are already being developed to support the movement toward GBF goals e.g., the WIO Great Blue Wall which aims to conserve, protect and restore 2 million hectares of ocean and coastal ecosystems by 2030.

While the WIO countries work to expand MPA and CMA coverage, a more pressing need is to bring existing MPAs and CMAs under effective management. According to the WIO MPA Outlook report, only about 40% of MPAs in the WIO region are managed effectively. The same situation has been documented for CMAs managed by communities. Effective Management refers to MPA and CMAs achieving the objectives for which they were established. Effective management requires that MPA and other organisations have the capacity to reduce threats, specifically, the daily activities implemented by managers as well as larger, community-wide efforts to address problems such as local pollution, poorly planned coastal development, and destructive fishing practices.

For MPAs and CMAs to be effective in the protection of marine and coastal ecosystems and their resources, it is necessary to build support through site-based planning. Many MPA and CMA managers and policy makers, including local and indigenous communities and other stakeholders, have insufficient access to new knowledge, information, and guidelines coming out of science, traditional knowledge, and field experience, to effectively manage their sites. They also lack capacity and tools to implement management plans which are often developed without much participation of MPA managers and communities.

A study by WIOMSA on how MPA practitioners collaborate in the WIO region shows that, MPA managers and communities at the national and regional levels work in silos, limiting the ability of MPAs and CMAs to contribute to ecologically coherent networks of protected areas. One reason for this is that previously, there was little opportunity for MPA and CMA managers to share what they had learned from their own experiences in various contexts with other managers. As a result, common challenges that necessitate collaboration among managers are not well known, expertise is not shared, and best practices and solutions are not shared.

The Western Indian Ocean MPA Professional Network (WIOMPAN) established with the support of the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA) and the Nairobi Convention, provides a mechanism to enable resource managers to come together, directly experience and learn from one another and share lessons learned, while setting new standards for the management of MPAs and CMAs in the WIO region. WIOMPAN brings

¹ UNEP/WIOMSA 2021. WIO MPA Outlook.

together MPA and CMA practitioners from the 10 Nairobi Convention countries – Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, South Africa, Comoros, Seychelles, Mauritius, Somalia, Madagascar and Reunion (France). The network works with over 100 MPAs and 100 CMAs as part of a large networking and partnership approach. It primarily consists of MPA and CMA practitioners from various MPA management bodies (government and non-governmental organizations), as well as CMA leaders.

WIOMPAN has proven itself as an impactful and resourceful network with active participation from its members towards increasing management effectiveness of marine conservation areas. The network implements activities through the WIOMSA secretariat, various partners (e.g., Nairobi Convention, Indian Ocean Commission, Blue Nature Alliance, the Minderoo Foundation, Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Wildlife Conservation Society, Flora and Fauna International, VARUNA, and IUCN), existing networks (e.g., MIHARI), and the WIOMPAN committee, which consists of Country Chapter leaders, representing WIOMPAN Country committees for each WIO country recognised under the Nairobi Convention.

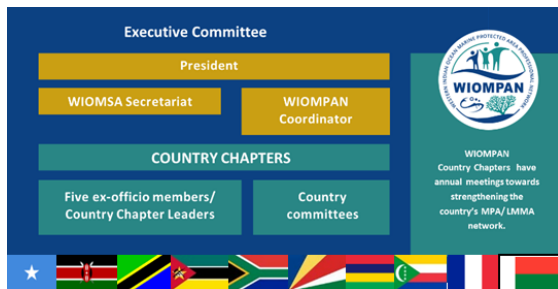


Figure 1: WIOMPAN structure.

WIOMPAN Country Chapter leaders hold annual meetings towards strengthening the country's MPA/CMA network, however, it was recognised that stronger regional coordination is required to streamline the various interventions towards increasing management effectiveness, including those implemented at regional, national and local level. With support from the Nairobi Convention, the Minderoo Foundation, Blue Nature Alliance, WIOMSA, the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), VARUNA, and FAO, the first regional WIOMPAN Knowledge Exchange Workshop was hosted by the Marine Parks and Reserves Unit, Tanzania, in Dar es Salaam on the 1st to the 4th of November. The Workshop was designed to increase regional coordination of interventions to strengthen management

effectiveness of WIO marine conservation areas.

