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REPOA Brief

Learning from the Experience of the Namibian Blue Economy 2

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Key Messages

Marine Transport	• Namibia is striving to build and sustain its competitive edge in ocean and sea transport, including the ports, and linkages between maritime transport and other sectors—manufacturing, agriculture, coastal infrastructure such as ports, towns and coastal industries, and trade.
Maritime Security	• Effective maritime security contributes to the growth and sustainability of other blue economy subsectors such as fishing, marine mining, marine and coastal tourism, maritime transport.
Ocean and Sea Extractives	• Namibia understands the importance of managing the sustainability of ocean and sea extractives related to the Blue Economy, including oil and gas.
Marine Renewable Energy	• Namibia has put in place plans to generate clean, green and renewable energy.
Skills and Career Development	• Namibia's efforts to unlock the opportunities of the blue economy include investing in new blue skills, careers and research.

This brief outlines some lessons from the experiences of Namibian blue economy following the mission of REPOA and the Bank of Namibia teams, which met the relevant Government authorities and the private sector agencies:

1. The Bank of Namibia (BoN)
2. The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Land Reform
3. The Benguela Current Convention (BCC)
4. The Namibian Ports Authority (NAMPORT)
5. The Environmental Investment Fund of Namibia (EIF)
6. The International University of Management
7. The Namibia Logistics Hub
8. The Sam Nujoma Campus of the University of Namibia.

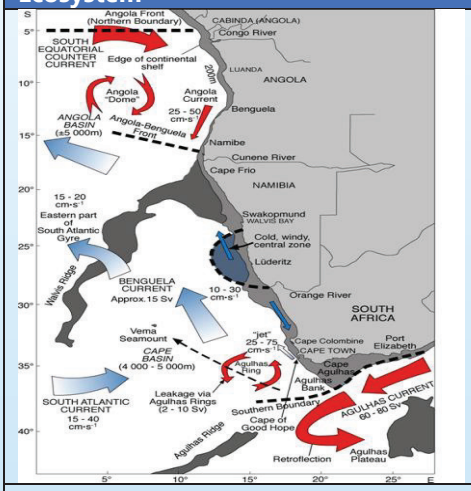
Objective	➢ **To explore the underlying opportunities and constraints for enhancing the expansion of the blue economy in Namibia as one of the best-case experiences for Tanzania.**

Baseline Definitions – Blue Economy	
World Bank	Defines BE as a sustainable use of the ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and jobs while preserving the health of ocean ecosystem.
EU Commission	Defines BE as encompassing all economic activities related to oceans, seas and coasts.
Centre for the Blue Economy	Defines BE as the overall contribution of the oceans to economies, the need to address the environmental and ecological sustainability of the oceans, and the ocean economy as a growth opportunity for both developed and developing countries.
United Nations	Defines the BE as an economy comprising a range of economic sectors and related policies that together determine whether the use of ocean resources is sustainable.
Environmental Institutions	Consider the BE to include economic benefits that may not be marketed, such as carbon storage, coastal protection, cultural values and biodiversity.
East African Community	Considers BE as the sustainable use and conservation of aquatic resources in both marine and freshwater environments, including oceans and seas, coastlines and banks, lakes, rivers and groundwater.

The Significance of the Blue Economy in Namibia

The coast of Namibia is part of an exceptionally rich marine ecosystem, supporting one of the most productive fisheries areas in the Atlantic. Namibia's coastline extends for 1,570 kilometres (km) and is bordered to the North by the Kunene River and in the South by the Orange River.

Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem



Source: Benguela Current Commission

- The Northern Benguela wind-driven upwelling system off Namibia's coast is recognized as one of the most biologically productive ocean regions in the world, positioning Namibia well to prosper from renewable food production in both fisheries and aquaculture, carbon sequestration and renewable wind energy.
- The Namibian Blue Economy includes Fisheries, Marine mining, Marine and coastal tourism, Marine transport, Coastal infrastructure, Ports and towns, Coastal industries.
- When effectively harnessed through appropriate policy frameworks, the existing and emerging sectors of the blue economy can result in increased food security, employment creation, tourism, infrastructure development, green energy, and a technologically advanced country, among other benefits.
- Namibia is endowed with human capital that, if trained and involved, could change the country and make it benefit from the blue economy in a sustainable way by creating sector-wise wealth and jobs.

