



**23rd IORA Meeting of the
Committee of Senior Officials (CSO)
Hybrid (In-Person in Dhaka & Virtual via Zoom)**

**Monday, 15 November 2021 to Tuesday 16 November 2021
At 12:00 – 18:00 BST time (GMT+6)**

Theme: “Harnessing the opportunities of the Indian Ocean sustainably for inclusive development”

DRAFT DECISION REPORT

The 23rd Annual Meeting of the IORA Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) took place in a hybrid format (In-Person at Dhaka and Virtual by Zoom platform) on November 15-16, 2021 and hosted by the People's Republic of Bangladesh. The Meeting was chaired by Rear Admiral (Retd.) Md. Khurshed Alam, Secretary, Maritime Affairs Unit, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangladesh, and was attended by representatives of IORA Member States, namely the **Commonwealth of Australia, People's Republic of Bangladesh, Union of Comoros, the French Republic on account of Reunion only (henceforth France/Reunion), Republic of India, Republic of Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Republic of Kenya, Republic of Madagascar, Malaysia, Republic of Maldives, Republic of Mauritius, Republic of Mozambique, Sultanate of Oman, Republic of Seychelles, Republic of Singapore, Federal Republic of Somalia, Republic of South Africa, Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, United Republic of Tanzania, Kingdom of Thailand, United Arab Emirates and Republic of Yemen.** The **Acting Secretary-General, Regional Centre for Science and Technology Transfer (RCSTT), and the Fisheries Support Unit (FSU)** also attended the meeting.

DAY 1: MONDAY 15 NOVEMBER 2021

- 1. OPENING SESSION**
 - 1.1 Welcome Address and Report of the outgoing Chairperson**
 - 1.2 Welcoming and opening remarks by the incoming Chairperson**
 - 1.3 Opening remarks by incoming Vice Chairperson**

Outcomes: The CSO noted the outgoing Chairperson's Report delivered by H.E. Mr Abdunnasser Alshaali, Assistant Minister for Economic and Trade Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Relations, United Arab Emirates. The CSO welcomed the handing over of the UAE Chairship report to the incoming Chair, Bangladesh.

The CSO congratulated the People's Republic of Bangladesh on the assumption of the position of IORA Chair for a period of two years from 2021-23 and noted the opening remarks by Ambassador Masud Bin Momen, Foreign Secretary (Senior Secretary), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangladesh.

The CSO congratulated the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka on the assumption of the position of Vice-Chair for a period of two years from 2021-23 and noted the opening remarks by the incoming Vice-Chairperson Ms. Anzul Jhan, Acting Director General, Foreign Ministry, Government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

The CSO expressed sincere appreciation to the UAE and for its leadership during its Chairship from 2019-2021, and to the Republic of South Africa for the outstanding contributions to IORA during its term on the IORA Troika from 2015-2021.

The CSO thanked the IORA Acting Secretary General and the Secretariat staff for the support provided.

1.4 Outline of Arrangements and Adoption of the Agenda

Outcome: The CSO adopted the Agenda.

1.5 Report of the Acting Secretary-General

Outcome: The CSO noted the report of the Acting Secretary-General and expressed its sincere congratulations and appreciation to Dr Gatot Hari Gunawan, Acting IORA Secretary General, for his excellent support and contribution since February 2021.

2. APPOINTMENT OF THE IORA SECRETARY GENERAL

2.1 Report: Selection of the next Secretary-General of IORA

Outcomes: The CSO welcomed the report provided by the Recruitment and Selection Committee (RSC) Chair, the UAE, which held interviews virtually for the appointment of the next IORA Secretary-General on 9 November 2021. The CSO noted that the RSC considered the candidatures of H.E. Salman Al Farisi (Indonesia), H.E. Dato, Dr. Fauziah Mohd Taib (Malaysia), and H.E. Mr. A. M. J. Sadiq (Sri Lanka).

The CSO expressed its appreciation to the RSC Chair, UAE and members of the Recruitment and Selection Committee (RSC) for the transparent and efficient work undertaken.

The CSO endorsed the recommendation of the RSC for the primary candidate, H.E. Salman Al Farisi, to be recommended to the COM for the position of IORA Secretary General from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2024.

The CSO appreciated the excellent services towards the completion of RSC process rendered by Dr. Gatot Hari Gunawan as the Acting Secretary-General of IORA.

3. IORA ACTION PLAN (2017-2021) & SECOND IORA ACTION PLAN

3.1 Report: Status of the implementation of the IORA Action Plan (2017-2021)

Outcome: The CSO noted the report by Bangladesh on the status of the implementation of the IORA Action Plan (2017-2021), highlighting the substantial progress and number of items that remain to be implemented owing to challenges such as the COVID-19 global pandemic.

3.2 Report: Workshop to discuss the Second IORA Action Plan and consideration of the Second IORA Action Plan (2022-2027)

Outcomes: The CSO noted the report by Bangladesh on the three sessions, held on 20 May, 23 August, and 12 October 2021 to discuss the format and content of the Second IORA Action Plan.

The CSO endorsed the draft Second IORA Action Plan (2022-2027) and recommended for approval by the COM.

3.3 Update: Identification of future Coordinating and Cluster Countries

Outcomes: The CSO noted the report from the Secretariat on the status of the identification of the Coordinating and Cluster Countries.

The CSO expressed thanks to all Member States which conveyed interest to be a Coordinating Country or part of Cluster Groups identified in the Second IORA Action Plan (2022-2027).

Kenya expressed its interest to join as a cluster country under Fisheries Management and Iran as a cluster country under Disaster Risk Management.

The CSO endorsed the list of Coordinating Countries tasked with implementing the Second IORA Action Plan (2022-2027) for approval by COM:

- Maritime Safety & Security (Sri Lanka)
- Trade and Investment Facilitation (Australia)
- Fisheries Management (Indonesia)
- Disaster Risk Management (India)
- Academic, Science and Technology Cooperation (India)
- Tourism and Cultural Exchanges (Mauritius)
- Blue Economy (South Africa)
- Women's Economic Empowerment Iran)
- Institutional Arrangements and Broadening Engagement (Sri Lanka)

3.4 Update: Bi-annual meeting of the IORA Functional Body Chairs and Priority Area Coordinating Countries

Outcomes: The CSO noted the update provided by the Secretariat and endorsed the Concept Note on the Bi-annual meeting of the Coordinating Countries and IORA Functional Body Chairs for the period 2022 and 2023.

The CSO agreed that the Indian Ocean Dialogue (IOD) constitutes an integral component of the Indian Ocean Region Academic Group (IORAG) and not as a formal functional body IORA. It was agreed to recommend to the COM that the IOD be removed from Annex III of the IORA Charter.

4. MEMBERSHIP ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

4.1 Update: Workshop to finalize the IORA's membership eligibility criteria

Outcome: The CSO noted the report by Bangladesh on the workshop to consider the status of IORA's membership criteria and on its plans to host the proposed Workshop on a date, preferably in early 2022, to finalise discussions and prepare recommendations to propose to CSO.

5 DIALOGUE PARTNERS: STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT, ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA AND APPLICATIONS

5.1 Report: Workshop on the strategic management of IORA's engagement with Dialogue Partners, and criteria/eligibility of potential Dialogue Partners

Outcome: The CSO noted the update by India and inputs from Member States on the draft 'Regulations for implementation of Article 4 (b) (i) of the IORA Charter on status of Dialogue Partnership', including the draft 'Letter of Engagement Between the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and the IORA Dialogue Partner (Name)'.

The CSO agreed to the concept note on the draft 'Regulations for implementation of Article 4 (b) (i) of the IORA Charter on status of Dialogue Partnership'.

5.2 Reports: Status of Programmes/Commitments made by Dialogue Partners

Outcomes: The CSO noted the update from the Secretariat:

China: The CSO noted the update by the IORA Secretariat and welcomed China's financial contribution (US\$90,000) to support IORA projects, including to combat COVID-19.

Egypt: The CSO noted the update by the IORA Secretariat on Egypt's intention to appoint a National Focal Point for IORA to co-ordinate and advance the implementation of activities.

Germany: The CSO welcomed the extension and expansion of the programme of cooperation between IORA and GIZ from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2022, and the extensive projects and initiatives envisaged. The CSO welcomed the evaluation of the IORA-GIZ project to be conducted by GIZ and encouraged Member States to attend and participate actively at the stakeholder workshop to be held on 01 December 2021.

Italy: The CSO welcomed the extensive projects and initiatives with Italy planned for 2021 and beyond.

Republic of Korea: The CSO welcomed the Second ROK-IORA Partnership Seminar held from 8-9 July 2021

UK: The CSO noted the UK's intention to support projects in the future, and that the Secretariat would be continuing to engage the UK on potential collaboration.

USA: The CSO welcomed the USA and Australia's co-hosting of the successful IORA Women's Economic Symposium on 8-9 September 2021.

The CSO noted an uneven approach taken by the Dialogue Partners in their engagement with and support for IORA. CSO tasked the Secretariat to conduct an assessment and review of the contributions made to IORA by all Dialogue Partners for consideration by the next CSO meeting.

5.3 Update: Application by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as Dialogue Partner

Outcome: The CSO noted that there was no consensus on the application by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and consideration was deferred to the next meeting of the CSO. The Secretariat was tasked to circulate a copy of the 15 December 2020 Note Verbale to the IORA Secretariat from the Embassy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in Pretoria to all Member States by no later than 01 December 2021. The Secretariat was also tasked to write a letter to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia updating the status of the application.

6. MARITIME SAFETY AND SECURITY (MSS) – Coordinating Country: Sri Lanka

6.1 Update: Progress Report on the Work Plan of the WGMSS

Outcome: The CSO noted the update on the progress made on the WGMSS Work Plan, and its contribution to the next IORA Action Plan 2022–27.

6.2 Update: Preparations for the Third Meeting of the IORA Working Group on Maritime Safety and Security (WGMSS)

Outcome: The CSO noted the update on the preparations for the Third Meeting of the IORA Working Group on Maritime Safety and Security and that Sri Lanka will host the meeting, preferably in-person, in the first quarter of 2022.

6.3 Update: Proposal to investigate greater synergies between IORA and other aspects of the maritime security architecture in the region

Outcome: The CSO noted the update by France/Reunion on the proposal to investigate greater synergies between IORA and other aspects of the maritime security architecture in the region such as the IOC-MASE project supported by the EU.

6.4 Update: Ramifications of ship disasters in the Indian Ocean in the aftermath of the recent MV-X Press Pearl Vessel disaster

Outcome: The CSO noted the update on the proposed meeting by Sri Lanka to discuss ramifications of ship disasters in the Indian Ocean region. Sri Lanka will host the meeting by February 2022.

6.5 Update: Establishing legal frameworks in the Indian Ocean region in the field of Maritime Safety and Security (MSS)

Outcomes: The CSO noted the update by India on the discussion paper that was submitted on MSS to Member States for feedback. Secretariat to forward the final views of India to the Member States for consideration.

The CSO requested Somalia and Kenya to prepare concept notes on transnational organised crime and send to the Secretariat for onward transmission to Sri Lanka for consideration, including exploring the possibility of Dialogue Partners supporting these proposals.

The CSO noted Iran's announcement on the need to conduct research on high-risk containers movement in the region, and the need for an Integrated Maritime Policy for the Indian Ocean Region.

7. TRADE AND INVESTMENT FACILITATION (TIF) –Coordinating Country: Mauritius

7.1 Update: Progress Report on the Work Plan of the WGTI

Outcomes: The CSO noted [Mauritius: significant progress achieved] in implementing the WGTI Work Plan. Member States were encouraged to update their country information on the IORA Trade portal.

The CSO noted Iran's proposals for investment opportunities for port development to be shared with the Secretariat for circulation to Member States.

The CSO noted Kenya's proposals for promoting maritime transport connectivity and a funding mechanism for infrastructure development to be shared with the Secretariat for circulation to Member States.

7.2 Update: Preparations for the 19th Meeting of the Working Group on Trade and Investment (WGTI)

Outcome: The CSO noted the update by Mauritius that Australia, as incoming Coordinating Country for Trade and Investment Facilitation, would take over the organization and hosting of the next WGTI meeting and that Mauritius will work with Australia for a smooth handing over.

7.3 Update: Status of the Indian Ocean Rim Business Forum (IORBF) and handing over of the IORBF Chair to Bangladesh and Remarks by Incoming Chair of IORBF

Outcomes: The CSO noted that Mr Sheikh Fazle Fahim of Bangladesh will become the IORBF Chair on the assumption by Bangladesh of the IORA Chairship. The CSO noted that the UAE and Secretariat was supporting the incoming IORBF Chair with briefings and introductory meetings.

The CSO welcomed the introductory remarks provided by the incoming IORBF Chair, Mr Sheikh Fazle Fahim, on plans to take the IORBF forward.

7.4 Update: Collaboration between IORA and Global Trade Review (GTR)

Outcomes: The CSO noted the progress from Australia in implementing the IORA-GTR partnership, including in strengthening IORA's profile and private sector engagement. Participation in GTR and other events in 2021 by IORA was noted by the CSO, and Australia's request for Member States to identify potential speakers for future GTR events in 2021 and 2022.

The CSO noted Iran's reservations conveyed to the Secretariat by Note Verbale on 5 February 2021 regarding participation in events focusing outside of the IORA region. The Secretariat was tasked to share the concerns with Australia and advise on the way forward.

7.5 Update: Signature of SME MOU

Outcomes: The CSO noted the update by the IORA Secretariat on the signature of the SME MOU which 19 Member States have signed.

The CSO welcomed Kenya's undertaking to sign the agreed MOU signing page, and all remaining Member States were encouraged to sign the MOU expeditiously.

7.6 Update: Collaboration between IORA and Financial Times for the Africa Summit, 19 October 2021

Outcome: The CSO noted the update that the IORA Secretariat has facilitated the partnership with the Financial Times for the Africa Summit on 19 October 2021.

8. FISHERIES MANAGEMENT (FM) – Coordinating Country: Indonesia

8.1 Update: Progress Report on the Work Plan of the Core Group on Fisheries Management (CGFM)

Outcomes: The CSO noted progress report on the Work Plan of the Core Group on Fisheries Management (CGFM) and noted the report by Indonesia on the outcomes of the First Meeting of IORA Core Group on Fisheries Management (CGFM) held on 3 November 2021.

The CSO welcomed Indonesia's hosting of the 26 October 2021 Webinar on IUU fishing and IORA webinar on marine debris on 10 November 2021.

The CSO noted Thailand's proposals to curb illegal fishing and the need to strike balance between preservation and over exploitation of fishing. Thailand to send proposals to the Secretariat for onward conveyance to Indonesia.

The CSO welcomed Iran's offer to provide marine fish cage culture expertise which is to be sent to the Secretariat for onward conveyance to Indonesia.

The CSO noted Kenya's views on aquaculture and sustainable fisheries which is to be forwarded to the Secretariat for onward conveyance to Indonesia.

8.2 Report: First Meeting of IORA Core Group on Fisheries Management (CGFM)

Outcome: Item was discussed together with item under 8.1.

8.3 Report: Activities of the Fisheries Support Unit (FSU)

Outcome: The CSO noted the FSU Report highlighting the FSU meetings with the CGFM and the WGBE in order to align their work plans. FSU is in process of drafting a fisheries management plan for IORA and Member States were encouraged to forward their inputs on the FSU proposal for an IORA Focal Point for the FSU.

8.4 Update: Activities under MoU between IORA and AFD

Outcomes: The CSO noted the update by the IORA Secretariat on the activities under the MoU between IORA and AFD, and welcomed the extensive initiatives and activities being implemented under the MOU.

The CSO noted the importance of sharing information and experiences on combatting IUU fishing.

9. DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT (DRM) – Coordinating Country: India

9.1 Update: Terms of Reference (TOR) of the Working Group on Disaster Risk Management (WGDRM) and Work Plan for Disaster Risk Management

Outcomes: The CSO noted the update on the TORs and the WGDRM Work Plan.

The CSO endorsed the draft WGDRM TORs for recommendation to the COM for approval.

The CSO approved the draft WGDRM Work Plan.

9.2 Update: Establishing legal frameworks in the Indian Ocean region in the field of Disaster Risk Management

Outcomes: The CSO noted the update by India on the discussion paper on the proposal for establishing legal frameworks in the Indian Ocean region. India suggested the Secretariat to circulate the 'way forward' sent India to all the Members. A 'way forward' may also be prepared by the Secretariat on the same lines for MSS to India CC Sri Lanka for consideration and further transmission to the Member States.

The CSO tasked the Secretariat to initiate a review and assessment of the value being added by the Specialised Agencies of IORA (RCSTT and FSU).

In response to an enquiry from Oman on the status of the Centre of Excellence (CoE) proposed by India, a Concept Note will be circulated by India in due course.

9.3 Update: Signature on Search and Rescue (SAR) MOU

Outcomes: The CSO noted the update by the IORA Secretariat on the signature status of the MoU by Member States, and that to date, 16 Member States have signed the MOU on SAR: Australia, Bangladesh, Comoros, India, Indonesia, Madagascar, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Singapore, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, and Thailand.

The CSO approved the proposal to add a signatory sheet to the MoU for the remaining Member States to sign remotely which was to be sent to the Secretariat for inclusion to the original MoU. Remaining Member States to consider signing the MoU as early as possible.

9.4 New proposal: IORA Sustainable Health Initiative

Outcomes: The CSO noted the update by Mauritius on the IORA Sustainable Health Initiative project proposal.

The CSO noted that following inputs from Iran (expected by 12 November) the proposal will be finalised with Mauritius, India and GIZ.

9.5 New proposal: MoU between IORA-Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI)

Outcome: The CSO endorsed the Concept Note and draft MOU between IORA and the CDRI for transmission to the COM for approval.

10. ACADEMIC, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COOPERATION (AST) – Coordinating Country: India

10.1 Report: Third Meeting of the Sub-Committee on Indian Ocean Rim Association Academic Group (IORAG) Reform (India)

Outcome: The CSO noted the report from India and endorsed the Decision Report of the Third Meeting of the Sub-Committee on Indian Ocean Rim Association Academic Group (IORAG) Reform.

10.2 Report: 26th Meeting of the Indian Ocean Rim Academic Group (IORAG) (India/UAE)

Outcomes: The CSO noted the report by India and endorsed the Decision Report on the 26th Meeting of the Indian Ocean Rim Academic Group (IORAG).

The CSO further endorsed the Modalities and Terms of Reference ToR of the IORAG for onward transmission to the 21st COM for approval.

