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**Fourteenth Conference of the Contracting  
Parties (COP14) to the Convention on  
Cooperation for Protection, Management  
and Development of the Marine  
Environment and Coastal Areas of the  
Atlantic Coast of the West, Central and  
Southern African Region (Abidjan  
Convention)**

Nouakchott, Mauritania, 21<sup>st</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2025

## **COP14 DECISIONS**

## **PREAMBLE**

We, the Contracting Parties to the Convention for Cooperation in the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the West, Central, and Southern African Region (Abidjan Convention);

### **Programme**

*Recalling* Decision CP13.2 approving the 2022-2024 Abidjan Convention's work programme, noting progresses in the implementation of the COP13 Decisions and the fact that most of its Decisions are still being implemented;

*Recognizing* that we, the Contracting Parties, have a shared responsibility and concern for oceans health thus addressing emerging issues across the ocean space, including ocean governance;

*Welcoming* the progress made in implementing the decisions and programs mandated by the meetings of the Contracting Parties and the impact of the low contribution of Contracting Parties to the Trust Fund;

*Reaffirming* our political commitment to the Abidjan Convention and to making our contribution to the optimal implementation of this work programme, including the payment of contributions and multilateral financial mechanisms, which are important levers for the Abidjan Convention;

### **Finance**

*Recalling* that the 2022-2024 work programme was financed by payments of statutory and voluntary contributions to the Abidjan Convention Trust Fund by the Contracting Parties and largely by contributions from partners towards the implementation of collaborative projects and activities;

Noting the need to strengthen and optimise the functions and the coordination of the Secretariat, as well as the implementation of the Abidjan Convention, its action plan, protocols and work programmes;

*Recalling* the responsibility of the Contracting Parties to ensure the funding of the Secretariat's operations through the regular payment of their contributions to the Trust Fund and the urgent need to clear the arrears;

*Recalling* the catastrophic situation of the Abidjan Convention Trust Fund for several years, which threatens the continued operation of the Secretariat and negatively impacts the implementation of the Contracting Parties' decisions and other Convention activities;

### **Ratification of the Additional Protocols**

*Noting* the Secretariat's efforts and progresses in the ratification process of (i) the Bassam Protocol on Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities, (ii) the Malabo Protocol on Environmental Standards Associated with Offshore Oil and Gas Activities, (iii) the Pointe-Noire Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management, and (iv) the Calabar Protocol on Sustainable Mangrove Management, and the development of the new protocol on the management of marine protected areas;

*Recalling* that the entry into force of these protocols will constitute an important step in ocean governance by providing Contracting Parties with an harmonized regional reference framework for integrated marine and coastal zone

management, the fight against pollution by hydrocarbons and land-based sources, and the conservation of biodiversity on marine and coastal ecosystems in the Abidjan Convention region;

*Considering* Parties' collective responsibility to adopt joint and individual measures to ensure effective governance of our oceans for the well-being of our people and economies;

### **Signing and ratifying the BBJN Agreement**

*Recognizing* the need to respond appropriately and cooperatively to the loss of biological diversity and the degradation of ocean ecosystems, particularly due to the effects of climate change on marine ecosystems, such as ocean warming and deoxygenation, as well as ocean acidification, pollution, including plastic pollution, and unsustainable resource use;

*Desiring* to better address the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction;

*Aware* of the legislative, administrative, and policy challenges, capacity-building needs, and the need to establish cooperative frameworks and partnerships to fulfil their obligations under the Agreement;

### **Kunming-Montreal Global Framework**

*Noting* the adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the need for coordinated action by Contracting Parties to achieve its targets;

### **National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans**

*Recalling* the importance for Contracting Parties to equip themselves with the essential tools for planning and effectively managing biodiversity, including in marine and coastal environments;

### **Additional Protocol on the Management of Marine Protected Areas**

*Considering* that marine protected areas and other conservation measures are tools for combating biodiversity loss;

*Noting* the progress made by Contracting Parties in establishing, managing and strengthening the network of marine protected areas in the Abidjan Convention region;

Recalling Decision CP13.05 requesting the Secretariat to develop a supplementary protocol for the management of marine protected areas;

*Noting* the progress made in the process of developing the draft protocol;

### **Third United Nations Ocean Conference**

*Recalling* the strategic importance of the upcoming third United Nations Ocean Conference, given the opportunities it offers countries to take stock of the challenges and progress made in ocean management and to engage in new partnerships for the region;

### **Plastic Pollution**

*Committing* to further address key environmental challenges facing the Abidjan Convention region, including the three global crises of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution;

*Noting* with concern that high and rapidly increasing levels of plastic pollution, particularly in the marine environment, represent a serious problem for the environment and human health and have a negative impact on the environmental, social, and economic dimensions of sustainable development;

