





Partenariat Régional pour la Conservation de la zone côtière et Marine en Afrique de l'Ouest

## 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

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## **Acronyms**

AMP/MPA Marine Protected Area

**AGR/IGA** Income generating activities

**AMEP/PSMA** Agreement on Port State Measures

**BAF** Blue Action Funds

CEGEP de la Gaspesie et des Iles - CGI

**CMS** Convention on Migratory Species

**CNSHB** Boussoura National Center of Fishery Sciences

**EJF** Environment Justice Foundation

**FFEM** French Facility for Global Environment

FiTI Fisheries Transparency Initiative

**GFW** Global Fishing Watch

**GRDR** Research and implementation group for rural development

**IBAP** Biodiversity and Protected Areas Institute of Guinea Bissau

IUU Illegal, Unreported and Undeclared Fishing

JCF Jewish Community Foundation of Montreal

MCO Mangrove for Climate and Ocean

**MPEM** Ministry of Fishing and Maritime Economy

**ODZH** Organização para a Defesa e Desenvolvimento das zonas Húmidas

**OSC/CSO** Civil Society Organization

**PAZHOC** Wetlands and Coastal Waterbirds Action Plan

**PNBA** Banc d'Arguin National Park

**PND** Diawling National Park

PNIU National Emergency Response Plan

**PRCM** Regional Partnership for the Conservation of the

Coastal and Marine Zone in West Africa

**RBTDS** Senegal Delta Cross border Biosphere Reserve

**REGUIZOH** Guinean Network of Wetlands

**RESILAO** Resilience of West African coastal communities and ecosystems

**SEDAD** Ecosystem Solutions for Sustainable Adaptation

TMT Trigg Mat tracking

**UEMOA** West African Economic and Monetary Union

**UNESCO** United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

**WABSA** West African Bird Study Association

WACA ResIP West Africa Coastal Area Resilience Investment project

# Message from PRCM Excutive Director



Dear PRCM partners and members,

The past year marked a significant turning point for our organization, with the closure of the MAVA Foundation, our main financial partner. Despite this change, we have persevered in tackling the complex challenges of the ecoregion by optimizing the Partnership's strengths through the diverse skills and complementary resources of our members – national institutions, regional and international organizations, civil society organizations, research institutions and universities.

The year 2023 was particularly successful for PRCM, as it was marked by many successes in the projects we implemented, despite the challenges we faced. You will have the opportunity to discover some of these successes hereinafter.

One of the highlights of the year was PRCM's move to its new premises at **La Maison de la Conservation (LMC)** that we share with some of our partners such as BirdLife International Africa, Wetlands International Afrique and RAMPAO. This new office space, a precious legacy from our former sponsor (the MAVA Foundation), will enable us to strengthen our operational capacity and better coordinate our actions.

In addition, in line with our institutional development policy, we opened new offices in Guinea Bissau and Mauritania, thus extending our presence and influence across the region.

At the same time, we have launched several ambitious new projects, including RESILAO, the Mangrove for Climate and Ocean (MCO) project, the Blue Bijagos project and the Ecosystem Solutions for Sustainable Adaptation (SEDAD) project. To support these initiatives, we had to substantially strengthen our technical staff, which provided us with the diversified and cutting-edge expertise we need to successfully carry out our missions.

In addition, in keeping with our mission to "Promote coastal and marine conservation in West Africa", we have produced and distributed a few communication tools, including a new corporate film entitled "Pour une gouvernance partagée du littoral / Towards a shared governance of the shoreline". This film clearly states our positioning and our ongoing commitment to promoting a healthy and prosperous marine and coastal environment, for the benefit of local populations.

Lastly, we have begun preparations for the Regional Coastal and Marine Forum to be held in Bissau from April 23<sup>rd</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024, and expected to bring together key players in the sector to exchange best practices and define future strategies for the conservation of our shoreline.

All these efforts and successes reflect our ambition to remain a benchmark organization in the sub-region. But, none of this would have been possible had it not been for the dedication and hard work of my colleagues, to whom I offer my sincere thanks.

My deepest gratitude is extended to the members of the Board of Directors for their support, and to our technical and financial partners for their ongoing support and invaluable collaboration.

I hope you enjoy reading the rest of this report.

**Dr Ahmed Senhoury**, PRCM Executive Director

## **About PRCM**





#### 🤧 Field of operation

The Regional Partnership for Coastal and Marine Conservation in West Africa (PRCM) is a coalition of stakeholders working on West African coastal issues, covering seven countries: Cabo Verde, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Senegal, Sierra Leone and The Gambia.



#### Vision

A healthy and productive marine and coastal environment for the well-being of West African populations.



- Serve as a platform federating coastal and marine conservation initiatives.
- Facilitate the networking of members and pool their technical and scientific expertise.
- Serve as a framework for dialogue among different categories of stakeholders.
- Act as a resource center, capitalizing on members' experience and making useful information available.
- Emerge as an effective stakeholder in the implementation of field projects that combine the need for nature conservation with the pursuit of the well-being of coastal communities.



PRCM governance comprises the following bodies:

- **The Board of Directors** that defines the policy of our mission, its strategy and supervises its implementation.
- **The General Assembly** that is the deliberative body, bringing together all active and associate members
- **The Executive Management** that is the managing, running and coordinating body. It is made up of a team of employees.

#### ORGANIZATIONAL CHART OF THE EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT





## Species, ecosystems and coastal societies

Marine and coastal species and habitats in the sub-region face threats from human activities and climate change. In 2023, PRCM launched new initiatives while continuing those already underway, with a view to sustainably consolidating the results.

Firstly, our efforts deployed to improve the conservation status of turtles continued in 2023 with the launch of Phase 2 of the "Sea Turtle Survival" Project for the period 2023–2026.

Secondly, we accelerated the implementation of the wetland and bird conservation action plan, aimed at combating the threats affecting habitats that are essential to the survival of species in general and birds in particular along the Eastern Atlantic flyway.

Lastly, sustainable mangrove management initiatives continued at Tristao and were extended to Kapatchez in Guinea, whereas a new mangrove protection initiative was launched in Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Guinea and Senegal.





