

The Nouakchott Declaration

We, the participants in the Fourteenth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on cooperation for the protection, management, and development of the marine and coastal Environment of the Atlantic coast of West, Central, and Southern Africa, known as the Abidjan Convention, meeting in Nouakchott, Islamic Republic of Mauritania, on 23 May 2025 ;

- *Recalling* the Abidjan Convention, particularly Articles 12 and 14, relating to cooperation;
- *Supporting* the role played by the United Nations Environment Programme in providing guidance for the rational, forward-looking, and ambitious management of coastal and marine ecosystems ;
- *Noting with concern* the vulnerability of our countries to the effects of climate change, as well as the socio-economic and environmental impacts on African coasts, as highlighted in the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change;
- *Emphasizing* that the priorities of our countries are to implement programs relating to coastal and marine protection in a manner that promotes sustainable development-particularly through poverty reduction and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals-with a focus on vulnerable coastal groups and communities, such as women and youth;
- *Recalling* the importance of the ratification and effective implementation of the Additional Protocols to the Abidjan Convention for improved ocean governance and the effective conservation of the region's ecosystems;
- *Recognizing* the need to sustainably manage areas beyond national jurisdiction while ensuring the conservation of biological diversity;
- *Noting* the adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the need for coordinated action by Contracting Parties to achieve its targets;
- *Recalling* the importance for Contracting Parties to equip themselves with essential tools for the planning and effective management of biodiversity, including in the coastal and marine environments;
- *Noting with concern* the damage caused to the environment, economy, and human communities by the high level of plastic pollution;
- *Recognizing* the importance of integrating initiatives and programs relating to cooperation in the coastal and marine environment into a global framework, to ensure coordination and coherence in the interventions of the Abidjan Convention;
- *Recognizing* the growing role of civil society, the private sector, and the media in supporting public awareness and the implementation of the Convention;

- *Noting* the perspectives and challenges expected from the Third United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC 3), particularly the opportunities it offers countries to assess the challenges and progress in ocean management and to forge new partnerships for the region ;

We call for:

- Strengthened consultation and coordination among countries in the objective, relevant and accurate formulation of the 7th Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), expected next year, particularly the thematic section related to the protection of the marine environment and the foreseeable and scientifically supported scenarios for 2050;
- The ratification and implementation of the four Additional Protocols to the Abidjan Convention;
- The launch of an effective process to synergize the efforts of the Abidjan Convention with other multilateral agreements, notably those on climate, biodiversity, wetlands and pollution;
- The continued cooperation of the United Nations and bilateral and multilateral technical and financial partners, including at the regional level, to provide effective political, financial, and technical support to all Contracting Parties and regional economic communities for the implementation of coastal protection measures;
- A better understanding of the Convention and stronger involvement in the functioning of the Executive Secretariat, including the provision of political, technical, and financial resources necessary for it to effectively fulfill its mandate;

We sincerely thank the Government of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania for the warm welcome and valuable support in providing excellent conditions for the successful organization of the Fourteenth Conference of the Parties to the Abidjan Convention.

The participants