

The Abidjan Convention:  
arrangements and engagement  
with the Secretariat and the  
Parties, including preparations for  
the next COP

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Cape Town, Nov 2019

# Multilateral Regional Agreements

- Critical role in the overall framework of environmental laws
- Complementing national legislation and bilateral agreements

# Negotiating

Identifying National Needs and Developing a National Position

Mobilising a Negotiation Team

Country Coalitions

Regional and Interest Group Negotiating Blocs

Particular Challenges for Developing Country Coalitions:

Delegation size,

Complex negotiations,

Team size and negotiator skills

# Abidjan Convention (ABC)

Convention on Cooperation for the Protection,  
Management and Development of the Marine  
Environment and Coastal Areas of the Atlantic  
Coast of the West, Central and Southern African  
Region (Abidjan Convention)

# ABC structure

Secretariat

Conference of the Parties

National Authorities

Protocols

# ABC - Decision CP 11.10

Set up a working group to study all aspects of the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction within the framework of the Abidjan Convention [...]"

# The major tasks of the WG ABNJ

- To **identify and agree on the issues to be studied in relation to BBNJ**
- To carry out **studies (support from organisations)** - tasks, and to organise working group meetings where these studies are considered and further discussed;
- To plan and **undertake specific activities with the objective of strengthening the capacity of Governments and their technical services** on management of ABNJ;
- **Draft technical reports which may be submitted through the ABC Parties** to any discussion on the related subject in the UNGA processes and/or the related processes under the UNCLOS;
- To **formulate recommendations to the ABC COP, and to transmit them for consideration by the COP** for their necessary decision and action.

# ABNJ Programme of Work

- Study to define **the ecological baseline for ABNJ** adjacent to the Abidjan Convention region;
- Analysis of the **existing legal framework and possible legal requirements for the Abidjan Convention** to work on the waters in ABNJ;
- Assessment of **available area-based management tools and existing relevant data systems**;
- Study to explore options for **regional and cross-sectoral coordination and cooperation**
- Assessment of the **possible role of regional approaches**
- Assessment of **regional capacity-building and technology transfer needs**
- **Regional recommendations for possible capacity support platforms and technology transfer mechanisms** on a global scale



# ABC – Strong High Seas

Main point of contact for national governments and other regional ocean conservation organisations in western Central Africa and Southern Africa

# STRONG High Seas - Work Programme

- Organisation of 5 regional Dialogue Workshops (2018 – 2021)
- Establishment of a regional dialogue & engagement platform (2017 – 2012)
- Legal framework analyses (2018)
- Ecological baselines analyses (2019)
- Socio-economic analyses (2021)
- Conservation measures analyses (2021)
- Integrated management (2022)
- Capacity development analyses and trainings (2022)
- Development of options for MCS (2019)
- Development of concrete proposals for MCS (2020)
- Development of regional capacities in MCS (2021)

# What can you do?

- Be champions for ABNJ in your national governments or organisations and in the region.
- Follow developments and engage with Abidjan Secretariat and the STRONG High Seas project and other BBNJ/ABNJ issues
- Engage with the STRONG High Seas team.
- Follow updates in newsletters, social media.

## 4 ABC protocols:

“changing ocean governance”

- Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management protocol
- Protocol on pollution from land-based sources and activities
  - Protocol on sustainable mangrove management
- Protocol on environmental norms and standards for offshore oil and gas exploration and exploitation activities

# ABC COP13 - 2020

- COP Decision
- Presentation in the plenary session – report on work and ABNJ (opportunities/recommendations)
- Side event on BBNJ - STRONG policy brief

# International cooperation

States Parties shall cooperate under this Agreement for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, including through strengthening and enhancing cooperation with and among relevant legal instruments and frameworks and relevant global, regional, subregional and sectoral bodies and members thereof in the achievement of the objective of this Agreement.

# Institutional arrangements

The COP shall [monitor and] keep under review the implementation of this Agreement and, for this purpose, shall:

Promote cooperation and coordination with and among relevant legal instruments and frameworks and relevant global, regional, subregional and sectoral bodies, with a view to promoting coherence among efforts towards, and the harmonization of relevant policies and measures for, the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction [, including by establishing processes for cooperation and coordination with and among relevant global, regional, subregional and sectoral bodies] [, including by inviting other global, regional, subregional and sectoral bodies to establish processes for cooperation];

# ABMT- International cooperation

Adopting conservation and [management] [sustainable use] measures to complement measures designated under relevant legal instruments and frameworks and relevant global, regional, subregional or sectoral bodies;

[(ii) Establishing area-based management tools, including marine protected areas, and adopting conservation and [management] [sustainable use] measures where there is no relevant legal instrument or framework or relevant global, regional, subregional or sectoral body.]]



# ABMT - consultation

The secretariat shall make that proposal publicly available and facilitate consultations thereon as follows:

Where there are relevant legal instruments or frameworks or relevant global, regional or sectoral bodies: (i) Whether to recommend that States Parties to this Agreement promote the adoption of relevant conservation and [management] [sustainable use] measures through such instruments, frameworks and bodies, in accordance with their respective mandates; (ii) Whether to adopt conservation and [management] [sustainable use] measures complementary to those adopted under such instruments, frameworks and bodies; (d) Where there are no relevant legal instruments or frameworks or relevant global, regional or sectoral bodies, the adoption of conservation and [management] [sustainable use] measures.]

# ABMTs - Implementation

States Parties shall promote the adoption of measures within relevant legal instruments and frameworks and relevant global, regional, subregional and sectoral bodies of which they are members to support the implementation of the conservation and management objectives of the measures adopted under this Part.]

# Environment Impact Assessment

Alt. 1. Relevant legal instruments and frameworks and relevant global, regional, subregional and sectoral bodies with a mandate in relation to marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction shall conform to the strict environmental impact assessment standards set forth in this Part.]

Alt. 2. No environmental impact assessment is required under this Agreement for any activity conducted in accordance with the rules and guidelines appropriately established under relevant legal instruments and frameworks and by relevant global, regional, subregional and sectoral bodies, regardless of whether or not an environmental impact assessment is required under those rules or guidelines.]

# Thank you!

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Supported by:



Federal Ministry  
for the Environment, Nature Conservation  
and Nuclear Safety

based on a decision of the German Bundestag



**PROG**

Partnership for Regional  
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ABIDJAN CONVENTION  
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