

Results

and ACHIEVEMENTS from the ASCLME Project

ASCLME



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Towards a sustainable future

by David Yousten

The ASCLME Project and the OSMOFP commenced at a time when there was a low baseline of existing knowledge for the Western Indian Ocean region. Results have sometimes been more readily accessible after being published in institutional reports and contained in national policies, NOCs and project activities. Data and information from international studies were not routinely translated to local countries, leading to local loss, or at least reduced benefit, of international investment in marine science in the region.

We are proud today that in the past five years, this scenario has changed considerably thanks to the efforts of a number of agencies. For example, networks such as WIOCMSP have facilitated and promoted the development of marine science programmes, and projects such as COMSUFICA have supported the development of national information networks and the repatriation of data. The ASCLME Project and the OSMOFP have encouraged these efforts and supported dedicated studies to fill information and capacity gaps. Moreover, as a result of GEF funding, with UNDP and World Bank support – and the partnerships with a host of regional and international agencies – detailed coastal and offshore observations have revealed a wealth of information on the role of current patterns, ocean-atmosphere interactions, habitat and species distribution, and their impacts on the sustainable livelihoods of coastal communities. Importantly, the countries have ownership of this data, and systems have been established to ensure that it is accessible and useful to them.

Today, the countries of the WIO have a baseline from which to measure changes within the ecosystem and predict the likely impacts on marine resources.

The Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) described on page three is a comprehensive and impressive text that professionally documents, the status of the Large Marine Ecosystems of the western Indian Ocean and analyses the threats to their long-term sustainability. It was compiled through a partnership between the ASCLME Project and the OSMOFP whilst also recognizing and capturing, as appropriate, inputs from the UNEP-WIO-Lab Project as well as the PCOA-UNDP Science Project and represents a major output of both projects.

Significantly, the TDA provides the technical basis for the development of a Strategic Action Programme (SAP), a process that is now well underway. We look forward to the forthcoming endorsement of the SAP by the countries of the region and to securing funding for SAP implementation.

In the following pages, we have highlighted some of the many activities funded and supported by the ASCLME Project since 2009. All of these activities have required time, energy and commitment from the countries of the western Indian Ocean and a wide range of partners and stakeholders who have collaborated with the Project to promote enhanced understanding and sustainable use of the ecosystem processes and resources of the western Indian Ocean. We extend our appreciation to you for your excellent work, and hope that the activities highlighted here will make you deservedly proud.

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