

ASEAN AND IORA SIGN MOU TO STRENGTHEN COOPERATION IN KEY AREAS



Photo caption: Secretary-General of IORA, Dr Salman Al Farisi & Secretary-General of Association of ASEAN, Dr. Kao Kim Hourn

The Secretary General of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), Dr. Salman Al Farisi and the Secretary General of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Dr. Kao Kim Hourn, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 4th September 2023 in Jakarta, Indonesia.

The Signing Ceremony, witnessed by H.E Retno LP Marsudi, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia and the Chair of ASEAN, and H.E Dr. AK. Momen, MP, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh and the Chair of IORA, exemplifies the commitment of these Associations to fostering deeper ties and strengthening regional partnerships. The MoU outlines cooperation between ASEAN and IORA which will be carried out by their respective Secretariat.

The cooperation spans various key areas:

1. Priority Areas of Cooperation
2. Blue Economy;
3. People-to-People Exchanges
4. Digital and Green Economies.

The Indo-Pacific region is expected to reap several advantages from this joint initiative between ASEAN and IORA.

The MoU provides the opportunity for the cooperation between ASEAN and IORA to maintain and enhance peace and prosperity in both regions through the conclusion of mutually beneficial cooperation.

2ND ITERATION OF NELSON INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME (NMIP)

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TESTIMONIAL

Joining NMIP is one of my best professional experiences. At the IORA Secretariat, I am gaining valuable insights for the efforts being undertaken by the Secretariat to achieve its goals. I am now more confident to stand as an ambassador of IORA.

The Ministry of Fisheries in Tanzania is one of main sector for promoting blue economy in the country and through this experience I can fulfill my role effectively as a fish technologist.



Neema Swai

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TESTIMONIAL

The NMIP is allowing me to learn various skills such as note verbal writing and technical meeting arrangements. So far, I have visited and interacted with representatives from IORA Member States and Dialogue Partners through their diplomatic missions in Mauritius.

I would like to express my gratitude to the IORA Secretariat and Member States and Dialogue Partners for their support.



Osman Mohamed Ibrahim

28TH MEETING OF THE INDIAN OCEAN RIM ACADEMIC GROUP (IORAG)



The 28th IORAG Meeting was held 26-27 September 2023 at Lagoon Beach Hotel, Cape Town in South Africa. The workshop brought together academics and policymakers from the Indian Ocean Rim to discuss the 'High-Level Strategic Dialogue on IORA's 25-Years - Reflection, Review & Renewal', Early-career Professionals Network, IORAG as a 'Think-Tank' and the Indo-Pacific Outlook, among others. The workshop was attended by 12 Member States, one Dialogue Partner (Italy) and 1 observer (Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association).

FIRST WORKSHOP ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE IORA GUIDELINE ON ILLEGAL, UNREPORTED AND UNREGULATED FISHING



Participants from 15 IORA Member States attended the 1st Workshop on the Development of the IORA Guideline to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate IUU Fishing, which is part of a series of workshops conducted in collaboration between Indonesia and France. The workshop series aim at developing the Guideline, which will contribute to the sustainable management of marine fisheries resources in the Indian Ocean Region.



CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FRIENDSHIP



➤ On the International Day of Friendship in 2023, the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Secretariat celebrated the beauty of these connections by collaborating with the non-governmental organization (NGO), Friends in Hope. The event was a heartfelt tribute to the bonds that have no boundaries.

Friendship, a concept as old as humanity itself, plays an essential role in fostering peace, understanding, and collaboration among nations. It's a cornerstone of diplomacy and cooperation, and the IORA Secretariat recognized its significance on this special day.

The International Day of Friendship was proclaimed in 2011 by the UN General Assembly with the idea that friendship between people, countries, cultures, and individuals can inspire peace efforts and build bridges between communities.