#### SURVIVAL OF SEA TURTLE SPECIES

In 2023, activities included the monitoring of nesting sites and mortality, as well as habitat quality along the marine turtle's geographical range, particularly in Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Mauritania and Senegal, which are the most important sites in the ecoregion.

To cover the geographical distribution area, fifteen partners were mobilized to carry out actions on the ground, including six national institutions in charge of sea turtle conservation and nine civil society organizations for greater proximity to the various sites. This inclusive approach has effectively contributed to the

dissemination of sea turtle conservation activities and the development of technical and societal know-how within national organizations and institutions. Collaboration at regional and international level with the Abidjan Convention, the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and research centers and universities has enabled us to expand the geographical area for the monitoring of sea turtles and their habitats.

Thus, the Atlantic Coast of Africa Marine Megafauna Week, organized from the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 7<sup>th</sup> of September 2023 in Senegal in

collaboration with CMS, enabled the fifteen countries gathered to begin a process of revitalizing the Abidjan Memorandum, establishing a network for data collection and knowledge co-production.

In terms of scientific research on sea turtles, 11 scientific articles have already been produced in Mauritania, Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau. A further eight scientific articles and a book are in the pipeline and should be published soon.

In addition, a few noteworthy initiatives have been launched to alleviate the impact of human activities on sea turtles. In this connection, an experiment to use clay pots for octopus fishing instead of the plastic pots currently used and that have a negative impact on the marine ecosystem and affect sea turtles, has produced encouraging results and should be popularized at a larger scale.

A significant effort was made in 2023 to build capacities of those involved in sea turtle conservation, including both initial training leading to a diploma and continuing education. Two Master's scholarships were awarded (one in Mauritania and one in Guinea-Bissau). In addition, 55 people in Senegal's Saloum Delta received further training in sea turtle identification and monitoring techniques.

In Mauritania, three technicians from the Banc D'Arguin National Park (PNBA) were trained in underwater diving and data collection

Meanwhile, we have included a module on sea turtles in our online training course on **the environmental management of oil and gas activities**, as part of the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of this free course.

As to information-sharing and awareness-raising, an extensive community cam paign on the importance of sea turtles enabled some 1,793 people to engage in ecological turtle monitoring activities. Over 132,709 turtle nests (Eretmochelys imbricata, Chelonia mydas, Caretta caretta and Lepidochelys olivacea) were observed in the project area. A batch of monitoring equipment was donated to The Gambia and Sierra Leone, making it possible to extend monitoring activities.

Besides, some progress has been made in consolidating the legal and regulatory framework for strengthening the protection status of sea turtles and sites of ecological interest. In Guinea Bissau, the internal regulations for MPAs have been revised, and in Senegal, the legislative enactments on sea turtle conservation have been published and publicized.





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## MONITORING MIGRATORY BIRDS ALONG THE EASTERN ATLANTIC FLYWAY

Millions of birds follow the Eastern Atlantic Flyway every year, thus linking Arctic breeding grounds with resting and wintering sites on the coasts of Europe and Africa. The resilience of critical bird sites in West African countries, and that of the people living around them, in a context of climate change, are key conditions for improving the conservation of migratory birds.

As part of the West African Coastal Wetlands and Waterbirds Action Plan (PAZHOC), activities continued at priority sites in Banc d'Arguin (Mauritania), Lower Senegal River Delta and Saloum Delta (Senegal), and in the Bijagós Archipelago (Guinea-Bissau). The annual count of bird populations took place from January 15<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023. In Mauritania, 46,680 birds were counted in Lac de Mâl, 44,881 in Lac d'Aleg and 1,285,949 in PNBA, representing 47 species. This represents a 25% drop in the population compared to the count in 2020.

The numbers counted in the Senegal Delta Cross border Biosphere Reserve (RBTDS) – 115,245 birds from 110 species – show an upward trend compared to 2022, except for gulls, terns, skimmers, geese and ducks. In Senegal, 555,581 birds from 137 species were counted. It was observed that the species with the highest numbers in 2023 were different from those obtained in 2022.

In Guinea Bissau, 88,969 birds from 86 species were counted, with an upward trend for Cadris ferruginea (CALFE), in contrast to Calidris canutus (CALCA), which has been gradually declining in recent years.

In addition to these results obtained on the ground, PRCM has also worked to strengthen the partnership necessary for waterbird conservation in West Africa. We are now engaged in a global partnership for climate change resilience of critical migratory bird sites and populations in the Eastern Atlantic Flyway, alongside IBAP, PNBA, Birdlife International, Wetlands International, and the Wadden Sea Commission, with funding from The International Climate Initiative (IKI), a German government fund promoting conservation and climate action.





#### MANGROVE CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION

In 2023, PRCM launched the Mangrove for Climate and Ocean (MCO) Initiative with financial support from ICONIQ IMPACT for a 3-year period, from 2023 to 2026. This project is implemented by a group of partners including Palmeirinha in Guinea Bissau, the Diawling National Park in Mauritania, the AGIRE NGO in Senegal and the Guinée Ecologie NGO in Guinea.

This year, almost 800 people were mobilized in the villages to reforest approximately 235.35 hectares, with rhizophora and avicennia species, including 30.35 ha in Konkouré Delta of Guinea, 25 ha in the Diawling National Park in Mauritania, 110 ha in Joal-Fadiouth in Senegal and 80 ha in Catio sector in Guinea. Bissau. For example, In Joal 500,000 rhizophora propagules and 150,000 avicennia sheaths were needed to sow and/or reforest the 110 ha planned.

As for income-generating activities, 14 tonnes of young arches were harvested and sown around Joal, and 206 tonnes were harvested after 8 months of closure. Seeding, which cost XOF 4,465,000, generated an average of XOF 47,404,500 over 8 months for at least 750 women. In Guinea Bissau, income-generating activities included solar salt production, beekeeping, palm oil production, the use of improved stoves, horticulture and the construction of rice field dykes, reaching an estimated value of XOF 2,125,000 and benefiting 4,852 people. In Guinea, 50 chorchor ovens and

100 improved stoves were distributed to fish smokers and households.

