



Marine sciences in the Western Indian Ocean Region: The story of WIOMSA

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WIOMSA President**



Phases of development of marine science in

WIO

Phase I (Pre 1970)

- Few research Institutions
- Little or no involvement of nationals in the national and regional research programs.

Phase II (1970 – 1990)

- International Conference on Marine Resources Development in East Africa in April 1974
- First marine scientists completed their postgraduate
- Participated in Dr Fridtjof Nansen cruises
- Marine biology courses started at UDSM



Pre-1990

- Few marine scientists, the majority of them being fisheries biologists
- Absence of research priority setting mechanisms at the regional level
- Poor dissemination and communication of research results
- Limited research collaboration amongst scientists
- Linkage to priority management issues were sporadic
- Absence of a research grants programme that responds to priority needs of the region.



Phases III & IV

Phase III (1990 – 2000)

- Sida/SAREC support to Marine Research established
- Kenya-Belgian Project in Marine Sciences
- Scholarships offered by different countries
- Regional research programs/organizations established
- WIOMSA established

Phase IV (2000 -)

- National Universities starting offering MSc and PhD degree programs
- Competitive research program initiated
- More regional collaboration
- WIO Journal of Marine Science established







Background

- Established in 1993
- Registered in 1994

Why was WIOMSA established?

- Fostering research excellence,
- Developing expertise for effective management,
- Raising awareness and enhancing access to knowledge and information,
- Promoting networking, cooperation and exchange,
- Promoting and advocating appropriate policies and practices.



Evolution of WIOMSA





MAIN ACTIVITIES

- Linking science to governance processes
- Capacity and professional development to conduct quality research and for improved management
- Enhancing access to relevant knowledge and information
- Strengthening networks and partnerships
- Outreach and Resource Mobilization
- Institutional Strengthening of WIOMSA

Specific activities

Linking science to governance

- Competitive Research Grant Programme (Open and Commissioned Programmes)
- Science to Policy dialogues

Capacity and professional development

- Marine Research Grant Programme (MARG)
- Grants to organize training courses
- Writing workshop
- Professionalizing MPA Management (WIO-COMPAS)





Communication & Dissemination

- **Western Indian Ocean Journal of Marine Science (WIOJMS) – ISI registered**
- **Book Series – 14 books, 4 in preparation**
- **Biennial WIOMSA Scientific Symposiums**
- **Special Issues of Journals - 7**
- **Upgrading of the website**
- **Annual Reports**
- **WIOMSA Magazine**
- **Policy Briefs**



Specific activities

Strengthening networks and partnerships

- Hosting of technical and practitioners networks
- MOUs with key regional institutions
- Members in partners' decision-making organs

Resource Mobilization

- WIOMSA Trust (WIT)
- Broadening the sources of revenues
- Looking for new donors

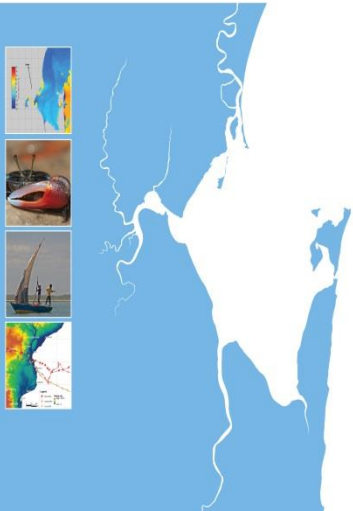
People, Nature and Research in
Chwaka Bay, Zanzibar, Tanzania

Edited by Maricela de la Torre-Castro and Thomas J. Lyimo



**THE MAPUTO BAY
ECOSYSTEM**

Editors Salomão Bandeira | José Paula





Major achievements

Contributed to:

- building and strengthening scientific and management capacity
- the increased knowledge base on the coastal and marine environments,
- raising awareness on important management issues,
- disseminating information on the sustainable use of marine resources and
- influencing policies at national and regional levels.



