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**Third consultative meeting on the development
of an African strategy for ocean governance**
Online, 15 and 16 June 2021

Draft African strategy for ocean governance

Note by the secretariat

1. The annex to the present note sets out a draft African strategy for ocean governance, which has been prepared for consideration by participants in the third consultative meeting on the development of an African strategy for ocean governance, to be held online on 15 and 16 June 2021. The purpose of the third consultative meeting is to review the draft strategy, provide input and comments, build common ground on its shape and content and provide a way forward for its finalization.
2. The draft African strategy for ocean governance contains sections on the assessment of existing governance frameworks and strategies in the region and their governance gaps and opportunities, and explains the need for an African ocean governance strategy. The draft proposes a vision, goals and objectives structured around four pillars and is focused on facilitating the implementation of existing governance frameworks and strategies.
3. To facilitate discussions during forthcoming regional consultations, possible scenarios have been included for the functions and form of the overarching implementation mechanism. Member States and other stakeholders are encouraged to critically evaluate the proposed scenarios with a view to building consensus on the best options for advancing ocean governance in Africa. A monitoring and evaluation mechanism for the strategy is also proposed.
4. After the conclusion of the regional consultations, a final draft strategy will be prepared and reviewed by all stakeholders to be submitted for the consideration of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN).
5. The following items have not yet been prepared: foreword, preface, list of acronyms.

Annex

Draft African strategy for ocean governance

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I. Background

1. An African ocean governance strategy was first envisioned by the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) at its fifteenth session, in 2015, in the Cairo Declaration on Managing Africa's Natural Capital for Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication. At that session, AMCEN, in recognition of the enormous value of healthy oceans to the development of Africa, resolved to develop a governance strategy, in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the regional seas conventions, on oceans and seas in Africa for the effective management of the region's shared maritime resources.¹ Despite the existence of several ocean governance mechanisms in Africa, governance challenges are hampering the harnessing of the full potential of the continent's ocean resources. During the sixteenth session of AMCEN, held in Libreville in June 2017, ministers acknowledged that the sustained contribution of oceans to national economies depended upon, among other things, the use of effective governance frameworks.²

2. The call for the development of an African ocean governance strategy was further reaffirmed in the Nairobi Declaration on Turning Environmental Policies into Action through Innovative Solutions for Environmental Challenges in Africa, adopted by AMCEN at its seventh special session, in September 2018.³ The African ministers for the environment agreed to promote the growth and development of the regional ocean sector in a sustainable blue economy pathway and support the mainstreaming of aquatic biodiversity in all productive sectors with a view to sustainably harnessing the blue economy.

3. In response to those decisions, the secretariat of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), which serves as the secretariat for AMCEN, carried out background studies and organized in-person and online consultative meetings in November 2018 and November 2020 to support member States in the preparation of the draft strategy.⁴ During the consultative meetings, member States and other stakeholders provided guidance and direction on the areas and content that needed to be included in the strategy.

II. Justification for the strengthening of ocean governance in Africa

4. The draft strategy sets out four main reasons for the strengthening of ocean governance in Africa based on the outcomes of meetings of member States and AMCEN meetings. Considerations relevant to the need to strengthen ocean governance in Africa include the following:

- (a) The sustained contribution of oceans to national economic growth is heavily dependent upon, among other things, the presence and use of effective governance frameworks;
- (b) The impact of human activities can trigger loss or degradation in the value of the ecosystem goods and services provided by oceans;
- (c) The need to stem the degradation and depletion of marine and coastal resources contain maritime insecurity and the illegal and unregulated exploitation of resources, which are affecting national economies;
- (d) The need to make integrated ocean policy decisions across ocean sectors through regional and cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination.

¹ The documentation of the fifteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment is available at www.unep.org/regions/africa/african-ministerial-conference-environment/amcen-past-sessions.

² The report of the ministerial segment of the sixteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN/16/8) is available at https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/25881/amcenmin_rep2017.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

³ The report on the proceedings of the seventh special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN/SS.VII/2) is available at <https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/26809/AMCENSS7MinisterialReport.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

⁴ The Chair's summary of the first consultative meeting on the development of an African strategy for ocean governance (UNEP/ASOG/WG.1/4) is available at https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/27138/Chair_Summary.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y.

A. The need to sustain the value of ocean resources in Africa

5. The continent is endowed with abundant coastal and aquatic resources which, if sustainably harnessed, can create tremendous socioeconomic transformations.⁵ Thirty-eight African States share a coastline that extends over 47,000 km. Approximately 64 per cent of the land area of Africa is covered with inland water sources, including 63 shared river basins. This network of ocean and aquatic resources sustains natural life and provides ecosystem goods and services that are inextricably linked with life on the continent.⁶ A significant proportion of the population of Africa lives in coastal regions and the density of human coastal populations is increasing every year.

