

SS022: Voyage Through Science and Management: Celebrating 50 Years of Partnership at Sea with the EAF-Nansen Programme in the Western Indian Ocean Region

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The EAF-Nansen Programme celebrates 50 years of dedicated work in supporting resource assessment, capacity development and fisheries management in developing countries. Since its inception in 1975, and particularly in its recent phases, the Programme has played a key role in strengthening knowledge capacities, and institutional frameworks for sustainable fisheries management aligned with the ecosystem approach to fisheries across Africa, including the Western Indian Ocean (WIO) region which is home to unique and productive marine ecosystems that are vital for food security, livelihoods, and biodiversity. Yet, the region faces increasing pressures from overfishing, climate change, and habitat degradation. In this context, the EAF-Nansen Programme has supported countries and regional institutions through research surveys with the R/V Dr. Fridtjof Nansen, capacity development initiatives including studentships, policy and legal support, and the application of the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF). As WIOMSA continues to champion regional marine science and collaboration, the 2025 Symposium offers a timely and strategic platform to reflect on and share the results of the Programme's work in the WIO, celebrate 50 years of impactful collaboration, and discuss the way forward for science-based fisheries management in the region.