

BLUE ECONOMY REPOA's 29th ANNUAL RESEARCH WORKSHOP

CONCEPT NOTE

Transforming Tanzania's
Blue Economy for Inclusive
& Sustainable Development

25-26 May 2026,
Zanzibar, Tanzania



Organised by:



Table of Contents

01

02

04

05

06

08

21

26

34

	Table of Contents	i
	Executive Summary	ii
1.	Introduction and Purpose	01
1.1	Introduction	
1.2	Objectives	
1.3	Rationale for the Workshop	
1.4	Targeted Results	
1.5	Expected Impact	
2.	29th Annual Research Workshop Programme	02
3.	Key Blue Economy Sectors	04
4.	Blue Economy in Tanzania—Mainland	05
5.	Blue Economy in Tanzania—Zanzibar	06
6.	Blue Economy Best-Case Countries—Europe	08
6.1	Blue Economy in the European Union	
6.2	Blue Economy in the Netherlands	
6.3	Blue Economy in Norway	
6.4	Blue Economy in Sweden	
6.5	Blue Economy in Denmark	
6.6	Blue Economy in Ireland	
6.7	Blue Economy in the UK	
6.8	Blue Economy in Germany	
6.9	Blue Economy in France	
6.10	Blue Economy in Spain	
6.11	Blue Economy in Italy ²³	
7.	Blue Economy Best-Case Countries--Asia	21
7.1	Blue Economy in China	
7.2	Blue Economy in Japan	
7.3	Blue Economy in Indonesia	
7.4	Blue Economy in the Philippines	
8.	Blue Economy Best-Case Countries—Inside Africa	26
8.1	Blue Economy in Namibia	
8.2	Blue Economy in Seychelles	
8.3	Blue Economy in Mauritius	
8.4	Blue Economy in South Africa	
8.5	Blue Economy in Ghana	
	References	34

Executive Summary

Tanzania’s transition toward a sustainable and inclusive blue economy is advancing, supported by major national policy frameworks such as the National Blue Economy Policy (2024) and Zanzibar’s Blue Economy Policy, Implementation Strategy, and Fisheries Master Plan (2022–2023). Yet the country continues to experience an implementation gap: strong policy ambition is not matched by institutional coordination, crosssector integration, investment mobilisation, or sufficiently evidence-based strategies.

Despite vast marine and freshwater resources—including a 1,424 km coastline, a 200nauticalmile EEZ, and extensive inland water ecosystems contributing to fisheries, tourism, aquaculture, transport, and energy—realized economic gains are below potential. Mainland Tanzania’s blue economy contributes 11.9% to GDP, while in Zanzibar it contributes 29.6% of GDP and employs roughly one-third of the population. These figures demonstrate opportunity but also reveal the need for greater productivity, competitiveness, and resilience.

The **29th Annual Research Workshop (ARW)** with the theme “**Transforming the Blue Economy for Inclusive and Sustainable Development in Tanzania**” offers a critical national platform to translate policy frameworks into actionable pathways. Through crosssector dialogue, comparative learning, and partnership-building, the ARW will accelerate policy implementation, strengthen institutional capacity, and generate concrete outputs—moving Tanzania from policy aspiration to structured action.

This concept note presents a **restructured, outcomeoriented** design for the ARW, focused on:

- Strategic action planning;
- Crosssector integration;
- Financing and investment mobilisation;
- Evidence generation;
- Adaptive learning from global bestcase examples;
- Strengthened governance and implementation modalities.

The blue economy workshop is designed not as a mere discussion event, but as a **catalytic implementation forum**, resulting in clear commitments, timelines, and mechanisms for followup.

1. Introduction and Purpose

1.1 Introduction

The 29th Annual Research Workshop (ARW) on the Blue Economy in Tanzania, themed “**Transforming the Blue Economy for Inclusive and Sustainable Development in Tanzania,**” marks the first dedicated platform convened by REPOA and its partners to examine how Tanzania and its partner countries can deepen their integration into the global blue economy. The workshop responds to the growing need for countries to leverage maritime and aquatic resources for enhanced trade, competitiveness, climate resilience, and sustainable economic development.

The **purpose** of the 29th ARW is therefore to:

Provoke and promote policy dialogue and contextualised research on how to sustainably accelerate the implementation of the blue economy in Tanzania—both Mainland and Zanzibar—while improving outcomes in terms of inclusive, competitive and productivity-led economic growth.

In addition, the workshop seeks to draw upon global bestcase country experiences to illuminate the drivers of sustainable blueeconomy growth and identify lessons relevant to Tanzania’s context.

1.2 Objectives

The overall objective of the 29th ARW is to **catalyze policy dialogue and generate actionable, context-specific research insights** that will accelerate the sustainable implementation of the blue economy across Zanzibar and Mainland Tanzania. The workshop aims to move beyond dialogue by producing **practical recommendations**, implementation pathways, and measurable action points that support inclusive, competitive, and productivity-driven economic growth.

The workshop will also draw from international best-case experiences to identify key drivers of successful blue economy transformations and assess how these can be adapted to the Tanzanian context.

The workshop will pursue the following three specific objectives:

- 1. To identify concrete opportunities and challenges within Tanzania's blue economy and translate these into targeted policy design options with the Tanzania Vision 2050 and Zanzibar Development Vision 2050;
- 2. To assess and recoment examine strategies for effectively implementing blue economy policies, strategies, including strengthening linkages with other sectors to enhance national competitiveness and economic transformation; and
- 3. To sharpen the analytical perspectives on sustainable blue economy implementation by examining African and global best-case experiences and extracting practical lessons relevant to the Tanzania's context.

1.3 Rationale for the Workshop

The blue economy is emerging as a structural pillar of Tanzania’s longterm transformation. The Mainland’s extensive coastline, vast Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), rich freshwater systems, and maritime corridors, alongside Zanzibar’s marine-dependent economy, present an unmatched opportunity for sustainable, inclusive growth. However, realising this potential requires:

- » Coherent and harmonised policy frameworks;
- » Robust marine resource governance;
- » Technological and institutional innovations;
- » Enhanced financing and investment pipelines;
- » Strengthened local capacities across research, regulation, and industry.

The 29th ARW thus provides a **national and international convening space** where policymakers, researchers, privatesector actors, financial institutions, regulators, and development partners can jointly interrogate emerging evidence, share global experiences, and identify actionable pathways for Tanzania’s blueeconomy advancement. This rationale aligns with the workshop’s commitment to strengthening partnerships and collective action across sectors and regions.

1.4 Targeted Results

The need for sustained building of relevant skills and policy engagement across the public and private sectors underscores the importance of bringing together the relevant stakeholders from the key institutions in Zanzibar and Tanzania Mainland, including MDAs, researchers, financial institutions, regulators, the representatives of the best-case countries, and the development partners to discuss and build an understanding of the Blue Economy from various points of views and experiences.

The workshop is designed to generate **six major clusters of results**, each contributing to national capacity development and policy coherence:



1.5 Expected Impact

By the conclusion of the workshop, Tanzania is expected to be positioned to:

1. Accelerate the implementation of blueeconomy strategies in both Mainland and Zanzibar;
2. Inform highlevel policy processes with evidencebased insights;
3. Enhance coordination among institutions responsible for fisheries, maritime transport, aquaculture, coastal tourism, port development, energy, and conservation;
4. Support the emergence of new research priorities and collaborative frameworks;
5. Strengthen national competitiveness in regional and global blueeconomy value chains.

2. 29th Annual Research Workshop Programme

The 29th Annual Research Workshop (ARW) will be delivered through a structured twoday format designed to facilitate policy dialogue, knowledge exchange, and action planning. The workshop format is grounded in the tentative programme provided in the concept note, which outlines plenary sessions, keynote presentations, institutional special sessions, and thematic discussions.

The thematic structure is organised to enable a logical progression from highlevel framing to sectoral deep dives and implementation pathways.

DAY 1 – Strategic Framing and Policy Anchoring: MONDAY, 25TH MAY 2026

OPENING PLENARY	Welcome Remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • REPOA • Ministry of Blue Economy and Fisheries, RGZ • Ministry responsible for Planning or Blue Economy, URT
	Remarks from Partners
OPENING ADDRESS	Guest of Honour
Keynote speakers	Blue Economy Policy Framework and Implementation: Fundamental Concepts and Best-Practices
TEA AND COFFEE BREAK	ALL
PLENARY SESSION 1:	OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR SUSTAINING THE GROWTH AND TRANSFORMATION OF THE BLUE ECONOMY
LUNCH BREAK	ALL
PLENARY SESSION 2:	FINANCING THE BLUE ECONOMY'S OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH
TEA AND COFFEE BREAK	ALL
"SPECIAL SESSION OF THE ZANZIBAR MINISTRY OF BLUE ECONOMY & FISHERIES"	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. LAUNCH OF THE MARITIME TRAINING INSTITUTE 2. LAUNCH OF THE FISHERIES TRAINING INSTITUTE
"SPECIAL SESSION OF REPOA"	REPOA 30 YEARS ANNIVERSARY
SPECIAL SESSION OF NATIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION	LAUNCH OF THE NATIONAL RESEARCH STRATEGIC AGENDA
DINNER	Special Event of CRDB (and Equity Bank) on Financing the Blue Economy in Tanzania (TBC)

DAY 2, Sectoral Deep Dives and Implementation Roadmaps: TUESDAY, 26TH MAY 2026

PLENARY SESSION 3	BUILDING THE BLUE ECONOMIES OF THE COASTAL COMMUNITIES THROUGH EFFECTIVE SUPPORT FOR:
	A. FISHERIES
	B. AQUACULTURE
	C. SEAWEED FARMING
TEA AND COFFEE BREAK	ALL
PLENARY SESSION 4	TRANSFORMING TRADE EXPANSION THROUGH THE BLUE ECONOMY INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGEMENT:
	A. MARINE TRANSPORT (SHIPPING, PORTS, & CORRIDORS)
	B. MARITIME SECURITY
	C. COASTAL TOURISM
LUNCH BREAK	ALL
PLENARY SESSION 5	BLUE ECONOMY PARTNERSHIPS, RESEARCH AND RENEWABLE ENERGY
CLOSING SESSION	KEY REFLECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
	CLOSING REMARKS

3. Key Blue Economy Sectors

	Key Sectors	Short definition
	Fisheries	The sustainable harvesting of naturally occurring living resources in both marine and freshwater environments.
	Aquaculture	The cultivation and farming of aquatic organisms in a way that has minimal impact on air, water quality and on fish welfare.
	Maritime Transport and Ports	The activities associated with ensuring a sustainable maritime transport ecosystem, including the transportation of freight and passengers by water and port services.
	Coastal and maritime tourism	The activities involved in providing tourism services in and around coastal or marine environments contribute to sustainable development in the local area.
	Seaweed farming	The cultivation and farming of seaweed, adding value through processing and creating diverse products for food, cosmetics, and animal feed, while ensuring marine ecosystem conservation.
	Blue renewable energy	The offshore, inshore, and nearshore generation of clean and renewable power from natural sources, including wind, wave, tidal and solar.
	Blue biotechnology	The application of science and technology to aquatic organisms to produce knowledge, goods, and services, in compliance with sustainability practices.
	Blue tech and ocean observation	The activities, technologies and infrastructure involved in ocean data collection, modelling and prediction, including for maritime security and defence.
	Environmental protection & regeneration	The protection and regeneration of marine ecosystems, including activities to prevent ocean pollution and restore and strengthen biodiversity in coastal areas.
	Deep sea mining	The extraction of minerals and resources from the ocean floor for various industrial uses, including oil and gas and other minerals and desalination.
	Shipbuilding and refit	The products and services required for building, maintenance, repair and refitting of vessels for environmentally responsible water transport.
	Water management	The services and infrastructure required for sustainable water collection, purification, desalination, decontamination and distribution, as well as for sewage and waste treatment.

