



Indian Ocean Rim Association

The Indian Ocean Rim Association is an intergovernmental organization that fosters regional cooperation among the 23 Member States bordering the Indian Ocean. Established in 1997, IORA promotes sustainable development and collaboration within the region. The association covers various priority areas, including trade and investment, disaster risk management, maritime safety and security, fisheries management, tourism and cultural exchanges and academic, science and technology .

IORA Supports Regional Collaboration on Marine Pollution Prevention and Response

IORA Secretariat participated at a Regional Workshop on Marine Pollution, Incident Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Cooperation in the context of the Operationalisation of the Regional Maritime Security Architecture (RMSA) from 16-18 September 2024 at the Docks, Port Louis, Mauritius.

Following the MoU between IORA and IOC signed in February 2022, IORA and IOC have been collaborating on some projects of similar interests and as such, the wider Indian Ocean Region was invited to form part of this important workshop.

On top of Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Maldives, Mauritius, Seychelles and South Africa from the Western Indian Ocean (WIO), Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka also attended on virtual mode.

During the opening remarks of Mr Shivraj Dhuppe, Director of Maritime Safety and Security and Disaster Risk Management directorate on 16th September 2024, the need for collaborative efforts and sharing of best practices by expert agencies in dealing with the maritime challenges and disaster management and preparedness has been emphasized.

IORA had a dedicated session, chaired by Mr Shivraj Dhuppe on the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) Framework for the Protection and Preservation of the Marine Environment today in collaboration with the Max Planck Foundation for International Peace and the Rule of Law (MPFPR) on 18th September 2024.

During his presentation, Mr Egor Fedorov, the expert from MPFPR outlined the UNCLOS Legal Regime for the protection and preservation of the marine environment, followed by a Q&A session. Some domestic legislative gaps on the implementation of UNCLOS in respect to marine pollution in selected countries of the region were also highlighted.

Eventually, it has been proposed to have an indepth analysis of the domestic legislative gaps on Marine Pollution on the implementation of UNCLOS where experts from MPFPR would be invited for an in-person capacity building session with the legal experts/law enforcement agencies in the Indian Ocean region.

IORA will continue to strengthen cooperation among its member states and other regional/international organizations such as IOC to address marine pollution through coordinated policies, capacity building, and sustainable marine practices.



IORA's 2nd Seminar on IUU Fishing Focuses on Sustainable Maritime Practices

The 2nd IORA Seminar on Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing was successfully hosted at the Naval War College, Goa, India on 25th September 2024, with participation from IORA Member States and international organizations like United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation (BoBP IGO).

The seminar emphasized the importance of regional cooperation and the adoption of sustainable maritime practices to combat IUU Fishing in the Indian Ocean region.

The opening address was delivered by Commandant of the Naval War College, Goa while in keynote address, Ms Paramita Tripathi, Joint Secretary Indo Pacific Division of Government of India emphasized the need for close cooperation of IORA Member States in tackling maritime security issues including IUU Fishing.

The key session on 'Regional Cooperation for IUU Fishing' was moderated by Mr. Shivraj Dhuppe, Director for Maritime Safety and Security and Disaster Risk Management of the IORA Secretariat. Maritime security practitioners from IORA Member States also shared perspectives from their respective countries on tackling IUU Fishing.



IORA Contributes to Global Dialogue on Maritime Security at Daniel K. Inouye Asia Pacific Centre for Security Studies



IORA Secretariat participated at the Transnational Security Course organized by the Daniel K. Inouye Asia Pacific Centre for Security Studies (DKI APCSS) from 14th to 19th July 2024 in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Mr. Shivraj Dhuppe, Director for Maritime Safety and Security & Disaster Risk Management of the IORA Secretariat spoke on non-traditional maritime security challenges such as piracy, illegal trafficking, and ocean health degradation, highlighting IORA's efforts in maritime safety, information sharing, and capacity building in the Indian Ocean Region.

Building Climate Resilience: IORA Contributes to Asia-Pacific Workshop on SIDS

IORA Secretariat was invited by the Daniel K. Inouye Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies to attend a workshop focused on fostering partnerships to strengthen climate resilience in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) across the Indian Ocean region. The event took place in Maldives, from 9th-12th September 2024.

This event brought together experts from climate security, disaster management, and emergency response sectors.

The Director of Maritime Safety and Security and Disaster Risk Management, Mr Shivraj Dhuppe and the Expert in Blue Economy and Disaster Risk Management, Ms Mélyne Tarer participated as speaker and moderator respectively in a panel discussion covering key topics, including:

- ◆ Policy & governance for climate resilience
- ◆ Building resilient infrastructure & sustainable energy systems
- ◆ Financing climate resilience in SIDS
- ◆ Confronting climate change: diverse organizational responses

IORA continues to make strides in advancing fisheries management, disaster risk management, maritime safety and security and promoting the blue economy to ensure the sustainable development and resilience of Indian Ocean nations.



