

Co-designing a regional LMMA Alliance in the Western Indian Ocean: a step toward a Pan-African coalition

LMMAAs have emerged as one of the most promising models of community-led conservation in the WIO, placing communities at the forefront. While the approach is widely recognized, its adoption remains uneven across the region.

In September 2024, Madagascar hosted the first WIO LMMA Forum, bringing together over 300 participants from nine countries. A key outcome was the collective agreement to establish a regional coalition to coordinate efforts, expand LMMA coverage, strengthen national networks, and amplify community voices in marine conservation.

While the Pacific model has guided initial efforts, the Alliance aims to support the adoption and adaptation of the LMMA philosophy in the WIO, building a shared regional vision rooted in local realities. It will serve as a hub for knowledge exchange, legal advocacy, sustainable financing, research, and storytelling. The Alliance will also work to increase the visibility and influence of LMMA practitioners in regional and global conservation spaces.

This session will present outcomes from national consultations, introduce the Alliance's proposed structure and workplan, and invite stakeholders to co-design its next steps. Particular attention will be paid to existing networks in the WIO and beyond to explore synergies. Ultimately, the Alliance aspires to evolve into a pan-African LMMA network.