4. Blue Economy in Tanzania – Mainland



Application of UNECA’S Blue Economy Valuation Toolkit to Tanzania Mainland in 2023 revealed the following four key indicators of the blue economy:

- ✓ **GDP** - BE contributed to 11.9% of Mainland Tanzania’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the year 2020.
- ✓ **BE WAGES** - the BE generated in the year 2020 9.9% of Gross National Income (GNI) in Mainland Tanzania.
- ✓ **BE SERVICES** - The values of ecosystem services dominated by freshwater lakes accounted for 74.8% of BE services.
- ✓ **SOCIAL FABRIC** -The BE contributes positively to the social fabric as indicated by its Composite Social Index Value of 48.64 in 2020.

Tanzania has a coastline of 1,424 km, a territorial sea of about 64,000 square kilometres, and an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of 200 nautical miles, covering 223,000 square kilometres. The total inland water of the country covers about 6.5 percent of the total land area. Inland water resources in Tanzania include Lake Victoria (35,088 square kilometres), Lake Tanganyika (13,489 square kilometres), Lake Nyasa (5,760 square kilometres), Lake Rukwa (3,000 square kilometres), Lake Eyasi (1,000 square kilometres), and about 1,000 square kilometres of other small lakes, in addition to rivers and wetlands. These lend to a variety of activities including fisheries, tourism, mariculture and aquaculture, energy production, ports, coastal transport, and coastal mining.

The fisheries industry is a major node of economic activity. Located in the African Great Lake region, the country has abundant fishery resources. Tanzanian EEZ lies within the richest tuna belt of the Southwest Indian Ocean (SWIO). According to World Bank estimation, the tuna fishery in the Tanzanian marine waters provides around 0.9 percent of the South West Indian Ocean (SWIO) region’s tuna production. Fisheries contribute to Tanzania’s economy in both income and employment. The sector is responsible for over 180,000 jobs, while 4.5 million people indirectly depend on fishery activities on the Mainland. The sector contributes about 1.7% to the country’s GDP.

Tourism, is a key sector and a massive economic driver contributing to Tanzania’s economic growth. In 2024, the tourism sector was the second-largest component of Mainland Tanzania’s GDP, with a contribution of 17.2%, and acting as the country’s top foreign exchange earner, generating roughly **\$3.4 to \$4.2 billion** annually. In terms of formal employment, the sector ranks third, with 850,000 workers. Nonetheless, the share of coastal tourism in the total activity is not measurable.

Oil and gas are the next sectors that can boost the Tanzanian economy. Tanzania’s natural gas reserves were estimated at 57.54 trillion cubic feet. In 2024-2025, the contribution of the mining and quarrying sectors (inclusive of oil and natural gas) to the GDP was 10.0%.

Tanzania’s Blue Economy focus areas for investment	Fisheries and Aquaculture: Sustainable fisheries and aquaculture;
	Maritime Conservation: Marine and coastal ecosystem conservation and restoration (mangroves, coral reefs);
	Tourism & Recreation: Development of eco-friendly tourism and related infrastructure;
	Maritime Infrastructure: Maritime transport, ports, and logistics;
	Energy: Renewable energy from ocean sources (wind, waves);
	Waste-to-resource solutions for a circular economy.

Key Funding Sources and Initiatives

International Funding

World Bank: Approved **\$227 million** in grants and credits in **June 2025** for projects such as the Tanzania Scaling-Up Sustainable Marine Fisheries and Aquaculture Management Project (TAFSAM).

European Union (EU) & European Investment Bank (EIB): The EU is providing a **€110 million** contribution for a climate-resilient blue economy program. The EIB has also launched a **€350 million** (about Sh1.02 trillion) credit line through local banks (CRDB, NMB, KCB) to support blue economy businesses, especially women-led enterprises.

UNDP & Global Environment Facility (GEF): A **\$6 million** project was approved by the GEF Council in **December 2025**, implemented with the UNDP, to safeguard critical coastal habitats and advance inclusive blue economy opportunities in the Tanga-Pemba Seascape.

Blue Alliance: This non-profit is making impact investments, including in community-based aquaculture and ecotourism in Pemba, Zanzibar, using its Blue Finance impact loan facility.

Government and Private Sector Funding

Government Frameworks: Mainland Tanzania's Five Years Development Plan III (FYDP III) integrate blue economy goals to attract investment and Vision 2050 implementation frameworks.

Private Sector Investment: The government encourages private investment in various areas, including ship-building, fish-processing, ice-making plants, and eco-tourism.

Local Banks: Financial institutions like CRDB Bank, NMB, and KCB are involved in facilitating access to finance for blue economy enterprises through partnerships with international bodies like the EIB.

These investments aim to create jobs, enhance livelihoods, improve climate resilience, and ensure the sustainable use of marine and freshwater resources.

Policy and Governance Framework: National Blue Economy Policy (2024)—A comprehensive framework launched to unlock ocean wealth while ensuring environmental conservation and social inclusion.

5. Blue Economy in Tanzania—Zanzibar



Application of UNECA'S Blue Economy Valuation Toolkit to Tanzania--Zanzibar in 2023 revealed the following four key indicators of the blue economy:

- ✓ **GDP**—currently the BE contributes 29.6% of Zanzibar's GDP.
- ✓ **BE EMPLOYMENT**—Currently the BE employ about one-third of the Zanzibar population.
- ✓ **BE SERVICES**--The values of ecosystem services were led by the contribution from coral reefs.
- ✓ **SOCIAL FABRIC**--The BE contributes positively to the social fabric of both Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar, as indicated by its Composite Social Index Value which was 48.64 in 2020.

In the archipelago of Zanzibar, oceans and seas are the sole BE resources of the island. BE is important to Zanzibar because of the scope of activities / areas of investment included under its umbrella:

Blue economy areas of investment in Zanzibar	Fisheries and Aquaculture: Transitioning from artisanal to deep-sea fishing. The government is providing modern equipment, boats, and capital to local fishers while developing fish-processing factories for export.
	Seaweed Farming: Zanzibar is the world's third-largest seaweed exporter. Over 25,000 farmers—mostly women—depend on it. Current efforts focus on value addition through local processing and shifting to deeper waters to combat climate change impacts.
	Maritime Trade & Infrastructure: Modernizing ports (such as the Fumba and Malindi projects) to facilitate 98% of international trade that is seaborne.
	Tourism & Recreation: Shifting toward eco-tourism and marine sports to protect fragile coral reefs, maintaining a sector that already accounts for 27-30% of GDP.
	Energy (Oil & Gas): Reviving exploration with a 3D seismic survey launched in January 2026 to assess offshore potential.

Key Funding Sources and Initiatives

International Monetary Funding	
	The World Bank approved \$227 million in grants and credits in June 2025 for marine resource management and climate resilience.
	The IMF allocated around \$15-16 million to Zanzibar's blue economy sectors from its post-COVID-19 Recovery Fund.
	The European Union with a €110 million contribution for a sustainable blue economy in Tanzania.
	UNDP, France (through AFD), Norway, Germany, and USAID , who provide expertise and funding for various initiatives like marine spatial planning and conservation.
	Impact Investing: Organizations like the Blue Alliance provide impact loans through their Blue Finance facility, funding "reef-positive" businesses such as community-based aquaculture and ecotourism enterprises in the North Pemba Channel Conservation Area.

Government and Private Sector Funding	
	Public Finance: The Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar (RGoZ) provides funding and incentives. In 2022/23, the Zanzibar Economic Empowerment Agency (ZEEA) was capitalized with \$7.5 million to establish a revolving fund for local enterprises.
	Traditional Banking and Microfinance: Local banks, such as CRDB Bank and NMB Bank, offer financial products, while microfinance is a primary source of capital for small-scale entrepreneurs in sectors like seaweed farming and fishing.
	Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs): The government encourages PPPs, especially in infrastructure projects like port development and renewable energy, to attract large-scale investment and share risk.
	Blue Economy Transformation Fund: The Zanzibar Blue & Green Economy Transformation Fund is being developed to attract private equity and development finance for scaling the seaweed industry and other marine agriculture.

Policy and Governance Framework: The Zanzibar blue economy authorities have, thus far, developed the following six key blue economy policy documents:

- a. Zanzibar Blue Economy Policy, October 2022;
- b. Zanzibar Blue Economy Implementation Strategy, October 2022;
- c. Zanzibar Fisheries Policy, 2022;
- d. Zanzibar Fisheries Master Plan, 2023—2038;
- e. The Ministry of Blue Economy and Fisheries Strategic Plan, 2023 – 2028; and
- f. Zanzibar Blue Economy Gender Strategy and Action Plan.

6. Blue Economy Best-Case Countries—Europe

6.1 Blue Economy in The European Union

It is estimated that the BE in the European Union provides 5.4 million jobs and generates €500 billion in gross value added a year. The BE in Europe encompasses a variety of interrelated sectors and activities involving oceans, seas, and coasts. This broadly integrated framework entails that effective transformation of the BE requires multi-sectoral cooperation and coordination, a variety of knowledge and skills, adequate planning and a secure environment for all actors in the related value chains. From the EU's extensive experience, below are some key features from which preliminary benchmarking and subsequent research will seek to obtain a detailed understanding to inform the BE policies and practices in Tanzania and Africa in general.

- **Sustainable blue economy:** how the blue economy contributes to the European Green Deals and the transformation towards a carbon-neutral, circular and biodiverse EU economy, and how the key member states contribute to/or constrain effective sustainability initiatives in the region.
- **Maritime Transport:** how the EU has built and sustained its competitive edge in ocean and sea transport, including the ports, shipbuilding and linkages between maritime transport and other sectors--manufacturing, agriculture, and trade.
- **Ocean and Sea extractives:** how the EU manages the sustainability of extractives related to the BE, including oil and gas.
- **Marine security:** how maritime security is organized and its contribution to the growth and sustainability of other blue economy subsectors, such as fishing, tourism, maritime transport, etc.
- **BlueInvest:** efforts by individual member states and the EU agencies to boost innovation and investment in sustainable solutions and technologies for the blue economy, including efforts to build capacities for maritime start-ups, SMEs, scale-ups and investors.
- **Maritime spatial planning (MSP):** how the MSP tool is applied to manage the use of the EU seas and oceans more coherently, and the enablers of effective participation of the individual members of the EU.
- **Aquaculture:** how the organization of the aquaculture subsector, its growing role in a sustainable food system for Europe, challenges (if any) and applied solutions.
- **Marine renewable energy:** the EU is known to have the largest sea space in the world—how it has or plans to generate clean, renewable energy.
- **Blue bioeconomy and blue biotechnology:** how the EU's private sector uses the ocean and seas to produce derivative products such as cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, packaging, biofuels, etc.
- **Other sectors:** to explore other direct and indirect activities and sectors that constitute the European blue economy, such as tourism, research, and maritime security.
- **Skills and career development:** how the EU unlocked the opportunities of the blue economy by investing in new blue skills and careers.
- **EU Blue Economy Observatory and Forum:** the foundations for a collective knowledge dissemination, knowledge exchanges and innovation platform for the sustainability of oceans,

seas and coastal areas.

