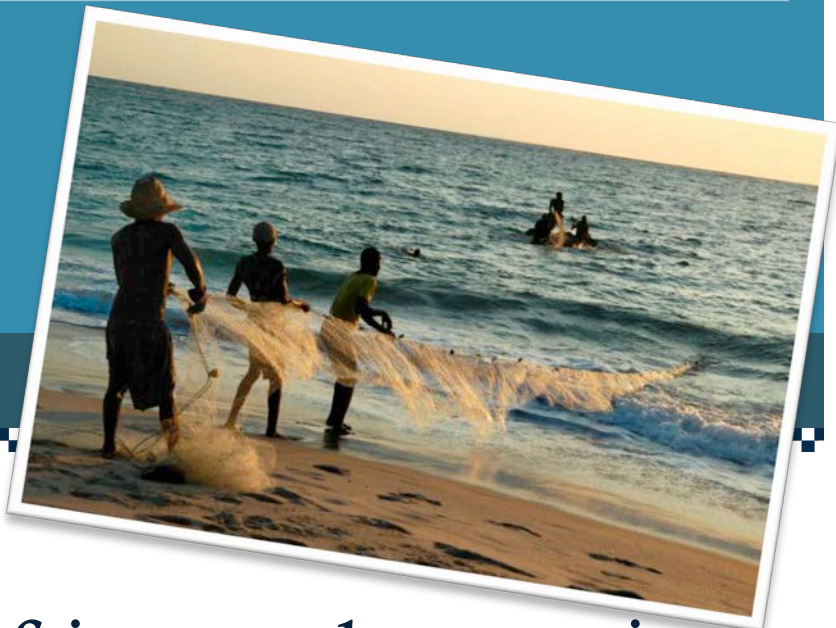


LME News

The newsletter of the
African LME Caucus

Issue 1: August 2011



The African LMEs



The Mediterranean Large
Marine Ecosystem
www.iwlearn.net/projects



The Canary Current Large
Marine Ecosystem
www.canarycurrent.org



The Guinea Current Large
Marine Ecosystem
www.gclme.org



The Benguela Current Large
Marine Ecosystem
www.benguelacc.org



The Agulhas and Somali
Current Large Marine
Ecosystems
www.asclme.org

Africa needs a marine research platform

Namibia and South African are among the top ten nations in the world when it comes to complying with the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, partly as a result of the contribution made by the research vessel *Dr Fridtjof Nansen*.

This assertion is made by the African LME Caucus which has put together a paper entitled *Acknowledgment of the impact of the Nansen Programme, in particular the R/V Dr Fridtjof Nansen, on African Large Marine Ecosystem projects*. The paper makes a strong case for the *Dr Fridtjof Nansen*'s Norwegian owners, NORAD; its current operators, FAO; and other donors to continue their support for ecosystem research in Africa.

Over the past 30 years, the *Dr Fridtjof Nansen* has conducted a wide range of surveys in African waters. These include surveys on the distribution of commercially important demersal species, acoustic surveys of pelagic and mesopelagic fish, fish behaviour studies and environmental studies. (To p.2)

LMEs under threat

African LMEs all face similar threats. These include a decline in commercial fisheries; uncertainty about the status of ecosystems; deterioration of water quality; habitat loss and destruction; and threats to endangered and vulnerable species.



R/V Dr Fridtjof Nansen

The Dr Fridtjof Nansen is owned by Norway and operated by the Norwegian Institute of Marine Research (IMR). The research vessel operates along the west and east coasts of Africa, supporting countries in fishery research and management. It operates within the framework of FAO's EAF-Nansen project, an initiative that has made considerable progress in building the capacity necessary for the introduction and implementation of an ecosystem approach to fisheries (EAF) in African LMEs.



Continued from page 1

Surveys of plankton, ichthyoplankton and experiments in acoustic and trawl survey methodology have also been undertaken from the Dr Fridtjof Nansen. In the process, hundreds of African researchers and technicians have received training. Many of these researchers are now playing important roles in the management of African fisheries.