The CSO noted inputs from Kenya for inclusion in the IORAG Draft Work Plan 2021/2022, and requested Kenya to forward inputs to the Secretariat as soon as for onward transmission to India for inclusion in the draft work plan.

The CSO endorsed South Africa's offer to serve as IORAG Chair for 2022 and 2023 for onward transmission to the 21st COM for approval.

10.3 Report: First Working Group Meeting on Science Technology and Innovation (WGSTI)

Outcome: The CSO noted the report from India and endorsed the Decision Report from the First Working Group on Science Technology and Innovation (WGSTI).

10.4 Indian Ocean Dialogue (IOD)

10.4.1 Consideration of IOD Modalities and Terms of Reference

Outcome: The CSO endorsed the draft Modalities and Terms of Reference of the Indian Ocean Dialogue (IOD) and confirmed that the IOD constitutes an integral component of the Indian Ocean Region Academic Group (IORAG) and not as formal functional body IORA.

10.4.2 Update: Preparations for the Eighth IOD

Outcome: The CSO noted the update by India on the preparations for the Eighth IOD scheduled to be held on 15 December 2021.

The CSO noted South Africa's request for future IOD's not to be scheduled in December as it is not conducive to optimum participation by academics from South Africa.

10.5 Update: Implementation of ICE for the IORA Member States

Outcomes: The CSO noted the update by India on the implementation of ICE for IORA Member States based on the finalized criteria to establish IORA Centers of Excellence. A Concept Note will be provided by India in due course.

The CSO noted Malaysia's interest to share the expertise of the Maritime Institute of Malaysia (MIMA) with Member States. Malaysia to share further information with the Secretariat for onward transmission to Member States in due course.

10.6 Update: Establishment of the Research Support Unit (RSU) and the position of Policy

Outcome: The CSO noted the update from India on the RSU and the PARC, and the suggestions from Member States to the proposal. There remain some differences in approach on important issues and further discussion is needed. To this end India proposed that the updated views of the Member States be shared with the CSO, and a workshop be conducted to reach consensus on the way forward. The Secretariat to advise on a convenient date in early January 2022 for the workshop to take place.

10.7 Report: Online course on 'Principles of Ocean Remote Sensing and its applications'

Outcome: The CSO thanked India for hosting the online course on 'Principles of Ocean Remote Sensing and its Applications' and took note of the report on the course outcomes.

10.8 Report: Online course on 'Fundamentals of Ocean Data Management'

Outcome: The CSO thanked India for hosting the online course on 'Fundamentals of Ocean Data Management' and took note of the report on the course outcomes.

10.9 Report: Activities of the Regional Centre for Science and Technology Transfer (RCSTT)

Outcome: The CSO noted the RCSTT's Activity Report.

10.10 Update: Journal of the Indian Ocean Region (JIOR)

Outcomes: The CSO agreed that until such time that the IORA RSU becomes functional, the IORA Chair (beginning with Bangladesh) would provide the Secretariat with funds for JIOR subscriptions upon their specific request.

The CSO noted that Member States were to indicate to the Secretariat by no later than **15 December 2021** their interest in being provided with the JIOR subscription for 2022.

DAY 2: TUESDAY 16 NOVEMBER 2021

11. TOURISM AND CULTURAL EXCHANGES (TCE) – Coordinating Country: UAE

11.1 Report: Second meeting of the Core Group on Tourism (CGT)

Outcome: The CSO noted the update by the UAE that it will host the Second meeting of the Core Group on Tourism (CGT) on 21 December 2021. More information and documents for the meeting will be provided in due course.

11.2 Update: Establishment of the Tourism Resource Centre (TRC)

Outcomes: The CSO noted the update by the Secretariat on the establishment of the Tourism Resource Centre (TRC) and that the Secretariat had called for nominations to all Member States on 25 June 2021 but that no positive responses were received.

The CSO noted Iran's initial interest to consider hosting the TRC and requested the Secretariat to re-circulate the call for nominations and background to all Member States.

11.3 Update: Creation of tourism platforms (digital or otherwise) for sharing of best practices

Outcome: The CSO endorsed the Concept Note on the Creation of Tourism Platforms (digital or otherwise) for Sharing of Best Practices for the approval of the COM.

12. BLUE ECONOMY (BE) – Coordinating Country: South Africa

12.1 Update: Progress Report on the Work Plan of the WGBE

Outcome: The CSO noted the progress made on implementation of the WGBE Work Plan which was extended from 2020-2023 and its activities re-prioritised. The support and technical assistance of the AFD to the WGBE in implementing the work plan was recognised and welcomed. A first quarter of 2022 workshop on the scope of climate change and the development of a concept note on climate change as a topic in IORA was being planned with the support of the GIZ.

12.2 Update: Preparations for the Fourth IORA Ministerial Blue Economy Conference (BEC-IV)

Outcome: The CSO noted the update by Sri Lanka on the preparations for the Fourth IORA Ministerial Blue Economy Conference (BEC-IV), preferably in-person, in the first half of 2022.

12.3 Update: Preparations for the Third meeting of the Working Group on Blue Economy (WGBE)

Outcome: The CSO noted the update by South Africa on the preparations of the third meeting of the Working Group on Blue Economy (WGBE) which was scheduled to be held in the first quarter of 2022.

12.4 Update: IORA workshop on Blue Economy

Outcome: The CSO noted the update by France/Reunion on the preparations of the IORA workshop on the Blue Economy to share working experience on this sector which it planned to host in La Reunion in the first quarter of 2022. Additional information will be circulated before the end of 2021.

12.5 Activities by IORA Blue Carbon Hub

12.5.1 Update: Second round of IORA Blue Carbon Hub Early Career Visiting Scientist programme

Outcome: The CSO noted the update by Australia on the Second round of IORA Blue Carbon Hub Early Career Visiting Scientist programme and that that the second-round intake was postponed due to COVID-related travel restrictions. Australia was reviewing options, with a view to holding the second round in 2022, subject to developments with COVID-related travel restrictions.

12.5.2 Update: Workshop on Earth Observation Project

Outcome: The CSO noted the update by Australia on the preparations of the Workshop on Earth Observation Project that will be taking place virtually on 23-25 November 2022.

12.6 Update: Consideration of IORA White Paper on Blue Carbon Finance

Outcome: The CSO noted the update by Australia on the IORA White Paper on Blue Carbon Finance. The Third Meeting of the WGBE will be an opportunity to discuss the draft White Paper further.

12.7 Update: IORA Actions Against Marine Debris

Outcome: The CSO noted the update by Indonesia on IORA Actions Against Marine Debris, and suggestions and inputs on the proposal from Member States. Germany, through the GIZ, has pledged its support for this programme and Indonesia and GIZ were liaising with the relevant stakeholders to start implementing the project starting with a virtual workshop. Further information will be provided in due course.

12.8 Update: Research Study on “COVID-19 and Climate Change: Prospects for a “Blue” Recovery in the Indian Ocean Region”

Outcome: The CSO noted the update by the Secretariat on the status of the project. The 26th IORAG meeting agreed that under India's coordination the IORAG will lead the process of inviting universities of IORA Member States to participate, define the selection criteria for evaluating the proposals of the competing consortia, and set-up the evaluation committee to make a recommendation to the WGBE. It was important to finalise these processes as soon as possible while GIZ funding is available until June 2022.

13. WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT (WGWE) - Coordinating Country: Australia

13.1 Report: Fourth Meeting of the Working Group on Women's Economic Empowerment (WGWE) and Progress Report on the Work Plan of the WGWE

Outcomes: The CSO noted the report of Australia on the outcomes of the fourth meeting of the WGWE, including the refinement of the WGWE Work Plan to prioritise three activities for COVID-19 response.

The CSO welcomed Australia's commitment to working with Iran to hand over the WEE coordinating role.

The CSO noted Indonesia's intention to host a workshop on women in the coastguard in April 2022, and that a concept note will be forwarded to the Secretariat in due course.

13.2 Update: Improving gender balance in IORA

Outcome: The CSO considered the draft Concept Note and the draft zero 'IORA Gender Equality Pledge' prepared by Australia and agreed to recommend to the Council of Ministers (COM) on 17 November 2021 to endorse its further development, with a view to Ministers endorsing the final version intersessionally for publication on International Women's Day 2022 (8 March 2022).

13.3 Report: Completion of the UN Women-IORA project "Promoting Women's Economic Empowerment in the Indian Ocean Rim" 2018-21

Outcome: The CSO welcomed the successful conclusion of the three-year IORA-UN Women partnership, supported by Australia. The CSO encouraged Member States to make use of resources for women entrepreneurs created by the partnership, available on the IORA website, and to promote them nationally.

13.4 Report: IORA Women's Economic Symposium: Rewriting Business Strategies for the Global Pandemic

Outcome: The CSO welcomed the successful co-hosting of the symposium by Australia and the United States from 8-9 September 2021 with 77 attendees from 18 Member States.

14. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND BROADENING ENGAGEMENT - Coordinating Country: South Africa

14.1 Update: Vacancy for the position of the Human Resource Manager

Outcome: The CSO noted the update by the Secretariat on the vacancy for the position of the Human Resource expert that Mauritius was considering seconding. Mauritius confirmed that internal consultations were ongoing and the CSO will be updated on progress.

14.2 Update: Annual IORA Calendar of events

Outcomes: The CSO noted the progress made on the Annual Calendar of events and the IORA Directory of contacts.

Member States were encouraged to send dates of all future events and to confirm their contact details in the Directory that will be circulated by the Secretariat.

14.3 Update: IORA's Vision on the Indo-Pacific Region

Outcomes: The CSO noted the latest developments by India that the 21 October 2021 final review meeting took place and the Chair's revised draft on 8 November 2021 was circulated for consideration.

It was agreed for India to host another dedicated working session at the level of appropriate senior officials in January 2022. Member States will seek to release a statement as soon as possible.

14.4 Update: Streamlining decision-making processes through sub-structures (South Africa)

Outcome: The CSO endorsed the proposal on streamlining decision-making processes through sub-structures with the amendment of the IORA Action Plan to reflect "2022-2027".

Secretariat to consider the proposal from India to upload all CSO and COM related documents for Member States on the IORA Secretariat website.

14.5 Status of Institutional arrangements with other regional organisations and the UN

14.5.1 Report: Training Programme Geospatial Information Technology (GIT) for Operational planning and Decision-making in Disaster Risk Management

Outcomes: The CSO noted the report from the IORA Secretariat and welcomed the Training Programme Geospatial Information Technology (GIT) for Operational planning and Decision-making in Disaster Risk Management as a successful example of IORA/UNITAR/GIZ collaboration.

The CSO welcomed the intention to conduct the second phase of the Training Programme when the international travel and health situations allows for the training to be conducted, preferably in Thailand (where UNOSAT technical expertise and trainers are based), in-person. More information will be provided by the Secretariat in due course.

14.5.2 Update: The World Bank Proposal - Letter of Intent between IORA, SACEP and Parley or the project on “Plastic Free Rivers and Seas for Nations of the Indian Ocean Rim”

Outcomes: The CSO noted that the World Bank has suggested to the IORA Secretariat to send the comments from Member States on the Letter of Intent (LOI) between IORA, SACEP and Parley or the project on “Plastic Free Rivers and Seas for Nations of the Indian Ocean Rim” so that the LOI could be revised accordingly.

The CSO noted that the World Bank expressed interest in partnering with IORA on the proposal on IORA Actions Against Marine Debris.

It was agreed that the CSO Chair would engage with the World Bank representative directly to follow-up on the status of cooperation with the World Bank.

14.5.3 Update: Progress in collaboration with the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC)

Outcomes: The CSO noted the progress in collaboration with the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) and also noted that the draft MoU was circulated to Member States for their views.

The CSO noted that since the draft MoU will be submitted to the upcoming IOC Council of Ministers for endorsement on 26 November 2021, the CSO endorsed that:

- a) Final approval for the MoU will be confirmed intersessionally after both Secretariats were in agreement on the MoU.
- b) Both versions of the MoU (English and French) to be signed by the Acting Secretary-General or the Secretary-General on behalf of IORA as per the request of the IOC Secretariat.

14.5.4 Update: Collaboration with the other regional organisations and the UN

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

Outcomes: The CSO noted the Secretariat’s update that ASEAN had suggested pursuing practical cooperation between the ASEAN Secretariat and the Secretariat of IORA in the forms of:

- a) sharing of experiences and best practices in fund management;
- b) managing cooperation with its external partners; and
- c) other areas of mutual interests.

The CSO approved that the Secretariat pursue the afore-mentioned cooperation.

The CSO noted that the IORA Secretariat was planning to initiate some engagements including organizing virtual workshops and a visit to the ASEAN Secretariat by the officials of the IORA Secretariat.

Secretariat to update the CSO on progress in due course.

International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)

Outcome: The CSO noted the Secretariat's update, and that Member States will be informed of proposed collaboration projects with IRENA in due course.

International Solar Alliance (ISA)

Outcomes: The CSO welcomed the extension of the MoU signed remotely by the Acting Secretary-General, IORA and Dr. Ajay Mathur, Director General, for the International Solar Alliance (ISA) on 8 September 2021.

Member States were requested to consider the potential initiatives to promote solar energy within IORA in line with the MoU and were reminded of the availability of Special Fund support.

Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC-UNESCO)

Outcome: The CSO noted that the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC-UNESCO) was preparing the MoU for the visa of its Executive Board in October 2021. The Secretariat will update Member States in due course on the engagement with the IOC-UNESCO.

The International Seabed Authority (ISA)

Outcome: The CSO noted that the draft MoU between the ISA and IORA was being processed by ISA. The IORA Secretariat had requested for an update regarding the signing of the MoU, as well as expressing IORA's interest in collaborating with the ISA under the following areas of action: Policy development; capacity development; and Sustainability & partnerships for the Women in Deep Sea Research (WIDSR) draft Project Framework.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations

Outcome: The CSO noted that the IORA Secretariat was working closely with the FAO for a draft Work Plan and on the possibility of an MoU to be circulated to Member States when completed.

14.6 Strengthening of the IORA Secretariat

14.6.1 Report: Capacity Building Programmes for IORA – Project Management Training

Outcome: The CSO welcomed the report and thanked Singapore for organizing the virtual training programme on "Project Management" for IORA Member States and the Secretariat from 25 to 29 October 2021.

14.6.2 Update: Refurbishment of the Secretariat

Outcome: The CSO noted that the funds from the UAE to refurbish the Secretariat will be refunded to the IORA Special Fund for the payment of legal fees.

14.6.3 Update: Capacity building initiatives under Financing Agreements with GIZ

Outcomes: The CSO noted that the current IORA-GIZ Financing Agreement (September 2019-September 2021) was extended until 31 December 2021.

The CSO also noted that the Secretariat was currently in the process of drafting a Financing Agreement with GIZ to strengthen the Secretariat under the auspices of the extended and expanded IORA-GIZ MOU (July 2021 – June 2022). A proposal covering the period January 2022 to June 2022 will be provided to the CSO for intersessional consideration in due course.

14.6.4 Update: Capacity building initiatives under Financing Agreements with AFD

Outcomes: The CSO welcomed the signing of the Financing Agreement between IORA and the Agence Francaise de Developpement (French Development Agency, AFD) on 28 June 2021.

The CSO noted that AFD was planning to organise a training programme on enhancing by-catch landing, valorisation, traceability and quality, including the development of safe handling guides and species identification guides, in Seychelles by mid- January 2022. The CSO noted that AFD was also liaising with the IORA Blue Carbon Hub for 2 projects, namely:

- a. Developing a manual of Blue Carbon standard methods to be used for standardized base line data sets.
- b. Provide a training programme on Blue Carbon study and measurement.

More information would be shared with Member States by the IORA Secretariat in due course.

14.6.5 Report: Webinar on “Understanding the Indian Ocean”

Outcome: The CSO noted the update from the Secretariat on the Webinar on “Understanding the Indian Ocean” and thanked Australia for inviting the Member States and IORA Secretariat to attend the 5-part webinar series which was held from 10 June to 8 July 2021.

14.7 Update: IORA Media Network

Outcome: The CSO noted the update by the Secretariat on the established IORA Media Network including the dedicated email group: iora.media@iora.int. Member States were encouraged to submit additional journalist and media personnel nominations to strengthen the IORA Media Network.

15. FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

15.1 Report: Sub-Committee on Finance (SCF)

Outcomes: The CSO endorsed the Decision Report of the SCF that was held on 9 November 2021.

The CSO noted that staffing Issues have been deferred to a special CSO meeting. The Chair, Bangladesh, will communicate the venue and meeting date (in late January 2022) in due course.

15.2 Update: Secretariat’s proposed structure and staffing needs

Outcome: The issue was deferred until after the January 2022 special CSO meeting referred to in item 15.1.

15.3 Report: Sub-Committee for the Review and Finalisation of IORA Secretariat Financial and Staff Regulations, HR and Finance Manuals, Code of Conduct, Grievance Policy and Procedures, Disciplinary Code & Procedures, Recruitment and Selection Procedures, etc

Outcomes: The CSO noted the update by the IORA Secretariat on the status of the preparation of the IORA manuals as live documents to be reviewed and updated every six months at the two Sub-Committee on Finance (SCF) meetings, when necessary. The documents are:

- a) Finance Regulation and Finance Management Manual
- b) Staff Regulation and Human Resource Manual
- c) Procurement Regulation and Procurement Manual
- d) Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Code and Procedures
- e) Grievance policy

The CSO endorsed the above documents and recommended for COM approval.

15.4 Update: Review of the host country agreement

Outcome: The CSO noted the update by the Secretariat on the host country agreement and that the consultation with Mauritius was still under process and Member States would be updated in due course.

15.5 Update: Report on the Workshop to consider non-payment of membership fees

Outcomes: The CSO noted the update by the Secretariat and adopted the report of the Workshop to consider non-payment of membership fees and the recommendations.

The CSO agreed to recognize Iran's intention and capacity to pay its contributions and treat Iran as a special case, and the Secretariat was tasked to consult with an international financial legal expert to explore some ways of facilitating the payment of Iran's annual dues. In this regard Iran was requested to provide the challenges in facilitating the transfer of annual dues to the Secretariat in writing.

15.6 Honorarium payment for the Acting Secretary-General (ASG) of 20% of the monthly salary of SG if in charge for more than one month

Outcomes: The CSO considered the monthly Honorarium payment for Dr. Gatot H. Gunawan the Acting Secretary-General (ASG), of 20% of the monthly basic salary for more than 1 month's service as ASG.

