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FIVE-YEAR PLAN

AFMESI 2021-2025 STRATEGY

AFRICAN MARINE ENVIRONMENT SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE

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FOREWORDS

The Founding President, Dr Felicia Chinwe Mogo



This five-year Strategic Plan for the African Marine Environment Sustainability Initiative (AFMESI) clarifies the key assumptions that drive us to our mission and frame how we work to fulfil it. Our success has been and will continue to be, based on collaboration and partnerships: with industry, government and the community, and between our top-notch staff and their local, national and international colleagues.

AFMESI has been on top of matters relating to the Blue Economy. We conduct marine litter prevention and control activities, advise regional and national governments, play an active role within the G7++ Friends of the Gulf of Guinea

(G7++ FOGG) group in handling insecurity, especially in advocating for attention into the triggers of maritime insecurity and dealing with the triggers instead of, for example, militarized approaches only.

Science, innovation, research and engagement are critical to developing a sustainable African Blue Economy, and AFMESI is well placed to make a vital contribution now and into the future. We anticipate that the implementation of this plan will bring the organization closer to realizing our Vision 2025. I look forward to working with our staff, Advisory Board, volunteers, and partners as we continue a 5-year tradition of science-community-based work and actionable solutions for the African ocean.

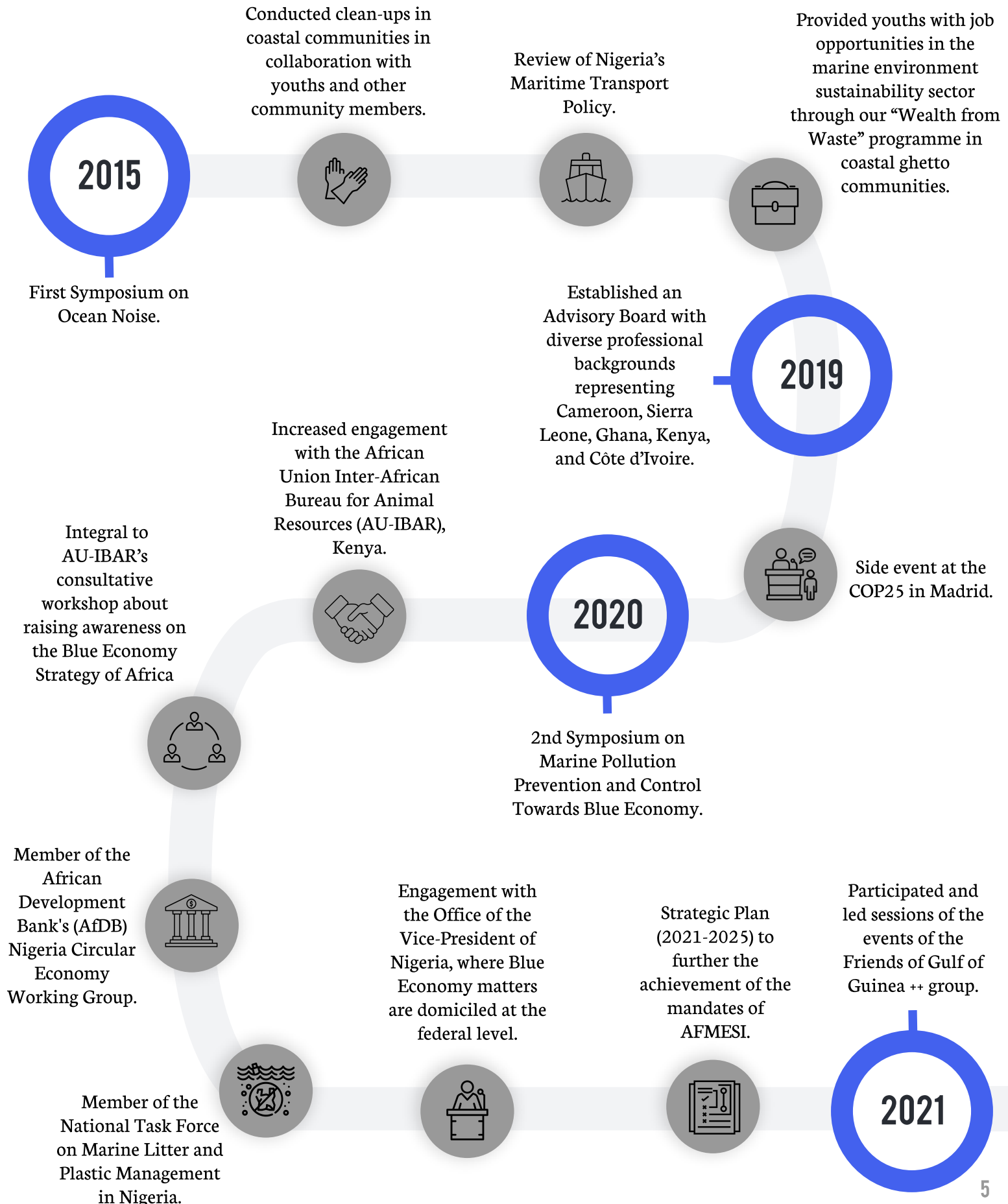
WHERE WE COME FROM

IMAGE: MATT ALANIZ, CC-BY-4.0

BACKGROUND

The African Marine Environment Sustainability Initiative (AFMESI) is a leading Pan-African non-for-profit organisation dedicated to protecting and restoring coastal and marine environments for healthy and vibrant communities since 2015. We are a respected voice in ocean sustainability in Africa and have a history of working creatively and cooperatively to tackle various issues. For over six years, AFMESI has served as a common ground for stakeholders to come together to discuss collaboration and coordination between local units of