Maritime Transport and Linkages—Linkages between maritime transport and other sectors are integral:

Trade & Logistics: The core function is to facilitate imports and exports (general cargo, commodities, vehicles, frozen products, foodstuffs, etc.). Namport serves as a gateway for cross-border cargo to/from SADC countries.

Manufacturing & Agriculture: Cargo handled includes raw materials for manufacturing, mining chemicals, mineral ores, and agricultural products like wheat, maize, sugar, and charcoal.

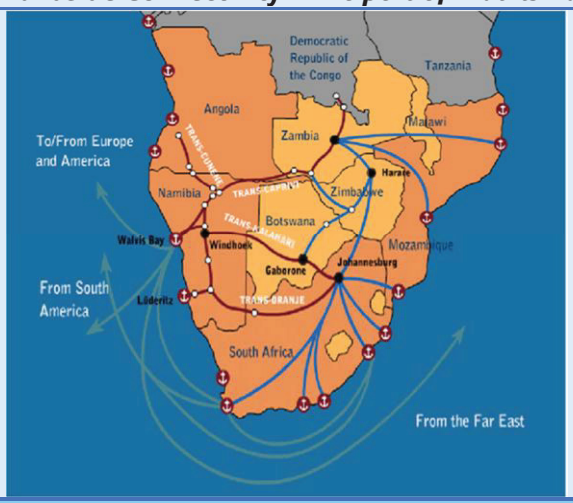
Coastal Infrastructure & Industries: The ports support coastal industries like fishing, offshore diamond mining, and increasingly, oil and gas exploration and production.

Tourism: The Port of Walvis Bay hosts passenger operations, with increased cruise liner calls augmenting revenue and providing opportunities for local SMEs.

Mining: Berth number 9 is dedicated for mining subsector--including uranium, copper, coal, diamond, sulphur, petroleum, manganese, uranium, and mineral ores.

Inland Transport (Road & Rail): Planned road and rail transport upgrades are expected to enable ports to remain preferred gateways, reducing transit times and providing alternative corridors.

Landside Connectivity-- *The port of Walvis Bay and other major ports in the SADC region*



- Walvis Bay corridor group has four transport and trade corridors:
  - The Trans Cunene Corridor to Angola,
  - The Trans-Kalahari Corridor to Botswana and South Africa,
  - The Trans Orange Corridor to Cape Province of South Africa (also connecting to the port of Lüderitz), and
  - The Walvis Bay-Ndola-Lubumbashi Development Corridor;
- Railways are being upgraded. Sectoral benefits resulting from the expansion of logistics include:
  - Connection to SADC corridor, including copper exports from Botswana and Namibia, and operations of Smelters in Zambia and Namibia.

Ports of Walvis Bay and Luderitz	Creating and Preserving Values
 *Zimbabwe sea-linked through Namibia with a dry port*	➢ **Navigation channel** was expanded to accommodate large shipping vessels, enabling port to port services and transshipment; between 1640 and 2115 vessels visit the ports of Walvis Bay and Lüderitz every year; ➢ **Container cargo** is handled at the New Container Terminals at the Ports of Walvis Bay and Lüderitz which has significantly bolstered capacity and connectivity; ➢ **Fishing industry support**—the ports of Walvis Bay and Lüderitz are vital links in exporting fish and fish products from Namibia to the global markets; ➢ **Passenger traffic**—the port of Walvis Bay offers a dedicated cruise-vessel berth, facilitating an expansion of the cruise tourism market; ➢ **Value-Adding Facilities—**Ship Repair Facility (up to 15kt); Cold Storage Facility; Dry Port Facilities (Zambia, Zimbabwe, Botswana and DRC); Marine Tourism (Waterfront & Marina); ➢ Both Walvis Bay and Lüderitz have invested significantly in modernizing their port facilities to accommodate the increasing number of cruise ships: o Deep-water berth capable of handling larger cruise vessels, ensuring safe docking and efficient passenger disembarkation; o Passenger terminals equipped with amenities such as lounges, customs services, and information centers that enhance the overall experience for tourists; o Transportation links to local attractions via road networks and shuttle services. ➢ **Future Berths & Terminals for** Green Hydrogen, Offshore Oil and Gas Supply Base, LPG/LNG, and Ship Repair (Graving Dock).

