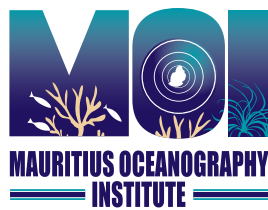


STRATEGIC PLAN 2025 - 2029



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Preface by the Chairman of the Board

The Board of the Mauritius Oceanography Institute (MOI) is pleased to present its Strategic Plan for the period from 2025 to 2029. This Plan provides a clear and ambitious roadmap for strengthening the Institute's contribution to oceanographic research, innovation and sustainable development, while supporting the Republic of Mauritius in realising its full potential as a resilient and prosperous Large Ocean State.



Mauritius has a deep and enduring connection with the ocean. Our marine environment is central to our economic development, food security, climate resilience and national identity. However, climate change, pollution, biodiversity loss, coastal degradation and growing pressure on marine resources require us to respond with sound scientific knowledge, innovative solutions and coordinated action.

Against this backdrop, the Mauritius Oceanography Institute has a vital role to play. The Strategic Plan 2025–2029 focuses on four key priorities: (1) advancing ocean research and innovation for a sustainable blue economy; (2) enhancing marine ecosystem conservation, climate resilience and disaster risk reduction; (3) strengthening capacity building, education and public engagement; and (4) fostering strategic partnerships and institutional excellence.

Through research in areas such as deep-sea exploration, marine biotechnology, oceanographic data acquisition and modelling, marine renewable energy, biodiversity conservation and ecosystem rehabilitation, the Institute aims to generate knowledge and solutions that respond to both national needs and emerging regional challenges. The Plan also recognises that scientific research must extend beyond the laboratory. Greater emphasis will therefore be placed on ocean literacy, citizen science, youth engagement and the effective communication of scientific findings to policymakers, stakeholders and the wider public.

The successful implementation of this Plan will depend equally on the strength of our institution and its people. Investing in specialised expertise, continuous professional development, modern research infrastructure, effective data-management systems and a supportive organisational culture will be essential. The Board is committed to providing the strategic guidance and oversight necessary to ensure that the Institute remains accountable, responsive and focused on achieving measurable results.

Collaboration will also be central to our success. The Institute will continue to strengthen its relationships with government bodies, universities, research organisations, regional and international partners, the private sector and local communities. These partnerships will enable the sharing of knowledge and resources, encourage innovation and further position the Mauritius Oceanography Institute as a regional centre of excellence in ocean science.



On behalf of the Board, I wish to acknowledge the valuable contributions of all those involved in the preparation of this Strategic Plan. I also commend the management and staff of the Institute for their dedication, expertise and continued commitment to scientific excellence and the sustainable stewardship of our ocean resources.

I am confident that the Strategic Plan 2025–2029 will guide the Mauritius Oceanography Institute towards greater scientific impact, stronger institutional performance and enhanced national and regional relevance. The Board looks forward to working closely with all our partners and stakeholders to translate this vision into meaningful and lasting outcomes for Mauritius, the Indian Ocean region and future generations.

Dr. Mitrasen BHIKAJEE, CSK

1. Overview

Established in January 2000 under the Mauritius Oceanography Institute Act (Act No. 24 of 1999), the Mauritius Oceanography Institute (MOI) is the national institution responsible for coordinating and promoting oceanographic research and development in the Republic of Mauritius. The Institute was created to rationalise and coordinate research activities related to the ocean and marine environment. The Institute also advises the Government on the formulation and implementation of policies, strategies and programmes related to oceanography and marine resource management.

As an island nation with an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of approximately 2.3 million km², Mauritius possesses vast marine resources which present significant opportunities for economic growth, food security, renewable energy development, marine biotechnology, tourism and environmental conservation. The MOI is therefore strategically positioned to support the Government's vision of developing a sustainable and resilient Blue Economy, through scientific evidence and technical expertise, while ensuring the protection of marine ecosystems.

In the context of this new Strategic Plan, the MOI is expected to strengthen its role as a

centre of excellence in oceanography and marine science within the Indian Ocean region, while enhancing its contribution to evidence-based policymaking, innovation and the sustainable exploitation of ocean resources. This forward-looking Strategic Plan would reinforce MOI's role as a national and regional centre of excellence, strengthening its capacity to generate knowledge, support innovation and provide the scientific foundation required for sustainable ocean governance and economic prosperity.

