



**Ecosystems Division**

**Meeting for Forum For Heads of Academic and Research  
Institutions in the Western Indian Ocean region**

*Flic en Flac, Mauritius, 13 April 2017*

**REPORT OF THE MEETING FOR FORUM FOR HEADS OF ACADEMIC AND  
RESERCH INSTITUTIONS (FARI) IN THE WESTERN INDIAN OCEAN  
REGION**

## Introduction

1. The meeting for the Forum for Heads of Academic and Research Institutions (FARI) was organized to discuss the role of FARI in the implementation of WIOSAP (*Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme for the protection of the Western Indian Ocean from land-based sources and activities*) and SAPPHIRE (*Western Indian Ocean Large Marine Ecosystems Strategic Action Programme Policy Harmonization and Institutional Reforms*) projects by promoting science to policy interface and access the support required in the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 in the Western Indian Ocean region.

## Opening of the Meeting

### *Opening remarks by the Secretariat of the Nairobi Convention*

2. The meeting was called to order at 0905 hrs by the Head of the Secretariat of the Nairobi Convention, Mr. Dixon Waruinge who gave a brief opening statement followed by an introduction by the participants.
3. Mr. Waruinge gave a brief overview of the Forum for heads of Academic and Research Institutions. He explained that the forum required to be properly structured to execute its functions. He noted that there may be resources to sustain the forum and its activities through the WIOSAP project. He recalled that there were a number of opportunities in the past to develop peer reviewed papers from previous projects such as the WIOLaB (*Addressing Land Based Activities in the Western Indian Ocean*), ASCLME (*Agulhas and Somali Current Large Marine Ecosystems*) and SWIOFP (*Southwest Indian Ocean Fisheries Project*) and that would have been a good way to use FARI to make publications instead of having project reports only. He mentioned that the forum can take the opportunity provided by the WIOSAP project to provide guidance through technical expertise by exploring the role of FARI in the upcoming projects. He emphasized the need for strong link between science and policy at institutional level and the need of FARI to lead in the science aspect.

## Technical Presentations

### *Promoting Science agenda and strengthening role of FARI*

4. The head of the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA), Dr. Julius Francis delivered a presentation on promoting the science agenda and strengthening the role of FARI in the region. He gave a brief background of FARI, highlighted the main challenges that led to the establishment of FARI, the decision of the Conference of Parties (CP 4/9, CP 5/5, CP 7/ 17 and CP 8/12) that led to the establishment of FARI, the purpose, objectives, membership and functions of FARI. He mentioned that the functions need to be reviewed and further discussed by the forum to keep within the core mandate of FARI. He also highlighted the support provided by FARI in the establishment of WIOLAB technical working groups for the project, development of TDA (Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis) and SAP (Strategic Action Programme) and in the review and Validation of the Marine Ecosystems Diagnostic Analysis for the ASCLME project. He noted the opportunities that exist for FARI as the science pillar of the Science to Policy forum and in the implementation of WIOSAP and SAPPHIRE projects.
5. Dr. Francis noted that there was lack of adequate knowledge in the region about FARI, its membership and roles based on the outcomes of the Science to Policy meeting held in October 2016 in Seychelles. He highlighted the need for clear rules of engagement of FARI in the Science to Policy Platform, institutionalization of the membership of FARI and the need for a source of funding for FARI activities. Some key questions were presented as a guide to the deliveries of the meeting and the way forward :

- How can FARI be formalized considering that current membership to the forum is on a voluntary basis?
- Should membership of FARI be limited to heads of institutions considering that some institutions have a high turnover of the heads, or should the forum have focal institutions that can nominate a representative from the institution to FARI?
- How can the relationship between FARI and the Nairobi Convention Focal Points be strengthened at national and regional level?
- Does FARI need a work programme of its own or can it function under the existing work programme of the Convention?

