

Title: **The Valuation of Marine Ecosystems in West Africa: A tool for Decision-Making in Ecosystems Management and MPA Governance**

Authors: Thomas Binet, Cemare, University of Portsmouth (UK)
Pierre Failler, CEMARE-University of Portsmouth (UK)

Abstract: ABSTRACT FOR SPECIAL SESSION ID? In his report the economics of ecosystems and biodiversity, P. Sukhdev compared the valuation of ecosystem services and biodiversity to a compass which helps decision makers to engage in the conservation of environment and against the loss of biodiversity. Following this road, the authors present the results of an economic valuation of marine ecosystems for a sampling of MPA in four West African countries (Senegal, Cape Verde, Guinea, and Guinea-Bissau). These provide arguments on the importance of the valuation of Total Economic Value in promoting the conservation of marine ecosystems and stopping the loss of biodiversity. This paper shows how the valuation of marine ecosystems can help reconnect science and policy and provide a lever for action toward the conservation of marine ecosystems. In particular, the papers shows how non-use values (which compute both non-merchant services from the ecosystems and the perception and attachment of populations to the marine ecosystems) can provide key testimonies on the need to promote the establishment and strengthening of MPA and provide further instruments to govern under uncertainty and help adapting to change.