Financing for the blue economy in the EU is provided through a blend of public and private funding mechanisms, including national government programs, EU initiatives, and private financial instruments like blue bonds.

6.2 Blue Economy in the Netherlands



The Netherlands places strong emphasis on innovation in offshore wind energy, water management, and coastal infrastructure, which are central pillars of its Blue Economy strategy. The Netherlands' Blue Economy strategy prioritizes sustainable shipping, offshore wind energy, advanced fisheries, and maritime technology as drivers of long-term growth. Its world-class port infrastructure, anchored by Rotterdam, the largest container port in Europe, underpins the country's central role in global trade.

The Netherlands operates a highly advanced blue economy, contributing approximately **€25.8 billion** in Gross Value Added (GVA) and employing nearly **187,000 people** as of 2022. While it accounts for a modest 2.9% of the national GVA, the Dutch sector is a European powerhouse, ranking **5th in GVA** across the EU. Dutch leadership in aquaculture, water engineering, and circular economy models offers a blueprint for how economic development can be balanced with ecological preservation.

Key Pillars of the Dutch Blue Economy and Focus Areas of Investment	Offshore Renewable Energy: The Netherlands is a leader in offshore wind, utilizing RVO-supported data and projects for energy transition.
	Maritime Innovation & Technology: High-tech, sustainable shipping, and smart port solutions (e.g., in Rotterdam) are prioritized.
	Circular & Sustainable Initiatives: BlueCity in Rotterdam acts as a hub for circular entrepreneurship, transforming marine waste for new products.
	Aquaculture & Marine Bioresources: Development of sustainable fish and seaweed farming is underway, aiming to balance food production with ecological health.
	Sustainable Blue Economy Partnerships (SBEP): The Netherlands, supported by organizations like NWO and Rijkswaterstaat, is involved in European projects focusing on Digital Twins of the Ocean (DTOs) and sustainable marine development.

Key Financing Sources and Initiatives

Financing Sources and Initiatives for the Netherlands	
Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership	This EU initiative (SBEP) pools resources to fund projects focused on digitalizing marine ecosystems and enhancing business competitiveness.
NWO Funding	The NWO provides significant funding for research.
Regional & National Support	Initiatives like the tidal energy project <i>SeaCurrent</i> received support from both national and regional funds to develop innovative marine technology.

European Investment Bank (EIB)	The EIB is doubling its commitment to sustainable ocean projects (e.g., coastal protection, green shipping) to over €2.5 billion, which directly impacts European maritime nations like the Netherlands.
BlueInvest	A European Commission initiative that aims to boost innovation and investment in the sustainable blue economy by providing coaching, matchmaking events, and access to finance for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and start-ups.

6.3 Blue Economy in Norway



The map shows Norway's coastline and major cities including Trondheim, Oslo, and Stavanger. It also highlights geographical features like the Arctic Circle and the Tana River. Neighboring countries like Sweden, Finland, and Latvia are also visible.

With one of the longest coastlines in Europe, the country has relied for centuries on marine resources for fisheries, trade, and international connectivity. Since the 1970s, oil and gas reserves have transformed Norway into one of the world's wealthiest nations. The aquaculture industry, particularly salmon farming, has emerged as a key growth sector and potential green industry, complementing traditional fisheries and offering opportunities for innovation in marine biotechnology, feed alternatives, and ecosystem-based management.

Key Pillars of the Norwegian Blue Economy and Focus Areas of Investment

- Ocean Industries & Energy:** The oil and gas sector, along with its supply chain, is the largest ocean industry, while offshore wind and carbon capture (CCS) are growing rapidly as part of the green transition.
- Seafood & Aquaculture:** Norway is a global leader in sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, with the industry creating significant value in Northern Norway.
- Maritime Sector:** A major component involving shipbuilding, ship repair, and maritime transport.
- Innovation & Sustainability:** The government focuses on "blue growth," using technology to manage ocean resources sustainably.
- Marine Biotechnology:** Emerging sector utilizing marine organisms for healthcare, beauty, and energy.

Key Financing Mechanisms and Initiatives

Financing Mechanisms and Initiatives for Norway	
Government Grants & Support	Norway provides significant funding for innovation, entrepreneurship, and reducing marine litter.
Blue Finance & Bonds	The International Finance Corporation (IFC) and Norwegian entities utilize blue bonds for ocean-friendly projects, such as the 2 billion Norwegian krone bond for sustainable water resource protection and fishing.
Development Cooperation	Through Norad, Norway supports sustainable ocean management globally, investing hundreds of millions in NOK to promote a sustainable, inclusive ocean economy, including "Oceans for Development" programs.

Blue Growth Focus	The EEA and Norway Grants support business development and innovation in marine/maritime sectors, targeting sustainable growth in coastal areas.
Research & Innovation	Funding is directed towards developing a circular blue bioeconomy, focusing on high-value products from fishing and aquaculture waste.
Sustainable Ocean Management	The government's Sustainable Ocean Plan (supported by the High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy) focuses on maintaining ecosystem health.

6.4 Blue Economy in Sweden



Sweden's adoption of the Swedish Maritime Strategy shifted focus toward sustainable growth across shipping, aquaculture, coastal tourism, renewable energy, and marine biotechnology. Recent initiatives, such as the "Co-Creating Better Blue" program (2022), emphasize innovation, collaboration, and ecosystem-based planning. Coastal tourism led the sector, generating 70% of jobs and 58% of GVA, followed by maritime transport (19% GVA, ~10% jobs) and living resources (11% GVA, ~13% jobs). Overall, the sector employed over 148,700 people in 2022. The country invests heavily in marine research and technology, with initiatives like "Co-Creating Better Blue" fostering sustainable marine solutions through collaboration between academia, industry, and local communities.

The Swedish blue economy is highly diverse, ranging from traditional maritime industries to innovative green technologies:

Key Pillars of the Swedish Blue Economy and Focus Areas of Investment

Coastal Tourism: The dominant sector, accounting for **70% of blue jobs** and **58% of its GVA**. It has fully recovered from a sharp 40%+ decline during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Maritime Transport: Represents **19% of GVA** and 10% of total blue employment. Swedish ports handle roughly **4.7% of all EU cargo operations**.

Living Resources: Contributes **11% to GVA** and 13% of employment, with emerging focuses on sustainable "Blue Food" like algae cultivation.

Offshore Wind: A rapidly expanding sector expected to drive future employment, though recently challenged by government blocks on 13 projects due to national defense concerns.

Research & Innovation: Programs like Co-Creating Better Blue (C2B2) focus on managing, protecting, and sustainably using marine ecosystems, with a 50 million SEK investment in research.

Electric Maritime Transport: Swedish company Candela is pioneering zero-emission hydrofoiling electric ferries for Stockholm's public transport, reducing CO2 per passenger by **97.5%**.

Sustainability Focus: The Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management (SwAM) promotes "blue growth," ensuring that maritime industries, including emerging aquaculture and renewable energy, do not overutilize marine resources.

Key Financing Mechanisms and Initiatives

A. Public Financing and Initiatives	
Government Agencies	The Swedish government promotes efforts for the protection and restoration of marine ecosystems and sustainable use of resources through agencies like the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management (SwAM), which focuses on managing marine and freshwater resources.
Development Aid	The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) provides substantial financial support for a sustainable ocean economy in developing countries , with SEK 733 million in 2022 .
Research Funding	The Swedish Foundation for Strategic Environmental Research (Mistra) has provided substantial funding, such as SEK 50 million for the "Co-Creating Better Blue" research program , which focuses on sustainable and collaborative use of the ocean.
EU Funds	Sweden participates in EU-level financing mechanisms, including the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), which has financed projects like the development of selective fishing gear and local fish markets.
B. Private and Blended Financing	
Blue Bonds	Financial institutions, such as the International Finance Corporation (IFC), have issued Swedish krona (SEK) denominated green bonds (which include blue finance investments) to investors in Sweden, attracting interest from major Swedish investors like AP7 and AP3 pension funds.
BlueInvest	Supported by the European Commission and the Swedish government, the BlueInvest initiative helps connect innovative blue economy start-ups and SMEs with investors, successfully mobilizing over 300 million euros in venture capital to date.
Sustainable Finance Principles	Swedish institutions are part of a community of practice that champions the Sustainable Blue Economy Finance Principles, the first global guiding framework to align financial activities with Sustainable Development Goal 14 (SDG14 - Life below water).

6.5 Blue Economy in Denmark



The Danish Blue Economy is a significant driver of national economic performance, generating approximately €15.1 billion in Gross Value Added (GVA) in 2022, equivalent to about 4.5% of Denmark's total GDP (Blue Economy Observatory, 2024). This contribution comes from a diversified maritime sector encompassing shipping, offshore renewable energy, fisheries, marine technology, and coastal tourism. In terms of employment, the Blue Economy supported an estimated 129,000 jobs in 2022, representing a vital source of livelihoods for both coastal and inland communities (Blue Economy Observatory, 2024).

Shipping and port services provide high-skilled positions in logistics, engineering, and vessel operations, while offshore wind projects create employment in construction, maintenance, and marine engineering (European Commission, 2025). Fisheries and aquaculture offer direct and indirect jobs, sustaining traditional coastal livelihoods, whereas marine technology and research sectors foster innovation-based employment opportunities. National policies align with the EU Common Fisheries Policy, ensuring sustainable fish stocks, promoting responsible aquaculture,

and supporting coastal community livelihoods. Programmes and institutions focusing on maritime education, engineering, and offshore energy skills development help maintain a highly skilled workforce to support the Blue Economy.

Key Pillars of the Danish Blue Economy and Focus Areas of Investment	Offshore Wind: Remains a primary driver of growth; Denmark continues to leverage its early-mover advantage as offshore wind energy becomes one of the fastest-growing sectors in the EU.
	Fisheries & Aquaculture: Managed by the Danish Fisheries Agency, these sectors are increasingly focused on sustainability, with specialized master's programs at the Technical University of Denmark (DTU) supporting workforce development.
	Marine Biotechnology: Emerging research into seaweed aquaculture in 2022 highlighted its potential as a circular bioeconomy system for nutrient removal and carbon uptake.
	Coastal Tourism: Employed 50% of the blue workforce (up from 44% in 2021).
	Maritime Transport: Generated 53% of the GVA (down from 58% in 2021).

Key Financing Mechanisms and Initiatives

A. Public Funding and Initiatives	
Danish Marine Nature Fund	Established in 2024 with a budget of DKK 500 million (approx. EUR 67 million) through 2030 for large-scale marine restoration projects, biodiversity strengthening, and marine data sharing infrastructure
Innovation Fund Denmark (IFD)	The IFD participates in transnational calls for research and innovation projects , such as the Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership (SBEP).
Governmental Authorities	The Danish Maritime Authority (part of the Ministry of Industry, Business and Financial Affairs) and the Danish Fisheries Agency work on creating competitive framework conditions and managing resources to support the "Blue Denmark" cluster and ensure growth.
International Collaborations	Denmark participates in international initiatives like JPI Oceans and the Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership, which pool resources for research into areas like the blue bioeconomy and microplastics in the marine environment.
B. Private Sector Involvement	
Venture Capital & Loans	The European Investment Fund (EIF), part of the EIB Group, offers financing for start-ups, scale-ups, and SMEs in the blue economy.
Blue Bonds and Loans	Financial institutions are developing " blue finance " instruments, such as blue bonds and loans, to finance ocean and water-friendly projects (e.g., sustainable aquaculture, green shipping, water treatment).
Industry Investment	Danish companies are major players in the global maritime sector and invest heavily in new opportunities, such as green solutions for the shipping industry and offshore wind farm development, often in collaboration with international partners.
C. Financial Instruments and Opportunities	
Grants	Public grants are available, often requiring partial self-contribution from project participants.
Blended Finance	This approach combines public or philanthropic resources with private capital to de-risk investments and attract more private funding for projects with high social or environmental impact but potentially below-market returns.
BlueInvest Initiative	This EU initiative, supported by the EIB group, aims to boost innovation and investment in sustainable blue economy technologies by assisting businesses in accessing finance.

