Cities and Blue Economy

Building the Blue Economy of the Coastal Cities of the Western Indian Ocean (WIO)

Valentine Ochanda[1]*, Julius Francis[1], Arthur Tuda[1]

[1] Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA), Zanzibar, Tanzania.

* Correspondence: v.ochanda@wiomsa.org

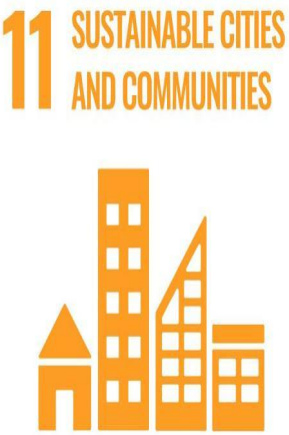
Summary

Cities are critical and vital nodes for human settlements and essential in nurturing the systems' value and maintaining life. Along with coastal cities, urbanization is active in using the city space and the generation of new public and private spaces. The coastal city nexus offers settlements, services and a variety of challenges. In addition, the nexus brings in several concepts, the most important of which is The Blue Economy (BE) concept. It is a key component of coastal economic empowerment, sustainable development, and ecosystem management. Cities and local governments play a critical role in developing coastal space and coastal landscape. Municipal and local governments must play a key role in facilitating land-sea planning and providing more space for coastal investment prioritization. Proper and strategic positioning will result in an increase in income for low income and informal settlements that depend on coastal ecosystems for their daily sustenance. In the WIO region, the blue economy must be viewed not only as a method of extracting resources but also as a method for integrating the cityscape and the seascape protectively and productively. For the two systems to co-exist for futuristic development, the economy is critical in enhancing the livability of the coastal communities and a manageable force in driving urbanization. BE and coastal cities nexus can only be realized through a robust governance system that allows adjustments. Enhanced programs and plans for the coastal communities, enhanced financial support and increased fiscal energy invested in the municipality will increase the capacity of the municipality to achieve BE. Several blue economy sectors can benefit the cities, such as fisheries, waterfront development, maritime transportation, port infrastructures, coastal tourism, and bioprospecting. WIO cities are at different levels of fiscal capacity, governance levels, city planning, and infrastructure development that supports the blue economy. Several points of departure and weaknesses in enhancing BE in the WIO region include different Municipal Governance systems and their low fiscal capabilities and cooperation within the region. To enhance a strategic WIO regional BE outlook, the country based enhanced operational environment can facilitate shared experiences with cities in other countries. Again, integrated governance systems can assist the less developed blue economy sectors and countries, enhancing synergies and economic strength and research on BE. The development of a blue economy and strengthening coastal cities in the WIO region relies on measures that enhance multilevel urban risk and blue economy management, alignment of policies and incentives for proper use of the land-sea management, strengthening of the local government and community capacity to participate and enhance the blue economy agenda as well as synergies with the private sector, appropriate financing and plans to manage the blue economy sector and the institutional capacity development of blue economy in education and consistent research.

Background and Regional outlook

At the Ninth Meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Nairobi Convention (COP 9) held in Mombasa, Kenya in August 2018, Contracting Parties to the convention recognised for the first time the need to partner with UN-Habitat to address the environmental challenges and opportunities posed by rapid urbanisation, especially of coastal cities in the WIO region as articulated in the SDG 11 and the New Urban Agenda (NUA). Further, COP 9 urged Contracting Parties to consider undertaking climate change vulnerability assessments of their urban coastal areas, including urban spatial planning processes and integrating marine natural capital (UNEP 2018, UNEP/NC/COP/9/9). In addition, the Convention Secretariat was requested to collaborate with UN-Habitat and

http://dx.doi.org/1x.xxx/wio.20



other partners to develop a regional action plan and roadmap to assist the Contracting Parties in integrating the NUA into coastal cities of the WIO region for the protection of the marine and coastal environment (UNEP 2018, UNEP/NC/COP/9/13).