Boosted by the promising results and momentum created in the Tristao Islands by the mangrove conservation project, the Dob Ecology Foundation has decided to support a new initiative. This initiative extends the project's intervention to Kapatchez in Guinea, while consolidating the results achieved in the Tristao Islands. During the course of that year, 59.5 ha of mangroves were reforested, 78.21 ha of abandoned rice fields were subjected to natural regeneration and 78 ha of rice fields were restored through the reconstruction of dykes. The activities were implemented in collaboration with the Guinée Ecologie NGO. Women groups were formalized around the production of palm oil, fish smoking and other income-generating activities. Each group received a motor tricycle and a mechanical power press.

The development of income-generating activities (IGA) is at the heart of the support measures intended for women in sustainable mangrove management projects. The IGAs aim to reduce pressure on mangrove resources through activities such as beekeeping and solar salt production, while supporting the organization of groups and the construction of almost 200 improved stoves for households and some twenty Shorkores ovens for women fish smokers.

In the Saloum Delta, the seeding of fourteen tons of ark clams to restore four degraded mudflats resulted in a 7.8g increase in the average size of the clams after two months of closure.





#### THE BLUE BIJAGOS INITIATIVE

From the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup> of October 2023 in Guinea Bissau, we launched the Blue Bijagos Project financed by the Blue Action Funds Foundation and implemented in partnership with IBAP, Grid Arendal, the BioGuinée Foundation, the Palmeirinha, ODZH and Tineguena NGOs.

The aim of this project is to contribute to the strengthening of the Bijagos Archipelago's marine protected areas and their sustainable management. Expected results include the creation of two new MPAs and the strengthening of protected area connectivity in the Bijagós, thanks to the establishment of a corridor linking the Urok, Orango and João Vieira MPAs.

During the last quarter of 2023, several training courses were organized for implementing partners on the mastery of Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) and gender tools. At the same time, 31 teachers from schools in the Bijagos Islands were trained in Information, Education and Communication techniques on natural resources and ecosystem conservation. For a month, we broadcast daily programs on eight radio stations to raise awareness of the importance of the Unhocomo and Unhocomozinho sites for the conservation

of species and habitats, and in particular for the migration of sea turtles. In the same vein, we trained and equipped some twenty women in horticulture, with a view to reducing pressure on the target areas. We began the process of creating the Unhocomo and Unhocomozinho MPAs by drawing up the terms of reference for the ecological and sociological characterization study of the sites identified.

Lastly, under the leadership of IBAP, the process of classifying the Bijagos Reserve as a UNESCO World Heritage Site has been relaunched. Numerous consultation meetings and data-gathering sessions are evidence of the enthusiasm and interest shown by the government and the community of environmental organizations. The classification file will be submitted to UNESCO in the 1st quarter of 2024.

## Strengthening resilience of coastal communities and ecosystems





#### 🕵 RESILIENCE OF THE WEST AFRICAN COASTLINE

In May 2023, PRCM launched an ambitious initiative to strengthen the resilience of coastal ecosystems and the communities that depend on them. The Coastal Resilience in West Africa Project (RESILAO), deployed in six countries (Cabo Verde, Mauritania, Senegal, Republic of Guinea, Guinea Bissau and The Gambia), with a global budget of 2.6 million Euros, is co-funded by the French Facility for Global Environment (FFEM) for a period of 5 years.

The first phase of the request for project proposals to identify relevant national initiatives was very well received. A total of 74 project proposals were received, including 34 from Senegal, 15 from Mauritania, 13 from Guinea and 9 from Cape Verde.

Following a competitive and rigorous selection process, eight (08) initiatives were selected. Recipient organizations include CSOs, national and research institutions. These include initiatives from the Lantuna and Projecto Vito NGOs in Cape Verde, Guinée

Ecologie and REGUIZOH NGOs in Guinea, and Fundacion CBD-Habitat NGO and Banc d'Arguin Parc National in Mauritania. In Senegal, the Cayar MPA and UNIVERSEL were selected. The country coaches will continue to provide advisory support to the beneficiary organizations with the view to optimizing the achievement of the expected results.





## THE ECOSYSTEM SOLUTIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE ADAPTATION (SEDD) PROJECT

The SEDAD initiative, of which PRCM has contributed to the development and is involved in the implementation of, was launched in October 2023. It is aimed at strengthening adaptation to climate change in West Africa, by implementing Nature-based Solutions (NBS) and participatory governance for better management of natural resources and biodiversity under the leadership of women and young people. The project is being rolled out over three (03) years in three countries of the sub-region - Mauritania, Senegal and The Gambia.

The last quarter of the year 2023 was devoted to the recruitment, training and deployment of coordination and field teams, and to the appointment and installation of ambassadors, essential links in the chain of community involvement...

# Promotion of sustainable fishing

For the people of West Africa, and coastal communities in particular, fishing is not only an economic activity, but also a key to social equilibrium and food security. Unfortunately, IUU fishing, a major scourge, continues to have an adverse impact on the availability of fishery resources, and causes a major loss of income

for governments and coastal communities alike. PRCM's actions in 2023 once again demonstrate its commitment to working alongside governments to combat this scourge, through advocacy and technical assistance to the administration.



## STRENGTHENING FISHERIES GOVERNANCE IN GUINEA

In close collaboration with Guinean public authorities, PRCM has conducted several actions to strengthen fisheries governance and regulate illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing activities in Guinea's exclusive economic zone (EEZ).

Thus, the Fisheries Code, the main legal framework governing fishing activities, has been updated, along with its implementing regulations. The promotion of transparency in the fishing sector has had significant results. The official website of the Ministry of Fisheries and Maritime Economy now provides access to publications of fisheries management decisions, the list of licenses per type of fishing vessel, fishing statistics bulletins issued by the National Fishery Sciences Center of Boussoura

(CNSHB) and the complete list of 2023 fishing licenses.

In addition, training sessions were organized for some 40 journalists to raise their awareness and knowledge of the issues and impacts of IUU fishing, as well as the different forms of illegal fishing. The aim of these training sessions was to enable them to play an active role in eradicating this scourge.

In the same vein, communities of fishermen, who sometimes act as witnesses to IUU fishing, were also made aware of the issues and impacts of this practice. Finally, for fisheries managers, capacity building was provided, thus enabling them to draw up a Fisheries Management Plan for 2024, incorporating strategies to combat IUU fishing.