Maritime Security--Illegal fishing, for example, is a direct or objective threat to Namibian security because it is explicit, and targets marine resources, particularly fish species, the revenue-generating capacity of the Namibian state, its environmental stability, projection of military power at sea, protection of the marine environment, economic growth and development, and the livelihood of its coastal populations. The limitation of sea patrols by the Namibian Navy and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Land Reform due to financial constraints caused by illegal fishing activities has a negative influence on the marine environment in terms of destruction and depletion of fish resources. These dimensions of maritime security are integrally linked and mutually reinforcing.

The extent of occurrence, probability of occurrence, and historical antecedents thus make illegal fisheries activities a significant threat to Namibian maritime security. Falling under this category would also be corruptly awarded fishing quotas to foreign fishing companies without following due processes, which tends to result in overfishing of Namibian maritime waters.

To combat the challenge of illegal fishing, improvement and strengthening of existing mechanisms, international cooperation, and coordination between maritime security agencies, and continued engagement with neighbouring states were considered necessary.

Namibia, therefore, places a strong emphasis on security on its development agenda. This is reflected in several pieces of national legislation and multisectoral strategies adopted for monitoring, control, and surveillance of its fisheries and other marine resources.

Similarly, maritime security emphasises the location of vessels, especially fishing vessels, as this is necessary for search and rescue operations in cases of emergency at sea.

The ports Walvis Bay and Lüderitz are equipped with state-of-the-art safety and security measures that ensure a secure environment for tourists. These include advanced surveillance systems—monitoring all activities within the port area; and emergence response protocols &established plans to address any potential incidents swiftly.

Ocean Extractives—Deep-seabed and seawater mining are the new frontier with huge potential. Namibia is rich in minerals and many of these deposits are located in the coastal regions. Diamond mining in the ocean off the coast of Namibia is the most expensive diamond, mined under joint venture between DeBeers and the Government of Namibia.

Uranium is mined extensively in the Erongo region close to the coastal towns of Swakopmund and Walvis Bay. Most diamond-mining activities have moved offshore as deposits on land have been depleted. While much of the country's coastline is protected, mining activities have caused environmental degradation in localised areas. Nevertheless, the mining industry in the ocean and coastal regions of Namibia constitutes an important economic sector.

Skills and Career Development

Three key areas of BE that benefit from targeted research & career development	Main thrusts
 *Source: Environmental Investment Fund of Namibia; Ensuring Sustainability.*	Currently, the main research and education activities are linked to fisheries and aquaculture, with a huge gap of expertise in renewable energy, deep-sea mineral exploitation, oil and gas as these sectors are research driven by international companies with low connections to Namibian and African education and research institutions.
	The growing importance of BE sectors and BE components such as Blue Carbon and Green Hydrogen is currently pushing the development of new educational programmes in Namibia and other pilot countries such as South Africa, Seychelles, Mauritius and Ghana.
	The University of Namibia also has a BE research campus in Henties Bay which is a school of marine engineering that covers: fisheries, seaweed industrialization, oil and gas, and mining;
	Research is a core function of the Benguela Current Commission (BCC) with various working groups and experts on Eco-Science.

Namibia's Directorate of Resource Management (under the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Land Reform) is responsible for conducting research and advising on the sustainable use of the living marine resources and the state of the marine environment. There are two research institutes in Namibia, the main centre in Swakopmund and a smaller one in Lüderitz.

Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

The blue economy presents an opportunity to boost the Namibian economy, contribute to food security and create job opportunities for its people. The BE Policy guides the coordination and promotion of sustainable and equitable economic opportunities. The BE policy further advocates for investment in Namibia's Blue Economy by both local and international investors to strengthen growth and allow expansion of the Blue Economy within its guiding principles for the benefit of the current and future generations of Namibia.

Namibia is committed to the principle of optimum sustainable exploitation of aquatic resources.

The success of these blue economy activities and their respective benefits to the economy depends on two key factors:

- Effective leadership, strong political will, and bold decisions to implement plans by the National Planning Commission; and
- Policy predictability and certainty helps to reduce the need for applying fiscal incentives, which are often distortionary and lead to revenue loss.

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