

WIO-C Meeting

Whitesands Hotel, Mombasa - 10 June 2009

Participants

Hadley Becha (EAWS)
Anjan Datta (UNEP GPA)
Julius Francis (WIOMSA)
Jane Gaithuma (Birdlife international)
Sarah Humphrey (WIO-C consultant)
Margareth Kyewalyanga (IMS)
Nyawira Muthiga (WCS)
Oliver Naswira (Wetlands International)
Amani Ngusaru (WWF)
David Obura (CORDIO)
Peter Scheren (UNEP WIO-LaB)
James Stapley (ASCLMEs)

Opening

Amani opened the meeting and thanked the participants for coming. IUCN had sent their regrets for not being able to participate. This meeting follows the meeting in Cape Town in November 2008 where CORDIO, UNESCO-IOC, WCS and WIOMSA had been absent due to prior commitments.

Amani thanked the Nairobi convention and WIO-LaB project for their support in bringing together the NGOs active in the region in the context of this important regional project. The individual organisations have been involved in various project and programme inputs but the recognition of WIO-C as a group allows for structured input to these programmes. It was agreed that Amani would chair the meeting.

Review of objectives and agenda of the workshop

Amani noted that it is now more than two years since WIO-C was created, during which time WWF volunteered to host the secretariat. The agenda of the meeting (attached as Annex 1) was organised in two parts, with the first half of the day focused on programmatic issues and in particular the LBSA SAP and the second on WIO-C operational issues building on the survey undertaken by Sarah earlier in the year.

In an initial discussion on the WIO-LaB SAP, Anjan noted that NGOs have had a space on the steering committee as well as wider opportunities in the process. He challenged the group to structure themselves and be in a position to communicate who is their representative in different circumstances, and to be proactive in proposing what they want to do and how they want to work. This need has been recognised but the structure needs to follow.

Julius noted that this is one of the reasons why WIO-C was established. There had been discussions on a joint programme in 2006/2007, perhaps similar to PRCM. The ideas were floated but the opportunities have moved faster than the WIO-C structure. A workplan had been developed at the first meeting and a secretariat and thematic leads were assigned but this was not followed through. Issues of membership, secretariat and joint activities need to be resolved.

In view of these remarks, participants decided it would be more appropriate to look at WIO-C operations prior to determining how the members could contribute in a concerted manner to the SAP. This brief meeting report reflects the re-arranged agenda and focuses on key findings and conclusions.

Part 1. Moving WIO-C from Concept to Practice

It was acknowledged that the regional context has evolved considerably in the period since the Nairobi meeting and that some issues were not fully resolved during the conclusions of that meeting. The ongoing review provides an opportunity for a fresh start building on the original mission, guiding principles, and letter of adhesion. The survey undertaken earlier this year addressed some of the issues that need to be resolved in the operationalisation of WIO-C.

The conclusions from the Nairobi meeting and draft guiding principles were reviewed with a focus on mission and purpose, membership, and joint activities of WIO-C (Annex 1). It was agreed that David would draft a 'Charter' for the WIO-C building on the discussion during the meeting and the survey results that would provide a clear statement of WIO-C's purpose and function.

ACTION: David to draft and circulate a WIO-C 'Charter' for feedback and further discussion.

In terms of mobilising WIO-C, it was concluded that it takes time and activity to gel a structure that works but that this meeting has generated a better a better idea of what WIO-C is and how it works. It was further acknowledged that commitment in terms of time from the member organisations will be key to success.

There is an ongoing need for a secretariat function but at the same time it was agreed that there should be a free flow of information with communications amongst members not necessarily needing to pass through the secretariat. It was suggested that WWF continue to operate as secretariat on at least an interim basis and as long as Amani is available, but accepted that this may need to be re-evaluated in the face of changes in WWF. It was further agreed that work should be delegated amongst the membership.

Amani noted that he had received support from Jerker Tamelander (IUCN) at various stages in the WIO-C launch and discussions and asked if anyone else would be available to help in this respect. David proposed exploring appointment of a qualified intern at CORDIO for a period of nine weeks over the summer who could support the development of a charter and further develop Sarah's work on institutionalisation of the WIO-C.

