

WIO-COMPAS

PROGRESS, IMPACT AND LESSONS

2008-2026

The workforce behind effective management

The Western Indian Ocean now includes more than **100 marine protected areas** and over **300 community-managed marine areas and LMMAs**. As countries work towards global biodiversity targets, these numbers—and the area under conservation—are expected to grow. Yet expanding coverage will deliver limited benefits unless existing and new areas are managed effectively.

Regional assessments continue to show a gap between designation and effective management. The *Western Indian Ocean Marine Protected Areas Outlook* found that only around **40% of assessed MPAs were effectively managed**, with persistent constraints relating to staffing, skills, financing, monitoring, enforcement and community engagement.

A rapid survey conducted through WIOMPAN country chapter chairs recorded approximately **2,000 people working in ocean conservation areas across the region**. When considered against the combined extent of WIO MPAs, this equates to approximately **3.4 staff per 1,000 km²—or one staff member for every 294 km² under protection**.

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WESTERN INDIAN OCEAN MARINE SCIENCE ASSOCIATION

The challenge is not only to increase staff numbers. Marine conservation professionals need the competence to translate management plans, scientific evidence and policy commitments into effective action. They also require continued professional development, recognised standards, supportive institutions and credible pathways for career progression. WIO-COMPAS was developed to address this critical link between workforce capacity and management effectiveness.

100+
MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

300+
LMMAs & COMMUNITY-MANAGED AREAS

~2,000
CONSERVATION-AREA STAFF RECORDED

1 : 294 km²
ONE RECORDED STAFF MEMBER PER 294 KM² OF MPA

*Regional aggregate based on a rapid survey of WIOMPAN country chapter chairs.

From training to demonstrated competence

WIO-COMPAS was launched in 2008 to address a critical gap. Training can strengthen knowledge and skills, but completing a course does not show whether a practitioner can apply them effectively in the workplace. Candidates demonstrate their existing knowledge, experience and performance against regional standards through portfolios, case studies, practical exercises, written assessments, presentations and interviews. The three levels represent professional progression based on years of experience and the increasing scope and complexity of roles and responsibilities. They do not indicate differences in the importance of each role.

Across three levels, WIO-COMPAS assesses the capabilities required for effective management—from governance, enforcement and operational planning to stakeholder engagement, monitoring, resource management, leadership and ethics. Candidates receive a recognised professional designation, while the assessment process helps them identify strengths and areas for continued development.



Progress across the WIO

Since 2008, WIO-COMPAS has awarded 174 successful certifications: 108 at Level 1, 61 at Level 2 and five at Level 3

Momentum has accelerated: 73 certifications—43% of all awards—have been completed since 2022. In 2026, a French-language assessment on Sainte-Marie Island, Madagascar, produced 22 successful Level 1 and Level 2 certifications, the programme's largest certification event to date. Annex 1 provides a full list of all candidates clustered by country.

CERTIFICATION ACROSS THE WESTERN INDIAN OCEAN



The impact of WIO-COMPAS extends beyond the number of certificates awarded. The 2022 programme review found that 80–90% of surveyed MPA PROs believed certification had strengthened their management capabilities and confidence in carrying out their duties. Nearly half of post-2012 respondents—and 63% of earlier graduates—had subsequently been promoted or assigned greater responsibilities. Graduates also reported stronger professional networks, clearer expectations of their roles and a better understanding of where they needed further development.

WIO-COMPAS is also beginning to influence institutional workforce systems. The Seychelles Parks and Gardens Authority had integrated certification into its scheme of service, recruitment criteria and job descriptions. The review also identified steps towards institutionalisation within the Kenya Wildlife Service, Tanzania's Marine Parks and Reserves Unit, CapeNature in South Africa and the Wildlife Conservation Society in Madagascar. Among institutional respondents, 75% considered certification at least partly useful for ensuring that appropriately qualified staff are recruited.

