



SOUTH WEST INDIAN OCEAN TUNA FORUM (SWIOTUNA)

NEWSLETTER



For more information contact:

Interim Secretariat -South West Indian Ocean Tuna Forum (SWIOTUNA)

P.O Box 85148-80100

Bububu Estate, Hse No. D83; Off Mtogwe Road, Likoni.

Email – info@swiotuna.org /swiotuuna@gmail.com

VOL 1 OF 2021

PICTORIALS





Marine and biodiversity conservation in Africa, and indeed the SWIO region is facing a myriad of pressures and drivers, including over-harvesting of resources, large-scale agricultural development and expansion, unsustainable tourism, pollution, climate change and habitat degradation. SWIOTUNA looks at implementing its Strategic Action Plan and Advocacy Action Plan.

Scaling up of promising innovative conservation prototypes and solutions and implementation of effective policies and strategies is urgent. Funding for CSOs remains a challenge.

For CSOs to be more effective, more effort should be directed towards building the capacity of SWIOTUNA members on;

- i) Fundraising and resource mobilization to ensure sustainability of the civil society organizations and community led initiatives
- ii) Leadership and governance for improved management of Civil Society Organizations and other NSAs.
- iii) Shared lessons and knowledge management for uptake and adoption of best practices and technologies that are pro-poor
- iv) Upscaling of promising innovative community-based fisheries management prototypes and solutions for more impacts.



In this Issue

- Message from the Interim Secretariat
- Know SWIOTUNA Executive Board
- About SWIOTUNA
- SWIOTUNA 2020 Annual General Meeting
- SWIOTUNA **Policy Brief on Minimum Terms and Conditions (MTC)** for granting Fisheries Access Arrangements
- Benefits of Community Based Fisheries management system
- Know more about Tuna
- SWIOTUNA Media Relations
- Protecting marine mammals
- Ocean Pollution and Global warming
- Upcoming Events
- SWIOTUNA in a few years
- Pictorials

FOREWORD

Dear Reader,

Welcome to this Second Edition of South West Indian Ocean Tuna Forum (SWIOTUNA) Newsletter. A lot has happened over the years since our first edition. You will agree with me that the world has changed with the new normal brought about the COVID 19 Pandemic. The year 2020 was the most difficult one. To most of people, the world was literally upside down. The world economy was almost brought down to its knees. The coastal communities and marine based sectors including fishing, small-scale fisheries value addition and community-based conservation initiatives were most affected by the pandemic. Local coastal communities lost their vital source of livelihood.

We thank God for the new year 2021, and it is our hope that our economies, livelihood and social life is going to bounce back rapidly albeit in a big way. We are optimistic that in the coming days we are going to experience and implement post-COVID recovery programmes with the support of our development partners and other stakeholders.

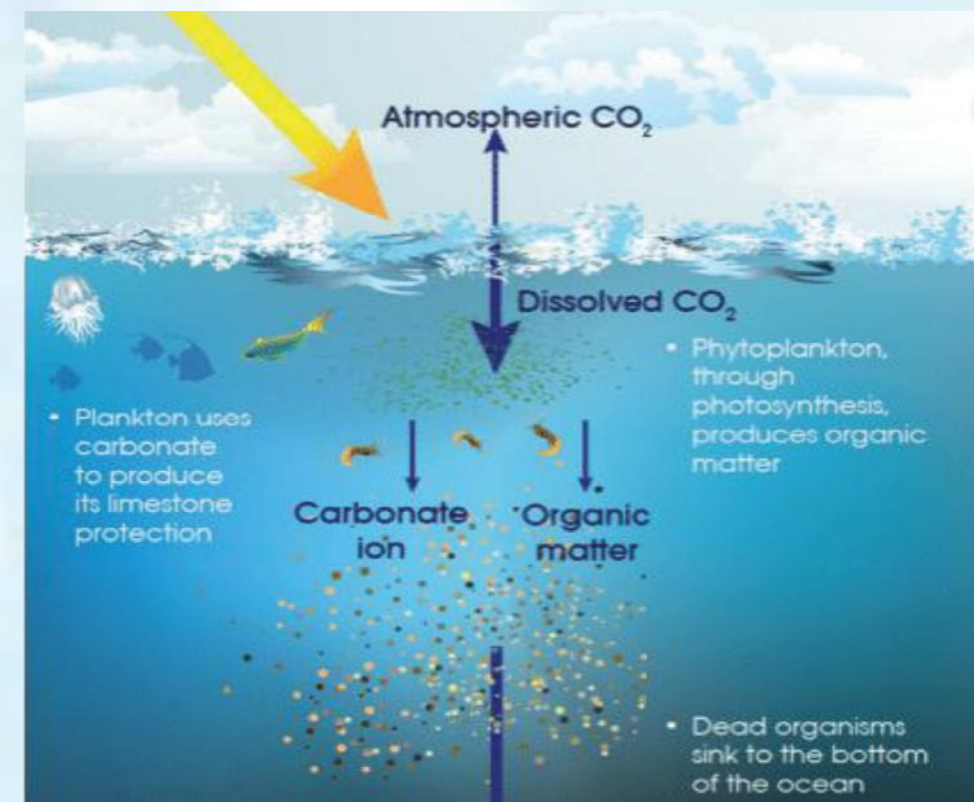
In this issue we will be able to learn more about SWIOTUNA and share experiences of their achievements over the past years. SWIOTUNA has continued to strengthen the voice and build the capacity of coastal communities, relevant civil society organizations and non-state actors to advocate for improved governance of marine resources while putting their interest at heart. SWIOTUNA members and partners are involved in the implementation of on-the-ground community based coastal and marine conservation initiatives in priority places. The media have immense power to bring about improved policy reforms and practice. The importance and the role of the media in conservation and management of coastal and marine resources is acknowledged in this newsletter. The SWIO region is one of the most pristine and biodiversity hotspot in the world besides providing an array of ecosystem services. Efforts towards the conservation and protection of marine mammals in the region are highlighted. However, the SWIO region like any other parts of the world has not been spared the negative impacts of climate change. Tuna is one of the most lucrative and highly priced seafood commodity traded globally. In this issue, your understanding and knowledge about tuna will be broadened. Effective and appropriate are enablers of a thriving and sustainable ocean economy. SWIOTUNA has been involved in a range of policy processes at national and global level. This aspect has also been highlighted here in this newsletter.