ACTION: David to explore appointment of intern at CORDIO to assist on WIO-C consolidation

ACTION: Sarah to liaise with David and future intern of development of Charter and guidelines for WIO-C

Part 2. Programmatic Issues

Amani reiterated the group's appreciation to WIO-LaB for their support in convening this meeting, and welcomed the way in which the project has reached out to get the views of NGOs. He recalled the Cape Town meeting of WIO-C and subsequent WIO-C statement to the SAP multi-stakeholder workshop, and noted that substantial efforts had been made to look at how the WIO-C programmes complement the SAP. The SAP has been revised based on these inputs, most notably in the area of habitats. This meeting provides an opportunity to look at further input into the SAP process and to look ahead to implementation of the SAP. WIO-C could move towards developing some joint proposals.

Peter presented a brief update of the SAP process. He noted that WIO-C is anchored in the Nairobi Convention, and stressed the importance of effectiveness through partnership. The Nairobi Convention in turn depends on partnerships. He suggested NGOs could have a greater impact in policy influence and possibly fundraising by working as a group than by working individually. Although the WIO-LaB project didn't clearly set out to define a role for NGOs their role in the WIO-LaB has emerged as a force during the course of the project, complementing the input of countries. The SAP purpose represents similar objectives to those of the NGOs.

Peter summarised the process leading to the draft SAP that will become the work programme of the Nairobi Convention and is set for adoption in November 2009. The vital role of partnerships is evidenced in the SAP, particularly the annexes. Five countries are now involved in developing national plans to mainstream the SAP, and NGOs are involved. Other partners included donors and other UN programmes. The LBSA work has a land based perspective and there are two further major GEF projects that will be taken on board later on, bringing in offshore issues including fisheries (ASCLMEs and SWIOFP).

Peter raised three questions:

- ✓ Does the SAP adequately capture existing programmes and activities by NGOs in terms of protection and conservation of the WIO coastal and marine environment, i.e. do you see your place?
- ✓ What could be the role of NGOs in the implementation of the SAP, i.e. what are the comparative advantages of the NGOs?
- ✓ How could we best coordinate inputs by NGOs in the development of the SAP, as well as later on during its implementation?

The forthcoming SAP workshop will provide a further opportunity to review the SAP. The NGOs were influential in this respect in Cape Town and their suggestions are reflected in the latest draft SAP. The partners annex to the SAP (SAP Annex 6) shows the extent to which WIO-C has been recognised by the countries as an implementing partner. During the next days' workshop, the SAP targets will be prioritised and partners identified. The meeting will conclude in defining some concepts for SAP implementation projects to be developed, with 'owners' for each, which may include WIO-C. This is an opportunity for the NGOs concepts to be endorsed. WIO-LaB can provide support for development of full proposals.

Peter noted that at this stage the last of his questions is key as the facilitation role of WIO-LaB will draw to a close by the end of the year.

Sarah provided a brief recap of the WIO-C input to the November 2008 Cape Town meeting, including the ways in which NGOs can add value to the process and the rationale for WIO-C to engage with the WIO-LaB process. This interest and added value was highlighted in the Statement presented by Ali Kaka (then EAWLS) on behalf of WIO-C to the SAP Multi-Stakeholder Workshop.

SAP Contributions

A form had previously been circulated to look at existing and planned contributions of WIO-LaB partners, including the WIO-C members, to the SAP. WIO-LaB is looking for highly aggregated data showing linkage to the SAP – preferably at the level of targets (as in table 2 in the contributions form). It need not be at the level of actions though this would be useful for identifying specific areas for collaboration and follow up.

In a rapid round-table it was apparent that few WIO-C members had had a chance to complete all sections of the table and it was agreed that all would endeavour to do this during the course of the next two days. This information may also serve to identify opportunities for WIO-C collaboration beyond the scope of the SAP. It was noted that the overall WIO-C contribution is likely to exceed any other single organisation's input and that the NGOs are playing a particularly important role in habitats.

It was proposed that WIO-C assign a spokesperson to make a presentation or statement the forthcoming SAP workshop, if possible with reference to a synthesis of overall contributions.