Exclusive news from



EIGHTH MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP FOR WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT (WGWEE)



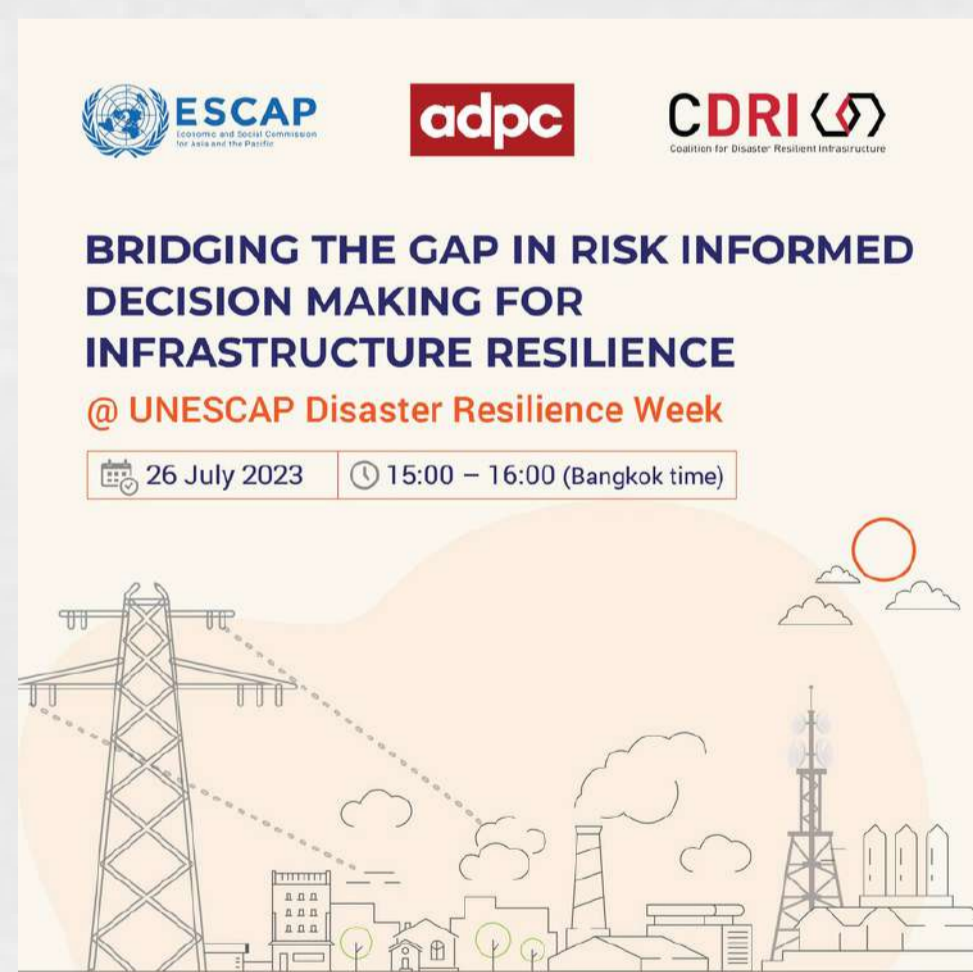
The eighth meeting of the Working Group on Women's Economic Empowerment (WGWEE) was held virtually on 12 September 2023. The meeting chaired by Dr. Khadijeh Karimi, Director General, International Office, Vice-Presidency for Women and Family Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran discussed activities undertaken by the Working Group and reviewed the work plan. Further, Member States provided an update on activities they were leading and proposed some new projects in line with the aims and objective of the cross-cutting issue of IORA.

WORKING-LEVEL MEETING WITH DIALOGUE PARTNERS

IORA Secretariat hosted a working-level meeting virtually on 13 September 2023 with IORA Dialogue Partners to highlight the avenues open to the latter to work with the Association. IORA Secretariat made a powerpoint presentation highlighting the organization's priority areas and explained the potential opportunities of cooperation between IORA and dialogue partners for the development of the region. Furthermore, participants were also briefed about the upcoming IORA 23rd Council of Ministers and related meetings to be held in Colombo, Sri Lanka on 09-11 October 2023.