government on coastal and marine management policies and programs. Even though AFMESI has no enforcement powers, it has accomplished its goals by using technical data, fact-based information, and citizen stewardship, all of which have influenced decisions made by various local, regional and national agencies. AFMESI has created an environment that fosters innovative projects at the community and national level and across the freshwater-marine divide. AFMESI has built its reputation by providing sound experts advice and authoring sound scientific reports used by individuals, governments, and international agencies to guide their decision-making. Our interventions have covered a broad range of topics, including underwater noise monitoring, fisheries improvement, marine litter influences on the ocean, coastal and marine domain vulnerability, flood control, benthic macroinvertebrate populations, land use impact on aquatic and water quality, as well as existing and lost native ecosystem types.

SUMMARY OF WORK AND ACHIEVEMENTS



GALLERY OF WORK & ACHIEVEMENTS

Investiture of the title of Patron of AFMESI on Barr. Temisan Omatseye, a former Director-General of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA)



From R-L: Mr. Somkwe John-Nwosu (Managing Director, Credo Marine & Energy Services Ltd.), Dr. Felicia Chinwe Mogo (Founder/President, AFMESI), Barr. Temisan Omatseye (Former DG, NIMASA), Ms. Chiamaka Mogo (Executive Secretary, AFMESI), Mrs Eunice Ezeoke (President, WISTA Nigeria)

AFMESI at the 2nd Symposium on Ocean Marine Pollution, Prevention and Control Towards a Blue Economy.



Dr. Felicia Chinwe Mogo (Founder/President AFMESI) speaks at the Symposium.

GALLERY OF WORK & ACHIEVEMENTS

Investiture of the title of Patroness of AFMESI on Barr. Margaret Orakwusi, Chief Executive Officer of MORBOD Fisheries Limited and Chair of the Shipowners Forum, Nigeria



Dr. Felicia Chinwe Mogo (Founder/President, AFMESI) presenting the plaque and certificate to Barr. Orakwusi, Chief Executive Officer of MORBOD Fisheries Limited and Chair of the Shipowners Forum, Nigeria.

AFMESI at COP25, Madrid, Spain. Side event on a partnership for a Sustainable Blue Environment for Africa.



GALLERY OF WORK & ACHIEVEMENTS

AFMESI Marine Litter Cleanup at Ogogoro Island.



