



# Policy Brief

## TOWARDS SUSTAINBLE GROWTH OF OCEAN ECONOMIES IN AFRICA UNDER A CHANGING CLIMATE

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### Key Messages

- More than 60% of the world's economic output takes place near coastlines. In some African countries, the ocean economy contributes one-quarter of revenues and one-third of export revenues.
- Aquatic resources such as fish, coral reefs, seaweed, minerals, oil and gas, the services they provide, and resilient coasts are assets that can be used sustainably for the benefit of current and future generations.
- Oceans are not just important for growth and jobs. They are also key to nutrition. Africa relies on its oceans to feed its people, now and into the future.
- Coastal population growth, overfishing and illegal fishing, pollution, unsustainable tourism and other issues degrade damage marine and coastal biodiversity and ecosystems, reduce livelihood opportunities, and aggravate poverty.
- One of the biggest threats to coastal and marine systems is climate change, the impacts of which are already being detected in many cases and areas of Africa. Though its effects are not yet fully understood, climate change is a threat multiplier for marine and coastal environments.
- Developing the ocean economy in a sustainable fashion is possible in a number of areas, including fisheries, aquaculture, minerals, energy, transport and trade, tourism and recreation, and marine biotechnology. While some of these sectors will require little encouragement and additional governance, others need more and better planning to achieve their full potential and return more sustainable outcomes.
- Developing the ocean economy requires strategic vision and commitment, good governance, and investments from all actors, public and private, domestic and international.
- African countries need to develop their ocean economies, but they need to do so in a way that factors in likely climate change impacts. For example, green infrastructure ought to be used to protect against coastal erosion; seaport design needs to be adapted so it is more resilient and its environmental impact is reduced or mitigated; the power and temperature of the sea need to be harnessed as sources of energy. Many of these techniques have already been tested and used in other regions.
- Moving towards COP22, we should aim to promote oceans in the context of the global action on climate – both adaptation and mitigation – and in Africa in particular. COP22 will provide opportunities to report on climate action for the oceans and to raise awareness and funding for scaling up action and improving our collective knowledge base.

## Oceans and Economic Development

More than 60% of the world's economic output takes place near coastlines. In some African countries, the ocean economy contributes one-quarter of revenues and one-third of export revenues. For example, the coastal and marine resources of the South West Indian Ocean region contributes an estimated US\$22 billion a year, half of it coming from coastal tourism. In West Africa, the coastal area is home to one-third of its people and the source of about half of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (see more data in Box 1). African countries wish to develop their 'ocean economies' further.

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### Box 1 : Some facts and figures on the Blue Economy in Africa

- Over 12 million people are engaged in the fisheries sector alone, including inland fishing and fish farming, and marine capture fisheries.
- Fish is an important source of animal protein. On average, African people eat 9.7 kg of fish per year, which could increase considering the global average of 18.9 kg.
- Oceans, coasts, coral reefs, unspoiled beaches attract tourism in Africa. According to CNN, Africa has 13% of the world's 100 best beaches.
- About 90% of world trade is carried by ship over oceans.
- Offshore oil production account for about 30% of the total world production.

## Oceans and Food Security

Oceans are not just important for growth and jobs. They are also key to nutrition. Africa relies on its oceans to feed its people. In coastal and insular countries, the proportion of protein intake from fish is remarkably high, for example 50% in Mozambique, more than 60% in Sierra Leone and Ghana, and 70% in Tanzania.

