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Meeting of the Special Session of the Regional State of Coast Report during the 9th Science Symposium of WIOMSA

Wild Sun Coast Resort, Durban, South Africa 30 October 2015

Meeting Report

Background

1. In Decision CP7/15.1, *Contribution to the United Nations Regular Process*, Contracting Parties to the Nairobi Convention agreed to support and actively contribute to the United Nations Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, Including Socio-economic Aspects by nominating national experts or institutions to be part of the Pool of Experts and by providing the necessary information for the process and the assessment of marine environment. Pursuant to decision CP7/15, the Secretariat contracted the Western Indian Ocean Marine Scientists Association (WIOMSA) to prepare the first Regional State of Coast Report for the Western Indian Ocean region.
2. In realization of decision CP7/15, the first Regional State of Coast Report (RSCOR) for the Western Indian Ocean was launched on 21 June 2015 during the Eighth Conference of Parties to the Nairobi Convention (COP8) that was held on 22-24 June 2015 in Mahe, Seychelles. The report was launched by the Executive Director of UNEP, Mr. Achim Steiner, and the Minister for Environment, Energy and Climate Change of Seychelles, Hon. Didier Dogley.
3. Subsequent to the launch of the RSCOR report, the Nairobi Convention Secretariat and WIOMSA organized a Special Session to discuss ways to develop and further disseminate key messages from the report to different audiences in the Western Indian Ocean region.
4. The Special Session was organized on 30 October in Durban, South Africa during the 9th Scientific Symposium of the Western Indian Ocean Scientists Association (WIOMSA) held on 26-31 October 2015 in Durban, South Africa. It offered an opportunity for the authors of the Regional State of Coast Report who were in attendance at the 9th WIOMSA Scientific symposium to attend the session. The session was also attended by communication experts.

Introduction

1. Dixon Waruinge (Nairobi Convention Secretariat) opened the meeting at 9.00 a.m by stating that there had been tremendous downloads of the Regional State of Coast Report (RSCOR) after the launch in June during the Eighth Conference of Parties (COP 8). The trend has since been declining gradually and is indicative there was need to reach other audiences other than the scientific community.

2. He stated the purpose of the session was to discuss on how to prick the conscience of governments, the public and other stakeholders, over time with key messages from the report. Further, he stated that the report in its current form and structure is primarily designed for scientists and the next step is to engage decision makers, managers, and civil society by identifying and communicating the problems and solutions highlighted in the report with different communication tools. In addition, he stated that campaigns were not possible and the communication strategies must mainly target policy-making processes.

Discussions

3. Joy Owango, a communication expert, gave an overview of different communication strategies and products for disseminating the RSCOR to different audiences. She stated that the communication tool for each audience is primarily determined by their attitudes. She gave examples of different products that can be used for different audiences for example social media campaigns, policy briefs, opinion editorials as shown below:

General Public

- a) Banners
- b) Info graphs
- c) Flyers

Policy makers

- a) Policy Briefs and Fact Sheets

Civil Society

- a) Newsletters

Press

- a) Opinion editorials

4. After the presentation, there were several suggestions and proposals from the authors on the different products that can be generated from the report as highlighted below:
 - a) The key elements of communication should focus on: a) status; b) challenges; c) opportunities; and d) recommendations and policy options by using the DSPIR analysis to create a logical flow of the message.
 - b) The policy options and recommendations for each chapter should be amplified and tailor-made to develop a contextualized recommendation for each audience.
 - c) The products should inform policy makers from a regional perspective and trickle down to the national level.

- d) The findings of Part 2 of the report should be used to update the Protocol on Protected Areas, Wild Flora and Fauna to the Nairobi Convention.
- e) The key issues that should be communicated are those that are unknown to the public, and to stress on important ones that are known.
- f) The main focus should be on opportunities, status of resources and summaries highlighted in the report.
- g) Each author knows the key messages for the chapters that they authored, and the approach would be to communicate them with different tools for different audiences.
- h) The main news is the integrated nature of the report, for example the relationship between marine biodiversity and the blue economy. This should be presented in a more understandable non-scientific language.
- i) A proposal was made to use one integrated whole message and four different thematic messages.
- j) Different parts of the report have different audiences and different products should be developed for the identified audiences.
- k) It was suggested that as a starting point, the focus should not be on communication tools but on the key messages, and then develop a matrix on targeted audiences from the key messages.
- l) Authors were requested to propose key messages from their chapters for different audiences.
- m) A proposal was made to develop a popular version of the report.
- n) A communication strategy was proposed to be developed.
- o) A road map for the process was also proposed to be developed.

Conclusion

After the discussions, it was agreed as follows:

5. A 50 page popular version of the report to be developed. Each lead author was requested to prepare a one page summary of their chapter. The final Popular Version report to be edited by Jose Paula.
6. Key messages to be developed in parallel to the popular version of the report with the following features:
 - They can be used in different products and should be memorable.
 - They should be developed from parts of the report rather than chapters.
 - They should be actionable and elicit reaction.
 - They should include potential audiences.

- They should as a starting point be developed as annotated bullets for further editing and refinement.
- Key message bullets to be used in the Western Indian Ocean news roundup of the Nairobi Convention.

Time- Frame

Action	By When	Responsible
Annotated bullets for key messages	15 th November 2015	Authors
One page summary for popular version of report	1 st December 2015	Authors
Editing and summary of key messages and popular version of RSCOR	15 th December 2015	Jose Paula

Audiences

Audience	Description
Civil Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Conservation NGOs (national, regional and international) b) Fisher Fora c) Human Rights NGOs d) Animal Rights NGOs e) Community Based Organizations
Policy Makers/Management Authorities	<p>Regional Policy makers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Regional Economic Commissions b) Regional Fisheries Management Authorities c) Water Resources Authorities d) Intergovernmental Organizations <p>National Policy Makers Ministries of:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Environment b) Industry c) Mining d) Economic Affairs e) Finance f) Culture <p>Sub-national Policy Makers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Counties b) Provinces c) Regions d) Municipalities e) Legislative bodies
Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Print Media b) Broadcast Media c) Online Media
Scientific Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Research Institutions b) University and Colleges c) Museums d) Libraries
Private Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Fishing Companies
Funding Agencies	

Closing

7. The meeting was closed at 12.30 p.m