6.6 Blue Economy in Ireland



Ireland's Blue Economy (the “Ocean Economy”) has transformed from traditional maritime activities to a diversified and sustainable sector. Innovation and technology adoption, particularly in aquaculture and renewable energy, have increasingly positioned Ireland as a competitive maritime nation within Europe. Gross Value Added (GVA) reached €2.7 billion in 2023, representing a 31% increase since 2019. This substantial growth reflects the rising productivity, diversification, and value generation across multiple marine sectors. **Employment**—The ocean economy supported approximately 39,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs in 2023, marking an 8% growth compared to 2019.

Key Pillars of the Irish Blue Economy and Focus Areas of Investment	Coastal Tourism: The largest sector by employment and GVA, accounting for roughly 55% of the Blue Economy's GVA and 71% of its workforce.
	Shipping & Maritime Transport: A top-performing industry alongside tourism and seafood.
	Seafood (Fisheries & Aquaculture): Includes established sea fisheries and growing aquaculture sectors.
	Offshore Renewable Energy: A high-priority emerging sector. The Irish government has set a target of 5 GW of grid-connected offshore wind by 2030.
	Marine Institute Research: The Marine Institute provides the scientific data and annual reports necessary for policy evidence.

Key Financing Mechanisms and Initiatives

A. Public Funding Sources—Irish Government & EU Co-funded Schemes	
Brexit Blue Economy Enterprise Development Scheme	Administered by Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) and funded by the EU Brexit Adjustment Reserve, this scheme offered grants up to €200,000 for capital projects, mentoring, and training in sectors like seafood, coastal tourism, and renewable energy initiatives within coastal communities.
Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership (SBEP)	A major EU Horizon Europe partnership with a total budget of approximately €43.5 million, co-funded nationally by the Marine Institute and Research Ireland. It supports transnational research and innovation projects in areas such as digitalization, blue bioresources, and resilient coastal communities.
European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund	This fund, with around €142 million allocated to Ireland for 2021-2027, supports the sustainable development of the fishing and aquaculture sectors and promotes the wider blue economy.
Blue Growth & Marine Spatial Planning Scheme	Established under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), this is another initiative co-funded by the Irish Government and the EU, focused on developing Ireland's marine spatial plan.
Fisheries Local Action Groups	These groups deliver local development funding specifically for communities within 10km of the coast, supporting local blue economy projects.

Brexit Blue Economy Scheme	A €25 million fund managed by Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) to help coastal communities and businesses adapt to post-Brexit market realities.
B. Private Investment Landscape	
Investment Mechanisms	Blue bonds are gaining traction among institutional investors as a way to finance projects with positive ocean health outcomes.
Government Focus	Irish Budget 2026 includes measures such as increased R&D tax credits and accelerated capital allowances for energy-efficient equipment.

6.7 Blue Economy in the UK



The United Kingdom's blue economy contributes modestly but strategically to national GDP growth, supporting sectors such as offshore wind, fisheries, shipping, port operations, and marine tourism, which sustain employment and drive technological innovation. Accounting for 1.5–1.7% of total employment, the sector underpins high-value maritime services that strengthen trade, investment, and export revenues, reinforcing macroeconomic stability.

Coastal tourism and port activities have historically dominated employment, accounting for roughly two-thirds of blue economy jobs since 2009. However, coastal tourism jobs declined by 19% while port-related employment grew by 108% during the same period.

The UK's blue economy is built on a mix of long-standing maritime industries and rapidly growing green technologies:

Key Pillars of the UK Blue Economy and Focus Areas of Investment	Offshore Renewable Energy: The UK leads Europe in offshore wind, holding approximately 60% of the jobs and 48% of the GVA in this sector.
	Port Activities: This is one of the largest employers, accounting for roughly one-third of all UK blue economy jobs .
	Coastal Tourism: Historically a dominant sector, it remains a primary driver of employment in regional economies like the South West of England.
	Marine Non-Living Resources: While the offshore oil and gas sector remains a major GVA contributor, it is in a phase of decline.
	Maritime Services: London is a global hub for maritime professional services, including insurance (35% global share) , shipbroking (26%), and legal services (25%).
	GB Energy: The newly created state-backed company is expected to provide a significant boost to the UK's ocean energy sector.

Key Financing Mechanisms and Initiatives

The financing of the blue economy in the UK involves a mixture of **public funding and private investment** mechanisms. Public initiatives primarily target international development and

conservation, while private capital is channelled through investment funds and emerging "blue finance" products.

Public Sector Funding	
Blue Planet Fund	The primary mechanism for the UK government's blue economy financing is the £500 million Blue Planet Fund , which focuses on providing Official Development Assistance (ODA) to developing countries for marine conservation and sustainable marine resource management. This fund is managed jointly by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO).
Private Sector and Innovative Finance- is growing through innovative finance.	
Blue Impact Strategy Initiatives	Have targeted sustainable seafood businesses.
Blue Bonds	For marine projects.

6.8 Blue Economy in Germany



Germany's blue economy is a significant economic driver, generating €57.6 billion in GVA and employing 570,000 people as of 2022, primarily driven by maritime transport (56% of GVA) and coastal tourism. Key sectors include offshore wind energy, shipping, and port logistics.

Germany is a global leader in maritime logistics and a top contributor to the European Union's blue economy, with its maritime sector generating over **€50 billion** in annual turnover. As of 2023, Germany ranks as one of the four largest contributors to the EU blue economy's gross value added (GVA) alongside Spain, France, and Italy.

Key Pillars of the German Blue Economy and Focus Areas of Investment...1

- Maritime Transport & Logistics:** Germany is a global leader in logistics, with nearly one-third of its total external trade handled in seaports. The **Port of Hamburg** remains the third busiest container port in the EU.
- Coastal Tourism:** A major employer in the blue economy, accounting for 53% of employment in 2022.
- Marine Renewable Energy:** Offshore wind is the fastest-growing sector with GVA rising 42% in 2022 to reach €5.3 billion. Germany is a leader in this area within the EU alongside Belgium, the Netherlands, and Denmark.
- Marine Living Resources (Fisheries & Aquaculture):** 27% of blue economy workers.
- Marine Non-Living Resources:** Includes offshore raw material extraction.
- Shipbuilding and Marine Technology:** Germany maintains a leading market share (28%) in blue biotechnology, particularly for medical and pharmaceutical applications.

Key Pillars of the German Blue Economy and Focus Areas of Investment...2	Inland Waterways: The "Blue Belt" program manages roughly 7,300 km of federal waterways to balance freight transport with ecological restoration and recreation.
	"Blue Deal" Proposal: to better protect marine ecosystems while promoting sustainable, digital, and climate-neutral maritime industries.
	Innovation & Research: Germany hosts several world-renowned marine research institutions that anchor its blue economy policies: Alfred Wegener Institute (AWI) for polar and marine research; GEOMAR Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel; Federal Maritime and Hydrographic Agency (BSH), for monitoring maritime activities.
	Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership: Germany participates in international initiatives like the Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership to foster innovation in marine ecosystems.

Key Financing Mechanisms and Initiatives

Financing of the blue economy in Germany involves a blend of substantial public funding at both national and EU levels, supplemented by private sector investment.

Public Financing—a variety of national ministries are integrated with EU financial mechanisms.	
German Federal Ministries	Various bodies, including the Federal Ministry for Digital and Transport (BMV) and the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action , provide targeted funding.
EU Funds	Germany participates in major EU programs, notably the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) , which allocated a total of €302.6 million to Germany for 2021-2027, with 49% dedicated to sustainable fisheries and 33% to sustainable aquaculture. Other funds like the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Investment Bank (EIB) provide significant capital.
International Initiatives	Germany contributes to global efforts, such as being the biggest donor to the Blue Action Fund , a joint financing instrument for marine protection projects worldwide.
Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership	Germany actively participates in this Horizon Europe initiative, with leading institutions like the Alfred Wegener Institute and the Federal Maritime and Hydrographic Agency (BSH) providing R&I support.
International Cooperation	Germany supports sustainable blue economy development globally.
Blue Action Fund	Germany is a major contributor to this fund, which has mobilized over €200 million to support NGOs in marine protection.
Private Sector Involvement	
Investment Drivers	Private sector investment is largely driven by regulation, growing market demand, and EU financial incentives like grant funding and venture capital.
EIB Group Support	The EIB Group provides a range of financial tools to support private companies.
Specialized Funds	Private financial products exist, such as the DWS Concept ESG Blue Economy LC , a global equity fund that invests in companies linked to the blue economy.

6.9 Blue Economy in France



France's blue economy, encompassing marine-based industries like tourism, shipping, and fishing, is a significant economic driver, generating approximately €29.5 billion in GVA and employing over 533,000 people in 2022. Blue economy in France possesses the world's second-largest Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), spanning roughly 11 million km². As of early 2026, the blue economy remains a critical strategic pillar for the country. France is the largest contributor in the EU in terms of employment for Shipbuilding and repair and the second for Port activities; the largest contributor in EU for GVA for Shipbuilding and repair; the second-largest for Coastal tourism and the third-largest for Port activities and Marine living resources.

Key Pillars of the French Blue Economy and Focus Areas of Investment	Coastal Tourism: The largest contributor, accounting for roughly 45% of blue economy employment and 41% of its GVA.
	Maritime Transport & Ports: Major hubs include HAROPA Port (Le Havre/Rouen/Paris), Marseille, and Dunkerque. The Port of Calais is the leading French passenger port.
	Marine Living Resources: Includes sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, representing 25% of the sector's workforce and 19% of its GVA.
	Shipbuilding & Repair: France is the leading contributor in the EU for employment and GVA in this specific sector.
	Marine Renewable Energy (MRE): Rapid growth is seen in offshore wind, tidal energy, and specialized technologies like Sea Water Air Conditioning (SWAC) in overseas territories.

Overseas France—The blue economy is particularly critical in French overseas territories (e.g., Reunion, French Polynesia, New Caledonia), where emerging sectors like **marine biotechnology**, **sea water air conditioning (SWAC)**, and **undersea fiber-optic cables** are being developed to drive local growth.

Key Financing Mechanisms and Initiatives

Government and EU Funding	
French Government Programs	France funds the €50 million "Ocean & Climate: an ocean of solutions" Priority Research Programme under the "Investment for the Future" plan to support research and innovation in marine science and sustainable management. The government also uses public budgets and taxes/royalties related to the use of natural areas to fund marine and coastal ecosystem protection.
EU Initiatives	French entities benefit from several EU funding streams, including the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) , which support areas like sustainable tourism, biodiversity, and renewable energy. The European Commission's BlueInvest initiative, supported by the European Investment Fund (EIF), aims to mobilize over €1 billion in public and private investments by 2028 for blue economy SMEs.