Efforts to raise awareness among public authorities and stakeholders continued, with a view to Guinea's adherence to the Fisheries Management Transparency Initiative (FiTI). Technical workshops were held to develop tools and assess compliance with transparency in fisheries management in Guinea, based on the twelve requirements of the FiTI Standards. Stakeholders were prepared for the FiTI membership process and the implementation of the 2024-2028 work plan. The final stage in Guinea's formal accession to FiTI is the adoption by the authorities of a ministerial

ruling on the creation and operation of the National Council for Fisheries, Aquaculture and the Maritime Economy (CNPAEM), which will take over the missions of the National Multi-Stakeholder Group (GMN).

Meanwhile, we assessed Guinea's ability to meet each of the Global Fishing Watch's (GFW) requirements for national data integration. A draft MoU between GFW and the Guinean government is currently being examined by the authorities before transmission to GFW.





#### FISHERIES GOVERNANCE IN SENEGAL

PRCM is implementing the Fisheries Governance project in Senegal. With the collaboration of Senegal's Ministry of Fishing and Maritime Economy (MPEM), significant progress has been made in terms of transparency and publication of key fisheries management data. A technical workshop attended by heads of regional fisheries services, heads of surveillance and heads of secondary coastal surveillance centers helped define the information required, as well as the format and frequency of reporting.

Similarly, the management of the information system related to the fight against illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing has markedly improved. The **website** dedicated to this cause is regularly updated with information from the missions of the Fisheries Protection and Surveillance Department (DPSP) and statistical bulletins.

The site also serves as a gateway to platforms for paperless inspection and control procedures, ensuring greater transparency and efficiency in the fight against IUU fishing.

The Government of Senegal has demonstrated political will to implement FAO's Agreement on Port State Measures (AMEP) by issuing a decree on the control of fishery and aquaculture products, along with ministerial rulings. One of these sets out the prerequisites for Senegalese and foreign industrial fishing vessels to be authorized to enter the port, while the other lists the Senegalese ports that can accommodate foreign fishing vessels. In addition, the process of drafting Senegal's Continental Fishing Code is underway, and the administrative authority has begun revising the Senegalese Fisheries Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) procedure manual.

Besides, PRCM has supported the updating of the National Action Plan to combat IUU fishing, approved by the MPEM, and contributed to the acquisition of equipment for surveillance agents, thus strengthening national capacities in this crucial area.



## STRENGTHENING PARTICIPATORY SURVEILLANCE IN SENEGAL

In collaboration with our partners, notably EJF, Senegal's MPEM and the Local Artisanal Fishing Councils (CLPA), we have made successful efforts to improve the performance of pilot participatory monitoring units. Key results of these initiatives include the following:

- Deployment of the "DASE App" Technological Solution: An innovative application dubbed "DASE App" has been introduced to improve the collection and management of monitoring data.
- Provision of surveillance equipment: Specific equipment has been deployed in four areas particularly vulnerable to IUU fishing and incursions by industrial fishing vessels.
- Capacity building: local stakeholders have received in-depth training in the acquisition of appropriate knowledge, technologies and tools, ensuring that irrefutable evidence can be gathered in the event of IUU fishing activities.
- Access to DPSP website: Participatory monitoring antennas have been connected to the Department of Fisheries Protection

and Surveillance (DPSP) website, making it easier to access and update monitoring data.

In September 2023, a ministerial ruling was signed by the Minister of Fisheries and Maritime Economy, setting out the terms and conditions for the exercise of participatory surveillance. This ruling grants the official status of "surveillant" to artisanal fishermen involved in participatory fisheries surveillance operations. This status provides coverage for volunteer fishermen and strengthens collaboration between the fisheries administration and local artisanal fishing councils (CLPA), with dedicated funding for the operation of these structures also established by decree.

In addition, all stakeholders involved in political decision-making, including members of parliament and local civil servants, have been made aware of the challenges of participatory monitoring. They have also been given the technical skills and tools they need to take the initiative and play their full part in the process of ensuring Senegal's adherence to international transparency standards.

# Alleviating the impact of extractive infrastructure and activities on coastal areas

Oil and gas exploration and production activities are still in their infancy in the West African sub-region, given the large number of blocks currently being prospected. We

need to support stakeholders in the countries concerned to prepare for these new challenges and build their capacities in the associated fields.



## SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF OIL & GAS ACTIVITIES IN WEST AFRICA – COBIA INITIATIVE

This PRCM initiative addresses the environmental, social and economic issues associated with the offshore extractive industry and is helping to create an offshore community within the region to improve the management of environmental risks associated with the offshore oil and gas industry in four West African countries: Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Senegal and Sierra Leone.

In The Gambia, PRCM collaborated with GI-WACAF to support the development of the National Oil Spill Contingency Plan (PNIU) by recruiting an international consultant.

In Sierra Leone, the public and some 50 media

players were made aware of the impact of oil and gas pollution on the marine environment. Information, education and communication materials were produced and distributed at workshops and other meetings. The event organized by our partner - the NGO Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL) - to present the White Paper on the coastal environment led to recommendations to the government for mitigating the risks of oil pollution.

PRCM also took part in the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the MSGBC Oil, Gas & Power Conference & Exhibition that took place from November 21st to 22nd, 2023 in Nouakchott, Mauritania, bringing an environmental perspective to this meeting primarily dedicated to private-sector oil and gas companies. During this conference, we presented to His Excellency Mr. Mohammed Ould Ghazouani, President of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, during his visit to the PRCM stand, a simulation of the risks of oil spills in aquatic environments and their impacts on marine and coastal ecosystems and the communities that depend on them. It was also an opportunity to present the richness of the sub-region's coastal and marine ecosystems to MSGBC participants, and to raise awareness of the need to adopt appropriate measures to preserve them.

In addition, the  $4^{\text{th}}$  edition of the Oil & Gas MOOC was launched.

This online training course on the environmental management of offshore oil and gas activities in West Africa has been developed by PRCM and its partners to enhance the knowledge of the public and professionals. Courses have started and are still underway.