## DISCUSSIONS

### *Formalizing and Institutionalizing FARI*

6. Mr Waruinge explained that most Multi-lateral Environmental Agreements have Scientific and Technical Advisory Committees (STAC) but the Nairobi Convention does not. He proposed that FARI can play this role and also provide support to policy making at the regional level though this is not a traditional role of STACs. He also noted that FARI has an important role to play in fostering discussions on the interlinkages between science and policy. He requested participants to come up with ways in which the forum can provide support to the heads of institutions to meet these roles. Mr Waruinge stated that it should be the role of National Focal Points of the countries to nominate focal institutions to the forum as part of formalizing FARI at the national level.
7. The representative from Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), Dr. Nyawira Muthiga urged the forum to ascertain that persons nominated to the forum are committed to it and are actively interested and engaged in science. The representative from Eduardo Mondlane University, Dr. Salomao Bandeira called for guidelines for the focal points to consider while nominating a national institution to the forum in order to ensure that the institutions nominated have the relevant expertise and competencies. The suggestion was adopted by the forum. Dr. Francis suggested that the forum could adapt previous guidelines used in the selection of WIOLAB technical working groups as the criteria for selection of national focal institution(s). The representative from Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF), Dr. Jared Bosire suggested that the forum should have at least to institutions nominated at the national level - one academic and one research institution.
8. Dr. Francis suggested that the Nairobi Convention Focal Points institutions could nominate one research institution and one academic institution to represent that country in FARI and the nominated institutions should express willingness to perform tasks in FARI and should confirm in writing of their participation. The representative from Birdlife international Mr. Ademola Ajagbe noted that there is need for representation at two levels, that is the national level and the regional level and suggested that the institutions nominated at the national level must be ready to mobilize capacity for creation of mini-FARI at national level.
9. The representative of Policy, Planning, Research Unit, Department of Environment in Zanzibar Dr. Aboud Jumbe highlighted the need for development of terms of reference to accompany a letter of request to countries to nominate those representing the national institutions in FARI. He suggested that for *ad hoc* representation a request can be made for the Focal Point to nominate a person for the specific activity requiring relevant expertise. He mentioned that the nominated member is the one who will be sitting in FARI while the experts will be nominated for a particular activity requiring their expertise but will not need to join FARI.
10. Dr. Bosire suggested that there should be an opportunity for the Nairobi Convention Secretariat to invite partners who can provide capacity and expertise to the forum. Dr Francis suggested that there can be two categories of membership into FARI - one for Government institutions and another for Non-

Governmental Organizations (NGOs). Mr Waruinge mentioned that once FARI had been constituted, the Terms of Reference for FARI can allow the Chairperson of the forum to invite partners of relevant expertise to the forum.

11. The forum suggested a description for the institutions to be nominate to FARI by the focal points as follows: An institution mandated to conduct research on marine, oceanographic issues, involved in ocean sciences; evidence of research work and publication contribution, with scientists renowned in various marine and ocean related fields. The director of Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute (KMFRI), Dr. James Njiru noted that there was a need to modify the description to ensure that academic research institutions are adequately captured.
12. Dr. Muthiga noted that FARI needs to develop a criteria for selecting a chairperson, vice-chair and a secretary of the forum. She further suggested that the Chairperson to FARI must be the substantive head of an institution formally nominated by FARI for a two-year term.

#### *Strengthening the link between Nairobi Convention Focal Points and FARI*

13. It was suggested that the link between FARI and the Nairobi Convention Focal Points could be strengthened by:
  - The Focal institutions of the Convention being given the opportunity to select representative institutions to FARI
  - Creation of mini-FARI at national level
  - Having the Focal Points supported by FARI representation during technical meetings
  - FARI could sit in the inter-ministerial committees for the implementation of the WIOSAP Project as appropriated by the country. It was however noted that the Nairobi Convention Secretariat had limited influence on national coordination at the inter-ministerial committees therefore it would be a mandate for the focal institution to link the nominated FARI institutions with the national level processes.

