

Transboundary Conservation and Regional Ocean Governance

SS001: Bridging borders, building resilience: Transboundary approaches to marine and coastal conservation in the WIO

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The Western Indian Ocean (WIO) region faces mounting pressures from climate change, human activities, and fragmented governance systems that threaten the sustainability of its shared marine ecosystems. In response, the Transboundary Marine and Coastal Conservation and Sustainable Management Project—jointly supported by the EU, BMUV, and GIZ Tanzania—aims to foster collaborative marine governance and biodiversity protection across the Kwale (Kenya) and Tanga–RUMAKI (Tanzania) seascapes. This session will showcase early lessons from the project's implementation, focusing on innovative co-management mechanisms, community engagement, and institutional coordination in transboundary marine conservation. Through a series of high-level panels, local voices, and interactive dialogue, the event will examine policy, ecological, and socio-economic aspects of cross-border marine protected area governance. The session will also explore pathways to scale up successful models and align them with national and regional marine spatial planning frameworks, contributing to the achievement of 30x30 targets under the Global Biodiversity Framework and the UN Ocean Decade. By convening scientists, policymakers, community leaders, and development partners, this side event aims to strengthen regional collaboration, foster inclusive conservation approaches, and build momentum for sustainable and equitable ocean governance in the WIO region.