I now invite you to sit down, relax and enjoy reading this 2nd Edition of the SWIOTUNA Newsletter and do not hesitate to give us your feedback.

Thank you.

Doreen Simiyu

The Interim SWIOTUNA Coordinator.



Phytoplankton such as algae, for instance, transform dissolved carbon dioxide into organic carbon, which then forms part of the food chain. Gradually some of this sink to the sea bottom where it is buried in sediment. Without the biological carbon pump that this entails concentrations of carbon in the atmosphere today would be about 50% higher, according to estimates cited in the report.

Upcoming Events, meetings and News:

- SWIOTUNA Partners with WWF for a multi-year NORAD funding proposal for the SWIO Marine Programme 2021- 2025. The proposal was submitted to NORAD via WWF Norway in August 2020. We are optimistic that we will secure the funding.
- Indian Ocean Tuna Commission Technical Committee on Allocation Criteria (TCAC) will take place on the 23 - 15th of March 2021. SWIOTUNA members should get in touch with their respective fisheries ministries and have a positive engagement with the national delegates.
- The African Union conducted continental awareness workshops for the African Blue Economy Strategy on the 29th October 2020. SWIOTUNA members should access the strategy online and reach out to their countries to explore opportunities for engagement in the implementation.

“Whale and dolphins rely on sound for communication, mating, foraging, and migration. Addition of loud noises from ships, sonar, drilling rigs, and other human sources can distort messages sent by marine mammals.

Acoustic noise pollution prevents these mammals from detecting approaching ships or fishing nets, adding to the risk of being killed. By and large, loss of habitat is the biggest threat to their livelihoods. Habitat loss can occur as the result of pollution, changes in ecosystems, ship traffic, and a number of other human-related problems. By-catch leads to their deaths,” he shares.



Halting overfishing and the plastic pollution of the oceans could help tackle the climate emergency by improving the degraded state of the world’s biggest carbon sink, a report has found.

The oceans absorb both the excess heat generated by our greenhouse gas emissions, and absorb carbon dioxide itself, helping to reduce the impacts of climate chaos. But we are rapidly reaching the limits of the oceans’ absorptive capacity as our pillage of marine life is disrupting vital ecosystems and the natural carbon cycle.

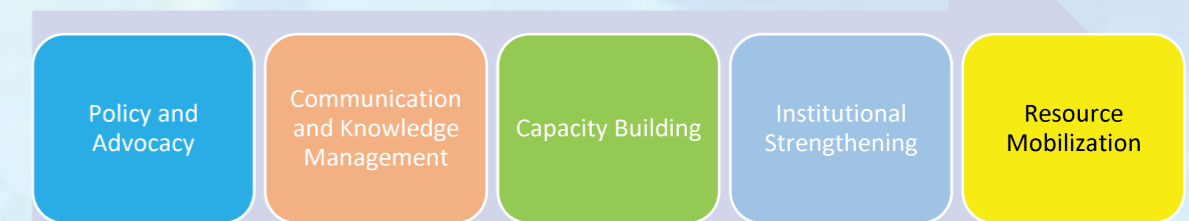
Creating ocean sanctuaries and forging a new treaty to protect the oceans, with a target of safeguarding at least 30% of the oceans by 2030, could restore many areas to health and combat global heating, according to the report entitled Hot Water: the climate crisis and the urgent need for ocean protection, published by Greenpeace International.

ABOUT SWIOTUNA

South West Indian Ocean Tuna Forum (SWIOTUNA) came into being in 2010 through a resolution of a regional meeting of civil society and private sector involved in fisheries and marine resources conservation and management.

SWIOTUNA was registered in May 2019 as a regional Not for Profit Organization under the laws of the Republic of Kenya with its Headquarters currently based in Nairobi. The forum provides a capacity building opportunity to the CSOs and other Non-State Actors (NSA) working on marine and fisheries related issues to advocate for sustainable use, development and management of marine fisheries in the SWIO range states with a view to ensuring that the respective countries and local communities derive more socio-economic benefits from their fisheries resources.

SWIOTUNA members have played a key role in influencing fisheries policies and tuna strategies at national level via respective national CSO alliances including the Tuna Fisheries Alliance of Kenya (TUFAC), Tanzania Tuna Alliance (TUNA) and FOSCAMC(Mozambique).