Volunteers wearing AFMESI equipment clean up litter in Ogogoro Island, Lagos, Nigeria

Investiture of the title of Patron of AFMESI on H.E. Ambassador Dr. Wilfred Machage, High Commissioner of Kenya to Nigeria in Abuja, Nigeria



From R-L: Mrs. Glory Adie-Ayabie (key maritime stakeholder), Dr. Felicia Chinwe Mogo (Founder/President AFMESI), Major General Jonathan India Garba (Rtd.) (Advisory Board Member, AFMESI), H.E. Ambassador Dr. Wilfred Machage (High Commissioner of Kenya to Nigeria)



VISION, MISSION, GOALS

WHERE WE ARE GOING

AFMESI Staff and Advisory Board spent about a year engaging in conversations on the organisation's role, history, and future direction. A focus group was created that met in October 2020 to begin the strategic planning process. The group reviewed and provided inputs into the organisation's missions, vision, and core values at the session. A proposed mission, vision, and core values were drafted and approved by the Advisory Board in 2021.

OUR VISION

AFMESI, as a leader in ocean knowledge, empowers Africa and its people to safeguard the ocean ecosystem and fully harness the Blue Economy's socioeconomic opportunities.

OUR MISSION

AFMESI, as a leader in providing governments, international agencies and the maritime industry with a range of advisory, economic development and research services that inform policy-making, regulation and sustainable management and growth of Africa's marine resources. AFMESI undertakes, coordinates and promotes partnerships and engagements, which are essential to developing a safe and healthy ocean while achieving a sustainable ocean economy and inspiring a shared understanding of the ocean.

WHERE WE ARE GOING

IMAGE: SKYPIXELS, CC BY SA 4.0

VALUES

Guiding Principles and Values

We embrace these guiding principles and values in everything we do. They are central to the development and implementation of this strategic plan.

COLLABORATION: We embrace teamwork, collaboration and the integration of our scientific and technical capacities. We convene and work with coastal communities, experts, national, regional and international partners – listening, challenging and sharing – towards understanding and addressing the pressing ecological and socioeconomic issues in the marine domain.

ACCOUNTABILITY: Demonstrating integrity and responsible stewardship of our resources, expecting the best of ourselves and our colleagues.

RESPECT: Ensuring the dignity of all people and the value of diversity demonstrated through our honest, caring and ethical interactions and practices. We respect traditional and indigenous knowledge of coastal communities, recognise and celebrate the vital work of our colleagues, partners and stakeholders with a commitment to our individual and corporate social responsibilities.

COMMUNITY: We cherish community and the connections that create it.

EXCELLENCE: We strive for excellence and provide the highest possible quality of responsive service informed by meaningful consultation and delivered professionally.

COMMUNICATION: We are committed to informing and sharing our experience, knowledge, and lessons learnt to benefit society.

DIVERSITY: We encourage diversity of perspectives and backgrounds and recognise that diversity is vital to ocean management, research, development and innovation.

COMMITMENT: We are passionate about the ocean, our mission and Africa sustainably achieving its marine potential.

INTEGRITY: We uphold the highest levels of integrity, accountability and transparency in everything that we do.

INNOVATION: We promote and support a culture of innovation, nurturing creativity, fostering new ideas and striving to improve what we do and how we do it continuously.

SUSTAINABILITY: Sustainability in all its dimensions—including environmental, financial, and institutional—is a keystone of our work.



IMAGE: CC-BY-4.0

CONTEXT

SETTING THE CONTEXT FOR AFMESI STRATEGY

Critical social, economic, technological, legal, environmental and political trends and drivers were identified as part of our gap analysis and need assessment and set the foundation for the African Marine Environment and Sustainability Initiative's (AFMESI) six-year strategic plan. This plan has been developed following engagement and consultation with AFMESI employees, Advisory Board, local, national, regional and international partners, maritime sector experts and service providers. It outlines AFMESI's six-year strategic goals, along with key strategies and indicators of success in reaching these goals. The plan will be executed via a cycle of three-year action plans, reviewed annually using our performance measurement map.

