Increasing the size and effective management of Marine Protected Areas in East Africa

ICCF Inception Workshop: Facilitating Dialogue and Strengthening Transboundary Cooperation with Legislators to Improve Marine Governance

Nairobi 17th November 2020
Melita Samoilys, CORDIO East Africa

Blue Economy definition:
"to promote economic growth, social inclusion and the preservation or improvement of livelihoods while at the same time ensuring environmental sustainability of the oceans and coastal areas"

1) Why Marine Protected Areas ?

- Kenya, Tanzania and Mozambique share a continuous highly interconnected coastline, both ecologically and socially, which is rich in coral reefs, seagrass beds and mangroves

- All 3 ecosystems play a critical role in climate change mitigation e.g protecting shorelines and coastal populations from sea level rise & flooding, and through the significant carbon sinks that seagrass beds and mangroves provide

- MPAs are a well established approach to protecting and managing biodiversity and fisheries

- Global Convention for Biological Diversity target for the % of national marine areas that marine areas that should be protected has risen from 10% (2020) to 30% (2030). Few nations met their 2020 target, all need to expand for 2030

- Recent estimates of size of government gazetted MPAs puts us at: 10% (Kenya), 20% (Mozambique) and 13% (Tanzania).

2) Sustainable small scale fisheries (SSF): restoring the fish populations

- Coastal and marine environments support important coastal fisheries (SSFs) which support the livelihoods of 19 million (2015) – 28 million (2030) people within 25km of the Kenyan, Tanzanian, Mozambique coast. SSFs provide 50-90% of household income

- Overfishing and destructive fishing methods (eg dynamite), poor enforcement and inadequate regulations have led to highly depleted fish populations, some species have disappeared (eg sharks) as well as degraded habitats. 79- 95% of coral reefs were rated overfished in East African countries in 2014.

- Protected areas are a key mechanism for restoring fish populations, but need to be fully protected - the CBD target of 30% means no extraction – this could be done through national spatial plans (MSP) that formalise SSF zones.

- Funding commitments to monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) of SSFs is weak.

3) Community engagement: stewardship through Locally Managed Marine Areas

- If LMMAs are factored in to calculate national total MPA coverage you get:
11% (Kenya), 20% (Mozambique) and 59% (Tanzania -Zanzibar)

- Coastal people living within these seascapes want and need to play a leading role in the governance of their marine resources. In Kenya communities are empowered and are actively leading the "LMMA movement" from 1 LMMA in 2006 to 24 in 2015.

- National legislation providing legal frameworks for community LMMAs is key to their success. This legislation needs to be streamlined with long term funding and easy to invoke, so communities can rapidly define local marine areas and their regulations.

- These ocean governance strategies need long term and accessible funding. Blue Economy policies have the potential to develop legal frmaeworks and financing instruments to expand existing marine protected area coverage, support community engagement management of marine protected areas, and restore SSFs to be productive and sustainable