Blue economy policy and strategy are still in their infancy at national and local levels in several WIO countries. However, the concepts of the blue economy are taking shape in the region, with some Contracting Parties having developed and implemented blue economy actions and strategies at national levels. For example, South Africa's Operation Phakisa (Findlay 2018) is an integrated tool and platform to enhance the blue economy nationally. Mauritius and Seychelles have also progressed in integrated coastal systems management of the land-sea interface while improving national blue economy sectors. Kenya hosted a high-level blue economy conference in 2018 with over18 000 participants worldwide, initiating meaningful dialogue on the blue economy.

The linkages between environment, society, and economy in coastal cities are essential in fostering and enhancing a sustainable blue economy in the WIO region. Therefore, there is a need to better understand their interdependencies and the associated constraints for sustainable development. If appropriately managed, coastal cities can offer better socio-economic conditions and quality of life to residents and the broader context in which they are situated. Therefore, the integrated adaptive management and sustainable development of coastal cities and their marine environment are essential.

It is against this background, and in response to the COP 9 decisions, WIOMSA, in collaboration with UN-Habitat, commissioned a series of studies on the status of the blue economy in four cities in three WIO nations.

- The case studies for four cities based on primary research include Mombasa and Kilifi (Kenya), Dar es Salaam (Tanzania) and Port Louis (Mauritius). These in-depth city case studies are provided as separate reports, informing both the roadmap and this Status Report.
- The status report is essential to identifying areas and institutions that need to be enhanced or created within the region to improve coastal communities and urban-ocean sustainability. Apart from fostering regional initiatives as part of the Nairobi Convention, the report's outcomes will also address critical global initiatives that include SDG 11 on sustainable cities and communities. SDG 14 protects marine resources, improves food security and economic status, and creates partnerships to enhance WIO cities' livability while guarding against climate change hazards.
- The Status Report sets the scene for a final document, the *'Roadmap for the development of the blue economy in coastal cities*". The study is informed by secondary research across the region and primary research in 4 cities – Mombasa, Kenya; Kilifi, Kenya; Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; and Port Louis, Mauritius. The Status Report is a knowledge resource for city and national government stakeholders, WIOMSA, UN-Habitat and other partners. The report highlights the importance of cities to the blue economy, interdependencies across its sectors, social, economic and environmental and impacts and broader urban systems, and the value of coordinated planning.
- The *'Roadmap for the development of the blue economy in coastal cities*' (WIOMSA and UN-Habitat,

2021a)- responds to challenges and opportunities identified in more comprehensive research and provides specific blue economy recommendations for WIO cities and their stakeholders, including but not limited to city and national government stakeholders, WIOMSA, UN-Habitat, donors, private and civil society organisations. The roadmap report focuses on specific policy and operational, blue economy actions for cities, rather than theoretical or conceptual approaches on how cities relate to the blue economy.

Production of the reports

The six reports blend secondary research across cities of the WIO region and primary findings from the city case study research. Based on learning from the desktop phase, Dar es Salaam, Port Louis, Mombasa and Kilifi Town were selected as case study cities. Specific factors which influenced choice are as follows: a desire to choose at least one mainland and one island city; selection of cities which allowed exploration of key blue economy themes that emerged in the desktop research phase (a port city, a tourism hotspot, a city with solid fishing sector connection and a rapidly growing smaller city); and logistics related to travel and availability of interviewees.

Key informant interviews and focus group discussions were the primary means of field investigation, engaging key stakeholders across blue economy sectors and stakeholder types (government, academia, private and civil society). Researchers consulted 85 stakeholders across the four cities. Field research obtained and analysed data for major blue-economy industries' economic, social, and environmental dimensions using the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analytical framework to gain an in-depth, balanced understanding of the city-blue economy relationship. Semi-structured interviews were used to elicit stakeholders' thoughts on overarching city blue economy strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats before exploring specific blue economy sectors with which the stakeholder was involved (e.g., fishing, tourism, and maritime transport and shipping). The final chapters of this Status Report summarise key blue economy issues for WIO cities and highlight some critical recommendations detailed in full in the roadmap. Proposals responded to the city challenges and opportunities uncovered during the primary and secondary research. The roadmap uses a modified Delphi methodology to prioritise a long list of blue economy recommendations (WIOMSA and UN Habitat, 2021b)

This research was carried out between January 2020 and early March 2021 before and after the COVID-19 outbreak. Findings reflect that, although the impacts of COVID-19 were largely acknowledged, before-after perceptions differed. Generally, the long term economic, social and environmental impacts of the pandemic and the blue economy are yet to be fully established.