The SWIOTUNA 2018-2022 strategy

Our Strategic Objectives



1. Policy and Advocacy and lobbying



2. Capacity Building and training



3. Communication and Knowledge Management



4. Institutional Strengthening

PROGRAMMES AND ENGAGEMENTS

SWIOTUNA undertakes its' work under these three thematic programme areas and under this program we have specific projects.



management

1. Capacity building and Networking
2. Organizational/ Network development and knowledge
3. Policy advocacy and lobbying

Ongoing Projects



Empowering Civil Society organizations Non-state Actors in sustaining advocacy and policy reforms for improved marine fisheries governance and development in the South Western Indian (SWIO) Region. The project is funded by WWF-Mozambique for a period of 1st May to 30th November 2019.

Key Interventions:

- Training SWIOTUNA members on fisheries access arrangement.
- Developing SWIOTUNA policy brief on Minimum Terms and Conditions (MTC)
- Developing SWIOTUNA success story booklet.
- SWIOTUNA members' annual general meeting.



Improving Civil Society competence and effectiveness for collective engagement in Ocean resource governance in the South West Indian Ocean (SWIO)/ Northern Mozambique Channel Initiative (NMCi) region.

Key Interventions:

- Outreach meetings to Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Mozambique, Comoros and Madagascar to self-organize for collective action and join SWIOTUNA
- Develop SWIOTUNA website
- Support representation and participation of SWIOTUNA members in a national or regional process relevant to marine governance



Towards Establishment of a regional multi stakeholder forum for integrated ocean management and marine spatial planning in the Northern Mozambique Channel.

Key interventions were to:

- Review SWIOTUNA capacity assessment report and develop an improvement plan for implementation 2019+.
- Lessons and experience sharing with partner organizations in Comoros, Madagascar and Mozambique with regards to promoting Integrated Ocean Management (IOM) and Marine Spatial Planning (MSP).
- Support SWIOTUNA members to attend the sustainable blue economy conference held on 26th to 28th November 2018 in Nairobi, Kenya.
- Hold a meeting for SWIOTUNA executive committee.



SWIO - A BIODIVERSITY HOSTPOT

The SWIO region is a pristine biodiversity hotspot supporting diverse marine life. Among the attractions to the Kenyan coast, especially Watamu is the humpback whales, a species of animals that travel from as far as Antarctica, covering over 4,000km to mate and calve in the warm Indian Ocean waters.

Other species that enjoy these waters are the minke whale, Bryde's whale, the toothed

sperm whales, the killer whale, the false killer whale, the melon headed whales and most recently the blue whale.

Besides whales, the Kenyan coast is also the abode of dolphins. More details on the dolphins indicate that five species of dolphins have been sighted within Kenya's marine waters: the common Dolphine, Indo-Pacific bottlenose, Indo-Pacific humpback, spinner, and the spotted dolphins.

Three other species, the striped dolphin, Fraser's dolphin, and Risso's dolphin are also reported to visit.

These two animals work well together, according to Marine Scientist at Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute (KMFRI), Dr Jacqueline Uku.

"Studies into social behaviors of whales and dolphins revealed they have developed sophisticated social behaviour amongst themselves including complex alliance relationships, social transfer of hunting techniques (teaching how to hunt and using tools), cooperative hunting; "talking" to each other and using "name" recognition.

They also exhibit interspecific cooperation with humans and other species and alloparenting— looking after youngsters that aren't their own, and social play," she explains.

However, they both face natural and human induced threats such predation by large sharks and killer whales.

"Human-induced threats include entanglement in fishing gear, ship strikes, habitat degradation, oil and gas development, and climate change.

Whales are also affected greatly by ocean noise from ships," adds Dr Uku.

KMFRI, through the platform of opportunity for marine mammal sightings provided by RV Mtafiti, a research boat, has facilitated information on occurrence and distribution patterns.

It is also part of the Kenya Marine Mammal Network, a collaborative group that identifies marine mammal hotspots to increase protection.

Michael Mwangombe, project coordinator, Kenya Marine Mammal Research and Conservation, says these mammals also experience acoustic pollution, habitat loss and by-catch (unintentional catch).

Outsider groups find it difficult to voice opinions in the media and even when they do, official sources are contacted to balance these stories to ensure objectivity. These, often resource-poor groups, are compelled to use the media as a means of gaining recognition as trusted policy actors. However, due to the media's reliance on established sources they may need to resort to different methods to capture media attention - which may cause distractions to their legitimacy, as the news may focus on a group's event and not its politics.

Media stereotypes of policies, individuals or groups can influence their respective abilities to determine policy outcomes. Furthermore, even if certain policies turn out to be successful, they may still be subjected to unnecessary reform, if their legitimacy has already been undermined in the media by the creation of negative stereotypes. Furthermore, it is often difficult for citizen campaigners to reframe official policy frames once they have been adopted by the media. Media coverage actually has limited consequences for actual policy decisions even when public agenda and political discussions are affected by the media.

The media is important for understanding the political agenda and the framing of decisions about special or sensational issues, but normal politics and the broader policy priorities or governmental issues are largely unaffected. Media influence is strongest with sensational issues, and weakest in governmental issues, which are predominantly policy-driven. Likewise, when a policy issue is nonrecurring in terms of media coverage (a sensational issue), media power to influence public opinion (but not necessarily policy outcomes) is greater than with recurring policy coverage (which are more synonymous with governmental issues).

