The Indian Ocean Rim Association is an inter-governmental organisation which was established on 7th March 1997. IORA enhances economic dialogue and regional cooperation to promote sustainable growth and balanced development for prosperous Indian Ocean Rim. The vision for IORA originated during a visit by late President Nelson Mandela of South Africa to India in 1995, where he said:

“The natural urge of the facts of history and geography...should broaden itself to include the concept of an Indian Ocean Rim for socio-economic co-operation and other peaceful endeavours. Recent changes in the international system demand that the countries of the Indian Ocean shall become a single platform.”

23 MEMBER STATES

Australia, Bangladesh, Comoros, France/Reunion, India, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Oman, Seychelles, Singapore, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand, United Arab Emirates and Yemen

11 DIALOGUE PATNERS

China, Egypt, Germany, Italy, Japan, Korea, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye, United Kingdom and United States of America.

PRIORITY AREAS

- Maritime Safety and Security
- Trade and Investment Facilitation
- Fisheries Management
- Disaster Risk Management
- Academic, Science and Technology Cooperation
- Tourism and Cultural Exchanges

*With the Blue Economy and Women’s Economic Empowerment as Cross-cutting Issues

STRUCTURE

IORA’s apex body is the Council of Foreign Ministers (COM) which meets annually. A Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) meets bi-annually to review and prioritise IORA’s activities. The Association has Functional Bodies which strengthen and promote activities in the Association and are governed by their Terms of Reference (TOR) as recommended by the CSO and approved by the COM.

SPECIALIZED AGENCIES

Fisheries Support Unit (FSU) - Headquartered in the Sultanate of Oman since 2003, FSU plays an important role in enhancing the cooperation, better utilisation of fisheries resources, exchanges of expertise and joint research activities.

Regional Centre for Science and Technology Transfer (RCSTT) - Established in 2008 in the Islamic Republic of Iran, RCSTT aims to facilitate the transfer of sustainable and appropriate technology to and between Member States.

IORA SPECIAL FUND

The IORA Special Fund was established by the Council of Ministers in its meeting held in Colombo, Sri Lanka, August 2004. The Special Fund is a financial mechanism for supporting and complementing the funding of projects and programmes adopted by the Association, in line with the principles and objectives enshrined in the Charter as well as the objectives and goals envisaged by the relevant bodies of the Organisation.

IORA SECRETARIAT

The IORA Secretariat manages, coordinates, services, and monitors the implementation of policy decisions and work programmes adopted by the Association. It is based in Mauritius and overseen by the Secretary-General who is appointed for a three-year period.