ACTIONS:

- All participants to complete the tables of contributions
- Sarah to compile SAP contributions
- Amani to develop a draft statement and circulate to WIO-C members for review

Review of SAP Partners Annex

Peter referred to table on Annex 6 of the SAP (Draft 10) where the consortium is mentioned as a potential lead partner against numerous targets and actions, notably under habitats. The table was developed by the steering committee (comprising mainly of the countries). He anticipated that one or other WIO-C members will be contributing where mentioned and could formulate its work in the context of this SAP.

It was noted that the NGOs are largely working individually and not as a consortium, but that the strong role that has been assigned to WIO-C in the SAP implementation represents a valuable acknowledgement of the important role NGOs play in the region. It was suggested that 'WIO-C' be replaced with 'WIO-C/NGOs' to take account of the contributions of NGOs that are not WIO-C members. Individual NGOs are mentioned in some cases (e.g. IUCN WANI and Wetlands International are referenced under river basins). It was further noted that the reference to WIO-C does assume or anticipate a degree of coordination and in some cases concerted action between the NGOs.

It was suggested that the table would need to be more detailed in order to capture nuances in different organisations' contributions. WIO-C could consolidate more detailed information under targets and actions – for example in an annual reporting process. This could contribute to a gap analysis as well as recognising ongoing work and competence.

Further detail on the NGO's contributions will emerge as the contributions tables are compiled but it was already noted that the level of contribution may vary significantly between the different actions.

Concepts

Concept development is intended both to identify priority actions and to advance these priority themes for funding. Some targets and activities can be advanced without extra funding, through more concerted action amongst the active organisations.

Two to three potential concepts were identified by the WIO-C, building on existing competence and interest of the members, scope for regional action, and comparative advantage offered by working together as a consortium, and the low likelihood of countries taking the initiative in these areas (Annex 3). It was also noted that the NGOs have a comparative advantage in terms of their experience with community involvement as a cross cutting approach. There will be a further opportunity to work on these concepts in the coming days.

It was also noted that the new SAPs under development will provide opportunities for complementary work in the future, linking in to the WIO-C members' wider programmes.

ACTION: James to update the ASCLMEs team on WIO-C and develop bridge between WIO-C and ASCLME

Towards SAP Implementation

Peter noted that five countries are already working in national action plans and two others are considering this, of the eight covered by the project. The forthcoming workshop will further define next steps through prioritising actions with a five year horizon and the SAP is expected to be formally adopted in November.

There was some discussion on the differing roles of NGOs and countries in implementing the plan and the ultimate need for countries to take responsibility for this if it is not to become just another plan whose implementation depends on further project funding. Participants argued that responsibility needs to be clearly assigned to national agencies, and there needs to be a regional mechanism for follow up and reporting. It was noted that the decision as to whether to not to use a regional framework is ultimately in the hands of the governments.

It was suggested that there would be value in further investing in NGO processes in a more formal manner to support implementation of the SAP and Nairobi Convention, and possibly to provide a watchdog function. However there was some concern this may send a message that national processes are ineffective and that countries needn't take on full responsibility for the plan. It was further noted that the WIO-C's remit is regional rather than national but that coordinated input into national processes may be valuable and could be discussed further.

Concluding Remarks

It was agreed that Wetlands International and Birdlife International be admitted to the revised WIO-C on the same basis as the present 'founder' members. These are the new founder members

Actions

Action	Who	When	Updated Status (07/07)
1. Draft and circulate a WIO-C 'Charter' for feedback and further discussion	David	End June	Underway
2. Explore appointment of intern at CORDIO to assist on WIO-C consolidation	David	ASAP	Done – Amber Luong appointed starting June 22
3. Handover /finalisation of Charter and guidelines for WIO-C	Sarah, Amani, David, Amber	June 30/ ongoing to end July	Ongoing
4. Complete the tables of contributions to WIO-Lab	All	June 12	IUCN & Birdlife pending
5. Compile SAP contributions	Sarah	June 12	First draft completed
6. Develop a draft statement to multi-stakeholder workshop and circulate to WIO-C members for review	Amani	June 12	Done statement agreed and presented (Annex 4)
7. Draft and circulate Brief meeting report	Sarah	June 26	Done
8. Initiate discussion on further development of concepts	Sarah	June 30	Pending 4 & 5

