IMPACT STORIES

HOW WWF'S REGIONAL APPROACH IS PROTECTING ECOSYSTEMS AND BENEFITTING PEOPLE ACROSS THE SOUTH WEST INDIAN OCEAN

DISCLAIMER

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RIGHTS AND PERMISSIONS

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ABOUT THIS REPORT AND WWF IN THE SWIO REGION

This report shows how WWF's work in the South West Indian Ocean benefits from taking a regional approach to shared challenges.

WWF is one of the world's largest and most respected independent conservation organizations, with over 38 million supporters and a global network active in more than 100 countries.

In 2022, after more than 60 years of on-the-ground investment in the South West Indian Ocean (SWIO) region, WWF launched the WWF-SWIO Regional Programme. WWF-SWIO's vision is to "use the power of nature to safeguard societies to deliver triple benefits for people, nature and climate".

This report focuses on how the WWF-SWIO Regional Programme has positively impacted disaster readiness and adaptation to climate change, community-led conservation, and the development of a sustainable blue economy since its launch in April 2022.

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LETTER FROM THE WWF-SWIO REGIONAL PROGRAMME LEAD

The vast, shimmering expanse of the South West Indian Ocean is more than a breathtaking marvel; it is the lifeblood of millions. From the vibrant coral reefs of Tanzania to the lush mangroves of Madagascar, this region pulses with biodiversity that sustains ecosystems, economies and livelihoods.

Yet, as we stand at the crossroads between ecological stewardship and ongoing environmental exploitation, the loss of coral reefs, the decline of fish stocks and mangroves, and the unrelenting poverty are stark reminders that geographically and temporally finite, project-based conservation-only interventions are woefully insufficient to meet the climate, biodiversity and economic challenges in the SWIO region of today.

A holistic, regional, programmatic approach is needed.

In 2022, WWF launched the South West Indian Ocean Regional Programme to deepen and accelerate marine and coastal conservation across the region. WWF-SWIO's purpose is to strengthen linkages between the coastal WWF teams across five countries (Tanzania, Kenya, Mozambique, South Africa and Madagascar) in order to facilitate the unrestrained exchange of knowledge, experience and resources; to embed fairness and environmental sustainability in the region's growing blue economy; and to advocate for regional policies, practices and agreements that will support healthy ecosystems for the benefit of generations to come.

By looking at the WWF-SWIO Regional Programme through a climate lens, this report aims to celebrate some of the wins that WWF has secured towards resilient coastal communities by working at the regional level – without denying the urgency of its mission. By partnering and advocating across national borders, WWF-SWIO has facilitated the spread of solutions that protect communities from climate-related weather events and build climate resilience (see "Scaling Out" on page 8), and that empower communities with the legal rights and know-how needed to be effective stewards of their marine heritage (see "Scaling Up" on page 18). But perhaps the proverbial feather in WWF-SWIO's collective cap is the joint launch of a new business incubator and finance vehicle to support the development of community-led sustainable blue enterprises to the point of being investment-ready (see "Scaling Deep" on page 28).

Together, we can work at scale to cultivate a future where the SWIO region's riches are harnessed wisely, ensuring resilient ecosystems and communities as well as economic prosperity for generations to come.

DR SAMANTHA PETERSEN
WWF-SWIO REGIONAL
PROGRAMME LEAD

INTRODUCTION

As the most biodiverse oceanic region in Africa, the South West Indian Ocean is a resource-rich transboundary region that extends beyond national borders.

Ensuring that it is managed in an environmentally sustainable way that benefits the most vulnerable communities needs to be a collaborative effort, undertaken at scale.

Recognizing this, WWF International launched the WWF-SWIO Regional Programme in April 2022, expanding on an earlier regional initiative focusing on the Northern Mozambique Channel.

WWF SOUTH WEST INDIAN OCEAN REGIONAL PROGRAMME

WWF-SWIO SEASCAPES

1. Northern Mozambique Channel
2. Lamu-Ijara-Tana
3. Kwale-Mombasa-Kilifi
4. Tanga-Pemba
5. RUMAKI
6. Mtwara
7. Primeiras and Segundas
8. Zambezi Delta
9. Inhambane
10. Eastern Cape region
11. Cape Floristic region
12. Diana
13. Manambolo Tsiribihina
14. Mahafaly

HOW WWF-SWIO BRINGS ABOUT CHANGE

WWF-SWIO simultaneously works at several levels within the SWIO region to drive change:

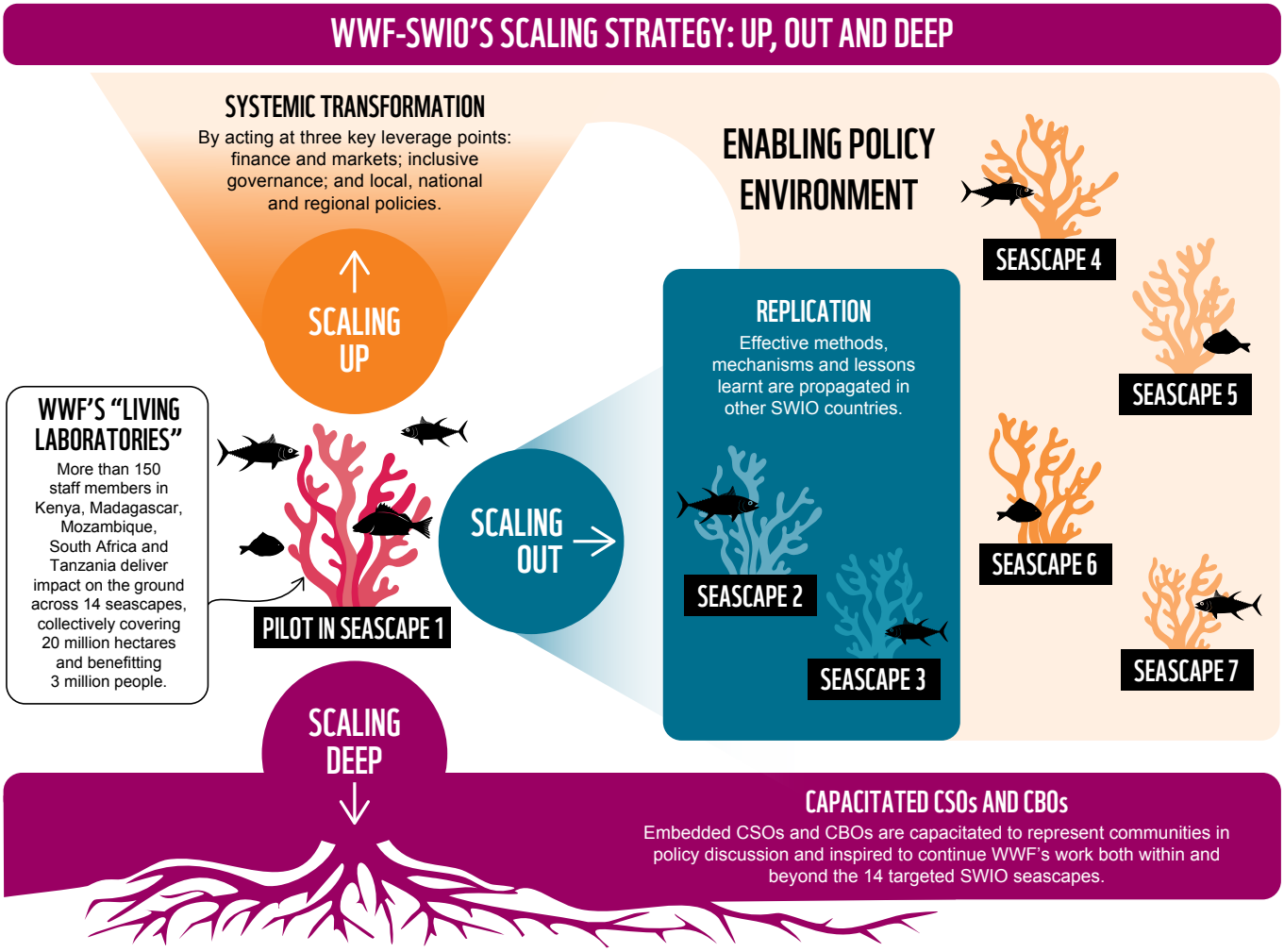
At the seascape level it takes a place-based approach to delivering impact on the ground across 14 (13 operational, one transboundary area) seascapes in five countries that collectively cover 20 million hectares. We see these places as "living laboratories" for finding solutions. They are where WWF has a long-term presence – more than 60 years in many cases – and enjoys strong local, national and regional relationships.