MEETING OF THE COALITION FOR DISASTER RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE & INFRASTRUCTURE FOR RESILIENT ISLAND STATES



The Secretariat of the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) in New Delhi, invited the IORA to the Third Steering Committee Meeting of the Infrastructure for Resilient Island States (IRIS) from 27 to 28 July 2023 in Chennai, India. The invitation is in accordance with the MoU 'Promoting Resilience of new and existing infrastructure to climate and disaster risks within the Indian Ocean region' between the two entities that was signed in April 2022.

CAPACITY BUILDING ON 'SPACE TECHNOLOGY FOR DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT', 6-8 SEPTEMBER 2023

The 3-day capacity building programme on 'Space Technology for Disaster Risk Management' had a focus on the overview of the role of Earth Observation (EO) and Geo-spatial technologies for disaster risk management. The objective of the programme was to demonstrate the potential utilization of EO technologies towards building disaster resilient society, benefitting the participants from IORA Member States. 29 delegates from 11 Member States participated in the capacity building workshop.



➤ FOURTH MEETING OF IORA FUNCTIONAL BODIES' CHAIRS AND COORDINATING COUNTRIES (FBC-CC)



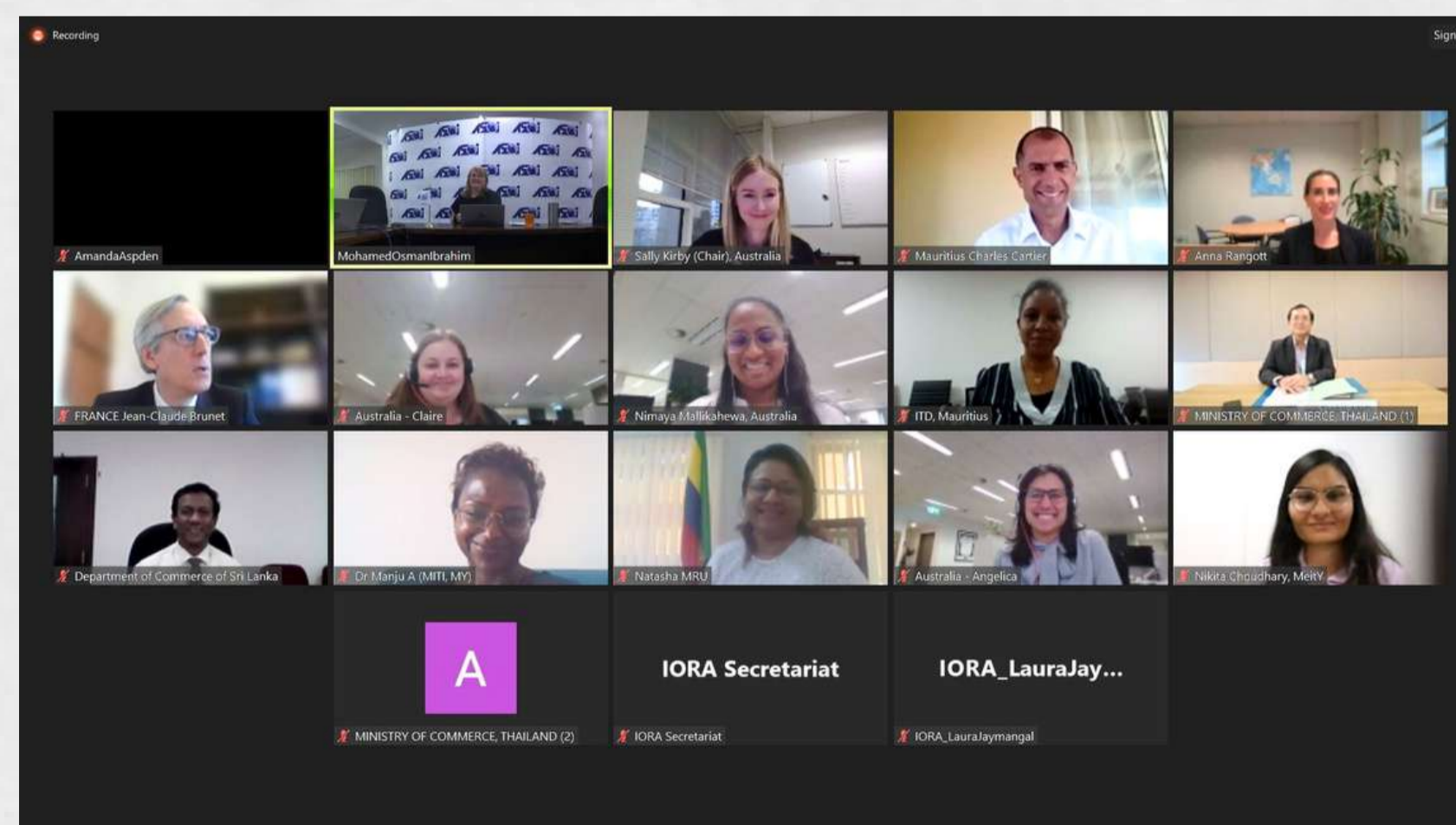
IORA Chair, Bangladesh hosted the Fourth Meeting of the IORA functional bodies' Chairs and Coordinating Countries (FBC-CC) on 25 September 2023 virtually. Rear Admiral (Retd) Md. Khurshed Alam, Secretary, Maritime Affairs Unit of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangladesh presided over the meeting. At the meeting the Chairs of 10 Functional Bodies of IORA and Coordinating Country for Institutional Arrangements and Broadening Engagement (IABE) presented report on their respective activities covered since the third Meeting of FBC-CC that held on 23 May 2023. They also discussed the challenges they are facing in implementing the work plans of the Functional Bodies and the way forward.