European Investment Bank (EIB)	The EIB, a major financier of the blue economy, invested €10.6 billion in sustainable operations between 2020 and 2024 , leveraging private capital for projects such as marine renewable energy, green maritime transport, and port infrastructure.
Private Sector and Innovative Finance	
Private Investment	Financial institutions play a critical role.
Forums and Alliances	Events like the Monaco Blue Economy and Finance Forum gather private sector companies, banks, and investors to pledge new financial commitments and discuss scaling up solutions.
Support for Businesses	Business France supports French small and mid-size companies and attracts foreign investment in innovative blue economy projects, such as the decarbonization of the maritime sector and aquaculture.

6.10 Blue Economy in Spain



Spain is a European leader in the blue economy, possessing the largest maritime workforce in the EU with **937,000 employees**. The sector is a major economic driver, contributing approximately €36.5 billion in GVA in 2022, led by coastal tourism, maritime transport, and port activities. With strong positions in Galicia, Andalusia, and the Balearic Islands, the sector is expanding into innovative areas like marine renewable energy and sustainable aquaculture.

Key Pillars of the Spanish Blue Economy and Focus Areas of Investment.

Coastal Tourism: The dominant pillar, accounting for 70% of jobs and 64% of GVA within the sector. It leads the EU in this category, holding 28% of the total EU coastal tourism GVA.

Marine Living Resources: Includes fisheries and aquaculture, where Spain ranks first in the EU for employment and production.

Maritime Transport & Ports: Strategic ports like Algeciras (8th busiest container port in the EU), Valencia, and Barcelona handle the majority of national imports/exports.

Desalination: Spain holds a dominant 73% share of the EU desalination market workforce.

Emerging Industries: These include offshore renewable energy (floating wind and wave energy), marine biotechnology, and "Smart Port" digitalization (Ports 4.0).

Key Financing Mechanisms and Initiatives

Key Financing Mechanisms and Initiatives in Spain	
European Union (EU) Funds	Spain receives significant funding from EU programs, including the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) .
National Initiatives	The Spanish government, through entities like the Agencia Estatal de Investigación and the CDTI Innovation , provides national grants and support for R&D projects in the blue economy.

Partnerships and Private Investment	Spain is involved in multi-donor funds like the Blue Mediterranean Partnership , to which it pledged €8.5 million . The European Investment Bank (EIB) also works with Spanish entities, such as the Instituto de Crédito Oficial, on initiatives like the Clean Oceans Initiative, which finances projects to reduce plastic pollution. Private investment is encouraged through various support programs and public-private collaborations.
Regional Programs	Several autonomous communities like Galicia, Andalusia, and the Canary Islands have their own specific strategies and observatories to promote and finance local blue economy activities, such as port development, coastal tourism, and marine renewable energy projects.

6.11 Blue Economy in Italy



Blue economy in Italy has established itself as a European leader in the blue economy, ranking **4th in the EU** for both GVA and employment. As of 2022, the sector directly impacts the national economy by **€64.6 billion** in GVA, which accounts for roughly **10.2% of Italy's GDP** when considering both direct and indirect impacts. It has over 227,000 companies and nearly 900,000 employees contributing to the sector. Key sectors include coastal tourism, maritime transport, shipbuilding, and fishing. The industry is growing, with significant investments from Italy's National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP) targeting port modernization, digitalization, and green initiatives.

Key Pillars of the Italian Blue Economy and Focus Areas of Investment.

Coastal Tourism: The largest contributor, representing **36% of GVA** and nearly **45% of the workforce** (approx. 248,000 jobs). Italy ranks 2nd in the EU for employment in this sector.

Maritime Transport: Contributes roughly **19% of GVA**. Italy serves as a vital logistics hub with 5 seaports (Genoa, Trieste, Gioia Tauro, Livorno, and Augusta).

Shipbuilding & Repair: Represents **14% of GVA**; ranks 2nd in the EU for employment.

Living Resources (Fisheries & Aquaculture): Also accounts for **19% of GVA**.

Regional Hubs: The South of Italy hosts nearly **50% of blue economy companies**.

Innovation & Research: Italy leads several major initiatives, including the **Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership**, coordinated by the Ministry of Universities and Research (MUR).

Emerging Opportunities: Significant growth is expected in **offshore renewables**.

Key Financing Mechanisms and Initiatives

Public Financing	
National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP)	Has allocated sizable investments of up to \$3.1 billion through 2026 from its NRRP to modernize port infrastructure, enhance sustainability, and digitalize operations. An additional €400 million has been earmarked for marine ecosystem restoration.

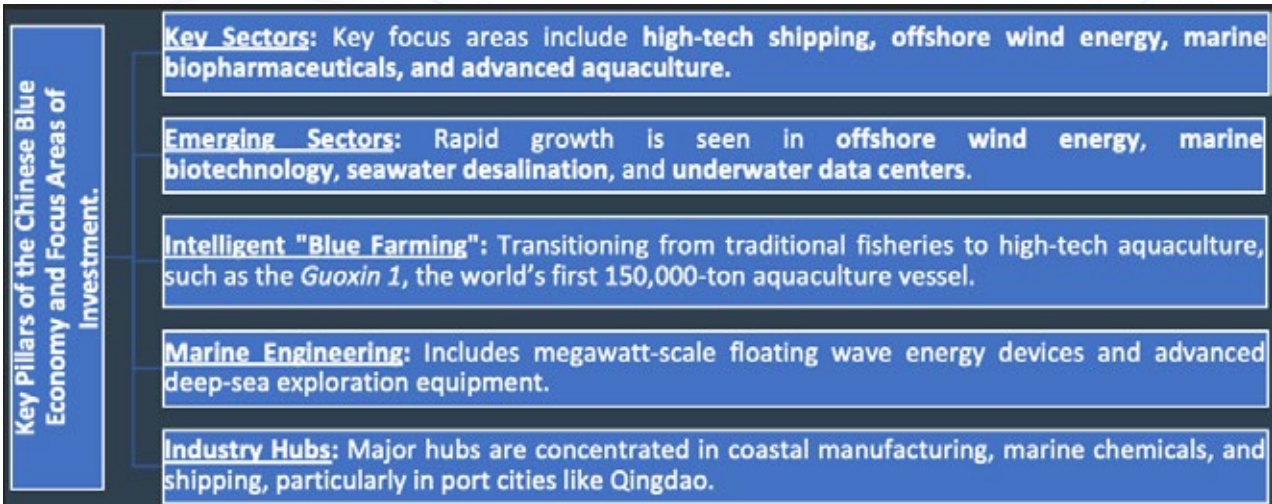
EU Structural and Investment Funds	Benefits from various EU funds, including the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF), the Cohesion Fund (CF), and Horizon Europe—supporting projects ranging from sustainable fisheries and aquaculture to coastal tourism, research, and infrastructure development.
Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership	Coordinated by the Ministry of Universities and Research, this EU partnership pools €450 million over seven years for research and innovation investments across Europe, including areas like offshore energy, blue bioresources, and resilient coastal communities.
Private Investment	
Financial Instruments	Mechanisms like blue bonds , sustainable investment funds , and impact investing are emerging tools to attract private capital.
BlueInvest Initiative	Italy participates in the EU's BlueInvest platform, which aims to boost innovation and unlock private investment opportunities in blue sectors by providing assistance to businesses and connecting them with investors, with a goal of mobilizing over €1 billion by 2028.
European Investment Bank (EIB)	The EIB has been a major player in financing blue economy sectors, particularly in rehabilitating seaport infrastructure and developing offshore wind energy, often using instruments like the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI).

7. Blue Economy Best-Case Countries – Asia

7.1 Blue Economy in China



China is rapidly advancing its blue economy as a core national strategy to balance sustainable marine resource use with economic growth, with the ocean economy accounting for approximately 8% of national GDP in 2024. Key focus areas include deep-sea exploration, sustainable aquaculture, and high-tech marine engineering, driven by 32,000 km of coastline. The rapid development of China's blue economy is part of a broader strategy for modernization and strengthening its global maritime position. As of 2024, the gross ocean product reached approximately **RMB 10 trillion** (approx. \$1.39 trillion), accounting for roughly **8% of China's total GDP**.



Key Financing Mechanisms & Instruments

Financing Mechanisms and Instruments	
Blue Bonds	Primarily used for sustainable fisheries, marine renewable energy, and coastal resilience.
Blue Carbon Loans	Innovative instruments like the Industrial Bank (IB) coastal wetland carbon sink loan use wetland plants as pledges to protect marine ecosystems.
Structural Monetary Policy	For 2026 , the People's Bank of China (PBOC) has signalled a moderately loose monetary policy, including sector-specific interest rate cuts for green and "high-tech" development which includes the blue economy.
Development of Taxonomies	Work is ongoing in 2026 to formalize blue finance taxonomies and "biodiversity taxonomies" to prevent "blue-washing" and standardize what constitutes a "blue" project.
International Cooperation	Initiatives like the China-ASEAN Blue Economy Partnership and the Belt and Road Blue Cooperation Initiative focus on shared regional prosperity and ecological governance.

7.2 Blue Economy in Japan



Japan's blue economy focuses on sustainable, technology-driven use of marine resources, integrating fisheries, tourism, shipping, and offshore energy while restoring coastal ecosystems. Driven by the Japan Blue Economy (JBE) Association and Sasakawa Peace Foundation, it emphasizes "blue carbon" initiatives like eelgrass restoration, carbon credit systems, and regional revitalisation.

Japan's blue economy emphasizes the sustainable use of its vast marine resources—the world's sixth-largest Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)—to drive economic growth while preserving ocean health. In 2026, Japan continues to position the blue economy as a pillar of its **Basic Plan on Ocean Policy**, focusing on decarbonizing maritime transport, advancing offshore wind energy, and pioneering "blue carbon" credit systems.

Key Pillars of the Japanese Blue Economy and Focus Areas of Investment.	Fisheries and Aquaculture: A transition toward sustainable, small-scale fisheries is paired with technological advancements to boost local economies and conserve marine life.
	Decarbonized Shipping: The government is collaborating with the private sector to develop zero-emission ships by 2028.
	Offshore Wind Energy: Japan is aggressively expanding offshore wind power, particularly along its Pacific and Sea of Japan coasts, through Marine Spatial Planning (MSP).
	Umigyo (Ocean-Based Industries): A uniquely Japanese model promoting local revitalization by integrating fisheries with marine tourism and education.
	Regional Initiatives: Cities like Miura and Ainan are combining marine industries, education, and tourism to revitalize coastal communities.
	Research & Governance: The government, through the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, supports scientific, data-driven approaches to manage marine resources and promote ocean health.
	Marine Seaweed Cultivation: Leading energy and insurance firms are currently developing new blue carbon methodologies for seaweed bed restoration.