At the local, national and regional levels it enables systemic transformation by focusing on three leverage points: finance and markets, governance, and creating an enabling policy environment.

At all levels, WWF-SWIO aims to accelerate and scale its impact through its Scaling Strategy.

HOW WWF-SWIO SCALES IMPACT

WWF-SWIO works at multiple levels to accelerate a lasting shift to sustainable ocean resource management across the region. This is known as its Scaling Strategy.



Scaling Out refers to replicating successful pilot projects in other locations across the region through, for example, learning exchanges and the development of toolkits.

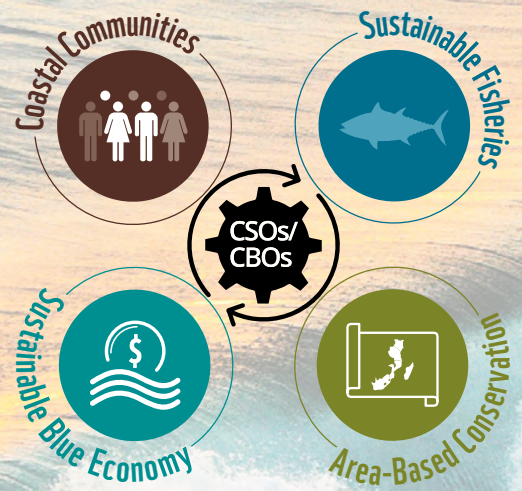
Scaling Up refers to engaging policy makers to secure national, regional and global policies that support sustainable resource use in the SWIO region. WWF's policy recommendations are always based on the best available science and are frequently supported by learnings from successful pilot projects, where developing such test cases will support policy change.

Scaling Deep is about creating an environment that will support future sustainable resource use beyond WWF's direct involvement. Scaling Deep can take many shapes, including building capacitated networks of partners, civil society organizations and community-based organizations that can continue the work in their own contexts and engineering systemic shifts that will support the ongoing growth of a sustainable blue economy in the SWIO region.

The different approaches to scaling are not mutually exclusive, meaning a given intervention might have elements of all types of scaling. That said, this report showcases a selection of examples to demonstrate how WWF-SWIO is consciously scaling up, out and deep to bring about a broad-based, lasting and systemic shift that supports the restoration and sustainable management of the region's precious ocean resources.

FOCUS AREAS

WWF-SWIO's work focuses on four strategic pillars: Coastal Community-Led Conservation, Sustainable Fisheries, Sustainable Blue Economy and Area-Based Conservation, with a foundational and cross-cutting theme of empowering civil society organizations (CSOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) to build strong, community-led institutions that ensure a lasting legacy.



A SELECTION OF SUCCESSES IN SCALING

This impact report provides insight into a selection of initiatives that demonstrate how WWF-SWIO is successfully scaling its impact across the region.

SCALING OUT →

WWF is **SCALING OUT** in important directions by securing strategic partnerships. WWF has taken a regional partnership approach to helping communities prepare for – and respond to – extreme weather events linked to climate change.

Find out more on page 8.

↑ SCALING UP

WWF is **SCALING UP** by securing the rights of coastal communities to take the lead in safeguarding and restoring their natural resources, especially the region's magnificent yet dwindling mangroves.

Find out more on page 18.

SCALING DEEP ↓

WWF is **SCALING DEEP** by fostering the region's sustainable blue economy with the launch of a dedicated joint programme, the SWIO Venture Builder, to nurture local, ocean-based value chains and businesses that are environmentally sustainable and that support the well-being of coastal communities.

Find out more on page 28.

SCALING OUT:
SECURING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS TO STRENGTHEN CLIMATE RESILIENCE

Over the decades, WWF has partnered with various non-profit organizations to build climate resilience in targeted coastal communities.


© Hussein Ahmed / WWF-Kenya

Across the South West Indian Ocean, the risk of climate-related disasters has only become more serious. By the middle of the century, the average sea surface temperature is expected to climb by about 1.7°C, placing the Indian Ocean in a state of near-permanent heat wave. These temperature changes will alter the ocean's physical and chemical properties, increasing salinity and acidity while decreasing oxygen concentrations. Sea levels, which have already increased by 3.2 millimetres per year in recent decades, will continue to rise. Collectively, these shifts will affect food security by reducing the catches of small-scale fishers while also exposing vulnerable coastal communities to the devastating effects of repeated, more intense droughts, tropical cyclones and marine heatwaves.[1]

By damaging the health of natural ecosystems, climate change jeopardizes food security, water security, agricultural productivity, fishing and aquaculture, tourism and human health across the SWIO region. With more than 60 million people living within 100 kilometres of SWIO's coastline, the need to strengthen climate adaptation across the region to limit impacts on both human and environmental well-being is increasingly apparent. Yet the region has historically attracted relatively little financing for climate-related activities, with countries in East Africa facing a 23% investment gap as a percentage of GDP.[2]

Working in partnership with its Africa Adaptation Hub, WWF is leveraging its reputation as a trusted global conservation partner and long-standing presence in the SWIO region to attract climate-related funding to this financially overlooked region and the rest of the African continent. At the same time, WWF is partnering with various non-profit organizations that specialize in developing early warning systems (EWS) and providing climate disaster relief to both protect communities across SWIO from the worst effects of climate change and provide a more robust response to extreme weather events in the near term.

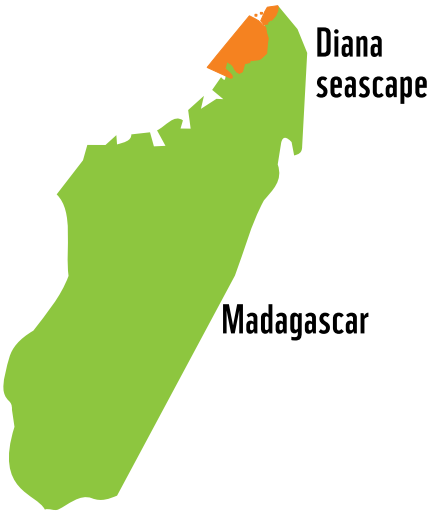
Two such partnerships are with Aquatic Service, a non-governmental organization that pioneered a system to warn fishing communities across Madagascar about oceanic storms and winds, and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), who partnered with WWF to provide better disaster relief in WWF's 13 operational SWIO seascapes. These two partnerships are discussed in greater detail in this section.

[1] WWF. 2024. *Seeding Hope: How climate change is impacting coastal communities in the South West Indian Ocean and how mangrove protection and restoration present robust nature-based solutions.*

[2] Meattle, C., Padmanabhi, R., Fernandes, P., Balm, A., Wakaba, E., Chiriac, D. and Tonkonogy, B. 2022. *Landscape of Climate Finance in Africa*. San Francisco: Climate Policy Initiative.

AQUATIC SERVICE'S MITAO FORECAST EARLY WARNING SYSTEM GUIDES FISHERS TO SAFER WATERS

Living on the northern tip of one of the world's most vulnerable countries to climate change means the Diana seascape in Madagascar is increasingly at risk of natural hazards, especially tropical cyclones – the island's most destructive natural hazard, costing about US$87 million in direct annual losses.