6. The region's rich coastal and marine resources include mineral deposits, oil and gas and biodiversity.⁷ Coastal and marine resources are also important for human settlements. Some coastal countries in the region, including Angola, Gabon and Nigeria, are large players in the world's oil industry, while in countries such as Sierra Leone and the United Republic of Tanzania, coastal resources are important sources of construction materials, including sand, gravel and limestone. Phosphate mining and salt extraction are also key coastal activities in Africa.⁸

7. Fisheries and aquaculture contribute approximately \$24 billion per year to the African economy and employ over 12 million people.⁹ The maritime industry is estimated to contribute approximately \$1 trillion per year¹⁰ and 90 per cent of the continent's imports and exports are conducted by sea.¹¹

8. Seaports are crucial to facilitating trade in most African countries, which are dependent on exports of raw materials and imports of food, manufactured goods and fuel. Ports in Africa handled an estimated 265 million tons of cargo in 2009, a figure that is expected to rise to more than 2 billion tons by 2040. Seaports provide access to regional, continental and world markets for the 16 out of 54 countries in Africa that are landlocked.¹²

9. Moreover, coastal tourism alone is one of the fastest-growing marine-based economic activities worldwide, estimated at \$8.4 billion for coral reef-rich nations alone. Coastal tourism currently generates 8.1 per cent of the continent's GDP and is valued at over \$177 billion, accounting for 6.5 per cent of total employment or over 22 million jobs. More importantly, tourism is the primary economic sector in several small island developing States, including Cabo Verde, Mauritius, and Seychelles, where it contributes 45 per cent, 24 per cent and 65 per cent of GDP, respectively.¹³

10. The oceans and seas of Africa offer tremendous potential and opportunity to develop both non-renewable energy sources such as oil and gas and renewable energy sources, including wind, tides and waves, only a fraction of which has been exploited.

B. The need to reverse the adverse effects of ocean exploitation

11. On the negative spectrum, owing to the large coastal population in Africa and weak governance systems, there are significant adverse activities that threaten the oceans and marine environment.

12. According to the 2014 report of the Africa Progress Panel, illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing represents between \$10 billion and \$23 billion worldwide every year, of which \$1.3 billion occurs in West Africa (\$300 million from Senegal alone, equivalent to 2 per cent of its GDP in

⁵ Economic Commission for Africa (2018), *Africa's Blue Economy: Opportunities and Challenges to Bolster Sustainable Development and Socioeconomic Transformation* (Addis Ababa). Available at www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/uploaded-documents/SROs/EA/HIGH-LEVEL-SUSTAINABLE-BLUE-ECONOMY-CONFERENCE-2018/the_eca_issues_paper_nairobi_2018_sbec.pdf.

⁶ Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (2005), *Ecosystems and Human Well-Being: Synthesis* (Washington, D.C.: Island Press). Available at www.millenniumassessment.org/documents/document.356.aspx.pdf.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Africa Progress Panel (2014), *Africa Progress Report 2014: Grain, Fish, Money: Financing Africa's Green and Blue Revolutions*. Available at www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Project-and-Operations/Africa_Progress_Report_2014.PDF.

¹⁰ World Ocean Review (2010), *Living with the Oceans* (Hamburg: Maribus). Available at <https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/8734>

¹¹ Economic Commission for Africa (2018), *Africa's Blue Economy*.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ UNEP (2014), *Emerging Issues for Small Island Developing States: Results of the UNEP/UN DESA Foresight Process* (Nairobi).

2012).¹⁴ Most of the illegal, unregulated and unreported catches can be attributed to vessels navigating under foreign flags. World Bank experts estimate that losses from the overexploitation of fishery resources amount to \$225 million for Indian Ocean island economies alone.¹⁵

13. In 2014, it was estimated that mangrove deforestation resulted in \$42 billion in economic losses annually.¹⁶ The overexploitation of fishery resources and mangrove deforestation have undermined the natural capacity and ability of the ocean and aquatic resources to regenerate.¹⁷ Marine litter reaching the ocean from land-based sources is a major problem for both marine life and the natural beauty of beaches. It is estimated that by 2050, there will be more plastics than fish in the ocean.¹⁸

14. Industry and oil spills also have adverse effects on the marine environment. In West Africa, the oil-producing countries in the Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem alone discharge about 4 million tons of waste oil yearly into the coastal and marine environment.¹⁹ Widespread oil pollution in the Niger Delta also results in ecological, public health and security problems.²⁰ Other sources of marine pollution include wastewater discharges and effluents from logging, manufacturing industries and oil refining. There are several hotspots of land-based sources of pollution that have been identified in Africa, which governance mechanisms have not been very successful in addressing and controlling.

15. Discussions on the maritime domain in Africa have increasingly been dominated by the issue of piracy and armed robbery at sea. In West and Central Africa, a variety of challenges threaten the safety, security, and sustainability of the maritime space, from piracy and armed robbery at sea to illicit oil and fuel activities, trafficking of all sorts, smuggling and various environmental crimes.

