

# The Indian Ocean Rim Association

**SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES ROADSHOW:  
2026**

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**KGAME MOLOPE (MR)**

**NORTH WEST UNIVERSITY: MAFIKENG CAMPUS**

# Foundations

- Consultative Process:
  - Government Officials
  - Business
  - Academics
- Indian Ocean Rim Initiative – March 1995
- Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation – 7 March 1997
- Indian Ocean Rim Association – 2014
  - Charter based association
    - **Member States**
    - **Dialogue Partners**
  - Promotes **regional cooperation**
  - Consensus based

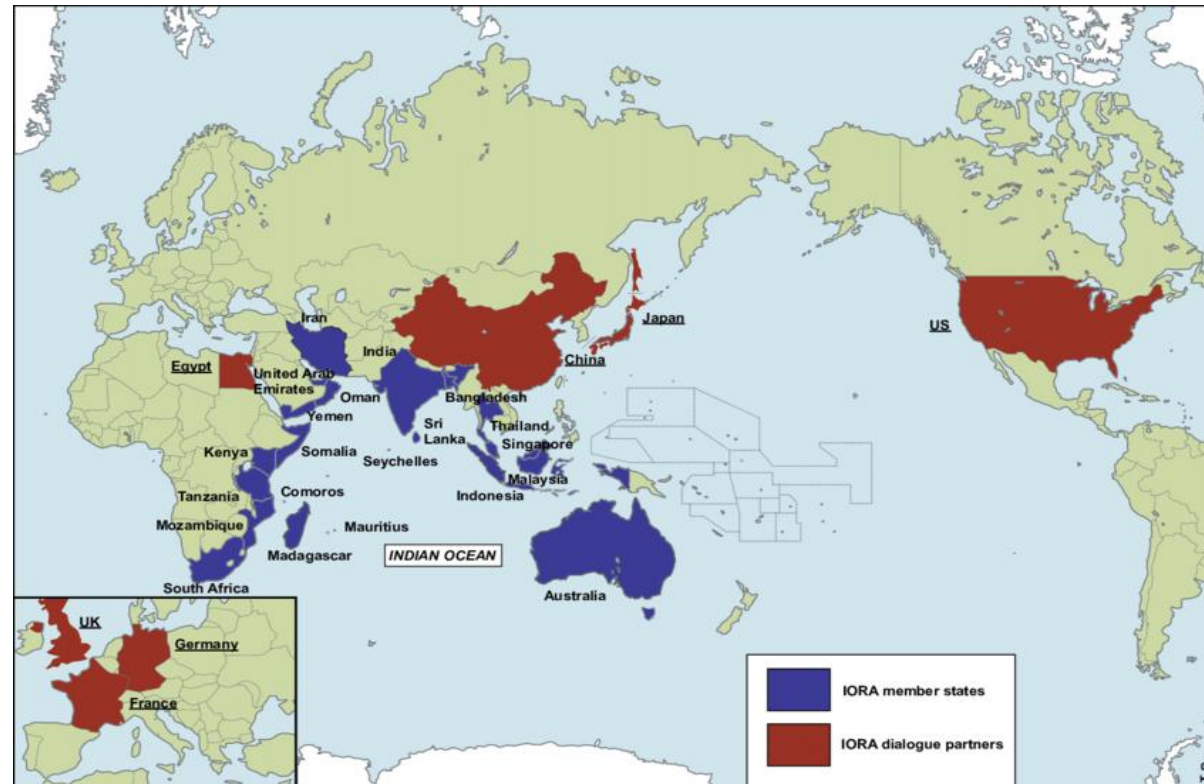
“the natural urge of the facts of history and geography should broaded itself to include the concept of an Indian Ocean Rim for socio-economic co-operation....”