Summary of the main findings

Importance of cities to the blue economy

Coastal cities are gateways of trade and transport for countries in the WIO region and essential blue economy activity and infrastructure sites, including ports, airports, hotels and fish markets, and the workforce that supports key blue economy sectors. These sectors do not necessarily exist in harmony and must manage competing demands. Coastal cities are also sites of significant urban population growth, which is unplanned and vulnerable to climate-induced hazards, including sea-level rise and coastal flooding. Urban growth challenges are not limited to major coastal cities but are also experienced in rapidly growing smaller secondary cities. The smaller cities are often unplanned and lack corresponding infrastructural development. These challenges play out at the city level and should be recognised in blue economy policy and operational action.

Blue economy governance and varying city influence

The influence of local authorities on the blue economy differs considerably across WIO countries, linked to decentralisation and fiscal autonomy. Mainland cities with a more advanced devolution process (eg Durban, Mombasa and Dar es Salaam) have significant responsibility and budgetary independence. In Mozambique, cities have devolved responsibilities but have lower fiscal and administrative capacity. In Comoros and Madagascar, local authorities offer a more stable government. Still, they are undermined by low budgetary capacity. In Seychelles and Mauritius, city authorities typically have much lower responsibility than their mainland counterparts and little blue economy planning and implementation. Nationally driven blue economy projects and FDI play a crucial role across WIO cities.

Even cities with limited blue economy responsibility provide essential municipal services supporting or undermining blue economy sectors (WIOMSA and UN Habitat, 2021b). It is, therefore, crucial that all

local authorities are engaged in blue economy planning where aspirations of urban planning are merged with the marine sector. WIO countries are at different blue economy strategy formulation stages and Marine Spatial Planning (MSP). Seychelles, Mauritius, South Africa and Kenya have made the most progress. In Kenya, MSP is carried out at the national and local levels. The blue economy strategy development and MSP are part of a complex ocean governance network. Integrated coastal zone planning is important in enhancing the urbanscape and protection of the urban form and ocean waters' protection and sustainable use. Locally Managed Marine Areas (LMMAs), classified as Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs), complement the Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and engage local communities in marine conservation. Designated coastal waters protection ultimately ensures the future sustainability of ocean resources and future sources of food and livelihood for urban residents while mitigating some of the more comprehensive environmental damage of urbanisation processes.

Sector-specific challenges and opportunities

Ports are crucial to nations economic development, commonly measured as GDP, and the overall cities' socio-economic performance. This is illustrated by the port of Durban, which employs 53 000 people directly and another 50 000 indirectly. Ports are typically national assets and are operated at the national level, with local authorities' little or no involvement in port operations. Ports are therefore subject to decisions made at the national level, which may conflict with city aspirations. Nationally, there is a need to ensure that ports are supported by sufficient economic infrastructures such as road and rail. While authorities may want to have greater input in city port operations at the local level, they must ensure that the city economy is sufficiently diverse to limit reliance on ports, often outside their control. In addition, ports in the WIO pose significant challenges to local waters through shipping processes, including fuel and ballast water and land reclamation. Future port investment in WIO cities needs to adopt a green port approach and certifications to minimise environmental and cascading impacts on the environment and other blue economy sectors such as fishing and tourism.

Coastal areas and coastal cities are vital to the tourism sector in many WIO countries. For example, Durban accounted for 24 per cent of South Africa's tourism earnings in 2015, and coastal tourism provides around 60 per cent of overall tourism earnings in Kenya. For coastal cities, challenges include protecting the tourism sector from external shocks (such as terrorism and pandemics). These shocks can dramatically affect visitor numbers and ensure that tourist spending in cities filters down to local communities rather than remaining foreign-owned, all-inclusive hotels. Cities facing such challenges have been exploring ways to better cater to domestic visitors and conference guests, who are less susceptible than international tourists to external shocks and are more likely to visit and spend money in local communities. In Port Louis, Mauritius and for cities on other WIO small island states, one key challenge is how to attract visitors who typically bypass the city and head straight for more remote beach resorts. Evidence of community community-led ecotourism that can sustain both marine biodiversity and local livelihoods is highlighted across cities.

