

TECHNICAL REVIEW
WEST INDIAN OCEAN ISLANDS
INDIAN OCEAN OIL SPILL CONTINGENCY PLANNING PROJECT

The Project Information Document (PID) and the Project Concept Document (PCD) have been reviewed. The significance and the scientific and technical merits of the proposal are as follows:

- **The proposed project designs to protect the environmental integrity of the coastal and marine ecosystems in the Indian Ocean region against oil spill pollution, by raising awareness of the threat of oil pollution to the environment and the economic potential of environmentally related activities, such as ecotourism and fishing industry. The proposal is very well presented in the area of the protection of this international waters.**
- **The key objective of the project is to build sustainable institutional and financial arrangements within and among countries and between countries and the local and international oil industry. The project examines the status of national legislation in the participating countries in relation to marine pollution conventions. This gives a realistic view of gaps and short comings. Other aspects which the project looks into are the financial, technical, organizational and coordination considerations and capabilities of countries in the region. Private sector involvement is sought to leverage needed investments.**
- **The environmental issues in the region are clearly identified and the proposed project addresses all of the issues specified. A detailed risk and impact study has been reviewed and carried out using oil spill modeling. However, the impact of oil spill on aquaculture activities (such as finfishes in cages, mussels and oysters in floating rafts, and prawns in brackish water ponds) is not mentioned in the PCD. As with fisheries, damage may occur in the form of complete destruction of the cultured species or financial losses may also occur as a result of the reduced market value of the cultured species which have become contaminated by the spillage.**

- **It may be helpful to prepare a regional database and geographic information system (GIS) on marine and coastal resources. Mapping of environmentally sensitive areas should be considered. This can be done as base maps and resource map layers in a GIS-linked database and data management system, which will provide useful information for oil spill response in the region. The system should provide baseline information (e.g., ecologically sensitive areas), prioritization for each tier and distribution of assets for spill abatement.**
- **The project should be financially supported and implemented since implementation of the proposed project would result in increased capacity for Mauritius and Seychelles to cope with oil spills occurring near their territories. Development of the regional oil spill response capacity would make it possible to address accidents rapidly wherever they occurred in the region, and significantly reduce the risk of contamination of international waters. Pollution prevention is a more cost effective strategy and is expected to have only positive benefits to the environment.**

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World Bank Response to Technical Review

As suggested by the reviewer, we have incorporated the risk to aquaculture activities. The issue of sustainable fisheries management will be addressed by a United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis for the West Indian Ocean Region, which is complementary to and coordinated with the proposed Oil Spill Contingency Project.

Preparation of a regional database on marine and coastal resources and identification of priority areas will be a part of the project. Component B (national oil spill contingency plans) will address these issues by developing national capacity for environment data collection and information management systems, identifying areas of environmental and socioeconomic importance, and establishing priority areas. The information developed during the data collection and its analysis would be used to prepare environmental sensitivity maps.