

**Notification of Regional Workshop on the BBNJ Agreement
for African States on the coasts of the Indian Ocean, Gulf of Aden
and Red Sea, and landlocked States in these regions,
as well as States of the Benguela Current Convention**

 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

 1 - 5 December 2025

 [Registration Form](#)

The Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations (the Division), in cooperation with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), is offering a Regional Workshop on promoting a better understanding of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement) for African States on the coasts of the Indian Ocean, Gulf of Aden and Red Sea, and landlocked States in these regions, as well as member States of the Benguela Current Convention.

The Workshop will be held from 1 to 5 December 2025 at the United Nations Conference Centre in Addis Ababa (UNCC-AA), Ethiopia, and will be hosted by ECA. It will be delivered in two segments: the first segment, delivered by the Division, will provide an overview of the BBNJ Agreement, covering all main elements of the Agreement as well as cross-cutting issues. The second segment, delivered by IUCN, will provide an opportunity for in-depth learning about a number of aspects pertaining to area-based management tools, including marine protected areas, as well as the necessary means of implementation.

First Segment: Overview of the BBNJ Agreement (1-3 December 2025)

This three-day segment will be delivered by the Division, with the support of regional and subject matter specialists, alongside contributors from across the United Nations system and other global, regional and subregional organizations. It will include presentations, breakout group discussions and plenary discussions.

The segment is being offered by the Division as part of its programme of activities undertaken in response to General Assembly resolution 77/321 to promote a better understanding of the BBNJ Agreement and to prepare for its entry into force, with additional support received from the European Union in the context of the project “Promotion of a better understanding of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement), including the strengthening of capacities of developing States toward becoming parties to the BBNJ Agreement and implementing it”, implemented by the Division and funded by the European Union.

The objective of this segment is to increase knowledge and understanding of the BBNJ Agreement, including the rights and obligations set out therein, among States and other stakeholders, with a view to supporting the efforts of States towards becoming parties to the Agreement and for its implementation.

The segment will include multiple modules, including on:

- the background to the BBNJ Agreement;
- an overview of the Agreement and its importance and the implications of becoming Parties;
- the substantive and cross-cutting elements of the Agreement, including the related rights and obligations set out therein;
- relevant legal instruments and frameworks and relevant global, regional, subregional and sectoral bodies (IFBs), including the relationship between the Agreement and those IFBs;
- procedural steps towards becoming party to the BBNJ Agreement;
- the work of the BBNJ Preparatory Commission; and
- supporting activities for becoming parties and for implementation.

A particular focus in discussions and breakout groups will be placed on the technical needs and requirements in preparation for implementation, including needs identification and gap analysis for legal and policy frameworks.

Second Segment: Area-based management tools and the necessary means of implementation (4-5 December 2025)

This two-day segment will be delivered by IUCN with a range of regional and international partners.

The objective of this segment is to focus on the opportunities and challenges of establishing and maintaining area-based management tools (ABMTs), including marine protected areas (MPAs), adjacent to African States. In doing so, participants will also have a chance to unpack the means of implementation, capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology (CBTMT) as well as financial resources their particular States and regions may require to implement Part III of the BBNJ Agreement.

The segment will include multiple sessions, including on:

- Ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs), vulnerable marine ecosystems, and bioregionalization as the basis for ABMTs, including MPAs, in areas beyond national jurisdiction;
- Science-policy interface for translating ecological knowledge into management measures and decision-making;
- Practical approaches for designing, establishing and managing ABMTs, including MPAs, in areas beyond national jurisdiction, including monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) for effective compliance;
- Operationalizing CBTMT through centres of excellence, regional hubs and partnerships, and identifying interoperable capabilities;
- Breakout discussions on key issues including perspectives on ABMTs, including MPAs, in areas beyond national jurisdiction, and establishing BBNJ centres of excellence;
- Financing the BBNJ Agreement, including innovative and sustainable finance for ABMTs, including MPAs, and beyond;

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- Unpacking cross-cutting and cooperation issues through discussions on the provisions of the Agreement related to "not undermining" and their implications for cooperation with IFBs, international cooperation and next steps towards effective early implementation by African States;
- Indigenous Peoples and local communities and other relevant stakeholders; and
- Next steps towards third session of the BBNJ Preparatory Commission and first meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Participation, funding and nominations

Participation in the Workshop is open to 24 African States on the coasts of the Indian Ocean, Gulf of Aden and Red Sea, and landlocked States in these regions, as well as States of the Benguela Current Convention,¹ relevant intergovernmental organizations and other relevant entities.

Eligible participants include those who are playing or are expected to play a leading role in the national process towards becoming a party to the BBNJ Agreement and implementing it, which may include governmental officials, such as national BBNJ focal points, and/or parliamentarians. In light of the role of members of parliament in the national processes of States towards becoming party to the BBNJ Agreement, the participation of parliamentarians is particularly encouraged.

Nominations are invited for up to two nominees per eligible State, preferably from different agencies of government and/or the legislature. Additional nominees may be accepted, if self-funded, depending on the venue capacity. The Division and IUCN will cover the costs of travel and daily subsistence allowance for up to two nominees from each eligible State. Priority will be given to those nominees who have not previously benefitted from training on the BBNJ Agreement.

IUCN will additionally support 11 participants (one per State) who attended the *Western Indian Ocean, Eastern and Southern Africa Region Workshop on the Agreement on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction* from 4 - 6 March 2025 in Mombasa, Kenya.² IUCN will cover the costs of travel and daily subsistence allowance for these participants.

Intergovernmental organizations, civil society and other relevant entities may nominate one participant at their own cost.

In line with international commitments to ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life, nominations should pay due consideration to the importance of gender balance.

¹ Angola, Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe.

² Angola, Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa and United Republic of Tanzania.

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The Workshop will be delivered in English with interpretation to/from French, depending on the needs of participants.

Nominations from eligible States: Nominees for the Workshop must register online at <https://indico.un.org/event/1020035/> by **15 October 2025**. Each nominee is required to register individually and upload their formal nomination issued by the Government. Selected participants will be notified in due course.

Nominations from intergovernmental organizations, civil society and other relevant entities: Nominees must register online at <https://indico.un.org/event/1020035/> by **15 October 2025** and upload a formal letter of nomination issued by the head of the intergovernmental organization or other relevant entity. Selected participants will be notified in due course.

Any questions with respect to the Workshop may be sent to **Linda Maria Behnke** (linda.behnke@un.org) and **Snježana Žarić** (zaric@un.org), with a copy to the Division (doalos@un.org). Questions related to the second segment of the Workshop can be addressed to **Barkha Mossaë** (barkha.mossae@iucn.org) and **Jeremy Raguain** (jeremy.raguain@iucn.org).