

**IORA BLUE ECONOMY CORE GROUP WORKSHOP ON PROMOTING FISHERIES & AQUACULTURE  
AND MARITIME SAFETY & SECURITY COOPERATION IN INDIAN OCEAN REGION  
Durban, South Africa  
4 - 5 MAY 2015**

**IORA Update**



The First IORA Blue Economy Core Group Workshop on “Promoting Fisheries & Aquaculture and Maritime Safety & Security Cooperation in Indian Ocean region” was held on 4 and 5 May 2015 at Coastlands Umhlanga Hotel, Durban, South Africa. The workshop was jointly organised by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) in partnership with the Durban University of Technology and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA).

The workshop was attended by 15 Member States of the Association (Australia, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mozambique, Sultanate of Oman, Seychelles, South Africa, Sri Lanka and Thailand) and 3 Dialogue partners (People’s Republic of China, Egypt and the United States of America).

The IORA Secretariat was headed by the Ambassador K. V. Bhagirath, the Secretary General of IORA.

The inaugural session was honoured by the presence of the Hon. Ms Nomaindiya C. Mfeketo, Deputy Minister of Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO), South Africa, who inaugurated the workshop, Ambassador K. V. Bhagirath, Secretary General of IORA, Prof. Theo Andrew, Executive Dean, Durban University of Technology (DUT) and Prof Olive Shisana, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC).

In her remarks, Hon. Ms Nomaindiya C. Mfeketo, Deputy Minister of DIRCO, highlighted the importance of marine resources assessment and their sustainable utilisation in the Indian Ocean Rim, as well as trade and exploration of a global maritime highway. The Deputy Minister focused on Project Phakisa, aquaculture in view of promoting investment in farms and marine protection and governance with new legislation. The need to have concerted effort in capacity building in the maritime skills was also recognized. As the incoming IORA Chair, South Africa would focus on Ocean Economy, research, innovation, engagements with Dialogue Partners and maritime safety and security with a focus on the role of civil society in IORA.

The two-day workshop included six discussion sessions on different aspects of Blue Economy such as: Development of IORA Blue Economy Core Group: Exploring Potential Cooperation in Fisheries & Aquaculture and Maritime Safety & Security in Indian Ocean Region; Blue Economy in the Indian Ocean Rim Region: Country Experience and Best Practices on Fisheries & Aquaculture and Maritime Safety & Security; Enhancing Capacity Building and Regional Networking in Fisheries & Aquaculture and Maritime Safety & Security Cooperation; Promoting collaborative research initiatives through research-based institutions and private sectors among IORA Member States; Exploring Member States capacities, needs and Technology Transfer in Fisheries & Aquaculture, and Maritime Safety & Security Sector; and Towards the First IORA Ministerial Blue Economy Conference, September 2015, Mauritius: Views and Expectation.

The deliberations of the above topics were substantiated through the intervention of a number of regional experts, researchers and professionals from the Fisheries & Aquaculture, and Maritime Safety & Security Sectors and the key recommendations of the workshop among others included: sharing of information, best practices, and experiences related to several aspects of Fisheries & Aquaculture and Maritime Safety & Security to address issues such as Illegal, unreported and regulated fishing (IUU), marine pollution, piracy and overexploitation of marine resources; enhancing Public-Private-Partnerships in order to optimize the benefits from developing sectors related to blue economy cooperation in Indian the Ocean region; the establishment of a Core Group on Fisheries and Aquaculture, as well as Maritime Safety and Security in an effort to develop blue economy cooperation; identifying projects that would benefit all Member States; develop more fishing agreements bilaterally and sub-regionally to harness cooperative efforts in the IOR region; develop Capacity Building Programmes for the development of the Blue Economy in the Indian Ocean region; enhancing networking among stakeholders in order to develop the Blue Economy in the Indian Ocean region; establishment of a Core Group on Maritime Safety & Security; among others.

In his speech Ambassador JM Matjila, Director General, DIRCO, South Africa, stressed on establishing a center for information sharing and enhancing bilateral partnership for cooperative advantage of Member States for the development of the Blue Economy in the IOR region, as well as encouraging research innovations.

Nine potentials projects were identified during the breakaway session to be submitted to the Bi-Annual IORA meeting in Mauritius on 28 – 28 May 2015 for consideration namely: trainers' training programmes on marine aquaculture; workshop on safe fishing practices for fishers, including artisanal fisheries; pilot project on small scale inland and/or nearshore aquaculture; training programmes on seafood safety (seafood handling, post-harvest processing and storage of fisheries and aquaculture products); and trainers' training programmes on deep sea fishing/ long-line fishing.

In his closing speech, Ambassador A. Sooklal, Deputy Director General, DIRCO, South Africa, summed up the workshop and highlighted the need to ensure that Indian Ocean remains a zone of peace and security for collaboration and cooperation. He pointed out that the workshop was fruitful and focused on doable recommendations. He expressed his appreciation to the organizer for the success of joint collaboration made between the IORA Secretariat, DIRCO and HSRC. He also thanked all participants for the valuable contribution and for the richness of the workshop.

This workshop is one of the three workshop proposed by HSRC that aims at developing the Blue Economy and forms part of one of the IORA thematic workshops whose recommendations would feed into the First IORA Ministerial Blue Economy Conference scheduled to be held in Mauritius in September 2015.

**05 May 2015**