In the past it was believed that the media's influence on policy occurred in a straightforward fashion, with journalists clearly separated from the governing processes. Media investigations (initiated by popular public sentiment) prompt widespread changes in public opinion, citizens then organize and collectively pressure the government, which capitulates to popular pressure and makes the appropriate public policy reforms. This simple linear model has recently been described as the 'Mobilization Model' - while in the past it has been referred to as a 'Popular Mobilization' or 'Public Advocacy'. This model assumes a strong democratic role for citizens in policymaking processes, a role which has been disputed by a number of political scientists who suggest that special interest groups and other political elites dominate the policymaking processes, not the

public.



Some of the beach users, including fishermen, protest over the grabbing of landing sites that has rendered them jobless in Mombasa, Kenya (photo by Laban Wallogaa, Nation Media Group, 18th April 2019)

SWIOTUNA Hold 2020 Annual General Meeting in Mombasa, Kenya

The South West Indian Ocean Civil Society Tuna Forum (SWIOTUNA) established in 2010 as a regional umbrella CSO organization was formally registered as a legal entity by the Kenya Government in May 2019. The forum provides a capacity building opportunity to the CSOs and other Non-State Actors (NSA) working on marine and fisheries related issues to advocate for sustainable use, development and management of marine fisheries in the SWIO range states while taking into consideration the interests of the coastal communities as well as states.

Since its inception, SWIOTUNA has embraced good governance and adhered to its institutional mandates as well as the constitution. One of the essential requirements as provided for in the governance structures and the constitution is for SWIOTUNA to convene Annual General Meetings for all the members. The AGM are convened in different countries on rotational with the support of National Chapters. Last year for instance the AGM was held in Dar Es Salaam in the United Republic of Tanzania. This year's AGM was held on the 2nd of December 2020 at the English Point Marina Hotel, Mombasa, Kenya. The AGM was organized by the Tuna Fisheries Alliance of Kenya (TUFAK) with the financial support of WWF. The AGM which was held back-to-back with the SWIOTUNA training session on sustainable blue economy brought together a total of 26 participants from Tanzania (TUNA Alliance), Kenya (Tuna Fisheries Alliance of Kenya - TUFAK), FOSCAMC (Mozambique) and Comoros. Participants from Madagascar, Seychelles, Mauritius and South Africa couldn't make it due to COVID related travel restrictions. Some however from South Africa and Madagascar managed to attend briefly via zoom though technology became a challenge at some point.



Edward Kimakwa leading the 2020 SWIOTUNA AGM

The meeting was formally opened by Edward Kimakwa the Regional Fisheries Programme Manager for the WWF SWIO programme. In his opening remarks, Mr. Kimakwa thanked all the members of their commitment to the SWIOTUNA objectives and aspirations. He underscored the importance of a collective approach to addressing the issues affecting sustainable use, development and management of shared marine fisheries resources in the SWIO. Over the years, SWIOTUNA has continued to champion the interest of coastal communities and those of the SWIO range states in different national and regional forums. Further he said that SWIOTUNA has now been recognized and continue to engage in regional policy processes, and gave an example of the African Union where they participated in the development of the Policy Framework and Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa as well as participation on the UNEP-Nairobi Convention in developing the WIO marine governance strategy.

At the national level, various CSO chapters including TUFAK-Kenya, TUNA-Tanzania, FOSCAMC-Mozambique, CNPE-Madagascar, Apostles of the Sea in Seychelles continue to promote and champion the interests of local communities, engagement in relevant fisheries/ marine policy reforms and on-ground community based coastal/marine conservation initiatives.

The SWIOTUNA Secretariat led by Joyce Watiri on behalf of the Interim Coordinator shared the following agenda items for the meeting which was adopted by the members.

1. Opening of the Meeting and organizational matters

The Blue Economy

2. Objectives and purpose of the meeting
3. Confirmation of minutes and matters arising for the previous Annual General Meeting that was held on the 29th of August 2019 At White Sands Hotel, Dar-Es – Salaam, Tanzania
4. Report from the SWIOTUNA Secretariat
5. Presentation of SWIOTUNA policy documents
 - a. SWIOTUNA administrative and management policies (Human resource, Finance policy, procurement policy, travel and Perdiem policy)
 - b. Strategic plan
 - c. Advocacy strategy
6. Sharing/update from members on their marine and fisheries related work
7. SWIOTUNA communication and visibility

The Chair for SWIOTUNA Mr. Becha was not able to attend the meeting physically. The meeting was informed that the Vice Chair, Blue Ventures from Madagascar couldn't make it for the meeting either. Members unanimously appointed Edward Kimakwa of WWF to Chair the meeting. Minutes for the previous AGM meeting held in 2020 in Dar Es Salaam were confirmed ([Full report of the AGM meeting in Dar Es Salaam in 2020 can be accessed from the SWIOTUNA Secretariat](#)).