Approximately 80 participants joined the Workshop, representing Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Reunion, Seychelles, South Africa, and Tanzania (including Zanzibar). More than 30% of the participants represented government MPAs. Other participants included government partners; co-managed MPA representatives; Community Conservation Area representatives; Directors and Deputy Directors of MPAs; International, Regional and Local NGOs; Intergovernmental organisations; and students.

The average number of years of experience of participants working in conservation areas was 15 years.

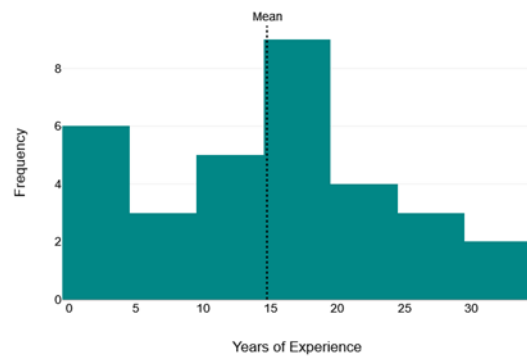


Figure 2: Average number of years of experience of workshop participants working in conservation areas.

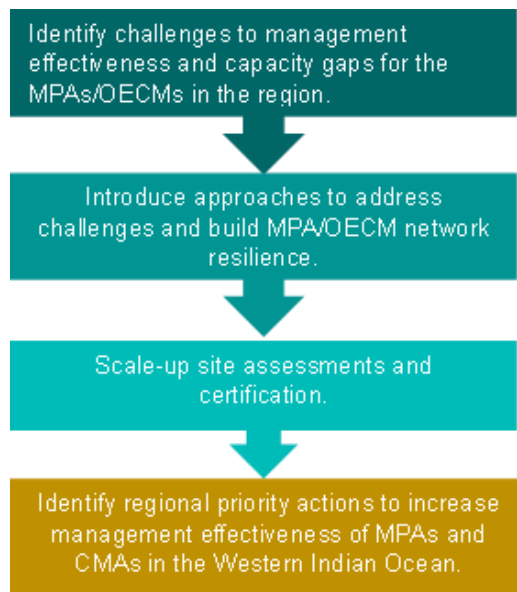


Figure 3: WIOMPAN Regional knowledge exchange participant group photo.



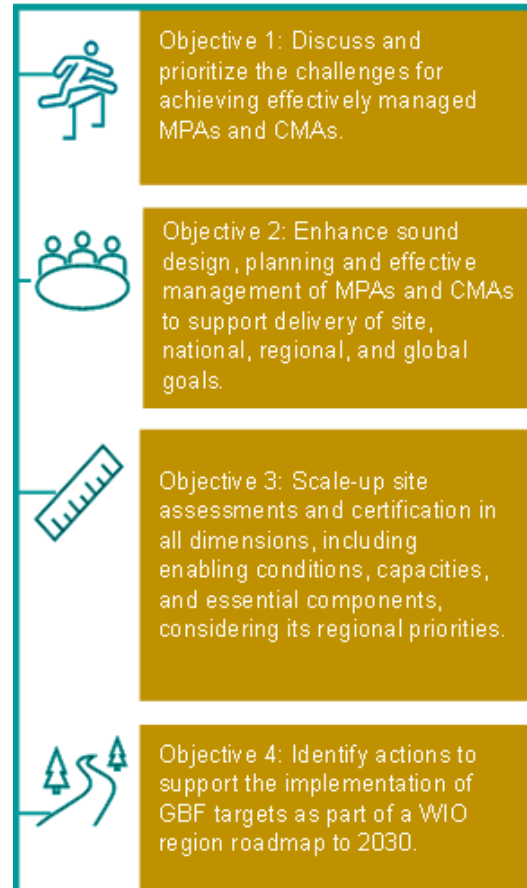
Figure 4: Group discussions during the Workshop.

Workshop process:



Objectives:

Workshop objectives included:



Defining management effectiveness:

To set the stage for in depth discussion on prioritising challenges hindering effectively managed marine conservation areas the Minderoo Foundation gave an overview of the concept of management effectiveness to define its key components. Effectiveness domains were identified using the [2021 WIO MPA Outlook report](#) based on interviews with over 100 MPAs in the WIO and the [IUCN Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool](#).

The five management effectiveness domains, along with some examples, were the following:

D 1:

Equipment & Infrastructure

Operational equipment and infrastructure

- Surveillance equipment or technology
- Environmental monitoring equipment or technology
- Visitor facilities and other tourism infrastructure
- Maintenance of equipment or infrastructure.