STRATEGIC GOALS

We will make meaningful progress toward achieving our vision for the future of AFMESI by focusing on five overarching goals: Engagement and relationships; Science and research; Advocacy and implementation; Communications; and Fundraising and organisational foundation.

We have identified priorities for strategic investment in partnerships, programmes, and people to achieve these goals. These priorities are described in the following pages.

With these priorities, AFMESI will work vigorously to ensure sustainability in all its dimensions. Diverse sources of funding and significant input from the many partners of the AFMESI will be required.

Development of funding and communications strategies to support this work is underway.

Nurture healthy, safe and inclusive Africa ocean and coasts

Supporting the fact that the ocean is one of the key life support systems on earth, 'AFMESI's strategic vision includes nurturing a healthy, safe and inclusive ocean and coasts; consisting of communities where social-economic and livelihoods are sustained and where people feel safe and proud of their environment.

One of the main components of 'AFMESI's strategy and future success is effective partnerships. The ability to convene and collaborate with partners will play a vital role in balancing ocean resources with growing needs. These partners are also passionate about ocean sustainability and keen on ensuring people-centred marine resources management/governance. Working together and optimising resources will help improve our services.

Innovate to meet ocean conservation and management needs

Pursuing innovative solutions and alternate partnerships among fiscal constraints are critical to

AFMESI's long-term success. A strategy that allows AFMESI to extract value and ensure future ocean conservation and management needs continue to be met.

Foster an organisational culture of leadership, accountability and continuous improvement

Human resource management is an essential component of core strategic planning. It must recognise the changing profile of the modern worker and the nature of the work itself. Factors such as ageing and intergenerational workers, cultural diversity, mental health in the workplace, core competence gaps, employee engagement, and virtual teams must be continually assessed and addressed.

Support for African Blue Economy

Through broader education, engagement and outreach programmes with our stakeholders, AFMESI will help develop an informed consensus about the sustainable development of 'Africa's ocean economy.

AFMESI GOALS 2021-2025

ENGAGEMENT AND RELATIONSHIPS

Engage a diverse and inclusive group of partners and establish relationships to advance policies.

SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

Collect and use scientific information to gauge the health of the ocean, direct programmatic priorities, and advance protection, restoration and management efforts.

ADVOCACY AND IMPLEMENTATION

Set our ocean and coastal agenda and advance policies and projects at all levels of government and with a range of partners.

COMMUNICATIONS

Raise awareness of the ocean, and promote our programme goals.

FUNDRAISING AND ORGANISATIONAL FOUNDATION

Develop strong, partnerships and systems to secure resources ensure the accomplishment of the mission.

