Terms of Reference

Consultant to conduct a study of options to achieve autonomy of the RAMPAO network

Context
The Regional Network of Marine Protected Areas in West Africa (RAMPAO) is a network that aims to "ensure, throughout the marine ecoregion of West Africa that consists of Mauritania, Senegal, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Gambia, Cape Verde and Sierra Leone, the maintainence of a consistent set of critical habitats necessary to support dynamic ecological processes essential for the regeneration natural resources and the conservation of biodiversity to the benefit of society."

Specifically, RAMPAO aims to create an ecological network, promote learning, create synergies, create functional and operational marine protected areas (MPAs) in the region, promote the exchange of experiences and strengthen mutual capabilities in terms of advocacy.

The RAMPAO was formally established in April 2007 and currently consists of twenty-seven (27) MPA members in five of the seven countries in the sub-region, which now cover about 2,722,595 ha. It has functioning operational bodies including a Secretariat, as well as statutes and procedural rules. Since its inception, the network has contributed to the training of managers and users of MPAs in the sub-region, facilitated the dissemination of information and know-how on MPA management strategies, supported exchanges and communication between communities, managers and users of MPAs and contributed to a greater awareness among policy makers and the public regarding the value of MPAs and the challenges of sub-regional cooperation in the management of coastal and marine resources.

Recognizing the need to reflect on the evolution of the network’s sustainability, a study of the institutional and financial options of RAMPAO was conducted in 2011 by consultant Mike Moser. This study aimed to support in a participatory manner the members and partners of RAMPAO in the identification and analysis of various scenarios and institutional and financial development options, in order to identify concrete recommendations that would guide its sustainability and its functional organization.

Several scenarios have emerged from this study, including those relating to the functioning of the secretariat of RAMPAO, but also the option to consider the legal and financial sustainability of the network status. While some recommendations have been implemented, such as the establishment of an independent secretariat, others remain unimplemented.

The current context change that occurred with the merger between the MAVA and FIBA foundations (the key institutional network partner to date) helped to accelerate the independence process initiated in 2010 by the RAMPAO.

Objective of the study
The objective of this study is to identify and analyze the various options that the network could adopt to ensure its administrative and financial autonomy relying heavily on the options
proposed in the previous study conducted by consultant Mike Moser. For each identified option, the study will provide specific evidence about their advantages and disadvantages according to a set of pre-determined criteria (i.e. required administrative procedures, financial cost, length of processes etc.). The study will also provide recommendations on the best option to adopt, and a detailed roadmap for the implementation of this option.

The findings of the study will give members the relevant information to enable them to choose the best option for administrative and financial autonomy of the RAMPAAO network.

**Methodology**

- A scoping meeting with the RAMPAAO Secretariat will guide the work and methodology.
- A literature review of documents relating to RAMPAAO (bylaws, charter, General Assembly (GA) reports, study on RAMPAAO institutional and financial options by Mike Moser, other relevant documents, including those from the PRCM) and other networks in the world. This analysis will cover such aspects as legal status, internal organization and functioning of the governance bodies, financing, human resources, relations with partners and the financial and organizational implications.
- Interviews with the secretariat staff, network partners and members, and government structures responsible for the conservation of marine and coastal biodiversity of the member countries in order to identify key options and their various implications will be performed by the consultant on the basis of an interview guide.
- Working sessions with members of the secretariat (the president of the GA, members of executive committee and scientific council and secretariat staff) will be organized as needed to facilitate the work.
- The development of a detailed report showing an analysis of the various institutional options available to the RAMPAAO to be submitted for assessment and validation by the network members and partners. The results of this study will be compiled in a report (French and English) outlining the issues, pathways, options and implications.

The study will encourage reflection at different scales (local/MPA, national/national Protected area policy contribution / regional contribution to international commitments) in the treatment of issues related to the feasibility, relevance, operation and the expected impact of real options for autonomy.

**Expected Results**

A detailed study report, which will include:

- An analysis of the current status of the network in terms of its statutes, administrative organization, mobilization of financial resources and governance, and the elements of context which requires the network to accelerate their process to gain autonomy
- A detailed analysis of the various options for the network’s organization, their administrative and financial implications as well as an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of each different option, based on a set of criteria to be determined.
- A detailed analysis of the different location options (choice of country), their administrative and financial implications as well as an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of each different option, based on a set of criteria to be determined.
- Substantiated recommendations on the preferred options for the administrative and financial autonomy of the network in terms of status, geographical location.
- A detailed roadmap for each recommended option.
Proposed timeline
The mission will be carried out on in total of 19 days during the period of January 2015. This period includes:

- 5 days of preparatory work (literature review, survey preparation)
- Field visits in two or three countries in the sub-region, including a stay with the Secretariat of the network and its members, and national and international network partners (9 days total)
- Days of report writing (5 days).

Profile
The consultancy will be led by an expert with proven international experience in the institutional development and operation of multi-stakeholder networks. He / she should also have a good knowledge of the legal aspects related to the functioning of the institutions of conservation in the West African sub-region. A good knowledge of RAPAO network is an asset. Fluency in English and / or French is essential.

Technical and financial proposal
The experts interested by this opportunity should submit a proposal for their candidacy that includes the following elements:

- The CV of the expert/s along with three references
- A letter describing the candidates understanding of the consultancy
- A motivation letter and
- Specific information on similar work that has been conducted in the past by the candidate.

The complete proposal should be submitting by email by November 26, 2014 at the latest to Mme Dominique Duval-Diop, Secretary General of the RAPAO network, duvaldiop@rampao.org.