Key Aspects of Blue Economy Financing in Japan	
J-Blue Credit Mechanism	Established in 2020 by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT), this is the world's first state-approved credit mechanism for blue carbon, allowing the private sector to finance blue carbon ecosystems (like seagrass and seaweed).
Blue Bonds and Loans	Japan's financial sector has pioneered blue-labelled bonds that fund sustainable fisheries, aquaculture, and water resource protection. These instruments are compatible with the International Capital Market Association (ICMA) Green Bond Principles .
Carbon Sequestration Focus	Chubu Electric Power and Mitsui Sumitomo Insurance are developing methodologies for blue carbon credits based on seaweed cultivation .
Regional Collaboration (ASEAN)	Japan supports the ASEAN Blue Economy Innovation Project, sharing expertise in marine and coastal ecosystem protection.
International Cooperation	Through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Japan promotes " fisheries-centered " blue economy projects in the Indo-Pacific and Africa , focusing on small-scale fishery modernization and IUU (Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated) fishing surveillance.
Climate Transition Bonds	The Government of Japan has scheduled multiple tranches of Climate Transition Bonds for fiscal 2025 and 2026 , with auctions for 10-year bonds occurring in March 2026 . These funds support the "GX 2040 Vision" (Green Transformation), which includes decarbonization efforts affecting the marine sector.

7.3 Blue Economy in Indonesia



As an archipelagic nation with over 17,000 islands and more than two-thirds of its territory covered by ocean, Indonesia's sustainable ocean economy is vital for national development. Strategically located between the Indian and Pacific Oceans, the country holds a critical position for regional and global maritime trade, as well as marine biodiversity conservation.

Indonesia's marine economic potential is estimated at USD 1.33 trillion per year, exceeding 1.3 times its 2017 national GDP. To ensure sustainability, the government regulates fishing activities through policies such as the **Marine and Fisheries Ministerial Decree**, which limits catch levels to 80% of estimated potential, and regulations controlling fishing gear to prevent habitat destruction and overexploitation. Aquaculture is also regulated through permits under Ministerial Regulation, promoting responsible fish farming practices.

Key Pillars of the Indonesian Blue Economy and Focus Areas of Investment.	Sustainable Fisheries & Aquaculture: Indonesia is the world's second-largest seafood producer; Seaweed Revolution: Targeted as a flagship initiative, with production reaching 10.8 million tons in 2024 and expanding into bioplastics and biofuels in 2026; Quota-Based Fishing: Implementation of measurable fishing zones to prevent overexploitation.
	Marine Tourism: Shifting toward regenerative tourism models that emphasize community involvement and ecosystem restoration.
	Blue Carbon & Conservation: Indonesia hosts the world's largest mangrove and seagrass estates. The government has committed to protecting 30% of its waters by 2045 and utilizing blue carbon for international climate financing.
	Maritime Logistics: Modernization of the "Tol Laut" (Sea Toll Road) program and port infrastructure to enhance connectivity across its 17,000+ islands.
	National Blue Agenda Actions Partnership (NBAAP): A collaborative platform with the UN and other partners to coordinate blue economy investments.
	Marine Plastic Reduction: A dedicated national effort to reduce marine debris by 70%—a critical challenge as the world's second-largest contributor to marine plastic pollution.

Key Financing Mechanisms & Instruments in Indonesia	
Blue Bond & Sukuk	Indonesia issued inaugural blue bonds (JPY 20.7bn or \$~\$149m) to fund marine-related projects. The government also uses Blue Sukuk (Islamic bonds) to support projects delivering environmental and social benefits.
Sovereign Blue Bonds	Indonesia issued its first sovereign blue bond in May 2023 and continues to utilize these funds for marine protected areas (MPAs) and sustainable coastal infrastructure.
Blended Finance	The " blended blue finance " model is being promoted to combine public, donor, and private capital to reduce investment risk in the blue economy, supported by the Indonesia Climate Change Trust Fund.
Sustainable Finance Taxonomy	Integrating blue-economy sectors into the Taksonomi Keuangan Berkelanjutan Indonesia (TKBI) to guide investors in sustainable fisheries, coastal tourism, and marine renewables.
SDGs Government Security Framework	Developed in 2021 , this framework allows for the issuance of integrated green, blue, and sustainability bonds.
Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Support	Initiatives focus on reducing entry barriers for small-scale actors through improved credit access, risk-sharing mechanisms, and capacity building.
Institutional Collaboration	Partnering with entities like the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and implementing a Blue Finance Roadmap 2020-2021.

Strategic Initiatives & Partnerships

- **Ocean Impact Summit 2026 (Bali)**: Scheduled for **June 8-9, 2026**, this summit serves as a platform for global collaboration and is backed by the World Economic Forum following a Letter of Intent signed in **January 2026**.
- **National Blue Agenda Actions Partnership (NBAAP)**: A collaborative framework designed to align national and regional efforts to meet maritime development targets.
- **ASEAN Blue Finance Profiles**: Expected to be launched in **March 2026**, these profiles will provide clearer insights into Indonesia's specific blue carbon assets and financing needs to guide sustainable investments.
- **International Support**: Partners like the **AFD** (French Development Agency), **PROBLUE** (World Bank), and the **Blue Action Fund** provide grants and technical support for marine conservation and coastal resilience.

7.4 Blue Economy in the Philippines



The Philippine blue economy, valued at ₱943.05 billion in 2023, focuses on sustainably managing marine resources to drive growth, constituting 3.9% of the GDP and supporting roughly 5% of employment, primarily in fisheries, tourism, and shipping. As the world's second-largest archipelagic nation, the country is leveraging ocean-based industries like renewable energy and aquaculture while investing in coastal protection.

On legislative developments—As of **December 2025**, the Philippine Congress approved the **Blue Economy Act** (Senate Bill 2450 / House Bill 9662), establishing a national framework for sustainable marine management and creating a Blue Economy Council.

Key Pillars of the Philippines Blue Economy and Focus Areas of Investment.

Fisheries and Aquaculture: Contributes about **29%** of the blue economy value; essential for food security and animal protein.

Ocean-Based Manufacturing: Accounts for **21%** of the sector's value.

Marine Tourism: Represents **16%** of the sector, with biodiversity tourism being a significant driver in regions like the Visayas.

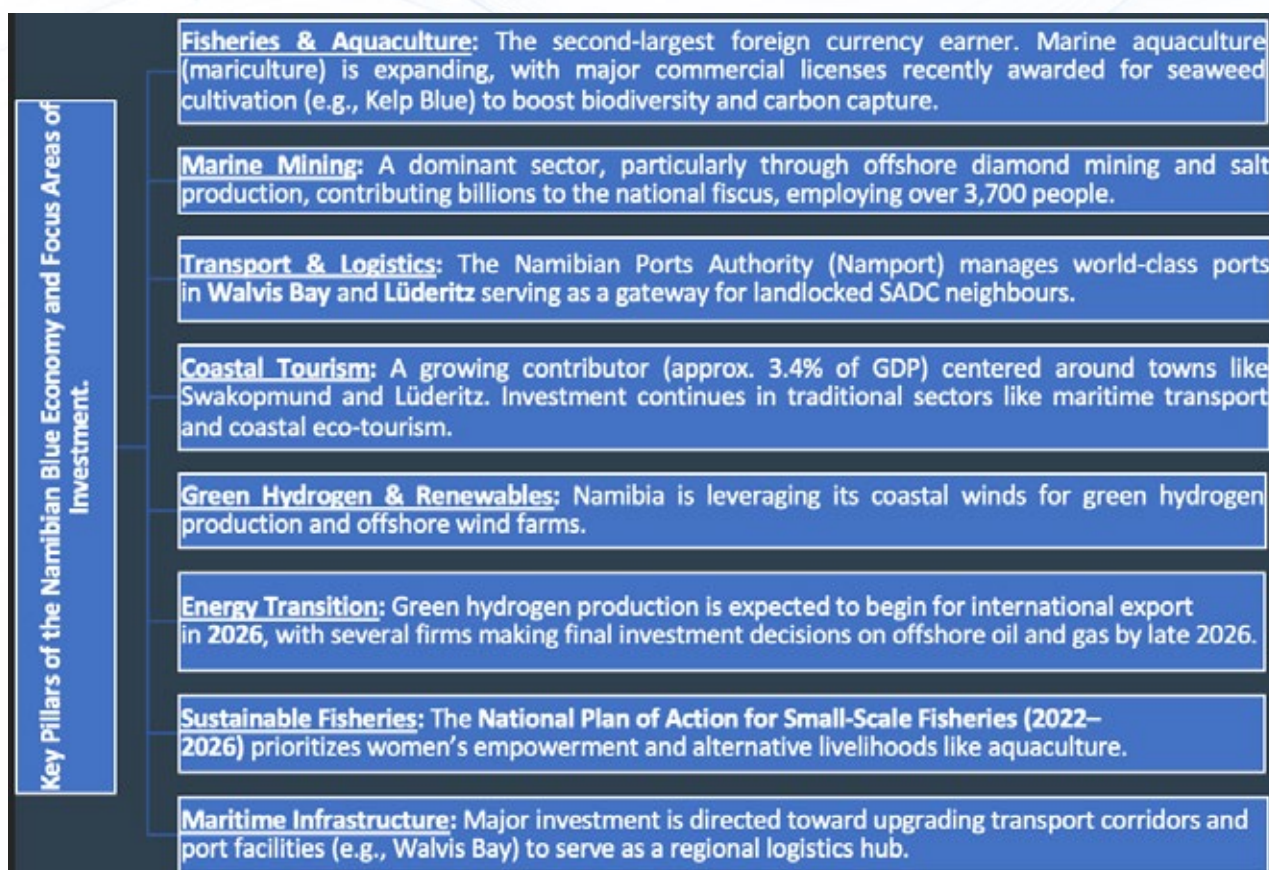
Maritime Transport and Shipping: Contributes **15%**; the Philippines is often cited as the "seafaring capital of the world," supplying a large portion of global maritime manpower.

Offshore / Renewable Energy: Represents **11%**; there is high potential for renewable energy, with 15 identified sites capable of generating 265 million megawatts.

Coastal Protection & Resilience: Investing in measures to protect against climate-driven risks and restore marine habitats.

Waste Management: Upgrading plastic and solid waste management systems to reduce marine pollution.

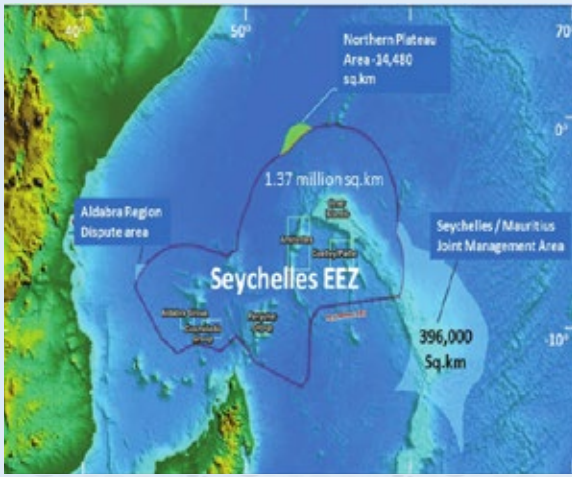
Infrastructure: Funding for necessary infrastructure, such as cold storage for fisheries.