WWF field teams work closely with communities in Diana to sustainably build economic independence from their surrounding natural resources and enhance long-term resilience against climate change, but these efforts sometimes fall short in protecting communities from the immediate threats of climate disasters. WWF has recognized that a more holistic approach to climate disaster risk reduction is needed – one that extends beyond the scope of nature-based solutions (NbS) alone.

Without access to forecasting services, small-scale fishers in remote coastal villages rely on intuition and traditional knowledge to assess the weather and determine whether it's safe to fish. However, these conditions can change suddenly and unpredictably at sea, leading to accidents that are often fatal. And with a changing climate, extreme weather events like these are not only becoming more frequent but are also occurring outside of their usual season, making them even harder to avoid.

In Madagascar, only 1% of fishers are equipped with motorized boats, leaving most battling strong winds and large waves in paddleboats or sailboats. These vessels, with their rudimentary steering capabilities, capsize frequently in strong weather conditions, leading to accidents that have caused many coastal community members to lose friends and family members. It was these losses that spurred the creation of the Mitao Forecast EWS – a system that connects remote fisherfolk with world-class weather forecasting models by using SMS technology.


© iAko R. / WWF-Madagascar

Created by Toky Sylvestre, the Mitao Forecast EWS was first piloted in the southern regions of Madagascar in 2014. WWF has since worked alongside Toky and his non-governmental organization Aquatic Service to scale the system to the rest of Madagascar. To date, more than 60 villages have adopted the system, which has since reduced wind-related fatalities at sea by 98%.

In 2023, WWF launched an initiative to equip the villages in the Diana seascape with the Mitao Forecast EWS. This included several field visits and engagements with local authorities and communities involved in implementing the system. It was during one of these

visits that Hortensia, a 28-year-old woman born in the village of Ankazomborona, would learn of the Mitao Forecast EWS and eventually take on the responsibility of updating the Mitao Forecast panel – a public display board with simple iconography that contains information on the wind direction and strength, as well as potentially hazardous waves. As part of the secretariat for the village's fishing union, Hortensia has a particular understanding of the challenges faced by local fisherfolk. She was eager to be part of a system that not only helps save fishers' lives, but also creates opportunities for women and youth.

The scaling out of the Mitao Forecast EWS has been done under the "Mangrove for Community and Climate" project, which sees WWF partner with Aquatic Service, the Malagasy Ministry of Fisheries and Blue Economy, and SWIOFISH – a World Bank-funded project – to strengthen the resilience of coastal communities.

The way the Mitao Forecast EWS operates is basic yet effective: every four days, Aquatic Service collects and analyses area-specific forecast information from premium online databases such as PredictWind. This information is captured in an SMS and sent to the applicable Mitao Forecast focal points in the villages, along with a set of instructions to update the Mitao Forecast panel.

In Ankazomborona, Hortensia receives this SMS detailing the weather forecast for the next four days, which she communicates by following the message's instructions and arranging appropriate informative visual tags on the Mitao Forecast panel to show the wind direction, colour-coded indicators of wind strength and warning notifications on when not to go out. Hortensia also verbally communicates the forecast to the community and encourages fisherfolk to consult the panel before heading out to sea.

At first, some of the fisherfolk were sceptical about being warned against going out to sea on seemingly clear days. Some fishers would go out regardless of the safety advice, often because they couldn't afford not to. However, the merit of the system has since been proven, and fisherfolk now habitually consult the panel before their fishing expeditions.

"Before, [the fishers] suffered because they didn't know what was going to happen. Now, before they fish, they look [at the Mitao Forecast panel] and know how far they should go, depending on the forecast."

HORTENSIA; MITAO FORECAST EARLY WARNING SYSTEM FOCAL POINT IN ANKAZOMBORONA

Hortensia points to the tag warning Ankazomborona's fisherfolk of high waves during the afternoon. The orange disk provides a colour-coded indication of the wind speed, which appears to be blowing from a northwesterly direction.

© WWF South West Indian Ocean

The tags for the Mitao Forecast are locked away until Hortensia arranges them on the panel.

© WWF South West Indian Ocean

Across Madagascar, WWF and Aquatic Service continuously monitor and adapt the Mitao Forecast EWS for efficacy. Keeping up with technological advances, Aquatic Service has recently started utilizing the AI-based forecast model Pangu Weather as a source for the weather data it provides to fisherfolk. Changes to the system are driven by the results on the ground and, in that way, Hortensia has been vital in refining the system. After raising her concerns over the accuracy of weather forecast information during a WWF-hosted learning exchange in southern Madagascar, Hortensia's feedback resulted in the weather forecast information being disaggregated by mornings and afternoons. Hortensia has also observed that fishers at sea are unaware of updated forecasts on the Mitao Forecast panel, especially real-time warnings of sudden forecast changes that she may receive, putting them at risk of dangerous weather events. Accordingly, WWF, its partners and the community are coordinating to identify four or five literate fisher representatives to whom these messages can be forwarded and who can convey the information to other fishers, especially while on the water.

© WWF South West Indian Ocean

Some tags explicitly warn community members against going out to sea.


© iAko R. / WWF-Madagascar

Fishermen fatalities at sea have plummeted by about 98% in villages equipped with Mitao Forecast panels.

© WWF South West Indian Ocean

PARTNERING WITH THE RED CROSS TO STRENGTHEN DISASTER RELIEF CAPACITY

Despite significant strides in building coastal resilience by restoring mangroves and developing community livelihoods, in April 2024 Tropical Cyclone Gamane highlighted the gaps in WWF's capacity to respond to immediate disaster-related challenges.

The strong winds, storm surges and floods caused by Cyclone Gamane affected nearly 18 000 people in the Diana seascape, leaving WWF teams grappling with the realization that their mandate and expertise centered on long-term adaptation measures, not the urgent humanitarian responses needed in such crises.

In 2022, the IFRC also began addressing the limits of its traditional approach in Madagascar when Cyclone Batsirai tore through the southern half of the island. In February 2022, the Red Cross and Red Crescent helped the affected Atsinanana residents by appealing that they relocate before the storm, preparing emergency relief provisions for the relocated, and conducting search-and-rescue missions afterwards.

In the same way that WWF realized it needed to be able to provide humanitarian relief to climate crises, the IFRC ventured to extend its scope beyond providing emergency aid by launching a longer-term initiative to support agroforestry – an NbS to improve climate resilience. While its mandate to save people's lives remains central to its activities, the IFRC recognized that avoiding human losses in the short term can only extend so far when the degradation of natural resources and the effects of climate change compromise the survival prospects of future generations.

A strategic partnership between the world's largest humanitarian organization and the world's leading conservation organization would enable both organizations to be more effective by amplifying their collective impact without demanding further resources. Communities in

Kenya, Mozambique and, very recently, southern Madagascar have all benefitted from joint initiatives between WWF and the IFRC. Specifically:

- **WWF-Mozambique and the French Red Cross** are collaborating to strengthen disaster risk reduction in Mozambique's Zambezi Delta seascape by capacitating disaster-response volunteers and conserving coastal mangrove habitats.

- **WWF-Kenya and the Kenya Red Cross Society** – which have a long history of collaboration dating back to 2006 – established two disaster risk reduction centres in Tanarivo County in 2019. These centers, funded by a private donor in Switzerland, are now fully operational and independently managed. The partnership also led to the joint finalization of the Lamu County Emergency Operation Centre in 2023, which won the global 2024 Averted Disaster Award for its exceptional disaster risk management after less than a year of officially being in operation.

- **WWF-Madagascar and the Malagasy Red Cross** have partnered to improve disaster risk reduction and EWS in the country's Manambolo Tsiribihina (MTB) seascape.