From individual competence to workforce development

WIO-COMPAS demonstrates that workforce development must extend beyond delivering more training courses. Effective marine conservation depends on whether professionals can apply their knowledge, progress in their careers and work within institutions that recognise and support their competence.

How WIO-COMPAS strengthens the conservation workforce



TRAIN

Demonstrate competence

Work-based assessment reveals strengths and development needs.

RETAIN

Create progression

Certification levels and recertification support professional growth

REFRAME

Define the profession

Standards recognise the capabilities required for effective management

Knowledge becomes sustained workforce capacity

Professional standards connect learning with recognition, responsibility and career progression.

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Lessons for global capacity development

The WIO-COMPAS experience offers four lessons for capacity-development programmes working in conservation and other professional fields.

What the WIO-COMPAS experience shows

1

ASSES PRACTICE

Training and competence are different

Test whether professionals can apply knowledge and judgement in real workplace situations.

2

ENABLE PERFORMANCE

Competence needs the right conditions

Skills cannot compensate for shortages in staffing, finance, equipment or institutional support.

3

EMBED RECOGNITION

Institutions determine long-term value

Connect certification to recruitment, job descriptions, professional development and promotion.

4

SUPPORT A CAREER

Capacity development must continue

Use progressive levels, recertification and professional networks to support growth throughout a career.

Lasting capacity requires more than training

Competence must be assessed, recognised by employers and supported through a professional career.

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ANNEX 1: List of MPA Pro's in the WIO



KENYA

Name and surname	Level	Organisation	MPA/ocean conservation area
Said Shee Mohamed	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Watamu Marine Park and Reserve
Hamisi Chuma	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Watamu Marine Park and Reserve
Mwanapili Hamisi	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Mombasa Marine Park
Kenneth Kazungu Katana	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Mombasa Marine Park
Ntindi Kassim Mwabilo	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Kisite-Mpunguti Marine Park and Reserve
Kitsao Kalume Tinga	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Watamu Marine Park and Reserve
Abdikadir Eimoy Adan	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Mombasa Marine Park
Omari Hassan Dago	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Malindi Marine Park
Daniel Mutwiri Kaburi	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Watamu Marine Park and Reserve
Julius Mutua Ngeti	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Kisite-Mpunguti Marine Park and Reserve
Lucy Kaingi Kivunzi	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Mombasa Marine Park
Mwanahamisi Haodo	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Malindi Marine Park
Mwinyi Mwandungo Mwalimu	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Mombasa Marine Park
Willys Ojuok Osore	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Malindi Marine Park
Abraham K. Songok	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Malindi Marine Park
Mary C. Kilului	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Mombasa Marine Park
Ramadhan Mwatsefu	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Mombasa Marine Park
Susan N. Mtakai	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Mombasa Marine Park

ANNEX 1: List of MPA Pro's in the WIO

KENYA - continued

Name and surname	Level	Organisation	MPA/ocean conservation area
Abdalla Bawatta Godana	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Mombasa Marine Park
Beatrice Jerop	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Mombasa Marine Park
Brenda Chepkurui Koech	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Kisite-Mpunguti Marine Park and Reserve
Mohamed Namuna	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Kisite-Mpunguti Marine Park and Reserve
Mwachanze N. Mohamed	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Mombasa Marine Park
Betty Achieng Ojuka	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Mombasa Marine Park
Tima Mwalimu Dago	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Mombasa Marine Park
Lydia Akoth Illa	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Malindi Marine Park
Salim Said Poleh	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Kisite-Mpunguti Marine Park and Reserve
Samuel Muriithi	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Malindi Marine Park
Cyprian Kaugiria Limungi	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Kisite-Mpunguti Marine Park and Reserve
Hassan Bakari Banje	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Malindi National Park
Masud Salim Chonga	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Kisite-Mpunguti Marine Park and Reserve
Rose Hakofa Abae	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Kenya Wildlife Research and Training Institute
Selestine Ughanga Mwasala	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Malindi Marine Park
Shamsa Hassan Ahmed	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Mombasa Marine Park
Bakari Mohamed Sheumbe	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Malindi Marine Park
David Katana Fondo	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Kisite-Mpunguti Marine Park and Reserve