Key Financing Mechanisms & Instruments

A. Strategic Financing Mechanisms	
Blue Bonds	Kelp Blue is set to issue Africa's first corporate blue bond in 2025, aimed at expanding giant kelp forests, demonstrating a move toward innovative private sector financing.
Environmental Investment Fund (EIF)	The EIF has been instrumental in mobilizing resources for climate-resilient projects, including over €43 million in loans via commercial banks and substantial grants for the blue economy and green hydrogen.
Government & Public Sector	The Namport Social Investment Fund (NSIF), established in 2006, supports the maritime sector.
International & Regional Support	Namibia benefits from international partnerships, such as the UNCTAD-supported project for a climate-resilient blue economy in the BCLME region.
B. Other Key Strategic Financing Mechanisms	
Environmental Investment Fund (EIF)	A key vehicle that has already mobilized over US\$550 million in grants and €43 million in concessional loans for projects transitioning to blue and green economies.
Blue and Green Bonds	Following Namibia's first Green Bond, the market is expanding to include "blue debt" and outcome-based finance such as blue carbon credits and sustainability-linked loans to align capital with ecological impact.
Climate Investment Fund	As of early 2026 , Namibia is eligible for up to US\$250 million in funding. Citizens and firms are urged to submit project ideas for decarbonization and green industries by February 1, 2026 .

8.2 Blue Economy in Seychelles



The map displays the Seychelles Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) with a total area of 1.37 million sq. km. Other labeled areas include the Northern Plateau (14,480 sq. km), the Aldabra Region Dispute area, and the Seychelles/Mauritius Joint Management Area (396,000 sq. km). The map also shows the Seychelles archipelago and surrounding waters.

Seychelles is a global leader in the Blue Economy, pioneering sustainable ocean-based development across its 1.358 million km² Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). By launching **the world's first sovereign blue bond**, it finances marine conservation and sustainable fisheries, aiming for economic growth while protecting marine biodiversity.

Seychelles has long championed the blue economy on the international stage since 2010 and stands out as a country actively pursuing a blue economy agenda. The nation launched a national blue economy strategy in 2012, creating a blue economy department and, by 2015, the Blue Economy Research Institute.

The two primary drivers of Seychelles' economic success are tourism and fishing, both of which are dependent on the ocean—offering formal jobs to at least 26% and 17% of the population, respectively. High-level political leadership, strong international partnerships, dedicated blue economy institutions, and attractive development and livelihood opportunities support blue economy implementation.

Key Strategic Framework—The Seychelles has made significant strides in advancing its blue economy through a coordinated, whole-of-government approach.

- ◇ **Blue Economy Roadmap (2018–2030):** This integrated policy focuses on four strategic priorities: creating sustainable wealth, sharing prosperity, securing healthy and productive oceans, and strengthening the enabling environment.
- ◇ **Marine Spatial Plan (MSP):** Seychelles has designated 30% of its EEZ (approximately 410,000 km²) as Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) to balance conservation with activities like fishing and tourism.
- ◇ **International Commitments:** In early 2025, Seychelles became the first African nation to ratify the **BBNJ Agreement** (High Seas Treaty), reinforcing its role in global ocean governance.

Key Pillars of the Seychelles Blue Economy and Focus Areas of Investment.	Sustainable Fisheries: A cornerstone of the economy, contributing roughly 20% to GDP and nearly 93% of exports . Current efforts focus on value-addition and "zero fish waste" strategies.
	Eco-Tourism: Tourism remains the primary economic driver, contributing up to 55% of GDP (directly and indirectly).
	Emerging Industries: The government is actively exploring aquaculture (mariculture), blue carbon (mangrove and seagrass restoration), marine biotechnology , and offshore renewable energy .

Key aspects of blue economy financing in Seychelles include:

Blue Economy Financing in Seychelles	
Sovereign Blue Bond (2018)	Raised US\$15 million from international investors to support sustainable fisheries, with a US\$5 million guarantee from the World Bank and additional support from the Global Environment Facility.
Debt-for-Nature Swap (2016)	Converted US\$21.6 million of national debt into funds for ocean conservation, resulting in 400,000 km ² of protected marine areas.

Fund Management: SeyCCAT	Seychelles Conservation and Climate Adaptation Trust: Manages the Blue Grants Fund to support research and conservation projects.
Fund Management: DBS	Development Bank of Seychelles: Manages the Blue Investment Fund, providing loans for sustainable, commercial blue economy businesses.
Funding Focus	Projects aimed at reducing plastic waste, improving sustainable fishing practices, restoring marine habitats, and developing sustainable tourism.
Strategic Approach	Utilizing international partnerships, public-private investments, and incorporating blue economy principles into national development strategies to ensure long-term, sustainable, and inclusive growth.
Highlights	
<i>A Pioneer in Ocean Finance</i>	<i>Seychelles issued the world's first sovereign blue bond, through the World Bank's SWIOFish3 project, to safeguard its ocean economy.</i>
<i>Driving Global Change</i>	<i>The first blue bond established a financing model that coastal nations and corporate issuers worldwide have replicated, driving the global blue bond market to \$15.25 billion¹.</i>

8.3 Blue Economy in Mauritius



In Mauritius, the **Blue Economy** is a central pillar of the national economic agenda, leveraging an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of **2.3 million km²**—nearly 1,000 times larger than its landmass and the fifth largest in the world. It contributes approximately **10.5% of GDP**, the government aims to double this to **20%** in the medium term.

The country also shares responsibility for an extended continental shelf of 396,000 square kilometers with the Republic of Seychelles. Mauritius' Ocean Economy aims to promote large-scale aquaculture, maritime services and ship registration, fishing, port-related activities, and deep ocean water applications.

Governance

Mauritius' Blue Economy Governance and Regional Strategy	
"Large Ocean State" Imaginary	Mauritius has shifted its national identity from a "small island" to a "large ocean state" to assert territorial control and attract global capital.
Joint Management Area (JMA)	A pioneering agreement with the Seychelles to co-manage 396,000 km ² of the Mascarene Plateau for seabed resource exploration.
Legislative Framework	The government is establishing a dedicated Blue Economy Unit and drafting a Blue Economy Bill to provide a robust legal framework by late 2025/2026.
Blue Finance	In partnership with the World Bank and IMF, Mauritius is exploring Blue Bonds and Biodiversity Bonds to fund sustainable ocean-based projects.
Policy & Governance	A dedicated Ministry for Blue Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, and Shipping governs the sector, guided by the Ocean Economy Roadmap.

Marine Station Launch	On January 15, 2026, the University of Mauritius and Odysseo launched a new marine station as part of the Blue Economy Hub project.
Sustainable Harvesting	In January 2025, exploratory harvesting of Sea Cucumber began in the Joint Management Area.
Investment Missions	Major trade missions to South Africa were conducted in early 2026 to promote Blue Economy investment opportunities.

Mauritius' blue economy strategy balances consolidating investments in traditional industries with pioneering emerging and nascent sectors:

Key Pillars of the Maurice Blue Economy and Focus Areas of Investment.	Coastal Tourism: Remains a massive contributor but is increasingly focused on sustainability and mitigating shoreline erosion.
	Marine Biotechnology and Seafood Processing: Mauritius is a major exporter of canned tuna to the EU. Future opportunities lie in market diversification and enhancing the value chain of seafood processing and tapping into new marine technologies.
	Ports & Shipping: Port Louis handles 99% of external trade. Major investments of Rs 5.4 billion are underway to expand cruise jetties and container terminals.
	Sustainable Aquaculture: Focus on off-lagoon, in-lagoon, and land-based farming to meet global seafood demand.
	Deep Ocean Water Application (DOWA): Utilizing cold, nutrient-rich seawater from 1,000m depths for Sea Water Air Conditioning (SWAC) , green data centers, and pharmaceuticals.
	Bunkering & Marine Services: Liberalizing marine fuel trade to become a regional hub, targeting 1.5 million metric tonnes by 2027.
	Marine / Ocean-Based Renewable Energy: Exploring Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion (OTEC) , offshore wind and ocean energy solutions, and floating solar projects to support energy transition.

Key Financing Mechanisms and Initiatives

Mauritius is actively financing its blue economy to increase its GDP share from 10.3% to 20% by targeting sustainable fisheries, aquaculture, marine biotechnology, and ocean renewable energy. Key financial mechanisms include Blue Bonds, debt-for-nature swaps, blended finance, and international aid from the EU and UNDP, and the development of new sustainable finance frameworks.

Key Financing Mechanisms and Initiatives in Mauritius	
Blue Bonds and Finance Instruments	The government is leveraging specialized financial instruments like blue bonds, debt-for-nature swaps, and blue carbon financing to fund marine conservation and sustainable use.
International Aid & Partnerships	The EU is funding a National Blue Economy Strategy (approx. Rs 4 million) to identify opportunities in sustainable tourism and maritime transport.
UN & Global Environment Facility (GEF)	A \$9 million UNDP-GEF project, launched in 2025, supports sustainable, inclusive, and climate-resilient blue economy initiatives in Mauritius and other African SIDS.
Public-Private Partnerships (PPP)	Mauritius is attracting investment for large-scale projects like off-shore wind and sustainable aquaculture, aiming to boost the blue economy's contribution to GDP to 20% in the medium term.

Sustainable Finance Framework	Established in 2023, this framework allows the government and private entities to issue Blue Bonds and sustainability-linked instruments.
Small-Scale Sector Support	To ensure equitable growth, policies focus on providing micro-finance and low-interest loans to local, small-scale fishers and aquaculture operators.
Private Sector Research	In January 2026 , the University of Mauritius and Odysseo Foundation launched a new Marine Station funded by Mitsui O.S.K. Lines (MOL) to support regenerative blue economy research.
SDG Investor Map	Developed with the UNDP, this tool identifies specific investment-ready opportunities in sustainable aquaculture and fisheries value chains, such as cold chain infrastructure and digital fish marketing platforms.
Stock Exchange of Mauritius (SEM)	Provides a specialized platform for listing sovereign and corporate sustainable bonds to enhance visibility and liquidity for blue economy projects.

8.4 Blue Economy in South Africa



South Africa's blue economy focuses on sustainably utilizing its vast 1.5 million km² EEZ, which is larger than its landmass, and the country's 3,924 km coastline, surrounded by three oceans, to drive economic growth and job creation. Through initiatives like Operation Phakisa (launched in 2014), the ocean economy aims to contribute R177-billion to GDP and create 1-million jobs by 2033, targeting sectors such as shipping, aquaculture, and marine tourism. The South African International Maritime Institute (SAIMI) drives the research and innovation needed to support these growth plans.

Key Economic Drivers—Key Investment Focus Areas: The focus is on expanding established sectors: **shipping, aquaculture, coastal tourism, marine non-living resources, and port infrastructure.**

Key Pillars of the South African Blue Economy and Focus Areas of Investment.	Marine Transport & Manufacturing —Focusing on ship and rig repair, boat building, and port infrastructure. South Africa's eight major seaports handle 98% of the country's trade volume.
	Offshore Oil & Gas —Estimated resources of ~9 billion barrels of oil and 60 trillion cubic feet of gas.
	Aquaculture —Targeted for rural development and food security, with a goal to expand from a relatively underdeveloped state to a major contributor.
	Coastal & Marine Tourism —Estimated to potentially contribute R21.4 billion to GDP by 2026.
	SAIMI —Coordinates maritime skills development, education, and research.
	Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) —A governance tool used to balance economic exploitation (like oil and gas) with environmental protection (like Marine Protected Areas).
	Marine Protection Services —In 2018, 20 new Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) were declared, increasing protected ocean territory from 0.4% to 5%.
	Operation Phakisa —A key initiative driving the "Oceans Economy" by integrating government, business, and research to unlock economic value.
	Research & Development —Strengthening investments in technology, AI, and automation in marine industries.
	Innovation & Startups —OceanHub Africa serves as a key accelerator, providing direct funding, advisory services, and access to impact investor networks for blue-tech ventures.