2. Vision Statement

To be a regional centre of excellence in oceanographic research, innovation, and sustainable development, driving the growth of Republic of Mauritius as a resilient and prosperous Large Ocean State

3. Mission Statement

To advance scientific knowledge and technology in marine and ocean sciences, foster sustainable use of marine resources, support policy and innovation for the blue economy and promote public engagement, education and partnerships.

4. Objects and Functions of the Institute

Objects of the Institute	Functions of the Institute
(a) to foster interest in research and development in relation to oceanography; (b) to advise Government on the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes in respect of oceanography and related aspects; (c) to coordinate, collaborate and cooperate with other institutions, agencies and persons on national, regional and global issues within its fields of interest, and to assist any organization, body or person in creating sustainable research and development programmes in those areas of interest and activity relating to oceanography; (d) to demonstrate and communicate to the scientific community and the public at large the results of research and the importance of oceanography in the conservation, maintenance, management, utilisation and development of resources based on marine and coastal ecosystems; (e) to manage and optimise the use of funds and other resources for the purposes of this Act.	(a) to initiate, encourage, launch, facilitate, support, undertake, participate in, rationalise and coordinate research and development in relation to oceanography having regard to the national, regional and international interests of Mauritius, its needs and priorities; (b) to arrange for carrying out such research and development; (c) to provide any other institution, body or person with facilities for carrying out such research and development; (d) to maximize opportunities and arrangements for such research and development on a collaborative basis; (e) to encourage and facilitate the application and use of the results of such research and development; (f) to prepare, fund, implement and periodically update and monitor programmes relating to the sustainable development of marine resources; (g) to collect, coordinate, store and disseminate information relating to oceanography and to publish reports and other material relating to oceanography; (h) to identify training needs in the field of oceanography; (i) to make available to other institutions, bodies or persons, on such terms and conditions as it thinks fit knowledge, expertise, equipment or facilities of the Institute; (j) to do anything incidental or conducive to the performance of any of its functions under this section.

5. Core Values

- Scientific Excellence
- Sustainability and Stewardship
- Innovation and Adaptability
- Integrity and Accountability
- Collaboration and Inclusiveness

CORE VALUES



6. SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
1. Strong pool of multidisciplinary scientists 2. Existing marine research infrastructure 3. National mandate and regional cooperation in ocean sciences 4. Track record in marine biotechnology and renewable energy prototypes	1. Limited public visibility and science communication 2. Insufficient funding for advanced research 3. Dependence on external expertise for niche fields (e.g. cruise planning and management) 4. Limited data management systems
Opportunities	Threats
1. Blue economy growth and government will 2. International collaboration and donor funding 3. Capacity building through new technologies and training 4. Growing global interest in ocean sustainability and climate resilience	1. Impact of climate change and extreme weather events 2. Dependency on public funds 3. Brain drain and limited retention of talent 4. Bureaucratic constraints and policy delays

7. Strategic Objectives

Strategic Objective 1: Advance Ocean Research and Innovation for a Sustainable Blue Economy

Focus Areas:

- a. Deep sea exploration, marine biodiversity assessment, and coral reef resilience
- b. Development of bio-based products (bioplastics, biofertilisers, nutraceuticals)
- c. Marine biotechnology (including aquaculture) and bioactive compound screening
- d. Oceanographic data acquisition and modelling
- e. Marine renewable energy research and prototype development
- f. Marine genomics and genetics

Rationale: Position MOI as a leading research and innovation hub in the Indian Ocean by leveraging its scientific expertise and infrastructure to unlock the economic potential of ocean resources.

Strategic Objective 2: Enhance Marine Ecosystem Conservation, Climate Resilience and Disaster Risk Reduction

Focus Areas:

- a. Marine ecosystem protection and rehabilitation (seagrass, mangroves, coral)
- b. Ocean acidification and climate change impact assessment
- c. Coastal monitoring (ESAs, beach profiling, pollution, microplastics)
- d. Marine soundscapes and habitat mapping (e.g., side-scan sonar, remote sensing, acoustic recording)
- e. Environmental risk assessments and mitigation strategies
- f. Collaboration with national and regional bodies for disaster risk studies

Rationale: Strengthen MOI's capacity to safeguard marine biodiversity and promote ecosystem-based adaptation in the face of environmental change and anthropogenic pressures.