Annex 1. Workshop Agenda

Version of 1 June

Opening		
08:30	Registration	Amani
09:00	Opening of the meeting and introductions	Amani
09:15	Review of objectives and agenda of the workshop	Amani
PART I. Programmatic Issues		
09:30	Presentation on the current status of the SAP, including the process, structure and plans for partnerships in its implementation Questions	Peter
10:00	WIO-C Contributions to the SAP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief recap November meeting (role of NGOs etc) • Recall statement to Cape Town Stakeholder Meeting • Summary of compiled contributions • Discussion - strategic value, common areas, opportunities 	Amani / Sarah Meeting Chair
10:30 COFFEE		
11:00	Discussion continues, moving to next steps & action points <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of information gaps • Identification of concrete opportunities for collaboration in the implementation of the SAP • Input to multi-stakeholder meeting partnership session 	Meeting Chair
12:30	Other Collaboration Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other NBI Convention Programmes /SAPs • WIO-C members opportunities 	Chair All
13:00 Lunch		
PART II. Operational Issues		
14:00	Brief recap on WIO-C	Amani
14:15	Review of Survey results, PRCM lessons, issues arising from interviews	Sarah
14:30	Moving forward with WIO-C: identification of critical issues	Chair
15:00	Breakout groups on key issues (<i>e.g. secretariat role, hosting and funding; governance and membership</i>)	Amani/Sarah
15:30 Coffee/groups continue working		
16:30	Groups report back: Issues, recommendations, Discussion	Chair
17:00 – 18:00	Making it happen: Next steps (<i>e.g. consolidation of operational guidelines, hosting criteria, proposal development</i>)	Chair

Annex 2. Discussion of WIO-C Purpose, Function & Operations

1. Review of Mission/ Purpose

Original Wording

WIO-C's **mission** is to become the principle mechanism for reaching a broad stakeholder involvement in the formulation and implementation of the Nairobi Convention work programme.

The **purpose** of the Consortium is to support synergy in programmes of work on marine and coastal ecosystem management and promote knowledge and information sharing amongst stakeholders in the Western Indian Ocean region, providing a mechanism for non-governmental entities to anchor activities in the Nairobi Convention and thus strengthening its implementation.

To this end, the Consortium's main activities focus on networking, coordination, lobbying, decision support, resource mobilisation, and programme development and implementation.

- WIO-C needs to be clear whether it presents its ambitions as a joint programme, a process for better engaging civil society in policy processes, or a 'club' where members have agreed to coordinate their efforts as and when this adds value. This has implications for the way WIO-C may market itself - for example if it wants to attract funding for the secretariat.
- WIO-C is essentially made up of NGOs so the main mission/vision is to achieve sustainable management and conservation, not simply feed into a government process.
- The current 'mission' text reads describes the purpose, mechanism and opportunity but not the main mission.
- The mission itself should be concerned with environment and sustainable use
- It should be the overall *raison d'être* of WIO-C.
- WIO-C remains anchored in the Nairobi Convention.
- Since ASCLMEs is not fully in the NC, but rather a partner, the purpose should have a view to wider 'regional governmental processes including the NC'.
- The first part of the current 'purpose' clause is key and could be elevated to a mission statement: This is what WIO-C is trying to achieve and that the members cannot do individually.
- The purpose could be developed by looking at how to achieve this synergy, based on some of the results of the survey.
- The dimension of policy work is particularly important in terms of how working together adds value
- It was proposed that WIO-C's primary purpose is to service the needs of its members, its secondary purpose is to serve and influence regional processes.

Proposed New Mission:

WIO-C's Mission is to achieve a healthy marine and coastal environment that sustainably supports people's livelihoods in WIO-region

2. Membership

New members

- If WIO-C is inclusive and supporting synergy, membership could be open, providing a voice and access to the NC processes.
- The existing members form an assembly of the consortium. One function is to approve new membership and types of memberships (e.g. national NGOs).
- It was noted that while some NGO members are stronger than others, there is complementarity. There should be ongoing provision for membership to be strengthened.
- WI and BI have brought energy to the debate and contributed actively in recent months

NGOs / NGOs and IGOs/ NGOs in partnership with intergovernmental organisations & processes