16. Ports in Africa, though crucial for international trade, are blighted by low efficiency that translates into both economic and environmental losses. Similarly, the coastal tourism sector is faced with a narrow range of tourism products, lack of prioritization and insufficient capacity. As an example, there are very few countries that own or operate cruise ship tourism businesses. The ability of Governments to govern coastal and maritime tourism is often hindered by weak municipal authorities as well as illegal or shadowy business deals and practices. Furthermore, in the Western Indian Ocean region, coral cover, an important tourist attraction, has declined to 30 per cent.²¹

17. More than 80 of Africa's river and lake basins are shared by two or more countries.²² Those freshwater bodies also face overexploitation. However, government support for the conservation or development of lakes and rivers remains low in many African countries, with little money allocated from national budgets.²³ Although Africa's lakes are limited and sensitive resources that call for proper care and management, they remain among the most abused of the continent's natural resources.²⁴

¹⁴ Africa Progress Panel (2014), *Grain, Fish, Money: Financing Africa's Green and Blue Revolutions*.

¹⁵ www.worldbank.org/en/programs/africa-program-for-fisheries.

¹⁶ UNEP (2014), *The Importance of Mangroves to People: A Call to Action*, J. van Bochove, E. Sullivan, T. Nakamura (eds.), UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre, Cambridge.

¹⁷ *Reefs at Risk Revisited*. Burke L, Reytar K, Spalding M and Perry A. (2011), *Reefs at Risk Revisited*.

¹⁸ World Economic Forum (2014), *The New Plastics Economy: Rethinking the Future of Plastics*. Available at http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_The_New_Plastics_Economy.pdf.

¹⁹ United Nations Development Programme (2013), *Towards Ecosystem-based Management of the Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem*.

²⁰ Impacts and management of oil spill in Nigerian coastal environment, P.C. Nwilo, O.T. Badejo (2008). Proceedings of the International Conference on the Nigerian State, Oil Industry and the Niger Delta.

²¹ D. Obura, M. Gudka, F. A. Rabi, S. B. Gian, J. Bijoux, S. Freed, J. Maharavo, J. Mwaura, S. Porter, E. Sola, J. Wickel, S. Yahya and S. Ahamada (2017), *Coral reef status report for the Western Indian Ocean*, Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN) and International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI).

²² World Wide Fund for Nature fact sheet (undated). Available at <https://wwf-eu.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/waterinafricaeng.pdf>.

²³ T. Petr (2005), *Inland Water Resources and Aquaculture Service*. Available at www.oceansatlas.com/world_fisheries_and_aquaculture/html/ecosys/inland/nateco/lakes.htm.

²⁴ UNEP (2006), *Africa's Lakes: Atlas of Our Changing Environment*. Excerpt available at <https://na.unep.net/atlas/africaLakes/downloads/chapters/Africas-Chapter1-Printer.pdf>.

III. Assessment of existing national, regional and continental policy, legal and institutional frameworks and mechanisms

18. There are ocean policies and institutional frameworks and mechanisms in Africa at the subnational, national, regional, continental and international levels. The present section provides an assessment of existing policies, laws and institutions and associated aspects of governance that protect marine ecosystems.

19. Specific policies and laws governing the coastal and marine environment are principally found in the regional seas action plans, conventions and associated protocols, regional fisheries bodies, instruments of the World Meteorological Organization and large marine ecosystem mechanisms. Those policies and laws provide legal frameworks that assist participating countries to reach joint agreement on priorities and to plan and develop programmes for the sustainable management, protection and development of marine and coastal resources.

20. Additionally, there are multilateral entities and instruments that govern regional ocean issues and promote regional and international cooperation, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, conventions of the World Meteorological Organization and the International Maritime Organization and global multilateral environmental agreements.

21. Despite the existence of regional mechanisms, ocean governance structures remain fragmented and uncoordinated. Many national, regional and global efforts focus on a single sector and the importance of their interdependence has not been fully recognized.

22. The African Union is the engine that drives sustainable development on the continent and its organs and institutions are therefore the principal frameworks for advancing ocean governance. African Union frameworks that address aspects of ocean management include Agenda 2063 of the African Union, the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area, 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy (the 2050 AIM strategy), the Charter on Maritime Security and Safety and Development in Africa (the Lomé Charter), the New Partnership for Africa's Development, the Libreville Declaration on Health and Environment in Africa, the Africa Blue Economy Strategy, and the Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes Within Africa (the Bamako Convention).

23. African Union policies or strategies focus on governance in specific sectors. For example, the Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa, issued in 2014, focuses on fisheries, only one aspect of ocean governance. The Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area, while focused on enhancing trade and related agreements, does not explicitly mention coastal and marine resources, which can be a large revenue earner and key for trade.

24. African actors and instruments, including African Union member States, regional mechanisms for conflict prevention, management and resolution, and regional economic communities, have focused more on ocean security-related policies than those related to the economy and conservation. For example, the 2050 AIM Strategy is focused on maritime transport. The challenges in its implementation relate primarily to achieving coherence in engaging with wide-ranging maritime security threats while seeking to achieve maritime safety. While efforts to address the challenges of maritime security and safety should take into account the need to achieve developmental goals for a blue or ocean economy, the marine environment must be protected. In that regard, the Charter on Maritime Security and Safety and Development in Africa (the Lomé Charter) was adopted in 2016.