During a learning exchange hosted by WWF in November 2024, IFRC's Regional Manager for Climate, Environment, and Community Resilience in Africa, Dr Gift Mashango, and WWF-SWIO Regional Programme Lead Dr Samantha Petersen reflected on the potential and possible mechanism of an IFRC-WWF partnership across the region. Such a partnership could enhance the ability of both organizations to protect coastal communities against the impacts of climate change and respond to natural disasters.

The IFRC movement is driven by Red Cross and Red Crescent national societies. These national societies together comprise a global network of more than 16 million community-based volunteers and staff who are trained to provide a variety of humanitarian services. As locals themselves, these volunteers are attuned to local needs and traditions while being deeply invested in the well-being of their communities. This resonates with WWF-SWIO's approach of working with embedded civil society organizations across the SWIO region. The IFRC's Global Early Warning 4 ALL (EW4ALL) Initiative could also present an avenue for expanding the Mitao Forecast EWS beyond Madagascar's borders.

"With more than 16 million volunteers across the globe, [the IFRC] can easily reach hard-to-reach communities at any given time. And with our volunteerism way of working, we are strong in sharing the early warning systems to address coastal community challenges.

We should be in a position to be much more impactful in terms of addressing the adverse effects of climate change. Climate change is multifaceted, and it really requires various players to come together to join their hands. We have started the journey already – this is the way to go."

DR GIFT MASHANGO;
IFRC REGIONAL MANAGER FOR CLIMATE, ENVIRONMENT,
AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE IN AFRICA

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© Nick Riley / WWF-Madagascar


© WWF South West Indian Ocean

“Climate impacts like cyclone-associated coastal flooding and inundation can be addressed through nature-based solutions such as restoring mangroves to reduce storm surge flooding – one of our core specialties. Similarly, the effects of warming sea temperatures on food security, fisheries and fish availability align with our technical expertise in small-scale fisheries management. Beyond that, we build coastal community resilience through livelihood development and by supporting economic development so that, when disasters do strike, communities are able to respond, rebuild and recover quicker. For me, this partnership is incredibly exciting because the Red Cross brings so many competencies that complement our own.”

DR SAMANTHA PETERSEN;
WWF-SWIO REGIONAL PROGRAMME LEAD

SCALING UP:
EMPOWERING COASTAL COMMUNITIES TO LEAD CONSERVATION EFFORTS

Between 2007 and 2020, the SWIO region lost nearly 170 000 hectares of mangroves. Today, the region's mangroves occupy just more than 740 000 hectares.[3]


© Twané Bester / WWF South West Indian Ocean

WWF is scaling up its regional efforts to protect this fragmented and shrinking resource by working to secure the rights of coastal communities to sustainably manage their natural resources, including mangroves, while simultaneously building their capacity to advocate for their positions and to make management decisions informed by the best available scientific evidence.

Coastal communities across the SWIO region have long witnessed the negative effects of declining mangrove forests due to deforestation, unsustainable coastal development and climate change. In addition to being more vulnerable to flooding during storms, these communities have noted a decrease in the catch of fish species that rely on mangroves to provide safe nurseries to their fry and juveniles.

One of WWF-SWIO's stated strategic outcomes for 2030 is for empowered communities to have restored 15 700 hectares of mangroves against a 2021 baseline, contributing to the climate resilience and food security of 2.3 million people. The Programme is making good progress towards achieving this goal: by mid-2024, WWF's support had enabled empowered local community governance structures to successfully restore 10 130 hectares of mangroves and conserve a total of 182 300 hectares of mangroves in Mozambique, Tanzania, Kenya and Madagascar.[4]

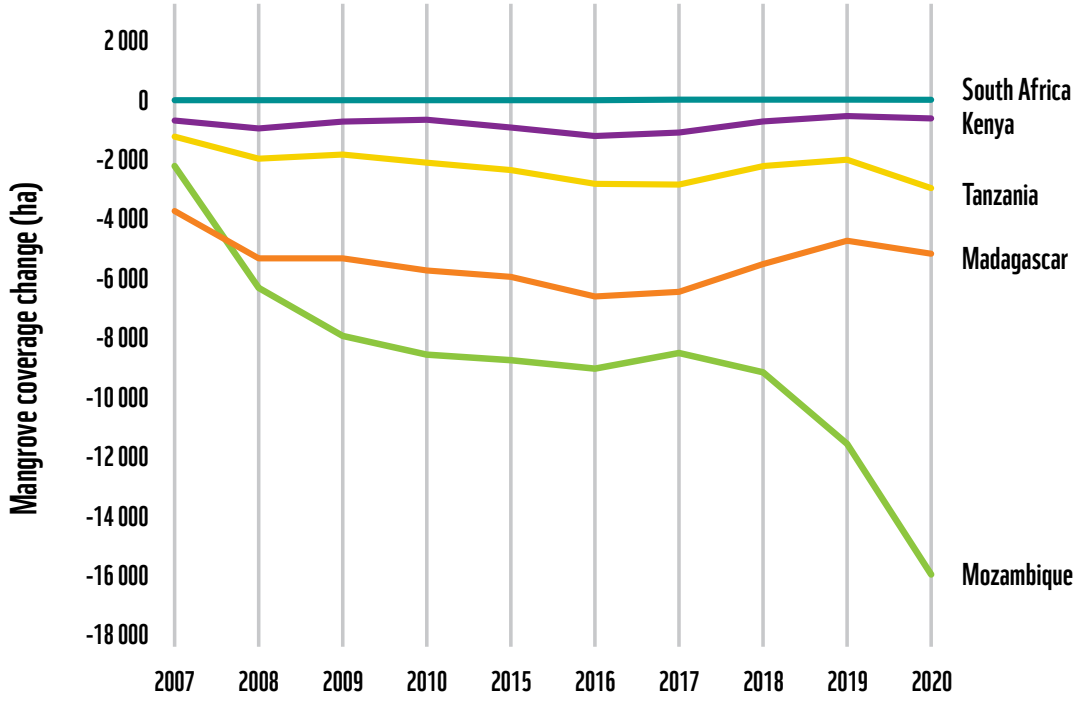
Although Mozambique stands out as the SWIO country that has lost the greatest area of mangroves since 2007 (Figure 1), the country's Primeiras and Segundas Environmental Protection Area, one of three WWF seascapes in the country, also stands out for having successfully restored the largest area of mangroves across the SWIO region: about 7 000 out of the targeted 10 130 hectares of mangroves restored are found in this seascape. The fact that 31% of this seascape is under the stewardship of 46 community governance structures contributes substantially to this success.[5]

[3] WWF. 2024. *Seeding Hope: How climate change is impacting coastal communities in the South West Indian Ocean and how mangrove protection and restoration present robust nature-based solutions.*

[4] WWF. 2024. *WWF South West Indian Ocean Annual report 2023/24.*

[5] WWF. 2024. *The Primeiras e Segundas seascape profile.*

Figure 1. Recent trends in mangrove coverage in hectares (ha) in the SWIO Region between 1996 and 2020



Just across the Northern Mozambique Channel is Madagascar, where a law on the local management of renewable natural resources allows “grassroots” community-based organizations, or *Vondron’Olona Ifotony* (VOI), to obtain natural resource management rights by signing a time-bound transfer of renewable natural resource management (TRNRM) contract with the Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development and the local authority.

About 3.4 million hectares of natural resources are currently managed by local communities under TRNRM contracts. These contracts require VOIs to manage the rights to use natural resources; restore forests; conduct monitoring, control and surveillance activities; and improve livelihoods.

Acquiring a TRNRM is an intricate process that requires awareness-raising campaigns and extensive training on sustainable resource management for users. It also requires VOIs to prepare development and management plans, to develop the project specifications with the responsibilities of board members, and to draft *dina* – local bylaws that aim to curb and regulate how mangroves are harvested.