Fishing provides a vital livelihood source to fishers in waters off the coast from WIO cities and those engaged in fish processing and value addition. Fishing is also a crucial source of protein for city residents. Inadequate equipment, including vessels and ancillary equipment, reduces the fishing sector's potential for local fishers across several WIO countries and cities. Local fishers are limited to nearby waters, which are overfished. Limited processing and storage facilities in WIO cities is another prohibitive factor meaning that much fish stock is wasted or has little value-added. For the fishing potential to be realised in WIO cities, these are two key investment areas. Local community groups exist in most WIO cities, known as Beach Management Units (BMUs), fishing associations or similar. Supporting these community groups can increase local livelihood potential and contribute to more sustainable management of coastal waters.

Waterfront Development projects, if delivered effectively, as well-designed mixed-use development, can provide valuable public space for community activity and trade. They can generate sustainable economic benefits from natural coastal assets while respecting and protecting natural coastal and marine habitats. However, not all waterfront developments in WIO cities balance these factors, so strong development control and environmental impact assessment are essential to ensure that development is carried out responsibly (Bolleter, 2014; WIOMSA and UN Habitat, 2021a, 2021b). Population and infrastructure in WIO cities are particularly vulnerable to the future impacts

of climate change. For the blue economy to flourish in coastal cities, service provision challenges must be addressed alongside or as part of specific blue economy investments, holistic programming, integrated with more comprehensive resilient urban planning and climate adaptation (Chang and Huang 2011).

Operational environment

The operational environment is the backbone of sustainable blue economy strategies in coastal cities. Since Coastal cities are an interface between the landscape and the seascape, innovative waste management strategies are essential to make this environment work and deliver effective solutions. The operational environment also includes transportation planning, education and resilient anticipatory planning. Most cities in the WIO region have a firm policy concerning waste management. However, more effort is needed in helping these cities deal with transportation planning due to port and related infrastructure, resilient and anticipatory planning of these cities in light of the challenges that they face example, sea-level rise and inundation. Realigning the cities form through strengthened planning is key in integrating the city planning needs and the operational environment for the overall blue economy strategy.

Technical recommendations for regional implementation of cities and blue economy in the WIO region

The region has potential for future growth of other blue economy sectors such as marine biotechnology, renewable energy, and resource extraction. Still, the recommendations are intentionally focused on blue economy sectors and the most prominent themes identified across WIO coastal cities.

- Support the blue economic governance and planning by formalising local Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) legislation. Specific spatial planning considerations may include adopting land-sea planning to include spatial uses within 5km offshore and establishing coordinated city structures for blue economy planning.
- Promote ports and maritime trade by identifying additional supply chain opportunities (processing, other value addition activities) spatially proximate to existing port activities.
- Enhance tourism by developing and promoting the city's tourism strategies, supporting local assets and communities, connecting cities and beach resorts, and coordinating regional tourist locations.
- Support the local fishing industry by incentivising bulk buying of local seafood products and focusing on local produce.
- Promote green waterfront developments through public-private partnership (PPP) initiatives, including multiple area market analysis, land use assessment, financing, and/or operations.
- Enhance operational environment by mapping circular economy opportunities in cities, including livelihood opportunities for local communities, transportation planning and infrastructure, innovative plastic waste solutions, resilient and anticipatory planning, and systematic interventions concerning recycling infrastructure and processes. In addition, develop a city circular economy strategy.
- Disseminate research findings using online learning platforms to cities and their respective blue economy stakeholders and encourage them to consider the local context when applying report recommendations and the follow-up steps. This could be achieved through a series of interactive, online modules for a municipality to undertake at their convenience. It may involve a simple overarching module or a series of modules focusing on a specific blue economy theme (eg tourism) or cities of a similar typology (eg higher/lower capacity).
- Provide technical assistance to cities for blue economy planning and recommendations. This would involve tailoring the guidance and learning into local blue economy action plans. The scale of this activity could range from working with a few cities to working with multiple cities across the region, developing city blue economy strategies and connecting coastal cities.
- Intensify research on the blue economy to address specific knowledge gaps, such as multiple objectives for blue economy, sub-national, regional tourism strategies, city circular economy plans, and COVID-19 impact on the blue economy in WIO cities.