The CSO agreed to recommend to the COM that the IORA Secretariat pay an amount of 20% of the monthly basic salary (excluding allowances) to ASG Gunawan for the period 1 March to 31 December 2021.

16. IORA SPECIAL FUND

16.1 Update: Review of the Administrative Arrangements of the Special Fund including the emergency use of the Special Fund for COVID-19 response projects

Outcome: The CSO considered the consolidated inputs on the Administrative Arrangements for the IORA Special Fund and recommended its approval by COM.

16.2 Special Fund projects (approved)

16.2.1 Update: Creation of an IORA Centre of Excellence for Dispute Resolution, Special Fund

Outcome: The CSO noted the update from Mauritius that project implementation was on track, and support was being provided by international law firm Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer and dispute resolution institutions in Singapore.

16.2.2 Update: High Level Capacity Building Programme on Gender Mainstreaming in the Six Priority Areas of IORA, Special Fund

Outcome: The CSO noted the update by Mauritius on the High-Level Capacity Building Programme on Gender Mainstreaming in the Six Priority Areas of IORA and that new dates would be communicated in 2022/2023, depending on the COVID-19 situation.

16.2.3 Update: International Relations in the Indian Ocean Region: Collaborative Study Experience, Special Fund

Outcome: The CSO noted the update from Australia on the hosting of the International Relations in the Indian Ocean Region: Collaborative Study Experience to be conducted in-person. Further details will be communicated in due course.

16.2.4 Update: IORA-India Cruise Tourism Conference “Spotlight on the Indian Ocean”, Special Fund

Outcome: The CSO noted the update by India on the hosting of the IORA-India Cruise Tourism Conference “Spotlight on the Indian Ocean” and that new dates would be communicated in due course.

16.2.5 Update: Workshop on the Impacts of Climate Change on the Marine Environment for IORA Countries, Special Fund

Outcome: The CSO noted the update by RCSTT that the workshop was postponed owing to COVID-19 and is scheduled for late in the first half or early in the second half of 2022. Further details will be communicated in due course.

16.2.6 Report: Third Somalia-Yemen Development Programme (SYDP-III): “Development and Management of Somalia’s and Yemen’s Marine Fisheries”, Special Fund

Outcome: The CSO noted the report by the IORA Secretariat on the third edition of the Somalia-Yemen Development Programme (SYDP-III) that took place in Italy on 27 September to 1 October 2021. The report of the workshop has been sent to the host, Italy, for consideration and will be shared with Member States in due course.

16.2.7 Update: Project on Ocean Knowledge Education Programme to strengthen the Blue Economy concept in the IORA region – A pilot study incorporating “Sustainable Ocean Management” into the curriculum for 12 to 13 yr old”

Outcomes: The CSO noted the update by the Secretariat that the disbursement of funds had been made and Seychelles informed accordingly.

The CSO also noted the update by Seychelles that IORA support for the project was appreciated and is expected to begin in 2022 to coincide with the school year.

16.3 Consideration of Proposals for future funding under Special Fund

16.3.1 Update: Workshop on Nature-based tourism: “Boosting Livelihoods across the Indian Ocean Rim through Nature-Based Tourism”, Special Fund

Outcome: The CSO noted the update by Mauritius on the Workshop on Nature-based tourism: “Boosting Livelihoods across the Indian Ocean Rim through Nature-Based Tourism” and that the workshop would be held in 2022 or 2023, subject to travel restrictions in the region, and that a revised Concept Note and Program would be circulated in due course.

16.3.2 IORA Sustainable Development Programme (ISDP)

Outcomes: The CSO noted that Bangladesh had shared a Concept Note on the ISDP project on “Capacity building on biosecurity of inland aquaculture farms” to be considered by the CSO in 2022.

The CSO noted that Mozambique would identify a project they would want to host in 2022.

The CSO recalled that only one project per LDC Member State can be implemented per year under the ISDP.

17. IORA SPECIAL PROGRAMMES

17.1 Update: IORA Human Development Fund (IHDF)

Outcomes: The CSO noted the update by UAE on consultations with internal stakeholders regarding the IORA Human Development Fund (IHDF).

The CSO also noted that the Secretariat wrote to all Member States and Dialogue Partners and requested them to indicate willingness to fund a technical study to see what could be the best modalities in which a human development fund for IORA can be shaped and implemented. CSO endorsed the Secretariat to engage with GIZ and the UAE to undertake the study.

The CSO noted the UAE was engaged in internal consultations on the IHDF and after approval, a workshop will be conducted.

17.2 Update: IORA Nelson Mandela Internship Programme (NMIP)

Outcomes: The CSO noted the update by the Secretariat that Mauritius has now reopened its borders to fully vaccinated visitors on 1 October 2021 and consideration may be given to reintroduce the application process, with preferential consideration being given to those individual candidates already approved in March 2021.

The CSO noted that Mauritius advised to reintroduce the application process and explore dates for hosting the programme, possibly in 2022, ensuring that the programme complies with the Mauritius travel and sanitary requirements in effect.

17.3 Update: Preparations for IORA Day 2022 and 25th Anniversary of IORA

Outcomes: The CSO noted the update by the Secretariat on the Preparations for IORA Day 2022 and 25th Anniversary of IORA, celebrating its Silver Jubilee and that the proposed events will be funded under the IORA-GIZ project.

The CSO encouraged activities by Member States for IORA Day 2022, and its Silver Jubilee.

17.4 Update: IORA “Connecting the Youth of the Indian Ocean Region” Writing Competition

Outcome: The CSO noted that due to the lack of funding resources for the competition, the IORA “Connecting the Youth of the Indian Ocean Region” Writing Competition is proposed to be postponed and to coincide with the 25th Anniversary of IORA. This will now be funded by the IORA-GIZ project.

17.5 Update: Indian Ocean Champion Concept

Outcome: The CSO noted the update by the IORA Secretariat on the preparation of the Terms of Reference/Technical Arrangements for the Indian Ocean Champion Concept and that the ToR would be shared with Member States after the CSO meeting by the end of January 2021.

17.6 NEW PROPOSAL: IORA-DHAKA DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

Outcomes: The CSO noted that the Concept Note on the new proposal entitled “IORA-Dhaka Development Initiative” was circulated to the Member States on 5 November 2021 and were requested to provide their feedback on the draft Concept Note by 30 November 2021.

The CSO also noted the brief by Bangladesh on the “IORA-Dhaka Development Initiative” and that the proposal may be finalized in the next Bi-annual CSO in 2022 or intersessionally.

18. NEW PROPOSALS BY MEMBER STATES (if any)

Outcome: The CSO noted that Madagascar had shared a Concept Note on the project on “Blue Carbon Ecosystems in the Indian Ocean”.

19. PREPARATIONS FOR THE 21ST COUNCIL OF MINISTERS’ MEETING, DISCUSSION ON:

19.1 Draft COM Agenda

Outcome: The CSO finalised the draft Agenda of the 21st COM.

19.2 Draft Dhaka Communiqué

Outcome: The CSO considered and finalised the draft Dhaka Communiqué, and recommended it for endorsement by the COM.

20. PREPARATIONS FOR THE NEXT MEETING: 11TH IORA BI-ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF SENIOR OFFICIALS

Outcome: The CSO noted that Bangladesh will host the 12th Bi-annual Meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) from 25-26 July 2022.

21. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (AOB)

Outcome: Iran proposed that the review of the IORA specialized agencies:

- Contain a clear mandate, terms of reference and modalities.
- Establish linkages between priority areas and cross cutting issues with the specialized agencies

Iran was requested to prepare a concept note on the proposed review.

22. ADOPTION OF THE DECISION REPORT AND CLOSING REMARKS

Outcome: The CSO adopted the report of the meeting.

The CSO noted the closing remarks by the Chair and expressed its sincere appreciation to the Chair for the hosting of the hybrid CSO meeting efficiently, and the exceptional hospitality provided.

Second Action Plan –Draft ‘Two’

PRIORITY AREA	Overarching Strategic Goals	Short-term (0-2 years)	Medium-term (2-4 years)	Long-term (4-6 years)
<p>MARITIME SAFETY AND SECURITY(MSS)</p>	<p>Promoting Maritime Safety and Security (MSS) in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) through effective coordination between Member States and relevant international organisations for sharing of expertise and resources, strengthening regional cooperation to address Trans Boundary challenges, and ensure freedom of navigation in accordance with International Law, including UNCLOS, while ensuring collaboration across IORA Working Groups on common areas of interest.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity building programmes, sharing of information and best practices. • Developing the MSS capabilities of Member States. • Enhancing cooperation through MoUs with other relevant international organisations (IOM, IONS, DCoC, ASEAN, UNODC, ReCAAP, BIMSTEC, etc) and ocean governance instruments (SAR, PSC, etc). • Studying potential threats with regard to movement of high risk containerized cargo shipments in IOR. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening MSS research and identifying potential threats and challenges. • Establishing a cooperation in SAR activities between IORA and IMO through technical and maritime cooperating centres of the Member State. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing mechanisms to enhance cooperation, to build capacity and a common understanding. • Developing guidelines on an integrated IORA Maritime policy, covering all aspects of maritime safety and security. • Information sharing on Early Warning Systems (EWS) through the transfer of technologies. • Establishing a cooperation on Airborne platform for surveillance in the IOR on MSS. • Pursuing International cooperation for post-disaster recovery. • Improving the capability of IORA member states

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouraging remaining member states to sign PSC and SAR MoUs. 		<p>to deal with disasters, disaster relief and supporting actions in maritime crisis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing/Developing Maritime Information Fusion Centres. Enhance Chemical, Biological, Radiological I & Nuclear Explosive materials (CBRN-E) preparedness of IORA Member States.
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PRIORITY AREA	Overarching Strategic Goals	Short-term (0-2 years)	Medium-term (2-4 years)	Long-term (4-6 years)
TRADE AND INVESTMENT FACILITATION (TIF)	Improving the production capacity, competitiveness, and value addition of products through inclusive public-private partnership which will contribute in enhancing intra-IOA flow of goods, services, investment to further develop and grow the region's economies sustainably. Facilitating the movement of businesspersons, increasing connectivity (institutional, physical, and people-to-people and endeavour to achieve enhanced ease of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a directory of business operators in the IOA region with a view to facilitate networking amongst those willing to engage in regional value chains. Organize business familiarisation visit/seminar programmes in different countries to share knowledge and skills amongst Members of the region. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy formulation to reduce trade barrier. Develop a strategy for the facilitation of movement of persons and businesspersons. Organise B2B meetings/shows to promote SMEs entrepreneurship in the IOA region. Implementation of areas under the IOA SME MOU. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the policy and increase the volume of the intra-IOA trade flow. Increase the movement of people and businessperson within the IOA Member States Implementation of activities under the remaining areas in the IOA SME MOU.

	<p>doing business ranking of IORA members, which will result in enhanced business facilitation.</p> <p>Strengthening regional cooperation for promotion of SMEs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct awareness campaigns on digital and e-commerce for SMEs in IORA to boost online trade. • Signed by all Member States the IORA MOU on SMEs. 		
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PRIORITY AREA	Overarching Strategic Goals	Short-term (0-2 years)	Medium-term (2-4 years)	Long-term (4-6 years)
FISHERIES MANAGEMENT (FM)	Enhancing protection, conservation and sustainable management of fisheries resources in the Indian Ocean region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing integrated and ecosystem-based approaches and environmentally sustainable practices in the management of fisheries resources. • Enhancing science-based management and conservation of marine living resources, and enhancing regional and international mechanism to combat IUU fishing. 	Improving fisheries and aquaculture productivity in fisheries sector through technical assistance and capacity building across the value chain.	Facilitating fish trade and market-oriented intensification along the fisheries value chain.

PRIORITY AREA	Overarching Strategic Goals	Short-term (0-2 years)	Medium-term (2-4 years)	Long-term (4-6 years)
DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT (DRM)	Strengthening regional disaster preparedness, community resilience, and disaster risk management in accordance with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote cooperation among DRM stakeholders, including to share data, technology, and information to reduce disaster impacts and inform anticipatory action. • Share DRM lessons identified through the Sendai Framework mid-term review processes. • Undertake capacity building activities including addressing gender equality and social inclusion in disaster risk reduction actions. 	Explore organising regional experts' exchange programmes and exposure visits, including in relation to the International Conference on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve early warning and evaluation systems for disaster mitigation. • Prepare guidelines on HADR for IORA Member States.

PRIORITY AREA	Overarching Goals	Strategic	Short-term (0-2 years)	Medium-term (2-4 years)	Long-term (4-6 years)
ACADEMIC, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COOPERATION (ASTC)	1. Increase scientific knowledge, develop research capacity, and transfer technologies, among research and development institutions and academics.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of priority areas of collaboration. • Align the work programme of the IORA-Regional Centre for Science & Technology (RCSTT) with the work plan of the Working Group on Science Technology and Innovation and vice versa (WGSTI). • Develop mechanisms for capacity building and sharing of knowledge and expertise among Member States. • Establish a common understanding among IORA on academic and scientific matters through practical consultation and coordination among member states on Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing opportunities for accessible scholarships and capacity-building to further human development, with a particular focus on the challenges of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS). • Exchange of experiences and expertise among Member States with the aim of promoting the creation of centres of excellence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting sharing and collaboration in technology and innovation and in the implementation of e-Government and other Information, Communication, and Technology (ICT) solutions in the region. • Foster developmental research in STI and enrich capacities of IORA Member States on STI. • Creation of centres of excellence and scientific networks.

	<p>2. Advancing collaboration among universities and higher education and scientific institutions of Member States in the field of academics, science, and education.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of priority areas of collaboration. • Establish mechanisms for collaboration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint programmes: Establishing collaborative programmes, joint academic research projects, exchange of information and publications. • Academic Scholarship Programmes: Establishing scholarship programmes for postgraduate and research studies, subject to Member States' individual capacities. • Collaborative research: Identifying mutual priority areas of co-operation in the fields of academic and scientific research; and Setting up Joint Call for Proposals on identified priority areas for collaborative STI projects between Member States. • Exchange programmes: Organising exchange programmes for students, researchers, and technical experts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop joint research programs and sharing research facilities. • Exchange programmes: Organising exchange programmes for students, researchers, and technical experts. • Conferences and seminars: Organizing regional scientific seminars to be attended by representatives from the field of academic and scientific research. • Establish an IORA University Network.
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of an early-career Professionals (E-CP) network within IORA. • Conferences and seminars: Organizing regional scientific seminars to be attended by representatives from the field of academic and scientific research. 	
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PRIORITY AREA	Overarching Strategic Goals	Short-term (0-2 years)	Medium-term (2-4 years)	Long-term (4-6 years)
TOURISM AND CULTURAL EXCHANGES (TCE)	Increasing people-to-people interaction to promote regional economic growth through Tourism.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct feasibility study/ies to explore the potential of cruise tourism. • Cooperate and share experiences for the sustainable development of tourism. • Encourage the sustainable development of community-based tourism and eco-tourism. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Augment regional connectivity by encouraging direct flights and shipping services including cruises by encouraging investment in requisite infrastructure. • Creation of IORA platforms (digital or otherwise) for sharing of data and best practices in Tourism. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore MOUs on Tourism with Member States. • Establish an IORA Tourism Resource Centre and Website. • Explore potential MOUs on regional connectivity and cruise tourism with Member States of IORA.
	Post-COVID-19 recovery - Rethink tourism for the future and to rebuild tourism post-COVID-19.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support governments and industry preparedness and response capacity, especially with regard to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperate to leverage digitalisation in tourism in order to improve efficiency and customer experience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperate on delivering on transformative and regenerative travel through education and training for the industry.

		<p>sanitary standards and measures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote use of international standards for vaccination certification to facilitate travel. 		
	Promoting cultural heritage and harnessing the economic potential of this heritage, including World Heritage properties and sites.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the status of the Core Group for Culture and assess its revivability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore MOUs on cultural heritage with Member States of IORA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and assess the value of natural and cultural heritage conservation to cruise tourism.

PRIORITY AREA	Overarching Strategic Goals	Short-term (0-2 years)	Medium-term (2-4 years)	Long-term (4-6 years)
BLUE ECONOMY (BE)	Developing a sustainable Blue Economy as a key source of inclusive economic growth, job creation and education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing and harnessing opportunities of the oceans for socio-economic development, whilst safeguarding the ocean's health and ensuring sustainable development and management of its resources. Promote capacity building and research in resource mapping and sustainable utilisation/management of marine resources. 	Appropriate policy frameworks, effective leadership, and innovative technologies to generate blue growth and to manage risks to the marine ecosystem and associated biodiversity.	Creating an enabling environment for private investments and sustainable financing for Blue Economy initiatives to secure sustainable, economic, and inclusive growth.

