



Food and Agriculture Organization  
of the United Nations

# Webinar and Workshop Series on Fisheries-Related Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures in the Southwest Indian Ocean

WEBINAR DATES: 20<sup>th</sup> of March 2024  
WORKSHOP DATES: 16<sup>th</sup> -18<sup>th</sup> of April 2024

## 1- Introduction

At its thirty-fourth session in February 2021, the Committee on Fisheries of FAO (COFI) noted the relevance of other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) to achieving a number of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and global biodiversity targets, and **requested that FAO produce and disseminate practical guidelines to support Members in their identification and implementation.**

OECMs are an area-based conservation measure defined by the Convention on Biological Diversity through decision 14/8 of its Conference of Parties. The same decision also contains a number of guiding principles and characteristics of OECMs, as well as a set of criteria to identify them.

In response to the request by COFI, the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Division (NFI) developed "[\*A handbook for identifying, evaluating and reporting other effective area-based conservation measures in marine fisheries\*](#)" in order to assist its Members in the identification, evaluation and reporting of Fisheries OECMs. In addition, NFI is organizing a series of shared learning workshops with the following objectives:

- (1) To support countries, fisheries related agencies and stakeholders to understand, discuss and apply the CBD's criteria for identifying fisheries-related OECMs;
- (2) To share the contents of the Handbook on marine fisheries OECMs; and
- (3) To synthesize lessons learned from countries' experience in applying the CBD criteria and develop further guidance on OECMs in fisheries that complements existing global guidance.

NFI aims for the workshops to enable:

- discussing OECMs within the specific regional or national marine context,
- discussing specific examples and case studies of potential fisheries-related OECMs that are of relevance to the region or the country,
- learning from and exchanging countries' experience in using area-based management tools in the fisheries context,
- identifying of an initial list of potential fisheries-related OECMs in the country or region, and
- discussing ways forward towards recognizing and reporting the identified OECMs.

To date, FAO has organized and held, together with other partners, the following shared learning workshops:

- the “Workshop on Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) in the Baltic Sea Area”
- the “Expert Meeting on Fisheries-Related Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) in the Mediterranean
- the “Sustainable Ocean Initiative Capacity-Building Workshop for the Wider Caribbean and Central America on Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures in the Marine Fishery Sector”
- “Expert Meeting on Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs) in Argentina”, and
- the “Workshop on Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs) in the COPPESAALC region.”

## **2- Western Indian Ocean region**

In the Western Indian Ocean region, there many different types of area-based fisheries management measures being used that have the potential to qualify as OECMs. During the Nairobi Convention Science to Policy Meeting in Maputo Mozambique on the 5th – 7th of December 2023, the importance and role of fisheries-related OECM was highlighted. Several science and policy recommendations were made including the need to identify the extent of existing area-based management measures (other than MPAs), which could potentially be recognized as OECMs, and assess what their socio-ecological impacts would be. At the regional level, knowledge exchange, technical assistance, and replication of best practices are recommended.

To assist regional countries in advancing dialogue on OECMs in the SWIO region, FAO is collaborating with WIOMSA to support knowledge exchange and stakeholder discussion on OECMs, as well as to propose regional initiatives to support the identification and reporting of potential OECMs for fisheries.

First, a virtual half-day webinar "Introductory Webinar on Fisheries-Related Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures in the Western Indian Ocean (WIO)" will take place on 20<sup>th</sup> of March 2024. The webinar will provide a general introduction to the concept of OECMs and their place in the region and introduce the objectives and structure of the workshop for the WIO to potential participants. Taking advantage of its online nature, the webinar will be open to all participants from not only the countries of the WIO region but also to other participants globally and any other interested stakeholders.

Second, in line with the other workshops that FAO has held, the "Workshop on fisheries-related other effective area-based conservation measures in the Western Indian Ocean" will take place on 16th -18th of April 2024 and will be held in Mombasa, Kenya. This workshop will set the way forward toward the identification of fisheries-related OECMs in the WIO region. The main points covered during the workshop will include:

- An introduction to identifying, evaluating, and reporting OECMs in fisheries;
- Compilation and discussion of main challenges related to the application of the OECM criteria with initial recommendations on how to address them;

- An initial application of CBD criteria for OECMs to case studies of fisheries-related ABMTs in the WIO region; and
- An assessment of the implications, opportunities, and potential difficulties, that may arise from identifying fishery-related OECMs in the WIO region;

Workshop participants will include participants from both Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Fisheries of countries in the region, as well as Nairobi Convention, FAO and WIOMSA staff.

Below is the agenda outline for the workshop.

### **3- Outline of agenda**

The workshop will last three days and will be structured as follows:

1. *Session 1 (Plenary) OECM Background*  
This session will provide a refresher on OECMs background.
2. *Session 2 (Plenary) Overview of the governance and fisheries management frameworks in the WIO region*  
This session will provide a global overview of the governance and fisheries management framework in the WIO with a focus on area-based management.
3. *Session 2 (Plenary) The application of OECMs in the fisheries sector*  
This session will present examples of OECMs in the fisheries sector.
4. *Session 4 (Plenary) In-depth analysis and discussion on the OECM definition and criteria, their applicability, and existing tools to support the identification of OECM.*  
This session will provide an in-depth analysis of the definition, criteria, and guiding principles of the OMECs and will open the floor to discussion regarding the criteria, its interpretation, and minimum requirements for the recognition of OECMs.
5. *Session 5 (Plenary) Presentation of case studies*  
This session will briefly present case studies of area-based fisheries management measures potential fisheries-related OECMs within the region and outline initial questions or challenges to be discussed in an in-depth analysis.
6. *Session 6 (Working groups) Analysis of case studies*  
Participants will be divided into groups to undertake an in-depth analysis of the case studies. Each group will analyze one potential OECM case study and evaluate it against the full set of criteria. Each group will note the main challenges encountered in the analysis.
7. *Session 7 (Plenary) Analysis of case studies*  
This session would be in plenary with the working groups reporting back on their analysis and the challenges encountered.
8. *Session 8 (Plenary) Processes for identifying, recognizing and reporting OECMs*

This session will be dedicated to discussing and sharing experiences about coordination processes that may be needed or deemed necessary for the identification, assessment, recognition and reporting of OECMs in the WIO region.

9. *Session 9 (Plenary) Conclusions and next steps*

This session will summarize the main discussions, highlights and conclusions of the workshop, outline next steps and discuss ways forward for recognizing and reporting OECMs.