ANNEX 1: List of MPA Pro's in the WIO

KENYA - continued

Name and surname	Level	Organisation	MPA/ocean conservation area
Hassan Mbale Machafu	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Watamu Marine Park and Reserve
Neville Agesa	1	Kiunga Community Conservancy	Diani-Chale and Kisite-Mpunguti MPAs
Susan Wanjiru	1	Kenya Wildlife Service	Mombasa Marine Park
Arthur Tuda	2	Kenya Wildlife Service	Mombasa Marine Park
Isaac Mugo	2	Kenya Wildlife Service	Malindi Marine Park
Albert Gamoe Locham	2	Kenya Wildlife Service	Malindi Marine Park
Jillo Katello	2	Kenya Wildlife Service	Kisite-Mpunguti Marine Park and Reserve
Willys Ojuok Osore	2	Kenya Wildlife Service	Malindi Marine Park
Patteson Mwagona	2	Kenya Wildlife Service	Watamu Marine Park
Eregae J. Ekuwom	2	Kenya Wildlife Service	Mombasa Marine Park
Said Shee Mohamed	2	Kenya Wildlife Service	Kisite-Mpunguti Marine Park and Reserve
Tima Mwalimu Dago	2	Kenya Wildlife Service	Mombasa Marine Park
Abraham Songok	2	Kenya Wildlife Service	Kisite-Mpunguti Marine Park and Reserve
Omar Mohamed	3	Kenya Wildlife Service	All Kenya Wildlife Service marine parks
Arthur Tuda	3	Kenya Wildlife Service	All Kenya Wildlife Service marine parks

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South Africa

Name and surname	Level	Organisation	MPA/ocean conservation area
Victor Cunningham	1	South African National Parks	Tsitsikamma National Park
Owen Govender	1	South African National Parks	Tsitsikamma National Park
James Wood	1	Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife	Aliwal Shoal MPA
Mapiya Vuyani	1	Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency	Mkambathi Nature Reserve
Rob Milne	1	South African National Parks	Tsitsikamma National Park
Richards Edwards	1	CapeNature	Betty's Bay MPA
Lindsay Lewis	1	CapeNature	De Hoop MPA
Marco Denver Barnado	1	South African National Parks	Tsitsikamma MPA
Wayne Meyer	1	CapeNature	Goukamma MPA
Moses Mzalwane	1	South African National Parks	Tsitsikamma MPA and National Park
Fox Roget	1	South African National Parks	Addo Elephant National Park
Roland Scholtz	1	Fransmanshoek Conservancy	Fransmanshoek Conservancy
McGeorge Cuan Brydges	1	CapeNature	Betty's Bay MPA
Ewald Van Wyk	1	CapeNature	Berg Estuary, Velddrif
Ralph Kelly	1	South African National Parks	Table Mountain Marine Protected Area
Henvik Visser	1	South African National Parks	Bird Island MPA
Warren Sables	1	South African National Parks	Table Mountain Marine Protected Area
Marlene Van Onselen	1	CapeNature	Dassen Island Nature Reserve

