

Organisational gender mainstreaming in BCC: A process case study

BCC and the importance of gender equality in ocean governance

The Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem (BCLME) stretches northwards from South Africa, along Namibia's entire coastline, into Angola. The BCLME is vulnerable to degradation from human activities such as (over, illegal, unregulated & unreported) fishing, marine transport, mining, and land-based pollution as well as the impacts of climate change. To address these issues, government leaders from Angola, Namibia, and South Africa established a cooperative approach to improve management of the BCLME, namely, the transboundary Benguela Current Convention (BCC). The BCC promotes a coordinated regional approach to long-term sustainability for the BCLME, safeguarding the ecosystem to realise socioeconomic benefits without damage to the environment (BCC, 2013).

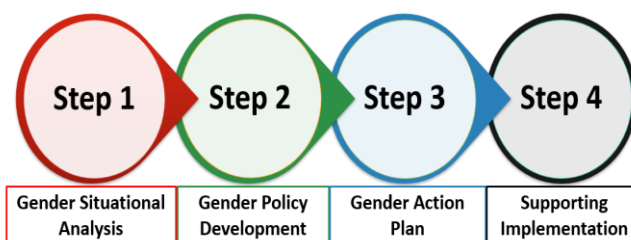
As a regionally representative body the BCC is in a unique position to promote gender equality in the governance of the Benguela Large Marine Ecosystem (BLME). The 2016 BCC Ministerial Conference has led the BCC – with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) – to initiate an organisational gender capacity building programme. International environmental frameworks such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (UN Environment, 2019), the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) (UN Environment, 2017), and the Convention to Combat Desertification

Gender inequality – undervaluing and excluding women (or men) – contributes to the underachievement of national, and regional ocean governance goals.

(UNCCD, 2012) all include gender commitments. The countries that are signatories to the BCC are aligning their own national environmental laws, policies, and machinery for promoting gender equality.

The 4 step process

Objective: The objective of the process was to build BCCs frameworks, approaches and human capacity to better promote gender equality in ocean governance.



Gender Situational Analysis	Develop gender research frameworks and questions.
	Carry out primary research.
	Analysis and drafting
Gender Policy Development	Setting guiding principles.
	Consultation and drafting
	Dissemination, review and approval.
Gender Action Plan	Analyse and understand BCC's workplans and ways of working
	Align actions with the BCC strategic Action Plan
Supporting Implementation	Develop roadmap and checklists to guide implementation
	Develop action and monitoring and evaluation plans
	Training and capacity building for implementation
	Develop gender knowledge products.

Step 1: The gender situational analysis

In 2019, the BCC commissioned gender situational analysis report (BCC, 2019) that investigated the gender 'status quo' in ocean governance in the three BCC signatory countries and the capacity of the BCC to effectively gender mainstream in its operations.

The process established research questions and framework: Seven gender frameworks were reviewed and adapted for the gender analysis. Two main frameworks used were the United Nations Development

Programme (UNDP) Gender Seal (UNDP, n.d.) and the UNDP-Global Environment Facilities (GEF) gender framework (UNDP, 2016).

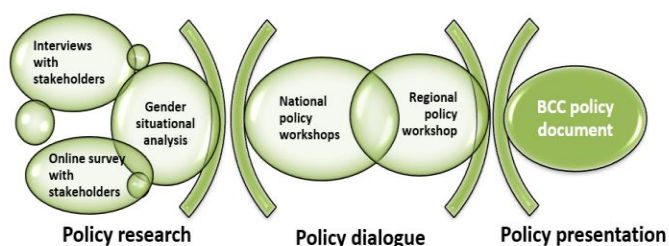
The research followed a mixed methods approach using primary and secondary data. Good practices of gender mainstreaming in environmental programmes such as the Global Environment Fund (GEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations women analysis frameworks were used as guidance. Various research tools were used to collect primary data via telephonic interviews, face-to-face interviews, and stakeholder focus groups (comprising 22 men and 38 women). An online survey was sent to stakeholders of ocean governance in the three countries (Angola, Namibia and South Africa), the BCC leadership, and secretariat (94 people responded). National workshops were held in each of the three countries to interrogate and verify the situational analysis results.