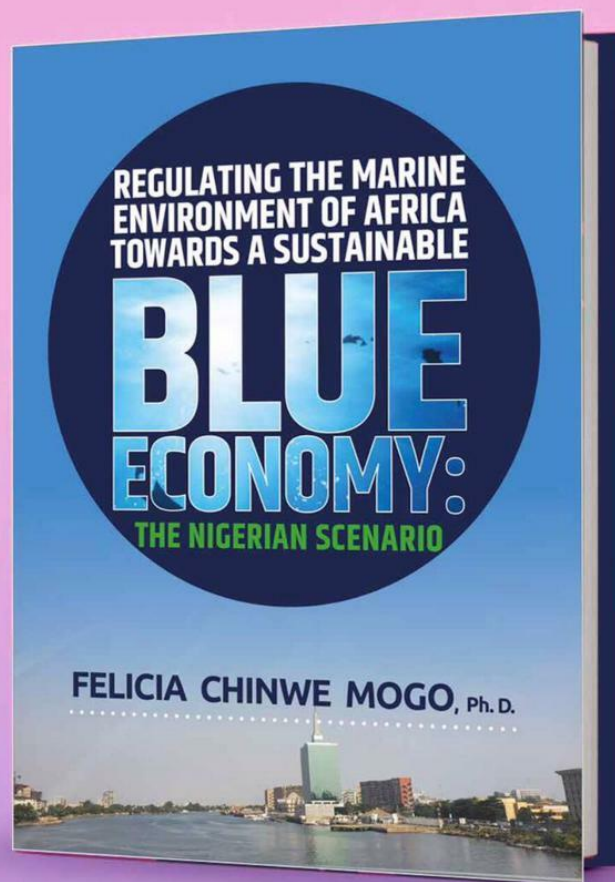




IMAGE: ANDY GORDON, CC-BY-4.0

IMPLEMENTATION

This strategic plan, developed after internal and external review with the Advisory Board and Staff, will be implemented through the OGSP (Objectives-Goals-Strategies-Plans) process that guides quarterly, semi-annual, and annual planning. Individual work plans will be developed, monitored and evaluated accordingly. This process will increase AFMESI's ability to deliver high-quality programmes through evaluating and aligning programmes and staffing to attain the organisational mission. Through this process, staff will articulate and implement clear objectives over three years, including activities, outcomes, timetables, resource requirements, and a process for monitoring progress. AFMESI will strive to attain at least 75 per cent of the measurable outcomes for each programme.

ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

AFMESI strives for practical actions leading to desired conservation results for the African ocean. To achieve this, we must prioritise actions and commit to strategies. Still, we must also closely monitor the outcomes of those actions to optimise impact. An interactive and proactive process will be engaged to ensure measurable outcomes. Results obtained will be ploughed back into the system scaling up and replicability. While this strategic plan lays out strategies for the next 5-years, 'AFMESI's staff and Advisory Board will continue to implement an effective system of monitoring, evaluation, verification and reporting to regularly adjust and fine-tune the plan to meet our overall mission.

ENGAGEMENT AND RELATIONSHIPS: ENGAGE A DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE GROUP OF PARTNERS AND ESTABLISH RELATIONSHIPS TO ADVANCE PROGRAMS AND POLICIES.

Reach new priority audiences organisation-wide.

- Identify new priority audiences and review for refinement at agreed-upon intervals
- Identify underserved or environmental justice issues or projects that includes identification of problems, and mutual goals
- Advance programming that reaches the "future majority" with a focus on diversity and inclusiveness (e.g., age, ability, socioeconomic, culture)
- Continue to create new volunteer programming and positions that support organisational goals and increases community involvement in AFMESI work
- Create a database of stakeholders. Communicate interest to related staff and follow-up on initial requests and inquiries to meet expectations

Deepen relationships to support and advance our mission.

- Review existing partnerships periodically, and adjust focus and resources accordingly
- Engage key member groups and policymakers as allies for the African ocean
- Increase partnership by 50 percent
- Develop opportunities to establish and share expertise and leadership, and engage in dialogue with partners
- Identify and implement strategies to retain volunteers
- Improve conversion of new members to volunteers and vice versa
- Support highly-engaged volunteers to take up leadership roles in AFMESI programs

SCIENCE AND RESEARCH: COLLECT AND USE SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION TO GAUGE THE HEALTH OF THE WATERSHED, DIRECT PROGRAMMATIC PRIORITIES, AND ADVANCE PROTECTION AND RESTORATION EFFORTS.

Collect natural and social science information representative of the ocean and its constituents to quantify target indicators' magnitude and rate of change.

- Facilitate meetings annually to determine data needs, monitoring priorities, and coordinate efforts among AFMESI staff
- Collect and gather scientific information from multiple sources, including AFMESI research and fieldwork as well as external sources
- Develop a method for identifying potential new indicators or parameters for monitoring based on emerging threats and current research – may include literature review; outreach to colleagues
- Evaluate each program at the end of the year to improve the quality of the scientific data and the volunteer experience

Analyse and interpret scientific information from multiple sources to evaluate and guide AFMESI programs and projects.