PRIORITY AREA	Overarching Strategic Goals	Short-term (0-2 years)	Medium-term (2-4 years)	Long-term (4-6 years)
WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT (WEE)	Promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, ensure women's rights, access, and opportunities for participation and leadership in the economy and to eliminate violence and discrimination against women and girls in all its forms as the prosperity of the region will only be realised fully by investing in the empowerment of women and girls.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a "IORA Gender Equality Pledge" that sets targets for female/male participation in IORA and is reported on at least annually. • Establish a network of women entrepreneurs in the region, supported by an online platform and a events and training programs focussed on overcoming WEE barriers, strengthening income generating activities, improving women's digital and financial literacy and offering avenues of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange regular regional events for private and public sector participants to address barriers to women's economic empowerment, drawing on the UN Women's 2020 and 2021 reports and featuring success stories across the region. • Develop a matrix of stakeholders that could assist with advancing WEE in the region. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IORA's WGWEE delivers at least one to two initiatives, projects or activity annually targeting a network of women in the region aimed at addressing the barriers to women's economic advancement as set out in the Jakarta Concord and Balaclava Declaration on Women's Economic Empowerment and Gender Equality as a Pre-Requisite for Sustainable Development. These barriers include discriminatory laws and practices (particular on sexual assault), job segregation, gender-based violence, unequal access to and control over resources inadequate

		<p>support, including women affected by violence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and amend the WEE work plan to align with the short, medium and long term objectives outlined herewith; overarching objectives of IORA's other priority areas; and addressing the challenges posed by COVID-19. 		<p>representation in decision-making and inadequate social safety nets.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvements in women's digital and financial literacy, referencing UN Women's Economic Empowerment in the Indian Ocean Rim: Progress and Challenges report as a baseline. Increase in the number of private sector entities to sign, support and implement the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs).
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PRIORITY AREA	Overarching Strategic Goals	Short-term (0-2 years)	Medium-term (2-4 years)	Long-term (4-6 years)
INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND BROADENING ENGAGEMENT (IABE)	1. Strengthening the IORA Secretariat, its institutions and specialised agencies by providing adequate resources to build capacity to support Member States, to deepen cooperation with the Dialogue Partners,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutionalise the annual Meeting of the IORA Working/ Core Groups Chairs/ Priority/Cross-cutting Areas Coordinating Countries as an annual mechanism for engagement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Coordination Meetings between the IORA Working/ Core Group Chairs, Coordinating Countries for the respective Cluster Groups. Engagement between the Member States 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To strengthen its relations and engagement with other International Organizations in the Indo-Pacific region, such as: ASEAN, APEC, African Union (AU), Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), Indian

	<p>non-government stakeholders and to enhance people-to-people interaction especially among the youth for mutual understanding, trust and development in the Indian Ocean region. Expanding collaboration with countries outside the region and relevant regional and international organizations based on mutual interest to increase the profile of IORA at international fora.</p> <p>2. Determine the Role of Primary Bodies (CSO, COM)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the establishment of the IABE as a Functional Body. • Annual engagement with Dialogue Partners on the margins of the CSO and COM. • Preparation ToRs for the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) and Council of Ministers (COM). • Preparation of ToR of the IORA Champion Awards. • Implementation of the Streamlining Decision-making processes. • Finalisation of the Special Fund Arrangements. • Celebration of IORA Day. • Finalisation of the Membership criteria. 	<p>(TROIKA and Cluster Group) regarding the needs and requirements of the Secretariat.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of the IABE as a Functional Body. • Implement and continue the IORA Champion Awards and continue the media familiarisation visits to Member States. • Celebration of IORA Day 	<p>Ocean Commission (IOC), the European Union (EU) and the Commonwealth and explore mutual Observership arrangements especially with the UN and its relevant agencies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the establishment of the IORA Development Fund and to execute projects that would endeavour to narrow the gap between the advanced economies and least developed countries (LDCs) of IORA, ensuring that development across the Indian Ocean Rim is inclusive and sustainable. • Celebration of IORA Day.
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Approved by COM on 17 November 2021

IORA ACTION PLAN: FUTURE COORDINATING COUNTRIES AND CLUSTER GROUPS FOR SECOND IORA ACTION PLAN

Srn.	PRIORITY AREA	Second IORA Action Plan
1.	MARITIME SAFETY AND SECURITY (MSS)	Coordinator: Sri Lanka
		Cluster Group: Australia, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, South Africa, Tanzania and UAE
2.	TRADE AND INVESTMENT FACILITATION (TIF)	Coordinator: Australia
		Cluster Group: India, Iran, Kenya, Malaysia, Mauritius, South Africa and Tanzania
3.	FISHERIES MANAGEMENT (FM)	Coordinator: Indonesia
		Cluster Group: Australia, Bangladesh, India, Iran, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Oman, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand, and FSU
4.	DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT (DRM)	Coordinator: India
		Cluster Group: Indonesia, Iran, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, South Africa and Sri Lanka
5.	ACADEMIC, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COOPERATION (ASTC) IORAG WGSTI	Coordinator: India
		Cluster Group: Indonesia, Madagascar, Iran, Mauritius, South Africa, UAE, RCSTT
6.	TOURISM AND CULTURAL EXCHANGES (TCE)	Coordinator: Mauritius
		Cluster Group: Iran, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Oman, Seychelles, South Africa, Sri Lanka and Tanzania
7.	BLUE ECONOMY (BE)	Coordinator: South Africa
		Cluster Group: Australia, Bangladesh, Comoros, France/Reunion, India, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand, UAE
8.	WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT (WEE)	Coordinator: Iran
		Cluster Group: India, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Mauritius, Seychelles, South Africa, Thailand, UAE
9.	INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND BROADENING ENGAGEMENT (IABE)	Coordinator: Sri Lanka
		Cluster Group: Troika+, Australia, India, Mauritius, South Africa

IORA Guidelines
for
Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief
[HADR]



Members



Australia



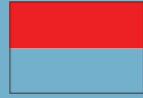
Bangladesh



Comoros



India



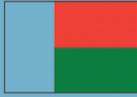
Indonesia



Iran



Kenya



Madagascar



Maldives



Malaysia



Mauritius



Mozambique



Oman



Seychelles



Singapore



Somalia



South Africa



Sri Lanka



Tanzania



Thailand



UAE



Yemen



France

Dialogue Partners



China



Egypt



Italy



Germany



Japan



South Korea



Turkey



UK



USA

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Appendix Detailed Information Requirement for Conduct of HADR32

Glossary

Terms	Descriptions
Affected Nation	The nation in which the disaster has occurred.
Assisting Nation	The nation which is rendering disaster response or recovery assistance to another nation.
Casualty Centre	The Casualty Centre is established ashore by the Assisting Nations within the relief camp to provide treatment to casualties occurring in the AO.
Control	The overall direction of management activities in an emergency situation. May include the tasking and coordinating of other organisations resources.
Coordination	The systematic acquisition and application of resources (workers, equipment, goods and services) to address the threat or impact of an emergency.
Defence Forces	A recognised term to explain Army, Navy and Air Force units.
Disaster ¹	Disaster means a catastrophe, mishap, calamity or grave occurrence in any area, arising from natural or manmade causes, or by accident or negligence which results in substantial loss of life or human suffering or damage to, and destruction of, property, or environment, and is of such a nature or magnitude as to be beyond the coping capacity of the community of the affected area (India DM Act, 2005)
Disaster Management	Refers to a continuous and integrated process of planning, organizing, coordinating and implementing measures which are necessary or expedient for—

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention of danger or threat of any disaster; • Mitigation or reduction of risk of any disaster or its severity or consequences; • Capacity building • Preparedness to deal with any disaster; • Prompt response to any threatening Disaster situation or disaster; • Assessing the severity or magnitude of effects of any disaster; • Evacuation, rescue & relief • Rehabilitation, reconstruction and recovery <p>Disaster management can also be defined as the organization and management of resources and responsibilities for dealing with all humanitarian aspects of emergencies, preparedness, response and recovery in order to lessen the impact of disasters (DM Act, 2005).</p>
Disaster Relief	Goods and services provided to meet the immediate needs of disaster affected communities.
Humanitarian Assistance	Activities conducted to relieve or reduce human pain, disease, hunger or threats to human life and severe damage or loss of property.
Humanitarian Principles ²	Humanity - Human suffering is addressed wherever it is found, with particular attention to the most vulnerable in the population, such as children, women and the elderly. The dignity and rights of all victims must be respected and protected.

Terms	Descriptions
	<p>Neutrality - Humanitarian assistance must be provided without engaging in hostilities or taking sides in controversies of a political, religious, or ideological nature</p> <p>Impartiality - Assistance is provided without discriminating as to ethnic origin, gender, nationality, political opinions, race, or religion. Relief of the suffering must be guided solely by needs and priority must be given to the most urgent cases of distress.</p>
Liaison Officer	A person nominated to represent their organization for response and recovery operations. Liaison Officers provide advice about the resources of their organization, structure and capability and act as a conduit for information.
Management Authority	These are organizations that have responsibility for coordinating activities for identified hazards and risks across the Preventive, Preparedness, Response and Recovery (PPRR) spectrum.
Multi National Force	Broad overarching term that describes the multinational efforts of participating nations.
Navy	The term, in instances where there is no formally constituted Navy, automatically will mean the agency responsible for maritime security.
Preparedness	Measures taken so that communities and agencies have the capacity to cope with the effects of emergencies.
Recovery	Measures that support emergency affected individuals and communities, physical and emotional well-being, social and community networks, built and natural environment and economic activity/ viability. Recovery is a medium to long term disaster strategy.

Relief Operation Centre (ROC)	ROC is established ashore by the Assisting Nations to coordinate and control the activities of the Relief Teams operating in the AO.
Response	Measures that minimize the effect of an emergency through actions that resolve the threats to life, property and the environment. Typically 'Response' is a short term disaster strategy.

Terms	Descriptions
Staging Areas	A location where disaster responders prepare equipment, stores and personnel for response and recovery operations.
Standard Operating Procedure	A set of directions detailing what actions are to be taken, as well as how, when, by whom and why, for specific events or tasks.
Support Agency	Support agencies are responsible for maintaining specific capabilities that are likely to be called upon to assist a Management Authority. Support agencies command their own resources in coordination with the Management Authority where required.
Volunteer	A person who voluntarily undertakes or expresses willingness to undertake a service without pay.

1 UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

2 UN General Assembly Resolution 46/182.

Acronyms & Abbreviations

Terms	Descriptions
ALG	Advanced Landing Ground Information
AO	Area of Operations
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
HADR	Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief
IOR	Indian Ocean Region
LF	Landing Force
LFC	Landing Force Commander
LO	Liaison Officer
MNF	Multi National Force
NEO	Non-Combatant Evacuation Operations
ROC	Relief Operation Centre
ROE	Rules of Engagement
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
UN	United Nations
WPNS	Western Pacific Naval Symposium
DRM	Disaster Risk Management

1.1 INTRODUCTION

1.2 General

1.2.1 An increasing number of natural hazards that have had disastrous impact on vulnerable populations have been witnessed in the IOR in the past decade with several IORA Member States being subjected to unprecedented devastation. These frequent disasters point to an urgent requirement to establish an arrangement of collective emergency response for disaster relief.

1.2.2 IORA has recognized DRM as one of its six Priority Areas. The Jakarta Concord, signed by the IORA Member States identifies the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, an international policy framework, as the guiding document for IORA to pursue Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in the region. IORA Member States must develop DRM toolkits based on national capacities and understandings. Development of Guidelines for Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) amongst the IORA members is the preliminary step that would facilitate coordinated responses and mutual assistance, in order to mitigate the effects of natural disasters.

1.2.3 HADR is, and should remain, a predominantly civilian function. However, humanitarian principles also dictate that all available resources, including military assets, should be utilized to minimize the human cost of a natural disaster. The experiences from the Asian Tsunami (2004), Cyclone ‘Sidr’ in Bangladesh (2007), Cyclone ‘Nargis’ in Myanmar (2008) and Cyclone Amphan in India (2020) highlight the potential benefits from the support by military forces for civilian led HADR missions, as also reaffirm their ability to muster assets and capacities to respond in a timely manner to ameliorate human sufferings by rendering effective relief efforts in the affected areas. As a corollary, the experiences gained from previous disasters indicate that militaries of IORA nations, including the navies, are very well placed to play an important role in HADR operations in the region.

1.3 Aim

The IORA Guidelines for HADR aims at providing guidelines for developing a speedy, responsive, coordinated and effective HADR for IORA members, if and when required, as also serve the purpose to have a common understanding of HADR Operations³

1.4 Scope

The IORA Guidelines for HADR have been outlined as under:

1.4.1 Part I - Principles, Stages and Effectiveness of Navies in Disaster Relief.

1.4.2 Part II - Mechanism for HADR Operations

3 These guidelines are voluntary in nature and not binding on countries. They will not, in any way, affect the rights, obligations or responsibilities of states and individuals under international law.

2.1 PRINCIPLES, STAGES AND EFFECTIVENESS OF NAVIES IN DISASTER RELIEF

2.2 Principles of HADR Operations

As HADR operations are not military operations in a conventional sense, they have a set of guiding principles that differ from conventional combat operations. These are as under:

2.2.1 Objective. All actions to be undertaken should be in support of clearly defined HADR objectives aimed at providing relief to population in disaster hit areas.

2.2.2 Unity of Effort. Since a large number of organizations (Navies, civil administration, volunteer, NGOs, etc) will be involved in HADR missions, unity of effort under civilian leadership is critical to the success of the mission.

2.2.3 Security. When forces are assigned to provide support in hostile environments, security must remain a primary concern at all times. Security includes protecting own forces, non-military personnel and recipients of the assistance.

2.2.4 Restraint. Forces involved in HADR operations need to act with extreme restraint as any incident which involves use of unprovoked/ perceived to be unprovoked force will be counter-productive to the success of the mission.

2.2.5 Legitimacy. Forces undertaking HADR missions will only ever support host government response efforts, respecting host government leadership and promoting and affirming the host government's ability to care for its people. Adhering to the principle of legitimacy will make it easier to accomplish the mission successfully.

2.2.6 Responsiveness. HADR missions are conducted to alleviate suffering and should, therefore, be conducted quickly and efficiently to provide rapid and tailored support to the recipient's needs. The speed of launching relief operations coupled with faster decision making is of paramount importance.

2.2.7 Simplicity. Focusing on essential matters fosters efficiency in planning and execution. Streamlining the HADR mission with simple standardized orders and procedures will enable better co-ordination with civilian agencies involved.

2.2.8 Flexibility. HADR missions are fluid in nature, therefore, forces must be able to quickly adapt to changing situations and requirements. Information is usually not needed. The speed of launching relief operations coupled with faster decision making is of paramount importance—as the situation on ground may not be apparent in the initial stages. Hence, the command and control set-up needs to be flexible with centralised command and decentralised execution being the best option.

2.2.9 Neutrality.⁴ Forces undertaking HADR missions need to maintain a neutral posture and must not be seen as aiding one party more than the other(s). This is also important for reasons of legitimacy.

2.2.10 Assumption. The forces would be operating under prescribed operational plans and directives enforced by their own commands and would be directed by the limitations placed upon them by their respective governments. Host governments and forces may restrict the type, amount and location of assistance rendered by IORA member navies.

2.3 Stages of Response

Disaster Management has the following four sequential, though not necessarily exclusive stages:

2.3.1 Preparatory Stage. This corresponds to the pre-disaster period and includes disaster prediction, warning and alert systems, preventive and mitigation measures, capacity building, training, issue of contingency plans and checklists for potential disasters. This is a stage to determine the state of readiness by mobilising and organizing resources and to efficiently respond to any imminent or impending disastrous events.

2.3.2 Initial Response Stage. This stage commences from warning of disaster to the period immediately after the disaster and aims at providing immediate relief to the affected populace and bringing a semblance of normalcy in the affected area.

2.3.3 Sustenance/ Rehabilitation/ Recovery Stage. This period covers short term measures to restore normalcy in the affected area, restore essential services, communication, and normal community life.

2.3.4 Stabilization/ Redeployment/ Reconstruction Stage. This is a medium to long term measure aimed at providing adequate relief to the affected people.

2.4 Effectiveness of Navies

2.4.1 As stated earlier, disaster relief operations are always to be controlled and coordinated by the local civilian administration. However, navies could be employed as a tool for complementing existing relief mechanism in order to provide specific support to specific requirements. Navies may be employed in response to the acknowledged humanitarian gap between the disaster-needs that the relief providing community is being asked to satisfy and the resources available to meet them.

2.4.2 The following aspects need to be addressed by the Assisting Nations, to make navies effective in providing immediate relief to afflicted populace in the event of a natural disaster:

a. Timeliness. Timeliness in deployment of navies for immediate relief response in the initial phase of a disaster largely determines its effectiveness.

b. Appropriateness. Navies need to be culturally sensitive when providing assistance in a region. Further, naval assets need to be withdrawn as soon as their requirement is over.

c. Efficiency. The efficiency of a naval force depends not only on its ability to perform the task assigned but also on its capacity to be utilised within the larger relief operation, which, to a large extent, depends on the ability of the foreign navies to submit itself to such coordination by civilian administration.

d. Absorptive Capacity. The effectiveness of naval assets is also affected by absorptive capacity of the affected region - the ability of local disaster management institutions to coordinate and effectively use the assets deployed. Individual naval assets should, however, be relatively self-reliant and thus place a lesser burden on the absorptive capacity of the affected region.

e. Coordination. Coordination between civilian humanitarian agencies and naval forces has been one of the greatest challenges in HADR operations. The differences of cultures, priorities and operating modes between naval personnel and civilian actors have an impact on information sharing between civilian and naval spheres. This aspect needs to be addressed by all participating members for effective HADR operations.

f. Cost. The cost of deploying military forces is generally higher than that for civilian assets. However, foreign military assistance is to be provided at no cost to the Affected Nation,

unless otherwise agreed upon* between the concerned states or regulated by international agreements.

*[Financial Model That underpins this plan must be drafted by all countries involved

g. Access. It is important for the affected nation to ensure effective access to port entry and clearance of equipment by their revenue services.

h. Exit strategy. It is important to ensure that a clear demobilisation and exit strategy is in place to enable the receiving country to take over the operations fully within its capacity and resources.

2.4.3 The potential value of deploying naval forces for providing rapid and immediate disaster response, while observing the factors for effectiveness, stated above, cannot be disputed. This is a humanitarian activity, which should override any differences amongst the member nations for agreeing to deploy highly trained, capable and disciplined naval forces to support civilian led disaster responses.

2.5 Actions by Navies in Various Stages of Disaster

2.5.1 Preparatory Stage. During this stage the following activities should be conducted:

- a.** Establishment of liaison with local level authorities.
- b.** Identification of possible areas of employment.
- c.** Understanding the overall disaster relief plan and formulation of own contingency plan.
- d.** Tasking and preparation for execution of contingency plans.
- e.** Clear Incident Command Management/System in place
- f.** Local level liaison and reconnaissance by own missions abroad with regard to establishment of liaison with local populace.
- g.** Briefing of sailors/troops and rehearsals for those types of disaster which are recurring in nature.

2.5.2 Initial Response Stage. During this stage, in case magnitude of the problem warrants the requisitioning of military forces, the following activities should be carried out:

- a. On being directed, the sailors/ troops are warned and prepared for the task.
- b. Final tasking and co-ordination
- c. Move to disaster area.
- d. Establishment or integration of an HADR civilian or military coordination centre by the Affected Nation.
- e. Division of geographical area into various segments
- f. Briefing of sailors/troops and rehearsals for those types of disaster which are recurring in nature.
- f. Evacuation of victims to safer places.
- g. Provision of medical aid and other relief like food, water etc.

2.5.3 Sustenance/ Rehabilitation/ Recovery Stage. During this stage, the naval forces may be employed to assist the civil administration for:

- a. Restoration of essential services like communications, water and power supply.
- b. Assisting in provision of temporary shelter for victims and their assets.
- c. Disseminating information relevant to relief activities and rendering advice to victims where necessary.
- d. Keeping the affected populace motivated to obviate the impact of rumours.
- e. Ensuring participation of affected populace in their welfare activities like meetings, relief operations, decision making etc.
- f. Rendering medical aid to the injured and prevention of spread of diseases postdisaster.