Joyce Watiri gave the report of the SWIOTUNA Secretariat. The report highlighted the activities implemented by SWIOTUNA since the last AGM in Tanzania. Such activities among others included development of SWIOTUNA Policy documents, participation in relevant regional meetings, development of communication and visibility products as well as fundraising. The meeting was informed of the outcome of the SWIOTUNA Executive Committee meeting which was held on the 30th of December 2020 in Nairobi. The SWIOTUNA Secretariat reported on the progress of development of SWIOTUNA Policy documents including the strategic plan, advocacy strategy, Human and Administrative policies (Human resource, Finance policy, procurement policy, travel and Perdiem policy).

The meeting noted the good progress made by the SWIOTUNA Secretariat with the development of policy and strategic documents. The documents will enhance good governance, administrative procedures, procurement and financial management. It was recommended that the documents once completed should be shared with the members for input and if necessary adoption virtually so that they can be put to use as soon as possible. It was noted that currently SWIOTUNA uses TUFAC financial, administrative and procurement procedures including travel policy.

On communication and visibility, the SWIOTUNA informed the meeting that they developed the website, however, they are experiencing challenge with the content. The Secretariat urged members to regularly provide content based on the activities that they implement in their respective countries and places. Members were given an opportunity to share interventions that they implemented and or engaged in since the last AGM. Priority was given to Annual Chapters who did the presentations on behalf of their members. The meeting appreciated the work being done by members in conserving and securing nature for the benefits of coastal communities and the environment (full report of the AGM can be accessed from the SWIOTUNA Secretariat).



One of the SWIOTUNA members making his contribution

The *first ever International Sustainable Blue Economy Conference* that was held in Nairobi in November 2018 brought together over 11,000 participants. Conservation organizations led by WWF International helped set the pace and agenda of the conference by engaging the media using different channels. The focus of the conference was to harnesses the potential of oceans, seas, lakes and rivers to improve the lives of people, particularly women, youth and Indigenous peoples in developing states and to leverage the latest innovations to

promote all-inclusive sustainable blue economy.



Edward Kimakwa Regional Fisheries Programme Manager live on Kenya Television Network (KTN) talking about sustainable blue economy on the sides of the International Blue Economy Conference held in Nairobi in

The media acts as a powerful political actor, with its interests strongly tied to the status quo and that of other corporate policy actors, instead of the general public. Journalists and editors shape policy agendas by actively filtering issues, so that reporting conforms to their dominant news values - selecting what issues are covered and which sources are used. This tends to confine policy debate to the strict boundaries of current accepted wisdoms set by the major political parties or institutional policymakers.

The conservative nature of these perceptual screens is strengthened by the media's need for concision, which is especially dominant on television, with its appetite for sound bite politics. Creation of credible policy frameworks influence journalists in much the same way, leading them to rely on institutional actors (encountered on daily beats) who support their perceptions of a successful policy framework.

The policies, on which the media focuses can, and often does, play an important role in determining the focal issues for policymakers. The media are active participants in the policymaking process and the ability to stimulate change or maintain the status quo depends on their choice of subject or policy issue and how they frame it. Active (investigative) reporting attempts to shape policy outcomes, but this does not necessarily mean that it always represents the most successful approach for gaining policy changes. In fact, sometimes passive (straight) reporting can have a greater influence on policy choices. When this occurs, media independence is largely bypassed, as the news generated depends solely on the information released (as public relations material) from legitimate news sources. The media may also influence policy outcomes through their ability to exclude certain policy options from the media, which sets the boundaries for legitimate public debate.

Local communities play an important role in utilizing and managing coastal and marine resources and ecosystems including fisheries, species of special importance, coral reefs and mangroves. The local communities depend on these resources and ecosystems for their livelihood, food and nutritional security and income. Since immemorial coastal communities have depended on fishing as a source of their livelihood. As years went by, fisheries resources and stocks started dwindling. With the turn of the 19th Century, local fishing communities started getting concerned about their mainstay and source of livelihood. They started organizing themselves in some groups and associations with the support of relevant governments agencies and development partners in their respective countries. There are different models of collaborative fisheries management in the SWIO region. In Kenya and Tanzania, they established what we call Beach Management Units (BMUs), in Madagascar they are referred to as Locally Managed Marine Areas (LMMA) while in Mozambique they formed Community fisheries council (CCPs).

These community-based fisheries management and development approaches have helped create awareness on the importance of responsible fishing. Illegal fishing such as use of dynamite fishing in Tanzania and use of beach seine nets in Kenya has been reduced significantly. Fishers have transitioned to the use of environmentally friend gears. Fish stocks have now improved in the no take zones and locally managed areas. Fishers are now fetching better prices for

their catch. Fisherfolk have also organized themselves in village savings and credit associations.

In Kenya and Tanzania, they are known as Village/Community Banking Associations (VICOBA). Fisherfolk can now easily access credit to improve their fisheries business. The voice of fisherfolk has also increased. They have been involved in different fisheries policy and reform process where their views are heard. For instance, they contributed to development of national tuna strategies in Mozambique, Tanzania, Madagascar and Kenya. They have also influenced the development of fisheries programmes supported by development partners. The fisherfolk are also involved in small-scale value addition and processing where they have helped improve the quality and competitiveness of their fish and fisheries products on the local, regional and export markets.

