

UNITED
NATIONS

EP

UNEP/Ocean
Governance/WG.1/3



**United Nations
Environment
Programme**



Distr.: General
1 October 2015

Original: English

**The first meeting of the African
Ocean Governance Strategy**
Istanbul, 19 October 2015

***Organisation of a regional conference on
Africa Ocean Governance strategy***

For reasons of economy, this document is printed in a limited number. Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copies to meetings and not to request additional copies.

I. Background

1. The approach to ocean governance at the global level is premised on the fact that global common problems such as ocean acidification or biodiversity loss, etc, require common solutions from all countries that contribute to, or are affected by the problem. Urguably, some environmental problems are successfully framed as global problems, but others are not e.g loss of mangroves or erosion of national coastlines. Equally, a number of transboundary problems such as pollution of an enclosed sea, or a river basin are more readily, and effectively addressed by those countries that share the sea, or the transboundary river and this is the foundational logic of the regional seas conventions.
2. While governments have the primary responsibility and obligations over their territorial seas up to the EEZ, the different UN agencies have roles and activities on oceans related to governance including on the high seas.

II. UNEP Work in Regional Seas

3. UNEP is mandated to coordinate regional seas conventions and action plans and administers seven of them (Caribbean Region, East Asian Seas, Eastern Africa Region, Mediterranean Region, North-West Pacific region, Western Africa Region). UNEP assists the regional seas member countries in pursuing regional ocean governance for regional sustainable development, and promotes partnership between/among the Regional Seas, Regional Fishery Bodies, Large Marine Ecosystem.
4. UNEP's work on oceans/regional seas programme (RSP) appear under as Multi-lateral Agreements (MEAs) and as programatic work. UNEP's work on oceans is found in the Divisions of Environmental Policy Implementation (DEPI), Environmental Law Conventions (DELIC) and Early Warning and Assessment (DEWA).
5. The regional offices handle the political and coordination aspects of the regions.. The programmatic work of RSPs in the regions is obviously linked to Regional Offices (RO) and there is need for close coordination between the RSPs and Regional Offices that support the coordination and implementation of activities.
6. UNEP's mandate therefore is to bring together all RSPs that cover the two Oceans (Indian and Atlantic) and the two Seas (the Red Sea and Mediterranean) and the UNEP Regional Offices of Europe, West Asia and Africa as well as regional economic commissions and other UN agencies under the political leadership of the African Union Commission (AUC) and AMCEN.

III. Why Oceans Governance in Africa

7. With regard to the Africa continent, coordination of the four regional seas requires the involvement of the Asian and European continents since they are contiguous to Africa in terms of seas. The role of four Regional Seas Secretariats that are related to Africa are important in terms of an oceans governance dialogue.

8. What has been lacking or is a challenge in Africa is having an collective and effective mechanism to consolidate and harness the natural blue capital potential of the four regional seas in Africa as part of their contribution to Agenda 2063 and its Africa Integrated Marine Strategy 2050 (AIMS). There is need for a stronger coordination framework for activities related to the marine environment and ocean governance.
9. It is against the above that the 15th session of the African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN) declared their “*support for the regional seas programmes in Africa as regional platforms for the implementation of the Africa Integrated Marine Strategy 2050 and Agenda 2063 on Ecosystem-based Management Approaches for marine resources in the exclusive economic zones and adjacent waters¹.*”, . The declaration provides an overarching support and mandate to the RSPs. *Further, AMCEN agreed to” develop a governance strategy, in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and regional seas conventions, on oceans and seas in Africa for the effective management of the region’s shared maritime resources and called for a regional conference to address the matter by 2016².”*

IV. Africa Ocean Governance Strategy

10. The development of an African Ocean Governance Strategy requires development of collaboration modalities with the four Regional Seas Convention secretariats (MAP, Nairobi Convention Secretariat, Abidjan Convention Secretariat, and PERSGA).
11. It is therefore proposed that a regional conference on African ocean governance be organised under the support of UNEP, (AMCEN Secretariat, UNEP Regional Office for Africa, in collaboration with DEPI and DELC). DEPI administers three out of the four RSPs involved in the discussions and DELC will provide the legal and governance backstopping. All AU member states (including land-locked countries) will be invited to participate at both experts and ministerial levels.
12. Prior to the regional conference, a consultant will be engaged to prepare a draft strategy, which will then be discussed by a team of experts from the member states.
13. The regional Conference will serve three purposes:
 - Agree on how to harness the natural blue capital of the oceans and seas on the African continent as a contribution to the development of Africa;
 - Agree on how to use the existing national and regional ocean governance frameworks to strengthen the regional governance mechanisms of oceans and seas in Africa in the context of the environment and ecosystems; and
 - Review and agree on a draft Africa ocean governance strategy, ready for submission to the next session of AMCEN/AU.
14. The conference will be for three days and the proposed agenda for the conference are presented in Annex. The conference will be conducted in two languages (English and French). It is proposed

¹ para 8 of the Cairo Declaration

² para 14 of the Cairo Declaration

that the Conference be organised in the last quarter of 2016 with specific dates to be decided later, so that the results of the Conference could be submitted to the AMCEN meeting in 2017.

15. The proposed budget for developing the draft strategy and organizing the conference is broken down as follows:

	Cost (USD)
Consultant cost to prepare draft strategy	25,000
Consultative meeting of experts	70,000
Support for the participants (54)	130,000
Conference rooms and equipment	20,000
Conference support consultant	20,000
UNEP staff member travel	20,000
Translation and interpretation	40,000
Total	325,000

V. Pre-conference activities

16. The following pre-conference activities are envisaged:

- Organise a UNEP internal meeting in UNEP to agree on the modalities (DEWA, DEPI, DELC, ROWA, ROE and ROA);
- Send a letter to AUC seeking for their support and involvement;
- Hire a consultant to prepare a draft strategy; and
- Organise a Panel of Government designated Experts (PGE) meeting to review draft Africa Ocean Governance strategy.

17. The proposed roadmap for the organization of the Conference is presented below:

Timeline	Activities	Responsible unit(s)	Comment
19 October 2015	The first meeting of the Africa Ocean Governance Strategy	UNEP	
By 31 December 2015	Securing funds for the organization of the Conference	UNEP	
BY 15 January 2015	Identification of dates	UNEP in communication with four regional seas	
BY 31 January 2016	Identification of a host country	UNEP	
By 31 March 2016	The second meeting of the Africa Ocean Governance Strategy	UNEP DEPI/ROA	Through telephone conference. The meeting will review progress, develop detailed Conference programme and decide

			on a host country.
By 31 May 2016	Issuing invitation letters	UNEP	
By 31 September 2016	The third meeting of the Africa Ocean Governance Strategy	UNEP DEPI/ROA	
By 31 September 2016	Conclusion of a host country agreement	UNEP and a host country	
4 th quarter 2016	Organisation of the Conference	UNEP in collaboration with regional seas and host Government	
After the conference	Submission of the report and results to AMCEN	ROA	

ANNEX: Proposed agenda of the conference

1. Opening of the Conference
2. Organisation of the Conference
3. Global issues, requiring ocean governance discussion (area beyond national jurisdiction, Sustainable Development Goals)
4. Basis for Africa Ocean Governance Strategy (Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy 2050, Agenda 2063, Blue Economy)
5. Existing national and regional ocean governance frameworks
6. Issues related to development of an integrated ocean governance framework for Africa
7. Review of a draft Africa ocean governance strategy
8. Formulation of recommendations to AMCEN
9. Adoption of a conference report
10. Closure of the Conference