2.5.4 Stabilization/ Redeployment/ Reconstruction Stage. The naval forces have limited role to play during this stage. The armed forces need to be repatriated the moment a semblance of normalcy is restored.

2.5.5 Withdrawal/ Exit Stage

3.1 MECHANISM FOR HADR OPERATIONS

3.2 General. The use of naval forces and capacities of IORA member nations for disaster management is to be on a voluntary basis. The Affected Nation should communicate the requirement for assistance to the Coordination Centre (Refer Article 3.5). However, until the Coordination Centre is established, the assistance may be sought by the Affected Nation or offered by other IORA nations, either bilaterally or through the IORA Secretariat.

3.3 Guidelines for Deployment during HADR Operations⁶The following guidelines may be observed when naval forces are deployed for HADR operations in foreign waters/ land:

- a. Respecting national sovereignty, territorial integrity, national laws, customs and regulations of the Affected Nation, in accordance with the UN Charter. External assistance or offers of assistance may only be provided upon request, or with the consent of the Affected Nation.
- b. The duration of deployment of assets and capacities is to be mutually determined by the Assisting and the Affected Nations.
- c. The Affected Nation shall exercise the overall direction, control, coordination and supervision of assistance within its territory.
- d. The dignity and rights of all victims are to be respected and protected.
- e. Humanitarian assistance is to be provided without any prejudice and discrimination of the ethnic origin, gender, nationality, political opinions, race or religion of the affected population. The humanitarian principles of the UN Charter must be adhered to (Refer Glossary).
- f. The religious sentiments must be kept in mind while providing aid to the Affected Nation and should not be contrary to the receiving country's religion, culture and traditional values.

6 The Principles of HADR Operations (Article 2.1) are to be imbibed by naval forces deployed.

g. The assets deployed are to be withdrawn as soon as immediate relief has been provided and other agencies are ready to take over or as indicated by the Affected Nation.

3.4 Resources for HADR Operations. The type of military forces and capacities, organic to the navies that may be earmarked for HADR by IORA member nations are as follows:

a. **Type of Unit.** The unit could be a medical, engineer, infantry, ship, aircraft and so on from the Army, Navy, Air Force or nominated Disaster relief forces which may be carried on board or operate under overall control of the navy.

b. **Size/ Level of Unit.** It could be a unit, flight, company or battalion and so on, as part of the naval effort.

c. **Capabilities and Capacities.** This shall include making available own transportation in delivering HADR or deploying transportation assets and capacities in order to assist other Assisting Nations to transport their military assets and troops.

d. **Personnel.** experienced in HADR operations should be deployed. Specialised personnel may include medical officers, liaison officers, logistics crew, aircraft crew, legal officers, engineers, hydrographers, interpreters, wetland ecologists etc.

e. **Emergency stock of disaster relief items.** (Also refer to Article 3.8.3 (a)).

f. **Military assistance.** during HADR operations may include heavy lift, deployable engineering infrastructure, logistic support, evacuation, search and rescue, medical support, accommodation and provision of emergency supplies.

g. **Foreign military assets.** involved in international disaster response operations remain under their own national command and control, operating in support of the Affected State as coordinated by the MNF coordinator.

h. **Reserve.** Each IORA member nation may earmark appropriate resources for HADR, which could be deployed expeditiously in times of disaster/ emergency.

3.5 Coordinating Centre. There would be a need to establish a full time Coordinating Centre (Civil-Military) through mutual consensus for dealing with all aspects of cooperation in HADR operations. The Affected Nation is to communicate the requirement of HADR assistance as required to this Centre. This Centre would interact

with other member nations, IORA Secretariat and other relevant organizations regarding the need for deployment of forces and undertake necessary actions thereof. The responsibility of managing this Centre could be rotated amongst the volunteer member nations or the Centre could be established within the geographical region of IORA under the overall guidance of the IORA Secretariat. Till such time a fully functional standing Coordination Centre is established at mutually agreed location, the tasks of the Centre will be carried out by the IORA Secretariat. On occurrence of a disaster, the IORA Secretariat may be called upon to inform all IORA nations, of the nature of the disaster and coordinate the initial response as well as monitor subsequent relief activities.

3.5.1 Charter of Duties – Coordination Centre.

- a. Coordination of HADR issues with IORA Secretariat, which would be coordinating with the Governments of the IORA nations.
- b. Monitor ongoing operations.
- c. Coordination for deployment of forces for HADR.
- d. Maintain and update database of HADR capabilities and assets available for relief operations of all member navies.
- e. Conduct safety briefings and site inductions
- f. Provide navigational advisory support to vessels transiting to and operate within the worksite
- g. Collaboration with member nation's marine coordination services

3.6 Interoperability. Organised multinational operations especially HADR, involve complex cultural issues, interoperability challenges, conflicting national command and control procedures, information sharing and other support issues. Hence, there is a need for consensus within the participating nations on the use of military personnel and for gaining cross cultural competence on a regular basis. This would require regular interactions and unity of effort to achieve success in HADR operations. Through interactions (exercises, courses etc), the navies must gain knowledge of capabilities for maritime surveillance and means for transfer of data in real time to a unit from another navy engaged in a co-operative activity at sea.

3.7 Employment of Navies for HADR Operations

3.7.1 Expected Tasks for the Navy. The navies may be called upon to carry out any one or more of the following tasks in case of a disaster:

- a. Establish infrastructure for Command and Control.
- b. Initial and subsequent surveillance of the affected areas.
- c. Deployment of relief teams to provide initial relief in areas inaccessible from land and establishment of relief camps.
- d. Medical aid, hospital ships and prevention of epidemics.
- e. Transportation of relief material, food and water.
- f. Maintenance of essential services and supplies.
- g. Evacuation of survivors to safer areas.
- h. Diving assistance.
- j. Damage control in the form of fire fighting, demolition of obstacles, provision of emergency lighting etc.

3.7.2 Organisation for HADR Operations. The organisation for conduct of HADR operations must be put in place well before the ship(s) reach the disaster port. This is important for ensuring that relief operations are commenced as soon as possible. The organisation and exact composition of the teams for HADR missions will depend on the various factors enumerated above at Article 3.7.1. The following teams may be constituted for undertaking an HADR mission:

- a Planning Team.
- b. Advance Team.
- c. Liaison Team.
- d. Reconnaissance Team.
- e. Medical Team.
- f. Logistics Team.
- g. Relief Camp Assistance Team.
- h. Relief Team (s).
- j. Aviation Team.
- k. Public Affairs Team.

i. Technicians and/ Engineers.

3.7.3 Tasking and Composition of Teams. When naval forces receive directions for a HADR mission and after initial planning by the Planning Team, an Advance Team is to be sent to assess the situation. The Advance Team may comprise one officer, a senior medical assistant, a senior electrical sailor, a senior communication sailor, a diving sailor, a survey sailor and a representative from the landing force, if embarked. The Advance Team's objective is to identify existing short falls in local government/ Affected Nation's capabilities for providing relief. Another important task of the Advance Team is to establish liaison with government officials, HADR participating nations, diplomatic personnel, NGOs and local authorities. The tasking and composition of the balance teams may be worked out subsequently based on the task at hand.

3.8 Conduct of HADR Operations

3.8.1 Command and Control. The MNF Coordinator, working under civilian leadership, should ensure that the missions assigned to nations within the IORA force, reflect specific capabilities and limitations of each contingent. The MNF Coordinator is expected to coordinate all actions at the disaster relief AO under the direction of local civilian authorities. The MNF Coordinator could be nominated from either of the following:

- a. Affected Nation.** Depending on the extent of damage and capacity to recuperate from the disaster, the Affected Nation may nominate the MNF Coordinator. As far as possible, the MNF Coordinator should be from the Affected Nation.
- b. Nation Reacting Earliest.** The MNF Coordinator could be selected from the nation reacting the earliest and the responsibility may be transferred later to another nation, if required.
- c. Capability/ Assets.** The nation with most capable assets and with majority participation may nominate the MNF Coordinator. On de-induction, the duties may be handed over to the Affected Nation.

3.8.2 Local Coordination Centre. A Local Coordination Centre should be established in the area where the disaster has occurred. It would operate under the MNF Coordinator. This Centre would act as an interface with all stakeholders who could facilitate relief operations, including political hierarchy, naval component,

civilians and NGOs. The suggested staffing of the Local Coordination Centre is recommended as under:

a. OIC Coordination Centre. Captain rank officer or equivalent (should be the senior most officer).

b. Staff.

i. Two x Commander rank officers or equivalent or as feasible (Affected Nation).

ii. **Military Point of Contact.** Lieutenant/Lieutenant Commander or equivalent or as feasible from each IORA nation participating in relief operations.

iii. **Coordination Centre Manning Staff.** The manning staff for the Coordination Centre could be pooled in from the IORA nations participating contingents based on the magnitude of disaster and relief operations.

3.8.3 Preparatory Activities. The preparatory activities that need to be undertaken prior conduct of HADR missions are as under:

a. Assessment of Resources Available. On receipt of orders for conduct of HADR mission, an assessment of resources available should be made immediately by the Relief Force/ Naval Commander on the scene. The assessment may broadly cover the following aspects:

i. Manpower.

ii. Stores.

iii. Victuals.

iv. Water.

v. Medical supplies.

vi. Communication facilities.

vii. Equipment for repair and rehabilitation.

viii. Aviation assets.

b. Preliminary Reconnaissance. Notwithstanding the information obtained by the Advance Team, a survey by the ship(s) would provide a true picture of the situation on ground. Therefore, it is imperative that a preliminary reconnaissance/ survey of the affected areas are carried out at the earliest available opportunity by the Reconnaissance Team. A helicopter, if embarked onboard, is the best platform for conduct of the survey. Key information that needs to be obtained by the preliminary reconnaissance/ survey includes the following:

- i. Extent of damage.
- ii. State of harbour facilities, installations and navigable channel.
- iii. Landing sites, dumping area (sea port/ airport) and areas for boats and craft.
- iv. Condition of roads and buildings.
- v. Likely sites for construction of camps and ALGs.

c. Detailed Information Requirements. In addition to the information gained through the Advance Team and Reconnaissance Team, detailed information covering all aspects of the mission is required to enable effective planning and conduct of the HADR mission. Information requirements that need to be addressed prior to undertaking a mission are placed as Appendix.

3.8.4 Action on Arrival. The following actions may be undertaken on arrival at the disaster site:

a. Approaching an Anchorage or Berth. On arrival in the disaster area, the ship should consider 'Sounding' her way into the selected anchorage near shore, or the alongside berth if available, with extreme caution as there is a possibility that the characteristics of the sea bed may have altered. This is particularly important after an earthquake or severe cyclone

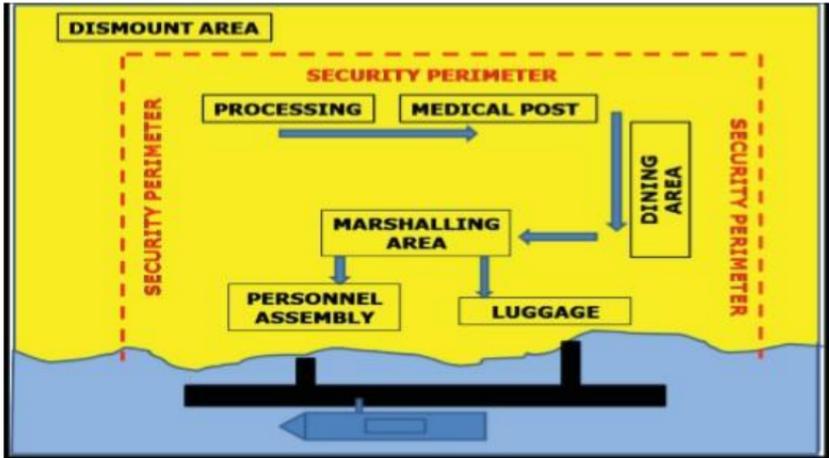
when large number of small craft may have sunk or are adrift. It should be borne in mind that navigational buoys may have shifted position post the disaster and may not be reliable.

b. Liaison with the Local Authorities and NGOs Operating in the Area. A small Liaison Team under an officer should be sent ashore to carry out the liaison work whilst preparation continues onboard for delivery of aid and assistance. A conference must also be held onboard the ship, if feasible, to co-ordinate the relief activity of all the agencies involved.

c. Control Ashore. The Relief Team is to be made responsible for setting up of the ROC ashore. The location of ROC should facilitate:

- i. Exercise of centralised control of all parties working ashore.
- ii. The site should be close to, but distinctly apart from, the local civilian Relief or Administrative Office.
- iii. Maintenance of accurate records of narrative.
- iv. Establish communication with the MNF Coordinator.

3.8.5 Embarkation Point. If the HADR mission involves civilian/NEO operations, then an Embarkation Point needs to be set up in vicinity of the location where ships have been berthed. The Embarkation Point should be large enough to enable screening, medical checkup and treatment, processing of papers, baggage identification, messing etc to be carried out prior embarkation on to the ships. The selection of the site for the Embarkation Point needs to take into consideration the security situation, quantum of embarkation to be carried out, characteristics of the port and its adjacent areas, connectivity by road etc. The suggested layout of an embarkation point is shown below:



3.8.6 Reconnaissance. Irrespective of the amount of information obtained during the preliminary reconnaissance or provided by the local authorities, it is important that a thorough reconnaissance of the disaster area is carried out by the Reconnaissance Team as soon as possible on arrival of the ships. The Officer-in-Charge of the operations ashore should, with representatives of local authority, if feasible, tour the area and assess the situation on which priorities of aid can be based.

3.9 Working Guidelines for Conduct

a. Force Protection and Crowd Control. Security is of vital importance to the conduct of HADR missions. Measures need to be taken in consultation with the Affected Nation to ensure that adequate security is provided to both the personnel involved in the HADR effort, as well as, the HADR recipients. However, this may not always be possible. The onus of providing security to personnel and aid sites rests with the local authorities. Direction by the local administration and law enforcement agencies needs to be taken. A separate provost organisation may be detailed, in coordination and with permission of the competent local authority, for crowd control at the aid site.

b. Use of Force. Use of force is to be strictly avoided during conduct of HADR operations. Armed personnel must be employed ashore only at the specific request of the Affected Nation. Nothing in the employment of armed/ unarmed naval personnel employed on shore duties will abrogate the inherent right of self defence.

c. Communications. Standard communication procedures need to be promulgated. Provision of mobile satellite phones to shore/ reconnaissance/support force will be required as they may move out of VHF/UHF range. Feasibility of creation of an open source, internet based communication system for real time information between IORA members involved in HADR may also be assessed. Voice communication needs to be maintained at all times between the ship, the relief camp and all detached parties. Extensive use must be made of portable VHF/HF and handheld communication sets. No party should be deployed without communication sets and additional batteries irrespective of distance from the camp/ship. Ships should also be ready for operating any frequencies that have been promulgated by the local government/ Affected Nation for conduct of operations. Development of regional maritime awareness needs to be progressed.

d. Airspace Management. During HADR, air assets on board/ ship bound will play a pivotal role in smooth and effective conduct of relief operations. To facilitate movement of air assets an 'Adhoc Air Traffic Control' may be established. It shall perform the tasks of monitoring and controlling the air space and cross deck operations by on board air resources. MNF Coordinator will nominate a suitable platform for carrying out airspace management in conjunction with the relevant agency of the Affected Nation, depending upon the availability of a suitable ship and the situation on ground.

e. **Transportation.** Local transportation, if available should be used for ferrying personnel/ disaster relief stores to/ from remote and isolated areas. Use must be made of the knowledge of local drivers to access these remote areas. Transport from the LF, should as far as possible, be only used for transportation of relief stores between the ship and the relief camp and for movement of relief parties and service personnel. All transport being used for relief operations are to be clearly marked for easy identification and provided with armed escorts, if required (only after consultation with the Affected Nation).

f. **Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Demolition.** All rehabilitation, reconstruction and demolition work undertaken as part of the relief operations should be conducted after due concurrence of the local administration has been obtained. Work, especially demolition, should as far as possible be conducted in presence of representatives from the local government. Safety aspects should always be borne in mind to avoid possible exacerbation of an existing sensitive situation.

g. **Medical Aid.** The Medical Team will function under the senior-most Medical Officer present in the relief force. A Casualty Centre should be established at a suitable location within the relief camp. If a large number of casualties are present, triage must be carried out. Help of locally available medical practitioners and personnel qualified in medical care must be taken to augment the limited medical resources that would be available. A working party to aid in movement of medical stores and patients also needs to be provided to the Casualty Centre that has been established. Only under exceptional circumstances or on order from higher authorities should a casualty be embarked onboard the ship for treatment. Medical records should also be maintained to the extent

feasible. All necessary medical precautions must be taken by the Service personnel of the participating nations against diseases like Malaria, Cholera, enteric group etc.

h. Priority of Aid. It is vital to establish priority of aid with respect to the aim of the mission, early in the planning process. The priority established would be based on the situation on ground, inherent capability of the HADR force and directives received from higher authorities. Once the priority of aid has been established, all personnel must be briefed accordingly and the organisation must be set-up to achieve the aims in order of the established priority. Aid must be delivered as per the necessity on the ground and as directed by the local authorities. The Local Coordination Centre and the ROC of Assisting Nations are to coordinate activities in a timely and responsive manner in order to deliver aid as per envisaged priority.

i. Public Affairs. Media interaction is a high priority area as far as HADR operations are concerned. The Captain of the ship and/ or an officer specifically nominated from the Public Affairs Team as the Media Liaison Officer should be the only personnel authorised to speak to the media. All possible assistance must be provided to the media as long as the assistance provided does not prejudice the ongoing operation. Only factually correct information is to be provided by the authorised personnel. The ship's company must also be sensitised to the fact that their actions will be under scrutiny of the media personnel during the conduct of HADR operations. Personnel must come across as being sensitive to the needs of the HADR recipients at all times. Care must also be exercised to ensure that no classified information is inadvertently provided to the media personnel.

j. Interpreter. Personnel with knowledge of the local language or even an English/ local language dictionary would be extremely useful to meet the requirements to communicate

with the local authorities and populace. Utilisation of IT tools like Google Translate is also recommended to overcome, to the extent feasible, language barriers. However, care must be taken of possible misinterpretation in using such tools.

l. Identification and Security. Recommended identification and security measures are as follows:

i. Personnel of Assisting Nations should wear their respective national military uniform and be identified by appropriate markings. Fluorescent jackets, prominently displaying the respective national emblem, may be worn along with arm-bands or some other means of identification such that the party to which they belong, can be easily recognised.

ii. The military personnel deployed in HADR operations are not to carry weapons while performing HADR duties, unless otherwise agreed upon with the Affected Nation.

iii. Adequate security for the authorised foreign military support is to be the responsibility of the Affected Nation.

m. Op Diary/ Narrative. An Op Diary/ Narrative should be maintained by the Local Coordination Centre and the respective ROCs to record all demands received, tasks carried out and any other occurrence of special importance.