25. The coherence between the Lomé Charter and the 2050 AIM Strategy indicates commitment on the part of African Governments to the development of a structure for marine governance. The Lomé Charter calls for high-level political will in the discharge of the responsibilities of States in reinforcing its provisions.

26. Nevertheless, it should be noted that focusing on security alone is not sufficient and it can be argued that the Lomé Charter places too much emphasis on restrictions in the use of maritime resources rather than on sustainable development. Moreover, the Charter obligations translate to national requirements for equipment, logistics, technology, and training. Therefore, it would be realistic to view the implementation of the Lomé Charter in African States as challenging.

27. With regard to the social aspects of the creation of an African strategy for ocean governance, which include human health, the Libreville Declaration on Health and Environment in Africa draws a direct link between environmental degradation and impacts on human health. There is room for human health to be included in ocean governance. The Bamako Convention focuses on the illegal import of hazardous waste, the dumping of waste in seas and waterways and their effects on human health.

28. In Africa, conventions on oceans management include the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (the Barcelona Convention), the Convention for Cooperation in the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Atlantic Coast of the West, Central and Southern Africa Region (the Abidjan Convention), the Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern African Region (the Nairobi Convention) and the Jeddah Declaration: Furthering the implementation of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans towards the sustainable development of the marine and coastal environment. Ocean conservation for island states is also governed by the Indian Ocean Commission. Regional seas conventions are limited in geographical scope and have no direct management or regulatory mandate relating to economic activities for a blue economy.

29. Regional fisheries management organizations²⁵ promote a coordinated regional approach to the long-term conservation, protection, rehabilitation, enhancement and sustainable use of common marine fisheries resources. Given the multiplicity of these organizations, overlap in functions and roles is inevitable.

30. The Africa Blue Economy Strategy addresses many of the challenges identified in other frameworks although it does not fully include the coastal communities as major stakeholders in ocean governance or link with other African Union strategies and does little to address the impacts of economic growth to marine ecosystems.

31. The six regional economic communities of Africa are the Southern African Development Community, the East African Community, the Economic Community of West African States, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, the Economic Community of the Central African States and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development. Regional integration and the advancement of environmental, social and economic development are their primary objectives and they also have treaties and protocols that advance ocean governance. Examples include the Protocol for Sustainable Development of Lake Victoria Basin (2003) and the Southern African Development Community Protocol on Fisheries (2001). Most regional economic communities are able to coordinate regarding environment and natural resource issues but are weak in integrating the economic aspects of ocean governance.

32. Regional agreements and policies related to maritime transport include the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community, which includes sections on maritime transportation and ports,²⁶ and the Revised African Maritime Transport Charter of the African Union.²⁷ Regional maritime transport and ports agreements face challenges in implementation. In the recent past, there has been a call to harmonize and integrate maritime transportation and services. A regional approach will promote coordination and cooperation between such services and encourage greater efficiency in the sector.

33. At the subnational level in most African countries, local governments and municipalities make decisions on land-based activities that affect the coastal and marine environment and resources, while national Governments make decisions on the ocean-related aspects of coastal and marine environments and some of the resources.

34. There are several successful and good practices of national ocean governance models in Africa. South Africa has set up a ministerial committee for oceans, which coordinates with ocean-related departments. Seychelles established a Blue Economy Department that coordinates with relevant ministries and launched the Fisheries Initiative and the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative. A department for action on the state of the sea in Senegal reports to the Prime Minister's office and has primacy over other ministries. Gabon has a national committee for ocean management. Mozambique established a Ministry of Sea, Inland Water and Fisheries; and Tanzania set up an integrated coastal zone management committee with several thematic task forces. Such structures are important to effective and successful ocean governance at the national level.²⁸

²⁵ See the appendix to the present strategy for a list of regional fisheries management bodies, large marine ecosystems and related conventions.

²⁶ www.eacj.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/EACJ-Treaty.pdf, Articles 93 and 94.

²⁷ https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/7797-treaty-0041_-_revised_african_maritime_transport_charter_e.pdf.

²⁸ The report of the first consultative meeting on the development of an African strategy for ocean governance (UNEP/ASOG/WG.1/5) is available at

<https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/27201/OGReport.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

IV. Synopsis of the governance gaps and opportunities in ocean management in Africa

35. Coastal and marine resource governance in Africa is characterized by complex, multiple and overlapping mandates and jurisdictions. AMCEN, among others, has recognized that ocean governance infrastructure and institutional frameworks are weak, while the conservation and sustainable use of the lakes, oceans, seas and marine resources is key for sustainable development.

36. The following table sets out major cross-cutting governance gaps and opportunities for an ocean governance framework in Africa.

