How to make marine community-based management happen in Northern Mozambique: practical solutions from the field

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Locally-Managed Marine Areas (LMMAs) are a key tool to protect critical nearshore habitats, species, biodiversity and ecosystem functions as well as aid in the recovery and sustainability of fisheries, though LMMAs only work when they are well enforced and compliance is high. Globally, many marine protected areas are not managed and the real challenge is often related to the active engagement of all stakeholders and decision makers, both prior to the creation of LMMAs and afterwards. Stakeholders’ interests and awareness should be aligned to guarantee management interventions are based on a common understanding which will positively influence the effectiveness of LMMAs. Our Sea Our Life is a project implemented in Northern Mozambique that is testing such a decision-making process for further replication. This presentation will address examples of actions around LMMAs that a) increase community participation and interest in conservation; b) help to overcome the opportunity costs of conservation; c) reduce dependence on marine resources, and d) help to provide a sustainable form of income to support conservation activities. Our Sea Our Life aims to develop a manual from lessons and successes in the field to help expand the approach elsewhere in Mozambique and beyond.