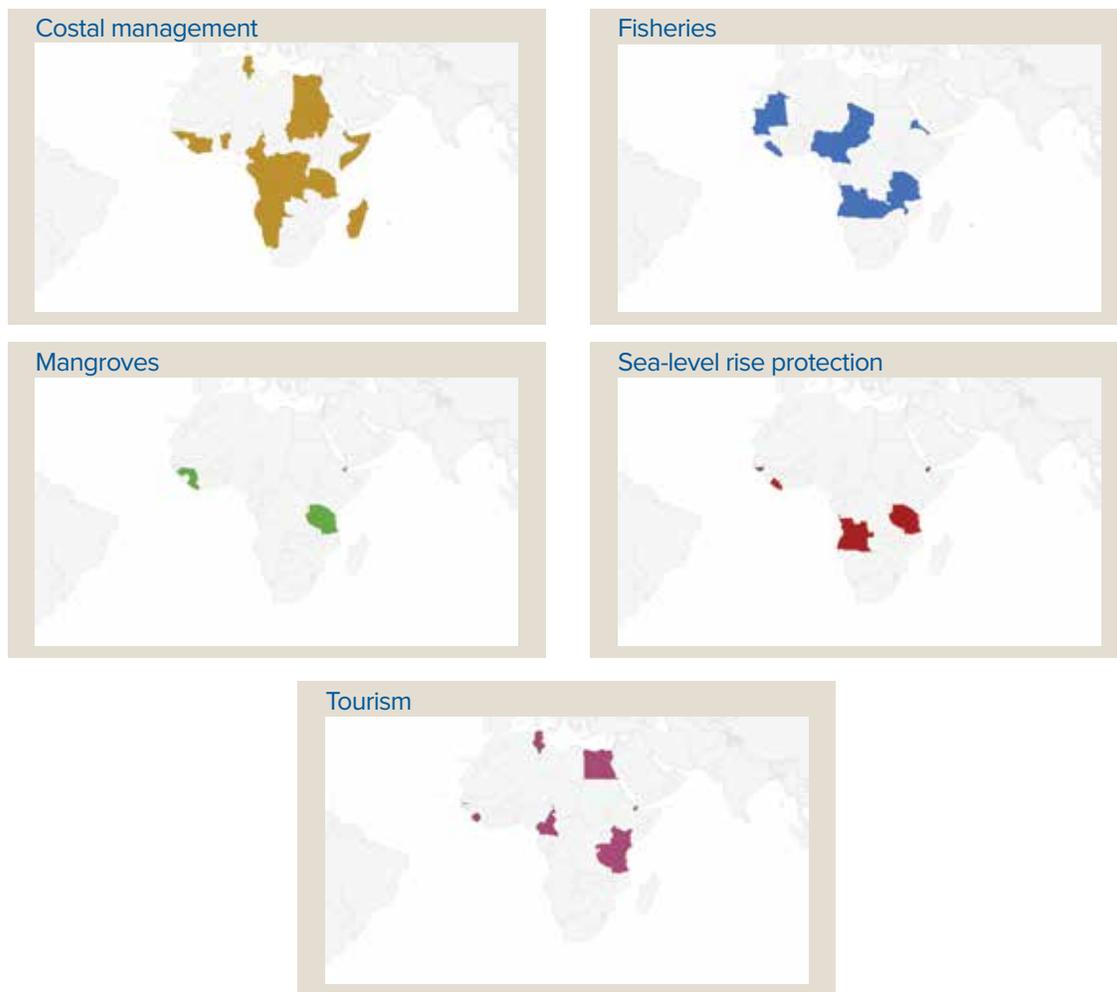
## Coastal Vulnerability

Throughout the continent, communities living off the coasts directly dependent on the services provided by these marine and coastal ecosystems, as they are often poor, vulnerable, and likely to suffer the most from changes to these environments. Coastal population growth, overfishing and illegal fishing, pollution, unsustainable tourism and other issues degrade damage marine and coastal biodiversity and ecosystems, reduce livelihood opportunities, and aggravate poverty. Coastal communities are prone to out-migration, exposing youth to grave dangers along their migratory routes and depleting the continent of an engine of growth and creativity.

## Facing Climate Change

One of the biggest threats to the equilibrium of such setting is due to the occurrence of climate change, the impacts of which are already being detected in many cases and areas of Africa. Climate change is a threat multiplier for marine and coastal environments though its effects are not yet well understood. The changes in temperatures and ocean currents, coastal erosion and flooding risk exacerbate already stressed ecosystems. Although there are visible impacts already being detected in many areas of African coastal countries, much remains uncertain. Many African countries have highlighted oceans and coasts in the adaptation chapters of their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) (See Box 2).

## Box 2: Oceans, Coasts in Adaptation Chapters of African NDCs



## Growing the Ocean Economy Sustainably

Growth of the ocean economy is possible in a number of areas, including fisheries, aquaculture, minerals, energy, transport and trade, tourism and recreation, and marine biotechnology. While some of these sectors will require little encouragement and additional governance, others need more and better planning to achieve their full potential and return more sustainable outcomes.

Where different industries wish to use a same space or same resources, competition and tension can arise, and trade-offs need to be understood for making decisions to maximize economic, social and environmental benefit. Strong planning and regional coordination are needed to optimize investment and to manage externalities through improved regulations, ocean monitoring and surveillance, coastal protection, and waste management. Ensuring synergies across the blue economy is important for sustainability and enhancing efficiency.

Developing ocean economies requires (1) strategic vision and commitment; (2) good governance; and (3) investments (see Box 3).



### Box 3: Requirements to develop the Ocean Economy: Vision, Governance and Investments

- 1) Developing a Vision. African countries have signed up to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) many of which are in particular relevant for the Ocean Economy, notably SDG 1 (eliminating poverty) and SDG 14 (protecting life below water). Most African governments submitted Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. African nations are also party to several regional alliances offering appropriate frameworks for coordination and synergy, including the African Maritime Transport Charter, the Africa Integrated Maritime Strategy (which produced the 2050 AIM Strategy), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), which adopted a roadmap on the Blue Economy and, importantly, the African Union 2063 Agenda, which interfaces with the UN Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development. These statements and plans should be translated into actions under the leadership of African nations.
- 2) Promoting good governance. Good governance based on science, data and technology, is critical to underpin governance reforms and shape management decisions, whether to ensure that fish stocks are sustainably managed, or that oil exploration takes critical natural habitats into account. Securing tenure rights to well-organized communities has also proven to be effective at restoring fisheries and livelihoods.
- 3) Increasing investments. For the potential of the ocean economy to be realized, significant investments will be needed to support improved governance, community initiatives, and an enabling environment for the private sector to engage in a responsible and sustainable way.

### ‘Greening the Blue Economy’

Going forward, African countries need to develop their ocean economies, but they need to do so in a way that factors in short-term and long-term climate impacts. Many techniques have already been tested and used in other regions and can be adapted to African situations. For example,

- Coasts must be protected against erosion using not only grey but also green infrastructure;
- Seaport design needs to be adapted so it is more resilient to climate change and does not cause erosion;
- Alternative energy sources that harness the power and temperature of the sea need to be developed;
- Human capital needs to be developed in the various sub-sectors of the ocean economy;
- Climate model predictions need to become available to orient investments and ensure their safety.

### Oceans and COP22

In the Paris Agreement adopted at COP21, oceans are mentioned only once, in the Preamble. As we move towards COP22, we should aim to promote oceans in the context of the global action on climate – both adaptation and mitigation – and in Africa in particular. COP22 will provide opportunities to report on climate action for the oceans and to raise awareness and funding for scaling up action and improving our collective knowledge base. The World Bank’s Africa Climate Business Plan assesses that a minimum of US\$670 million is required before 2020 to promote climate-smart ocean economies and protect coastal areas.