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The Benguela Large Marine Ecosystem (BCLME) is one of the world’s major eastern boundary upwelling systems. Trade winds cause cold, nutrient-rich water to rise from the deep creating a hotspot for marine biodiversity and food production. Spanning southern Angola, Namibia and South Africa’s West Coast, the BCLME is home to many fish species, seabirds and marine mammals. Economic activities such as fisheries, shipping, diamond mining and oil & gas exploration contribute significantly to the GDP of the three countries.

The Benguela Current faces threats by climate change and human activities such as pollution and overfishing. With funding from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), the BCLME III project promotes an ecosystem that is sustainably used, managed, conserved and protected for the wellbeing of the people of the region.

This booklet gives an overview of the BCLME III programme and its different projects in the member states.
The Benguela Current is one of the world’s four eastern boundary upwelling currents. It stretches from Cape Agulhas in South Africa to the 16th parallel south or roughly the port town of Namibe in Angola’s Cabinda Province, where it runs into the Angola-Benguela front. At its most northern tip it is 300 kilometers wide and it comprises a total surface area of 150 000 square kilometers.

An economic powerhouse

Because of the prevailing wind regime, cold water with high rates of phytoplankton rises from 300 meter depth to the surface areas. This causes the Benguela to be rich in pilchards and anchovies and further up the food chain bigger fish, marine birds and mammals. Fisheries range from an estimated 25 000 mostly artisanal fishermen in southern Angola to large commercial fishing operations employing tens of thousands of people in Namibia and South Africa. The spin-offs of fishing and processing for the wider economy are substantial.

The Benguela Current is also home to several medium-sized ports such as Cape Town, Luanda, Lüderitz and Walvis Bay situated along busy shipping lanes. Millions of tourists descend on the coastal areas every year enjoying recreational fishing and boating. Oil and gas exploration has been ongoing for decades and is experiencing a new surge. Situated firmly in the middle of the Benguela Current, Namibia is also the world’s largest miner of marine diamonds.

A wonderful biodiversity

The economic activities depend on and also impact an increasingly fragile ecosystem that supports an amazing biodiversity consisting of many endemic and threatened species of flora and fauna and several unique and protected habitats. Overfishing in the last decades of the 20th century caused pilchard stocks to collapse with the resulting impact on other fish species still being felt. There is strong evidence that climate change will change the upwelling system and reduce its productivity. Changing winds also impact on the feasibility of planned coastal wind parks while oil and gas exploration might affect migratory routes of large marine mammals such as whales.
Overview BCC

A common approach

To meet the challenges facing the Benguela ecosystem and preserve the current for future generations Angola, Namibia and South Africa in 2013 signed the Benguela Current Convention which is implemented by a permanent inter-governmental organisation. This Benguela Current Commission (BCC) with its secretariat in Swakopmund, Namibia, looks after the sustainable and responsible exploitation of living and non-living resources. It is responsible for the conservation of habitats, biodiversity and the protection of the ecosystem. The BCC also provides the training and capacity building needed to implement the Convention.

Through the Benguela Current Convention the three party states have put in place a powerful regional structure to manage a very important part of their natural and economic landscape.
Overview BCLME III

Improving ocean governance and management

The Benguela Current faces threats by climate change and human activities such as pollution and unsustainable fishing. To ensure sustainability, the BCLME III project, through the Benguela Current Convention (BCC), promotes a coordinated approach to managing the system. This project spans all three member countries and aims to promote the vision of sustaining human and ecosystem well-being for the future generations.

The BCLME III project is supporting the BCC to implement the Strategic Action Programme at both national and regional levels and encourage full participation by communities, the public and private sectors. The project aims to realize a coordinated regional approach to the long term conservation, protection, rehabilitation, enhancement and sustainable use of the Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem. This will enable realization of socio-economic benefits in the region through the domestication and implementation of the Benguela Current Convention and accompanying Strategic Action Plan.

BCLME III Targets

1. Development and strengthening of BCLME governance at regional and national level
2. Improved stakeholder engagement and partnership collaboration
3. Capacity building and training of the BCC
4. Enhance potential of the Blue Economy

BCLME III Trivia

- Budget: USD10 900 000
- Funded by: Global Environment Facility (GEF)
- Co-funders: BCC and governments of Angola, Namibia & South Africa
- Co-financing: USD 135 000 000
- Implementing Agency: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- Executing Agency: BCC Secretariat
- Project Duration: January 2017 – March 2022 (63 months)
This project will proactively address a number of SDGs, particularly SDG14: Conserve and Sustainably Use the Oceans, Seas and Marine Resources for Sustainable Development, but also SDG1 (End Poverty), SDG2 (Food Security), SDG5 (Gender Equality and Empowerment), SDG8 (Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth), SDG9 (Reduce Inequality), SDG12 (Sustainable Consumption), SDG13 (Climate Change), SDG15 (Ecosystem and Biodiversity) and SDG17 (Global Partnership for Sustainable Development).
Regional Activities

Regional BCLME III activities

**Development and strengthening of BCLME governance at regional and national level**

**Objective:** Enhance policy, legislative, institutional and management progression and transformation at both regional and national levels in line with the ecosystem approach and in support of the BCC strategic action plan

Support demonstrations of an ecosystem approach at the community level

**Outcomes:** Regional level ocean and coastal governance implemented

National level ocean and coastal governance implemented

National level integrated governance and management mechanisms piloted (demonstration projects)