Gaps and opportunities in ocean management in Africa

<i>Gaps</i>	<i>Opportunities</i>
<p>Limited cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The multitude of subnational, national, regional, continental and global mechanisms makes cooperation complex. • Interactions between governance frameworks are fragmented and weak. • The focus is on a single sector and the importance of interdependence is underrated. • There is no continental institutional structure or approach for cooperation and coordination among the various subregional and regional ocean-related institutions. • Policies and mandates of existing organizations and mechanisms are inconsistent or overlapping. 	<p>Cross-sectoral cooperation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of cooperative linkages with regional and global frameworks to institutionalize cross-sectoral cooperation mechanisms and coordinate sectoral activities to drive implementation. <p>Sustainable harnessing of the blue economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advances the development of blue economy sectors in an inclusive and integrated manner. <p>Capacity-building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fixes existing institutional and human resources capacity gaps in Africa. <p>Promotion of ocean-related investment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • African Governments and stakeholders mobilize and pool financial and technical resources for implementation.
<p>Weak implementation and enforcement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak implementation, enforcement and compliance with existing instruments and frameworks due to inadequate human and financial resources, capacity and political will. 	<p>Accelerated implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The political and leadership role of the African Union will accelerate implementation through regional seas conventions, economic commissions, transboundary lake or river basin commissions and other mechanisms to mobilize countries and stakeholders to accelerate the implementation of existing instruments.
<p>Weak science-based management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited use of data owing to poor data quality or lack of data. • Capacity gaps in the interpretation of scientific data for policy decision-making. • No comprehensive knowledge of existing databases and networks and their governance systems. • Poor data management owing to undefined protocols for data generation and sharing. 	<p>Advancing the role of science</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthened decision-making with regard to the ocean-based economy and ocean management through the use of scientific information and data.

<i>Gaps</i>	<i>Opportunities</i>
<p>Limited stakeholder engagement in ocean management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exclusion of some stakeholders in existing ocean governance frameworks. • Even where stakeholder participation is confirmed, specific roles and contributions to ocean governance frameworks are not defined. • Weak policies on the engagement of women and youth in ocean governance initiatives. • Private sector engagement is neither consistent nor systematic. • Lack of comprehensive knowledge of the stakeholders and networks of databases related to ocean governance and management 	<p>Broadening inclusivity in ocean governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attracting stakeholder interest and participation increases and broadens the benefits of ocean wealth, enables efficiency, optimizes the use of limited resources and improves ocean policies.

V. Purpose, goal and objectives of the African ocean governance strategy

37. The present overarching ocean governance strategy for Africa will facilitate the implementation of existing ocean governance instruments of the African Union and other relevant regional mechanisms, such as regional seas conventions and regional fisheries bodies.

Vision

Integrated, sustainable, inclusive and health-oriented ocean governance that contributes to the achievement of Agenda 2063 of the African Union.

Main goal

The main goal of the strategy is to establish an overarching framework to serve as a mechanism for facilitating the coordinated implementation of ocean institutional frameworks and actions in Africa.

Objectives

1. To implement existing institutional ocean governance frameworks in Africa.
2. To establish a collective decision-making mechanism on the ocean space and its resources.
3. To engage all relevant stakeholders in ocean governance in Africa.
4. To enhance cooperation between African countries.
5. To strengthen scientific and stakeholder capacity for better ocean policies and governance.

VI. Strategic pillars and scenarios for developing and implementing African ocean governance frameworks

A. Strategic pillars

38. The four interrelated strategic pillars defined in the present strategy are intended to address the overall challenges, threats and opportunities related to the oceans and their resources. The strategic pillars focus on facilitating the implementation of existing frameworks and mechanisms in a coordinated manner according to the following rationale:

1. Strategic pillar 1: Coordination, cooperation and linkage enhancement

39. Strategic pillar 1 is aimed at a structured institutional approach to strengthening cross-sectoral coordination and cooperation through the development of institutional frameworks and forums centred around multilateral cooperation. Under the strategic pillar:

- (a) Specific direction will be provided on cooperation and enhancing linkages and coordination among regional and global mechanisms through the creation of cooperation platforms or by imbedding related functions into existing platforms;

(b) Other strategic pillars will be supported in catalysing the implementation of the common objectives of regional seas conventions, regional fisheries bodies, subregional and regional economic communities and organizations and African Union structures related to oceans.

2. **Strategic pillar 2: Capacity development, resource mobilization and promoting investment**

40. Under the strategic pillar:

- (a) Existing capabilities and gaps in the implementation of existing and future ocean strategies will be mapped and assessed;
- (b) Joint strategic and sustainable investments in ocean-related economic sectors will be guided through a strategic investment plan;
- (c) Funding sources and opportunities for oceans development will be identified and mobilized;
- (d) Investment in the blue economy will be promoted.

3. **Strategic pillar 3: Science for ocean governance**

41. Under the strategic pillar, a regional data and information management system will be created to:

- (a) Facilitate knowledge, science and policy partnership dialogues and platforms;
- (b) Guide policymaking and decision-making within a framework guided by science and policy partnership dialogues and platforms.