Strategic Objective 3: Strengthen Capacity Building, Education and Public Engagement

Focus Areas:

- a. Creation of an Education and Communication Unit
- b. Establishment of Ocean Literacy Clubs in schools and colleges
- c. Training programmes, Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for staff, scientific diving modules
- d. Citizen science and youth inclusivity programmes (e.g., snorkelling, marine clubs)
- e. Science communication through virtual reality centres, visitor aquariums

Rationale: Empower the next generation of ocean stewards and promote public awareness by integrating science communication, education and community engagement into MOI's core functions.

Strategic Objective 4: Foster Strategic Partnerships and Institutional Excellence

Focus Areas:

- a. Regional and international collaboration
- b. Public-private partnerships and industrial linkages for ocean innovation
- c. Establishment of multidisciplinary departments and Rodrigues & other outer islands substations
- d. Restructuring to valorise staff expertise and enhance research outputs
- e. Positioning MOI as a regional centre of excellence in oceanography

Rationale: Expand MOI's influence and impact by building strong institutional frameworks, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration and enhancing visibility and leadership in ocean affairs.



Strategic Objective 1: Advance Ocean Research and Innovation for a Sustainable Blue Economy

Key Performance Indicators	Action Steps	Risk Indicators	Mitigation Strategies	Estimated Budget (MUR)
Number of publications and patents	Launch and fund deep-sea research programmes	Delay in research funding or vessel access / funding issues	Establish multi-source funding and regional ship-time sharing agreements	20M
Number of proposals for biotechnology prototypes developed	Prototype and test marine bioplastics, biofertilisers	Limited lab infrastructure and IP challenges	Upgrade labs and work with IP consultants	15M
Number of AI-based ocean data tools elaborated	Integrate AI tools into ocean modelling	Lack of skilled data scientists and engineers	Upskill staff via targeted training and recruit data science interns	8M
Volume of high-quality ocean data collected annually	Deploy HF radar systems and sensors across EEZ	Equipment failure or insufficient maintenance	Set up preventive maintenance schedules and supplier SLAs	30M

Strategic Objective 2: Enhance Marine Ecosystem Conservation, Climate Resilience and Disaster Risk Reduction

Key Performance Indicators	Action Steps	Risk Indicators	Mitigation Strategies	Estimated Budget (MUR)
Area (ha) of proposed for restored marine habitats	Pilot rehabilitation in Albion	Habitat degradation due to storms or human activity	Select resilient sites and engage local communities in maintenance	12M
Number of pollution and climate assessments completed	Conduct microplastic and ecological risk studies	Insufficient baseline data	Initiate collaborative baseline survey programmes	6M
Mitigation of coral bleaching events	Implement coral heat-resilience trials	Failure of adaptation strategies	Test multiple species and symbiont combinations	5M
Number of species monitored	Create marine biodiversity inventory	Resource limitations or loss of continuity	Use citizen science and partnerships with universities	10M

Strategic Objective 3: Strengthen Capacity Building, Education and Public Engagement

Key Performance Indicators	Action Steps	Risk Indicators	Mitigation Strategies	Estimated Budget (MUR)
Number of school ocean clubs established	Establish Education & Communication Unit	Low uptake or lack of school participation	Partner with Ministry of Education and pilot in key schools	2M
Number of citizens reached	Create ocean literacy clubs	Limited outreach funding	Secure sponsorship from CSR foundations	3M
CPD training hours completed	Partner with UoM	Scheduling conflicts	Use hybrid formats and flexible scheduling	4M
Communication tools produced	Develop VR-based campaigns	Lack of multimedia skills	Outsource VR development and train in-house staff	6M

