



Feedback Report:
**Integrated Ocean
Management Workshop**
27 July 2022

Background

The Ocean Innovation Africa July Stakeholder workshop series was held in honour of African Day of Oceans and Seas. The intention of the workshops was to facilitate action on some of the challenges and solutions raised during discussions at the annual Ocean Innovation Africa summit.

The “Integrated Ocean Management” workshop looked at key challenges and opportunities for integrated ocean management in Africa.

This report is a summary of points raised during that discussion and as such statements do not necessarily reflect consensus from the workshop participants, nor the viewpoint of Ocean Innovation Africa.

Participants

- Chair: **Pierre Failler** (University of Portsmouth, UNESCO)
- Co-Chair: **Emma Lefebvre** (Sciencias Po)
- **Jeromine K Fanjanirina** (Common Market for Eastern & Southern Africa - COMESA)
- **Fabrice Mesal** (Mercator Copernicus Marine Services)
- **Ibukun Adewumi** (Global Ocean Accounts Partnership - GOAP)
- **Prof Ilunga Masengo** (University of South Africa - UNISA)
- **Moses Ramakulukusha** (SA Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment - DFFE)
- **Ken Findlay** (Cape Peninsula University of Technology - CPUT)
- **Danai Tembo** (Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University - NMMU)
- **Naya Sena** (University of Tokyo)
- **Lawrence Dogli** (Gulf of Guinea Maritime Institute)
- **Jaco Stemmet** (Fugro Africa)

Data

Democratisation of data

Access to ocean knowledge and marine data is needed to be able to assess impact and predict the potential of proposed solutions to ocean management challenges. Data needs to be transformed into indicators and indicators to reports to inform evidence-based decision making. The process should be inclusive of all stakeholders, including civil society, and incorporate economic, environmental, and social indicators.

- The IOC-UNESCO Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) newly released technical guide on “Implementing Operational Ocean Monitoring and Forecasting Systems” is a best practice and technical guide on ocean modelling that aims to democratise oceanographic knowledge and expertise around the world.

A lot of data gathered in Africa by foreign institutions is not available for use in the countries from which it comes. Parachute science – where externally funded groups come in and obtain data and academic output, leaving little legacy or capacity within those countries – is detrimental to evidence-based IOM. Policies should regulate ownership and sharing of data produced within national boundaries. For example, in South Africa any data generated from surveys within territorial waters (bathymetry, metocean, current etc) is owned by the South African government.

Efforts to inform ocean management need not focus on production of data. It is equally, if not more, important to ensure that available data is analysed and used efficiently. In the absence of high-resolution data, a lot of critical information for decision making could initially be determined from lower-resolution remote sensing data.

More data could also be made available through multisectoral collaboration. Oceanic data collected by navy, transport, fisheries, exploratory industries, tourism etc. and from different countries can be collated in order to provide single and open access to standardised, qualified data.

Gathering data from industry sources can be difficult. The process and purpose must be made clear to assure companies that the data will be put to good use and that sharing it will not put them at an economic disadvantage. Legal considerations over ownership can also complicate collaboration, in particular when sharing data between different countries.

- Geodata companies have access to clients with vast amounts of oceanic data and could approach them to share this on relevant platforms (i.e. replicate what Fugro is doing).

All data is produced according to an agenda, which can influence the information it conveys. When collating data from diverse sources the purpose and process by which the data was produced need to be transparent. Caution needs to be exercised to ensure that data is not omitted or manipulated to support a concealed agenda when entered into shared databases.

Data to Policy

A lot of the research being carried out isn't translated into IOM-supportive policy. IOM needs to be implemented by government to be of any use. There is a breakdown in communication between researchers and decision makers preventing effective transfer of information to policy.

Researchers need to communicate the importance and implications of research rather than the research itself. This requires capacity development (training of researchers or intermediaries in effective communication of science to decision makers), or funding, for post-research communication of output to enable outcomes.

Data to Policy (cont.)

Some compromise is needed, however, as not all experts are comfortable or adept working outside their field of specialty. While scientists need some understanding of policy development, policy makers also need some understanding of the significance of variance and uncertainty in scientific output. While scientists need to be clear on their level of confidence in advice given to decision makers, policies need to be reviewed and revised as new information and feedback on the impact of existing policies become available. Engagement between researchers and policy makers needs to be on a continual basis.

Effective engagement will need to be continuous, and could be facilitated by an intermediary. Despite being the driver of evidence-based governance, data is not an inherently attractive topic. Conveying the importance of data to IOM is critical to garnering support.

Opportunities for action

- Mercator is planning African Marine Week in 2024 aimed at policy and decision makers to involve them in challenges.
- Need to train ocean managers to approach policy and decision-makers effectively. Soft skills – communications, diplomacy.
- Data interpretation e.g. develop data viewer/dashboard based on what information policy makers want to extract.