3.10 Detailed Instructions. The IORA members may promulgate detailed instructions in accordance with these guidelines for the use of naval assets and capacities for HADR operations.

4.1 CONCLUSION

4.2 The frequency of disasters has seen a manifold increase in the last few years and is of relevance to us in IORA countries as sixty percent of these occur in our region. The scale and intensity of disasters are increasing and disasters like Tsunamis and the Typhoon Haiyan are a grim reminder of this fact. Maritime forces due to their reach, sustenance and endurance are ideally suited to cover the gap, and provide relief in a timely manner. They have the capability to arrive with critical mass quickly, commence relief support immediately and sustain operations over prolonged duration.

4.3 Through these guidelines, an attempt has been made to lay down a common operational philosophy for IORA Nations for undertaking HADR operations effectively. There is a further need to integrate our strengths to develop a credible capability and capacity to provide HADR within our region and may be beyond. We need to build on this base to ensure that response to any future disaster is swift and well-coordinated.

4.4 It will be a working guideline and it may be amended, time to time, for the greater interest and mutual benefit of the member states to fulfill the purpose of IORA accordingly.

DETAILED INFORMATION REQUIREMENT FOR CONDUCT OF HADR

1. General Information.

- a. Type of disaster (earthquake, cyclone etc).
- b. Expected developments/ likely secondary hazards (landslides, floods, fire, release of toxic substances, civil unrest, conflicts) in the affected area.
- c. Time the disaster occurred (local).
- d. Areas that are affected.
- e. Estimated total population in the affected area.
- f. Estimation of key infrastructure damaged
- g. Current and forecasted local weather conditions.
- h. Has the government (or is it likely to) formally requested international assistance (if so for what specific purpose)?.

2. Initial Estimate of Impact.

a. Population.

- i. The number reported dead, injured, missing, displaced and homeless.
- ii. Situation of those affected with respect to coping mechanisms, accommodation etc.

b. Public Health.

- i. Diseases that are endemic and any outbreaks reported.
- ii. Percentage of hospitals that are functioning and their capacity

c. Shelter. Extent of housing/ shelter that is damaged.

d. Water and Sanitation. The effects on water supply, waste disposal and availability of drinking water.

e. Transport and Infrastructure.

- i. Means of access to affected areas.
- ii. Extent of damage to roads and bridges.
- iii. The nearest functioning airport.
- iv. Nearest functioning seaport and its handling capability.

f. The impact on food availability and its access.

g. Communications and Power Supply.

- i. Availability of power supply.
- ii. Availability of generators with local facilities (hospitals/ water pumping stations etc).
- iii. Functioning of landlines/ mobile phones.

3. Information on Initial Response.

- a.** The Government response so far.
- b.** The lead Government Ministry/ Body.
- c.** Availability of a well-established emergency response mechanism and its effectiveness in previous disasters.
- d.** The role of other relevant structures (Military, Emergency Committee, Civil Defence Structure etc).
- e.** Capabilities and Capacities of concerned agencies.
- f.** The response of humanitarian community (UN, Red Cross, Donors, NGOs etc).

4. Coordination. The type and level of coordination structure in place for the disaster.

Document Disclaimer

This document suggests working guidelines for conduct of HADR operations as part of the IORA in the IOR. The ground level operating procedures would be based on the situation, ROEs and directions promulgated by the MNF Coordinator under direction of civilian administration of the host country. This publication is promulgated on the terms and understanding that the content remains dynamic and lessons learnt will continuously be incorporated. The reader may contact the IORA Secretariat for any query with respect to the contents of the publication.





TERMS OF REFERENCE

of the

IORA

WORKING GROUP ON DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT (WGDRM)

(As discussed at 1st Expert Group Meeting on DRM)

1. Background

The Indian Ocean Region (IOR) is sometimes referred to as the “World’s Hazard Belt” due to its susceptibility to both natural and man-made disasters. Natural disasters in this region fall under the group of Climatological (cyclones and droughts), Geological and Tectonic (earthquakes and tsunamis) and Hydrological (floods and tidal surges). According to the UN ESCAP, around 50% of natural disasters occurring in this region are climatogenic and seismogenic in nature. The year 2018 saw many disasters occurring in the region due to tsunamis and earthquakes in Indonesia, severe droughts in Madagascar, floods and landslides in India, seasonal cyclones in the Islands of the Indian Ocean, and many more calamities. The management of disaster risks is particularly urgent in the IOR because it is home to many small island nation states and developing littoral countries with high population densities, which are vulnerable due to the lack of resources and assets to handle the calamity. Moreover, the region is also witnessing an increased risk of natural disasters linked to climate change with increasing sea levels and rising water temperatures.

In order to address these challenges, the IORA Cluster Group Meeting on Disaster Risk Management (CGDRM) held in New Delhi during February 2019 endorsed the IORA’s commitment to promoting DRM in the region by the formation of a DRM Working Group (WGDRM) that will oversee the DRM work plan as endorsed by Member States. At the meeting in New Delhi, it was decided that South Africa will draft the Terms of Reference (TORs) for the Working Group for DRM in consultation with the Coordinating Member State for DRM (India).

2. Introduction

The countries within the IORA are remarkably diverse in terms of area, economic activity, demographic composition and socio-economic factors.

DRM is therefore an area of collective interest to IORA Member States. In this regard, IORA also recognizes that DRM is a multidisciplinary concept as it involves the participation of a multitude of stakeholders, including national governments, non-governmental organizations, regional and international partners, donors, civil society and the private sector and Regional Institutions. The fundamental principle of the IORA Charter is for all Member States to co-operate within the framework of respect for sovereign equality, territorial integrity, and political independence, non-interference in internal affairs, peaceful co-existence and mutual benefit based on consensus. This principle of the Association will determine the scope of the WGDRM, in keeping with the Durban Communique adopted at the 17th Council of Ministers (COM) in 2017.

The establishment of the WGDRM would provide a mechanism for engaging disaster and emergency response officials and experts across Member States to promote regional cooperation by facilitating practical coordination amongst stakeholders. The WGDRM would develop and adopt an evolving DRM Work Plan so as to achieve the objectives outlined in the IORA Action Plan (2017-2021).

3. Vision

Effective disaster risk reduction, mitigation and coordinated response for all in a peaceful, safe and secure IOR

4. Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of WGDRM is to promote regional cooperation within IORA on DRM and WGDRM would work to strengthen cooperation and information sharing on best practices in terms of DRR, Mitigation and effective response mechanisms. The IORA Action Plan and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR 2015a) could be guiding principles for the work of WGDRM.

Objective One: Build the foundation for a Collaborative IORA DRM Framework based on the respective needs and priorities of Member States

- i. To establish a common understanding between IORA Member States of the collective DRM risks, threats and opportunities in the Indian Ocean region;
- ii. To foster cooperation among IORA Member States in respect to DRM in collaboration with Dialogue Partners;
- iii. To define standardized structures and processes for practical coordination of DRM activities and programs; and promote and enhance effective coordination and complementarities with existing mechanisms in the region and beyond;
- iv. To advance implementation of the DRM Work Plans and objectives
- v. To coordinate with the proposed IORA CGDRM and other IORA Working Groups as required.

Objective Two: Establish an integrated policy approach on DRM in order to promote institutional capability enhancement, capacity building and DRM mainstreaming

- i. To build sustainable partnership within the framework of IORA for the strengthening of capacity and capability enhancement as well as institutional capacity building in the domain of DRM;
- ii. To facilitate dialogue and exchange of information on opportunities, challenges and best practices through a digital DRM Exchange Platform;
- iii. To encourage Member States and Dialogue Partners to offer training and capacity building programmes as per the specific needs of Member States;
- iv. To coordinate and cooperate in order to ensure synergies and complementarities of various initiatives;
- v. To share early warning data and information and further enhance current systems for disaster mitigation and response in the region;
- vi. Share best practices in order to develop various disaster resilient initiatives in the region
- vii. To promote and enhance DRM awareness among IORA Member States.

Objective Three: Establish a Coordinated Regional Vision for DRM in IORA to address existing and emerging issues

- i. To activate current agreements and enhance cooperation with relevant international organizations and agencies to support the IORA WGDRM in addressing common regional challenges;
- ii. Form collaborative links with international agencies with special interest in the areas related to DRM;

5. Structure and Operation

a. Composition

- i. Member States will nominate representatives to participate in the activities of the WGDRM, through their respective National Focal Point. In addition to officials, each Member State may at their discretion also choose sector specific specialists/experts/academics relevant to the topic under discussion, as required.

- ii. Other observers, experts, eminent persons and special invitees could be invited by the Coordinator/Host of the Working Group, in consultation with the IORA Chair, to attend meetings as determined by Member States to provide diverse viewpoints and share expert knowledge.
- iii. Dialogue Partners will be encouraged to support specific projects and activities identified by the WGDRM. To this end, Dialogue Partners will be invited to dedicated session following the deliberations of the WGDRM meetings.

b. Coordinator/Host

- i. Selection of the Coordinating Country for DRM will be on a voluntary basis with consensus, with the recommendation of the WGDRM. This will be endorsed by the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) for approval by the Council of Ministers (COM).
- ii. Whereas the designated Coordinating Country for DRM will continue to hold the position for two years after the approval of CSO, other Member States may volunteer to host any of the WGDRM meetings and events.
- iii. Where more than one Member State offers to host the WGDRM meetings, the decision will be based on consensus.
- iv. The Host Country shall be the Chair of the WGDRM Meeting with the Coordinating Country as Co-Chair.

c. Agenda and Reporting Duties

- i. The Coordinating Country and/or Host and the IORA Chair will consult on the meeting agenda and activities and circulate to Member States through the IORA Secretariat seven weeks in advance.
- ii. All Member States can propose agenda items through the IORA Secretariat at least five weeks before each scheduled meeting of the WGDRM and associated activities as relevant.
- iii. The IORA Chair will review the agenda before the IORA Secretariat circulates the meeting documents to all Member States at least four weeks prior to the scheduled meeting of the WGDRM and associated activities
- iv. The Coordinating Country and/or Host of the WGDRM and the IORA Secretariat will prepare an outcome report of the meeting and its recommendations and circulate via email within four weeks of the conclusion of the meeting.

d. Mechanism and Operational Procedures

- i. IORA rules of procedure will apply to the functioning of the WGDRM.

- ii. The WGDRM will hold at least one meeting annually. It is recommended that this be held at least eight weeks before a CSO meeting to enable its outcome report to be circulated to all Member States in time for the COM meeting.
- iii. Logistical arrangements for each meeting will be the responsibility of the Member State hosting the meeting. The IORA Secretariat may assist the host country with the arrangements as required.
- iv. The Working Group should be guided by the IORA Action Plan for its implementation.
- v. The Working Group should set realistic objectives and strategic implementation through a work plan or sectoral priorities to achieve better focus and outcomes.
- vi. A report on the progress of the WGDRM shall be presented to the CSO by the Coordinating Country in consultation with the IORA Chair.
- vii. The WGDRM may establish ad hoc subgroups to deal with specific topics as and when required.

e. Funding Arrangement

- i. All financial expenses for administrative and logistical arrangements will be borne by the Coordinating Country and/or Host of the WGDRM with contributions from the IORA Special Fund where applicable, subject to its rules and procedures.
- ii. Voluntary commitments and contributions by Member States, Dialogue Partners, Observers and IORA Specialised Agencies are welcome and encouraged.

f. Language

- i. The working language of all WGDRM meetings will be English.

g. Hospitality

- i. The hospitality for delegates attending the WGDRM may be offered at the discretion of the host Member State.
- ii. Full hospitality will be extended to two officials from the IORA Secretariat by the host Member State.

h. Responsibilities of the IORA Secretariat

- i. Providing administrative, logistical support including guidance on IORA meetings as and when required by the Host Country.
- ii. Maintaining archives and files of the Meetings.
- iii. Preparing agendas and reports of the Working Group in the prescribed formats.

- iv. Creating and maintaining a database of representatives designated by the National Focal Points, a dedicated email group for working communications of the Working Group.
- v. Where necessary, the Secretariat on behalf of the Working Group may consider sharing information between IORA's institutions and agencies that will facilitate synergies and coordinated regional action to drive forward IORA's Priority Areas and cross-cutting Focus Areas.
- vi. Facilitating information sharing between participants, including circulating agendas, best practices and outcome reports to Member States and Dialogue Partners.
- vii. Intersessional communication will be through a dedicated email group coordinated by the IORA Secretariat.
- viii. Coordinating and sustaining the implementation of the recommendations by seeking and sharing regular progress reports.

6. Amendment, Modification or Variation

These TORs may be amended, varied or modified in writing after consultation and agreement by the IORA Chair and Member States.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MoU)

BETWEEN THE

COALITION FOR DISASTER RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE (CDRI) AND THE

INDIAN OCEAN RIM ASSOCIATION (IORA)

FOR

**PROMOTING RESILIENCE OF NEW AND EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURES TO CLIMATE AND
DISASTER RISKS WITHIN THE INDIAN OCEAN REGION**

PREAMBLE:

The Coalition for Disaster and Resilient Infrastructure (hereinafter referred to as “**CDRI**”), is a multi-stakeholder global partnership of national governments, United Nations (UN) agencies and programmes, multilateral development banks and financing mechanisms, the private sector, and academic and knowledge institutions. It seeks to rapidly expand the development and retrofit of resilient infrastructure to respond to the Sustainable Development Goals imperatives of expanding universal access to basic services, enabling prosperity and decent work. Launched at the UN Climate Action Summit on 23 September 2019, the CDRI Secretariat is represented by H.E. (TBC), Coalition for Disaster and Resilient Infrastructure, 4th & 5th Floor, Bharatiya Kala Kendra, 1, Copernicus Marg, in New Delhi, India;

AND

Indian Ocean Rim Association (hereinafter referred to as “**IORA**”) represented by H.E. (TBC) , Secretary General, IORA, 3rd Floor, Tower 1, NeXTeracom Building, Cybercity, Ebene, Republic of Mauritius;

WHEREAS CDRI and IORA being,

AWARE that raising awareness of the benefits of resilient infrastructure systems, and building linkages with other relevant Disaster Risk Management initiatives, can address the requirements for strengthened mitigation, response, and recovery coordination strategies.

CONSCIOUS of the achievement of goals and targets enshrined in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Paris Climate Agreement, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the United Nations Agenda 2030 principles of leaving no one, no place, and no ecosystem behind.

RECOGNIZING that the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) is referred to as the “World’s Hazard Belt” prone to disasters, both natural and man-made.

MINDFUL of the fact that natural disasters occurring in the Indian Ocean Region fall under various groups of Climatological, Geological-Tectonic and Hydrological.

MINDFUL of the objectives to assist IORA to advance effective disaster risk reduction (DRR), mitigation and response coordination for a peaceful, safe, and secure Indian Ocean region.

RECOGNIZING that Disaster Risk Management (DRM) is a multidisciplinary concept involving the participation of a multitude of stakeholders, including national governments, non-governmental organizations, regional and international partners, donors, civil society and the private sector.

ACKNOWLEDGING the detrimental impacts of natural and man-made disasters to economic, social, and healthcare development frameworks within the region.

AWARE that disasters occurring within the region requires enhanced cooperation and the sharing of best practices between IORA Member States to meet mitigation, response, and recovery coordination strategies.

RECALLING the fundamental principle of the IORA Charter for all Member States to co-operate within the framework of respect for sovereign equality, territorial integrity, and political independence, non-interference in internal affairs, peaceful co-existence and mutual benefit based on consensus.

RECOGNIZING the need to enhance collaborative links with international agencies with special interest in the areas related to Disaster Risk Management (DRM).

CONSCIOUS of the need to build sustainable partnerships within the framework of IORA for the strengthening of capacity and capability enhancement as well as institutional capacity building in the domain of Disaster Risk Management (DRM).

WHEREAS, CDRI and IORA collaborate in carrying out activities relating to research, knowledge

sharing, advocacy, capacity building and other related activities to promote the resilience of infrastructure systems to climate and disaster risks, in order to ensure sustainable development and address the challenges of building resilience into infrastructure systems and development associated with it in the Member States of IORA.

CDRI and IORA (hereinafter collectively referred to as the 'Partners') have reached the following understandings:

ARTICLE 1

1. OBJECTIVES OF THE COOPERATION

- 1.1 The objective of this Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is to establish the basis for an organizational cooperation in order to encourage engagement to build climate and disaster resilience of existing and future infrastructure, including a forum for the IORA and CDRI Member States in the Indian Ocean region, at all stages of development, to access knowledge and resources from other members through a knowledge repository, Marketplace, Communities of Practice and a digital engagement and learning platform to be set up by CDRI, for mutual benefit, and on the basis of equality and reciprocity.

- 1.2 The partners will encourage the development of collaborations in the context of multilateral research and infrastructure development and resilience programs in which both partners have common interest. They will promote exchange and cooperation of personnel, information, knowledge, and capacity building in climate and disaster resilient infrastructure.

