

## Citizen Debate:

How can Africa and Europe work together to strengthen existing MPAs, and LMMAs, and expand their geographical scope and effectiveness towards 2030?

**Online Recording – 12 January 2024 at 1pm CET**

**Broadcast – TBC**

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION /

The ocean is critical to accelerating global climate and biodiversity action, providing food security and promoting sustainable development for millions of people. Furthermore, unsustainable human activities and their harmful impacts continue to degrade the ocean, leading to profound changes and hampering the much-needed achievement of the UN 2030 and AU 2063 Agendas.

In view of this, there is a need to focus on preserving the ocean for the climate, biodiversity, and other services it offers, including to human livelihoods.

The shared interface represented in the Mediterranean basin, Atlantic and Indian Oceans, offers a strategic opportunity of cooperation which is not yet central to the AU-EU dialogue but one with immense potential for the two continents.

Given the vast exclusive economic zones (EEZ) of Africa (13 million square kilometres) and Europe ([25 million square kilometres](#)), cooperation on increasing MPAs, including Locally-Managed Marine Areas (LMMAs) across the two continents could prove beneficial and impactful.

Working jointly towards expanding the number of MPAs, and LMMAs would build on the outcomes enshrined in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, and particularly the 30x30 initiative and goal on protected areas, which is a stepping stone towards a 100% sustainably managed ocean.

Efforts to expand ocean protection should also support the needs and priorities of local communities and should therefore deliberately support sustainable use of natural resources by and for local stakeholder, first and foremost Indigenous People and Local Communities (IPLCs).

To ensure ocean governance efforts reach their objectives, the expansion of MPAs and LMMAs must be co-developed with indigenous and local communities through inclusive and meaningful engagement processes, demonstrating governance at the local level that is contextual, equitable and transparent.

### CONTEXT OF THE CITIZEN DIALOGUE /

Online Citizen Dialogues are a key part of AEF's toolkit to capture citizen perspectives on Africa-Europe relations. Through the series, AEF ensure citizen voices are included across the various work

streams and priority areas of the Foundation.

In the context of this Online Citizen Dialogue, AEF will engage young leaders who are spearheading ocean initiatives across Africa and Europe, and are committed to propelling the sustainability of ocean communities and blue economy endeavors.

Purpose of the Online Citizen Dialogue:

- Engage diverse forces from Africa and Europe
- Learn from diverse experiences and share best practices
- Create a community of practice for greater cooperation

The Online Citizen Dialogue will be pre-recorded on Zoom and published on the AEF's digital platforms at a later date.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE CITIZEN DIALOGUE /

This debate represents an opportunity to bring together youth and decision-makers to discuss Africa-Europe cooperation on ocean governance and the blue economy, with aims to:

- Produce insights on effective strategies for engaging coastal communities in the conservation and management of ocean resources;
- Gain a deeper understanding of the needs and priorities of coastal communities and the support required to strengthen existing and expand MPAs and LMMAs;
- Present ideas for how Africa and Europe can work together on increasing the presence and efficacy of MPAs and LMMAs across the two continents

### MAIN QUESTIONS TO BE TACKLED:

1. How can we meaningfully involve coastal communities in the high-level decision-making processes that are defining the blue economy, including the expansion of MPAs and LMMAs?
  - How do we ensure community needs and priorities drive the LMMA establishment process at all stages so that the community retains overall ownership?
  - How do we ensure implementation respects the rights, knowledge, values and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities?
2. How can governments and the international marine conservation community better recognize and support local marine stewardship efforts?
  - How do harness youth leadership across communities and regions to encourage the replication of LMMAs?
  - What's the role of awareness raising programmes within communities to increase knowledge about the state of marine resources and ensure continued buy-in on LMMA expansion?
3. What are the benefits of AU-EU cooperation on increasing MPAs and LMMAs to build on the outcomes enshrined in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, and particularly the 30x30 target on protected areas?
  - Priority should be given to investing in the capacity of African countries to enhance and manage MPAs and LMMAs effectively. How can local and regional partnerships better support local capacity building to yield tangible results in the short term?

- The definition or narrative between MPAs and other Effective-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) differs across regions, between communities and among practitioners in both Africa and Europe. In view of this, how do we address these barriers and create a cross-regional mechanism for improving awareness and exchange of best practices?

#### DESIRED OUTCOMES OF THE CITIZEN DIALOGUE/

- Knowledge sharing between youth and experts with an interest in sustainable coastal management
- Embedding practitioners' thinking into the development of recommendations for strengthening Africa-Europe cooperation on sustainable coastal management
- Contributing to recommendations for effective area-based conservation, including MPAs and LMMAs, integrating the needs and priorities of indigenous and local communities

#### SPEAKERS/

An outline of the proposed agenda and key contributors:

##### Expert speakers may include:

- **Vatosoa Rakotondrazafy**, Madagascar's small-scale fisheries Ambassador, and Regional Coastal and Ocean Governance Manager at IUCN
- **Guillermo Crespo**, Co-Lead of the IUCN WCPA High Seas Specialist Group, Research Consultant & Director of Keystone Ocean S.L.
- **David Obura**, Founding Director, Coastal Oceans Research and Development – Indian Ocean (CORDIO) East Africa
- **Alessandra Sensi**, Head of Sector, Water and Environment Division, Union for the Mediterranean
- **Editrudith Lukanga**, Secretary General, African Women Fish Processors and Traders Network (AWFISHNET)
- **Gaoussou Gueye**, Secretaire General CAOPA

##### Additional experts may include:

- **Manuel Ntumba**, Chair of the African Union Youth Advisory Board on Disaster Risk Reduction
- **Farah Obaidullah**, ocean advocate, consultant and the Founder of the non-profit Women4Oceans
- **Wayne Stanley Rice**, interdisciplinary conservation social scientist at the University of Cape Town

##### Citizens from youth-led organisations:

- **YOUTH4MPAs**; African marine enthusiasts with a goal to advocate for the proclamation and expansion of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in our oceans.

- **CliMates Madagascar**, international youth-led think-and-do tank on climate change gathering together volunteers, both students and young professionals.
- **The Surfrider Foundation**, non-profit organisation that fights for plastic reduction, ocean protection, beach access, coastal climate and clean water.
- **Peace Boat**, NGO working to promote peace, human rights, and sustainability, guided by the UN Sustainable Development Goals.
- **The Resilient40**, youth-led, regional climate action network that educates, empowers, and mobilises young people to lead on solutions for the ecological and climate crises that are rooted in science, aligned with traditional, local and Indigenous knowledge.

Additional citizens may include AEF Partners Initiative Grantees:

- **Je m'engage pour l'Afrique (France & Madagascar)**  
Hosts masterclasses on sustainable actions to preserve oceans
- **Coastal Resource Centre (South Africa)**  
Provides information to young people in rural coastal communities on the opportunities for innovation within the ocean economy

MODERATOR/

- Thomas Sberna, Senior Fellow for Ocean at the Africa-Europe Foundation

FORMAT /

- Duration of max 45-60 minutes. The language of the debate is English.
- The event will take place on Zoom.
- The panel will be promoted on our website and social media.

TIMELINE /

- Confirm citizens and experts by December 15
- Zoom recording on January 12
- Release date TBC