Challenges facing WIOMSA

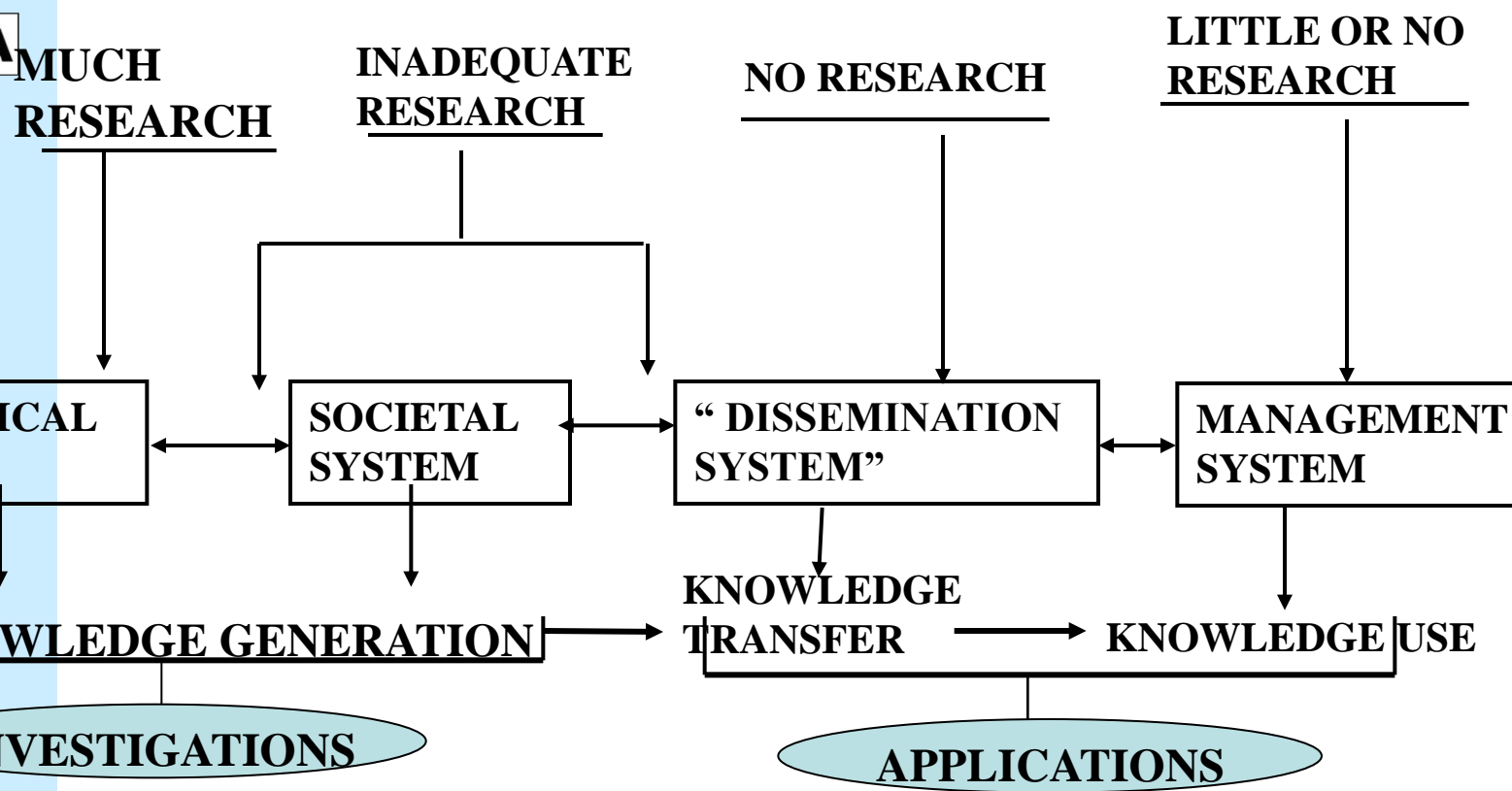
CONTEXT OF THE MASMA PROGRAMME



STATUS OF RESEARCH

OUTPUTS

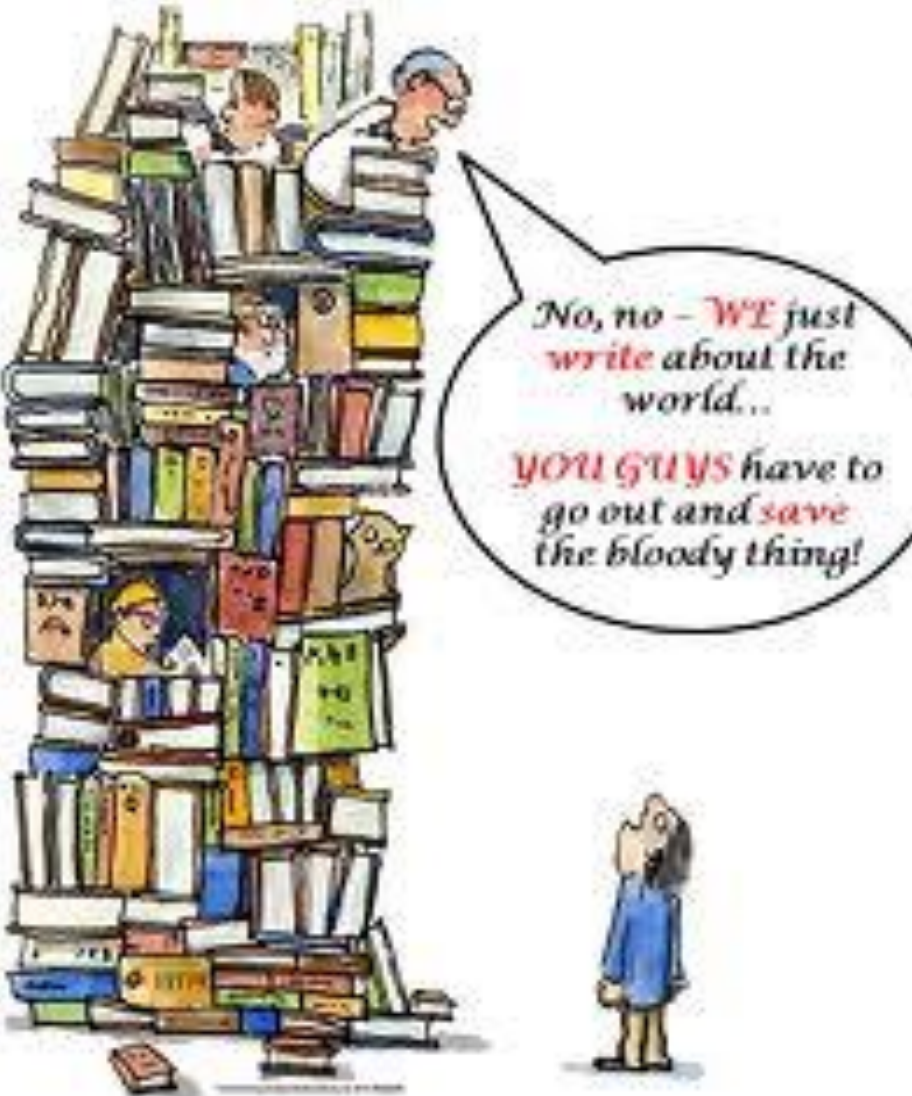
SYSTEMS



RESEARCH QUESTION NEEDS TO BE FRAMED WITHIN A SOCIAL SCIENCE/MANAGEMENT CONTEXT I.E. A MANAGEMENT ISSUE NEEDS TO BE RESEARCHED FOR A PROPOSAL TO BE RELEVANT FOR MASMA FUNDING

IF THESE DO NOT HAPPEN, THEN "RESEARCH" REMAINS SIMPLY INVESTIGATION, I.E . IT IS NOT "MASMA-able".

THESE SYSTEMS AND THEIR OUTPUTS SHOULD THEMSELVES BE THE SUBJECT OF RESEARCH AS WELL





Emm Kay
@emmkaff



Scientists: Don't freak out about Ebola.

Everyone: *Panic!*

Scientists: Freak out about climate change.

Everyone: LOL! Pass me some coal.

5:46 AM · 07 Aug 14

17.3K RETWEETS **9,456** FAVORITES





Challenges of linking science to policy processes

- What are the incentives for scientists and policy makers to work together?
- What are the effective mechanisms for linking science to policy processes?
- What is the appropriate level of governance to target?
- Is the data and information produced appropriate and in accessible format for decision-making processes?
- Researchers have many questions/misunderstanding about the decision-making process:
 - How to engage with them?
 - Who are the policymakers? What do they want?
 - Policies are not homogenous
 - How important is science in policymaking? Is science the decisive factor in policy making?



Evolving

- ***Consultation:*** national, regional and Africa wide processes such as NEPAD for selecting priority areas of research for Commissioned research
- ***Long-term sustainability.*** WIOMSA is working hard to identify alternative funding sources and revenue generating mechanisms to support WIOMSA programme of activities in the long-term.
- ***Increasing engagement*** of regional institutions/experts in regional initiatives
- ***Regional “Research Council”***
- ***Going beyond research outputs:*** From just recommendations to piloting potential solutions



**Thank you for your
attention!!**