



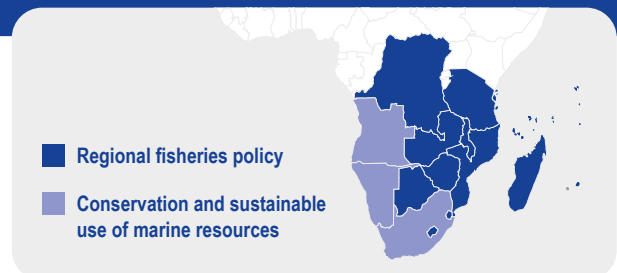
Blue Benguela Current Action (BBCA)

Strengthening the integrated conservation and sustainable use of the Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem including fisheries and other marine resources

Background

The Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem (BCLME) is one of the world's four major coastal upwelling ecosystems, extending from east of the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa along the Namibian coast to the Angola Front. It is a globally significant marine biodiversity hotspot and provides critical socio-economic benefits, including food security, employment, and economic development. The marine resources of the BCLME can support the development of a strong Sustainable Blue Economy, fostering diverse industries such as fisheries, energy, shipping, and coastal tourism, which collectively contribute to poverty alleviation and regional development.

In recognition of their exceptional trans-boundary natural capital, the governments of Angola, Namibia, and South Africa founded the Benguela Current Commission in 2007 and ratified the Benguela Current Convention (BCC) in 2015 to promote the trilateral management of the shared ecosystem. The BCC Commission is since empowered and institutionalised as the regional organisation responsible for the conservation and sustainable use of the BCLME.



Project name	Blue Benguela Current Action, part of the Global Programme "Sustainable Aquatic Food"
Regional partners	Benguela Current Convention (BCC) and Southern African Development Community (SADC)
Partner countries	BCC contracting states Angola, Namibia and South Africa (SADC member states for regional fisheries policy)
Volume	12m EUR (11m EUR of EU NDICI Africa Programme; 1m EUR BMZ)
Duration	June 2024 to March 2028
Implementing partner	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

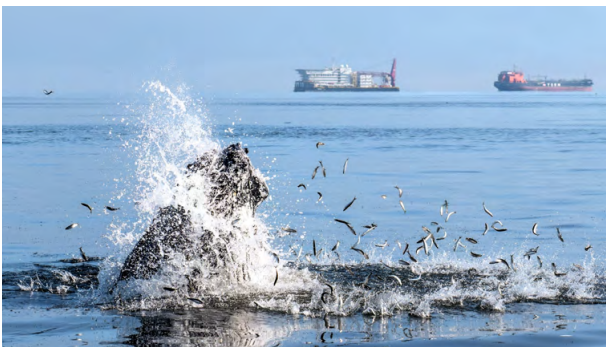
The Global Programme Sustainable Aquatic Food supports small-scale producers, partner governments and regional organisations to contribute to the transformation of aquatic food systems in particular through improved conservation and sustainable use of marine ecosystems.





Challenges

The BCLME faces significant challenges, including overfishing, habitat degradation, climate change impacts, and insufficient financial resources for effective marine biodiversity management. The proportion of animal protein derived from fish varies from 5% to 34% across the three countries, highlighting the critical role of fisheries in food security and good nutrition. The number of fishers per country ranges from 17,000 to more than 100,000, demonstrating the high dependency of coastal communities on marine resources for their livelihoods. Furthermore, the emerging pressures from industrial activities such as oil and gas exploration, shipping, and coastal infrastructure development necessitate robust governance frameworks and sustainable management practices.



Conservation and sustainable use are closely linked in the Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem.

There is a growing need for integrated governance, enhanced conservation strategies, and innovative financial mechanisms to ensure the sustainable use of marine and coastal resources. The BCLME countries have all committed to implementing the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF), expanding fisheries management beyond a single-species focus



Marine Spatial Planning provides guidance to the sustainable use of the ocean by all sectors for a sustainable growth of a Blue Economy.

to consider the entire marine ecosystem. The region has also made significant progress in Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) and the identification of Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs), which are key for achieving sustainable blue growth and enhanced conservation.

1. Our approach

To address these challenges, the Blue Benguela Current Action focuses on strengthening governance, fostering regional cooperation, and promoting sustainable economic opportunities. The initiative supports the implementation of the Benguela Current Convention and aligns with the policies of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). It emphasizes ecosystem-based management, Marine Spatial Planning (MSP), and inclusive participation of diverse social groups, including vulnerable communities, women, and youth toward the strengthening of a Sustainable Blue Economy.