- It needs to be clarified whether WIO-C is a consortium of NGOs or NGOs and IGOs. Some of these questions were confusing in Nairobi, and confounded general inclusion of all participating in the meeting.
- It was noted that NGOs have different constraints and accountability and operates in a different context to intergovernmental bodies. These differences had been raised by Gina Bonne (IOC) at the Cape Town meeting. IGOs are accountable to the countries and cannot make or back decisions the same way.
- It was proposed that first and foremost, WIO-C is a consortium of NGOs. The membership needs to be qualified on the basis of being active in the region, interest and relevance. The letter of interest /adhesion will confirm interest and relevance (and any other criteria).
- There is a continued need to be able to influence and work closely with regional policy processes. Intergovernmental organisations could be ex officio or supporting organisations, or co-opted members. The ability to meet and work with them directly is important so they shouldn't be kicked out. It may be possible to maintain a link to regional progresses and programmes on an issues basis?
- Concern was expressed about creating inner and outer circles of intergovernmental and NGOs. Yet the need to break down such distinctions had been highlighted earlier.
- It was noted that WIO-C has already been recognised within the Nairobi Convention – this is a vital link. WIO-C should not distance itself from the NC.
- The key is to have a forum where issues can be aired without the constraints of governmental frameworks. The voice of the consortium should not be constrained by this, but the activities and exchanges should be inclusive.
- There is a clear desire to capture the best of both worlds. One suggested formulation was that WIO-C present itself as a “Consortium of NGOs, in partnership with intergovernmental organisations”.
- The role of Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands¹, which with its broad membership is able to make very active contributions in the global debate on ocean and island issues, was highlighted. The concept here is open, not restrictive and it was suggested that WIO-C needs to capture this same spirit.

Proposed Description of Membership:

WIO-C is a consortium of NGOs in partnership with Inter-governmental organizations.

(Provisional: The founding members are IUCN, WCS, WIOMSA, WWF, EAWLS, CORDIO, IOC, IOC-UNESCO, Nairobi Convention and NEPAD-Cosmar. New organisations like Birdlife International and Wetlands International have since then become actively involved).

A common voice

¹ <http://www.globaloceans.org/about/index.html>

- It was acknowledged that none of the individual NGOs would accept an exclusive representation by WIO-C, but where there is a common position the joint voice is a source of strength.
- WIO-C needs to be able to make statements on behalf of the group and, where applicable, inputs to meetings / policy processes will need to be signed off by all members.
- Individual members may also make separate statements.
- It was acknowledged that the issue of 'who is speaking' presents issues for the IGOs. NGOs may need to be able to be critical and work as a watchdog, together, as a united front, in a way that IGOs cannot. This independent role of NGOs is invaluable.
- It was proposed that relevant documentation be reviewed, including the NC text to see what this means in practical terms for engagement in processes. (Declarations, observers, representation etc). The NC is still the major opportunity that WIO-C can hook into, even if it goes beyond this.

Preliminary Membership criteria

- Active in the region/issues covered by WIO-C's mission.
- Willing to contribute resources towards WIO-C objectives and processes (including time).
- Submission of a written expression of interested subscribing to the Charter (*see below*).

3. Charter and Operational Guidelines

- The title "Guiding principles" doesn't well describe the current content of the document
- The current definition of priorities can be interpreted as programme themes or cross cutting approaches. The original idea had been to assign programme leaders but some areas are less amenable to having a dedicated programme leader than others.
- There is a need to describe "what we intend to do together".
- Defining mechanisms to help synchronise actions will be vital; these are not principles as such.
- The vision or guiding principles needs to be better developed as a yardstick in terms of what members sign up to what they join the consortium - environment, sustainable development, WIO region.
- The current "priorities" section could address the things we do together – e.g. partnership, synergy focussing on collective strengths, science-based solutions, and support to WIO issues, commitment / willingness to contribute time and resources.
- NGOs retain their independence (non-restricted, recognition of autonomy, individual mandates)
- Members strive towards developing a common agenda, the focus in on enhanced joint activities (not the unit restricting its members) – signing up to a charter is signing up to a common agenda.
- WIO-C does not tell its members what they can and cannot do.
- Overall we need to establish what WIO-C does, why it exists and how it work. Issues to be covered include:
 - What – scope of interventions (the fabric / reason- i.e. sustainable development etc), the headlines members subscribe to in joining.
 - How – it works – its philosophy (memberships, partnership, etc).
 - How it works at practical / operating level (secretariat, how to join, etc).
 - Commitment – willingness to commit resources (including time).
 - Membership criteria, roles and responsibilities.
- It was proposed that a "charter" be developed that describes what WIO-C is (e.g. mission, purpose, philosophy) and David was asked to develop a draft for further discussion.
- This may be accompanied by a more detailed living document describing how WIO-C works in operational terms.

