



RÉSILIENCE
DES ÉCOSYSTÈMES
CÔTIERS DU SUD-OUEST
DE L'OCÉAN INDIEN
(RECOS)

Projet CZZ 2264
COI/RECOS/CT/2021/001

TERMS OF REFERENCE

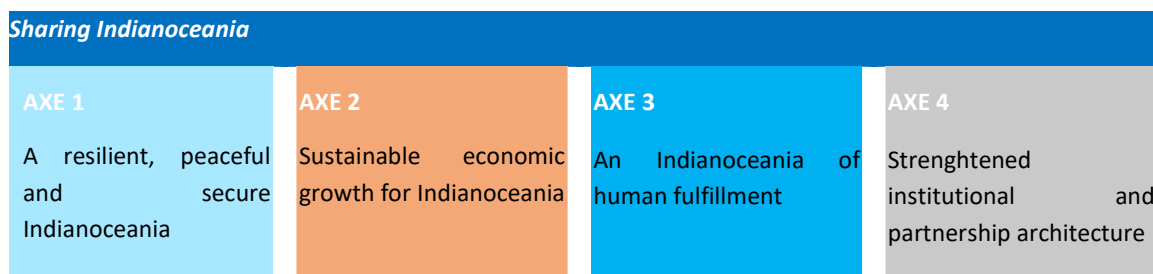
Recruitment of an Individual Consultant to Support the Structuring and Coordination of a Regional Marine and Coastal Education Network

1 CONTEXT

1.1 THE INDIAN OCEAN COMMISSION AND THE RECOS PROJECT

The Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) is an intergovernmental organisation that brings together five Member States: the Union of the Comoros, Réunion (under France), the Republic of Madagascar, the Republic of Mauritius, and the Republic of Seychelles.

As the only regional organisation in Africa composed exclusively of islands, it champions the specific interests of its Member States on both continental and international stages. With the active support of about ten international partners, the IOC gives form to regional solidarity around four strategic pillars¹ and through cooperation projects covering a wide range of sectors (see the figure below).



Co-funded by the French Development Agency (AFD) and the French Facility for Global Environment (FFEM), this project, titled “Resilience of Coastal Populations and Ecosystems in the South-West Indian Ocean” (RECOS), contributes to the IOC's diverse actions in favor of a sustainable and resilient environment.

The global objective of the project is to strengthen the resilience of coastal populations to the effects of climate change by restoring the services provided by coastal ecosystems. The specific objectives to achieve this are:

- To strengthen regional and national governance of coastal and marine ecosystems in the Indian Ocean;
- To implement innovative, diverse, and replicable restoration and sustainable use projects for coastal and marine ecosystems, supported by scientific working groups.

To achieve its goals, the RECOS project is organised around four components implemented through an integrated approach. These are illustrated in the figure below."

¹ “Sharing Indianocéanie”, 2023-2033 Strategic Development Plan of the Indian Ocean Commission, adopted by the 37th IOC Council of Ministers, Antananarivo (Madagascar), May 17, 2023. Available at: Strategic pillars | Indian Ocean Commission (commissionoceanindien.org)

COMPONENT 1
 Strengthening the monitoring and management of coastal ecosystems through the implementation and sharing of ICZM approaches in the Western Indian Ocean (WIO) region

- Implementation of pilot projects
- Call for projects promoting local actions for the restoration and management of coastal ecosystems
- Exchange of experiences programme on coastal ecosystem management
- Support to Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) governance at regional and national levels

COMPONENT 2
 Strengthening regional scientific cooperation on coastal ecosystem restoration, knowledge production and scientific monitoring of field projects

- Set up and manage the project scientific committee
- Strengthen regional scientific and technical cooperation on:
 - ▶ Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)
 - ▶ Ecosystem management
 - ▶ Coastline observation and monitoring
 - ▶ Environmental education in coastal areas
- Contribute to the capacity building of thematic experts in the IOC region

COMPONENT 3
 Managing cross-functional dimensions

- Communication and visibility
- Raising awareness on the importance of coastal ecosystems
- Knowledge management
- Monitoring & Evaluation

COMPONENT 4
 Project management and IOC support

- Technical assistance, management team and operating costs
- Financial audits
- Financing IOC operational component and RECOS National Focal Points (NFPs)
- Miscellaneous and unforeseen

1.2 SCIENTIFIC COMPONENT – FOSTERING MARINE AND COASTAL ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN THE WIO REGION

RECOS promotes regional scientific cooperation in marine and coastal research via a structured scientific framework. This led to the formation of four technical working groups, each aligned with regional strategic priorities and comprised of subject-matter experts dedicated to their respective fields.

