BRINGING NEW PERSPECTIVES: A BLUE FUTURE FOR THE INDIAN OCEAN REGION

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As South Africans we can achieve anything we wish, including putting human and social science research into action, as we put our minds to it and work together with a common purpose to uplift our people beyond inequality and gender differences.

Our mandate is to inform the effective formulation and monitoring of government policy; to evaluate policy implementation; to stimulate public debate through the effective dissemination of research-based data and fact-based research results; to foster research collaboration; and to help build research capacity and infrastructure for the human sciences. The Council conducts large-scale, policy-relevant, social-scientific research for public sector users, non-governmental organisations and international development agencies. Research activities and structures are closely aligned with South Africa’s national development priorities.

The HSRC’s integrated research programmes provide single points of entry – complete with a critical mass of researchers – for interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary and problem-orientated research.
1. Concept of the Blue Economy

2. Approach by the Indian Ocean Rim Association to the Blue Economy

3. Value of transdisciplinary research in the region

4. Policy implications - moving towards a ‘blue future’ for the region.
Club of Rome report The Limits to Growth 1972 -

• global industrial output per capita would reach a peak around 2008, followed by a rapid decline.
• global food per capita would reach a peak around 2020, followed by a rapid decline
• global services per capita reaches a peak around 2020, followed by a rapid decline
• global population reaches a peak in 2030, followed by a rapid decline
OCEAN RESOURCES

According to the WWF and the UNDP:

• The ocean has the greatest diversity of life on Earth
• The surface of the ocean absorbs up to 50% of the heat from the Sun and up to 30% of the carbon dioxide produced by humans
• Ocean Waves have the potential to be a sustainable renewable energy source
• Over 3 Billion people depend on marine and coastal diversity for their livelihoods
“BLUE ECONOMY”

• Pauli- *innovations for sustainable ocean development* (2010).
• United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development-2012 -
  • “oceans, seas and coastal areas form an integrated and essential component of the Earth’s ecosystem and are critical to sustaining it…”
• Seen as an alternative development model:
  • Policy discourses: Generate employment and facilitate inclusive and sustainable growth
BLUE ECONOMY

The Blue Economy is sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods and jobs, and ocean ecosystem health.

The Blue Economy encompasses many activities...

RENEWABLE ENERGY
Sustainable marine energy can play a vital role in social and economic development.

FISHERIES
Marine fisheries contribute more than US$210 billion annually to global GDP. More sustainable fisheries can generate more revenue, more fish and help restore fish stocks.

TOURISM
Ocean and coastal tourism can bring jobs and economic growth. Coastal Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States receive more than 41 million visitors per year.

CLIMATE CHANGE
The impacts of climate change on oceans—rising sea-levels, coastal erosion, changing ocean current patterns, and acidification—are staggering. At the same time, oceans are an important carbon sink and help mitigate climate change.

MARITIME TRANSPORT
Over 80% of international goods traded are transported by sea, and the volume of seaborne trade is expected to double by 2030 and quadruple by 2050.

WASTE MANAGEMENT
Silt and litter in the ocean is from land-based sources. Better waste management on land can help oceans recover.

To learn about other aspects of the blue economy, visit www.worldbank.org/oceans
• The Blue Economy is regarded as an alternative model of development in international policy discourse (Attri and Bohler-Muller, 2018: 1).

• IORA countries are in the process of developing various policy documents and strategies to maximise development from a Blue Economy perspective (Colgan, 2018: 13).

“All these documents draw attention to the unique resources and features of each country or region, but there is a common set of themes in all these discussions focussing on economic opportunities to be seized while acknowledging the environmental limitations within which development must take place. These documents may be best described as efforts of awareness building ... there are relatively few papers on the Blue Economy that speak to the practicalities of what specific strategies will be needed to direct actions. Persuading people to act is not the same thing as deciding what action to take” (Colgan, 2018: 38).
Indian Ocean Rim Association
8 Priority Areas for Sustained Growth and Balanced Development in the Indian Ocean

- Maritime Safety & Security
- Trade Investment & Facilitation
- Tourism & Cultural Exchange
- Fisheries Management
- Academic, Science & Technology
- Disaster Risk Management
Established in 1997
22 member states bordering the Indian Ocean;
9 dialogue partners;
Purpose of IORA:
- to build and expand understanding and mutually beneficial cooperation through a consensus-based, evolutionary and non-intrusive approach
Main Objective:
- cooperation for sustained growth and balanced development through regional economic cooperation;
2015: First IORA Ministerial Blue Economy Conference
- ‘the Blue Economy paradigm is founded on the ecosystem approach, including science-based conservation of marine resources and ecosystems, as a means to realise sustainable development’
**IMPORTANCE OF A BLUE FUTURE**

