

IORA – Indian Ocean Rim Association

The Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), of which SA is a founding member, was formally launched by a Ministerial Meeting in Mauritius in March 1997. The Association's broad objective is to promote the sustained growth and balanced development of the Region and of the Member States, and to create common ground for Regional Economic Co-operation (www.iora.net).

There are 3 arms within IORA, the Academic Group (AG) (the focus here); Trade and Industry and the business forum. IORA has adopted the following priority areas:

- Maritime Safety and Security (Geo-strategic issues and non-traditional security threats)
- Trade and Investment Facilitation
- Fisheries Management (Fisheries and Aquaculture)
- Disaster and Risk Management
- Tourism and Cultural Exchanges
- Academic cooperation, Science and Technology
 - Ecosystem, biodiversity and biodiscovery
 - Environment and global change
 - Renewable energy
 - Estuarine, coastal and marine resources, society and development
- Cross cutting themes
 - Operation Phakisa and Blue economy
 - Transformation and equity
 - Science, Technology, Innovation and capacity development

Currently SA serves on the IORA-AG as the Vice Chair to Indonesia (with Australia as the outgoing Chair) until October 2017 when SA will take over as Chair until 2019 with the United Arab Emirates as the Vice Chair.

Prof Narnia Bohler-Muller (HSRC) has been appointed as the Chairperson for the South African Chapter of the Academic Group and Dr Juliet Hermes (SAEON) as the Vice-chair. The Chair will coordinate the group's activities, which will include assisting the South African government in consolidating multilateral engagements that relate to topics covered under IORA and associated areas; post the IORA chair.

There are a number of planned events and workshops over the next couple of years and information on these can be found on the website (www.iora.net) and emails will be sent through SANCOR when relevant.

More information about the South African Chapter can be found at <http://iora-sa.dirisa.org> or by emailing iora.ag.sa@gmail.com, juliet@saeon.ac.za or nbohlermuller@hsrc.ac.za.