



THE ASCLME PROJECT

An update on Progress and Implementation since Inception

To undertake an environmental baseline assessment of the Agulhas and Somali Current Large Marine Ecosystems in order to:

1. Capture existing information relevant to their management
2. Identify and fill information gaps needed to improve LME-based management decision-making in the two LMEs and
3. Ascertain the role of external forcing functions (such as the Mascarene Plateau and the South Equatorial Current)

The deliverables from this 5-year project:

- A Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and a Strategic Action Programme for the Agulhas Current LME and for the East African Current region (with the long-term intention of expanding the latter to cover the entire Somali Current LME)
- A better understanding of the influence of the south equatorial current and the Mascarene Plateau in the context of the LMEs. (Does the Mascarene plateau constitute an LME in its own right?)

1. Information Captured for Development of the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis
2. Long-term LME Data Collection, Management and Distribution Mechanisms Established
3. TDA and SAPs and Associated Sustainability for an LME Approach Adopted
4. LME Coordination, Communication and Participation Mechanisms Established

2008 ASCLME-EAF Nansen Research Cruises:

1. East Madagascar
2. Mauritius
3. Mascarene Plateau and Basin
4. Mozambique Channel

All cruises were developed in conjunction with the FAO-EAF Nansen Project and through discussion with SWIOFP to ensure an effective ecosystem monitoring approach was employed

Meteorological and hydrographical sampling

CTD Profiles; sea surface salinity and relative temperature and fluorescence (Chl A); current speed and direction measurements (ADCP); wind direction and speed; air temperature and pressure, relative humidity, and sea surface temperature.

Plankton Sampling

Phytoplankton and zooplankton depth-stratified information on the abundance and distribution;

Biological Fish Sampling

Species composition by weight and number; length measurements; genetic analysis (DNA and stable Isotopes)

Echo Sounder

Multibeam (Seabed mapping & acoustic biomass estimation)

Additional Activities on 2008 Cruises included:

Deployment of Autonomous Temperature Line Acquisition System (ATLAS) moorings (in collaboration with NOAA)

Deployment of drifters and Argo floats for long-term data capture of water column parameters

Comparative surveys of dipole eddies and productivity within the Mozambique channel (in collaboration with SWIOFP and IRD)

Detailed reports of all cruises and data collected are in final review stage and will shortly be available on the ASCLME website (www.asclme.org)

Further to decisions of the 1st ASCLME PSC (Durban 2008), the Project has developed a Coastal Livelihoods Assessment and Mapping Component. This will focus on the following sectors and issues:

- Small-scale, artisanal and subsistence fisheries
- Mariculture activities
- Coastal tourism

Emphasis will be on the economic importance of each sector. The cost-benefit to the sector of using the ecosystem approach, and how each sector fits into the larger LME management approach

The ASCLME Project also has to capture or collect data for the TDA process relating to:

Coastal Habitat Types: (particularly nursery and spawning areas or those support rare/threatened species)

Invasive Species: (esp. from ballast waters and international transport movements)

Marine Pollution: e.g. shipping discharges, oil/chemical spills, exploration/extraction of natural resources

ASCLME has adopted a new approach to the TDA (Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis) development process.

This now starts at the country level with a national MEDA (Marine Ecosystem Diagnostic Analysis). The results from the MEDAs will be amalgamated into a regional TDA which will provide the basis for the policy level Strategic Action Programme.

This will A. provide each country with a national product as part of the LME process and B. help to create national ownership and capacity building for the regional LME management and governance process

1st Regional Meeting of the National Coordination Groups (COGs) in Mauritius in Sep 2008

Regional Meeting of National Data and Information Coordinators, South Africa, Jan 2009

General results from these meetings:

- Development of a regionally-consistent template for the MEDAs;
- A work-plan for the production of the MEDAs and the overall TDA(s) for 2009-2010;
- Adoption of a Regional D&I Management Plan

The MEDA → TDA → SAP Process is now structured and underway with effective country ‘buy-in’ and support (national Coordination Groups and technical support teams established and briefed on roles and deliveries)

Following the decision of the 2008 PSC, a Policy and Governance Coordinator has been hired and related activities have been developed and will shortly be implemented

A 3-week programme for local scientific trainees was successfully completed at UCT in mid-2008. Following this some 80% of trained individuals took part in the 2008 cruises

A Capacity Building and Training Programme for 2009-10 is in the final stages of development in coordination with our partner projects (primarily SWIOFP and the EAF-Nansen Project)

Plans are nearing completion for an in-country training programme customised to national needs and aimed at adoption of the ecosystem approach (with financial support from ASCLME for equipment and scientists)

A participatory Communications Strategy is under development to ensure stakeholder engagement in the ASCLME process

This includes a specific component for community involvement as well as Distance Learning and Information Sharing Tools (DLIST)

Filming (**Educational** and **Promotional**) is now under contract in collaboration with our WIO-LaB partners and the crew will be visiting the WIO countries to capture selected footage

As well as the formal partnerships between ASCLME, SWIOFP and WIO-LaB a number of new partnerships have been activated:

SAIAB/ACEP: Our primary partners and hosts in South Africa who support us through provision of accommodation, scientific staff and capital training equipment

FAO EAF-Nansen Project: MoU in final stages

IRD (France): MoU in final stages

UNDP-IUCN-GEF Seamounts Project: Formal collaboration captured in Project Document (approved)

NOAA: Collaboration in deployment of network of moorings and drifters for measuring ocean-atmosphere linkages

Furthermore, ASCLME is currently negotiating some new and exciting partnerships:

US Navy Research Laboratory: Development of new seismic technology for high-resolution current and water column analysis

AU-GEF-WB Sustainable Fisheries Investment Fund: Support for the development of demonstrations of sustainable fisheries at the artisanal/coastal level

NEPAD: Close consultations on how the Sub-Saharan LME approach fits into the NEPAD – ‘African Voice’ process

EU-Africa InterLink: Funding support from EU for specific priorities in Africa. ASCLME has proposed funded activities related to LMEs and Climate Change which are receiving a high priority from this EU- administered fund

- Capacity Building and Training for nearshore and offshore ecosystem assessments and monitoring
- 2009 cruises off Kenya, Tanzania, Comoros, the southern island group of the Seychelles, Mascarene Basin (ATLAS mooring maintenance and deployment), the southern boundary of the Agulhas Current LME.
- Coastal Livelihoods Assessment
- DLIST and Communications Strategy development
- MEDA data capture and information management/sharing strategies
- Development of data capture mechanisms for POPS, invasive species and marine offshore pollution



THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST

Please visit the website at www.asclme.org for more information