

Connecting Innovation, Communities, and Climate Action: Building Shared Prosperity in the Western Indian Ocean

The Western Indian Ocean (WIO) stands at the forefront of climate change, ocean stewardship, and blue economy opportunities. Achieving the vision of “One Ocean, One Future” demands partnerships that connect people, policy, and science to deliver a triple win for nature, climate, and people. WorldFish’s contributions in the region illustrate how innovation and collaboration can drive this transformation.

The Asia-Africa BlueTech Superhighway (AABS) is strengthening aquaculture capacity and sustainable production systems in Kenya, Tanzania, and Mozambique, while fostering South-South learning and building the skills of early-career ocean professionals. Research on climate-resilient aquaculture and mariculture, including seaweed and tilapia, complements broader blue carbon strategies and supports livelihoods. Digital innovation is also reshaping fisheries governance. The Peskas system empowers communities with real-time fisheries data, and its AI-powered evolution, SmartCatch – winner of the AI for Planet Prize at the 2025 UN AI for Good Global Summit – is setting new standards for inclusive, data-driven decision-making. This keynote will highlight how science-policy partnerships and innovation can secure healthy people, a healthy planet, and shared prosperity for the WIO and beyond.

Keywords: Western Indian Ocean, shared prosperity, blue economy, data-driven decision-making, ocean stewardship, digital innovation, South-South collaboration