



São Tomé Leads Safeguards Exchange for New WACA Countries

From May 5–10, São Tomé and Príncipe hosted a regional exchange under the WACA program, welcoming safeguard and social development experts from The Gambia, Ghana, and Guinea-Bissau. Through field visits and peer learning, the mission strengthened

Context

- Launched in 2018, WACA was designed to address the phenomenon of coastal erosion, caused by poor management of coastal infrastructure, inadequate spatial planning, and an overall paralysis because the solutions are costly, complex, regional, and requires leadership.
- What we did:
 - Provided IDA financing, international expertise to stabilize the coastline (\$650M)
 - Strengthened regional integration and capacity of national institutions



Approach WACA – Leadership 4 Results

Mantra: Regional Integration, National Leadership, Partnerships, Innovation, Marketplace, Scale

Challenges

- How do we promote and maintain regional integration to ensure that all countries work toward a shared vision for coastal resilience?
- How do we deliver consistent, high-quality results despite differences in language, technical and political readiness, and institutional capacity?

Leadership for Results: A Strategic Response

- Coastal resilience in West Africa requires more than technical solutions; it requires strong, adaptive leadership.
- What do we mean by Leadership? Leadership is not just about authority or titles—it's the ability to inspire action, foster collaboration, and navigate complexity to drive results.
- The Leadership for Results initiative is designed to empower WACA project leaders and stakeholders with the skills, mindset, and tools to drive transformational change towards a more resilient coastline.



Impact - Examples

Mauritania – Strengthening Project Delivery & Building Coalitions for the Blue Economy

- The Leadership for Results Initiative provided targeted support to Mauritania's Project Implementation Unit to enhance planning, procurement, and financial management capacities
- The goal was to ensure timely completion of critical infrastructure investments before December 2025 (project closing date).
- A detailed and actionable project plan was developed, featuring a clear distribution of responsibilities across the team and a visual collaboration map to enhance coordination.
- Also, Mauritania is set to be one of the first countries to join WACA+, the IDA-financed Multi-Phased Approach Program with regional collaboration.
- Leadership for Results played a pivotal role in building a new national coalition and securing high-level government support for the blue economy agenda.
- A foundation is laid for inter-institutional dialogue, engaging key stakeholders such as the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Fisheries, academia, civil society, and the private sector—facilitating alignment around shared goals for sustainable coastal development.

Togo – Laying the Foundation for Marine Spatial Planning (MSP)

- The Leadership for Results Initiative supported Togo's High Council of the Sea in their development of a national Marine Spatial Planning strategy. A very complex undertaking!
- The focus was on engaging required diverse groups of stakeholders—government officials, civil society, academia, and technical experts—to co-develop an inclusive and sustainable Marine Spatial Planning.
- Through facilitated sessions, participants were guided through the foundational questions: (1) Why is MSP essential? (2) What needs to be done? (3) Who should be involved? (4) When and how should action be taken? This delivered their roadmap.
- Implementing the engagement along the roadmap fostered a deeper understanding of the success factors, buy-in from key stakeholders, and constraints to effective MSP development.
- Crucially, it also built the leadership and problem-solving capacity of national stakeholders—transforming them into champions for sustainable ocean governance.

IDA + Leadership = Jobs & Livelihoods on a Livable Planet

[Visit the WACA website at www.wacaprogram.org](http://www.wacaprogram.org)

For more information:

- Manon Cassara (SAWE1)
- Lili Sisombat (SMDLK)
- Veruschka Schmidt (SAWE1)
- Peter Kristensen (SCAE1)