- Interpret scientific information to identify priority areas for AFMESI and collaborators to restore and protect
- Data will be used to determine the strategies and effectiveness of AFMESI and appropriate non-AFMESI initiatives
- Integrate climate science into data collection and interpretation, as well as program evaluation

Communicate results to priority audiences tailored to their varying levels of knowledge, understanding, and influence.

- Produce a data summary report, presentation, blog, or other appropriate outreach product for every volunteer-based monitoring event or program
- Summarise scientific data for ocean health and update at least every five years
- Present data and analysis through meetings with appropriate local, national governments or agencies upon detecting significant degradation or improvement in ocean quality indicators, including work with appropriate AFMESI Board members and volunteers
- Communicate methods and results to practitioner and scientific audiences via national or international conferences, leading topical websites, journals, and other publications

Expand the capacity and increase the efficiency of AFMESI data collection and interpretation.

- Develop a user-friendly web portal (dashboard) that integrates real-time flow and ocean health data, recent biological data, Geographic Information Systems or mapping capabilities, etc.
- Dashboard sends alerts to staff and stakeholders when parameter levels exceed thresholds

ADVOCACY AND IMPLEMENTATION: SET OUR COASTAL AND OCEAN AGENDA AND ADVANCE POLICIES AND PROJECTS AT ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT AND WITH A RANGE OF PARTNERS.

Increase by 25 percent the number of countries with ocean-friendly policies, frameworks, strategies and plans.

- Define ocean-friendly policies, frameworks, strategies and plans
- Establish a survey and baseline to evaluate the number of countries with ocean policies, rules, and plans
- Establish annual goals and strategies (specific communities, countries and actions)
- Advocate and assist governments and partners with education, resources, and constituent support

Increase use of relevant climate information for planning and management among high-priority communities/countries.

- Define high-priority communities/countries
- Develop annual plans to target communities/countries and actions: Identify relevant and compelling climate information, delivery strategies, and desired actions for ocean plans and management
- Fifty percent of target communities/countries have utilised climate change information in planning or management activities

Fifty percent of priority restoration projects and management activities have identified leads and funding and are being implemented or are completed.

- Identify three-year priority restoration projects and management activities for selected coastal and marine case studies in Africa
- Meet with all local, national, regional and international partner leads identified to advocate for priority projects, secure funding, and support logistics
- Take the leads and funding ideas and advance implementation of projects through either direct project management or assistance with second party advocacy, permitting, construction, monitoring, and education

Advocate for protections that support and enhance national legislation, regional and international laws/conventions/frameworks affecting ocean health.

- Identify annual legislative priorities; and define 'AFMESI's role, strategy, and partners
- Use social media, Vertical Response (web-based direct communication platform), blogs, the press, and letters to the government to advocate on above legislation
- Use strategic partner relationships and AFMESI experience, data, and expertise to create compelling arguments on the above legislation
- Measure increase in public participation in ocean-friendly behaviours and actions.
- Identify and prioritise a suite of ocean-friendly behaviours and actions
- Define metrics to gauge and measure ocean-friendly behaviours and actions
- Develop outreach and education strategies to reach the public and engender action

COMMUNICATIONS: RAISE AWARENESS OF THE COAST AND OCEAN, AND ADVANCE OUR PROGRAM GOALS

Increase AFMESI brand recognition throughout the African continent.

- Use the AFMESI brand identity consistently on all documents and presentations as well as outreach material
- Develop an ongoing consultative relationship with a public relations firm and an annual budget to use their media relations services for strategically planned initiatives and on-call for emerging issues or crises.
- Increase our strategic and efficient use of communication tools by providing structured content coordination (high-level planning/strategy, using an editorial calendar, multiple staff/volunteers/interns engaged in executing).
- Increase brand awareness through campaigns that promote the organisation using outreach tools such as websites, emails, social networking, events, videos, and schwag.
- Organise workshops, seminars, etc. in conjunction with other organisations in and outside the maritime industry principally to attract people and highlight the consequences of piracy and other illicit maritime activities on the Blue Economy