D 2:

Capacity and Training

Human resources capacity & staff development programs

- Technical job trainings (compliance, social or biological monitoring)
- Management training
- Leadership training

D 3:

Operations

Site-level program and activities

- Specific research programs (social, biological, environmental)
- Specific monitoring programs
- Protection activities (compliance, enforcement)
- Site boundary demarcation
- Restoration and conservation activities

D 4:

Stakeholders & Partners

Stakeholder engagement and partner activities

- Public education programs and activities
- Communications and marketing programs
- Activities with private partners (e.g., businesses or NGOs)

D 5:

Planning & Higher-level Processes

Planning and foundational processes

- Management plans
- Planning processes
- Policy and regulatory activities
- Legal activities
- Operational budget
- Administrative activities
- Zonation planning
- Annual plan of operations
- Fundraising and revenue plans
- Adaptive management

Challenges to achieving effectively managed MPAs and CMAs:

To prioritise the challenges and identify needs to effectively managed MPAs and CMAs at regional, national, and local level, participants were grouped according to their scope of work on conservation areas in the WIO. Broadly three groups were distinguished, the first group consisted of regional and national level leaders, donor and technical partners, and regional and international NGOs. The second group consisted of site level government and co-managed MPA representatives (managers and

core staff) and the third group included community-managed area representatives, particularly representatives working in CMAs in the region.

Group 1 – Prioritised challenges identified by MPA directors:

- 1) Qualified and adequate staff,
- 2) Secure and adequate budgets,
- 3) Adaptive management practice,
- 4) Proactive law enforcement and compliance, and
- 5) Adequate equipment and infrastructure.

Group 2 – Prioritised challenges identified at site level by Government MPA and Co-Managed MPA staff:

- 1) Lack of skilled staff,
- 2) Outdated management plans,
- 3) Lack of common interest/perceptions among stakeholders.

Group 3 – Prioritised challenges identified by CMA (LMMA) representatives:

- 1) Lack of legal recognition of LMMAs,
- 2) Bureaucratic nature of getting management plans approved takes long,
- 3) Lack of capacity for in-house planning.

Approaches to enhance sound design, planning, and effective management of MPAs and CMAs:

To address the challenges identified by participants, approaches were unpacked by the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management (SwAM) and Foundation of Success (FOS Europe) with participants

towards enhancing sound design and planning, and adaptively managed MPAs and CMAs.

The incorporation of deliberate learning into professional practice to reduce uncertainty in decision making, an adaptive management approach, was pinpointed. The integration of design, management, and monitoring to enable practitioners to test key assumptions, evaluate the results, adjust management decisions, and generate learning is a key ingredient to effective management of protected areas in a changing and uncertain marine world systematically and efficiently.

Priority challenge 1: Qualified and adequate staff

- 1) Undertake capacity assessments to identify gaps. Develop fitting capacity-building opportunities at all levels. Include marine conservation topics within curriculum at educational institutions as a basis for recruitment of skilled staff.
- 2) Training of trainers in key topics to build hubs of capacity at all levels in order to build ownership and enable crucial support to practitioners.
- 3) Promote use of the WIOMPAN network for practitioners to exchange experience, knowledge and to get advice from other practitioners.

Priority challenge 2: Management Plans

- 1) Facilitate/support the development of clear management plans which include all needed components to guide effective and adaptive management. This include using monitoring data to ensure evidence-based decision making.
- 2) Develop institutional structures and enabling processes to support adaptive management on all levels, including the production of manuals and standardised procedures for the different components of management plans.

Priority challenge 3: Difference in interests, perceptions, mandates & synergy between stakeholders (no common vision/misaligned)

- 1) Develop a process and platform for stakeholders to discuss and agree to work together towards improving common management outcomes (including a grievance mechanism)

Scaling up site assessments and certification:

After discussing appropriate solutions, IUCN discussed existing evaluation tools to gauge management effectiveness of conservation areas. An integral part of this session was focused on discussion of global standards, like the [Greenlist Standard](#), a global benchmark for how to meet the environmental challenges of the 21st century.