Governance

Political Will and Integration

At present there is a lack of clear objectives in ocean governance for many African countries, with roles of the various management and stakeholder groups unclear. Without clear political will interventions will not have the necessary impact.

Political will needs to catch up with development goals. To know what information is needed for governance requires understanding of what is meant by ocean governance as a product.

Ocean management planning is often not well integrated into national development planning, and not well integrated between the different agencies involved, leading at times to overlapping mandates and conflict or duplication of efforts. This forms a barrier to collaboration between responsible departments, particularly in implementation of relevant legislation and coordination of ocean governance tools like IOM, MSP, MPA networks, and ocean accounts.

Where there is collaboration at national level can become stifled at regional level due to poor interaction between neighbouring countries. It is important to put in place collaborative mechanisms for transboundary management. One country alone cannot effectively manage blue economy (BE) activity.

The scale of ocean management is particularly important given the dynamic nature of oceans and transboundary issues. Governance at different spatial scales: continental, regional, national, provincial ecoregional, etc., makes sense for different issues.

Political Will and Integration (Cont.)

Lack of integration between system level and local ocean planning can result in the views and needs of local communities being neglected. In particular, many ocean projects in Africa are funded by external parties with vested interests, resulting in less than rigorous and transparent selection and planning of projects. Practical processes for inclusion of indigenous knowledge in IOM need to be improved in national and regional planning.

The scale of management and planning processes is highly dependent on the scale of funding being implemented, from small NGOs and local ocean governance projects to international organisations and transboundary initiatives. This, in turn, is tied to what is perceived as bankable by funders, and reduction of risk at scale.

The approaches of different stakeholder groups towards ocean governance can be very different. Harmonised governance processes must aim for synergy between the needs and activities of different stakeholders. IOM needs to take into consideration the entire value chain.

Opportunities for action

- There is need for some kind of ocean knowledge framework/platform for existing and new knowledge on ocean development. Capture the range of interests and knowledge from different sectors and different actors within them. Map, translate, and promote knowledge into practice. Transfer and upscale relevant knowledge/solutions across countries, regions, sectors rather than reinventing the wheel. For Example the Cities Initiative, to share solutions from cities around the world to the sea level rise challenge.

Definition of Blue Economy

The lack of coordination at regional level in ocean governance up until now is problematic. Countries have been developing IOM and BE strategies independently, resulting in conflicts when attempts are made to implement IOM at regional level. Many different definitions are used in reference to the BE concept, particularly regarding focus on social versus economic development. To differentiate from a traditional maritime economy a blue economy needs to link the different sectors involved and have sustainability and equity as central tenets, rather than just economic gains.

Ocean value metrics need to go beyond GDP to address sustainable development goals (SDGs). Tools like ocean accounting are critical here to design indicators that will be used to monitor progress and review plans. Defining the goals and beneficiaries of the BE is essential to developing appropriate metrics.

It is important to frame the concept broadly enough to incorporate the trade-off between specific benefits and system-level solutions, balancing development and transformation. A more holistic business case should cover true cost-benefit to stakeholders. Oversimplification of the problem leads to inadequate consideration of solutions with, at times, counterproductive outcomes.

Adaptive Management

Ocean governance is an adaptive process. Policy cycles are reviewed and incorporate new information continuously as well as evaluating the impact of existing interventions and adjusting as necessary.

The impact of the various users of ocean resources are extensive and multifaceted, resulting in complex management constraints as well complex responses to those constraints. It is important to take into consideration the social challenges that result in pressure on ocean systems and resources to ascertain what it is that management interventions are responding to.

Adaptive Management (cont.)

Governance processes have evolved in response to the particular challenges of given regions and will continue to do so as the dynamics of those challenges change over time, especially as new ocean industries are developed and expanded. Sharing lessons from interventions in other regions can assist in making adaptive management more proactive.

Sovereignty

Ownership of BE development and IOM are key issues. The majority of BE projects in Africa driven by external groups, which can in fact be detrimental to local development. Different international agencies at times end up competing to promote different BE agendas. External groups are more inclined to implement projects according to a template without due consideration of local context or community perspective. Repeated interventions of this nature without delivery of promised benefits can result in fatigue on the part of communities. The interest of local communities need to be carefully balanced with those of international organisations implementing BE projects in Africa.

Including stakeholders throughout the planning process gives them a sense of ownership. This generates trust in the process, aiding implementation. Scientists need to learn to communicate complex concepts in terms communities can understand to get their feedback, rather than coming to them with packaged solutions ready to implement.

It is important to take indigenous knowledge systems and the distinct African worldview into consideration in planning processes. The issues of human rights and justice are often the most ignored in IOM planning. Initiatives should be co-designed with impacted communities to address this and to incorporate indigenous knowledge into research and policy. As primary users of the resources in question communities should have an active role in management and resources. Skills and knowledge transfer are needed to ensure that communities are included as more than just consultants.

Thank you to our fantastic workshop participants for getting this discussion going!