“The vessel has become a symbol for the sustainable development of fisheries in almost all coastal countries along the African

continent,” asserts Dr Hashali Hamukuaya, Executive Secretary of the Benguela Current Commission and current chair of the African LME caucus.

The paper suggests that the work and results of the *Dr Fridtjof Nansen* have raised the profile of fisheries management and attracted the support of African ministers concerned with fisheries and or the environment. A number of senior African leaders have acknowledged the long-term support that has been provided by NORAD and the *Dr Fridtjof Nansen* in particular.

The compilation of the paper is one

of the first initiatives of the African LME Caucus.

It will be forwarded to NORAD and FAO in a bid to ensure that the *Dr Fridtjof Nansen* continues its role in Africa, until such time as African LMEs are able to individually or collectively monitor, assess and sustainably use their marine resources within the context of a changing environment.

Literally hundreds of African researchers and technicians have received theoretical or hands-on training during scientific research cruises on the Dr Fridtjof Nansen.



The African LME Caucus

The second meeting of the African LME Caucus was held in Paris in July 2011

The meeting was well attended, attracting representatives of four out of five African LMEs and their partner agencies.

It followed the inaugural meeting of the African LME Caucus that took place in Accra, Ghana, in May.

At the Accra meeting, the goals and objectives of the African LME Caucus were defined. These are to establish closer cooperation between African LMEs, by discussing issues of common concern, sharing experiences and developing strategies to work together.

It was decided to formalise the Caucus by appointing a chair, a position that is to be held for a year at a time. Dr Hashali Hamukuaya, Executive Secretary of the Benguela Current Commission was asked to chair the Caucus in its first year.

At both meetings, representatives of African LMEs were invited to outline the progress made by their respective LME projects. Discussions on a wide range of subjects – from data sharing and

information to conducting research cruises across adjoining LMEs – followed.

At the second meeting of the African LME Caucus, a number of conclusions were reached. These were presented to the annual IOC/UNESCO/IUCN/NOAA global LME meeting. The conclusions were:

- the Caucus would foster closer cooperation between African LMEs;
- the research needs of each LME would be documented so as to secure vessel capacity for African LMEs for the next three years;
- the caucus would comprehensively document the value that the research ship *Dr Fridtjof Nansen* has provided to African LMEs over the past 30 years (see story on page 1 and 2).
- the caucus should emphasise the importance of climate change research for the management of natural resources;

- the importance of documenting the value of LME goods and services for national, regional and global economies was noted;
- the Caucus must ensure that LMEs and particularly African LMEs play a prominent role in the upcoming Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (CoP 17) to be held in Durban, South Africa in December 2011.

Dr Kenneth Sherman of the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), who is fondly known as the “grandfather of the LME concept” and who attended the Paris meeting, commended African LMEs for establishing the Caucus. He said that collectively LME projects have a better chance of making a continental and global impact if they worked together.

The African LME Caucus

Africa's five Large Marine Ecosystems encompass 33 coastal states with an estimated population of 600 million people, 50 per cent of whom live within 100 km of the coast and depend

overwhelmingly on healthy ecosystems and sustainable fisheries for their livelihoods. The heads of Africa's five LME projects and their partners are represented on the African LME Caucus.



News from the Agulhas & Somali Current LMEs



WIO-SEA concept takes shape

The countries of the western Indian Ocean (WIO) and their regional and international partners are engaged in the establishment of a long-term alliance aimed at securing the sustainable management of the region's marine and coastal ecosystems.

Though the alliance is still in the early stages of development, the concept has been designed to optimise the many national, regional and global initiatives that are being implemented across the region, explained Dr David Vousden, Director of the ASCLME Project.

Provisionally named "the Western

Indian Ocean Sustainable Ecosystem Alliance (WIOSEA)", it embodies the idea that the marine and coastal ecosystems of the western Indian Ocean play a fundamental role in world fisheries and the global climate and, as such, there is not only a national and regional responsibility to protect and maintain them, but also a global responsibility to manage and sustain them.