In Mauritania, the Mauritanian Institute of Oceanographic and Fisheries Research (IMROP) has achieved satisfactory results in the environmental monitoring of ecosystems and uses. Pollution from oil and gas activities has been monitored through the collection of water, sediment and biological tissue samples. In addition, data on strandings of sea turtles and mammals were collected through monitoring along the coastline from Nouadhibou (North) to N'Diago (South).



## MARINE AND COASTAL ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH PROGRAM (PREMAC)

PRCM is the implementing partner of the Marine and Coastal Environment Research Program (PREMAC), the main aim of which is to support scientific research by providing assistance to the various stakeholders involved in coastal management, through the implementation of research activities focused on the priorities of the Senegalese marine and coastal zone.

Following a request for proposals, PRCM selected Three research institutions in Senegal to carry out research projects, namely Centre Régional de Recherches en Écotoxicologie et

Sécurité Environnementale (CERES-Locutox), Centre de Recherche Océanographique Dakar-Thiaroye (CRODT) and e Centre Régional de Recherches en Écotoxicologie et Sécurité Environnementale (CERES-Locutox), le Centre de Recherche Océanographique Dakar-Thiaroye (CRODT) et Laboratoire de Physique, de l'Atmosphère et des Oceans (LPAO)

#### **CERES-LOCUTOX PROJECT: EPEREPCO 1**

CERES-Locutox works on establishing technical protocols and assessing the eco-toxicological risks of offshore petroleum-gas chemicals. The research focuses on a marine micro-alga and a

benthic invertebrate native to Senegal's coastal ecosystems. The research team developed a toxicity test protocol, inspired by ISO standard 16712 and the OSPAR Convention, to analyze the exposure of amphipods to Slickgone NS. These tests were carried out after an 8-day acclimatization in the laboratory, using samples taken from the Palmarin Community Nature Reserve, in the Sango-Sango mudflat. At the same time, three diatom species native to the Senegalese coast, belonging to the genus Chaetoceros, were cultivated. The results of this study are expected before the end of the project.

#### **CRODT PROJECT: EREBIS**

CRODT is focusing on the development of the Environmental, Biological and Socioenvironmental Baseline of Senegal's marine and coastal zone (EREBIS). Research teams have assessed the status of fish stocks, determined the fishing potential of eleven emerging priority stocks, as well as their maximum sustainable yield (MSY) and the corresponding fishing effort. In analyzing marine and coastal pollution, concentrations of heavy metals, HCTs and PAHs were measured at various coastal sites, including around the GTA block and the pipeline. A review of marine and coastal vulnerability criteria and socio-economic analyses are also underway.

These PREMAC initiatives, led by CERES-Locutox and CRODT, demonstrate PRCM's commitment to supporting rigorous and relevant scientific research, in order to better manage and protect Senegal's marine and coastal ecosystems.

#### **RIVES - LPAO PROJECT**

The Risks and Vulnerability of the Senegalese Marine and Coastal Environment: Charactization and Future Evolution (RIVES) project led by the LPAO is structured into three work packages: the dynamic functioning of the Senegalese marine and coastal environment, the long-term changes and impact of climate change on Senegal's Grande Côte and the oceanographic observation system on Senegal's Grande Côte (SOOGC). Initial results from WP1 show that marine heat waves from 1982 to 2022 have a high frequency near the coast, particularly between 18° and 21°N and between 10° and 12°N. Surface currents and wind stresses show a southerly circulation in January and a decrease in wind stresses from May-June. Particle trajectories indicate that pollutants move offshore in the cold season and onshore in the warm season.

WP2 is using the high-resolution CROCO model (~2 km) to study the marine and coastal dynamics of Senegal's Grande Côte. Downscaling simulations are underway to examine future changes. WP3 has set up a continuous oceanographic observation acquisition system, with a prospecting mission around the island of Yoff and the installation of an observatory platform for continuous monitoring.





#### Over the months

As part of the PRCM's institutional and organizational development, several actions were carried out in 2023 at institutional level.



#### **JANUARY**

Launch of the implementation of the 2023 - 2027 strategic plan, as adopted in November 2022 by the new PRCM Board of Directors.



#### **MARCH**

PRCM moves to its new offices at La Maison de la Conservation (LMC) located in Immeuble Capucine, Zone B, in Dakar, Senegal.



#### **MAY AND OCTOBER**

Opening of two PRCM offices in Guinea and Mauritania. This proximity allows PRCM to strengthen its operational capacities for project implementation and to strengthen its interaction with government institutions and local communities.



#### **JUNE TO OCTOBER**

Launch of new projects - Blue Guinea, SEDAD, Mangrove for Climate and Ocean



#### **NOVEMBER TO DECEMBER**

New PRCM membership applications submitted by 8 organizations with an interest in the coastal and marine zone. These will be examined by the Board of Directors at its next session.