• Facilitate cooperation and improve capabilities in the Blue Economy

• Unified and cohesive regional organisation with common interests and concerns despite local political, social, economic and cultural diversities

• Transdisciplinary research on the Indian Ocean region to enhance understanding and policy development

• Aim to address mutual development priority aspirations:
  • Blue economy; women’s empowerment; inclusive growth; sustainable development
SECTORS OF THE BLUE ECONOMY

• Fisheries and Aquaculture
• Renewable Ocean Energy
• Seaports and Shipping
• Offshore Hydrocarbons and Seabed Minerals
• Marine Biotechnology, Research and Development
• Tourism

Ocean Knowledge Clusters and SIDS & LDC Programmes are cross cutting priorities.
CONCEPTUALISING THE BLUE ECONOMY WITHIN A SOCIAL CONTEXT

- Responsible economic activity and inclusive development for job creation
- Environmental protection and sustainability
- Social justice
- Human well-being
2014: 14th Ministerial Meeting (Australia)
Recognition of the blue economy as a top priority for generating employment.

2015: Ministerial and First Blue Economy Core Group Workshop
Promoting Fisheries & Aquaculture; Maritime Safety and Security Cooperation

2016: Second Blue Economy Core Group Workshop (China)
Maritime Connectivity and Financing for Development in the Indian Ocean Rim

2017: Third Blue Economy Core Group Workshop (Mauritius)
Environmental Sustainability and the Blue Economy in the Indian Ocean

2018: Preparatory meeting to draft Terms of Reference for Working Group on Blue Economy (South Africa)

2019: Ministerial Blue Economy conference (Bangladesh)

IORA WORK DONE THUS FAR
JAKARTA ACTION PLAN

Jakarta Declaration on the Blue Economy adopted. (Jakarta 2017) + Concord and Action Plan 2017-2021

• Goals:
  • Establish an IORA Working Group on Blue Economy
  • Implement the outcomes of the Blue Economy Core Working Group Workshops as well as Ministerial and High Level Expert Meetings
  • Develop appropriate mechanisms of cooperation for sustainable development of Blue Economy sectors, including training and capacity-building programmes
  • Improve livelihoods of coastal communities through capacity building programmes
CHALLENGES FOR THE BLUE ECONOMY

‘Paradoxically, the fundamental challenge of the Blue Economy is simultaneously to do more and to do less … the Blue Economy is both a bold vision and an excruciatingly delicate balancing act.’

• Rapidly degrading ocean resources through unsustainable development
• Climate change & pollution-
  • 26% increase in ocean acidification
  • 13 000 pieces of plastic litter every square kilometre of ocean
• Excessive marine resource extraction & the destruction of habitats
• Human capital still required to innovate Blue Economy sectors
• Sectoral and fragmented management of activities in the oceans
• Lack of consciousness on the meaning of ‘Sustainability’. 
‘Science should go beyond the laboratory to meet the needs and concerns of the diverse actors that make up the ocean community’ - United Nations 2021-2030

**TRANSDISCIPLINARY APPROACH**

Disciplinary research within academia

Interdisciplinary (multidisciplinary) research within academia

Transdisciplinary research goes beyond academia and involves stakeholders from policy, civil society etc.

An effective Blue Economy entails much more than GDP growth -
• The acknowledgement and mitigation of environmental effects of industry
• Investment in, and best use of, science, data, innovation and technology to shape management decisions
• Effective inclusion and active participation by societal groups
  • Women; Youth; local communities; indigenous groups; marginalized/underrepresented groups.
  • Especially important to developing methodologies such as transdisciplinary research.
• Measuring social impact.

Parletta (2019): ‘"triple bottom line" decision-making’: ‘Integrated economic, social and environmental needs for optimal benefits all round.’
Recommendations

• Essential to fill the data gaps

• Academic collaborations are essential in facilitating a complete understanding and knowledge of the Blue Economy.

• It is essential for Member States to invest in research on the key Blue Economy sectors

• Need a collaborative approach with NGOs and social movements involved in advancing blue economy issues

• Must ensure community participation in policy formulation and decision-making
A ‘blue future’ – a healthy future – would demand a concerted effort by researchers, policy makers and sector industries to work together to prevent over-exploitation, to protect the environment and to avert the worst of the climate crisis.

‘The sea, the great unifier, is man's only hope. Now, as never before, the old phrase has a literal meaning: we are all in the same boat.’ - Cousteau
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