Policy recommendations based on the 2018 COP for coastal cities and blue economy.

In achieving the conventions strategies for the sustainable and workable blue economy and integrating the new urban agenda, including urban spatial planning processes, it is important to consider integrating marine natural capital**,** which also includes:

- Helping the parties enhance their operational environment to maximise gains in the blue economy in WIO cities

- WIOMSA, the Nairobi Convention Secretariat and other regional partners strengthen and integrate blue economy \ governance and planning in waterfront development, ports and maritime trade for the WIO region.
- Technical assistance on the blue economy should be offered by the Contracting Parties to local authority and county governments in the region and involve coastal cities in developing the blue economy.

Conclusions

The blue economy is a rapidly evolving concept. Hence there is a need to merge the aspirations of the people living in the coastal cities benefiting from the marine environment in the WIO region. The opportunities and challenges are intertwined between the marine and terrestrial crucial coastal ecosystems, the coastal cities and communities that can benefit from in the spirit and letter of SGD 11. However, challenges exist that include the policy environment, some untapped gaps and potential that require further research. The WIO region already has a starting point in enhancing tourism, water sports development, waterfront development, among others, in facilitating the merging of these concepts along with the land and the sea in a productive way. However, more effort needs to be made in assisting contracting parties in learning lessons from their peers and enhancing the positive development of the blue economy in the cities of the WIO region.

References

Bolleter, J. (2014) 'Charting a Changing Waterfront: A Review of Key Schemes for Perth's Foreshore', *Journal of Urban Design*, 19(5), pp. 569–592. doi:10.1080/13574809.2014.943703.

Chang, T.C. and Huang, S. (2011) 'Reclaiming the City: Waterfront Development in Singapore', *Urban Studies*, 48(10), pp. 2085–2100. doi:10.1177/0042098010382677.

Findlay, K. (2018) 'Operation Phakisa and unlocking South Africa's ocean economy', *Journal of the Indian Ocean Region*, 14(2), pp. 248–254. doi:10.1080/19480881.2018.1475857.

UNEP Conference of the Parties to the Nairobi Convention, decisions IX: (30-31 August 2018, Mombasa, Kenya). https://www.unep.org/nairobiconvention/index.php/events/conference/ninth-conference-parties-nairobi-convention

UNEP Conference of the Parties to the Nairobi Convention, decisions XIII: (30-31 August 2018, Mombasa, Kenya). https://www.unep.org/nairobiconvention/index.php/events/conference/ninth-conference-parties-nairobi-convention

WIOMSA and UN-Habitat (2021a) *Coastal Cities of the Western Indian Ocean Region and the Blue Economy A Strategic Roadmap.* 1st edn. Zanzibar, Tanzania: Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA).

WIOMSA and UN-Habitat (2021a) *Coastal Cities of the Western Indian Ocean Region and the Blue Economy: City Case Study – Mombasa*. Zanzibar, Tanzania: Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA) (1).

WIOMSA and UN-Habitat (2021b) *Coastal Cities of the Western Indian Ocean Region and the Blue Economy: City Case Study – Port Luis*. 1st edn. Zanzibar, Tanzania: Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA) (1).

WIOMSA and UN-Habitat (2021b) *Coastal Cities of the Western Indian Ocean Region and the Blue Economy Status Report.* 1st edn. Zanzibar, Tanzania: Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA) (1).