These community based fisheries are supported by the respective governments through relevant fisheries management authorities. Some of these initiatives have been supported by the World Bank (namely SWIOFISH project in Madagascar, Mozambique and Tanzania; Kenya Coastal Development Project - KCDP in Kenya); WWF offices in Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique and Madagascar; Blue Ventures, Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), CORDIO-East Africa, COMRED; development partners namely NORAD, Danida, SIDA and UKAID, USAID, IFAD and FAO.



A woman weighing octopus catch in Songosongo Tanzania (photo credit: Elia Sabula, WWF Tanzania). Octopus closures have taken traction in the Coastal East Africa including Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique

TUNA: the fish species to watch!

Tuna, (genus Thunnus), also called tunny, any of seven species of oceanic fishes, some very large, that constitute the genus Thunnus and are of great commercial value as food. They are related to mackerels and are placed with them in the family Scombridae (order Perciformes). Tunas vary considerably, both within and among species.

Tunas are elongated, robust, and streamlined fishes; they have a rounded body that tapers to a slender tail base and a forked or crescent-shaped tail. In colour, tunas are generally dark above and silvery below, often with an iridescent shine. They have a conspicuous keel on either side of the tail base, a row of small finlets behind dorsal and anal fins, and a corselet of enlarged scales in the shoulder region. Another notable feature is a well-developed network of blood vessels below the skin that acts as a temperature-regulating device associated with long-term, slow swimming. Because of this vascular system, tunas are unique among fishes in their ability to maintain the temperature of their bodies above that of the surrounding water, often between 5 and 12 °C (9 and 21.7 °F) above ambient water temperature. Some muscles may even be up to 21 °C (almost 39 °F) higher than the surrounding water.

The seven species of tunas in the genus Thunnus are the northern bluefin tuna (*T. thynnus*), albacore (*T. alalunga*), yellowfin tuna (*T. albacares*), southern bluefin tuna (*T. thynnus maccoyii*), bigeye tuna (*T. obesus*), blackfin tuna (*T. atlanticus*), and longtail tuna (*T. tonggol*). These different species range from moderate to very large in size. The giant of the group is the northern bluefin tuna, which grows to a maximum length and weight of about 4.3 metres (14 feet) and 800 kg (1,800 pounds). The yellowfin tuna reaches a maximum weight of about 180 kg (397 pounds), and the albacore grows to about 36 kg (79 pounds).

The northern bluefin tuna characteristically has yellow finlets and is often marked with silvery spots or bars. It is important in sport and commercial fishing, with anglers rating it among the greatest trophies obtainable. Populations of northern bluefin tuna in the Atlantic Ocean have declined significantly since preindustrial times because of overfishing. As a result, many scientists and environmental organizations have called for a moratorium on the harvesting of this species. Such a ban, however, has yet to be implemented. The other commercially important species are the albacore, marked with a shining blue stripe on each side; the yellowfin, with yellow fins and a golden stripe on each side; and the bigeye, a robust fish with relatively large eyes.

Tunas migrate long distances over all the world's oceans and occupy tropical, temperate, and even some cooler waters. The only two species of relatively limited distribution are the blackfin tuna (western Atlantic) and the longtail tuna (Indo-Pacific region). Tunas feed on fishes, squid, shellfish, and a variety of planktonic organisms. They spawn in the open sea over very large areas. The canned meat of albacore and yellowfin tunas is one of the world's most popular seafoods.

Tuna is a popular food. More than one million tons of tuna are consumed annually in the United States and Japan, the world's two largest tuna markets. Tuna is the most popular fish in the American diet and is second only to shrimp as the most popular seafood. The average American eats more than three pounds of tuna every year. If you are a fish eater, there are good reasons to eat tuna. It is very healthy, with lots of protein and very little fat compared to other meats, and it is a good source of omega-3 fatty acids. (Vegetarian sources include some seed oils, purslane, algae, and nut oils.)

There are also good reasons not to eat tuna. Like many other ocean fish, it contains mercury, which is toxic to humans. For this reason, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration recommends limiting the amount you eat, especially if you are a pregnant woman. Fish eaters and vegetarians alike also recognize that decades of overfishing of tuna throughout the world has caused some tuna populations to collapse and has pushed others to the brink of collapse.

Finally, the methods used by large commercial fishing vessels to remove tuna from the oceans in species-threatening numbers also result in the killing of countless numbers of other kinds of marine animals – such as dolphins and birds – as bycatch. The best way to help ensure the recovery of tuna populations and to minimize the harm to other marine life caused by commercial tuna fishing is to avoid eating tuna altogether and to encourage others to do the same.