ANNEX 1: List of MPA Pro's in the WIO

South Africa - continued

Name and surname	Level	Organisation	MPA/ocean conservation area
Nicole Bauer-Schmidt	1	South African National Parks	Table Mountain Marine Protected Area
Clive Hendricks	1	South African National Parks	Bird Island, St Croix Islands and Addo Elephant National Park
Duwayne Kurt Bartlett	1	South African National Parks	Table Mountain and Robben Island MPAs
Luke Jason Linde	1	CapeNature	CapeNature marine protected areas
Brenton Booysen	1	CapeNature	Breede River Estuary
Peter Ian Chadwick	2	WWF South Africa	WWF-SA CAPE Marine Programme
Keith Spencer	2	CapeNature	Goukamma Nature Reserve and MPA
Janette Du Toit	2	Cape West Coast Biosphere	Cape West Coast Biosphere Reserve
Robin Adams	2	South African National Parks	Table Mountain Marine Protected Area
Jean Du Plessis	2	CapeNature	Geelkrans Cluster and Stilbaai MPA
Wayne Meyer	2	CapeNature	Goukamma MPA
Edward John Richards	2	CapeNature	Betty's Bay MPA
Johannes Visagie	2	CapeNature	Dassen Island and Ganzekraal nature reserves
Rob Milne	2	South African National Parks	Addo Elephant National Park MPA
Thobeka Nosizwe Dlamini	2	Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment	Sarah Baartman Region: Addo and Tsitsikamma MPAs
Ane Oosthuizen	3	South African National Parks	All SANParks marine protected areas
Peter Chadwick	3	WWF South Africa	WWF-SA Integrated Ocean Use Programme
Kerry Sink	3	South African National Biodiversity Institute	All South African marine protected areas

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Madagascar

Name and surname	Level	Organisation	MPA/ocean conservation area
Huyghens Behanarina	1	Wildlife Conservation Society	Mananara Nord MPA
Toky Nirimamy Voajanahary	1	Wildlife Conservation Society	Soriake MPA
Victor Baba	1	Madagascar National Parks	Masoala National Park
Bienvenue Zafindrasilivonona	1	Blue Ventures Conservation	Velondriake MPA
Franco Andrianantenaina	1	Blue Ventures Conservation, Madagascar	Baie de Tsimipaika seascape and its 17 LMMAs
Fanantenana Ramasindraibe	1	Blue Ventures Conservation, Madagascar	Baie de Tsimipaika seascape
Aly Fatoumah	1	Blue Ventures Conservation, Madagascar	Baie de Tsimipaika seascape
Gaétan Armel Soankasina	1	Conservation International	Corridor Marin des Sept Baies MPA
Jean Emilien Randrianambinintsoa	1	Blue Ventures Conservation, Madagascar	Belo-sur-Mer LMMA and the Barren Isles MPA
John Bunyan Israel	1	Madagascar National Parks	Madagascar National Parks head office
Juliot Charles Randriamanohisoa	1	Fédération FIHAME Melaky	Barren Isles MPA and associated LMMAs in Melaky
Samar Pavel Ialy Radio	1	Madagascar National Parks	Nosy Hara Marine National Park
Solonomenjanahary Francis Joachim	1	Blue Ventures Conservation, Madagascar	Baie de Tsimipaika
Toky Andriambololoniaina	1	Wildlife Conservation Society, Madagascar	MaMaBay
Tsiafoiniaina Randrianantoanina	1	Wildlife Conservation Society, Madagascar	Baie d'Antongil MPA
Salava Haja Miandrisoa	2	Madagascar National Parks	Masoala National Park