"Some of the objectives of the proposed Alliance are to catalyse political leadership at the country and regional levels; mobilise long-term funding for data capture, ecosystem monitoring and management; and provide a solid framework for cooperation among the initiatives that encourage integrated, ecosystem-based management of marine and coastal resources," said Dr Vousden.

The Alliance is already being

championed by a number of senior government representatives within the region and has received significant formal support from prominent scientific groups. The next step is to develop a detailed Terms of Reference, work plan and budget and to present this to the appropriate regional bodies, including the SWIOF Commission, Nairobi Convention and WIOMSA.

The "architecture" or structure of the proposed Alliance is still under discussion. A number of high-level meetings have taken place and the ASCLME Project and the SWIOF are working together to ensure that the governments of the region play a central role in developing the concept and mechanics of the WIOSEA.

Read more about WIOSEA at www.asclme.org.

Scientists describe new squid species from Indian Ocean seamounts

A new species of squid has been described from the southwestern Indian Ocean following a 40-day research cruise on the Norwegian research vessel *Dr Fridtjof Nansen*.

It has not yet been named, but is being described by Dr Vladimir Laptikhovsky, a cephalopod specialist from the Falkland Islands Fisheries Department.

When a new species is found, it must be formally described in a scientific peer-reviewed paper and

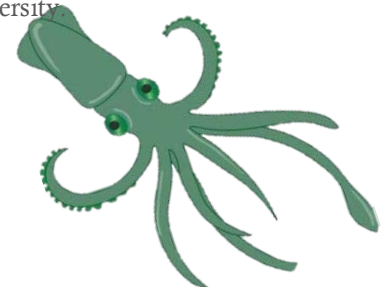
the "type specimen" must be lodged in a museum.

The new squid species was gathered during a research cruise on the seamounts of the southwestern Indian Ocean. The cruise was led by the IUCN and the ASCLME Project played a key role in funding and organising the cruise.

The new squid species is 70cm long and a large member of the chroteuthid family. Squids from this group are long and slender with

light-producing organs, which act as lures to attract prey.

So far, more than 70 species of squid have been identified from the seamounts cruise, representing more than 20 percent of global squid biodiversity.



News from the Benguela Current LME



BCC launches ECOFISH project

The Benguela Current Commission is to coordinate a joint research project that is expected to modernise and improve the management of key marine fisheries in Angola, Namibia and South Africa.

Aptly named ECOFISH, the project aims to improve the scientific assessment of hake, horse mackerel and sardinella – three fish stocks considered most important for securing the prosperity of the fishing industries of Angola, Namibia and South Africa, and the livelihoods of fishers and fish workers.

The ultimate goal of ECOFISH is to help the three SADC countries to develop a new framework for the ecosystem approach to fisheries (EAF) in the Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem.

Angola, Namibia and South Africa committed themselves to introducing an ecosystem approach to fisheries management at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002. The ECOFISH project will help them to fulfill this pledge.

ECOFISH has won the support of the European Union, which has provided a grant of 1.5 million Euros to fund the initiative over four years (2011 to 2015).

Angola, Namibia and South Africa prepare to sign Benguela Current Convention

The city of Benguela in southern Angola has been selected as the location for the signing of the Benguela Current Convention.

The Convention may be signed in November or December this year.

The three southern African countries are expected to ratify the Convention by December 2012, thereby bringing into force a unique multilateral agreement that has as its objective the long-term conservation, protection, rehabilitation and sustainable use of the Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem or BCLME.

“Essentially, the Benguela Current Convention will help the three countries to establish an ecosystem approach to managing the BCLME,” says Dr Hashali Hamukuaya, Executive Secretary of the Benguela Current Commission.

Dr Hamukuaya says that the selection of the city of Benguela as the location for the signing of the Benguela Current Convention is significant. The city, which is located 700km south of the Angolan capital of Luanda, shares its name with the Benguela Current and is built around a natural bay that reflects the stark beauty that is typical of the Benguela region.

The fact that Benguela was once a centre for slave traders is also significant, says Dr Hamukuaya.