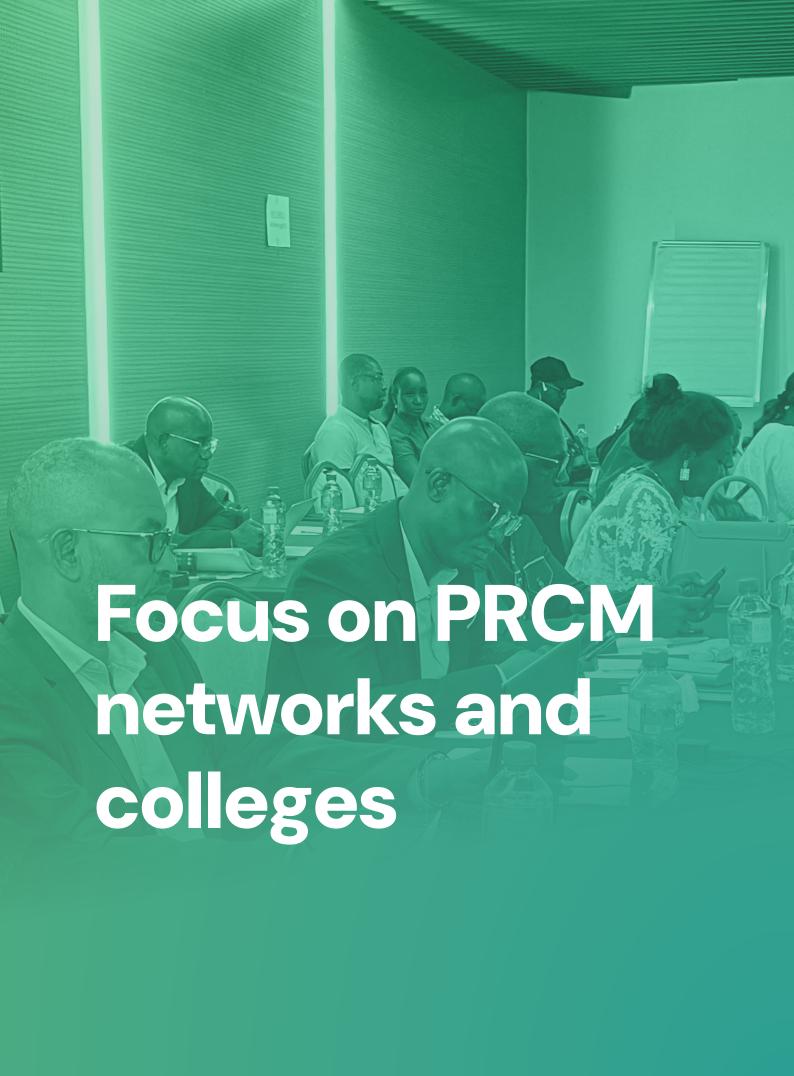




## Mobilization of financial partners

PRCM has stepped up its efforts to mobilize new technical and financial partners. These efforts have been fruitful, with the finalization of funding agreements and the launch of new projects in 2023, including:

- Mangrove for Climate and Ocean (MCO) Project implemented in four (4) countries, namely Guinea Bissau, Mauritania, Senegal and The Gambia. This project is supported by the ICONIQ Eco-Lab Foundation, which is providing US\$2 million over a three-year period.
- Decosystem Solutions for Sustainable Adaptation (SEDAD) Project launched in October 2023, with PRCM as implementing partner alongside CEGEP de la Gaspésie des îles. Funded by the Government of Canada for a three-year period, this project aims to promote adaptation to climate change in West Africa by implementing nature-based solutions, with a particular focus on youth and women's leadership. PRCM's share of the budget is approximately 0.5 million Canadian dollars.
- REDUCE Project: Reducing bycatch of endangered megafauna in the Eastern Atlantic. Funded by the European Union, this project involves PRCM in its implementation, with the aim of reducing bycatch of endangered megafauna. PRCM's share of the budget is in the region of 180,000 Euros.
- Blue Bijagos Project: funded by the Blue Action Fund, this project is implemented in the Bijagos archipelago in Guinea Bissau. Funding of this project amounts to 4.7 million Euros for a period of 5 years.
- Exchanges took place throughout 2023 with UEMOA and the World Bank for the development and implementation of a subcomponent to be entrusted to PRCM as part of the second phase of WACA ResIP, scheduled for implementation between 2024 and 2027.





#### REVITALIZING PRCM'S CIVIL SOCIETY COLLEGE

As per the recommendations of the 10<sup>th</sup> Marine and Coastal Forum held in Saly, Senegal, PRCM is committed to revitalizing the "college" of civil society stakeholders in coastal preservation efforts. A provisional board has been set up for the network of civil society players currently being formed. Draft Statutes and by-laws are due to be adopted by the network's next general meeting. To share

concerns, focal points have been identified and thematic working groups set up – fisheries, climate change and resilience, oil, gas and infrastructure, public policy and regulation. In terms of capacity building, a regional webinar was organized in October 2023 bringing together civil society organizations (CSOs) to share experiences of climate change adaptation initiatives on the coast.

## THE APPEL REGIONAL NETWORK OF PARLIAMENTARIANS

PRCM has played a crucial role in providing technical and organizational support for the revitalization of the regional network - Alliance des Parlementaires et Élus Locaux pour l'Environnement - Alliance of Parliamentarians and Locally Elected Officials for Environment (APPEL). The aim is to encourage the exchange and sharing of experiences gained in the coastal and marine area.

In 2023, two awareness-raising and information-sharing workshops were organized for parliamentarians and members of advisory bodies:

Match 2023 workshop: The focus was on the impact of seabed trawling on marine ecosystems in Senegal and West Africa. The workshop raised awareness of the devastating effects of this practice on marine biodiversity. July 2023 workshop: Touching on the implementation of transparency policies and standards in fisheries management, the workshop encouraged parliamentarians to promote more transparent and sustainable management of fisheries resources.

These initiatives were aimed at strengthening the commitment of parliamentarians and local elected representatives to environmental protection, while improving the governance and sustainability of coastal and marine areas.



## SENEGALESE ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS OF NATURE: CLEAN BEACH OPERATION IN MBAO, SENEGAL

As part of its efforts to improve the living conditions, the Senegalese Association of the Friends of Nature has joined forces with the people of Petit Mbao and Grand Mbao to combat the illegal dumping of household waste along the coastline. Prior to cleaning up the beach, awareness was raised in households through youth associations and women's groups. The target populations were made

clearly aware that the sea and the beach are not rubbish dumps but, on the contrary, contribute to improving their health and their living environment. A clean beach free of plastic and other household waste was then made available to the local population. A coastal defense committee has been set up to littering on the beach and is expected to be formalized at a later date.



## BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL AFRICA: BIRDS CONSERVATION

BirdLife International Africa has coordinated the efforts of partners in the Eastern Atlantic Flyway Initiative (EAFI) in PRCM countries. As part of the implementation of the Action Plan for the Conservation of Vultures in West Africa (2023–2043), Birdlife conducted social marketing exercises with national associations such as Nature-Communautés-Développement (NCD) in Senegal, WABSA in The Gambia, and ODZH in Guinea Bissau in targeted sites to induce behavioral change and combat the use of vultures by traditional healers.

In addition, bird monitoring initiatives have been strengthened through contributions to the World Bird Database and the Eastern Atlantic Flyway Initiative. Academic and leadership development initiatives were supported, thus strengthening the scientific and managerial capacities of technical partner staff and young people.

