

Special Session Revised Programme and Abstract

A. Title of Special Session:

Tangible actions to tackle pollution.

B. Abstract:

Plastic pollution poses a mounting threat to marine biodiversity, human health, and coastal economies, particularly in developing regions. Despite global commitments such as SDG 14.1 and the ongoing Global Plastics Treaty negotiations, the gap between high-level ambition and on-the-ground action remains stark.

This interactive session dives into the heart of that challenge, spotlighting tangible, context-specific interventions that work. Focusing on the Western Indian Ocean region, we'll explore how communities, policymakers, and scientists are tackling pollution through scalable, inclusive, and data-driven approaches. From citizen science and informal sector inclusion to circular economy strategies and policy innovation, participants will hear directly from practitioners leading the charge.

Aligned with the Nairobi Convention's science-policy processes, this session will generate clear recommendations to inform COP 12 and support implementation of the plastics treaty. Whether you're working in research, local government, waste systems, or grassroots advocacy, this is your opportunity to engage, connect, and co-create solutions that are locally rooted and globally relevant. Let's move beyond the problem and into practical action, together.

C. Keywords:

Pollution, Waste Value Chain, Monitoring, Circular Economy, Community Action, Policy Recommendations, Capacity-building.

D. Programme:

Time	Session Segment	Lead
14:00	Welcome & Objectives Set the scene for the session's purpose, urgency, and expected outcomes	TBC
14:10	Lightning Talks: 8x Impact Interventions Fast-paced, expert-led presentations on scalable, inclusive solutions from across the WIO – from citizen science to policy breakthroughs and grassroots innovations	Speakers Panel
15:30	Short Break Grab a coffee and gear up for an interactive round	All
15:40	Panel Q&A Your chance to ask the experts: How do we scale these solutions? What's working? What still needs to shift?	Moderator TBC
16:00	Breakout Group Introduction Framing the activity: how do we localise the solutions and plug the gaps?	Session Facilitator TBC
16:05	Breakout Discussions: From Global Goals to Local Grit Small group conversations focused on applying ideas in real contexts – community, city, island, or coast	Group Leads & Notetakers
16:35	Short Break Quick leg stretch or brainstorm polish time	All
16:45	Group Feedback & Synthesis Each group shares key insights and 2–3 punchy, actionable recommendations	Facilitator TBC
17:15	Closing Reflections & Next Steps What did we learn? Where do we go next? And how can you stay involved?	TBC

E. Why You Should Attend:

- Get plugged into the latest thinking on plastic pollution solutions
- Hear directly from the people piloting game-changing approaches
- Shape tangible policy and programme recommendations to inform COP12 and the Global Plastics Treaty
- Connect with potential partners, funders, and co-conspirators for good
- Leave with tools, inspiration, and maybe even a new project