Evaluation tools in use in the region (such as [IMET](#), [METT4](#), SAGE), as well as [Conservation Standards](#) have the potential to provide a strategic framework with performance targets and indicators of high Protected Area performance. These strategic frameworks can act as guidance tools for data collection, monitoring and measuring of conservation and social well-being outcomes. Standards can either show what success looks like (e.g., the [Greenlist Standard](#)), or provide managers with tools and best practices on how to design, plan and implement actions to improve (e.g., the [Conservation Standards](#)). It is therefore essential to ensure that sites use tools that are fit for their purpose, to promote, support and strengthen the use of these tools and standards in an integrated and sound manner for the whole region.

In light of the CBD Target 3, evaluation tools and standards contribute to reporting on the Quality of Marine P/CA, not only in terms of the quality of their management effectiveness, but also quality in terms of inclusiveness, diversity, and compliance with IPLC rights. Evaluation standards can also mobilise support partners and catalyse diverse sources of fundings towards needs and priorities identified at site level for actions and capacity development.

Conservation area management participants were asked to indicate their interest in

embarking upon the Greenlist process to reach this ambitious global standard. The sites who expressed interest were:



- Moheli National Park.



- Kiunga Marine National Reserve.
- Watamu Marine Park and Reserve.
- Kisite Mpunguti Marine Park and Reserve.



- Bazaruto Archipelago National Park.



- Curieuse Marine National Park.
- St. Anne Marine National Park.



- Mnemba Island Marine Conservation Area.
- Chumbe Island Coral park.

Regional priority actions to increase management effectiveness of MPAs and CMAs in the Western Indian Ocean:

Towards implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework in the Western Indian Ocean several key recommendations were identified and included as formal requests to the Nairobi Convention for implementation in the region. The requests have been captured in a white paper that will be presented at the Nairobi Convention Science to Policy meeting taking place from the 7th to the 9th of December in Maputo, Mozambique. The formal requests included:

Request 1: The Convention endorse the expansion of other effective area based measures got marine protection in an integrated manner, in particular:

- a) Articulating a roadmap at the regional level aimed at meeting the appropriate CBD targets for protection relevant for the region
- b) Supporting Member States to develop national roadmaps in alignment with the regional roadmap
- c) And that these road maps take note of the 2018 report by the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Request 2: The Convention support the development of a regionally coordinated update of the measurement of management effectiveness in MPAs and CMAs by country and site, building on the 2018 WIOMSA MPA outlook.

Request 3: The Convention support an increased understanding of economic, social and ecological benefits of effective management in CMAs and MPAs in the WIO region through:

- a) A system of national audits or studies documenting the benefits from these management measures
- b) Ensuring that the relevant studies are contextualized to coastal management.

Key outputs:

1. Identification of priority issues that affect MPA and CMAs management effectiveness and proposed solutions for marine protection.
2. White paper, "Recommendations for the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework in the Western Indian Ocean", to present at the Nairobi Convention Science to Policy meeting taking place from the 7th to the 9th of December in Maputo, Mozambique.
3. Regional capacity needs survey towards increasing staff competencies and management effectiveness of MPAs and CMAs.
4. Updated Terms of Reference for the WIOMPAN network.

Way forward:

WIOMPAN with partners will develop workplans and identify funding opportunities to implement the following key priorities identified during the workshop, including:

1. The recognition and reporting of CMAs (e.g. Locally Managed Marine Areas) including them in GBF reporting to support WIO countries in reaching global goals.
2. Securing adequate budgets for the management of conservation areas and seascapes promoting an ecologically coherent network of protected areas.
3. Developing capacity building opportunities, underpinned by the

- Capacity Needs Survey conducted during the workshop.
4. Developing mentorship programmes, which includes training the trainer programmes.
 5. Enabling practitioners to easily exchange experience, knowledge and give advice through the WIOMPAN platform.
 6. Facilitate/support the development of clear management plans which include all needed components to guide effective and adaptive management. This includes developing and using monitoring data to ensure evidence-based decision making.
 7. Developing institutional structures and enabling processes to support adaptive management at all levels, including the production of manuals and standardized procedures for the different components of management plans.
 8. Developing and implementing a regional roadmap on management effectiveness of protected and conservation areas in the WIO to reach CBD targets.
 9. Measuring management effectiveness of existing marine conservation areas.
 10. Support MPAs and CMAs that are aspiring for green listing.
 11. Increasing the understanding of economic, social and ecological benefits of effectively managed conservation areas.

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Thank you for your time and consideration!



WIOMPAN

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