## GRDR - RIOTERRA: AN EDUCATIONAL KIT FOR FUN LEARNING

As part of the Program for the Concerted Governance of Coastal Ecosystems (PGCL), GRDR has produced a wealth of knowledge in several high-quality formats (atlases, territorial monographs, story-maps, etc.), which is mainly discussed in restricted circles. To extend the sharing of this knowledge to citizens from different social backgrounds and age groups, and in particular to younger people, the RioTerra educational kit was conceived and designed as a fun and participatory tool for transmitting, discussing and questioning the issues at stake in coastal areas from Senegal to Guinea-Bissau:

- Mangrove: an ecosystem with multiple dynamics
- The palm grove: panorama of an ecosystem with multiple challenges
- The dynamics and challenges of the Town of Canchungo
- The dynamics and threats of coastal erosion in West Africa
- The fishing sector: an emblematic value chain for West African coastal regions

For more information, visit the **GRDR website** 



## ADEPA: SEEDING OF ARK CLAMS IN THE JOAL/FADIOUTH MPA

The West African Association for the Development of Artisanal Fishing (ADEPA) has initiated the seeding of ark clams. The initiative involved collecting juvenile clams (Anadara senilis) from an overabundant site (Ngassonga arm of the sea, 3 km from Fadiouth island) and seeding them in degraded mudflats in the Joal/Fadiouth Marine Protected Area (Mama nguedj passerelle, Fassanda) with a view to restoring them following intense exploitation. This initiative is held against the backdrop of a participatory surveillance and bio-ecological monitoring. A total of 150 young people and

women were involved in the process. 7.2 tons of small clams were seeded. Three (3) degraded mudflats have been restored. When the project opened, almost 750 people, mostly women, were working on the restored mudflats.

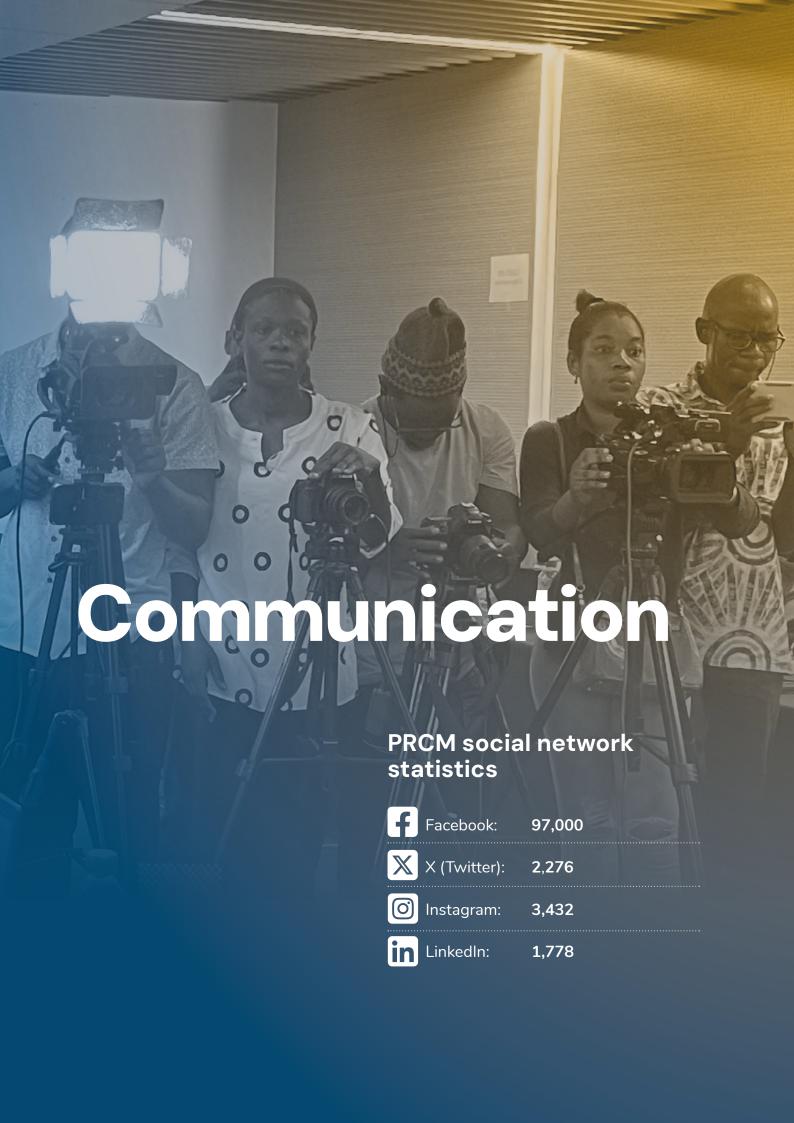
For more information, visit the ADEPA website



## BIO-ECOLOGICAL BASELINE FOR FISHERY RESOURCES AS PART OF THE SOKONE MPA ESTABLISHMENT PROCESS

It was about determining the composition and structure of fish populations in the new Sokone MPA before its establishment. Samples were taken in areas usually frequented by local fishermen. Based on habitat types and the distribution of fishing areas among riverside villages, twelve (12) stations spread over three main areas were selected. At the end of this first operation, 26 species of fish belonging to 18 families represented by 751 units were counted. The total biomass of units caught was equal to 70.937 Kg and the percentage corresponding to each species varied very

significantly, with 12 species having a biomass of less than 1%. The species with the highest biomass were Chelon dumerilli (17.44%), Mugil bananensis (16.05%), Coptodon guineensis (13.81%) and Monodactylus sebae (13.45%).



In 2023, PRCM stepped up its communications strategy to provide effective support for its projects, contributing to their success and visibility.

In the same year, PRCM produced a new film entitled "Pour une gouvernance partagée du littoral / Towards a shared governance of the shoreline". This film illustrates our positioning and underlines our commitment to promoting collaborative and sustainable management of coastal and marine areas. It has been designed to raise awareness and mobilize our partners and the public around our mission.

We also published a White Paper on the state of marine biodiversity in West Africa. This document, available in French, English and Portuguese, was officially presented at a scientific symposium organized by the MAVA Foundation. The event brought together leading scientists from West African countries and around the world to highlight the challenges and opportunities for marine conservation in the region.

