

A diver in a red shirt and blue mask is underwater, holding a long wooden pole. The diver is positioned in the upper half of the frame, reaching down towards a rocky seabed covered in green seaweed. Sunlight rays penetrate the clear blue water from the top left. The diver's fins are visible, and a snorkel is attached to their mask.

# SWIOCEPH

**SOUTHWEST INDIAN OCEAN OCTOPUS PROJECT**



**SWIO Cep** is an initiative by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), aimed at guiding octopus fishing communities towards more sustainable fishing practices in the southwest Indian Ocean region.

## WHAT IS SWIO CEPH DOING?

**The Southwest Indian Ocean Octopus Project (SWIO Cep)** uses the MSC framework and tools to engage and support stakeholders and octopus fishing communities in working towards more sustainable fishing practices. Additionally, the project provides a platform for stakeholder engagement and collaboration.

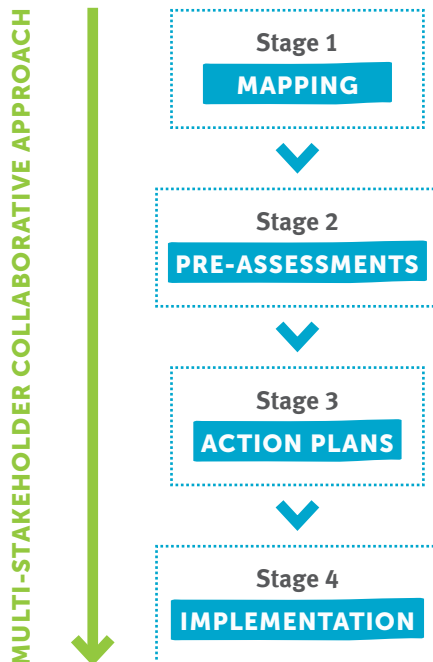
## WHY THIS PROJECT?

Octopus is traditionally caught by communities throughout the Indian Ocean and is a valuable source of protein and income. Increased global interest in octopus product has also created export market opportunities. Fishing sustainably will help these octopus fishing communities gain access to long-term social, environmental and economic benefits.

## HOW DOES IT WORK?

**SWIO Cep** follows a four-stage process. Information on fishing practices, stock status, landings and trade are used to **map** the octopus fisheries in the southwest Indian Ocean region. Selected fisheries are **pre-assessed** by independent assessors against the MSC's [Fisheries Standard](#) and areas of improvement identified. Stakeholders use the pre-assessments to develop **action plans** by collaboratively identifying ways to improve fishery practices toward sustainability. The action plans are then **implemented** by stakeholders through fishery improvement projects (FIPs).

## PROJECT STAGES



Important economic activity for  
**WOMEN**



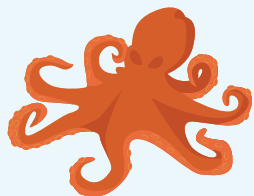
#### WIO REGION

Over  **60 MILLION**  
people inhabit  
the coastal zone

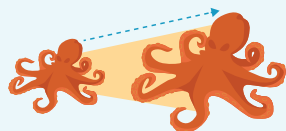


are the largest  
octopus exporters

Export markets are  
primarily in Europe



**95% OF THE CATCH**  
comprises  
*Octopus cyanea*



Octopus is  
fast-growing and  
short-lived, maturing  
in **6 MONTHS**

## WHERE IS IT TAKING PLACE?



## STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS

Collaboration between governments, regional management organisations, supply chain partners, fisheries, and NGOs plays a vital role in SWIO CepH. By bringing together supply and demand, the project aims to incentivise sustainable fishing practices.

## BUILDING ON EXPERIENCE: MSC TOOLS

SWIO CepH uses tools developed by the MSC to help fisheries improve their fishing practices. These tools provide an improvement framework: the Benchmarking and Tracking Tool tracks the status and progress of fisheries against the MSC Fisheries Standard, and the Capacity Building Tool enables stakeholders to implement credible Fishery Improvement Projects towards MSC certification (see [msc.org](https://www.msc.org)).



## THE MARINE STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

Our **vision** is of the world's oceans teeming with life, and seafood supplies safeguarded for this and future generations.

Our **theory of change** is that a growing market demand for sustainable seafood incentivises fisheries to improve practices and become well-managed and sustainable.

**msc.org**



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