WIO Science - Policy Platform Series
(1) 2022 163-166

Private sector engagement for a sustainable blue economy in the Western Indian Ocean Region

Yvonne W. Waweru[1]* and Alex Benkenstein[2]

[1] Nairobi Convention

[2] South African Institute for International Affairs (SAIIA)

* Correspondence: yvonne.waweru@giz.de

Summary

There is growing recognition that the private sector has a key role in achieving the Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG 14, which focuses on 'Life Below Water'. Private sector involvement is also pivotal in regional and global blue economy initiatives and policy frameworks. Examples of private-sector contributions to more sustainable oceans include adopting environmentally sustainable practices within business operations to address overfishing, plastics pollution, habitat destruction and other harmful impacts. In addition to improved business practices, the private sector can directly contribute to ocean protection and governance initiatives through sharing skills, data, technical support, communications support, financing and a range of services and assets. Based on a recently developed strategic framework for private sector engagement in the Western Indian Ocean Region by the Nairobi Convention, we present insights from the Western Indian Ocean (WIO) region.

Background

The Nairobi Convention countries derive approximately US$ 25 billion per year from the coastal and marine resources of the WIO region, mainly from tourism, fisheries, coastal agriculture, mining, mariculture, and ports and coastal transport sectors (UNEP 2009). The private sector plays a vital role in these economic activities and is an important engine of economic growth, job creation and poverty alleviation, especially in coastal areas. In addition, the private sector is an important source of investment capital for unlocking ocean assets in the region, valued at US$ 333.8 billion (Obura and others, 2017), thereby contributing to the development of the region's blue economy.

The private sector's economic activities in marine and coastal sectors rely heavily on marine and coastal ecosystems for goods and services as business inputs and indirectly through business value chains (TEEB 2010). At the same time, the activities of businesses, both large and small across a wide range of sectors, have significant and often detrimental impacts on coastal and ocean environments. In order to manage our oceans sustainably, private sector engagement in ocean governance and protection is crucial, as is ensuring an inclusive and sustainable blue economy for the region.

Advances

The private sector community relying on the ocean and coasts can be broadly categorised as direct ocean users, ocean user support industries, and providers of infrastructure for the ocean economy (Holthus 2018). Direct ocean users are industries that depend directly on the ocean to extract or produce goods such as fish, oil and gas, renewable energy, seabed minerals, and ocean space for shipping, coastal, marine and cruise tourism, and submarine cables marine uses. Further, ocean user support industries are the ecosystem of sectors that depend on the direct ocean users for their existence, such as shipping, shipbuilders, marine fuels, maritime electronics, logistics, crew training, and those that drive the need for economic activities in ocean industry. These include the primary industries, manufacturers or retailers that transport commodities, materials or products by sea. Additionally, the ocean economy infrastructure providers include the financial,

http://dx.doi.org/1x.xxx/wio.21

insurance, legal, and other service sectors that enable ocean industries to develop and operate.

At the 2018 Nairobi Convention Conference of Parties (COP9), Contracting Parties adopted Decision CP9/13/5. It encourages communication and collaboration between Contracting Parties and the civil society, private sector, non-governmental organisations, local governments, and municipal authorities in implementing the work programme of the Nairobi Convention. Harnessing synergies and collaboration, it aims to promote impact and commitment. A work programme was created by Nairobi Convention in response to this decision, aiming to engage stakeholders in public and private sectors in the greening of operations and management practices to support innovative ocean governance (UNEP 2018). In this regard, the Western Indian Ocean Large Marine Ecosystems Strategic Action Programme Policy Harmonisation and Institutional Reforms (WIO LME SAPPHIRE) project acknowledges the private sector involvement of ocean-related businesses. These include the tourism industry, large-scale fisheries, shipping companies, mining, water transport, etc. are important components of effective ocean governance and management.

To date, two studies have been completed and reports generated under the SAPPHIRE project related to improved private sector partnerships for ocean governance: i) an assessment report for private sector engagement in the Western Indian Ocean region, and ii) a strategic framework for private sector engagement in the Western Indian Ocean region. The assessment report outlines key maritime sectors of the region, including fisheries, tourism, shipping and ports, shipbuilding and repair, oil and gas, renewable energy, mining, desalination and undersea cabling. It summarises each sector's key stakeholders and environmental impacts and reviews existing private sector involvement in partnerships aimed at coastal and marine conservation and protection from the WIO and elsewhere. The strategic framework builds on the assessment report to propose a series of implementation measures for engagement of the private sector. For example, it proposes the establishment of a WIO Blue Economy Platform (WIO-BEP) as a regional platform for facilitating private sector engagement across sectors and for promoting partnerships between the private sector, governance authorities (regional and national) and civil society. It also proposes partnerships in research and monitoring and many sector-specific partnerships.