ROOTS OF IORA'S VISION

The Indian Ocean Rim Association is an inter-governmental organisation which was established on 7 March 1997.

The vision for IORA originated during a visit by late President Nelson Mandela of South Africa to India in 1995. This sentiment and rationale underpinned the Indian Ocean Rim Initiative in March 1995, and the creation of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (then known as the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Co-operation) two years later, in March 1997.

IORA Secretariat Participates in ASEAN-PIF and ASEAN-IORA Dialogue in Jakarta

The Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Secretariat was invited by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia to participate in the ASEAN-Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) and ASEAN-IORA Dialogue. Held under the theme "Implementing Collective Commitment to Establish Cooperation," the event took place at the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta, Indonesia, on 19th September 2024.

The Dialogue, organised in collaboration with the ASEAN Secretariat, focused on exploring potential activities and programs through a Framework of Cooperation (FoC). This follows the Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) signed between ASEAN-IORA and ASEAN-PIF. The MoU between ASEAN and IORA, signed on 4 September 2023 during the 43rd ASEAN Summit, aims to strengthen practical and feasible cooperation in areas of mutual interest.

The IORA delegation, comprising Ms. Amanda Aspden, Mr. Sajid M. Mallam Hassam and Ms. Vijaya L. Rumon actively participated in the event. Ms. Amanda Aspden (Director at the IORA Secretariat) delivered remarks during the Joint Session, emphasising the importance of the Dialogue in enhancing collaboration between ASEAN, IORA, and PIF. She highlighted how this engagement helps align the ASEAN and IORA outlooks on the Indo-Pacific.

Discussions during the event focused on the implementation of priority areas under the MoU, particularly aligning the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) and the IORA Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (IOIP). The panel discussion featured distinguished speakers from ASEAN and IORA, with Mr. Sajid M. Mallam Hassam, Principal Programme Officer, presenting on crucial topics such as maritime cooperation, the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030, the blue economy, people-to-people exchanges, and the digital and green economies. Secretariat-to-Secretariat collaboration was also highlighted, with future cooperation opportunities explored.

The IORA delegation also had the opportunity to visit the ASEAN Secretariat, observe proceedings, and engage in valuable networking with key stakeholders. These interactions helped strengthen ties between the organisations and fostered productive dialogue on areas of mutual interest.

Participants emphasised the need to initially focus on 2-3 priority areas where ASEAN and IORA can effectively collaborate to implement the Framework of Cooperation.

IORA remains dedicated to advancing sustainable development across the Indian Ocean region through strategic partnerships with organizations such as ASEAN and PIF, working towards the welfare and prosperity of its member states.

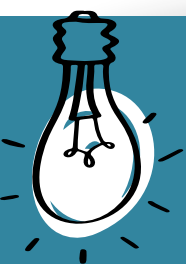


From Agreement to Action: IORA Engages in BBNJ Workshop on Marine Life Protection Beyond Borders

IORA Secretariat participated at the Regional Capacity Building Workshop on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement: From Participation to Implementation in Chennai, India from 27th-28th August 2024.

On 4 March 2023, countries meeting at the United Nations reached a significant milestone for the ocean and for efforts to curb global biodiversity decline when they agreed a new international treaty to safeguard marine life in areas that lie beyond national jurisdiction.

Following 19 years of negotiations, the implementing agreement to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ) – or High Seas Treaty- is the world's first cohesive, international and legally binding framework to specifically protect High Seas biodiversity. As such, the Regional Workshop, organized by Bay of Bengal Programme Inter Governmental Organization (BOBPIGO), High Seas Alliance, and Rise UP and was supported by the Government of Netherlands, aimed to explore challenges and opportunities for conserving and managing the high seas in South and Southeast Asia.



DID YOU KNOW?

IORA has been a champion of Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) since 2013!

Recognizing WEE as a cross-cutting issue, IORA integrates it into all areas of regional cooperation, understanding that empowering women is essential for sustainable growth across sectors.

Through its Second Action Plan (2022-2027), IORA member states have committed to:

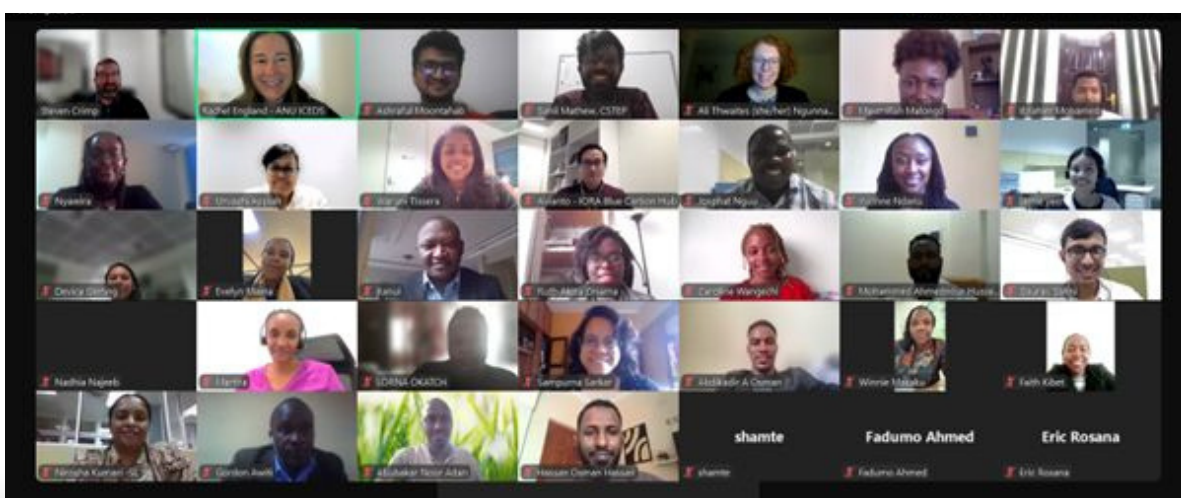
- Promoting gender equality and empowering women and girls
- Ensuring women's rights, access, and leadership opportunities in the economy
- Eliminating violence and discrimination against women and girls



IORA's Professional Short Courses for Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation

The Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is supporting IORA's Professional Short Courses for Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation. The programme was delivered by The Australian National University from 29th July to 5th September 2024. Participants are professionals working in a climate change adaptation or mitigation from IORA Member States namely Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Singapore, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Tanzania and Yemen.

The participation of the fellows of the 2024 Early Career Ocean Professionals of the IORA Blue Carbon Hub was also noted. On completion of the course, participants acquired knowledge for evidence-based policy design and reform, have enhanced interpretation and analysis skills, and have explored a variety of socio-economic impacts and policy interventions to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change.



Development of the IORA Strategic Agenda on Climate Change

Following the proposal of the People's Republic of Bangladesh to enhance Climate Change strategies within IORA at the Committee of Senior Officials in Dhaka, November 2022, "IORA Vision 2030 and Beyond" was developed as an outcome of the High-level Strategic Dialogue held in Mauritius in June 2023. It stipulates the need to develop a strategic agenda to address urgently climate change based on Member States' priorities, in partnership with Dialogue Partners, the Academic Group and the Business Forum, taking into consideration broader climate change actions to avoid duplication and promote synergy in the region. It was agreed that IORA shall undertake a mainstreamed and integrated approach to climate change across all IORA's priority areas and cross-cutting issues.

In September 2024, Bangladesh, as Chair, and the IORA Secretariat hosted a 2-day virtual workshop to develop IORA's Strategic Agenda on Climate Change. A special session included input from Dialogue Partners, Specialized Agencies, the Business Forum, and the Academic Group. A draft will be shared in due course.



IORA Blue Carbon Hub Hosts 5th Think-Tank Meeting on Sustainable Coastal Ecosystem Management

The IORA Blue Carbon Hub, in collaboration with the Thailand Department of Marine and Coastal Resources and the IORA Secretariat, hosted the 5th think-tank meeting on 'Opportunities for using nature, biodiversity and carbon markets to support sustainable management of coastal ecosystems' from 10th to 12th September 2024.

The meeting provided Member States with an opportunity to learn more about the potential to use market mechanisms to finance protection and restoration and generate livelihood opportunities for coastal communities.

Several recommendations were made during the meeting as the way forward to promoting the restoration and sustainable management of coastal ecosystems, including inter alia: the need for more capacity building programme on various topics such as carbon standards, Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), biodiversity credits, among others. The IORA Blue Carbon Hub aims to build knowledge and capacity to protect and restore blue carbon ecosystems throughout the Indian Ocean, in a way that enhances livelihoods, reduces risks from coastal hazards, and helps mitigate climate change.



**JOIN THE INDIAN OCEAN
UNIVERSITY NETWORK (UNIOR)**

**IORA MEMBER STATES AND
DIALOGUE PARTNERS
INVITED TO JOIN!**

Interested universities must be nominated by their **IORA Member States and Dialogue Partners** by **30 June 2025**.

For further information, universities are encouraged to consult their respective IORA National Focal Points.

2nd "It's Whale O'Clock" Webinar: Advancing Sustainable Whale and Dolphin Watching Tourism

The Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), in partnership with the Quietude team hosted the second "It's Whale O'Clock" webinar under the Sustainable Whale and Dolphin Watching Tourism Network on 10th July 2024. The event was organized in collaboration with Ambassador Brunet, Delegate for Regional Cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region, and Mr. Amar from the Diplomatic Mission at the Prefecture of La Réunion.

