Nairobi Convention: A Key Step Toward a Regional Strategy to Tackle Plastic Pollution in the Indian Ocean

Port Louis, 18 December 2025 - Mauritius hosted a major regional workshop from 16 to 18 December to advance the development of a Regional Strategy to address plastic pollution and associated chemicals in the Indian Ocean, under the Nairobi Convention.

The Indian Ocean is now considered the world's second most polluted ocean after the Pacific. Plastic debris, microplastics, and chemical additives are placing increasing pressure on marine ecosystems, biodiversity, and public health. In response, countries across the region are strengthening their collective action through the Nairobi Convention.

The three-day workshop brought together representatives from all ten Nairobi Convention member states. Sixty experts from public institutions, international organizations, the private sector and NGOs worked jointly to identify regional priorities, including:

- phasing out problematic and unnecessary plastics
- scaling up sustainable alternatives and reuse systems
- strengthening marine pollution prevention
- improving data generation and pollution monitoring
- expanding collection and recycling capacity
- promoting effective financial mechanisms such as Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and Deposit-Refund Systems (DRS)
- integrating key social dimensions, including fair transition and gender equality.

"*This workshop is a significant achievement in itself. It reflects a shared understanding of the plastic pollution crisis and a collective willingness to protect our marine environment and the health of communities across the Indian Ocean*" said Gina Bonne, Director of the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC).

Jean Lindsay Azie, Team Leader Environment, UNDP Mauritius, added: *"The contributions gathered in Mauritius lay the first foundations of a Regional Strategy that could be presented at COP12."*

For the Nairobi Convention partners, the workshop confirms the region's growing collective momentum. *"This meeting shows our countries' ability to work together, across borders, to build a structured response to plastic pollution - a challenge we all share. The work initiated in Mauritius marks a turning point toward a shared vision and coordinated action,"* said Edgard Razafindravahy, Secretary-General of the IOC.

The workshop was organised by the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) and the Nairobi Convention, with support from the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and the

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French Global Environment Facility (FFEM), through the ExPLOI project, the Nairobi Convention, the BRS Convention and the GEF ISLANDS Indian Ocean Project implemented by UNDP.

About the Nairobi Convention

The Nairobi Convention is a regional treaty that brings together governments, civil-society actors and the private sector from across the Western Indian Ocean around a common goal: a healthy Indian Ocean region where rivers, coastlines and marine ecosystems are protected. It provides a framework for regional cooperation, mobilizes expertise and financing, and supports countries in addressing the environmental challenges affecting the whole region.

Member States of the Convention are Comoros, France, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Somalia, Tanzania and South Africa.

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