



13 July 2026

IOTC CIRCULAR 2026-30

Dear Madam / Sir

REQUEST FOR OBSERVER STATUS FROM CORDIO EAST AFRICA

Please find attached a request letter from CORDIO East Africa to participate as an Observer to the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission processes.

In accordance with Rule XIV of the IOTC Rules of Procedure, Contracting Parties of the Commission may wish to allow CORDIO East Africa to participate as an Observer given their interest in the IOTC as stipulated in the attached letter. Thus, unless any objections are received within 30 days of the date of this Circular, the IOTC Secretariat will consider that approval has been granted for the Executive Secretary to issue an invitation to the potential Observer to attend IOTC meetings accordingly.

Yours sincerely

Paul de Bruyn
Executive Secretary

Attachments:

- Letter from CORDIO East Africa
- Profile CORDIO East Africa

Distribution

IOTC Contracting Parties: Australia, Bangladesh, China, Comoros, European Union, France (Territories), India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Rep of), Japan, Kenya, Rep. of Korea, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, United Rep. of Tanzania, Thailand, United Kingdom, Yemen. **Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties:** Liberia, Panama. **Intergovernmental Organisations, Non-Governmental Organisations.** **Chairperson IOTC.** **Copy to:** FAO Headquarters, FAO Representatives to CPCs.

This message has been transmitted by email only



Coastal Oceans
Research and Development
in the Indian Ocean,
East Africa

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10th July 2026

Mr. Adam Ziyad
Chairperson
Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC)
PO BOX 1011 - Victoria,
Mahe, Seychelles

Dear Mr. Ziyad

Subject: Request for Observer Status – CORDIO East Africa

I write to request permission for CORDIO East Africa to attend IOTC meetings as an Observer. CORDIO is a non-governmental organization registered in Kenya, with extensive experience in conservation and sustainable management of marine biodiversity in the western Indian Ocean (WIO). Our mission is to improve the health and resilience of marine ecosystems and coastal peoples' well-being through research, conservation action and support to policy processes. Our work includes resilience of marine ecosystems, artisanal fisheries, community-led management approaches, mitigating climate change impacts and endangered species protection. We help bridge the gap between government and community and between policy and practice. Please see attached Organisational Profile for further information on CORDIO.

We are interested in contributing to and learning from the IOTC, notably within two of its core mandates: equitable development in coastal nations to access fishery resources; and the Conservation and Management Measures for tropical tuna. We are also interested in contributing two IOTC Working Parties: Tropical Tunas (WPTT) and Ecosystems and Bycatch (WPEB). CORDIO has been leading the 'Blue Fisheries' innovation cluster on the Our Blue Future platform since 2023. This work focuses on building the evidence, negotiation capacity and political alignment in SWIO coastal states to improve the governance of tropical tuna fisheries. CORDIO has also been advancing research and conservation action for sharks and rays. This work generates data on elasmobranch diversity, distribution and fisheries interactions, and supports regional collaboration in conservation of threatened migratory species. Through this work we hope to contribute to IOTC processes.

Please let me know if you require more information. We are very keen to support the IOTC.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Melita Samoilys".

Dr. Melita Samoilys
Research and Conservation Director

CC: Dr David Obura, Founding Director
CC: Mr Joshua Rambahiniarison, Senior Scientist



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*An African hub for marine science and conservation
in the Western Indian Ocean*

Organization Profile 2021-2026

Coastal Oceans Research and Development in the Indian Ocean (CORDIO), East Africa is a leading African non-governmental organisation working at the intersection of marine scientific research and conservation policy and practice in the western Indian Ocean (WIO). CORDIO's work ranges from promoting sustainable resource use within fishing communities to national and regional policy development to improve governance of marine ecosystems. At the global scale, CORDIO contributes to major international policy and convention processes as well as involvement in expert working groups and committees.

CORDIO's identity and reputation has been built on its long history of producing quality scientific research on western Indian Ocean coastal and ocean issues. CORDIO is one of the leading sources of monitoring and ecological expertise on coral reefs in the region, including their resilience to climate change. Through its role as a regional node for the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN), CORDIO builds capacity in data management and analysis with counterparts in national research institutions. CORDIO's research on, for example, biogeography, endangered species and coastal fisheries, bridges science and management, notably through pioneering sustainability in artisanal fishing gears and supporting Locally Managed Marine Areas. CORDIO's publications are diverse and increasingly multi-disciplinary, ranging from top global scientific journals such as *Science* and *Nature*, to user-friendly manuals designed for local communities and other managers. CORDIO employs a collaborative, inclusive and open research culture, spanning numerous other conservation organizations, community institutions and government agencies. CORDIO also collaborates with universities in the region contributing to a strong community of marine scientists within the WIO.

CORDIO's diverse and extensive collaboration and partnerships are central to nearly all facets of its work, from project delivery to its scientific publications. Nearly all of these are carried out through partnerships, both with international organizations, funders and networks, and with more locally site-based non-government organizations. Collaborations with government on policy development and research are emphasized, as are institutional relationships with other research and training organizations, notably Pwani University in Kenya.

CORDIO East Africa was registered in Kenya in 2003 as a company, limited by guarantee (non-profit), under the laws of Kenya and has an office in Mombasa. CORDIO East Africa's geographic scope is the WIO: Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Somalia, Seychelles, Tanzania.

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Managing Director: Ms. Joan Momanyi (jmomanyi@cordioea.net)