- Working Group 1 - MPA Management: effectiveness of management measures for marine protected areas;
- Working Group 2 - Essential coastal and littoral ecosystems: mangroves, seagrass beds, coral reefs;
- Working Group 3 - Coastal zone management mechanisms: coastal observation and governance mechanisms;
- **Working Group 4 - Environmental education: Impact assessment of educational programs.**

The establishment of Working Group 4 (WG4) was prompted by discussions at the 12th WIOMSA Symposium in November 2022. This led to a first regional workshop in February 2023, which brought together experts in environmental education and research to identify priority research axes.

A central need identified by all IOC countries was the requirement to evaluate the impact of marine and coastal education programs—commonly referred to as “Ocean Literacy”. To address this, a strategic roadmap was designed, focusing on:

- **A comprehensive regional inventory** of ocean literacy tools and approaches ;
- **The classification of these tools** based on a peer-validated typology ;
- **The identification of assessment methods** to measure changes in the perceptions and behaviors of target populations ;
- **The development of a standardised impact assessment framework** for marine and coastal education programs.

These objectives were integrated into a postdoctoral fellowship conducted by Dr. Sylvain Rakotovoao, from the Madagascan Research Centre for Environmental Education (CREE). The fellowship is currently in its second and final year.

During UNOC3 (the 3rd UN Ocean Conference) held in Nice in June 2025, RECOS—in collaboration with the French National Research Institute for Sustainable Development (IRD)—reaffirmed its commitment to promoting ocean literacy and together with partners, advocated for a structured regional ocean education network: the WIO-MCEN (West Indian Ocean Marine and Coastal Education Network).

This initiative was endorsed in September 2025 during the 13th WIOMSA Symposium. On this occasion, RECOS and the IRD co-organised a mini symposium on Marine and Coastal Environmental Education (M&CEE), bringing together practitioners and researchers. A dedicated roundtable session facilitated the collaborative design of the vision and mission for the future regional network (see annex for the session minutes) and resulted in the creation of a **Working Group 4 Advisory Committee** comprised of 4 Ocean Literacy experts from the WIO region (see table below).

Member	Role and affiliation	Country
Pascale Chabanet	Senior Scientist, IRD	Reunion Island
Ravhee Bholah	Associate Professor, MIE	Mauritius
Jeannette Larue	Director General for Public Education and Community Outreach, MACCE	Seychelles
Judy Mann-Lang	Executive of Strategic Projects, Two Ocean Aquarium Foundation	South Africa

Building on this momentum, the initiative has now reached a pivotal stage. To transition from the conceptual design to the operational phase, the project is recruiting a Regional Coordinator. This key position will be responsible for **the formal structuration of the WIO-MCEN regional network anchored within WIOMSA**, ensuring its long-term governance and the effective implementation of the vision co-designed by its members.

2 OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT

To support the operationalisation of the WIO-MCEN network, the IOC/RECOS project seeks to recruit an individual consultant. The objective of this consultancy is to provide strategic and technical support to develop the regional network and ensure its long-term sustainability. The consultancy ensures effective communication, coordination, capacity building, and knowledge exchange among WIO-MCEN members, partners, and stakeholders; supports implementation of WIO-MCEN activities; and contributes to regional marine conservation efforts.

3 SCOPE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

A. Expected Outputs (Deliverables)

The consultant shall be responsible for delivering the outputs defined in Section “Deliverables”, in accordance with the agreed timeline and quality standards.

B. Indicative Tasks

The following tasks are indicative and intended to guide the consultant in achieving the expected deliverables.

The consultant remains responsible for proposing the most appropriate methodology and approach to deliver the required results.

1. Network Development and Structuring

- Conduct a rapid situational analysis of existing environmental education initiatives in the region, mapping key stakeholders and integrating the preliminary scoping findings from the Core Committee to establish a unified baseline
- Support the formal structuring of the network by organising consultation meetings with

members and partners to define the general framework of the WIO-MCEN.