“Benguela symbolises the fact that these three countries have overcome serious obstacles, including colonialism, occupation and bitter wars and are now working together constructively and peacefully to ensure that their shared natural resources are managed in a sustainable and integrated way.”

The Benguela Current Commission has been driving the process of drafting the Convention text and ensuring the three countries reach consensus around the wording of the treaty. Once the Convention is signed, the Commission will continue to provide administrative and logistical support to the countries and manage the BCC’s ambitious science and training programmes.

The governments of Angola, Namibia and South Africa have endorsed the regional cooperation that is promoted by the Commission and committed themselves to ratifying the Benguela Current Convention by 31 December 2012.

Eight ministers responsible for the marine industries and the marine environment in their respective countries agreed that the Benguela Current should be “protected and promoted as an asset” and that their countries should participate in, and benefit from, the Benguela Current Commission as it responds to challenges of poverty and under-development.

News from the Canary Current LME



Three *Nansen* research cruises in CCLME for 2011

The Norwegian research vessel *Dr Fridtjof Nansen* will complete three research cruises in the Canary Current LME in 2011.

Eighteen researchers took part in the first cruise of the year which began in Mindelo, Cape Verde on June 18. This was a two-week ecosystem survey of the Cape Verde islands. Of the 18 researchers who took part, nine were from the countries of the CCLME: seven from Cape Verde, one Mauritania

and one from Morocco. Other members of the scientific team were from Norway, the USA, Spain and the UK. These were specialists in taxonomy, benthic research and ornithology.

Over the duration of the two-week cruise the regional researchers received hands-on training in the deployment of trawl gear, the monitoring of acoustic equipment and the sampling of environmental parameters.

A second research survey was conducted from the *Dr Fridtjof Nansen* between 22 June and 7 July. This survey began in Saint Louis, Senegal and ended in Guinea. The objective was to assess the main small pelagic stocks of the CCLME region in collaboration with the Mauritanian and Moroccan research vessels (*Al Awam* and *Al Amir Moulay Abdallah*, respectively).

The final survey of the year will take place towards the latter part of 2011. This will be an ecosystem survey

that will survey the area from Guinea in the south to Morocco in the north.

All three surveys were planned by the CCLME working group on Ecosystem Survey Planning and Analysis. This group consists of representatives from the CCLME countries, the Institute of Marine Research of Norway, the Spanish Institute of Oceanography, Atlantnir of Russia and FAO.



Vanda Monteiro of the Fisheries Department of Cape Verde samples fish on board the *Dr Fridtjof Nansen*.

Work begins on Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis

The first meeting of the CCLME's Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) Working Group took place in Saly, Senegal on 19 and 20 May 2011.

The Working Group reviewed the preliminary TDA (that was developed during the project preparation phase) and agreed on a method of work and an outline for the TDA. Mr Moussa Bakhayoko, Chair of the Consultative Committee of Ocean Experts, and Technical Advisor to the Prime

Minister of Senegal, was elected Chair of the TDA Working Group.

The TDA is a science-based assessment which identifies and quantifies the causes of environmental problems in a geographic region, said Mr Birane Sambe, Regional Coordinator of the Canary Current LME:

"It is a vital document for the preparation of the Strategic Action Programme (SAP)."

The TDA takes into account

national, regional and global factors such as the socio-economic, political and institutional contexts, without ignoring national concerns and priorities. It is an objective assessment, based on the best available scientific and technical information.

The development of the TDA will be supported by eight *ad hoc* working groups and five demonstration projects. The participation of inter-ministerial committees and other stakeholders is expected.

News from the Guinea Current LME



Extension for SAP development

The IGCC/Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem project has received approval from its Steering Committee for a final “no-cost extension” of the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) development phase of the project that serves 16 coastal countries in west and central Africa.

Approval for the extension came at the end of the Committee's 8th meeting held in Accra, Ghana, on 17 and 18 May. According to Dr Stephen Maxell Donkor, Executive Secretary of the GCLME, the extension was required to complete tasks needed to transform the Interim Guinea Current Commission (IGCC), to a permanent Guinea Current Commission and develop the SAP Implementation project.