The webinar served several objectives:

- Sharing updates from the network
- Featuring a keynote by the World Cetacean Alliance on "From Local to Global: Enhancing Whale Watching through a Collaborative Approach"
- Facilitating exchanges and reinforcing ties among network members



Exploring Blue Economy Opportunities: IORA's Participation in Italy's Greentech Global Forum

The Italian Foreign Ministry invited the IORA Secretariat to participate in two significant events: the Greentech Global Forum from September 16th-17th, 2024, and the 64th Genoa International Boat Show on September 19th-20th. The inaugural Greentech Global Forum aimed to boost collaboration and innovation in green energy, e-mobility, advanced citizen services, and the circular economy between Italian companies and international partners, including the diplomatic corps.

Representing IORA, the Secretariat and the Fisheries Support Unit (FSU) from Oman joined the forum's "IORA-ITALY Partnership: Sustainable Development and Blue Economy" panel, chaired by Italy's IORA Senior Official, with participants from India's Ministry of Fisheries and Fisheries Development Oman (FDO). At the Genoa Boat Show, the IORA Secretariat participated in the "Italy-IORA Partnership: Yachting Market Trends in the Indian Ocean Region" panel, furthering Italy's commitment to advancing collaboration within the Indian Ocean Region.





IORA Secretary General Discusses Collaborative Opportunities During Visit to Russia

H.E. Dr. Salman Al Farisi, Secretary General of IORA concluded an official visit on 11th-12th September 2024 to the Russian Federation. Dr. Al Farisi held a working lunch with Russia's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Sergei Lavrov, discussing avenues for mutual cooperation. Dr. Al Farisi also addressed an audience at MGIMO University (Moscow State Institute of International Relations), where he delivered a lecture on IORA's role in promoting regional development and stability.

Dr. Al Farisi took the opportunity to explore Russia's rich cultural heritage.



IORA and China Reaffirm Strong Partnership During Meeting in Mauritius

H.E. Dr. Salman Al Farisi, Secretary-General of IORA met with H.E. Zhu Liying, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the People's Republic of China to the Republic of Mauritius on 28th August 2024. They reaffirmed the strong partnership between IORA and China.

The IORA Secretariat expresses its deep appreciation to the Government of China, Dialogue Partner since 2000, for its consistent and ongoing support.



IORA Celebrates Mandela Day Through Collaboration with Future Hope NGO

Mandela Day is an annual global celebration that takes place on 18th July annually to honour the life and legacy of Nelson Mandela. This day is a call to action for individuals, communities, and organisations to take time to reflect on Mandela's values and principles and to make a positive impact in their communities. This year, H.E. Dr. Salman Al Farisi, Secretary General, IORA Secretariat collaborated with the South African High Commission, the Nelson Mandela Centre for African Culture Trust Fund to provide support to the Future Hope NGO in Sainte Croix.



Fostering Collaboration: The 5th ROK-IORA Partnership Seminar on Sustainable Ocean Resource Management

The 5th Republic of Korea (ROK) - IORA Partnership Seminar on Harnessing Sustainable Ocean Resources through Ocean Research was successfully held in hybrid format on 3rd July 2024. It served as a platform for sharing experiences and knowledge of experts from IORA Member States and Dialogue Partners: ROK, Australia, USA, Madagascar and International Seabed Authority. ROK is committed to continue facilitating regular discussion among IORA's Member States, Dialogue Partners, and other stakeholders, through annual ROK-IORA Partnership Seminar.

A Collaborative Vision for Disaster Management: Dr. Al-Farisi Engages with US Delegation at IORA



US Ambassador to Mauritius and Seychelles, Henry V. Jardine along with his delegation, and Mr Steve Recca from Pacific Disaster Centre (PDC) Global visited IORA Secretariat on 15th July 2024 and met with Dr Salman Al-Farisi, Secretary General of IORA for exploring possibilities for cooperation on Disaster Risk Management in the Indian Ocean Region.

PDC Global is a global leader in the innovation of life-saving disaster management science, early warning technology and advanced analytics and the centre's free DisasterAWARE platform is a monitoring solution offering real-time alerting.

Advancing Disaster Risk Management: CDRI and IORA Explore Collaborative Efforts



The delegation from Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) led by Ms Alpana Saha, Director, Partnerships along with Mr Raj Vikram Singh, Senior Specialist, Disaster Risk Financing (DRF) & Mr Akash Mishra, Analyst DRF visited IORA Secretariat and had a courtesy call with Dr Salman Al Farisi, Secretary-General of IORA on 14th August 2024. They discussed future collaboration on DRM under the signed Memorandum of Understanding between CDRI and IORA. CDRI is a multi-stakeholder global partnership that aims to build resilience into infrastructure systems to ensure sustainable development.