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Madagascar - continued

Name and surname	Level	Organisation	MPA/ocean conservation area
Raymond Isaia	2	Madagascar National Parks	Sahamalaza National Park
Rondro Domoina Rakotomalala	2	WWF Madagascar	Toliara marine and coastal area
Ignace Jean Baptiste Razanakoto	2	Madagascar National Parks	Nosy Hara Marine National Park
Venty Odile	2	Madagascar National Parks	Kirindy Mitea National Park
Huyghens Rock Behanarina	2	Wildlife Conservation Society	Baie d'Antongil
Herve Ndriamparany Rahoasa	2	MIHARI Network	Northern Madagascar LMMAs
Frida Razafinaivo	2	Madagascar National Parks	Madagascar National Parks
Jean Ramialson Andrimampionona	2	Blue Ventures Conservation, Madagascar	Velondriake MPA
Aly Fatoumah	2	Blue Ventures Conservation, Madagascar	Manongarivo/Manongalaza seascape
Dolce Randrianandrasaziky	2	Blue Ventures Conservation, Madagascar	Baie de Mahajamba
Franco Andrianantenaina	2	Blue Ventures Conservation, Madagascar	Barren Isles
Vonjy Gildas Ralazamanana	2	Madagascar National Parks	All Madagascar National Parks MPAs
Lalatiana Odile Randriamiharisoa	2	Madagascar National Parks	All Madagascar National Parks MPAs
Sophia Nirina Rakotoharimalala	2	Wildlife Conservation Society	Ankivonjy and Ankarea
Taylor Dira Angelo Veriza	2	MIHARI Network	LMMAs of western Madagascar
Volantsoa Faramalala Ratsimandresy	2	Fondation pour les Aires Protégées et la Biodiversité de Madagascar	Madagascar's MPAs and LMMAs

ANNEX 1: List of MPA Pro's in the WIO

Tanzania

Name and surname	Level	Organisation	MPA/ocean conservation area
Besta Msumange	1	Marine Parks and Reserves Unit, Tanzania	Mafia Island Marine Park
Humphrey Matalu Mahudi	1	Marine Parks and Reserves Unit, Tanzania	Mafia Island Marine Park
Magreth Mchome	1	Marine Parks and Reserves Unit, Tanzania	Dar es Salaam Marine Reserves System
Ally Rashid Mgeni	1	Marine Parks and Reserves Unit, Tanzania	Mafia Island Marine Park
January Mashola Ndagala	1	Marine Parks and Reserves Unit, Tanzania	Tanga Coelacanth Marine Park
Mohamed Shamte	1	Marine Parks and Reserves Unit, Tanzania	Mafia Island Marine Park
Munezero Hezekiah Kanyangemu	1	Marine Parks and Reserves Unit, Tanzania	Mafia Island Marine Park
Musa Ally Hamisi	1	Marine Parks and Reserves Unit, Tanzania	Mafia Island Marine Park
Amos Singo	1	Marine Parks and Reserves Unit, Tanzania	Mnazi Bay–Ruvuma Estuary Marine Park
Nelson Mdogo	1	Marine Parks and Reserves Unit, Tanzania	Tanga Marine Reserves System
Theodora R. Abraham	1	Marine Parks and Reserves Unit, Tanzania	Tanga Coelacanth Marine Park
Mathias Mateso Buguse	1	Marine Parks and Reserves Unit, Tanzania	Dar es Salaam Marine Reserves System
Shabani Mkwavila	1	Wildlife Conservation Society	Mafia Island Marine Park
Michael Elisha Luwondo	1	Marine Parks and Reserves Unit, Tanzania	Dar es Salaam Marine Reserves System
Ali Yusuf Machano	1	Chumbe Island Coral Park	Chumbe Island Coral Park