➤ IORA BLUE CARBON HUB THINK TANK MEETING ON NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS FOR COASTAL ADAPTATION, 12-14 SEPTEMBER 2023, BALI, INDONESIA

The IORA Blue Carbon Hub in collaboration with the Indonesian Ministry of Maritime and Investment Affairs hosted the IORA Blue Carbon Hub Think Tank Meeting on Nature-based Solutions for Coastal Adaptation, on 12-14 September 2023, in Bali, Indonesia. The meeting was attended by 17 Member States and focused on the current challenges and impediments with harnessing coastal ecosystems (with particular focus on blue carbon ecosystems) as nature-based solutions for adaptation options



➤ THE 22ND MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP FOR TRADE AND INVESTMENT



The 22nd Meeting of the Working Group for Trade and Investment took place virtually on September 5, 2023. The meeting saw the participation of forty-one individuals representing thirteen Member States. The focal point of the meeting's strategic discussions revolved around the theme of "Reducing Barriers to Digital Trade."

MEETING ON REVIEW MECHANISM OF IORA SPECIALIZED AGENCIES



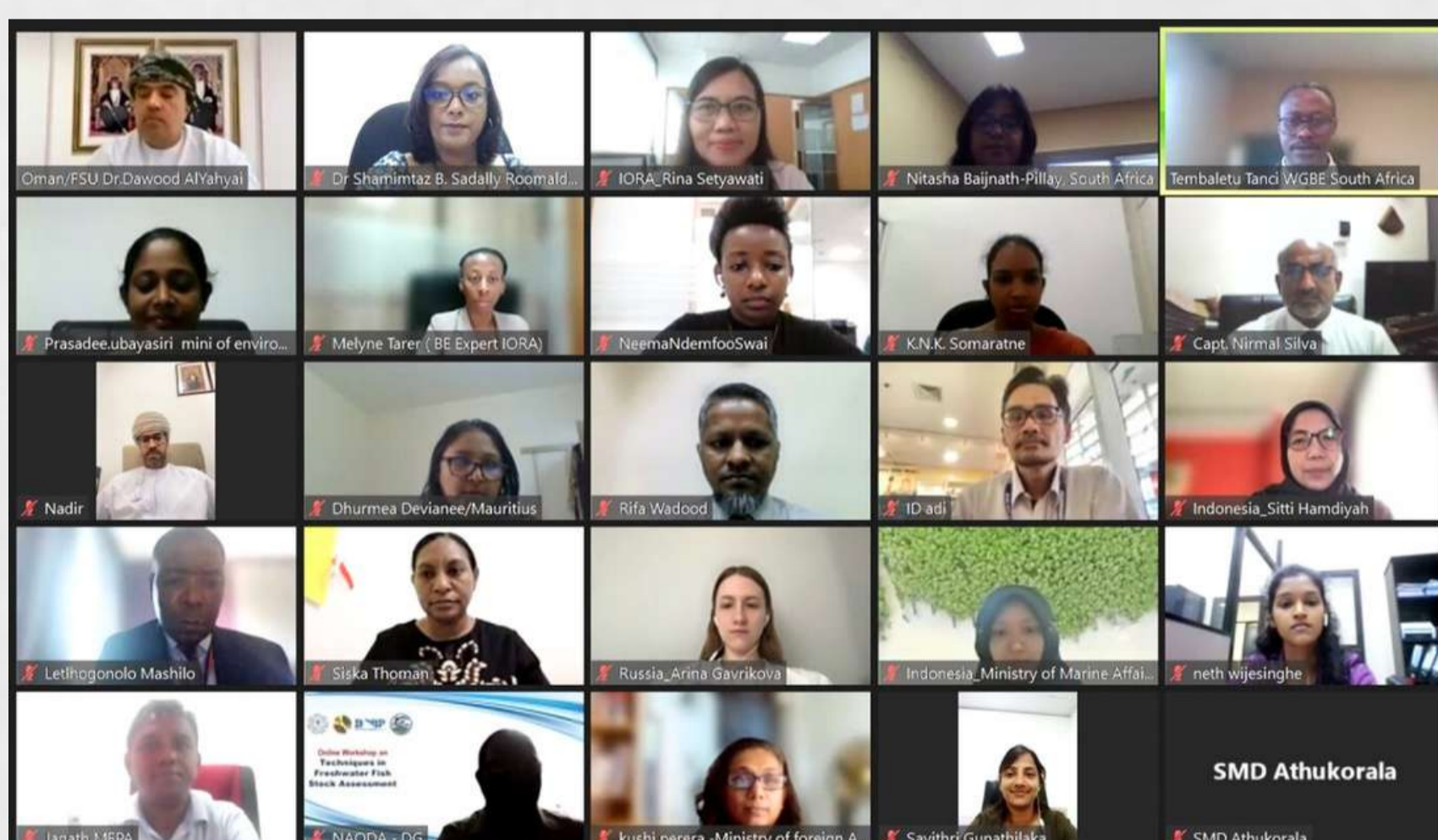
IORA is an intergovernmental organization which regroups Member States in the region of the Indian Ocean, as well as Dialogue Partners from across the world. It has two specialized agencies namely the Regional Centre for Science and Technology Transfer (RCSTT) based in Iran and the Fisheries Support Unit (FSU) based in Oman. These agencies bring their expertise to IORA, and to make them more impactful it was proposed to review their works on a regular basis to keep aligned to IORA member states' needs. In this regard, the Islamic Republic of Iran hosted a virtual meeting on 19 September 2023 as the lead country to discuss the draft Concept Note on the Review Mechanism of IORA Specialized Agencies.

WORKSHOP ON COOPERATION ON MARITIME SAFETY, 24-28 JULY 2023

With the support of Max Planck Foundation for International Peace and the Rule of Law (MPFPR), the workshop "Cooperation for Maritime Safety" was held virtually on 24-28 July 2023. This workshop explored the rights and obligations of IORA Member States provided for under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. More than 60 participants from 12 IORA Member States attended the workshop.