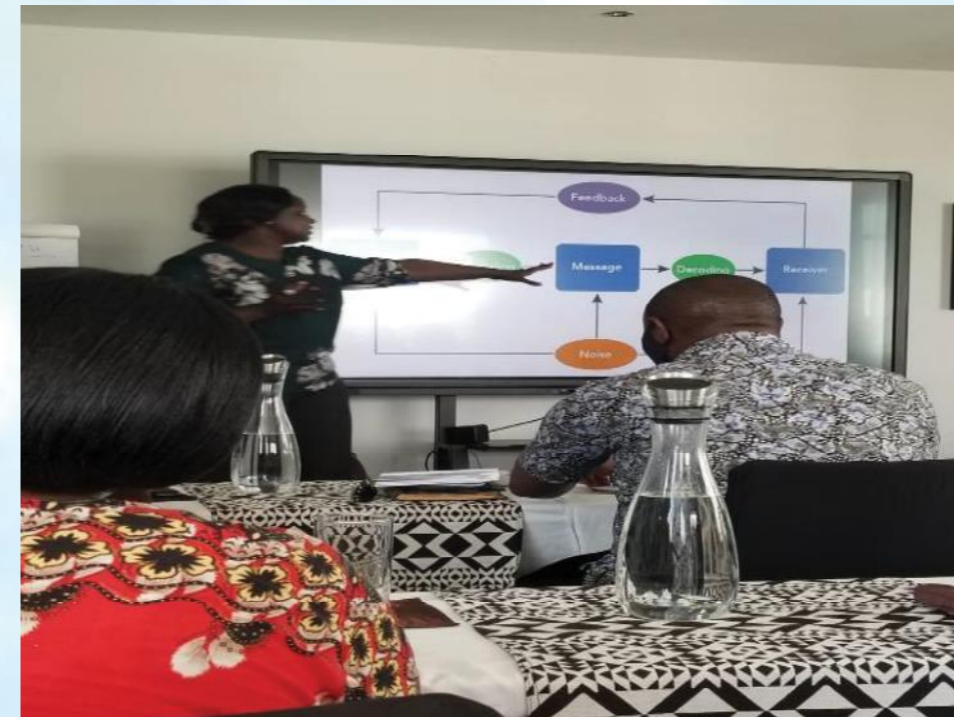
Know your Tuna

Bluefin. The bluefin is the largest tuna, growing to a length and weight of about 14 feet (4.3 m) and 1,800 pounds (800 kg). It is also the most expensive, owing to its popularity as a sushi delicacy; in Japan, a single fish can fetch more than \$60,000. The two main species of bluefin, the Southern and the Northern, are both severely overfished and exploited in all areas, especially the Atlantic. They are listed as critically endangered.

Albacore. Another large species, Albacore is a favorite source of canned tuna. Often marketed as white tuna, it has been called the “chicken of the sea” for the quality of its meat. Its popularity has led to a state of overfishing worldwide that is threatening populations in the Atlantic Ocean.

Skipjack. The relatively small skipjack, which grows to about 3 feet (90 cm) and 50 pounds (23 kg), is the most commonly consumed species of tuna. Although a few populations are stable, it is considered fully-fished to overfished in most areas.

evaluated. In reality, the policy process is more fluid, where policies are formed through the struggle of ideas of various advocacy coalitions.



Faith Cherono a media expert expounding on the role of the media in conservation during the SWIOTUNA training held in December 2020

The SWIOTUNA and affiliate members including the Tuna Fisheries Alliance of Kenya (TuFAK), the Tanzania Tuna Alliance (TUNA), FOSCAMC of Mozambique, CNPE of Madagascar and Apostles of the Sea in Seychelles just but to mention a few have been engaging with the media on several aspects related to sustainable management and development of coastal and marine resources. For instance, Beach Management Units (BMUs) in Mombasa on the 18th of April 2019 protested against the grabbing of fish landing sites in Mombasa county and other coastal areas of Kenya. This prompted the President of Republic of Kenya, H.E Uhuru Kenyatta to order the Ministry of Lands to revoke all the titles for the landing sites that were illegally grabbed. Not only the media helped to high light this issue, the BMU also engaged the media to ensure that this issue has been

followed up by the concerned state of officials holding them accountable. “When the President gave out the order, we attempted to make a follow-up but were informed that only five sites remain in Mombasa,” said Mercy Wasai the Chair of Bamburi Beach Management Unit (BMU)



Media exposure led to African governments to step up fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing

Kenya's commitment to a sustainable blue economy is deeply embedded in her development blueprint, Vision 2020. For instance, a sustainable blue economy is the 8th pillar of the 3rd Medium Term Plan (2018-2023) and the Big Four Agenda. Under the Commonwealth Blue Charter, Kenya is listed as the current champion of the sustainable blue economy strategy.

Edward Kimakwa of World Wide Fund (WWF) underscored the importance of a sustainable blue economy and its contribution to livelihood of coastal communities and national economies in the SWIO range states. He talked of how healthy oceans and coastal ecosystems underpin the wealth of the region and offer huge potential for sustainable development. The Western Indian Ocean (WIO) coastal and marine ecosystems total ocean assets is estimated at US\$ 333.3 Billion, with an estimated annual gross marine product of US\$ 20.8 Billion. The WIO economy can be equated to the 4th largest economy in the region. The sustainable economy concept is relatively new and to many Civil Society Organization it is not well understood.

Blue economy or blue growth to some people it means simply the use of the sea and resources therein for economic development where sustainable or not. According to WWF, a sustainable blue economy is a marine based economy that provides social and economic benefits for current and future generations that seeks to restore protect and maintain the diversity, productivity, resilience, core functions, and intrinsic values of marine ecosystems which is based on clean technologies, renewable energy, and circular material flows to secure economic and social stability over time, while keeping within the limits of one planet.

Edward further talked about WWF's interventions in the SWIO region in promoting sustainable blue economy. There is need for a comprehensive legal and policy framework in the SWIO range states to guide the development of the ocean economy towards sustainable blue growth. Financing institutions need to redirect their investments and consider environmental credentials that enhance sustainable blue economy in their lending services. Identifying best practices and scaling on-the-ground sustainable blue economy prototypes presents an excellent opportunity for shared lessons and uptake of innovations in the blue economy space. Other topics that were discussed during the training include marine spatial planning and nature-based solutions.