**NELSON MANDELA in 1995**  
(1918 - 2013)



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# Geography of the Indian Ocean Rim Association



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# Institutional Mechanism

- **Council of Ministers**
- **Committee of Senior Officials**
- Functional Bodies
  - **Academic Group**
  - **Business Forum**
  - Working Groups – ref to priority areas
- Core Groups
  - Tourism
  - Fisheries Management



# Institutional Mechanism

- Specialised Agencies:
  - Regional Centre For Science and Technology Transfer
  - Fisheries Support Unit
- Observer status in
  - Indian Ocean Research Group
  - Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association
- IORA – Observer at the United Nation General Assembly ( 2015)
  - UN Conference on Trade and Development (2014)
  - African Union (2015)
- MoUs

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# Objectives

- Founded on cooperation based on principles of: sovereignty, equality, territorial integrity, political independence, and non-interference in internal affairs of Member States, peaceful coexistence and mutual benefit, IORA objectives are:
  - To promote sustainable growth and balanced development of the region and Member States;
  - To focus on those areas of economic co-operation which provide maximum opportunities for development, shared interest and mutual benefits; and,
  - To promote liberalisation, remove impediments and lower barriers towards a freer and enhanced flow of goods, services, investment, and technology within the Indian Ocean rim.



# Priority Areas

- Maritime safety and security;
- Trade and investment facilitation;
- Fisheries management;
- Disaster risk management;
- Academic, science and technology cooperation; and
- Tourism and cultural exchange.
  - Crosscutting Issues:
    - Blue Economy
    - Women Empowerment
    - Climate Change

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# **The Indian Ocean Rim Association Academic Group (IORAG)**

- the first of the Indian Ocean Rim Association's (IORA) Institutional Mechanisms:
  - to foster academic cooperation – member states and dialogue partners = think tank
    - Evidence based decision making in the association – priority areas + cross cutting issues + institutional development
    - Academics < priority areas > units / groupings < CSO > CoMM
      - Research
      - Knowledge and information sharing
      - Best practice sharing
      - Policy development (alignment)

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# IORAG OBJECTIVES

- **Promote intellectual dialogue:** This objective emphasises fostering open exchange of ideas and perspectives amongst member states.
- **Disseminate knowledge:** IORAG aims to develop and share knowledge related to the Indian Ocean Rim, including the "Indian Ocean Rim Concept" and relevant research.
- **Support IORA institutions:** Through rigorous research, IORAG assists both Primary Bodies (Council of Ministers, Committee of Senior Officials, Secretariat) and Functional Bodies (Working Groups, Sub-Working Groups, Sectoral/Cluster/Core Groups, Dialogue Forums) within IORA.
- **Provide evaluation and advisory services:** IORAG offers evaluations and advice on academic activities within IORA, including assessments of proposed IORA Academic Centres of Excellence based on established Key Performance Indicators.
- **Coordinate and evaluate research:** IORAG plays a central role in coordinating and evaluating academic research generated across IORA and its various mechanisms.

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# IORAG Objectives

- **Support evidence-based decision-making:** IORAG aims to facilitate research-based policy and decision-making by disseminating research findings through IORA journals and the IORA website.
- **Promote academic collaboration:** IORAG encourages national and regional networks and cooperation amongst training institutions, universities, and other specialised institutions across member states to foster human resource development and exchange.
- **Strengthen regional analysis and collaboration:** IORAG works to strengthen both political analysis and scientific research collaboration within the region.
- **Disseminate knowledge for sustainable development:** IORAG facilitates the sharing of knowledge and innovation to drive economic growth and environmental sustainability, encompassing both the creative economy and the "blue economy."
- **Catalyse regional discussions:** IORAG organises the "Indian Ocean Dialogue" (annually or biennially) to stimulate discussions on issues of regional importance.
- **Develop a network of Think Tanks:** IORAG strives to establish a network of Think Tanks across IORA member states.



# **ACTION PLAN**

- Activities **contributed** by Member States and Dialogue Partners
  - National IORAGs and their stakeholders
- Regional Activities:
  - Networks
  - Partnerships
  - Collaborations



# **IORA Special Fund**

- Member States and Dialogue partner contributions.
- To supporting training and capacity-building programmes
- Projects approved by IORA = regional projects.
- Guidelines: 1 + 3



*Thank You*