Step 2: Gender policy development

Setting guiding gender principles as a foundation for the BCC was an important step for policy development. The BCC Gender Policy is based on the premise of fundamental principles recognised by each of the BCC signatory countries: human rights approaches, equality and non-discrimination, and the participation and empowerment of women’s and girls’ rights.

The gender policy development process was initiated in the first half of 2019 and involved utilising information from the situational analysis to produce policy goals and outcomes. As summarised in Figure 2 the process culminated in the presentation of recommendations for BCC policy decision-makers (The BCC Commissioners) who gave the final approval for the Policy in late 2019.

Figure 1: Policy development stages



Step 3: The organisational Gender Action Plan

The BCC organisational Gender Action Plan complements the policy in that it states the activities that are necessary to achieve the BCC’s six gender related policy goals:

BCC Gender Policy goals
1. Ensure gender equitable programming in all BCC initiatives that seeks to actively promote gender equality.
2. Facilitate capacity building of gender mainstreaming in ocean governance in the BCC that supports operational structures to be able to sustainably apply gender mainstreaming concepts.
3. Ensure the inclusion and participation of men and women in the BCC structure and its activities.
4. Establish data gathering, management and oversight mechanisms for gender mainstreaming in the BCC.
5. Establish programme monitoring and evaluation (M&E) that indicates whether a programme addresses the different priorities and needs of men and women.
6. Generate and share gender mainstreaming knowledge and experience in LME and ocean governance.

These activities reflect the findings and recommendations from the BCC gender situational analysis (BCC, 2019) and align with GEF and UNDP gender policy priorities. The theory of change for the BCC Action Plan reflects a gender policy and planning approach where institutional changes are set only within the BCC’s sphere of influence. It implies the need for an approach of gender mainstreaming and one where men and/or women are targeted specifically to actively change the situation of either gender.

Step 4: Supporting the BCC secretariat in implementation.

At the start of 2020, the BCC took follow on action to support their secretariat to realise their organisational gender action plan. Key elements of this support are:

Measures in supporting the BCC Secretariat:

Tailored gender guides: Developed to inform the members of the BCC secretariat of the key gender issues to consider in their specific technical area. These include checklists for common aspects of gender mainstreaming in their day to day work.

Individual departmental action plans: The departmental action plans were developed after a close analysis of departmental workplans and discussions with each member of the BCC secretariat. The action plans are augmented with a description and rationale to ensure departments have a context to their planned actions.

M&E frameworks for implementation of action plans: Which contain a brief rationale for M&E, indicators of achievement, means of verification, timelines, and roles and responsibilities, which can be integrated into existing M&E frameworks.

Capacity building: The training for BCC focussed on 2 training events for the BCC Secretariat:

- Training session 1: Introduction to Gender and Gender in Programming (1st Quarter 2021).
- Training session 2: Implementing gender action plans (2nd Quarter 2021).

Developing gender knowledge products (KPs): The purpose of BCC developing gender knowledge products was twofold: Firstly, informing stakeholders about the different situations of women and men and in the BCC countries and approaches to promoting gender mainstreaming and secondly, publicising the BCCs commitment to gender equality. The audience of BCC KPs include the of both internal and external stakeholders.

3. The outcomes of BCC's 4 step process

There are several outcomes from the BCC gender capacity building process:

- Through the Situational Analysis BCC has a better understanding of the organisations gender mainstreaming capacity and national gender issues in ocean governance in Angola, Namibia and South Africa.
- The organisation now has the frameworks, approaches, and management tools to promote gender equality. These can be adapted and updated as required.
- Through the process the secretariat has an increased capacity in understanding the link between gender equality and ocean management and how this understanding is applied to their work in order to promote gender equality.
- The BCC has developed a process that is easily adaptable for other LMEs and as such it has added to the regional knowledge base in gender mainstreaming ocean governance.



For more information on the process and methodology documents for this process please contact :

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