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PRESS RELEASE

TCC Trains MESA Programme Marine Scientists in Science Communication

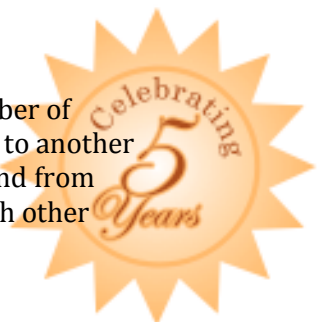
The training course on Communicating Science to Policy Makers and Non Scientists for the West Indian Ocean region was held in Flic en Flac, Mauritius from 8-12 August 2016. The training was organized by Monitoring for Environment and Security in Africa (MESA Programme), Mauritius Oceanography Institute (MOI), Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) in collaboration with the Training Centre in Communication – TCC (Kenya).

The training was attended by 35 participants comprising marine scientists and resource managers from Tanzania, Kenya, Mozambique, Madagascar and Mauritius and Seychelles. The training workshop had initially attracted huge interest not only from the West Indian Ocean (WIO) region, but also from other parts of Africa including Cameroon, Namibia, Nigeria and Tunisia. Unfortunately, the course was primarily intended for applicants from the WIO region. This huge demand from almost all angles of Africa highlights the need for a similar platform and suggests that only a fraction of research findings are effectively communicated to policy makers.

Science Communication (#SCICOMM) is a growing field worldwide, and this is mirrored in the WIO region. Many governments and institutions are facing demands for more transparency in funding research. The main objective of this course was therefore to train participants on the different ways of communicating their key research findings to policy makers and others, such as members of the press or public. The training modules included a series of lectures and practical exercises in #SCICOMM, including Science Policy Linkage and Science Communication Concepts.

As part of the training, participants drafted a number of policy briefs, key messages, fact sheets, opinion editorials and newsletter articles, among others. Judging from the recommendations from the course participants, the general feeling is that the training was very interactive and enlightening. Many participants felt that the training was very informative and had provided them with key skills in making sure what they are doing will finally reach out to different end users, depending on their needs and requirements. Some of these skills will be shared with colleagues at their workplaces. Some participants promised to integrate #SCICOMM into their research activities as much as possible and encourage other colleagues at their work places to do the same. This is expected to make a difference.

Due to enormous demand for #SCICOMM training reflected by the large number of applications received, there is a strong impetus for the course to be repeated to another group of participants from the WIO region in the near future. Since the demand from other parts of Africa is also enormous, WIOMSA may consider partnering with other



regional/international organizations to support scientists and managers in those countries so that they can realize their dreams in #SCICOMM.



The Consortium of Training Institutions

Mauritius Oceanography Institute

The Mauritius Oceanography Institute (MOI), a parastatal research organisation, advises Government on the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes in respect to oceanography. The Institute also undertakes and coordinates research and development in that field.

Monitoring for Environment and Security in Africa

MESA uses space-based and in-situ data to enable an improved management of the environment and food security at continental, regional and national levels in Africa. MESA consolidates and widens the operational environmental services developed in the AMESD (African Monitoring of the Environment for Sustainable Development) programme. The purpose of the MESA programme is to increase the capacity in information management, decision making and planning of African continental, regional and national institutions mandated for environment, climate and food security. This is being achieved by enhancing access to reliable, timely and accurate land, marine and climate data and information for Africa. MESA is exploiting Earth Observation (EO) data and technologies to promote socio-economic progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

Training Centre in Communication

The Training Centre in Communication (TCC) is a self-sustainable Trust created through private public partnership and has its headquarters at the University of Nairobi, Kenya. It is the first Centre in Africa that builds capacity in Science Communication for research institutes and universities, through training and guidance in implementation of communication strategy. TCC has successfully managed to build capacity in Science Communication in Western, Eastern and Southern Africa since 2004, before it was registered as a Trust and created a partnership with University of Nairobi in 2007. More information about Training Center in Communication can be accessed at www.tcc-africa.org.



Indian Ocean Commission

Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) is an intergovernmental organization that was created in 1982 at [Port Louis, Mauritius](#) and institutionalized in 1984 by the Victoria Agreement in [Seychelles](#). The IOC is composed of five African Indian Ocean nations: [Comoros](#), [Réunion](#) (a department of France), [Madagascar](#), [Mauritius](#) and [Seychelles](#). Notwithstanding their different characteristics (Reunion as a French department; Mauritius and Seychelles as Middle-Income Countries whereas Comoros and Madagascar are amongst the Least-Developed Countries), the five islands share geographic proximity, historical and demographic relationships, natural resources and common development issues.

IOC's principal mission is to strengthen the ties of friendship between the countries and to be a platform of solidarity for the entire population of the African Indian Ocean region. IOC's mission also includes development, through projects related to sustainability for the region, aimed at protecting the region, improving the living conditions of the populations and preserving the various natural resources that the countries depend on.

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