4. **Strategic pillar 4: Stakeholder engagement in ocean governance**

42. In order to facilitate inclusivity in ocean governance and the involvement of stakeholders (including the private sector, civil society, local governments, women and young people), actions will be taken under the strategic pillar to:

- (a) Ensure the effective involvement of stakeholders in ocean management governance decisions for the realization of sustainable ocean governance solutions and financing partnerships;
- (b) Identify the roles of key stakeholders in ocean governance;
- (c) Strategize to achieve the active engagement of women and young people;
- (d) Promote private sector engagement and investment.

B. Function and form of an overarching mechanism

43. The first and second consultative meetings on an African strategy for ocean governance confirmed the need for an overarching governance framework. The form and function of that overarching coordinating mechanism need to be defined, elaborated upon and agreed. Given the multiplicity of ocean governance frameworks and issues in Africa, ocean sector stakeholders need a way to meet and addresses issues .

44. The proposed objectives, strategic pillars and functions focus on accelerating implementation, promoting cooperation and coordination and enhancing linkages, which are key to addressing governance gaps and weaknesses and to promoting the effective and sustainable utilization of ocean space and resources in Africa.

Functions

45. The overarching mechanism will focus on information exchange, enhancing cooperation and coordination and reviewing the implementation of existing instruments, policies and strategies and effectiveness. Its key functions include:

- (a) Fostering the development of requisite capacities on ocean governance in Africa;
- (b) Consolidating national and regional political will to enhance understanding of the importance of oceans to sustainable development;
- (c) Promoting continental networking for existing national and regional data and information systems;

(d) Enhancing cooperation through existing regional organizations associated with all ocean-related sectors and industries;

(e) Enhancing stakeholder and business engagement in ocean governance.

46. Overall decision-making on oceans will remain within the purview of the African Union structures and individual instruments and institutions, such as the Summit and the Specialised Technical Committees of the African Union Commission. This is intended to avoid having a multiplicity of decision-making authorities and to ensure the alignment and integration of ocean policies and actions with the continental transformation agenda.

C. Possible scenarios for the overarching mechanism

47. Having addressed the issues of overlapping frameworks, coordination, cooperation and linkages, functions, strategic direction and form of governance frameworks, there is a need to determine a way forward for the establishment of the overarching mechanism.

48. The outcomes of the series of consultative meetings on an African strategy for ocean governance suggested the creation of a platform to bring together instruments, institutions, and key stakeholders, including Governments, business, and civil society. The platform would link with existing strategies, frameworks and conventions, charters, regional economic commissions, environment and fisheries organizations, port and shipping associations and scientific institutions, inter alia. Existing governance structures, mechanisms and institutions would maintain their mandates but meet at the platform to deliberate on common interests and objectives.

49. Suggested scenarios for the implementation of the overarching mechanism and the platform are set out below. The scenarios are not mutually exclusive.

1. Scenario 1: Update and expand the proposal on inter-agency cooperation under 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy

50. Under the 2050 AIM Strategy, the use of an inter-agency cooperation approach is proposed. Although the inter-agency cooperation in the 2050 AIM Strategy focuses on maritime security, its functions could be remodelled for a holistic cooperation and coordination approach to ocean governance. The remodelled inter-agency mechanism would perform the functions set out in section 6.2 of the present strategy. In the case of ocean governance, the inter-agency mechanism would be expanded to include national focal points and representatives of different institutions and stakeholder groups.

51. The advantages and disadvantages of the scenario are as follows:

Advantages

- (a) It facilitates the implementation of the inter-agency cooperation framework proposed under the 2050 AIM Strategy and removes the need to establish a new mechanism;
- (b) It enables easy connection with the structures of the African Union Commission.

Disadvantages

- (a) No clear provisions exist in the 2050 AIM Strategy with regard to the creation and implementation of the inter-agency cooperation framework;
- (b) No sources of funding are identified under the 2050 AIM Strategy.

2. Scenario 2: Establish an African ocean governance platform or forum

52. Scenario 2 involves the establishment of a member State-led platform or forum to serve as an institutional framework for ocean governance where government representatives and other stakeholders meet to deliberate on the functions discussed under section 6.2 of the present strategy.

53. The scenario has two variations:

- (a) A new instrument or forum that brings together all ocean sectors and aspects of ocean governance;
- (b) An existing instrument or institutional framework that takes on ocean governance matters and that functions in a holistic manner either through an existing, amended or remodelled mandate.

54. The minimum requirements for either option are as follows:

(a) A high-level cross-sectoral policy organ (at the ministerial level at a minimum) to agree on common decisions and underscore the socioeconomic and political importance of oceans as proposed under section 2 of the present strategy. The high-level policy organ would provide oversight and strategic guidance on ocean governance and would report to established African Union structures.

(b) The high-level organ would be supported by scientific, social, economic and environmental advisory panels where institutions and stakeholders would meet to address specific issues of common interest and to strengthen linkages within and outside the continent. The number of panels should be limited and they should be categorized by themes or sectors with similar or related issues. It has been suggested that the advisory panels relate to the following domains:

- (i) Management of the living environment (topics including pollution control, ecosystems, fisheries, climate change and biodiversity);
- (ii) The blue economy (topics including trade, industry, job creation, tourism, fisheries, infrastructure, transport, shipping, ports and harbours and marine security);
- (iii) Science for ocean governance to guide and underpin the required science-policy interface.