- Formalise the network's core elements, including its objectives, mission statement, and governance statutes, building upon the vision established during the 13th WIOMSA Symposium (refer to the annexed minutes).
- Identify and invite key partners to join the network.
- Ensure WIO-MCEN visibility and connectivity across regional platforms, working groups, and events.

2. Implementation of WIO-MCEN Activities

- Develop a strategic Roadmap, identifying priority regional activities and designing both short-term work plans and a long-term action plan for the network.
- Support preparation of WIO-MCEN project proposals, progress reports, and technical briefs as required.
- Promote the exchange of best practices, lessons learned, and innovations in environmental education and communication.
- Animate the network by actively monitoring and sharing funding opportunities and calls for proposals related to environmental education (newsletter).
- Curate and update the WIO-MCEN online database by sourcing and integrating new technical resources.

3. Resource Mobilisation and Sustainability

- Lead the development of a Sustainability Strategy and identify and map potential donors, including international agencies, private foundations, and "blue economy" partners interested in marine education.
- Contribute to and/or coordinate high-quality project proposals and actively seek out calls for proposals and lead the technical and financial drafting to secure new funding streams for WIO-MCEN activities.
- Establish strategic partnerships: Build and maintain relationships with regional and global partners to leverage "in-kind" support, shared resources, or joint-funding opportunities.

4. Institutional Support and Technical Advisory

- Act as the strategic bridge between environmental education and regional policy by advising WIOMSA leadership, contributing to key scientific reports, and representing the network's interests in high-level conservation dialogues.

5. Meetings and Reporting

- Convene and facilitate WIO-MCEN coordination meetings as needed, including one regional in-person workshop with key stakeholders.
- Participate in relevant regional meetings, working groups, and consultations.
- Provide quarterly progress updates to WIO-MCEN leadership and partners.
- Support documentation of meeting outcomes, action points, and follow-up tasks.

4 MODALITIES OF IMPLEMENTATION

The assignment is home-based (remote). Occasional travel in the WIO region may be required, subject to prior validation.

The consultant will:

- Work under the joint supervision of WIOMSA and IOC/RECOS in collaboration with the Advisory Committee of Working Group 4.
- Work independently and will not be considered as a staff member of IOC or WIOMSA.
- Be responsible for their own working equipment, insurance, and tax obligations.
- Coordinate activities through virtual meetings and regular reporting.

WIOMSA and RECOS Working Group 4 Advisory Committee will:

- Will provide the documentation necessary to complete the deliverables.
- Facilitate contact with project partners implementing field projects and regional partners.

Validation process: all deliverables must be submitted to and will be evaluated by WIOMSA and the Advisory Committee of Working Group 4 and validated by IOC/RECOS.

5 EXPECTED OUTPUTS AND DELIVERABLES

The consultant objectives, tasks and deliverables are compiled in the performance framework below. Contractual deliverables are underlined.

Phase	Focus	Key Deliverables	Deadline
Phase 1 Inception	Foundation & Governance	<u>Inception report including:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Scoping & Mapping Report: Baseline situational analysis and stakeholder map. • The WIO-MCEN Governance Framework: Vision, Objectives, and Statutes • Strategic Roadmap: Multi-year action plan and immediate short-term work plan. 	At latest 1.5 month after contract signature
Phase 2 Implementation	Coordination & Operations	<u>2 Quaterly reports including:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of strategic roadmap & action plan Network Engagement Portfolio: Evidence of partner invitations, signed conventions or MOUs, consultation and regional workshop minutes, and communication logs. • Digital Resource Library: Updated and curated online database with new technical assets. • Analysis opportunities for sustainability 	1st quaterly report: at latest 3 months after validation of inception report 2nd quaterly report: at latest 6 months after validation of inception report

Phase 3	Sustainability & Impact	Final report including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress made on the 4 missions listed in section A • A 1-year budgeted action plan and roadmap • Long-term Sustainability Strategy: Comprehensive donor/partners mapping (Blue Economy, foundations, agencies...), analysis of sustainability options, strategic partnerships... 	At latest 2 weeks before the end of contract
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6 CANDIDATE PROFILE

The successful candidate must meet the following requirements:

- Be a national of an IOC Member State (Mauritius, Seychelles, Madagascar, Comoros, France-Réunion) ;
- A Master's degree (or equivalent) in Environmental Sciences, Coastal Management, Geography, Social Sciences, Development Economics, or a related field;
- 3 to 5 years of experience in managing environmental projects, with a proven track record in environmental education, "Ocean Literacy," or network coordination and facilitation;
- Solid experience working in the South-West Indian Ocean region (covering at least 3 countries), supported by an in-depth understanding of the regional geopolitical, socio-economic, and environmental contexts;
- Full professional proficiency in both French and English (written and spoken) is mandatory;
- Outstanding drafting and reporting skills with a strong capacity for analysis and synthesis;
- High degree of autonomy, organisational skills, and a strict commitment to deadlines;
- Strong interpersonal skills and cross-cultural sensitivity.

7 TIMELINE, DURATION AND TERMS OF ASSIGNMENT

The consultant will provide intermittent support over an 8-month period (august 2026–Mars 2027).

The total budget for this consultancy is €18,000 (all-inclusive).

This amount includes all costs related to the assignment, including but not limited to:

- professional fees,
- international and local travel costs (including at least one mission within the WIO region),
- accommodation, per diem, and any other logistical expenses.

The consultant is responsible for organising travel within the agreed budget ceiling.

No additional costs for the consultant’s activities will be covered by IOC/RECOS unless explicitly agreed upon in writing. However, RECOS will fund the expenses related to the regional in-person workshop including venue hire, travel costs, and daily allowances for the participants.

The service contract will be established following the notification of the selected service provider. Payments will be made in instalments, subject to the validation of deliverables, in accordance with the contractual terms.

8 EVALUATION CRITERIA

DESCRIPTION	POINTS
Quality of the Technical Proposal: The proposed methodological approach is relevant and of high quality.	50
Timeline relevance: the schedule of deliverables is well aligned with the project objective and is feasible.	10
Service Provider Experience: The provider has a minimum of 3 years of consultancy experience in similar fields	20
Contextual Knowledge: The provider is well-connected to regional stakeholders and possesses a strong understanding of the regional context, with at least 3 years of consultancy experience within the region.	20

The successful candidate will be the one who obtains the highest combined score (technical offer/financial offer based on an **80/20 ratio**). A technical score of less than **75 out of 100** is eliminatory.

9 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

All deliverables produced under this assignment shall be the exclusive property of the WIO-MCEN network, and by extension, that of the Indian Ocean Commission and the WIOMSA.

ANNEX 1

Towards a WIO Regional Network for Marine and Coastal Environmental Education (M&CEE)

Roundtable summary

On the 30th of October, as part of the 13th WIOMSA symposium, a session was held to showcase research on the evaluation of environmental education programme impacts on beneficiaries—research conducted by members of a working group on marine and coastal environmental education initiated by the IOC/RECOS project in 2023. These presentations were followed by a roundtable aimed at discussing a future regional network for Marine and Coastal Environmental Education, building on existing initiatives. This event aimed to identify as many regional stakeholders involved in this field as possible, in order to assess people and regional/international organisation's interest, willingness, and capacity to participate in the structuring of a regional network. This session was organised and chaired by the RECOS Project of the Indian Ocean Commission and the Institute for Research and Development (IRD).

Participants from the audience were asked to complete an online form that included questions on their vision of a network and their willingness to take part in this initiative. The following minutes include both panellists' and participants' perspectives.

Panellists:

- **M. Djahere Ahamada Saïd**, Coordinator, Elite 3A Madagascar
- **Dr Pascale Chabanet**, Research Director, French National Research Institute for Sustainable Development (IRD), France
- **Dr Ravhee Bholah**, Associate Professor, Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE), Mauritius
- **Dr Judy MannLang**, Executive Strategic Projects at Two Oceans Aquarium Foundation, South Africa
- **M. Bernardo Reduto Leal**, UNESCO Ocean Literacy Associate Programme Specialist

Facilitator: Christophe Legrand, RECOS Project Coordinator.

About the survey

The following summary includes the vision and ideas of 24 stakeholders across the Western Indian Ocean region and beyond, representing organisations and individuals from:

- **Countries represented:** Kenya (7), South Africa (5), La Réunion (8), Mauritius (5), Seychelles (3), Mayotte (1), Vietnam (1), Switzerland (1), Tanzania (1), Comores (1);
- **Response type:** 17 representing organisations, 7 responding as individuals;
- **Gender distribution:** 58% females respondents, 42% male respondents;
- **Network interest:** 100% expressed interest in participating in the network.