Further noting the progress made by the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee, as established by UNEP/EA.5.2/Res.14 of the United Nations Environment Assembly, towards the development of an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment;

*Further committing* to advancing the sustainable blue economy in the Southeast Atlantic through the sustainable use of ocean resources, including by strengthening relevant frameworks, tools, and approaches such as marine and coastal spatial planning and ocean economic valuation;

### **Cooperation and Partnerships**

*Welcoming* the financial and technical support provided by partners, including regional and international organizations, for the implementation of the work programme of the Abidjan Convention;

*Underscoring* the need to develop and strengthen strategic partnerships to advance the work of the Abidjan Convention, particularly in the context of the implementation of the 2025-2027 work programme;

*Appreciating* the support provided by the United Nations Environment Programme, as Secretariat of the Convention, and by partners in the implementation of the works of the Abidjan Convention, its protocols, action plans, and work programmes;

### **Decide to:**

#### **Decision CP14.01: Implementation of COP13 decisions**

1. *Commend* the Secretariat of the Abidjan Convention for its efforts in implementing the decisions of COP12 and COP13.
2. Request the Secretariat, given their importance, to continue implementing the following decisions:
  - CP13.4 on the amendment of the texts of the Abidjan Convention;
  - CP13.6 on the implementation of SDG 14 in the Abidjan Convention countries
  - CP13.7 on ocean acidification;
  - CP13.8 on the governance of coastal and marine zones in the Abidjan Convention area;
  - CP13.10 on the preparation of a report on the state of the marine and coastal environment in the Abidjan Convention area;
  - CP13.11 on collaboration with other African Regional Seas Conventions;
  - CP13.12 on the blue economy in the context of poverty reduction in Africa
  - CP13.15 on Marine Spatial Planning (MSP)

### **Decision CP14.02: Adoption of the 2025-2027 Work Programme**

1. *Adopt* the 2025-2027 work programme, which reflects the Contracting Parties' legitimate ambitions for the Abidjan Convention region, the theme of COP14, and the impacts on economies and human well-being;
2. *Note* that the said work programme is based on the same thematic areas as those included in the 2022-2024 work programme, namely:
  - a. Valuation of goods and services;
  - b. Management and prevention of coastal and marine environments degradation
  - c. Coordination of political and legal issues;
  - d. Communication, awareness-raising, information, and education;
  - e. Cross-cutting and emerging issues;
3. Urge the Secretariat to optimize the work programme and relaunch the GCLME project;
4. Urge the Secretariat to pursue its collaborative efforts with partners active in the marine and coastal environment,

### **Decision CP14.03: Financial Matters 2025-2027**

1. Congratulate Contracting Parties that have paid their mandatory contributions to the Trust Fund and urge all others to continue to pay their contributions on time.
2. *Appeal* to the collective and individual political responsibility of the Contracting Parties to take full ownership of the Convention and fulfil their obligations by clearing arrears and paying their contributions to the Trust Fund to enable the Secretariat to carry out its mandate and missions.
3. *Urge* the COP14 Bureau to support efforts to recover arrears in contributions to the Abidjan Convention Secretariat's Trust Fund including through diplomatic channels, and include this item on the agenda of all its meetings.
4. *Request* Contracting Parties and partners to assist the Secretariat in mobilizing resources for the 2025-2027 Work Programme implementation and other projects and activities;
5. *Request* Contracting Parties and partners in a position to do so to voluntarily make contributions to the Trust Fund to support the effective implementation of the Convention's work programme.
6. *Recommend* that the Secretariat strengthen its fundraising efforts with reference to financial rules and procedures.

### **Decision CP14.4: Ratification and implementation of the Additional Protocols to the Abidjan Convention**

1. *Felicitate* the Secretariat and its partners for organizing awareness-raising activities on the Calabar, Malabo, Bassam, and Pointe Noire

Additional Protocols, and supporting certain Contracting Parties in developing action plans and the ratification process;

2. *Congratulate* the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) for adopting community regulations to accelerate the implementation of provisions of the aforementioned protocols in the WAEMU area,

3. *Urge* the Contracting Parties, in light of the challenges facing marine and coastal environments, to initiate or accelerate the ratification process for the Additional Protocols so that they can enter into force as soon as possible;

4. *Invite* the Secretariat and all technical and financial partners to support the Contracting Parties in the ratification processes and the development of programs and projects to implement the Protocols' action plans;

5. *Invite* all other regional economic organizations in the Abidjan Convention area to draw inspiration from the initiatives undertaken by WAEMU to facilitate the harmonization of coastal and marine zone management policies.

