

Partnership Dialogue #2 – Managing, protecting, conserving and restoring marine and coastal ecosystems

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a) Status and trends

- Human population in Western Indian Ocean countries will almost quadruple from 2015 to 2100 (from 220 to over 800 million people)
- Economic growth, and therefore potential impacts to the environment, in East and Southern Africa will be among the highest globally due to multiple factors: starting at the lowest level of many regions globally, rapidly growing population providing a market and work force, growth in the conventional (hydrocarbons) and renewable energy sectors from low levels, and technology innovation.
- With high levels of poverty and poor governance structures, a large proportion of mainly poor people depend to a great extent on ecosystem services. Growth in demand, and impacts from the factors listed above will result in acceleration of already-declining natural assets.
- Climate change is dramatically impacting ecological and social systems in the region, exemplified by impacts to coral reefs, outbreaks of disease (Rift Valley Fever), and expanding conflicts driven by water and other resource shortages.

b) Challenges and opportunities

Low levels of development, capacity and internal finance in the region hinder investment in and implementation of joint actions with benefits across social, economic and environmental spheres, and for long term sustainability.

c) Existing partnerships

☐ Are many existing partnerships covering the theme of the dialogue? Are there identified gaps in coverage?

The Northern Mozambique Channel initiative is a partnership among governments and civil society (NGOs) is applying this perspective to Regional Ocean Governance under the framework of the Nairobi Convention (UNEP Regional Seas). The theme of the dialogue is one of the three principle pillars of the initiative, the others focusing on social and economic welfare, as the three pillars of sustainable development.

☐ Who are the main actors involved in existing partnerships?

The NMCi is focused on countries - Comoros, France, Madagascar, Mozambique, Tanzania. The NGOs currently seeding the initiative come from the marine environment sector (WWF and CORDIO East Africa, with other members from the Consortium for the Conservation of the Western Indian Ocean (WIOC, www.wio-c.org). Eventually the partnership will grow to include the governments, civil society (of which the NGOs are one constituency) and private sector, all with varied but potentially mutually supportive interests in the natural, social and economic capital assets and sustainability of the shared ocean region in the northern Mozambique Channel.

☐ Do we know how well existing partnerships are performing? What have been success factors? What are the main challenges identified with existing partnerships?

This is a nascent partnership with many challenges but equally large opportunities. Alignment and willingness among governments is the first requirement and the current focus. The partnership is building awareness of the value of the sub-regional approach. The complexities of this innovative and 'out of the box' partnership approach challenges engagement by both state and non-state actors. Practically, the partnership is building up grassroots actions partly through re-alignment of existing projects and partly through fundraising.

☒ *Have successful partnerships on the theme been narrowly focused in scope, or more holistic, encompassing several related areas?*

This is a new thematic focus, particularly at this scale of Regional Ocean Governance. To date, there are no precise counterparts. Another large scale initiative, the Coral Triangle Initiative, being quite different in design.

d) Possible areas for new partnerships

☒ *Given challenges, opportunities and gaps, how could new partnerships help with implementation?*

By driving innovation, identify opportunities in to-date unrecognized places, rallying multi-stakeholder support and commitment to sustainability. This is a fundamentally holistic approach, targetting social, economic and environmental goals in a common framework.

☒ *What actors would need to be involved for new partnerships to succeed?*

A broader multi-stakeholder partnership, involving all levels of government, many components of civil society and leading business and private sector interests. Three major types of partners will broaden and deepen engagement and actions: major entities in the corporate/economic sectors relevant to the region (energy, shipping, tourism, fisheries, development finance), major NGOs active in the social sector (e.g. health, education, rights, etc) and national/subnational civil society representatives. Some steps are being made to engage with the oil/gas sector and civil society through a current proposal. Success will overwhelmingly be determined by the willingness and ability of partners to forge a common vision of success (around protecting and growing social, environmental and capital assets, not degrading them) and developing the cooperation mechanisms to achieve success. Initial investment and funding are a major constraint, but successful design will result in all required funds being generated through internal mechanisms and sources (around use of deriving added value and wealth from natural and economic assets in particular).

☒ *What would be critical success factors?*

Natural, social and economic assets (capitals) underpin sustainable development. These generate the wealth that should include a 'rent' component that pays for the governance and sustenance of the asset. By appropriately valuing especially natural assets, all activities that exploit them (directly and indirectly) should contribute to their sustenance. Economic assets already follow such a model (though not complete) and social assets often do where governance is fair and equitable.

Applying the Capitals Approach to design and deliver the sustainable development paradigm involves recognizing and valuing each set of assets and applying a 'no net loss' approach where use of one capital is designed in such a way as to not degrade its asset base, nor any other asset - natural, social or economic. This requires funding/investment, which can be covered by the income generated from that use, or payment of that value by a range of beneficiaries/stakeholders through rent/tax/use approaches.

e) Guiding questions for the dialogue

- What are the most important interactions between environmental, social and economic assets and their stakeholders that must be addressed to achieve sustainable development (ie. balanced growth of all three).
- How can we leverage these in the context of regional ocean space to deliver on SDG 14.2 to manage, protect, conserve and restore marine and coastal ecosystems.
- Success in SDG Target 14.2 requires greater income and wealth delivered to poorer sectors of society (the bottom 40%?) - what immediate mechanisms can lead to long term success in achieving this with a focus on SIDS, LDCs and small scale fisheries (SDG14.7, links to Partnership Dialogue 5, links to SDGs 1-poverty, 2-hunger, 8-inclusive growth, 12-sustainable production/consumption, 16-just societies)