2. Key activities include

- Strengthening the institutional capacity of the Benguela Current Convention (BCC) through targeted training and policy development to enhance regional ocean governance.
- Enhancing national and regional fisheries governance by developing regional capacities for monitoring, control, and surveillance to combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing.
- Strengthening institutional capacities for integrated marine biodiversity management and marine spatial planning, including technical training and policy development.
- Supporting participatory processes for identifying and designating important marine biodiversity areas as Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) or Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs).
- Supporting sustainable livelihood opportunities through responsible marine resource use, by capacitating local communities to develop marine-based enterprises, including sustainable fisheries and marine aquaculture (mariculture).
- Promoting knowledge sharing and collaboration on sustainable fishing practices, marine biodiversity conservation, and ecosystem-based marine spatial planning among stakeholders.
- Developing innovative financing solutions, such as blue bonds and ecosystem payment schemes, to secure long-term funding for marine biodiversity conservation and sustainable fisheries management.

3. Our objectives

Overall objective (impact): To contribute to an inclusive and sustainable Blue Economy in the Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem (BCLME) that embraces the integrated conservation and sustainable use of the region's marine and coastal biodiversity and the associated ecosystem goods and services for the benefit of diverse social groups.

Specific objectives (outcomes):

1. To enhance the national and regional governance and integrated management of the Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem's marine biodiversity and natural resources supporting sustainable livelihoods.
2. To leverage financial resources for the sustainable management of key marine biodiversity areas.

Key outputs: The following outputs contribute to the Specific Objectives:

- **Output 1:** Strengthened institutional capacities of the BCC (comprising the BCC secretariat, the Commission, and the respective national Ministries of fisheries, environment, and other marine-related sectors) to implement effective governance frameworks and policies.
- **Output 2:** Strengthened SADC regional fisheries policy processes and institutional capacity to promote sustainable fisheries management at the national and regional levels.
- **Output 3:** Diversified income of local communities, particularly of vulnerable groups and women, through sustainable use of marine biodiversity and resources, including the development of sustainable fisheries and marine-based alternative livelihoods.

- **Output 4:** Enhanced management of marine biodiversity areas and Marine Protected Areas for the conservation and sustainable use of marine resources, supporting sustainable livelihoods and food security while ensuring ecosystem integrity.
- **Output 5:** Improved legal and institutional capacity for the implementation of ecosystem-based Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) to promote effective ocean governance and sustainable resource allocation.
- **Output 6:** Innovative financing solutions developed to support Marine Protected Areas and/or Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures for the conservation and sustainable management of fish stocks and other marine biodiversity, ensuring long-term financial sustainability for marine conservation efforts.

Key expected results



50 SMSE, 30 % women-led, have increased their sustainable production, benefitting 400 people.



Identification or designation of at least one **OECM or MPA** per country.



150 policy makers and stakeholders have received capacity building measures.



5,000,000 hectares of improved conservation and/or sustainable use management.



300,000 km² in addition under MSP-based management incl. provisions on biodiversity management and sustainable fisheries.



Oyster farming in the bay of Walvis Bay in direct neighbourhood to a wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention and harbour infrastructure.

4. Benefits

The Blue Benguela Current Action is a critical initiative to ensure the long-term sustainability of marine resources in the BCLME region. By fostering regional cooperation, strengthening governance, and promoting sustainable economic opportunities, the project contributes to biodiversity conservation, food security, and socio-economic resilience in Angola, Namibia, and South Africa. The initiative aligns with global and regional commitments, such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 14 (Life Below Water), the Convention on Biological Diversity Targets (CBD) and supports the ratification of the International Agreement on Biodiversity in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ).

Furthermore, the project enhances climate resilience by integrating ecosystem-based approaches to marine resource management, reducing the vulnerability of coastal communities to climate change impacts. By integrating good governance principles, gender inclusivity, and financial innovation, the project aims to create a resilient and thriving Blue Economy for present and future generations. Through capacity-building efforts, policy alignment, and innovative financial mechanisms, the initiative strengthens the foundation for a well-managed and productive marine ecosystem that benefits both people and nature for generations to come.

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