**Decision CP14.5: Ratification and Implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction - BBNJ**

1. *Urge* the Contracting Parties to sign and ratify as soon as possible the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction;

2. *Request* the Secretariat, with the support of partners, to continue raising awareness among the Contracting Parties of the advantages and benefits, and facilitate the development of a vision and framework for the implementation of the BBNJ Agreement;

3. Request the Contracting Parties, with the support of the Secretariat and partners, to assess their technological capacities and needs, to support activities such as scientific research and environmental impact assessments which are essential for the implementation of the BBNJ Agreement.

**Decision CP14.6: Implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF)**

1. *Urge* Contracting Parties to implement the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and regional biodiversity frameworks, as appropriate, by aligning their policies and legal instruments with the Framework, including updating their national strategies and action plans to include marine and coastal biodiversity;

2. *Request* the Convention Secretariat to initiate programs, mobilize resources, and establish partnerships to strengthen Contracting Parties' capacities and develop governance tools to fulfil their biodiversity

conservation commitments and contribute to achieving the objectives of target 3 of the global biodiversity framework;

3. *Invite* Contracting Parties to consider the roles and contributions of indigenous peoples and local communities as stakeholders in biodiversity conservation.

**Decision CP14.7: Updating National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAP)**

1. *Request* the Secretariat, in collaboration with the CBD, to conduct an analysis of the challenges and needs of Contracting Parties in developing and regularly submitting their National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), taking into account the challenges of conserving marine and coastal biodiversity;

2. *Urge* Contracting Parties to prepare the 7<sup>th</sup> NBSAP report, integrating marine and coastal issues, and to submit it on time;

3. *Request* the Secretariat, with the support of the CBD and other partners, to support Contracting Parties in data collection and assessment processes for marine and coastal ecosystems, including biodiversity.

**Decision CP14.8: The Protocol on Marine Protected Areas and the organization of plenipotentiaries**

1. *Urge* the Contracting Parties to continue national consultations on the Additional Protocol on Marine Protected Areas submitted to the 14<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Abidjan Convention and submit their inputs to the Secretariat by the end of December 2025 ;

2. *Request* the Secretariat of the Abidjan Convention to mobilize resources and establish partnerships to develop the Action Plan, programmes for the Additional Protocol on Marine Protected Areas and organize meeting of plenipotentiaries for signature;

3. *Request* the Secretariat to initiate programs, mobilize resources, and collaborate with partners to support the efforts of the Contracting Parties to strengthen measures for the protection, restoration, and sustainable management of ecosystems.

**Decision CP14.9: Participation and Contribution of Contracting Parties to UNOC 3**

1. *Encourage* Contracting Parties to participate at a high level of representation to the third United Nations Ocean Conference;

2. *Request* Contracting Parties to the Abidjan Convention to endorse the Nouakchott Declaration, which will be presented at UNOC 3, as the Contracting Parties' commitment to the sustainable management of the Abidjan Convention region ;

3. *Urge* the Secretariat, with input from Contracting Parties, to use the Conference as an opportunity to mobilize partnerships for the implementation of the 2025-2027 work-plan of the Abidjan Convention.

#### **Decision CP14.10: Plastic Waste, Signature, and Ratification of the Treaty**

1. *Urge* the Contracting Parties to use their influence to reach an agreement at the next session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC5.2) on a legally binding international instrument on plastic pollution, including the marine environment ;
2. *Commend* the Secretariat for developing a Regional Framework to Combat Marine Litter, including plastics and microplastics ;
3. *Request* the Secretariat of the Abidjan Convention to initiate programs, mobilize resources, and build partnerships to operationalize the Regional Framework, particularly in:
  - i. the prevention and management of marine litter and plastic pollution;
  - ii. the collection and recycling of plastic marine litters ;
  - iii. the finalization of the draft Supplementary Protocol on Plastic Pollution;
4. *Request* the Secretariat, in collaboration with key partners in the region, to establish a regional technical working group on marine litter and plastic pollution.

#### **Decision CP14.11: Collaboration, Cooperation, and Partnerships for the Development and Implementation of New Projects**

1. *Request* the Secretariat to initiate new programs, mobilize resources, and establish partnerships to leverage opportunities in financial mechanisms and agreements for the implementation of its 2025-2027 Work Programme;
2. *Urge* the Secretariat to sign Memoranda of Understanding with Community Economic Organizations within its area of coverage to position itself as a convention for the implementation of policies and strategies for the Management and Governance of Marine and Coastal Areas;
3. *Urge* the Secretariat to develop a partnership with the Benguela Current Commission.
4. *Urge* the Secretariat to collaborate with UNCCD and all organizations responsible for Desertification to take into account this problem faced by certain Contracting Parties.