4. What WIO-C does (*referred to as objectives*)

- Contributing to regional policy processes including input to regional programmes (such as SAPs) – advisory, implementation, etc.
- Developing a common/united/concerted voice on policy issues (to events & processes, but also proactively tackling critical issues), championing new causes.
- Sharing of information - whose doing what – basis for partnership, lesson sharing, gap identification, etc.
- Maintain an 'overview' of key issues, including emerging issues and trends, working with wider set of regional organisations (cross cuts the above 3) that affect coastal and marine environment
- Catalysing, fundraising for and undertaking joint activities.

- Some of the current 'priorities' can be seen as describing WIO's approach

Annex 3. Potential Concepts

Two to three potential concepts were identified under the theme of managing crucial coastal habitats.

These were based on criteria of:

- Existing competence and interest of the members,
- Scope for regional action,
- Comparative advantage offered by working together as a consortium, and,
- Low likelihood of countries taking the initiative in these areas.

Concept 1 – Monitoring and Evaluation

High Interest

Target 4 – A regional monitoring and evaluation plan established and implemented for Critical Habitats, Coasts and Shorelines

Strategic Action 6 – Develop long term monitoring of coast and shoreline changes based on agreed targets of coastal zone land use.

Participants noted:

- There is a need for more coordination on monitoring - to get an overview on state of the environment – synthesis, data /methodological compatibility
- There are notable gaps in mangroves and sea-grasses; a lot of work in corals and in individual MPAs.
- Most monitoring is oriented to specific questions – aiming to complete a national database is insufficient.
- A meeting would be helpful bring experts together to prepare an overview - but common methodologies are not a panacea.

Concept 2. Strategic Assessment and Mapping

Medium interest

Target 3 – Critical Habitat management in place in all countries contributing to ecologically sustainable ecosystem services and regional protection

Strategic Action 6 – Identify and do strategic assessment of other critical habitats and such as canyons, coastal lakes, dunes, estuaries, aggregating and nesting sites, biodiversity hotspots, bird flyways, etc.

and *Strategic Action 7 – Update mapping, status and distribution of seagrass and coral habitats*

Participants noted:

- 'Critical habitats' is a very general term that needs better definition should be expanded to cover all important habitats including coastal forests and wetlands
- The general focus under critical habitats on reefs, mangroves and seagrasses is incomplete in terms of allowing reporting of contributions to the overall habitats theme.
- Important bird areas and potential Ramsar sites are still being identified and are likely to be underrepresented in a narrow definition of critical habitats
- There is an ASLME project looking at mapping of coastal habitats.
- There is a need also to look at areas under stress as well as areas that need to be protected. The protocol work on hotspots is taking this latter perspective on critical habitats i.e. pollution hotspots rather than a wider ecosystem health assessment

- Mapping has proved problematic at regional scale as different countries have taken different approaches, or are at different stages.
- The EAME map covers a range of habitats based on available data but covers only the mainland countries and part of South Africa

Concept 3 – Protected areas gap analysis

Building on Concept 2, a separate concept may be developed linking

Target 3, Strategic Action 6 Identify and do strategic assessment of other critical habitats and such as canyons, coastal lakes, dunes, estuaries, aggregating and nesting sites, biodiversity hotspots, bird flyways, etc.

and Target 2 – Coastal zoning based on integrated economic, social and environmental considerations implemented, Strategic Action 4 – Establish protected areas with focus on critical coastal and marine habitats, evaluating their contribution to mitigating habitat loss

- The gap analysis could be a fast-track process building on existing work (including the ongoing IOC MPA projects for the island states).
- A gap analysis needs to address both representativeness and connectivity.
- The project may include support to project development for MPA establishment.