Session summary (panellists & participants)

1. Observation and Needs:

First, we highlighted the need for :

- Partnerships
- peer learning
- regional knowledge sharing and access to resources
- sustainable funding mechanisms
- accounting for linguistic diversity in the region
- connecting scientists, practitioners, schools and communities
- evaluating impact of science communication and marine education initiatives.
- Avoiding duplication of efforts
- Marine science lacking from national curricula
- Need to make learning more meaningful.

"A WIO community who falls in love with the Ocean"

2. Vision/Objectives: *"A network that enables mutual exchange of knowledge among all members, that fosters transdisciplinary co-learning, and champions Ocean Literacy integration across educational and policy frameworks at all levels, for enhanced ocean communication efforts in the WIO"*

Based on the identified guiding principles in building a regional network on M&CEE:

- Enabling the mutual exchange of knowledge and practices among all network members
- Fostering transdisciplinary co-learning, arts-based methods and inclusivity in educational approaches
- Championing the integration of Ocean Literacy into educational curricula, political agendas, development projects, and policy frameworks at local, national, and regional levels
- Align communication efforts for the ocean across the region

The identified strategic priority areas for action:

- **Network & Capacity Building:** Cultivate a vibrant network of marine scientists, educators, and communities, enhancing their collective capacity for effective ocean communication and education.
- **Curriculum Integration & Tool Development:** Facilitate the co-design and widespread adoption of innovative, interdisciplinary M&CEE approaches and tools within regional curricula.
- **Impact Assessment & Policy Influence:** Establish robust mechanisms for evaluating the impact of marine education initiatives to inform and influence evidence-based policies and decision-making.

Specific missions:

- **Develop and curate a shared digital platform** of practical tools, resources, and guidance on Ocean Literacy approaches aligned with the global ocean movement.
- **Establish systematic assessment and M&E methodologies** to measure initiative impacts and generate evidence-based policy recommendations.
- **Strengthen interdisciplinary connections** among scientists, educators, and policymakers to bridge science, education, and policy.
- **Build capacity and facilitate knowledge exchange** through training, regional peer-learning, and sharing of best practices.

3. Initial Activities:

This section details potential initial steps and actions to be taken. Panellists and participants have identified activities such as: establishing "marine centres, raising funds, learning from best practices, drawing from existing national networks' experience, facilitating peer-to-peer exchanges.

Kick-off activities that could stem from existing initiatives are:

- Identify 1 ou 2 key initiatives such as an ongoing OL regional project, organise workshop to kickstart the activities
- Working towards a framework for shared resources, guidance for tools, M&E guidance while ensuring fitting into the global ocean movement
- Consolidating existing databases (example of an [online database](#) for resources on M&CEE in the WIO) into one, ensuring its perennity
- Feeding the database with M&CEE resources and initiatives
- Identifying sources of funding, advocating for government buy-in and budget allocation
- Designate a core working group for driving initial network establishment, maintaining momentum, coordinating activities, and ensuring

5. Structure and Governance:

Key actions include:

- Identifying key champions (core groups of dedicated and motivated people) and country focal points
- Ensuring continuous meeting and structured conversations
- Need for a regional coordinator to guide discussions and the structuration of the network
- Including and drawing from national networks' experience (with SA example)
- Seeking support from international and regional organisations (e.g., WIOMSA)

4. Partnerships:

Additionally to the associations, organisations and private sector representatives represented in the survey and showed an interest in the initiative, perspectives from panellists and audience include exploring partnerships with WIOMSA, SADC (Southern African Development Community), collaborating with international existing networks, involving the private sector, the ministries of education in the region, liaising with GOLI (Global Ocean Literacy Initiative) and the Samawati group (initiated at WIOMSA 2025), collaborating with Bahari Learnet, ECOP AFRICA (Early Career Ocean Professionals), and identifying synergies with existing initiatives (Southern African Resilience Academy (SARA) working group on Arts-Based Co-Imaging, IOC-UNESCO Ocean Literacy working group, etc), etc.

Key lesson from the WIOMSA

A sustained commitment from a core group of passionate individuals matters more than perfect initial resources. If we can demonstrate early impact through practical activities, the resources and formal structures will follow!