Such administrative hurdles can be intimidating, effectively preventing communities from securing their legal right to manage their own natural resources. WWF works tirelessly across three seascapes in Madagascar – Diana, MTB and Mahafaly – to help VOIs successfully apply for or renew TRNRM contracts so that their communities can realize the benefits of natural resource management (see page 22).

© Nick Riley / WWF-Madagascar

IT TAKES A VILLAGE TO PROTECT MANGROVES

As a child, Ahmed Ben Youssouf would visit his family in Ankazomborona – a village once wrapped in vibrant green mangrove forests. Little did he know then that the charcoal-making pits he would encounter so frequently were the initial symptoms of a growing problem: the overexploitation of his village's mangrove forests.

On top of overexploitation, the village's mangroves also face the threat of being progressively buried by sediment after rains, as the removal of trees at a higher elevation has made the soil more prone to erosion. Today, roughly 40 years later, Ahmed's fond memory of a luscious Ankazomborona inspires him to undo the damage and protect these mangroves in his role as advisor to the VOI in charge of managing the local natural resources – VOI Ankameva.

VOI Ankameva was established in 2001 and obtained a TRNRM contract in 2006 without external support. However, the organization found the next few years challenging as it wrestled for the capacity to enforce its local bylaw, or *dina*. "It's difficult to apply the *dina* in an area where most of the people know each other," says Ahmed. Community patrollers, or *polisin'ala*, also lacked the funds and equipment to effectively carry out their monitoring, control and surveillance roles. In the end, the perseverance and passion of members like Ahmed kept Ankazomborona's mangroves alive and maintained the vision of the TRNRM contract until 2016, at which time WWF started supporting the VOI.

Right: Ahmed Ben Youssouf; Advisor to VOI Ankameva in Ankazomborona.


© Twané Bester / WWF South West Indian Ocean

With WWF's support, VOI Ankameva has celebrated big wins like launching an ecotourism site in June 2023 (see page 36) and little wins like successfully enforcing the *dina* to stop a local rice farmer from clearing mangroves. The mangrove ecosystems have started to flourish, as have the populations of crabs and fish that use these habitats for spawning. This is especially good news for the village's small-scale fishers, whose catch had been diminishing in the years prior.

With a renewed governance and operational backbone, increased inflow of revenue, and strengthened capacities, VOI Ankameva decided to focus its resources on improving the education of its youth. In 2023, the VOI donated metal sheets for the construction of classrooms as part of an initiative that also saw many of the village's grass roofs reinforced with the sturdier material (pictured below). Whereas in the past the children would be taught in uninsulated classrooms of reeds and wood, the children's access to education would no longer be contingent on favourable weather.

In collaboration with the deans of the local schools, VOI Ankameva also started a programme to sensitize the youth on the importance of mangroves. Now, each year, students of Ankazomborona's primary and secondary school take part in an environmental education session where they learn about the benefits of restoring and protecting mangroves, including the benefits for Ankazomborona's fisheries and ecotourism site. This initiative inspired the students so much that, in 2022, they requested their own area of mangroves to replant – and were allocated the very same land that had earlier been illegally cleared for rice farming.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© Matateu Ubisse / WWF-Mozambique

SUPPORT FOR THE GUARDIANS OF THE COAST

Ultimately, effective conservation of coastal and marine environments – and especially of mangroves – needs boots on the ground.

In the Primeiras and Segundas seascape, as elsewhere in Mozambique, these boots are occupied by Management-oriented Monitoring System (MOMS) agents. In South Africa, these monitors are called Marine and Coastal Community Monitors, while in Madagascar, community patrollers are called *polisin'ala* (literally translated as forest police).

Although these monitors have different levels of authority to take action, they have a shared responsibility: to monitor and safeguard ecosystem health. It can be gruelling work. Members of Madagascar's *polisin'ala* conduct patrols over long distances and across difficult terrain to detect and deter illegal activities, often at great personal risk. Despite the dangers, these patrollers have delivered remarkable results in protecting mangroves, managing to nearly halve illegal mangrove clearing in the Diana seascape between 2021 and 2023.

Protecting mangroves isn't their only skill. *Polisin'ala* also help with the restoration of mangroves, either by helping to replant seedlings or by participating in learning exchanges and carrying the knowledge they gain back to their communities.

In Antsatrana, a village within the Diana seascape, the *polisin'ala* have gained a unique edge thanks to the village's VOI and community savings and loans group. Under the leadership of its president, Chamse, the VOI *Fikambanana Miaro ny Tontolo iainana Antsatrana* (FMTA) has ensured

that the *polisin'ala* have the tools they need – like smart phones and boats for their patrols – as well as the community's financial backing. WWF provides wages for 12 of the 14 patrol days each month, while the village itself funds the remaining two days through a dedicated "Environmental Fund" embedded in the village's savings and loans association system (see page 37). This community-led funding approach is a testament to how WWF's initial support has evolved into a self-sustaining initiative, shaped by the priorities that village residents have identified for themselves as essential.

With further WWF training and support, the impact of the *polisin'ala* has extended beyond mangroves: in southwest Madagascar, these monitors have helped double the population density of Verreaux's sifakas – an endemic, endangered lemur – since 2019.

© WWF South West Indian Ocean


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"Our role as *polisin'ala* has been challenging, but our work behind the scenes pays off over time. We are not only seen as role models for the youth in terms of conservation, but we are also seen as the guardians of the areas for others."

CHAMSE; PRESIDENT OF FMTA, THE VOI CONDUCTING MANGROVE RESTORATION IN ANTSATRANA

THE FUTURE OF MANGROVE MANAGEMENT IN THE SWIO REGION

Effective mangrove management is a developing field that requires ongoing research and development of site-specific strategies at local and regional levels.

In many SWIO countries, mangrove replanting has faced setbacks due to seedlings failing to thrive. The leading theory for this is that high soil salinity is making the areas inhospitable for the seedlings. WWF is collaborating with the Science Faculty at the University of Antananarivo in Madagascar to study the ecological conditions required for successful mangrove restoration in order to overcome this obstacle.

At the same time, mangrove-management successes in Mozambique and Madagascar hold valuable lessons for the rest of the SWIO region. These successes include inspiring the youth to conserve their natural surroundings through lessons on the importance of mangrove ecosystems, as well as the collaboration between village savings and loans members to generate community-based financial support for strengthened mangrove protection by establishing a dedicated fund for it.

A recent climate vulnerability assessment commissioned by WWF titled *Seeding Hope* has shown that mangrove restoration and protection planning requires careful consideration based on climate and forecasting modelling data. As climate change shifts weather patterns, it may alter mangrove viability across the region, potentially making it more worthwhile to direct resources towards protecting and restoring specific sites.

Complex but not impossible, protecting and restoring the mangroves of the SWIO region is a goal that WWF, its partners and local communities are committed to achieving.


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SCALING DEEP:
THE SWIO VENTURE BUILDER

WWF-SWIO is working to create an enabling environment for a sustainable blue economy in which value chains that sustain healthy coastal and ocean ecosystems can thrive, benefitting both people and nature in the long term.


© Jonathan Caramanus / Green Renaissance / WWF-UK

At the heart of this work is the SWIO Venture Builder, a joint initiative that aims to close the gap between development-level grassroots enterprises and fully fledged, investment-ready businesses by providing support to promising sustainable blue enterprises and value chains.

Depending on the local context, this support could take the form of technical advice, business development support, or bridge financing. It could also be focused on a single enterprise or on a collection of enterprises that have been aggregated into a consolidated investment portfolio, reducing the transaction costs of financing community-led enterprises while also improving the risk-return profile of such investments.

Working on many levels

The main defining feature of the SWIO Venture Builder is that it works across various levels to create an environment that enables sustainable blue small-, micro- and medium-sized enterprises (SMMEs) to scale up and become financially viable blue businesses that benefit the historically sidelined coastal communities without harming the environment.

