

Nairobi Convention / WIO-C Proposal on the Northern Mozambique Channel

Project Summary



FONDS FRANÇAIS POUR
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Short project title	Northern Mozambique Channel (NMC) initiative
Country/region	Comores, France, Madagascar, Mozambique, Tanzanie
Core Member Institutions	MAEDI, MEEM, AFD
Application area	International Waters
Thematic of focus	Integrated management and resilience of coastal/marine zones
Co-financers	GEF, Sida, WIO-C Members, FEDER
Contribution of the FFEM	1,5 million €
Applicants	Nairobi Convention Secretariat in partnership with WIO-C ¹
Final beneficiaries	Governments and local authorities, Regional Organisations, Civil Society, MPAs, Economic operators
Project start	December 2017/ January 2018
Project duration	4 years

¹ Represented by WWF and Cordio as the main project coordinators.

1. CONTEXT

The NMC's strategic priority for biodiversity conservation has been confirmed by various processes, including the Indian Ocean Commission WIOMER process, the UNESCO World Heritage Convention and the Convention on Biological Diversity "EBSA" process. The importance of the region and its natural assets was furthermore recognized at the 8th Conference of Parties to the Nairobi Convention, in Mahe, Seychelles (June 2015), when a decision (CP8/6) was issued requesting the Contracting Parties, the GEF and other partners, to support projects in the Northern Mozambique Channel as an example of the Integrated Ocean Management (IOM) approach. Based on this decision, the Nairobi Convention Secretariat (NCS) has established a partnership with WWF and Cordio, as members of the WIO-C, to prepare a strategic framework for advancing IOM in the NMC area. Various stages of consultations on this strategic framework have meanwhile been held with the five participating governments as well as well as the WIO-C NGOs, with general-level consensus on the directions to be taken resulting. Based on this overall strategic framework, the present summary provides an overview of a project concept for the French Global Environment Facility (FFEM) as under preparation by the partnership in support of the country-led NMC-IOM process.

2. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Overall objective of the project: By 2025, the Northern Mozambique Channel's high biodiversity value ecosystems are maintained, and secure sustainable futures and livelihoods for coastal communities and economies.

Specific objectives of the project: By 2020, an integrated ocean management approach is designed, endorsed and initiated through a multi-stakeholder driven marine spatial planning and scenario analysis approach, and an emphasis on upscaling community-driven initiatives.

3. OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT

Building on the foundations of strong regional cooperation and partnerships, the NMC region is well placed to implement a sustainable "Blue Economy" development pathway that will respond to the aspirations and commitments made under the UN 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), with particular relevance to SDG 14 on Oceans. In this regard, the present project aims to set the foundations for a regional partnership-based IOM approach to secure the health and productivity of critical ecosystems in the region, with a particular focus on the rich coral reef and mangroves habitats hosted by the region. At the core of the IOM approach, marine spatial planning (MSP) will be rolled-out at the regional level by a broad-based, multi-stakeholder process led by governments, and supported by the civil society (objective 1). This process will be based on cutting-edge knowledge as a support to decision-making, ensuring all economic sectors as well as local communities are engaged in assessing stakes, trade-offs and opportunities of future development pathways. As a key sector, the oil and gas industry, will be targeted to ensure the precautionary principle is applied and best practices are adopted in order to mitigate impacts to the natural assets and communities in the NMC (objective 2). Particular emphasis will furthermore be put on scaling up and replication of successful models of livelihood enhancing community-based management approaches for mangrove, coral reef and their associated fisheries resources, through improved practices and learning networks (objective 3).

Objective 1: Institutional and knowledge foundations laid for a multi-stakeholder based Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) process for the NMC to deliver on the SDGs, in particular SDG 14.

Led by The Nairobi Convention Secretariat, with key support from WWF, this objective is firmly grounded in the UN 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with the overall aim to build capacity within the participating countries and at a coordination level in the Nairobi Convention Secretariat to enable the implementation of an IOM approach through application of MSP. This will contribute to the implementation and delivery of the outcomes of other important regional projects, such as of Outcomes 1.1 and 4.2 of the SAPPHERE project as well as Component 4 of the WIOSAP². This institutional capacity development will be supported by the provision of policy-relevant information and knowledge that will support decision-making.

Objective 2: Best practices in the oil and gas sector are adopted and lead to mitigation of impacts of the sector to the natural assets and communities in the NMC, and effective engagement of the sector in the multi-stakeholder process.

² SAPPHERE Outcome 1.1 "Policy, legislative and institutional reforms and realignment ..." and Outcome 4.2 in "Delivering best practices and lessons through innovative ocean governance demonstration" and WIOSAP Component 4 "Governance and Regional Collaboration"

Activities under this objective will be guided by the NMC oil and gas working group, with core support by FFI and WCS. The potential for growth in the oil and gas sector may present both the highest threat and the greatest opportunity for sustainability in the NMC, including the critical mangrove and coral reef habitats. The rationale for this objective is to take advantage of the current slow-down in development of the sector, due to global oil prices, to undertake two foundation activities: implement latest guidance for best practice³, and identify and work with leading companies and civil society groups (champions).

Objective 3: Community livelihoods and wellbeing are secured through improved practices in community-based marine management and Public-Health-Environment approaches, through replication and scaling up of successful models in learning networks across the NMC.

This component of the project will be led by CORDIO (overall and 3.1), Blue Ventures (3.2) and Rare (3.3), in coordination with the wider NMCi partnership and other experts via a technical working group. Coastal communities are most vulnerable to multiple threats including climate change, over-exploitation and decline of coastal resources, including through the involvement of the oil and gas sector; they will be the first ones to suffer from the loss and degradation of critical coastal habitats (mangroves, coral reefs, etc.). In a region where capacity for top-down management and governance is limited, adaptive management strategies led by local stakeholders that secure the rights of local users of marine resources are an important set of tools for managing marine resources, maintaining ecosystem services and bringing coastal communities out of poverty. Learning exchanges and networks have demonstrated their potential to initiate and sustain such local management initiatives. The work under this objective is therefore designed to develop a dynamic community of practitioners and communities in order to identify what has been working in the region, facilitate and empower communities to join together in peer learning networks to help them learn about these solutions, and upscale/expand their adoption and implementation.

4. INSTITUTIONAL SETTING

The project will be implemented under the overall coordination of the Nairobi Convention Secretariat, working closely with relevant WIO-C partners under the coordination of WWF and Cordio. A dedicated project coordinator would be hosted by the Secretariat for this purpose. Project governance will be assured by a project steering committee, with membership by the participating countries and key partners. At the highest level of decision-making, the Conference of Parties to the Nairobi Convention will play a key role. Partnership with other inter-governmental organizations (IOC, SADC, EAC, etc.) will also be established. Technical support will be provided by supporting partner organizations, including members of the WIO-C, as well as the French Marine Protected Areas Agency and the CBD Sustainable Oceans Initiative.