ARTICLE 2

2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF COOPERATION

- 2.1 The Partners hereby:
 - a. In mutual respect of each other's identity and mission, commit themselves to cooperation through sharing of knowledge, information and expertise in order to develop and reinforce potential synergies, enhance public awareness, dialogue and cross learnings to endeavour to implement common objectives;

 - b. Resolve to work together for the promotion of resilience of new and existing infrastructure systems to climate and disaster risks, creating a marketplace dedicated to solution providers to showcase products and services on disaster resilient infrastructure, sharing best practices, tapping into global expertise and project financing opportunities and raising the

profile of local/regional expertise and projects;

- c. Undertake to work together to promote the activities of CDRI and IORA in Member States common to both, facilitate the development and implementation of climate and disaster resilient infrastructure programmes and projects;
- d. Mutually agree to exchange information about projects or other initiatives in order to identify compatibilities, to create synergies and to avoid overlapping actions;
- e. Acknowledge to identify through regular contacts and dialogue, the activities to be undertaken including training and capacity building to realize the aforementioned co-operation;

ARTICLE 3

3. AREAS OF COOPERATION

3.1 The Partners hereby undertake to work together on the following broader areas of cooperation:

- a. Exchange of information and work programmes, assistance in aggregation of need and offerings for climate and disaster resilient infrastructure and where appropriate mutual attendance on invitation in decision-making meetings under the areas of cooperation agreement for any specific project or initiative;
- b. Develop common positions, wherever feasible and strengthen as well as harmonise regional and national policy, regulatory, legal and institutional frameworks in support of climate and disaster resilient infrastructure;
- c. Extend and enhance technical and capacity building support including disaster response, recovery and reconstruction support; innovations, institutional and community capacity building assistance; standards and certification in preparation and appraisal of programmes and project proposals including implementation projects located in the Member Countries common to both, wherever feasible subject to availability of financial and technical resources;
- d. Promote risk-informed fiscal planning and investments in disaster resilient infrastructure among IORA Member States;
- e. Reduce vulnerabilities to natural and man-made hazards by undertaking risk and resilience

assessments of critical infrastructures such as power, telecom and transport and promote risk-informed fiscal planning and investments in disaster resilient infrastructure among IORA Member States;

- f. Jointly identify emerging areas of assistance and build human, institutional and technical capacities at regional, national and local level to foster the development and implementation of plans and projects focused on climate and disaster resilient infrastructure and its governance;
- g. Maintain contact between respective Secretariats and local stakeholders in the Member States of IORA, common to both;
- h. Organize technical regional workshops and conferences on climate and disaster resilient infrastructure to raise awareness, generate traction and commitment, share experiences/best practice and action on the importance of disaster resilient infrastructure and facilitate development of national and regional action plans/work plans on climate and disaster resilient infrastructure for IORA Member States;
- i. Cross-link the websites <https://www.cdri.world/> and www.iora.int; to facilitate the sharing of news on the collaboration efforts/partnership, while keeping in mind the promoting of the visibility for both Partners; and
- j. Other activities as mutually agreed from time to time.

ARTICLE 4

4. MONITORING, REVIEW, CONSULTATION AND IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISMS

- 4.1 The Partners will draw up an annual work plan in line with their mandates, including the Work Plan of the IORA Disaster Risk Management Working Group (WGDRM), in furtherance of the objectives of this MoU.
- 4.2 The Partners recognize the importance of periodic consultations to review the planning, implementation and outcomes of this MoU viz. activities, results, challenges and opportunities. The Partners mutually agree to hold such consultations annually to review the progress of the activities / developments made under the present MoU, and to cooperate on best endeavour basis.
- 4.3 The Partners can conduct their work and meetings in the specifically designed framework mutually agreed upon.
- 4.4 Contact and information sharing relating to this MoU will be conducted through the

designated Focal Points from the CDRI and IORA Secretariat.

ARTICLE 5

5. TERM, AMENDMENT AND TERMINATION

5.1 This MoU shall come into effect from the date of its signature and shall remain in effect for an initial period of three (3) years. The term of this MoU may be extended upon mutual written consent of the Partners. Three years are proposed as a minimum timeframe to evaluate the effectiveness of the outcomes of the MoU.

5.2 This MoU may be amended by a mutual written agreement between the Partners.

5.3 Either Partner may terminate this MoU, by serving prior written notice of duration not less than three (3) months upon the other Partner. Termination shall not affect activities covered by a collaborative contract between the executive agencies and already underway at the time of termination.

ARTICLE 6

6. SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES

6.1 Any dispute between the Partners relating to the interpretation or implementation of this MoU will be resolved amicably through consultation and negotiation between the Partners.

Neither Partner shall use the name, emblem, logo or trademarks of the other Partner, its subsidiaries and/or affiliates, or any abbreviation thereof, in connection with its business, or for public dissemination, without the prior express written approval of the other Partner.

Neither Party shall have the authority, express or implied, to make any public statement on behalf of other Party or attribute any action to the other Party and all press releases issued in relation to this MoU shall be approved in writing in advance by the Parties before being issued.

This provision shall apply to matters not specifically mentioned in this MoU as well.

ARTICLE 7

7.1 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

The Partners acknowledge that the activities under this MoU may result in a product subject to intellectual property rights. In this regard:

- a. the Partners agree to negotiate and agree upon appropriate intellectual property provisions in each case, based on the nature of the activity and the financial and/or intellectual contribution made by each Partner, and to set out the intellectual property provisions in a separate written agreement; and
- b. each Partner shall retain ownership of the intellectual property rights in any of their respective existing materials or work product that is shared with the other Party in connection with activities under this MoU.

ARTICLE 8

8. NON-BINDING NATURE OF THE MoU

8.1 This MoU is not intended to create legally binding obligations or liabilities on either Partner. It merely expresses the intentions and understanding of the Partners which will form the basis of this MoU.

8.2 The Partners hereby agree that they are not bound exclusively by this MoU and will be at liberty to enter into any separate agreements or arrangements with any third Party without reference to the other.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the duly authorized representatives of both Partners have affixed their signatures below:

Signed at the ----- in (New Delhi, India – TBC) on -----

(TBC) ----- in two originals in English.

For and on behalf of Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA):

For and on behalf of Coalition for Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI):

H.E. (TBC)
Secretary General

(TBC)

Adopted by the 21COM on 17 November 2021

DRAFT MODALITIES & TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR)
of the
INDIAN OCEAN RIM ACADEMIC GROUP (IORAG)

1. Background

The first Institutional Mechanism created during the establishment of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) in 1997 was the Indian Ocean Rim Academic Group (IORAG). This was in acknowledgment of the importance of academia in achieving the objectives of IORA as a Regional Organization.

The meetings of the IORAG traditionally were held back-to-back with the meetings of the primary Institutional Mechanisms of IORA, namely the Council of Ministers (COM) and the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO). The IORAG followed the Rules of Procedure of the CSO and COM whereby the Chair of IORA would be responsible for the hosting and chairing of the meetings of the IORAG, as well as to oversee the implementation of the outcomes of the IORAG in consultation with the CSO.

In recent years, there has been an effort to reinvigorate the Academic Group by fostering a more dynamic link between policy and projects in the work programmes of the WGTI, IORAG and IORBF. In order to sharpen the focus of the IORAG, it has been suggested that the following measures be considered:

- a) Develop a stronger Indian Ocean Research environment with the IORAG serving as an academic “think tank” for the Association;
- b) Foster a culture of Indian Ocean regional identity;
- c) Focus on matters of common interest;
- d) Conduct research aimed at enabling better regional policy outcomes;
- e) Develop a stronger regional policy framework;
- f) Help set the direction and strategic purpose for IORA's academic cooperation policy agenda; and
- g) Enhance collective regional awareness.

To give effect to this, at the 23rd IORAG meeting held in Durban, South Africa in 2017, South Africa proposed the institutional reform of the IORAG, building on the initiative started during the Chairship of Australia, to provide a more active role in the functioning of IORA. The Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) and Council of Ministers (COM) approved this recommendation, and South Africa drafted a proposal for the reform, and the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the establishment of a Reform Sub-committee.

The proposal outlined a number of items to be addressed, which would contribute to the goals of the IORA Action Plans.

At the 18th meeting of the IORA Council of Ministers held in South Africa on 2 November 2018, a revised IORA Charter was adopted which required all IORA's Functional Bodies such as the IORAG to be constituted formally through Modalities and Terms of Reference (TOR) as recommended by the CSO and approved by the COM.

2. Vision of the IORAG

To promote the strengthening of academic cooperation through enhanced dialogue, research, exchange and networking across all the IORA priority and cross cutting areas.

3. Purpose and Objectives of the IORAG

The purpose of the IORAG is to advance IORA's efforts in a direction that contributes to but are not limited to the goals of the IORA Action Plans.

The role set out for the IORAG is both advisory and catalytic, with the following principal objectives:

- a) Promote intellectual dialogue amongst the participating Member States;
- b) Serve as a vehicle for the development and dissemination of the Indian Ocean Rim Concept and of relevant research undertaken in or about the Indian Ocean;
- c) Serve the region and support IORA's Institutional Mechanisms, particularly its Primary Bodies (Council of Ministers, Committee of Senior Officials, and the Secretariat) and Functional Bodies (Working Groups, Sub-Working Groups, Sectoral/Cluster/Core Groups, and Dialogue Forums) through concerted, coordinated and rigorous research in the priority and cross cutting areas of the Association;
- d) Provide an evaluation and advisory role for all academic related activities of the Association, including assessment of proposed IORA Academic Centres of Excellence based on the Key Performance Indicators, as approved by the CSO;
- e) Coordinate and evaluate all academic research generated and conducted through IORA and its Institutional Mechanisms;
- f) Serve as a vehicle for the development and dissemination of the research-based policy-making and decision-making support; Publish research papers/ academic conference proceedings in IORA Journals and on the IORA Website;
- g) Promote national and regional academic networks and co-operation in the development and exchange of human resources, particularly through closer linkages among training institutions, universities and other specialised institutions of the Member States;
- h) Strengthen regional political analysis and scientific research collaboration;
- i) Facilitate the dissemination of knowledge and innovation to drive economic growth and environmental sustainability, including through the creative economy and the 'blue' economy;
- j) Catalyse discussions within IORA on issues of regional importance through organizing 'Indian Ocean Dialogue' (annually/biennially); and
- k) Develop a network of Think Tanks across the IORA Member States.

4. Structure and Operation of the IORAG

a) Composition

- i. Member States will nominate their academic representative/s to all activities of the IORAG through their respective National Focal Point. The IORA Secretariat will regularly circulate the contact details of academic representatives among the representatives and National Focal Points.
- ii. Specialised Agencies, other observers, experts, eminent persons and special invitees could be invited by the IORAG Chair in consultation with Member States, to attend meetings to provide diverse viewpoints and share expert knowledge.
- iii. The IORA Policy Advisor and Research Coordinator (PARC) will form a part of IORAG and will attend all its meetings. PARC will act as a link between IORAG and the research needs of IORA Member States.

b) Coordinator/Host

- i. Selection of the Chair for IORAG will be on a consensus basis depending on the interest expressed by Member States. This will be endorsed by the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) for approval by the Council of Ministers (COM).
- ii. Whereas the designated Country to Chair the IORAG will continue to hold the position for two (2) years, other Member States may volunteer to host any of the IORAG meetings. The Chair of the IORAG will serve as meeting Chair with the Host Country as Co-Chair.
- iii. Where more than one (1) Member State offers to host the IORAG meetings, the decision will be based on consensus.

c) Agendas and Reporting

- i. The IORAG Chair and the IORA Chair will consult on the meeting agenda and activities and circulate to Member States through the IORA Secretariat preferably eight (8) weeks or more in advance. All Member States of the IORAG can propose agenda items through the IORA Secretariat at least six (6) weeks before each scheduled meeting of the IORAG and associated activities as relevant.
- ii. The IORA Chair will review the agenda before the Secretariat circulates the meeting documents to all Member States at least four (4) weeks prior to the scheduled meeting.
- iii. The IORAG Chair and the IORA Secretariat will prepare an outcome report of the meeting and its recommendations and circulate via email within four (4) weeks of the conclusion of the meeting.

d) Meeting Procedures

- i. IORA rules of procedure will apply to the functioning of the IORAG.
- ii. The IORAG will hold at least one meeting annually. It is recommended that this be held at least three weeks before a CSO meeting to enable its outcomes report to be circulated to all Member States in time for the Council of Ministers (COM) meeting. IORAG may formally engage with and attend the meetings of other Functional Bodies, if invited. IORAG may also recommend to CSO to hold IORA Academic Conferences. Any commitments given by academics/ non govt. members at IORAG meetings must be endorsed by the National Focal Points in consultation with respective national ministries.
- iii. Logistical arrangements for each meeting will be the responsibility of the Member State hosting the meeting. The IORA Secretariat may assist the host country with the arrangements as required.
- iv. The IORAG should be guided by the IORA Action Plan and the Work Plans of the various Functional Bodies.

- v. The IORAG is encouraged to set realistic objectives and strategic implementation through a work plan or narrowed sectoral priorities to achieve better focus and outcomes.
- vi. A report shall be presented to the annual CSO meeting by its Chair in consultation with the IORA Chair. The report should include among others a set of actionable recommendations for the future and communicate on achievements.
- vii. Dialogue Partners will be encouraged to participate actively in the meetings as well as on specific projects and activities. Following IORA practices, Dialogue Partners can participate in the discussions of meetings, but not in the decision-making processes.

e) Funding arrangements

- i. All financial implications for administrative and logistical arrangements of IORAG meetings will be borne by the Host of the IORAG with contributions from the IORA Special Fund where applicable, subject to its rules and procedures.
- ii. Voluntary commitments and contributions by Member States, Dialogue Partners and Development Agencies and other Partners are also welcome and encouraged.

f) Language

The working language of all IORAG meetings will be English.

g) Hospitality

- i. Accommodation and transportation for delegates especially from the LDC countries and Secretariat officials attending the meeting may be offered at the discretion of the host country.
- ii. Full hospitality will be extended to two officials from the IORA Secretariat whenever the services of the Secretariat are required.

h) Research

- i. The selection of research projects undertaken in accordance with clause 3c may follow a top-down approach (research requests nominated to IORAG by other IORA structures and mechanisms), or a bottom-up approach (IORAG identifies a project). Proposed projects supported by both top-down and bottom-up approaches would receive priority.
- ii. At project conclusion, the following materials are to be produced: a full report, a shorter policy brief for circulation to other IORA structures and mechanisms, and an academic article published in an Indian Ocean Rim journal (publication in the Journal of the Indian Ocean Region or Journal of the Indian Ocean Rim Studies should be promoted), in addition to relevant training materials.

i) Responsibilities of the IORA Secretariat

- i. Providing administrative, logistical support including guidance on IORAG meetings as and when required by the Chair of the IORAG.
- ii. Maintaining archives and files of the Meetings.
- iii. Preparing agendas and reports of the IORAG in the prescribed formats.
- iv. Creating and maintaining a database of contact information of representatives designated by the National Focal Points.
- v. Facilitating information sharing between participants, including circulating agendas and outcome reports to Member States and Dialogue Partners.
- vi. Inter-sessional communication through a dedicated email group coordinated by the IORA Secretariat.
- vii. Coordinating and sustaining the implementation of the decisions of the Working Group by seeking and sharing regular progress reports.

viii. Other activities as proposed by the IORAG and as agreed by Member States for the Secretariat to assist with the implementation of work plan activities and meeting the objectives of the IORAG.

j) Amendment, Modification or Variation

The Modalities and TOR may be amended, varied, or modified in writing after consultation and agreement by the IORA Chair and Member States.

CONCEPT PAPER

THE CREATION OF IORA PLATFORMS (DIGITAL OR OTHERWISE) FOR SHARING OF DATA AND BEST PRACTICES IN TOURISM

1. INTRODUCTION

According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), Travel and Tourism is one of the world's largest economic sectors, supporting one in 10 jobs (319 million) worldwide and generating 10.4% (USD 8.8 trillion) of the world GDP. In 2018, Travel and Tourism also experienced a 3.9% growth compared to the global economy (3.2%). One in five new jobs were created by the industry over the last five years.¹

The Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) is a growing international organisation with a current membership of 22 Member States surrounding the Indian Ocean, and 10 Dialogue Partners. IORA's membership is attained through an application process endorsed by the Member States through the Council of Ministers (COM), and a work programme coordinated by the IORA Secretariat through the oversight of the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO).

Home to nearly 2.7 billion people, IORA member states' shores are washed by the Indian Ocean and are rich in cultural diversity, languages, religions, traditions, arts and cuisines. They vary considerably in terms of their geography, populations and levels of economic development. The membership is located in a number of sub-regions (Australasia, Gulf, Southeast Asia, South Asia, West Asia and Eastern & Southern Africa), as well as shared membership with other regional groupings such as Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and Southern African Development Community (SADC), to name a few. Despite such diversity and differences, these countries are bound together by the Indian Ocean.

2. BACKGROUND

The IORA 2017–2021 Action Plan that was endorsed by the IORA Council of Ministers (COM) and adopted at the Leaders' Summit held in Indonesia in March 2017 envisaged the establishment of a Core Group on Tourism (CGT). In November 2018, the COM approved the Terms of Reference and a Work Plan for the CGT. The CGT aims to provide a common vision for the tourism sector as an engine for economic and social development in the Indian Ocean Rim region.

Mutual cooperation between Member States is essential for the tourism sector, which is a priority area for IORA and an important aspect of the Blue Economy, a cross cutting area of IORA. The IORA CGT works through and in collaboration with the following structures in IORA:

- IORA Council of Ministers
- IORA Council of Senior Officials
- IORA Secretariat

¹ <https://www.wttc.org/economic-impact/>

- Other Functional Bodies of IORA:
 - Indian Ocean Rim Academic Group (IORAG)
 - Indian Ocean Rim Business Forum (IORBF)
 - Working Group on Trade and Investment (WGTI)
 - Working Group on Women's Economic Empowerment (WGWEE)
 - Working Group on Maritime Safety and Security (WGMSS)
 - Working Group on the Blue Economy (WGBE)
 - Core Group on Tourism (CGT)
 - The Indian Ocean Dialogue (IOD)

On 23 October 2018 in Port Elizabeth, South Africa, the IORA Tourism Ministers adopted a work plan for the CGT with an activity on 'the creation of platforms (digital or otherwise) for sharing of best practices. The IORA COM subsequently approved this on 2 November 2018 in Durban, South Africa.² The timeframe for the work plan is 2018-2020.

The work plan was approved during South Africa's chair-ship of IORA and the responsibility of this activity on creation of platforms (digital or otherwise) for sharing of best practices was allocated to the IORA Secretariat and South Africa as per the CGT's work plan. Following discussions between the Secretariat and the South African Department of Tourism, it was agreed that South Africa would lead this process by developing a concept paper on the creation of a platform for sharing of best practices. The concept paper would be circulated to member states for inputs/comments.

It is crucial for the IORA Member States to strive towards regional cooperation in tourism, especially to achieve sustainable tourism growth in the region. An IORA platform created for collating and sharing information and best practices for the tourism sector would be innovative and generate new business opportunities to ensure the continued competitiveness, growth and sustainable development of the sector. From the discussions held with various stakeholders on the nature of the platform, it is proposed that a **digital platform** is more suitable given the vast geographic spread of the Association and the need to adopt technology to further the priorities in IORA in the era of the fourth industrial revolution.

A digital platform would ensure that data is hosted centrally to promote access to information. The digital platform is to be made available through a link and/or portal on an IORA website where Member States would have access to information on best practices on tourism within the Indian Ocean region.