Increase AFMESI's total followers by 60 percent annually and deepen the level of engagement among new followers

- Define and establish a baseline measure of AFMESI followers
- Regularly collect, analyse and interpret geographic, demographic, and psychographic data on existing audiences and use results to identify and prioritise new audiences, craft compelling and persuasive messages, and strategise communications investments
- Grow our use of selective social media channels to expand our reach to new audiences.
- Enhance staff capacity through training
- Improve digital communications (website and email) to increase audience engagement and interaction with AFMESI
- Decide metrics for tracking conversions through communications channels and regularly review and evaluate efforts
- Ensure effective internal communication
- Use results for AFMESI and project communication

Enhance communications with cooperative partners and project stakeholders that results in greater participation and support.

- Prioritise the communication of AFMESI data results and amplify their link to project and policy work in accessible and meaningful ways to an array of audiences using a variety of communications techniques
- Use best practices and unify brand communication on project work towards cooperative partners and stakeholders in written reports, presentations and digitally (web and email)
- Ensure that all programs have a communications/marketing strategy that meets program and organisational goals.

FUNDRAISING AND ORGANISATIONAL FOUNDATION: DEVELOP STRONG RELATIONSHIPS AND SYSTEMS TO SECURE RESOURCES THAT ACCOMPLISH THE MISSION

Enhance internal systems to be increasingly transparent, efficient, and effective.

- Engage staff in the review of internal systems for improvement
- Identify gaps and efficiencies in systems
- Create new systems when needed and improve or condense existing systems

Foster an open, collaborative, and supportive culture for staff, board, and supporters.

- Events, meetings, and outings encourage shared learning, partnerships, and participation in AFMESI
- Productive and regular feedback is encouraged and integral to processes and encouraged
- Regular planning (updates, mid-range and strategic planning, metric tracking) allow staff, Advisory Board, and volunteers to see how their work fits into the organisational vision and strategic plan and feel that they contribute in ways that are effective, measured, and valued
- Foster communication among Advisory Board members, staff, and volunteers through interactive meetings and outings

Create a Fundraising Plan for each fiscal year

- Create quantifiable goals, strategies to achieve goals, tactics to support strategies, personnel and time frames
- Establish metrics and benchmarks to evaluate progress, schedule evaluation, and reporting and opportunity for mid-course corrections
- Outline roles and responsibilities for staff, board, and volunteers
- Secure funds from diverse sources that support both restricted and unrestricted work and ensure a dependable revenue stream
- Develop a secure base of diversified funds from individuals, foundations, corporations, planned gifts, grants, and fee-for-service work
- Standardise tracking and coding of contributed funds using standardised software to improve reconciliation, reporting, and analysing
- Increase unrestricted funds to support our response to new or emerging threats with innovative and effective solutions
- Increase our use of metrics to track annual giving, renewal rates, acquisition rates, average gift sizes, and percentage of gifts coming through various fundraising channels
- Increase income from a broad base of individual, government and cooperate donors.
- Identify the constituencies to reach and communicate the AFMESI message
- Identify new prospects based on the donor profile
- Engage constituents through a data focus related to capacity, ability, and inclination.
- Increase participation in volunteer leadership for fundraising
- Build a legacy giving program and increase awareness with constituents



CONCLUSION

Guided by this Strategic Plan, AFMESI will strive to ensure that coastal and marine sustainability takes a front burner at national and regional levels in Africa. In pointing the way for AFMESI to achieve the goals identified above, this Plan represents the convergence of our aspirations and the imperative to push the boundaries of advocacy, research and partnership to foster Blue Economy development in Africa. These goals set out a 5-year vision for AFMESI. During this time, additional action steps will be identified as part of our ongoing institutional strategic thinking—especially in the process of developing annual Action Agendas (a practice that will be integral to the success of subsequent Plans), as well as in a formal review at the three-year midpoint. But at the heart of this work is our ongoing commitment to our core values that animate our mission and vision, and above all to the success of Blue Economic development on the continent.

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