

THE WIOSAP PROJECT PRESENTS

MARINE PROTECTED AREAS AND KENYA

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 Kenya, 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.

Malindi Marine Park, Kenya. © Jennifer O'Leary



WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF MPAS?

MPAs can bring social, economic, and environmental benefits.

Economic:

- Protect breeding and nursery grounds for fish and prevent over-exploitation of fish stocks, helping **maintain food and job security**
- **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:

- 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 KENYA?

Kenya has made significant progress towards increasing the total coverage of MPAs. The current six MPAs protecting over 941 square kilometers of oceans have led to increased revenues and income for local tour operators and fishermen, enhanced biodiversity protection, and discouraged destructive fishing practices.

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 three proposed MPAs, i.e. Malindi-Watamu, and Ras Tenewi, and the Transboundary Marine Conservation Area between Tanzania and Kenya;
- Further expand MPA coverage to meet future targets under the Global Biodiversity Framework;
- Invest in community development programs to educate and raise public awareness to enhance support for MPAs;
- Engage in adaptive co-management with the wide range of partners supporting Kenya's existing MPAs;
- Support locally managed marine areas (LMMAs) adjacent to existing MPAs, which can help increase the protection impact of the MPA.

Regional Recommendations include:

- Creating a regional framework to develop Kenya and its neighbors' capacity 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 nairobi-convention.org!