**Improved stakeholder engagement and partnership collaboration**

**Objective:** Develop a more effective and interactive stakeholder engagement as well as the strengthening of necessary partnerships for sustainability of the BCLME

**Outcomes:** Regional and national level stakeholder engagement activities

Community level engagement activities

Public and private sector engagement strengthened

**Capacity building and training of the BCC**

**Objective:** Aims to develop stronger capacity within the region for ecosystem-based management

Capacity development of the BCC at all levels

**Outcomes:** Capacity Development and Strengthening of the BCC, its secretariat and various associated committees and bodies for implementation of the BCC strategic action plan

**Enhance the economic potential of the blue economy**

**Objective:** Unlock socio-economic potential through investments in blue economy in the Region.

Marketing and resource mobilisation for financial sustainability of the BCLME

**Outcomes:** Sustainable long term financing mechanisms adopted by BCC
Many coastal towns and settlements in Angola are heavily dependent on marine resources for their economic survival. The Benguela Current and its marine resources also play an important role in the social cohesion of these communities. The country specific pilot projects rolled out by BCLME III focus on improving livelihoods through increased sustainability of small scale fishing.

**BCLME III Angola Partners:** Ministry of Fisheries and the Sea, Ministry of Petroleum, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Transport
**Overview Angola**

### Optimising Small Scale Fisheries

**Objective:** Establish community cooperatives to provide financial services, reduce pollution and enhance fish handling.

**Results:** Improved income and welfare for coastal communities through improved infrastructure and services, better economic structures and environmental management

**Budget:** $207 000 until March 2022

**Beneficiaries/Area:** Fishing communities in the coastal areas of Luanda province

**Implementing partner:** Institute of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture Development (IPA) in the Ministry of Fisheries and the Sea
Overview Angola

**Developing Mariculture Production**

**Objective:** A case study in experimental farming focusing on the currently underdeveloped community level mariculture of oysters (Crassostrea gigas) and other selected species to 'prove' the case study objectives in selected coastal communities.

**Results:** Increase food security and reduce dependence and impact on nearshore fisheries, and improving livelihoods through setting up experimental stations for oyster mariculture.

**Budget:** $200 000 until March 2022

**Beneficiaries/Area:** Coastal areas in central and southern Angola.

**Implementing partner:** Institute of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture Development (IPA) in collaboration with the National Directorate of Aquiculture of the Ministry of Fisheries and the Sea.
From the Kunene River in the North to the Orange River in the South, the Benguela Current covers the entire 1570 kilometre Namibian coastline. This area counts several busy commercial ports, diamond mining, bird and marine mammal sanctuaries, offshore oil and gas exploration and rich fishing grounds. The Blue Economy holds huge potential for Namibia, but requires detailed planning and balancing of stakeholder interests to be successful and sustainable.
Overview Namibia

Promotion of the Blue Economy

OBJECTIVE
The project will harmonise and integrate marine spatial planning and coastal management. This will be of enormous value at the national level. A comprehensive Total Economic Value approach will be followed to arrive at both macro and micro values for the blue economy.

1. Socio-economic status report for entire coastline and EEZ. Marine Spatial Plan for Conception Bay to Orange River Mouth

2. Biodiversity inventory for entire Namibian coastline

3. Macro-level ecosystem valuation for entire Namibian coastline and EEZ

4. Micro level cost-benefit analysis of potential development options to support blue economy

5. Mapping of blue economy investment opportunities and resources mobilisation for public private partnerships; resource mobilisation and promotion strategy; investment conference

6. Pilot project for ecosystem-based community development

7. Capacity building and training for blue economy

8. Inter-ministerial committee on blue economy strengthened; policy briefs, information sheet and guiding tools; seminars, public lectures on blue economy

9. Lessons and best practices documented and shared regionally and internationally via IW: LEARN and LME: LEARN

Budget: $575 000

Beneficiaries/Area: Namibian coastline till end of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). Some activities will be concentrated on specific sites.

Implementing partners: Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources, Ministry of Mines and Energy, University of Namibia, Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Ministry of Works and Transport
Overview South Africa

BCLME III in South Africa

Water quality is of vital importance to the marine environment. The Swartkops estuary near Port Elizabeth is affected by pollution from nearby industry and Municipal waste water treatment works and stormwater canals, among others. The BCLME III demonstration projects looks at ways of improving water quality to make it fit for use for different users and drawing up standards that can be replicated nationally and in the region, in protecting vulnerable areas.
OBJECTIVE
Investigate the causes and impacts of impaired water quality on the living marine resources and associated dependent communities to develop and improve standards and guidelines for water quality maintenance across the entire pilot area.

1. Compile standards and practices for integrated water quality monitoring
2. Improved operation of wastewater treatment
3. Improved environmental practices of industries and commercial establishments
4. Marine environment stress reduction through recycling wastewater, removing pollutants and overall improved management
5. Communities involved in monitoring water quality
6. Address potentially harmful effects of aquaculture

Budget: $575 000

Beneficiaries/Area: Swartkops Estuary

Implementing partners: Department of Environmental Affairs, Department of Water and Sanitation, Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Eastern Cape Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality
Overview Funders and Partners

Funders and Partners

Angola
Institute of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture Development (IPA) in collaboration with the National Directorate of Sea Affairs of the Ministry of Fisheries and the Sea

Namibia
Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources, Ministry of Mines and Energy, University of Namibia, Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Ministry of Works and Transport

South Africa
Department of Environmental Affairs, Department of Water and Sanitation, Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Eastern Cape Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality

UNDP
Empowered lives. Resilient nations.
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