In addition, a documentary film on sea turtles casting light on our sea turtle monitoring (STM) work over the last few years, was broadcast on a private Senegalese channel at prime time. The broadcast raised awareness among a wide audience of the issues involved in conserving marine turtles and highlighted PRCM's efforts in this area.

To mark the World Oceans Day, PRCM's Executive Director gave an exclusive interview to the Senegalese News Agency (APS). This interview was an opportunity to share our vision and our initiatives for the protection of oceans, reinforcing our visibility and our commitment to the public.

We have also undertaken to update our graphic charter to make it more modern and to ensure consistency in all our communications. The new charter strengthens our identity and our presence with our different audiences.

In 2023, communications continued to occupy a central place within PRCM, playing a crucial role in disseminating our messages and strengthening our links with various audiences.

To achieve our awareness-raising and mobilization objectives, PRCM has put in place various communication tools to reach a wide audience and share essential information about our initiatives and projects.

The website is our main showcase. It provides a detailed presentation of our missions, projects and results. The site also contains news, publications, annual reports and information on forthcoming events. It serves as a central platform for the dissemination of our work and the promotion of our actions in favor of marine and coastal conservation in West Africa.

As for the Newsletter, it was still distributed to all our partners, thus sharing the progress and successes of our projects, as well as relevant information about our activities. Distributed every three months to our partners, members and supporters, it has enabled us to keep our network informed and engaged, while highlighting our initiatives and those of our partners.

Our pages on social networks including Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and X (formerly Twitter), were regularly updated with engaging and informative content, enabling us to maintain ongoing interaction with our audience and boost our visibility. Our social network followers continue to grow significantly.

On the other hand, the Online Geographic Information System (WebGIS) is an innovative tool for visualizing and analyzing geospatial data related to our projects. It provides interactive mapping of marine protected areas, areas of critical biodiversity and other essential environmental data. This tool is crucial to the planning and management

of our conservation initiatives, providing a geographical database accessible to our partners and the public. In conclusion, communication at PRCM in 2023 was an essential lever to intensify our impact and



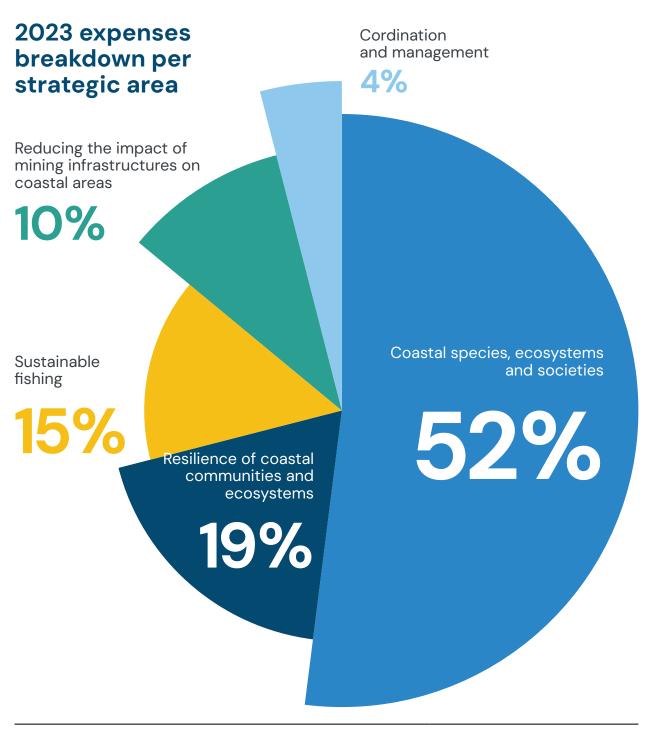






reach. By adapting to current needs and using modern tools, we have been able to amplify our voice and mobilize greater support for the conservation of coastal and marine areas in West Africa.





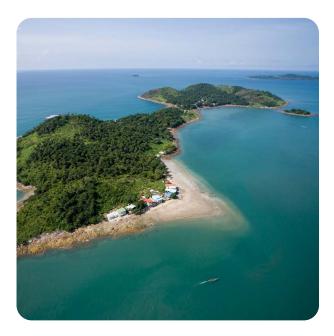
Strategic area	Expenses in 2023 (in €)
Coastal species, ecosystems and societies	1,861,357
Resilience of coastal communities and ecosystems	695,279
Promotion oof sustainable fishing	536,822
Alleviating the impact of extractive infrastructure and activities on coastal areas	376,855
Coordination & management	143,501

The 2023 budget for the PRCM decreased from last year's budget of **6,467,769 euros** to **5,678,801 euros**. This decrease is explained by the fact that MAVA-funded projects ended in 2022. The 2023 budget was 64% executed.









We closed the year 2023 with the feeling that we have contributed to the strengthening of the resilience of our marine and coastal ecosystems in a fairly dynamic political and institutional context.

The inclusive and collaborative approach that guides our actions is the key to proposing sustainable solutions to the many challenges facing coastal and marine areas: loss of biodiversity, waning fish stocks, marine pollution and climate change.

In 2024, we plan to maintain and even strengthen our presence on the ground by continuing and accelerating the implementation of current projects and launching new ones. Our efforts will also focus on mobilizing partners and engaging coastal communities in decisive, high-impact actions.

The holding of the 11th Marine and Coastal Forum in Guinea Bissau, a key forum for exchanges on governance of the coastal and marine zone, and for sharing knowledge, experience and good practices, will certainly provide an opportunity to highlight emerging issues and re-mobilize stakeholders around the resilience of ecosystems and populations.

Our determination to work together in a shared governance of our marine areas, in perfect synergy with each of the stakeholders and with the essential support of the populations, will enable us to build the ideal of a healthy and productive marine and coastal environment for the well-being of the populations.

We are infinitely grateful to the financial partners who support our mission.

**Hans Wilsdorf Foundation** 

**Blue Action Fund** 

French Facility for Global Environment (FFEM)

Oceans 5

**UEMOA** 

**World Bank** 

**Dob Ecology Foundation** 

ICONIQ Impact Co-LABs

**OAK Foundation** 

CEGEP de la Gaspésie et des Îles



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