55. A coordinating secretariat will be needed to perform operational tasks, which could be an existing or a new secretariat.

56. However, establishing a new instrument or forum has the disadvantage of being costly and time-consuming. The use of an existing instrument or institutional framework would be cost-effective and integrative and is therefore recommended. Existing institutional frameworks in Africa are listed in the appendix to the present strategy.

57. The advantages and disadvantages of the scenario are as follows:

Advantages

- (a) It would be connected with African Union structures and systems;
- (b) It is inclusive of all stakeholders and promotes their coordination;
- (c) There are several operational examples of such a scenario;
- (d) It enhances cross-sectoral linkages;
- (e) It enhances the political will of countries.

Disadvantages

- (a) It would be very costly and time-consuming;
- (b) It requires a large secretariat.

3. Scenario 3: Establish a financial facility or mechanism for African ocean governance

58. The facility would be a regional financial mechanism to facilitate resource mobilization to accelerate the implementation of existing strategies, mechanisms and frameworks and to promote investment in the blue economy. This scenario would be implemented under the auspices of African Union institutions or a regional financial institution, such as the African Development Bank. An example of such a facility is the African Water Facility.

59. The advantages and disadvantages of scenario 3 are as follows:

Advantages

- (a) It addresses financing for ocean governance gaps, which is required to spur implementation;
- (b) High-level ambitions could be achieved with proper funding;
- (c) The use of financial resources would be optimized by avoiding duplication;
- (d) There are many existing funding mechanisms in Africa, including under the African Development Bank.

Disadvantages

- (a) There is a risk of not securing adequate funding;
- (b) Non-traditional financiers, including from the private sector, are not involved;
- (c) Establishment is difficult, requiring a lengthy process and consensus.

4. Scenario 4: Establish an African ocean knowledge hub

60. The option set out in scenario 4 foresees the establishment of a new, continent-wide oceanographic knowledge management system that would address the need for improving and strengthening data and information for decision-making, by improving analytical capacity and knowledge management and dissemination.

61. The continental hub would coordinate and connect national and regional science and data networks and centres, promote the building of institutional and human resource capacity, enhance information and knowledge management and exchange, and strengthen monitoring and evaluation for sustainable and integrated ocean management.

62. The hub would present an opportunity to harness and raise the profile of the sector's relevant home-grown knowledge, and provide access to reliable data, information and learning to researchers, policymakers, and development partners to enhance science-based policymaking.

63. The hub would take its guidance from existing mechanisms and frameworks and could be hosted by the African Union Commission.

64. The hub could take the form of a new knowledge hub to coordinate a network of existing institutions and data and information systems, an existing knowledge platform with a continental mandate, such as the African Climate Policy Centre, or a hybrid structure combining existing knowledge platforms with a new hub.

65. The option set out in scenario 4 would feed science into policy for the implementation of the science-policy strategic pillar. The advantages and disadvantages of the scenario are as follows:

Advantages

- (a) It ensures good information flow between countries and across sectors;
- (b) It facilitates a better understanding of the African ocean resources and their use;
- (c) It supports the monitoring and evaluation of progress in the implementation of existing ocean governance instruments and frameworks;
- (d) It enhances the connection between the scientific network and policymakers.

Disadvantages

- (a) The establishment of basic capacity in each country is complex and costly;
- (b) Countries may be reluctant to share data and information;
- (c) A strong data policy agreed by all relevant stakeholders and scientific institutions is required;
- (d) There is a risk that scientific information will not be utilized for policy decisions.

5. Scenario 5: Establish a business and stakeholder forum

66. Scenario 5 envisages a business and stakeholder-led process for African ocean governance. A business and stakeholder forum would facilitate business opportunities, promote sustainable investment in the blue economy and provide business policy advice on ocean governance. The forum would disseminate information on opportunities for business and civil society engagement, facilitating the engagement of stakeholders in related discussions, including women, young people and the private sector.

67. The forum would provide a platform for all stakeholders in order to:

- (a) Bring together businesses and Governments in Africa;
- (b) Forge partnerships between the private and public sectors;
- (c) Promote the role of all stakeholders in the sustainable development of oceans;
- (d) Explore innovative ideas for investment and financing for ocean-related activities in Africa.

68. Comparative model organizations include the Africa Business Forum, the Pan African Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the East African Business Council. The advantages and disadvantages of the scenario are as follows:

Advantages

- (a) There are many business forums in Africa that can be used as models;
- (b) It enhances the engagement of businesses in ocean governance to realize a sustainable blue economy;
- (c) It harnesses the population of Africa, especially women and young people, in ocean-related activities.

Disadvantages

- (a) The business community may not be engaged as they may not deem this a business opportunity;
- (b) Focusing on business may undermine ocean sustainability;
- (c) There may be difficulties in including all the relevant stakeholders, which could hinder implementation.