#### *Need for a FARI work programme*

14. It was noted that there was need to determine the functions of FARI that would be performed on a regular basis and that the work programme for FARI should be based on the needs in the region so that the institutions can align their individual programmes and funds with the work programme. Regular functions of FARI suggested by the forum were as follows:
  - Mobilization of a group of experts to advice government on informed policy for decision making on development.
  - Provide guidance on reviewing and validating activities of projects particularly demonstration projects.
  - Review of Conference of Parties (COP) documents to identify emerging issues to present at the COP
  - Receive decisions made in the Conference of Parties ( COP) and provide a science perspective to decisions made
  - Creating *ad hoc* working groups on emerging issues such as development of the oil and gas sector and blue economy in the region
  - Link with the task forces/working groups of the Nairobi Convention. Review of all work from Task forces before presentation at the Conference of Parties.
  - Support creation of a forum for private companies to inform the Nairobi Convention Focal Points and partners of what they are doing for the environment in order to engage their participation (It was

noted that strategy for private sector engagement should be explored further particularly at the Science to Policy meetings)

- Provide a quality check for documents under the Nairobi Convention work programme to ensure they meet ethical standards
  - Mobilizing funds and establishing partnerships to tackle a particular thematic issues e.g. sedimentation, nutrients management from LBSA
15. It was suggested that the Nairobi Convention Secretariat can consider inviting a major private sector investor who has done good work in environmental conservation to the next Conference of parties as a champion from the private sector so as to build private sector engagement in the protection and management of the marine and coastal environment.

#### *FARI Contribution to the WIOSAP project*

16. FARI contribution to the WIOSAP Project was highlighted as follows:

- Advise on constitution of task forces / working groups
  - Review and validation of documentation developed under the project (quality assurance)
  - Provision of technical support to countries in development of demonstration projects, on request
  - FARI members participate in the national project committees
  - Reviewing of project proposals at the regional level (institutions selected to FARI at national level can review at national level but FARI shall contribute to review at regional level)
  - Resource mobilization to support follow-up
  - Coordinate and support the preparation of outlooks, regional state of coast report
  - Contribute to the development of Area Based Planning tools (e.g. MSP, ICZM, MPAs) economic valuation
  - Develop of communication strategy of FARI
17. Mr. Waruinge requested the forum to develop a structure of how FARI will be organized to undertake the activities under the WIOSAP project. He also mentioned that the development of a communication strategy would be put as an immediate activity under WIOSAP.

#### **Key issues and way forward**

18. Key issues and suggestions by the forum were:

- The need to develop guidelines for country focal points to select relevant institutions to FARI
- The focal points to the Nairobi Convention can nominate more than one national institution to FARI
- The focal points must nominate at least one research institution and one academic institution with relevant competencies in marine and coastal environment issues as per the Terms of Reference/ selection criteria to be developed.
- Other institutions can be nominated to attend or participate in meetings based on their expertise as need arises and these institutions shall not be considered as FARI members.
- The representative(s) from the national institutions nominated to join FARI must be of senior management level
- The nominated institutions should express their willingness to perform tasks assigned under FARI and should confirm their participation formally in writing.

- The nominated institutions should be prepared to mobilize/establish model-FARI at the national level
  - The heads of nominated institutions can select representatives from within the nominated institution or outside the nominated institution to tackle specific issues requiring specialized expertise
  - The organization structure of FARI shall consist of a chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary and members.
  - The Chairperson and vice chairperson must be substantive heads of national institutions duly nominated to FARI
  - The leadership of the forum shall serve for a two-year term period
  - The Terms of Reference for the leadership of FARI needs to be developed
  - A communication strategy shall be developed for FARI
19. Mr. Waruinge informed the forum that the Nairobi Convention Secretariat would draft letters to the governments describing FARI and its roles and request governments to nominate one or more institutions based on established guidelines and competencies of the institutions to be nominated
20. Dr. Francis was asked to develop the Terms of Reference of FARI
21. The Forum would develop a structure of how FARI will be organized to undertake the proposed activities under the WIOSAP project and present the document in the proposed WIOSAP Project Steering Committee meeting later in 2017.
22. The Nairobi Convention would put the development of a communication strategy as an immediate activity under WIOSAP project

### **Closing of the meeting**

23. The Head of the Nairobi Convention Secretariat, Mr. Waruinge gave brief closing remarks thanking the forum for their participation in the meeting and their insightful suggestions on how to improve the operation of FARI. There being no other business, the meeting was closed at 1250 hrs on 13 April 2017.

## ANNEX I

### LIST OF PARTICIPANTS, FORUM FOR HEADS OF ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS

13 APRIL 2017, HILTON HOTEL, FLIC EN FLAC, MAURITIUS

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