In the assessment report, it was noted that efforts to involve the private sector in ocean governance have been piecemeal and have often failed to achieve the expected results. If private sector partnerships are effective, the mutual benefit must be derived from the partners involved (UNEP and others, 2021). For example, for the private sector, sustainable ocean business practices would provide an opportunity for long-term profitability as they can lower costs, physical, regulatory and social risks and enable more efficient operations (Bhattacharya and Managi, 2013). The involvement of the private sector also has a direct relationship with strengthening regional cooperation

Table 1. Collaboration among environmental stakeholders and private businesses has co-benefits.

Potential benefits for the environmental sector	Potential benefits for the private sector
Reduction of stress on the WIO LMEs	Improved understanding of the risks and opportunities related to the environment, climate and sustainability
Contribution to SDGs, sustainability, Nairobi Convention work programme	Improved understanding of environmental impacts and how to decrease risks and secure more robust supply chains
Identification and implementation of innovative solutions to environmental problems	Assistance in meeting statutory requirements
Mainstreaming of environmentally friendly practices into private sector operations	Access to funding through, for example, the Green Climate Fund, Blue Action Fund, etc
Access to private sector knowledge, technology and innovations	Cost-savings through more efficient resource use and improved sustainability
Facilitation of information-sharing, including best practices	Access to stakeholders and technical assistance
Acceleration of the transition to a blue economy	Insight into current and future policy environments
Improved policy-making (responsive to private sector needs)	Access to stakeholders and technical assistance
Improved governance	

and ocean governance in the WIO region. Numerous benefits would accrue from a regional approach, as shown in the figure below (UNEP and others, 2021):

Outlook for the region and Recommendations

As highlighted in the assessment report on private sector engagement, there is great diversity among private sector actors in the WIO region in terms of the nature of their activities (economic sector) and scale of activities – from micro-enterprises to multinational corporations. Consequently, there is a wide range of potential collaboration opportunities that may be designed around one or more of the following objectives:

- Advocacy and awareness-raising
- Information sharing (including identification and sharing of best practices)
- Joint research and ecosystem monitoring
- Promoting the adoption of joint standards (including through certification, branding, industry charters, etc.)
- Training and skills development
- Incentives to support behavioural change
- The implementation of demonstration projects

Various potential modalities can be utilised as mechanisms for engagement with the private sector, including information dissemination; public events, training and campaigns; open networks and policy discussions; multi-stakeholder fora; partnerships and alliances; and transactions (UNEP 2019). Strategic engagement with the private sector will thus require prioritising interventions and partners from these opportunities. The assessment report proposes the prioritisation of four economic sectors, namely: a) Fisheries (including capture fisheries, mariculture, and seafood processing); b) Extractive industries (oil & gas, coastal and offshore mining); c) Tourism and recreation; and d) Shipping and ports (including shipbuilding and repair).

The Strategic Framework also proposes many partnerships to increase engagement with the private sector as follows:

a. *The WIO-Blue Economy Platform (*WIO-BEP)
   The WIO-BEP is proposed to serve as a regional platform to facilitate private sector engagement across sectors and promote partnerships between the private sector, governance authorities (regional and national) and civil society. The membership of WIO-BEP is proposed to include, among others, private sector stakeholders together with organisations that form part of the Western Indian Ocean Sustainable Ecosystem Alliance (WIOSEA). For resource mobilisation purposes, a WIO-BEP fund could be established, through which voluntary contributions from the private sector and contributions from donors could be made.
b. *Research and Monitoring*
   Engaging and including research and monitoring organisations that were members of the WIOSEA during the Agulhas and Somali Current Large Marine Ecosystem (ASCLME) and South-West Indian Ocean Fisheries (SWIOF) Projects are proposed as a priority. This would facilitate monitoring ecosystem-related indicators and ocean-climate observations in the WIO.
c. *Sectoral Partnerships*
   The strategic framework also outlines many preliminary concepts for partnerships for priority sectors to be assessed in the consultation process and developed into full partnership proposals in consultation with the relevant partners and other potential partnerships. These include:
   - A regional capacity-building partnership for applying ocean accounting frameworks in ocean governance processes.
   - A WIO Alliance for Sustainable Octopus Utilization
   - A regional partnership on ICT for Fisheries
   - The establishment of a Regional Sustainable Tourism Council
   - The establishment of a Regional Marine Pollution Response Centre