VII. Action plan

69. An action plan under the strategy will be further developed after agreement is reached on the scenarios proposed in the strategy.

VIII. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms

70. The implementation of the African strategy for ocean governance will be monitored through frameworks to be agreed under section 6.3 of the present strategy according to a set of possible indicators set out below.

- (a) Number of cooperative ocean-related decisions made under the African ocean governance strategy;
- (b) Number of cooperation agreements concluded among the subregional and sectoral mechanisms;
- (c) Volume (megabytes) of ocean data and information made available for governance and decision-making;
- (d) Percentage increase in financial resources invested in oceans by Governments and the private sector;
- (e) Increase in the level of stakeholder involvement in ocean governance;
- (f) Ocean-related indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular the indicators related to Sustainable Development Goal 14, conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources.

71. Five years after the adoption of the present strategy, an evaluation of its effectiveness will be carried out by the African Union Commission. The terms of reference of the evaluation will be developed and finalized through the governance mechanism itself.

Relevant literature

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Appendix

Mechanism	Frameworks	Gap analysis
African Union frameworks	Agenda 2063 of the African Union	African Union strategies only focus on specific sectors. One example is the Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa, which focuses only on one aspect of ocean governance. Few African Union strategies or plans emphasize the protection of marine ecosystems or trade and the economic growth that could be gained from the region's coastal and marine resources. Agenda 2063 of the African Union mainly focuses on the economic aspects of ocean governance.
	Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area	Focuses on enhancing trade and its related agreements in the region but does not expressly mention matters of coastal and marine resources that can be a large revenue earner and key for trade.
	2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy (AIMS)	Focuses on maritime security. Has challenges in achieving coherence as it engages with wide-ranging maritime security threats while seeking to achieve maritime safety. Does not create a balance between achieving developmental goals for a blue or ocean economy and the protection of the marine environment.
	Charter on Maritime Security and Safety and Development in Africa (the Lomé Charter)	Requires high-level political will in the discharge of the responsibilities of States in enforcing its provisions. Highly focused on security issues. Places too much emphasis on restriction in the use of maritime resources rather than on sustainable development. Obligations translate to national requirements for equipment, logistics, technology, and training.
	New Partnership for Africa's Development	Uses several approaches, including economic, ecosystems, social and welfare approaches. Does not integrate existing frameworks on ocean governance.
	Libreville Declaration on Health and Environment in Africa	Focuses on human health and does not cover ocean governance.
	Blue Economy Strategy of the African Union	Strategy is comprehensive and attempts to address many of the issues identified in other frameworks. Major stakeholders in ocean governance are not included. Does not link with previous African Union strategies. Only touches on the impacts of rapid economic growth for marine ecosystems.
	Bamako Convention	Focuses on the impacts of hazardous waste on the seas and on human health. Focuses on the environmental and social pillar without reference to economic aspects.
Subregional frameworks		
Regional economic communities and instruments	Protocol for Sustainable Development of Lake Victoria Basin; Protocol on Fisheries of the Southern African Development Community; Intergovernmental Authority on Development; Indian Ocean Commission; Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa	Challenges faced by regional economic communities include a lack of coordination between natural resource management and the various economic sectors and weak mechanisms, which result in unsustainability, parallel efforts and low value addition. Weak mechanisms to advance the economic aspects of ocean governance.

Mechanism	Frameworks	Gap analysis
Regional seas programmes and related conventions and declarations	Barcelona Convention, Abidjan Convention, Nairobi Convention, Jeddah Declaration, Indian Ocean Commission, Regional Organization for the Conservation of the Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources	Lack a direct management or regulatory mandate relating to economic activities for a blue economy. There is a need to establish a regional framework to deal with marine and costal environmental and socio-economic governance issues.
Regional fisheries management organizations	Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic, Subregional Fisheries Commission, Fishery Committee of the West Central Gulf of Guinea, Regional Fisheries Committee for the Gulf of Guinea, Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States Bordering the Atlantic. Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna, Indian Ocean Tuna Commission, International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean, South East Atlantic Fisheries Organization, Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement.	Regional fisheries management organizations tend to promote the long-term conservation, protection, rehabilitation, enhancement and sustainable use of marine fisheries resources. Their functions and roles are overlapping and duplicative, leading to unsustainable management of fisheries resources in Africa.
Regional fisheries conventions	Regional Convention on Fisheries Cooperation among African States bordering the Atlantic Ocean, Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, Convention on the Determination of the Minimal Conditions for Access and Exploitation of Marine Resources within the Maritime Areas under Jurisdiction of the Member States of the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission, Convention on the Determination of the Minimal Conditions for Access and Exploitation of Marine Resources within the Maritime Areas under Jurisdiction of the Member States of the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission, Benguela Current Convention.	
Large marine ecosystems	Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem, Canary Current Large Marine Ecosystem, Agulhas Current and Somali Coastal Current Large Marine Ecosystems.	