2.1 Criteria for best practices

Criteria for best practice includes practices that:

- Have been implemented successfully either as a process, strategy, procedure, policy, program and/ or technology;
- Have brought about tangible, positive, sustainable impact in various forms;
- Have integrated the social, economic and environmental consideration;
- Involve effective partnerships between various parties (public, private and local community);

² The COM is the highest decision-making forum in IORA

- Have creativity. Think out of the box, and make paradigm shifts to get out of comfort zones; and
- Can be transferred, adapted and replicated by others.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

Currently the existing platforms for sharing of information are physical platforms where Member States host seminars, meetings, workshops and conferences in order to share information and best practices. These events are mostly funded by the volunteering host country and/or the chair of IORA. The host country is expected to secure the venue, local transport, accommodation and return flights travel for delegates and the IORA Secretariat. The proposed digital platform would support the Tourism Resource Centre (TRC), which is a mechanism that is meant to source, gather and disseminate tourism information in support of IORA members. However, the TRC is still to be established.

The World Economic Forum (WEF) competitiveness rankings evaluates the IORA Member States on various tourism related areas. However, this concept will only highlight travel and tourism competitiveness, environmental sustainability, and tourism service infrastructure. It should be noted that out of the 22 IORA Member States, the 2019 WEF report does not provide data on Comoros, Maldives, Seychelles and Somalia; whereas parts of the 2019 report have all member states included.

3.1 Travel and Tourism Competitiveness 2019 Index report

Number	Country	Global Rank
1.	Australia	7
2.	Singapore	17
3.	Malaysia	29
4	Thailand	31
5	United Arab Emirates	33
6.	India	34
7.	Indonesia	40
8.	Mauritius	54
9.	Oman	58
10.	South Africa	61
11.	Seychelles	62
12.	Sri Lanka	77
13.	Kenya	82
14.	Iran	89
15.	Tanzania	95
16.	Bangladesh	120
17.	Mozambique	127
18.	Yemen	140
19.	Madagascar	0
20.	Somalia	0
21.	Maldives	0
22.	Comoros	0

Source³

³ www.wttc.org

3.2 Travel and Tourism Competitiveness 2019 Index report

Number	Country	Global Rank
1.	Australia	7
2.	Singapore	17
3.	Malaysia	29
4.	Thailand	31
5.	United Arab Emirates	33
6.	India	34
7.	Indonesia	40
8.	Mauritius	54
9.	Oman	61
10.	South Africa	61
11.	Seychelles	62
12.	Sri Lanka	77
13.	Kenya	82
14.	Iran	89
15.	Tanzania	95
16.	Bangladesh	120
17.	Mozambique	127
18.	Yemen	130

3.3 Environmental Sustainability 2019 Index report

Number	Country	Global Rank
1.	Kenya	36
2.	United Arab Emirate	41
3.	Australia	49
4.	Tanzania	50
5.	Oman	57
6.	Singapore	61
7.	Mozambique	70
8.	Mauritius	71
9.	Seychelles	75
10.	Sri Lanka	102
11.	Malaysia	105
12.	Iran	107
13.	Bangladesh	116
14.	South Africa	124
15.	India	128
16.	Thailand	130
17.	Indonesia	136
18.	Yemen	138

3.4 Tourist Service Infrastructure 2019 Index report

Number	Country	Global Rank
1.	Australia	9
2.	Thailand	14
3.	United Arab Emirates	22
4.	Seychelles	30

5.	Singapore	36
6.	Mauritius	30
7.	Malaysia	57
8.	South Africa	64
9.	Oman	71
10.	Sri Lanka	92
11.	Indonesia	98
12.	Kenya	103
13.	Iran	108
14.	India	109
15.	Mozambique	110
16.	Tanzania	120
17.	Bangladesh	133
18.	Yemen	135

Source ⁴

Tourism is one of the six priority areas of IORA, with Women Economic Empowerment and the Blue Economy as cross cutting areas. The tourism sector has tremendous potential in the Indian Ocean region. Substantial benefits could be accrued by member states through the enhancement of tourist and marketing linkages within the region.

3.5 Tourism and Blue Economy

The Blue Economy captured the attention of all IORA Member States due to its growing global interest and potential and for being recognised as the top priority for generating employment, food security, poverty alleviation and ensuring sustainability in business and economic models in the Indian Ocean. Considering its wide range of valuable resources, the Blue Economy is gaining increasing interest in IORA Member States that are all committed to the establishment of a common vision that would make this sector a driver for balanced economic development in the Indian Ocean Rim region.⁵

Tourism in IORA has formed linkages with the IORA Blue Economy. Member states have discussed various areas of mutual concern regarding blue economy which may have influence on the performance of the Tourism sector. The various areas of mutual interest between blue economy and tourism include the promotion of cruise tourism in the Indian Ocean Region, promotion of sustainable management and development of coastal and marine tourism sector and protection and conservation of coastal and marine biodiversity through sustainable coastal and marine tourism.

Some of these areas have been discussed in various forums organised by IORA and reports have been produced, e.g. Coastal and Marine Tourism workshop held in Durban, South Africa in May 2018; Blue Economy Ministerial Conference held in Jakarta, Indonesia in 2017; Indian Ocean Conference on "Marine Spatial Planning - Towards Sustainable Use of the Indian Ocean" held in Mauritius in November 2017; Indian Ocean Conference on Blue Carbon, held in Australia in March 2018; Ministerial Conference on "Women's Economic Empowerment - A Pre-requisite for Sustainable Development" hosted by Mauritius in August 2018; etc.

⁴ www.wttc.org

⁵ <https://www.iora.int/en/priorities-focus-areas/blue-economy>

The best practices to be shared on these areas will be the responsibility of the Core Group on Tourism in collaboration with the Working Group on the Blue Economy (WGBE). The implementation of IORA's Blue Economy would accelerate ocean-driven economic growth amongst its members and unlock the tourism potential of the ocean's economy.

3.6 Similar models by other regional organisations

Given that the IORA membership is located broadly in ASEAN, SAARC, GCC, SADC and other regional fora such as Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), it is prudent to explore models of these regional fora in so far as sharing of best practices in tourism is concerned. Attempts were made, including through the IORA Secretariat to gather information about the models but there was no feedback from some of these regional fora. In some instances, the IORA Secretariat could not solicit information due to lack of cooperation arrangements. The IORA Secretariat managed to link South Africa with APEC Secretariat which provided information about its model of sharing best practices in tourism, as outlined below. As a member of SADC, South Africa developed an input of SADC model and the SADC Secretariat verified the input as outlined below:

3.6.1 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)

APEC is a regional economic forum established in 1989 to leverage the growing interdependence of the Asia-Pacific. APEC's 21 members⁶ aim to create greater prosperity for the people of the region by promoting balanced, inclusive, sustainable, innovative and secure growth and by accelerating regional economic integration.

The APEC Secretariat disseminates information on APEC to targeted audiences and the public through a variety of means including an extensive publishing programme, website and other electronic media, audio visual material, presentations, visitor briefings and outreach visits to APEC member economies. APEC is implementing a Communications and Outreach Strategy which is aimed at improving information delivery to key audiences and extending the reach of APEC communications efforts. The strategy focuses on developing greater understanding of APEC's role and agenda as well as more widely promoting its achievements.

APEC has put in place centralised systems and staff resources to support a more extensive and proactive communications operation for APEC. Some of the key activities undertaken by APEC to disseminate information include:

- Production of a wide range of general information resources on APEC as part of the Secretariat's publishing programme and assistance with production of APEC for a publications.
- Sale of APEC publications and CD ROMS through sales/marketing agreements with book agents/distributors in some APEC member countries. Monitoring of sales patterns to ensure electronic/hard copy publishing combinations support information dissemination objectives and user needs.
- Enhancement of APEC website's functionalities and applications to support a more proactive communications strategy.

⁶ Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Chile, China, China-Hong Kong, Chinese-Taipei, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Republic of Korea, Russia, Singapore, The Philippines, Thailand, United States of America and Vietnam.

- Development of an APEC Projects Database to provide public access to comprehensive information on project activities undertaken by APEC and to provide a central reference for APEC for a to ascertain convergent or complementary projects being undertaken by others.
- Management and continuous improvement of APEC's document access policy to facilitate access to APEC records via electronic means.

3.6.2 Southern African Development Community (SADC)

SADC is a regional economic development community comprising 16 Member States⁷ in Southern Africa region. Its overall goal is to promote and achieve equitable and sustainable development, through increased regional integration underpinned by an environment of peace, security and regional stability. The region's development policies and priorities are defined in the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP).

In line with the RISDP, there are several sectoral policies and strategies including the SADC Tourism Programmed 2020 – 2030 which serves as a roadmap to guide and coordinate the development of a sustainable tourism industry in the region and to facilitate the removal of barriers to tourism development and growth.

Tourism is a cornerstone of the SADC economy, together with agriculture, mining and other sectors. In 2018, the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) economic data on SADC's tourism sector reported a GDP contribution in excess of USD56 billion (8.6% of GDP). In terms of employment, the same economic data confirmed a contribution of over 6 million jobs (6.1% of total employment) due to the cross-sectoral, labour intensive and 'low barrier to entry' nature of the sector.

The SADC tourism sector utilizes a variety of physical and digital/online platforms and tools for dissemination of information using the three SADC working languages. Physical platforms include regional summits, meetings, conferences, workshops, etc. Digital platforms include SADC website, social media, video and telephone mechanism, electronic communication, etc. SADC's information and knowledge exchange is encapsulated in the Revised SADC Communications and Promotional Strategy 2016 – 2020.

4. PROBLEM STATEMENT

There is currently no dedicated repository where best practices and other important information, experiences and views can be stored and shared relating to sustainable tourism development in the Indian Ocean region.

The vast geographic area of the IORA region also poses a challenge since Member States do not necessarily have the financial resources and time to convene meetings to share information and best practices.

According to United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), Tourism was one of the first sectors to digitalize business processes on a global scale, bringing flight and hotel booking online to become a digital pioneer. As Information and Communications Technology (ICT) became a global phenomenon, tourism was a

⁷ Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe

consistent early adopter of new technologies and platforms. A digitalized tourism sector must innovate and generate new business opportunities to ensure the continued competitiveness, growth and sustainable development of the sector. The ultimate goal is to make a solid contribution to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations and the global development community.⁸

Considering that IORA does not have a dedicated platform for sharing of best practices on tourism, it is recommended that a digital platform would be most suitable for sharing best practices amongst the IORA Member States on tourism.

An efficient digital platform would be of value to all Member States as information would be easily accessible. The digital platform would not be a replacement of the hosting of meetings, seminars and workshop however, there would be less dependence on such events to share information.

5. OBJECTIVES OF THE DIGITAL PLATFORM

The main objectives of the digital platform are to:

- a) Source, gather and disseminate tourism information for IORA Member States.
- b) Provide stakeholders (academics, researchers, business, public, etc.) access to best practices material in tourism within IORA.
- c) Serve as a data centre and a resource of tourism knowledge, data and analysis.
- d) Update member states on the state of Tourism in IORA.

6. PILLARS OF THE DIGITAL PLATFORM

- a) Data capture (collating of past, present and future knowledge)
- b) Innovation (improve and enhance tourism development)
- c) Organisational efficiency (improve IORA Member States' processes through application of new and accurate information)
- d) Transparency and accountability
- e) Travel and Tourism Information, Communication, and Technology (ICT) readiness which will guide each member country readiness for the implementation of the tourism digital platform.
- f) Establishing individual digital platform per member state.

7. COMPONENTS OF THE DIGITAL PLATFORM

7.1 Functionality

- a) Application development (database, application & webserver)
- b) Analytics (graph analysis, text analytics)
- c) Data management (availability & security, user administration, content administration – available 24 hours, 7days a week)
- d) Data integration and integrity (data governance, data quality)
- e) Data capturing
- f) Television Commercials (TVC) or suitable manners

7.2 Users of the platform

- Government officials from IORA member states
- Private sector

⁸ <http://innovation.unwto.org/content/digital-transformation>

- Academics
- Researchers and Consultants
- Dialogue partners, etc.
- The Public

7.3 Type of information to be shared on the digital platform

Focus areas

- Marketing
- Sustainable Tourism Development
- Destination Competitiveness
- Attract Investments to implement digital technology
- Innovation in tourism through cooperation in new digital platforms, database systems, and value chain connections
- Economic and technical cooperation
- Human resources development on tourism industry
- Tourism Satellite Account
- Scholarship and Train the Trainers' Program
- Successfully adopted tourism strategies in IORA region
- Country profile, tourism destination and facilities, connectivity, transport, communication, accommodation, refreshment, security etc.
- Suggestions and complain box

Documents

- Policies
- Member States' national newsletters
- Reports of the IORA CGT Meetings
- Project proposals
- Approved research reports
- Funded projects and updates
- Tourism Master Plans and strategies
- Tourism sector country reports
- Report on the study of consumer needs in each member state

8. IMPLEMENTATION

8.1 Location of the platform

It is recommended that:

- In the short term, the platform should be located at an IORA Member State through a Tourism information portal for ease of access by all member states; alternatively, a member state may volunteer to provide capacity and resources to the IORA Secretariat to recruit a suitable candidate to implement and optimise the platform.
- In the long term, the platform could be located at the TRC in Oman once the resource centre is operational.

8.2 Technology Requirements

- The platform shall be accessible through a Tourism portal.
- The differences in technology levels will be considered when doing so.
- Information shall be categorised as confidential (members only) and public.
- Confidential information shall be through the Tourism focal point.

- Public information shall be shared on the IORA website.
- The system shall include a Workflow Management capability to support IORA coordination across multiple participants in one workflow.
- The system shall include a Workflow Management capability that supports user-definable workflows.

8.3 Content contribution to the platform

Member States are encouraged to utilise the platforms for sharing of best practices on a quarterly basis as follows:

- Update information through the Tourism focal points.
- Involve both public and private Tourism sector partners.
- Work closely with the IORA Academic Group (IORAG) to ensure relevance and accuracy of the information.
- Submit funding proposals for information, updates and projects to the IORA CGT for endorsement (if any).
- Provide progress updates on funded projects.

8.4 Resources

IORA has the following resources available to develop the digital platform for the sharing of tourism information and knowledge, and implement regular updates:

- IORA Special Fund
- Dialogue partners

8.5 Information security

In the reality of an increasingly connected world – in which the internet, digitally enabled services, devices and emerging tech are becoming an integral part of economies worldwide – effective cybersecurity plays an absolutely critical role. With growing use and dependency on ICTs, so grow the risks. This means responding to constantly evolving challenges and cyber threats – which require that all stakeholders be aware of risk factors, have the necessary capabilities and take appropriate action to prevent or address them.⁹

With the consideration to cybersecurity, the following are areas of concern for the sharing of best practices, especially in cases where confidential or sensitive information is to be shared:

- Usage, handling, dissemination & maintenance of information
- Personally, Identifiable Information (PAIA),
- Proprietary Information
- Classification of information
- Sensitive but Unclassified
- Unclassified for Official Use Only¹⁰

8.6 Monitoring and Control

- The system shall include an access control mechanism
- The access control mechanism shall authenticate users and the sharing infrastructure shall include an agreed-upon trust model for information exchange

⁹ <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Cybersecurity/Pages/default.aspx>

¹⁰ <https://csrc.nist.gov/>

- The access control mechanism for shared resources shall be decentralised (i.e., distributed among the information sharing participants) rather than the responsibility of a centralised authority
- Access control mechanisms shall limit access according to the information control metadata associated with each information element, applications, services or analytics and the authorisation attributes of the user
- Information and updates shall be approved by Member States through the IORA national focal point.
- The necessary resources to host and manage the portal will need to be determined and mobilised in consultation with Member States and the CSO.

Indian Ocean Rim Association

File No: COM 2021

Note No: MSs.2021.02

The Secretariat of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) presents its compliments to the **IOR Member States** and has the honour to refer to the 21st Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Council of Ministers' (COM) and related meetings that was held in hybrid format (in-person at Dhaka and virtually) on 15-17 November 2021, and hosted by the Chair, the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

The IORA Chair has approved the circulation of the following outcome documents for internal record purposes while noting that annex L and M are live documents to be reviewed and updated every six months at the two Sub-Committee on Finance (SCF) meetings, when necessary:

1. Final 23CSO Decision Report, 15-16 November 2021 (Annex A)
2. Final SCF Decision Report, 9 November 2021 (Annex B)
3. Second IORA Action Plan (Annex C)
4. Future Coordinating and Cluster Countries (Annex D)
5. Guidelines for strategic management and criteria for Dialogue Partners (Annex E)
6. IORA Guidelines for Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) (Annex F)
7. Modalities and Terms of Reference (ToR) and Establishment of the Working Group on Disaster Risk Management (WGDRM) (Annex G)
8. IORA-Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) MoU (Annex H)
9. Modalities and Terms of Reference (ToR) of the Indian Ocean Rim Academic Group (IORAG) (Annex I)
10. Creation of tourism platforms (digital or otherwise) for sharing of best practices (Annex J1 & J2)
11. Streamlining decision-making processes through sub-structures (Annex K)
12. Revised IORA Staff Regulations (Annex L) – Member States will note that the last version (Version 3), attached herewith, that was circulated on 16 November 2021 to Member States, mentioned “(under review)” under Paragraph 3 “APPOINTMENTS OF SECRETARY GENERAL AND BENEFITS”. The IORA Secretariat has accordingly included the relevant paragraphs based on the Terms of Reference of the Recruitment and Selection Committee (RSC) and this is the version 4, which include the above-mentioned paragraphs. The Secretariat understands that the SCF meeting on 9 November 2021 recommended an Ad Hoc Meeting to finalise the live documents and that a deadline of 30 November 2021 was to be given to Member States for any further inputs.

13. Revised IORA Financial Regulations (Annex M) – Similarly, on the Financial Regulations, the IORA Secretariat has amended Paragraph 7.6 (last paragraph under Item 7. MEMBERSHIP CONTRIBUTION) (in track changes), in order to reflect the inputs from South Africa which were endorsed by the CSO and adopted by the COM.

14. Administrative Arrangements of the Special Fund (Annex N) – The guidebook will be prepared in due course.

15. IORA Secretariat budget for 2022 (Annex O)

16. The final Dhaka Communique (Annex P)

The Secretariat of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the **IOR Member States** the assurances of its highest consideration.

Mauritius, December 6, 2021

TO ALL MEMBER STATES,
For Information: Chair, Bangladesh

16 Annexures

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