Specifically, the SWIO Venture Builder:

Engages local financial institutions on the opportunities that could be unlocked by developing financial products targeted to the blue SMME market.

Engages national governments to shape enabling policies for emerging sustainable blue enterprises.

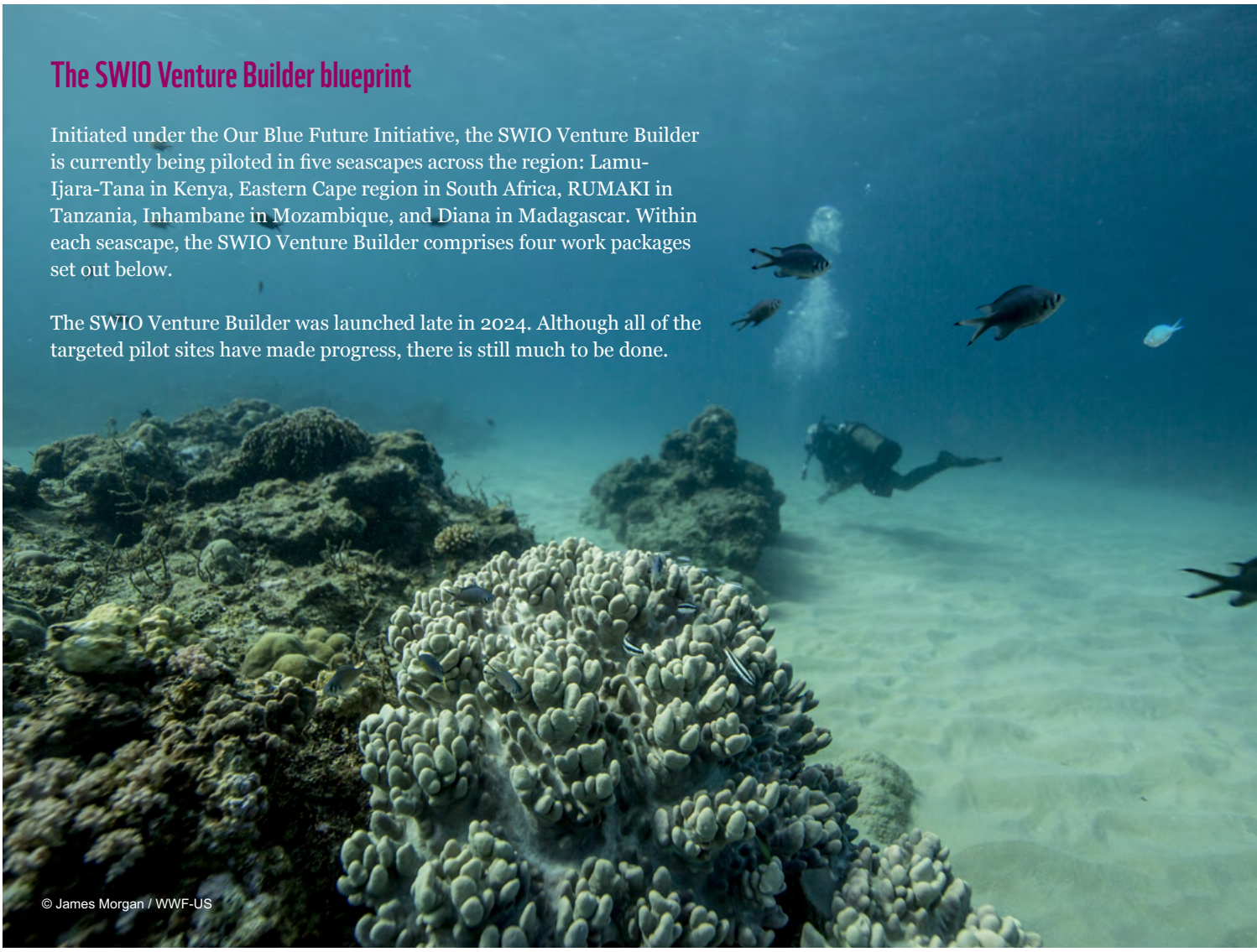
Builds the capacity of innovation and entrepreneur support organizations to better support community-led sustainable blue enterprises by, for example, building stronger business models, establishing fair governance systems, and ensuring that communities will benefit from benefit-sharing arrangements.

Identifies sustainable blue value chains to support and unlock market access.

The SWIO Venture Builder blueprint

Initiated under the Our Blue Future Initiative, the SWIO Venture Builder is currently being piloted in five seascapes across the region: Lamu-Ijara-Tana in Kenya, Eastern Cape region in South Africa, RUMAKI in Tanzania, Inhambane in Mozambique, and Diana in Madagascar. Within each seascape, the SWIO Venture Builder comprises four work packages set out below.

The SWIO Venture Builder was launched late in 2024. Although all of the targeted pilot sites have made progress, there is still much to be done.



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1. CONDUCT A SEASCAPE ASSESSMENT

The first SWIO Venture Builder work package in a seascape is conducting a thorough seascape assessment to:

Evaluate the seascape's existing business models

Identify potential avenues for revenue that are sustainable from an ecological, social and financial perspective

Determine what needs to be done to develop the seascape's portfolio of sustainable blue enterprises to investment-readiness

Assess the seascape's governance structures and the operating and policy environment in the country for local community-led enterprises.

High-level seascape assessments have been completed for all SWIO seascapes. These assessments have identified 35 sustainable enterprise development projects for possible further development. A detailed seascape assessment has been completed in the MTB seascape (Madagascar, not a SWIO Venture Builder pilot site) and initiated in Inhambane seascape (Mozambique) and RUMAKI seascape (Tanzania).

2. INCUBATE COMMUNITY LIVELIHOODS AND SMMEs

WWF's long-term presence in the SWIO region has seen communities within WWF-SWIO's 13 operational seascapes engage in a range of alternative livelihood enterprises. Now, the SWIO Venture Builder has selected five pilot seascapes where it will incubate sustainable enterprises by providing further technical, business and financing support (see below). The aim: to develop these enterprises to the point where they can be included in the SWIO Venture Builder's portfolio of investment-ready projects.

PILOT SEASCAPE COUNTRY, TARGETED VALUE CHAINS AND IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS

COUNTRY	INCUBATION ACTIVITIES CURRENTLY UNDER WAY
KENYA	**Open Capital:** Business development of small-scale fisheries value addition and cold chain development, as well as seaweed enterprises **Pangea Accelerator and WWF:** Partners in establishing the NbS Lab – a centralized hub to support sustainable startups and connect stakeholders
SOUTH AFRICA	**Epic Solutions:** Business training for community members to support sustainable enterprise development **Indalo Inclusive and OceanHub Africa:** East Coast rock lobster value chain development
TANZANIA	**Finance Earth:** Seascape assessment underway in RUMAKI **WWF, Prime Africa and Nairobi Convention:** Natural Capital Assessment for marine spatial planning in the Northern Mozambique Channel to support alternative livelihoods **WWF:** Establish partnerships with VSLAs and the microfinance banks in Tanzania **OceanHub Africa and Fisheries Education and Training Agency (FETA):** Incubation programme for enterprises in seaweed, small-scale fisheries value addition, beekeeping and ecotourism
MOZAMBIQUE	**TechnoServe:** Seascape assessment completed in Inhambane **Finance Earth:** Financial modelling for seascape financing mechanism about to launch **WWF, Prime Africa and Nairobi Convention:** Natural Capital Assessment for marine spatial planning in the Northern Mozambique Channel to support alternative livelihoods **WWF**: Establishing and supporting VSLAs **OceanHub Africa, IUCN and Mission Inclusion**: The ReSea Project as an accelerator for sustainable blue economy businesses and nature-based value chains
MADAGASCAR	**WWF, Prime Africa and Nairobi Convention:** Natural Capital Assessment for marine spatial planning in the Northern Mozambique Channel to support alternative livelihoods **WWF:** Livelihood development programmes, including raffia, ecotourism, beekeeping and tilapia farming enterprises; establishing and supporting VLSAs; implementing the Marine and Community Resilience Fund (MCRF) **Miarakap and ISA Agribusiness**: Alternative livelihood incubation programmes (see page 34) **OceanHub Africa, IUCN and Mission Inclusion**: Under the ReSea Project, in 2025, supporting small-scale fisheries value addition, tilapia farming, beekeeping, ecotourism and raffia enterprises.