THIRD MEETING OF THE IORA WORKING GROUP ON THE BLUE ECONOMY



The Republic of South Africa, Chair of the Working Group on the Blue Economy (WGBE) hosted the Third Meeting of the IORA WGBE, Online, on 21 August 2023. During the Third WGBE Meeting, Member States provided updates on the status of their commitments for the implementation of the activities of the WGBE Work Plan. The meeting also enabled the Member States to discuss on the new WGBE Work Plan 2024-2026 and explore the way forward to encourage Member States, Dialogue Partners and relevant stakeholders to take the lead for the implementation of activities of the Work Plan.

3RD MEETING OF THE CORE GROUP OF FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

Indonesia hosted the 3rd Meeting of IORA Core Group on Fisheries Management (CGFM) in Jakarta, on 12 September 2023. The Meeting aimed at identifying and discussing the implementation of the CGFM Work Plan, as well as, to update on the progress of fisheries management related activities/programs under WGBE and FSU Workplan.



▶ **COMMEMORATING INTERNATIONAL NELSON MANDELA DAY 2023**



IORA proudly collaborated with the South African High Commission to Mauritius for this commemoration at the Nelson Mandela Centre for African Culture Trust Fund



Event at Amour Sans Frontière School in Goodlands



Performance by students of Amour Sans Frontiere School, Goodlands



March with the SSR Disability School, Triolet

▶ **KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA BECOMES DIALOGUE PARTNER OF IORA**

H.E Mr Sultan Al Angari, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the Republic of South Africa paid a courtesy call on Secretary-General Dr. Salman Al Farisi at the IORA Secretariat in Mauritius where H.E Mr Sultan Al Angari transmitted the Letter of Acceptance to become an IORA Dialogue Partner. During the call, Secretary-General Al Farisi welcomed the KSA as the 11th Dialogue Partner of the Association and appreciated the commitment of the KSA to support IORA. The Secretary General and the KSA discussed possible areas of cooperation, including supporting research in IORA.



▶ **IORA SECRETARIAT AND AFD LAUNCHED PROMOTIONAL VIDEOS FOR AQUACULTURE DEVELOPMENT IN THE INDIAN OCEAN REGION**

The Hon. Sudheer Maudhoo, Minister for Blue Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping, in the presence of His Excellency Salman Al Farisi, the Secretary-General of IORA, Her Excellency Florence Caussé-Tissier, the Ambassador of France, and Mrs Laetitia Habchi, the director of AFD, launched the IORA videos related to seaweed and insect farming at the Institut Français de Maurice, Rose-Hill, on the 06th July 2023. The launch was jointly organised by the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Secretariat and the French Development Agency (AFD)



SECRETARY-GENERAL'S OFFICIAL MEETINGS



SG IORA participated as panelist in the East Asia Summit Workshop on Developing Coastal Economy, organized by Indonesia, 4-5 August 2023. He presented key drivers, challenges, opportunities, and innovative approaches for the sustainable development of ocean economy.



SG IORA participated as a panelist at the Seminar on "Bangladesh Indo Pacific Outlook: Opportunities and Way Forward" in Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2 September 2023, on the invitation from Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies.



Pull-Aside meeting with the Under-Secretary General of the United Nations and the Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission of Asia and the Pacific, Ms. Armida Alisjahbana, on the sideline of the 43rd ASEAN Summit and Related Summit in Jakarta, 5 September 2023



SG IORA paid a courtesy call on the Honorable President of Bangladesh, H.E. Mohammed Shahabuddin, on the sidelines of the 43rd ASEAN Summit and Related Summit in Jakarta, Indonesia, 6 September 2023



SG meeting with the Director of Non-Aligned Movement for South-South Technical Cooperation (NAM CSSTC), Ambassador Diar Nurbiantoro, Jakarta, Indonesia, 15 September 2023



Bilateral Meeting between SG IORA and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Russian Federation, H.E. Sergey Lavrov on the sidelines of the 43rd ASEAN Summit and related Summit, in Jakarta, Indonesia, 6 September 2023



Courtesy call of the new Ambassador of the European Union to the Republic of Mauritius, H.E. Oskar Benedikt, 26 September 2023



18th East Asia Summit 2023, Jakarta, Indonesia, 7 September 2023