The SAP Implementation project will support the transition to a country-owned, independent and permanent commission for the management of the marine and coastal resources of the GCLME.

New oil spill policy for GCLME

West and Central African members of the Interim Guinea Current Commission (IGCC) /Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem (GCLME) project have agreed to develop a regional policy on the use of chemical dispersants to tackle oil spills in the Guinea Current region.

“For those who don't have a national policy, this meeting will help them craft a policy. We will also provide them with useful background documents,” said Dr Thomas Coolbaugh, chairman for the Global Initiative for West and Central Africa (GI WACAF) at the close of a three-day workshop which on June 24.

The meeting's 49 delegates recommended that all countries should have a clear national policy describing the conditions for utilisation of dispersants, and draw up a pre-determined list of approved dispersants.

The incorrect use of chemical dispersants can cause massive damage to the environment following an oil spill.

Delegates at the meeting were asked to send a list of approved dispersants validated by their countries to GI WACAF one month before the organisation's regional biennial conference. The conference is scheduled to take place in Lagos, Nigeria from 10 to 14 October.

GI WACAF will harmonise the list of dispersants available for use within the waters of the region.

Information regarding national policies, stockpiles of dispersants and equipment availability shall be posted to the GI WACAF website for the use of member countries.

Another suggestion was that a Net Environment Benefit Analysis must be taken into consideration when considering the use of dispersants. This form of analysis ranks the net environmental gain in green services or other ecological properties arrived at through actions. It can be used to make decisions, including the appropriate use of chemicals.

The meeting also proposed that GI WACAF focal points create a correspondence group in order to look into forming a regional approach to oil spill response and approved dispersants. The group will comprise the focal points and consultants.

The three-day workshop was organised by the Interim Guinea Current Commission (IGCC) in collaboration with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) under an agreement with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), as executing agency for the GCLME project. It drew participants from maritime organisations and related institutions from all the GCLME member countries, ministries, departments, agencies, oil firms (Shell, Total, Chevron, Perenco), the private sector and others identified by the International Maritime Organization, as well as all the member states of the IGCC.



The newsletter of the African LME caucus is produced twice a year

The newsletter strives to improve communication between Large Marine Ecosystem projects and inter-governmental LME commissions across Africa. If you would like to receive a copy of this newsletter, please contact Nico Willemse at the office of the Benguela Current Commission:

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The ASCLME

There are two Large Marine Ecosystems in the western Indian Ocean. These are the Somali Current LME – which extends from the Comoros Islands and the northern tip of Madagascar up to the horn of Africa – and the Agulhas Current LME which stretches from the northern end of the Mozambique Channel to Cape Agulhas. Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa and Tanzania share the resources of the LMEs.

The BCLME

The Benguela Current LME stretches from Port Elizabeth in South Africa to the province of Cabinda in northern Angola, encompassing the full extent of the cold Benguela Current. The BCLME sustains important artisanal and commercial fisheries and valuable offshore industries, including marine diamond mining and oil and gas extraction. Angola, Namibia and South Africa are the countries bordering the Benguela Current LME.

The CCLME

The Canary Current LME is a major tropical upwelling region off the coast of Northwest Africa. It is strongly influenced by the Canary Current that flows along the African coast from north to south between 30° N and offshore to 20° W. Morocco, Mauritania, Senegal, Guinea-Bissau, the Canary Islands (Spain), Gambia, Cape Verde and Western Sahara are the countries bordering the Canary Current LME.

The GCLME

The Gulf of Guinea LME is one of the world's most productive marine regions. It is shared by 16 countries in West and Central Africa. An estimated 80 million people depend on the fisheries, habitat and energy resources of the LME.

The Mediterranean LME

Twelve countries are engaged in a partnership to address the major environmental concerns of the Mediterranean LME. These are a decline of biodiversity, a decline of fisheries, a decline in seawater quality, human health risks, and a loss of groundwater dependent coastal ecosystems.