Strategic Objective 4: Strategic Partnerships & Institutional Excellence

Key Performance Indicators	Action Steps	Risk Indicators	Mitigation Strategies	Estimated Budget (MUR)
Number of effective MoUs proposed	Formalise regional and international collaborations	Bureaucratic delays	Prepare standard MoU templates and designate a legal liaison	1M
Grant-funded project volume	Build project pipeline	Grant rejections	Diversify donors and enhance proposal quality	2M
Rodrigues substation setup	Construct and equip station	Construction delays	Appoint local contractor with proven track record	10M
Restructuring milestones achieved	Re-organise departments	Resistance to change	Include staff in planning and communicate benefits	1.5M

Estimated Total Budget: MUR 160.5 Million

9. Human Resources (HR) Policy Plan (2025 – 2029)

9.1 HR Vision

To build and retain a highly skilled, motivated and innovative workforce that supports MOI's strategic objectives and positions the institute as a regional leader in oceanographic research and sustainability.

9.2 HR Strategic Goals

- a. **Capacity Development:** Upskill existing staff and recruit new talent aligned with priority research areas.
- b. **Workforce Planning:** Ensure optimal staff levels and competencies across departments.
- c. **Performance Management:** Implement systems for accountability, excellence and continuous improvement.
- d. **Organisational Culture:** Promote a collaborative, inclusive and adaptive work environment.
- e. **Retention & Recognition:** Foster career development, recognition programmes and staff wellbeing.

9.3 Key HR Initiatives and Action Plan

A. Capacity Building

- i. Identify skill gaps based on strategic plan needs (e.g., marine AI, biotechnology, VR)
- ii. Annual training calendar and CPD hours for all scientific and technical staff
- iii. Collaborate with University of Mauritius and international partners for training modules
- iv. Introduce Scientific Diving and Ocean Modelling Certifications

B. Recruitment and Succession Planning

- i. Recruit at least 10 specialised researchers (biotechnology, data science, deep-sea biology)
- ii. Develop internship and graduate trainee programmes for local university students
- iii. Establish talent pipeline with scholarships and MOI job shadowing schemes
- iv. Designate deputies for critical senior positions to ensure continuity

C. Organisational Restructuring

- i. Implement functional reorganisation as per Strategic Plan
- ii. Create or strengthen units: Education & Communication, Climate & Ecosystems, Innovation & Technology
- iii. Define clear roles, KPIs and reporting structures across teams

D. Performance and Appraisal System

- i. Annual performance appraisal framework tied to KPIs
- ii. Incentives for high performers and research outputs (papers, patents, grants)
- iii. Introduce 360-degree feedback and peer review for senior roles

E. Employee Engagement & Wellbeing

- i. Launch internal communication platform for updates and idea sharing
- ii. Wellness and mental health support services for staff
- iii. Organise quarterly staff engagement events

F. Diversity and Inclusion

- i. Promote gender equity in recruitment, especially in science and field roles
- ii. Support inclusion of staff with disabilities through workplace adaptations

9.4 HR Budget Estimate (2025 – 2029)

Category	Estimated Budget (MUR)
Training and CPD	10M
Recruitment and Talent Programmes	6M
Performance & Incentive Schemes	4M
Engagement and Wellness Programmes	2M
Organisational Restructuring	3M
Total	25M

9.5 Monitoring and Evaluation

- a. Biannual HR performance reviews
- b. Staff satisfaction surveys every 2 years
- c. Progress reporting to MOI Board and Strategic Planning Committee

9.6 Conclusion

This HR Plan supports the successful delivery of the MOI Strategic Plan 2025 – 2029. By investing in talent, structure and engagement, MOI will strengthen its capacity to achieve scientific excellence and become a model institution in the Blue Economy.

10. Implementation Framework

- a. **Lead Responsibility:** Director and Strategic Planning Committee (to be set up)
- b. **Monitoring & Evaluation:** Annual reviews and external audits
- c. **Reporting:** Quarterly updates to Board and Ministry
- d. **Review:** Mid-term in 2027 and full evaluation in 2029

11. Way Forward

This Strategic Plan positions MOI as a leader in regional oceanographic science. Through innovation and resilience, MOI will drive Mauritius' vision of becoming a model Large Ocean State.



Avenue des Anchois, Morcellement de Chazal
Albion, 91005, Republic of Mauritius
Tel : +(230) 206 0560
Fax : +(230) 238 5174
Web: <https://moi.govmu.org>
E-mail : director@moi.intnet.mu