Yellowfin. The second most commonly fished tuna, the yellowfin is a large, fast-swimming fish. The species is considered overfished worldwide. Because of the steadily decreasing size of the fishes being caught, there are fears that not enough yellowfin are reaching reproductive age, which could lead to the collapse of their populations.

Bigeye. Similar in size and appearance to the yellowfin, the bigeye is a popular source of sushi and sashimi. This species is considered to be fully exploited or overfished in every ocean of the world.

Know where your tuna has been

Tuna are found in all of the world's oceans, but their status in different oceans can vary widely. Most tuna species are

in the poorest shape in the North Atlantic and the South Atlantic, including the Mediterranean Sea. Years of overfishing for American and European markets have led to severe reductions in the populations of bluefin, albacore, and yellowfin tuna. Although the Atlantic fishery is highly regulated, illegal fishing off coastal waters continues, especially near Africa, where developing countries cannot afford the patrols necessary to enforce the law. Most tuna populations in the Pacific Ocean and the Indian Ocean are in slightly better shape, especially in the case of albacore. But even in the world's largest oceans, tuna populations are in decline, and some are in danger of collapsing under the continued weight of large-scale commercial fishing.

Tuna consumers should avoid eating fish that were caught in the Atlantic or the Mediterranean.

Know how your tuna was caught

The vast majority of fished tuna is caught by large commercial fishing vessels using one of two methods: long-line fishing and purse seining. Both methods produce bycatch in large numbers. Other methods have significantly smaller environmental impact but are responsible for only a tiny fraction of the fish available to consumers in the United States and Europe.

Overfishing can impact entire ecosystems, it can also change the size of fish remaining, as well as how they reproduce and the speed at which they mature. When too many fish are taken out of the ocean it creates an imbalance that can erode the food web and lead to a loss of other important marine life including vulnerable species like sea turtles and corals.

Demand for fish continues to increase around the world, and that means more businesses and jobs are dependent on dwindling stocks. Fish ranks as one of the most highly traded food commodities and fuels \$ 362 billion global industry. Millions of people in largely developing, coastal communities depend on the fishing industry for their livelihood and half the world's population relies on fish as a major source of protein. When fish disappear, so do jobs and coastal economies. High demand for seafood continues to drive over-exploitation and environmental degradation, exacerbating this circular problem.



Engaging with media

SWIOTUNA has embraced the role of the media in the policy arena in the SWIO region while focusing on the main roles and responsibilities for SWIOTUNA is to bring about policy reforms and improved governance of marine resources in the SWIO region.

Policymaking is a political process which is affected by various social and economic factors and the media plays an integral role in shaping the social context in which policies are developed. Through the media, citizens learn how government policies will affect them, and governments gain feedback on their policies and programs. The media acts as the primary channel between those who want to influence policy and policymakers controlling the scope of political discourse and regulating the flow of information. Policymaking follows an orderly sequence where problems are identified, solutions devised, policies adopted, implemented and lastly



Empowering Civil Society Organization on sustainable blue economy matters in the South West Indian Ocean region.

With the pressure mounting on land-based resources, the ocean economy is receiving more attention and with this shifts the need to use oceans and water resources more sustainably has become paramount. The South West Indian Ocean Tuna Forum (SWIOTUNA) with the support of WWF organized a regional training workshop for SWIOTUNA members on the 3rd - 4th of December 2020 at English Point Marina Hotel in Mombasa, Kenya. The main objective of the training was to broaden the understand and enhance knowledge with a view to building the capacity for its members to play a proactive role in promoting sustainable blue economy agenda in the South West Indian Ocean (SWIO) region. The training more specifically focused on Marine Spatial Planning, Integrated ocean management and on-ground prototypes on nature-based solutions. The participants were also trained on the role of the media in bringing about policy reforms for improved ocean governance and enabler for sustainable blue economy to thrive. The workshop brought together a total of 28 participants from civil society, non-state actors, and Community Based Organizations drawn from Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique and Comoros. Due to Covid19 travel restrictions, participants from Mauritius, Seychelles and South Africa were not able to travel. However, some of them were able to participate virtually via zoom.

Dr. James Kairo of the Kenya Marine Fisheries Research Institute (KMFRI) underscored the role of science, technology, and innovations in sustainable blue growth. Whereby he pointed out Investment in a sustainable blue economy that can accelerate achievements of sustainable development goals and as well as the Paris Agreement. He brought to the fore that, the narrative that the ocean is too big to fail is being replaced by the ocean is too big to ignore. He went ahead to discuss the meaning of a sustainable blue economy, elements of a sustainable blue economy and issues/challenges related to the sustainable blue economy. He added by saying, the ocean covers 70 percent of the earth's surface and produces more than 50 percent of the oxygen we breathe as well as absorbing more than 80% of the heat. The ocean asset base is globally estimated to be over \$24 trillion and is expected to double by 2050. Ocean-based industries, such as fisheries and tourism, are critical providers of employment and income to billions of people around the world.



Dr. James Kairo talking to SWIOTUNA members about sustainable blue economy and Nature-Based Solutions during the training in December 2020