ANNEX 1: List of MPA Pro's in the WIO

Tanzania - continued

Name and surname	Level	Organisation	MPA/ocean conservation area
Hashim Karambo Kilawi	1	Marine Parks and Reserves Unit, Tanzania	Mafia Island Marine Park
Masanja Charles Joram	1	Marine Parks and Reserves Unit, Tanzania	Mafia Island Marine Park
Paschal Mkongola	1	Marine Parks and Reserves Unit, Tanzania	Mafia Island Marine Park
Redfred Ngowo	2	Marine Parks and Reserves Unit, Tanzania	Mnazi Bay–Ruvuma Estuary Marine Park
Sylvester Kazimoto	2	Marine Parks and Reserves Unit, Tanzania	Dar es Salaam Marine Reserves System
Jairos Mahenge	2	Tanzania Coastal Management Partnership	Pwani Project
Anita Julius	2	Marine Parks and Reserves Unit, Tanzania	Tanga Coelacanth Marine Park
Humphrey M. Mahudi	2	Marine Parks and Reserves Unit, Tanzania	Mafia Island Marine Park
Ulrike Kloiber	2	Chumbe Island Coral Park	Chumbe Island Coral Park
January M. Ndagala	2	Marine Parks and Reserves Unit, Tanzania	Tanga Coelacanth Marine Park
Milali E. Machumu	2	Marine Parks and Reserves Unit, Tanzania	All MPRU marine parks and reserves
Magreth Mchome	2	Marine Parks and Reserves Unit, Tanzania	All MPRU marine parks and reserves
Iswalala Julius Pagu	2	Marine Parks and Reserves Unit, Tanzania	Dar es Salaam Marine Reserves System
Nelson Mdogo	2	Marine Parks and Reserves Unit, Tanzania	Tanga Marine Reserves System
Catherine S. Msina	2	Marine Parks and Reserves Unit, Tanzania	Dar es Salaam Marine Reserves System

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Seychelles

Name and surname	Level	Organisation	MPA/ocean conservation area
Peter Kowalski	1	Global Vision International	Curieuse Marine National Park
Dainise Lyne Quatre	1	Seychelles Parks and Gardens Authority	Sainte Anne Marine Park
Anto Clive Suzette	1	Seychelles Parks and Gardens Authority	Curieuse Marine Park
Deimen Mougal	1	Seychelles Parks and Gardens Authority	Sainte Anne Marine Park
Jason Bastille	1	Seychelles Parks and Gardens Authority	Curieuse Marine Park
Shazelle Julie	1	Seychelles Parks and Gardens Authority	Sainte Anne Marine Park
Roland Quarte	1	Seychelles Parks and Gardens Authority	Baie Ternay and Port Launay marine parks
Cliff Emile	1	Seychelles Parks and Gardens Authority	Ile Coco MPA
Dean Willian	1	Seychelles Parks and Gardens Authority	Sainte Anne MPA
Rony Renaud	2	Seychelles Parks and Gardens Authority	All SPGA-managed parks
Allen Cedras	2	Seychelles Parks and Gardens Authority	Inner Islands
Remie Asman	2	Seychelles Parks and Gardens Authority	Sainte Anne Marine Park
Anto Suzette	2	Seychelles Parks and Gardens Authority	Curieuse and Ile Coco
Demien Mougal	2	Seychelles Parks and Gardens Authority	Sainte Anne MPA
Lya Docteur	2	Seychelles Parks and Gardens Authority	Sainte Anne, Curieuse, Port Launay, Baie Ternay and Ile Coco

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Comoros, Mozambique, Mauritius/Rodrigues and Réunion






Country	Name and surname	Level	Organisation	MPA/ocean conservation area
Comoros	Anrifiddine Ousseni	1	Agence des Aires Protégées des Comores	Mitsamiouli-Ndroudé National Park
	Youssouf Ahmed	1	Agence des Parcs Nationaux des Comores	Coelacanth National Park
	Madi Bamdou Mouchitadi	2	Agence des Parcs Nationaux des Comores	Mohéli Marine Park
	Housseni Houssoyni	2	Direction Générale de l'Environnement et des Forêts / Agence des Aires Protégées des Comores	All Comoros MPAs
Mozambique	Norton Cossa	1	WWF Mozambique	Primeiras and Segundas Environmental Protection Area
	Tomas Muacahnia	2	Universidade Eduardo Mondlane	Inhaca MPA
	Karen Allen	2	Nautilus Conservation	All ANAC-managed MPAs
	Vanessa Muianga	2	Peace Parks Foundation	Maputo National Park
Mauritius/Rodrigues	Andy Louis	1	South East Marine Protected Area	South East Marine Protected Area, Rodrigues
Réunion	Karine Pothin	2	Réunion Island National Marine Reserve	Réunion Island National Marine Reserve

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