Contracting Parties are urged to strengthen collaboration with the private sector and other stakeholders for the conservation and sustainable utilisation of coastal and marine resources in the context of a sustainable blue economy in the WIO. Specifically, Contracting Parties are encouraged to:

- Adopt the report on the strategic framework for the engagement of the private sector in the Western Indian Ocean and the recommendations therein, including developing an implementation plan and a framework for reporting on progress in implementing the Strategic Framework for Private Sector Engagement; assessing the feasibility of WIO-BEP to support more effective private sector partnerships in the region, and establishing focus groups to assess and drive forward the proposed partnerships in the Strategic Framework for Private Sector Engagement
- Develop a multi-stakeholder advocacy strategy in coastal and ocean stewardship that enables

companies to contribute resources and influence through individual actions and multi-stakeholder partnerships. This will help to accelerate the transformation to a sustainable and inclusive blue economy.

Despite growing awareness of unsustainable practices related to humanity's relationship with the oceans, anthropogenic pressures compromising ocean health continue to mount. Achieving SDG14 requires concerted action at global, regional and local levels. The WIO region has completed the assessment of the current contribution of the private sector to ocean protection and governance and identified numerous opportunities to strengthen its role in this regard. The region has also developed a strategic framework for fostering more effective partnerships between civil society, government and the private sector. Necessary steps remain to be taken, and implementing the strategic framework for private sector engagement should be at the centre of these efforts going forward.

References

Bhattacharya, T. R. and Managi, S. (2013). Contributions of the Private Sector to Global Biodiversity Protection: Case Study of the Fortune 500 Companies. Int J Biodivers Sci Ecosyst Serv Manag, 9(1), 65-86.

Holthus, P. (2018). Ocean Governance and the Private Sector, World Oceans Council.

Obura, D., Burgener, V., Owen, S. and Gonzales, A. (2017). Reviving the Western Indian Ocean Economy: Actions for a Sustainable Future, Gland: WWF International.

TEEB (2010). *The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity: Mainstreaming the Economics of Nature – a Synthesis of the Approach, Conclusions and Recommendations of TEEB, Geneva: United Nations Environmental Programme*. http://doc.teebweb.org/wp-content/uploads/Study%20and%20Reports/Reports/Synthesis%20report/TEEB%20Synthesis%20Report%202010.pdf

UNEP/Nairobi Convention Secretariat (2009). *Strategic Action Programme for the Protection of the Coastal and Marine Environment of the Western Indian Ocean from Land-based Sources and Activities, Nairobi*. United Nations Environment Programme. https://nairobiconvention.org/CHM%20Documents/WIOSAP/SAP_protection_coastal_marine_WesternIndianOcean.pdf

UNEP/Nairobi Convention and UN (2018). *Proposed Work Programme for the Period 2018-2022 for the Implementation of the Nairobi Convention, Mombasa*. United Nations Environment Programme. https://nairobiconvention.org/clearinghouse/sites/default/files/Proposed%20Work%20Programme%202022-2024.pdf

UNEP (2019). *Strategy for Private Sector Engagement*. United Nations Environment Programme. https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/31107/Strategy%20for%20Private%20Sector%20Engagement-2.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

UNEP/Nairobi Convention Secretariat and SAIIA (2021). *A Strategic Framework for Private Sector Engagement in the Western Indian Ocean Region*. United Nations Environment Programme. https://nairobiconvention.org/clearinghouse/sites/default/files/Framework%20Private%20Sector%20Engagement%20%282%29-compressed.pdf