Work has already commenced across all seascapes. As an example, in September 2023 the Fisheries Education and Training Agency (FETA), WWF's implementation partner in Tanzania's RUMAKI seascape, provided practical training to a 20-strong group of community members and government staff on value addition and marketing of seaweed-based products. Seaweed can be made to produce soap bars, body oil and dry seaweed that is used in food. About 70 coastal communities across the seascape are expected to receive similar training.

Across the Northern Mozambique Channel is Madagascar's Diana seascape, another one of the SWIO Venture Builder's pilot seascapes. Through WWF-Madagascar's support, the communities within this seascape have engaged in a range of alternative livelihood enterprises focusing on fish farming, manufacturing raffia handicrafts and ecotourism (see page 34). By providing alternative sources of income, especially for marginalized groups like young people and women, these projects are reducing communities' reliance on the unsustainable use of mangrove resources while enhancing their financial resilience in the face of damages due to worsening climate change.

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DIANA: SEASCAPE OF OPPORTUNITY

The SWIO Venture Builder has identified freshwater fish farming, raffia-based handicrafts and ecotourism as three value chains in Diana seascape with the potential to be developed to investment-readiness.

Freshwater fish farming

With WWF's support, about 200 residents across the Diana seascape have started farming freshwater tilapia fish for household consumption and to sell on local markets. Besides establishing and supporting 11 cooperatives by providing training and materials, WWF – in collaboration with ISA Agribusiness (a local incubator for sustainable agribusiness development) – helped to spur the local market, enabling these farmers to generate an income from their aquaculture efforts. However, the market is still nascent, and demand fluctuates. To provide more security, WWF is helping the communities secure more stable off-take contracts – an important step towards incubating these enterprises to investment-readiness.

While these contracts are being put in place, WWF continues to provide technical support to fish-farming operations, including helping the communities secure quality feed, overcome the problem of overly saline water, and develop a monitoring and evaluation system.

Handmade raffia handicrafts

Madagascar supplies about 75% of the world's demand for raffia from more than 50 000 hectares of raffia palms. If managed sustainably, the industry could provide a viable source of income and an alternative livelihood for coastal communities, reducing their reliance on mangrove resources, particularly during fisheries closures.

In 2023, WWF – in collaboration with the Regional Office of Tourism of Diego Suarez, a nearby town – provided craftswomen across the Diana seascape


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with practical training in processing raffia, producing and marketing raffia handicrafts, and cooperative governance. Some of these women have gone on to employ young men to harvest the raffia trees (who themselves are trained to do the harvesting in a way that does not damage the mother plant or undergrowth plants) on a rotational basis. After harvesting, the women extract the raffia fibres using a traditional process that minimizes post-harvest losses before drying, dying, and weaving the fibre into beautiful raffia handicrafts that are sold at markets in Diego Suarez.

To date, four raffia cooperatives have been formed. In addition to the initial training, WWF has provided these communities with raw materials, equipment (such as carts and shredding knives) and funding for wages. WWF's support has enabled the women of the Diana seascape to develop a raffia value chain that is both environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive, generating an income for nearly 75 households across the seascape.

Mamitiana Clarisse (pictured left), a member of her village's fisheries cooperative, was elected president of the Antsatrana raffia cooperative when it formed in April 2023. For Mamitiana, raffia provides a pathway to secure education and a stable future for her children by offering a reliable source of income that complements her fishing efforts.

Ecotourism

Ankazomborona ecotourism site in Diana seascape is a nature lover's paradise, with hiking trails that take visitors into the heart of the seascape's mangrove restoration sites. Here, lemurs hang from trees and flamingos sift through the mud for prawns as the sun rises over breathtaking views over Nosy Be – a large island off Madagascar's northern coast. Beyond hiking, visitors can enjoy traditionally prepared fresh seafood and *lasary manga* (mango salad) made from locally grown ingredients.

This ecotourism site was first mooted in 2021 under the Leading the Change project funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency in partnership with WWF-Sweden. Since its launch in 2023, the site has welcomed hundreds of visitors, much to the delight of the local youth, who enjoy interacting with international tourists.

The local VOI that manages the site plans to enhance and expand its ecotourism offerings. This would require further training for tour guides and restaurant staff, as well as collaborating with the Regional Office of Tourism and Handicraft to upgrade its market site. Currently, Ankazomborona is only accessible via a 7-kilometre informal road connected to the RN6, Madagascar's primary highway, and the closest urban hub, which is the capital of Ambilobe, is 40 kilometres away. As such, VOI Ankameva aspires to improve road access and signage to the village's ecotourism site.

By providing additional business incubation support, linking the enterprises with appropriate financing options, and facilitating additional training, technical assistance and capacity-building as needed, the SWIO Venture Builder is committed to developing Diana seascape into a model for the sustainable blue economy in the SWIO region.

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3. DEVELOP A PIPELINE OF FINANCE MECHANISMS

Given that most community-led enterprises are too small and often too risky for mainstream finance, there is a need to develop a pipeline of financial mechanisms that can enable smaller ticket sizes to flow to these businesses. To address this, WWF and its partners have been developing a pipeline of financial mechanisms that range from village savings and loan schemes referred to by different names in the various countries, to more formalized microfinance and intermediate finance.

In many parts of the developing world, coastal communities lack access to formal financial services. One of the ways WWF and its SWIO Venture Builder partners work to correct this imbalance in the SWIO region is by establishing village savings and loan associations (VSLAs).

VSLAs are community-run microfinance banks that provide loans, insurance and financing to members who collectively contribute to a shared pool of funding. VSLAs empower communities by providing financial safety nets that can help address immediate needs; provide a platform for launching sustainable enterprises; or act as a reserve of funds to support environmental conservation efforts.

Simple yet powerful, the VSLAs have seen prolific success across the SWIO region. To date, WWF and its partners have supported the establishment of more than 5 000 village banks across the region. In some cases, the system provides members with the opportunity to invest in sustainable development projects. One such VSLA in the Diana seascape's village of Antsatrana has set up a dedicated mangrove conservation fund to which members can voluntarily contribute that pays mangrove patrollers, or *polisin'ala*, and supports reforestation projects led by the village's VOI. The mangrove conservation fund was recently used to procure an additional speedboat for the village's *polisin'ala* to help with their patrols.

BUILDING SCHOOLS AND SAVING LIVES WITH VILLAGE SAVINGS GROUPS

In 2018, WWF introduced village savings and loans associations (VSLAs) to Antsatrana, a village in Diana seascape. The microfinancing tool quickly gained traction, and in 2023, the VSLA Union – the governing body for all the village's VSLAs – built a permanent space for meetings.

VSLA meetings in Antsatrana are deeply rooted in ritual, with lockboxes secured by multiple locks – the keys to which are held by different members – and a designated notary who tracks contributions. In total, the village now has 36 active VSLA groups, comprising more than 1 000 members who collectively save between 30 and 50 million Ariary, or US$6 000 to US$10 000, per group each year.

The SWIO Venture Builder has prioritized establishing and enhancing VSLAs across its pilot seascapes – and eventually across the entire SWIO region – to secure potential financing for sustainable blue enterprises that intend to scale to investment-readiness.