Funding Mechanisms

Financing the blue economy in South Africa involves leveraging public-private partnerships, blue bonds, and Operation Phakisa to unlock investments in maritime transport, aquaculture, and renewable energy. Key strategies for 2026 include growing local investor participation, utilizing debt-for-nature swaps, and boosting funding for ocean research and AI-driven innovations.

Funding Mechanisms	
Blue Bonds & Debt Swaps	Growing interest in innovative financing, such as blue bonds and debt-for-nature swaps, to secure sustainable funding. The Africa's Green Economy Summit (AGES) in Cape Town (February 2026) focuses specifically on translating nature into bankable assets via blue bonds and performance-linked finance.
Private Sector Engagement	Addressing the gap in African climate funding, which is low compared to global averages, by encouraging private investment in ocean projects.
Incubators/ Accelerators	Organizations like OceanHub Africa are crucial for supporting, mentoring, and funding early-stage blue-tech and aquaculture businesses.
BlueInvest Africa 2026	A flagship European Union-led forum will be held in Cape Town (November 2026) to match African start-ups with international private investors and development banks.
Blended Finance	Government contributions are increasingly used to de-risk projects for private capital.

8.5 Blue Economy in Ghana



Ghana is developing a comprehensive Blue Economy Strategy to sustainably harness its marine, coastal, and inland water resources for economic growth, job creation, and food security, with a focus on fisheries, tourism, and maritime transport. The strategy aims to protect ecosystems, reduce pollution, and build climate resilience, with a proposed National Blue Economy Commission to coordinate these efforts. **Regulatory Reforms--The Fisheries and Aquaculture Bill, 2025** was passed to strengthen global credibility and protect over **\$425 million** in annual seafood exports, making the sector more attractive to international investors.

Key Pillars of the Ghanaian Blue Economy and Focus Areas of Investment.	Strategic Pillars: The strategy focuses on "Blue Wealth" (fisheries, aquaculture, tourism, shipping, energy), "Blue Health" (ecosystem protection, pollution control), and "Blue Knowledge".
	Mangrove Restoration: Specific funding is directed toward restoring 3,000 hectares of mangroves.
	Port Expansion: Major investments have transformed ports like Takoradi into modern, deep-drafted facilities--which now features a 16-meter deep container and bulk terminal.
	Aquaculture and Fisheries: Financing supports the sustainable management of marine and inland resources. A major focus is on sustainable fishing and aquaculture to combat overexploitation.
	Maritime Development: Efforts are underway to strengthen maritime security,, including establishing a National Hydrographic Office.
	Infrastructure: GHS 80 million has been secured to complete the Anomabo Fisheries College.

Major Funding Sources and Mechanisms

Financing for Ghana's blue economy is increasingly coming from sustainable debt markets and international development partners.

Blue and Green Bonds	
Bond issuances	Ghana is positioning itself to raise GHS 10 billion through bond issuances as of February 2026 , with a focus on green and sustainability principles.
Green bond financing	The International Finance Corporation (IFC) recently noted that Ghana's macroeconomic recovery could unlock up to \$7 billion in green bond financing for climate-aligned infrastructure.
International Grants and Loans	
Mangrove Blue Carbon Pilot Program	World Bank: Through the Blue Economy for Resilient Africa Program (BE4RAP) , the World Bank is funding a \$13.5 million Mangrove Blue Carbon Pilot Program in Ghana, which includes contributions from Denmark's Ørsted.
AfDB's 2024–2029 strategy	African Development Bank (AfDB): While active in broader infrastructure, the AfDB's 2024–2029 strategy for Ghana prioritizes sustainable transport and agri-industrial transformation, which supports blue economy value chains.
Private Sector Investment	
Mariculture	As of February 10, 2026 , Flozell Limited and Norwegian partners are engaging with the government to fully finance Ghana's first large-scale mariculture project, which is expected to create 3,000 jobs .
Hydrography	The Ministry of Transport is making significant investments in hydrography and marine cartography to secure maritime trade and attract offshore energy investments.

- Benzaken, D., Voyer, M., Pouponneau, A., & Hanich, Q. (2022). Good governance for sustainable blue economy in small islands: Lessons learned from the Seychelles experience. *Frontiers in Political Science*, 4, 1040318.
- Blue Economy Observatory. (2024). The EU Blue Economy Report 2024. Publications Office of the European Union.
- Blue Economy Observatory. (2024a). The EU Blue Economy Report 2024. Publications Office of the European Union.
- Blue Economy, Inclusive Industrialization and Economic Development in Southern Africa. Economic Commission for Africa, August 2020.
- Bonds to Finance the Sustainable Blue Economy—A Practitioner’s Guide. September 2023, Asian Development Bank / International Finance Corporation.
- Carver, R. (2020). Lessons for blue degrowth from Namibia’s emerging blue economy. *Sustainability Science*, 15(1), 131-143.
- Dyrset, G. (2025). Blue growth in Norway – Three emerging narratives. *Marine Policy*, 178, 106-718.
- European Commission (2025). EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive Progress Report. Publications Office of the European Union.
- European Commission (2025). The EU Blue Economy Report, 2025.
- Government of Ireland. (2021). National Marine Planning Framework. Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.
- Government of Ireland. (2023). Programme of Measures to protect Ireland’s seas. Department of Housing.
- Haimbala, T. (2019). Sustainable growth through value chain development in the blue economy: a case study of the port of Walvis Bay.
- Investor Report: Unlocking the Potential of the Blue Economy. Blue Invest.
- Karina, B., Martin, S., Marlon, V. P., Anne, G., Tommaso, P., & Elin, L. (2023). Towards a sustainable blue economy in Sweden. SEI report.
- Knol-Kauffman, M., Nielsen, K., Sander, G., & Arbo, P. (2023). Sustainability conflicts in the blue economy: planning for offshore aquaculture and offshore wind energy development in Norway. *Maritime Studies*, 22(47).
- Kontovas, C., Bras, A., Chang, C.-H., Romano, A., Ching-Pong, M., Wang, J., . . . Yang, Z. (2022). Fostering innovation in the blue economy within the United Kingdom (UK): A stakeholder’s perspective. *Ocean & Coastal Management*, 224, 106-143.
- María, D. C., Joseph, O. A., & Anne Marie, O. (2023). Transitioning from blue growth to the sustainable blue economy: A review of Ireland’s new marine governance in the aquaculture sector.
- Machaka, C. L., & Warikandwa, T. V. (2025). Towards a Sustainable Blue Economy for Namibia and Its Coastal Communities: A Contemporary Socio-Legal Perspective. *Potchefstroom Elec. LJ*, 28, 1.
- Partners in Growing the Blue Economy—Why the Oceans Economy Matters. The South African International Maritime Institute (SAIMI), South Africa.
- Policy for the Blue Economy in Mauritius...December 2023. FAO, Ministry of Blue Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping, Mauritius.

Republic of Namibia, Namibia Blue Economy Policy, Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources
Implementation Period: 2022-2031.

Republic of Namibia, National Plan of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries, 2022-2026. Ministry of
Fisheries and Marine Resources.

Semboja, J. (2021). Realizing the Blue Economy in Zanzibar.

Setiawan, T., & Samith, M. (2025). Indonesia's marine resources innovation: Digital transformation
in blue economy policy for economic sustainability. *Journal of European Economy*, 24(1).

Socio-Economic and Ecological Assessment of the Blue Economy in Tanzania Application of
UNECA'S Blue Economy Valuation Toolkit. UNECA, March 2023.

The Blue Economy and the Norwegian Ocean Strategy. Deputy Director General Jartrud Steinsli ,
Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries. Lysaker, 20 November 2017.

The Dutch Maritime Strategy 2015 – 2025, Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment.

The Ministry of Blue Economy and Fisheries Strategic Plan, 2023 – 2028, Ministry of Blue Economy
& Fisheries.

UNECA'S Blue Economy Valuation Toolkit to Tanzania Mainland in 2023.

Zanzibar Blue Economy Policy, October 2022, Ministry of Blue Economy & Fisheries.

Zanzibar Blue Economy Implementation Strategy, October 2022, Ministry of Blue Economy &
Fisheries.

Zanzibar Fisheries Policy, 2022, Ministry of Blue Economy & Fisheries.

Zanzibar Fisheries Master Plan, 2023—2038, Ministry of Blue Economy & Fisheries.

Zanzibar Blue Economy Gender Strategy and Action Plan, Ministry of Blue Economy & Fisheries.

KEYNOTE PRESENTATION & DISCUSSION

Keynote Presenters



Firas Raad, World Bank Division Director for Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Firas Raad is the World Bank Division Director for Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe with over 27 years of experience as a development and health policy professional working for the World Bank Group, the United Nations, and the Jordanian Government. In previous management roles in the World Bank, he served as a Country Manager for Malawi, South Sudan, Malaysia, and Kuwait.

He also served as Head of Mission for the Office of the Quartet Representative in East Jerusalem (while on secondment from the World Bank) and as a Human Development Coordinator for the Gulf Coordination Council (GCC) Countries and Senior Health Specialist in the World Bank's Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Region. He has a Master's Degree and a Doctoral Degree in International Health Policy and Economics from the Harvard School of Public Health, a Master's Degree in International Relations (with a focus on Macroeconomics and Middle Eastern Studies) from the School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), and a Bachelor's Degree in Economics from Johns Hopkins University. He is a Jordanian national, speaks Arabic and English, and is married with three children.



Abdulmajid Mussa Nsekela, CRDB Bank PLC.

An experienced business leader, Abdulmajid Nsekela has more than 20 years of experience in the banking industry. His knowledge has been enhanced through all the departments he has worked in including Audit, Human Resources and Financial Planning and Strategy, to name a few. He started working in the banking industry in 1997 at CRDB Bank as a Bank Officer and in 1998, was selected to be part of the transition team that changed CRDB Bank's culture.

Due to his competence in work, in 2000 he was promoted to Relationship Manager in the Corporate Banking Department and later on to Senior Relationship Manager in 2003. Abdulmajid worked with NMB bank for 10 years where he worked as the Heads of Retail Business and Personal Banking, as well as Senior Manager- Personal Banking. Abdulmajid has recently attained a Doctoral qualification from the University of South Africa (UNISA); holds a Master's Degree in Business Administration majoring in International Banking Finance (MBA-IBF) and Post Graduate Diploma in Business Administration (PDGBA) from Birmingham University (UK). He is also an alumnus of the Institute of Finance Management (IFM) where he graduated with an Advanced Diploma in Banking. Currently, Abdulmajid Nsekela is the Chairman of

Tanzania Bankers Association and the Chairman of Arts and Culture Fund. He served as a member on various boards including the Tanzania Financial Inclusion National Council, Tanzania Private Sector Foundation, Tanzania Mortgage Refinance Company Limited and Economic & Social Research Foundation. Abdulmajid is also a member of the Tanzania National Business Council.

Appreciation to our development partners:



Ambasáid na hÉireann | Tanzania
Embassy of Ireland | Tanzania
Ubalozi wa Ireland | Tanzania



REPOA Main Office

157 Migombani/REPOA streets, Regent Estate,
P.O. Box 33223, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.
Tel: +255 (22) 270 0083 Cell: +255 (0)784 555 655
Website: <https://www.repoa.or.tz>
Email: repoa@repoa.or.tz

Branch Office

2nd Floor Kilimo Kwanza Building
41105 Makole East, Kisasa,
Dodoma, Tanzania