A hallmark of the VSLAs in Antsatrana is that the VSLA Union has established separate funds for community improvements:

A **social development fund**, which recently paid for building materials to upgrade the local school's roof from grass to corrugated metal

An **environmental fund**, from which the *polisin'ala*'s wages are paid

An **emergency fund** to provide members with financing in the case of loss, disease or other unforeseen circumstances (this fund helped save the life of a local fisherman who got lost at sea by paying for the services of a search-and-rescue speedboat)

Members are also eligible for a **bereavement payout** of up to 900 000 Ariary, or US$180, after the death of a loved one.

"A VSLA is promising in many ways for an entire community. Not only does it strengthen the bond between community members, but it also cultivates a business mindset."

ALDINE; VSLA RELAY AGENT IN ANTSATRANA.*

*A VSLA relay agent is someone who is trained to teach others how to establish a VSLA.

BUILDING A BLUE ECONOMY PIPELINE FOR THE BLUE WINDOW LOANS

The European Investment Bank (EIB) is providing loans to financial intermediaries (local banks) through its blue financing window, enabling local banks to undertake smaller-sized lending to small- or medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with sustainable blue business models. WWF-SWIO and EIB are currently collaborating with the aim of securing funds to build the capacity of local banks in Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, Madagascar and South Africa – enabling them to identify and support investments into local eligible blue SMEs. This will further enhance alignment of the EIB's blue window loans with the Sustainable Blue Economy Finance Principles.

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4. FINANCING FOR BANKABLE NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS TO DELIVER SEASCAPE OUTCOMES

In order to ensure long-term finance for climate-smart, sustainable development and conservation of ecosystems important to the lives and livelihoods of coastal communities, various seascape financing models are being prototyped by the SWIO Venture Builder partners across the region.

The five countries targeted by WWF-SWIO collectively contain nearly 750 000 hectares of mangroves, of which 41% are found in Mozambique and 37% are found in Madagascar. Both countries are highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, including the devastating winds that come with tropical cyclones. Such cyclones already cost Madagascar US$87 million each year in direct losses.[6]

Maintaining and restoring the health of carbon-rich coastal and marine ecosystems ("blue carbon" ecosystems) is essential for bolstering climate resilience, facilitating adaptation, conserving biodiversity, contributing to climate mitigation, and supporting food security and sustainable coastal livelihoods. Securing the future of these habitats and seascapes requires coordinated, collective action from a wide range of stakeholders. To date, however, financing for the protection, restoration and effective management of these ecosystems has been limited and has failed to reach the scale needed for them to contribute effectively to global climate mitigation and adaptation efforts.

The US$200 billion in development finance that flows to NbS each year is less than a third of the US$700 billion needed to achieve global climate, biodiversity and land degradation goals.[7] Currently, the vast majority of this finance comes from public sources. Private-sector investment will be needed to bridge the gap.

[6] World Resources Institute. 2023. *Pathways to unblocking private financing for nature-based solutions.*

[7] Ibid.

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There are several possible sources for leveraging the SWIO region's natural assets to attract private funding:

Ecotourists could provide direct payments to the communities that live in or near mangroves for the recreational benefits that their mangroves provide.

Private investors such as asset managers, banks and impact investment funds that see the long-term benefits of generating measurable social or environmental benefits alongside financial returns could utilize and invest in a range of innovative finance mechanisms, including, where appropriate, blue bonds.

Private sector companies who are committed to global sustainability objectives and have direct or indirect business interests in the SWIO region could invest in projects that safeguard and restore the region's ecosystems with a range of benefits, underpinning their long-term business sustainability.

To take this one step further, under WWF's recommended contributions approach, private sector companies seeking to transition towards net zero could make a financial commitment that internalizes the external costs of any remaining greenhouse gas emissions, and invest the financial commitment into a menu of potentially high-impact climate and nature actions. This should be undertaken after the company has accounted for, disclosed and reduced its emissions across the value chain, in line with an ambitious science-based target pathway. The financial contribution should be based on a carbon price far above what is generally practised in the voluntary carbon market. Some of these actions might generate quantifiable emission reductions or remove carbon from the atmosphere, while others might unlock the pipeline of future climate solutions. These solutions could include mangrove restoration and other NbS, new emissions capture technologies, and even business innovation and transformation efforts that can further society's move toward a net-zero economy. This approach is being piloted in Madagascar (see page 42).[8]

[8] WWF. 2024. *Seeding Hope: How climate change is impacting coastal communities in the South West Indian Ocean and how mangrove protection and restoration present robust nature-based solutions (Full report).*

OPENING A WINDOW ON MANGROVE PROTECTION – THE CONTRIBUTIONS APPROACH IN PRACTICE IN SWIO

In 2020, Danish roof window manufacturer Velux partnered with WWF-Denmark to finance The Green Shores Project, making VELUX a pioneer in the corporate sector in financing NbS by following the WWF Blueprint for Corporate Action on Climate and Nature.

The VELUX Group is committed to reducing and removing the equivalent of its historical CO_2 emissions through financing forest conservation and restoration projects that are developed and delivered by WWF. The forest-project portfolio is designed to remove and reduce 4.5 million tonnes of CO_2 by 2041. This is the equivalent of the VELUX Group's total emissions since its foundation in 1941.

In 2023, The Green Shores Project started investing in mangrove restoration and protection and establishing alternative livelihoods in Madagascar's MTB seascape. The project aims to strengthen the livelihoods of 2 000 households by developing nature-positive value chains such as tree nurseries, beekeeping, and community-based ecotourism.

Since its launch, the project has restored 60 hectares of mangroves by planting more than 24 000 native seedlings from community-owned nurseries. The restoration site is planned to cover a total of 1 000 hectares by 2025, and 6 500 hectares by 2033.

The project will continue supporting restoration and protection efforts until 2063, with the funding secured from VELUX until 2041 making the VELUX project portfolio quite unique in WWF for its extended duration.


© Nick Riley / WWF-Madagascar


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MARINE AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE FUND

A seascape financing mechanism called the Marine and Community Resilience Fund (MCRF) is being piloted in Madagascar. This fund aims to serve as a hybrid investment vehicle that balances impact and financial risks by funding both mangrove conservation and ocean-positive SMEs. To achieve its vision, the MCRF aims to:

- **Increase** the capital that existing conservation trust funds endow into community-led mangrove conservation and livelihood projects in the seascapes
- **De-risk** and attract microfinance loans to coastal microentrepreneurs
- **Catalyse** private-sector investments into SMEs in the seascapes.

The MCRF is scheduled to launch later in 2025 and, over the course of its five to eight years of operation, is expected to unlock US$1 million in microcredit to coastal microentrepreneurs and support 2 000 households to improve their incomes and sustainable livelihoods as well as provide – in perpetuity – yearly financing of more than US$300 000 to community-led conservation activities.

Seascape-level financing mechanisms like the MCRF are also currently being developed for the Inhambane seascape in Mozambique and the RUMAKI seascape in Tanzania.

CONCLUSION

WWF-SWIO's regional approach to the SWIO region draws on strategic partnerships and focuses on empowering coastal communities to take the lead in managing their natural resources. This tactic has already served to scale and intensify WWF's ability to improve lives, strengthen communities, and restore and conserve ecosystems across the SWIO region.

Now, the challenge lies in scaling this impact even further, and faster, while securing the necessary financing to fully leverage the region's carbon-capturing and adaptation-enhancing mangroves in the lead-up to 2030 and beyond.

By scaling out, up and deep, WWF-SWIO is driving meaningful transformation of various anthropogenic challenges to the region's ecosystems. As worsening climate conditions threaten the well-being of coastal communities and ecosystems, it is more important than ever for WWF to scale the impact of its multidisciplinary approach.


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SWIO VENTURE BUILDER PARTNERS

The following organizations are actively working on the ground to support sustainable blue community-led enterprises at the local level in Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique, South Africa and Tanzania through the SWIO Venture Builder developed under the Our Blue Future platform.

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