



## Concept Note

### AU-ECA Side Event at the High level Conference on Blue Economy

27 November, 2018  
Nairobi, Kenya

#### Context

The African Union Commission (AUC) places a significant strategic importance on the prosperity and sustainable development of Africa's blue/maritime economy. The recognition of the importance of Blue Economy is indicated in the promulgation of various policies such as the Revised African Maritime Transport Charter, 2050 Africa Integrated maritime Strategy (2050 AIM Strategy), Lome Charter on Maritime Security, Safety and Development, and the Agenda 2063 on the Blue Economy.

In the 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy (2050 AIMS), the creation of an African 'Blue Economy' is envisioned, reflecting the potential for socio-economic development and regional integration of maritime spaces.

The Africa's Maritime Domain (AMD) offers all African nations, vast growth opportunities and a network of sea-lanes of enormous importance for their development, security and prosperity. It is of huge importance in terms of natural resources and energy, trade and industry, scientific and tourism. International commerce by water affects people and industries throughout the entire continent, including land-connected countries. In addition, the numerous vessels, ports, shipyards, and support industries in the AMD provide thousands of jobs for Africans, including women and youths. Clearly, disruptions or inefficiencies in Africa's maritime system with its supply chains and industries can thus have costly impact on a large number of participants in the economies of many African countries.

The blue economy has diverse components, including established traditional ocean industries such as fisheries, tourism, and maritime transport, but also new and emerging activities, such as offshore renewable energy, aquaculture, seabed extractive activities, and marine biotechnology and bio prospecting. A number of services provided by ocean ecosystems, and for which markets do not exist, also contribute significantly to economic and other human activity such as carbon sequestration, coastal protection, waste disposal and the existence of biodiversity.

The extraordinary beauty, cultural wealth and great diversity of Africa's coastal areas is a huge potential that can make our continent the preferred destination for many holidaymakers worldwide, making coastal and maritime tourism an important tourism sector. As part of Africa's Blue Growth strategy, the

coastal and maritime tourism sector can be targeted as an area with special potential to foster a smart, sustainable and inclusive Africa.

The clear delineation of maritime boundaries is often an important step in the direction of joint resource management and joint activities in the areas of trade, security, tourism and environmental protection. Furthermore, Innovative and sustainable solutions for the exploitation of ocean resources is very essential. Therefore, the Implementation of the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) and Africa Support Programme (GMES) is essentially for the use of Earth Observation techniques for management of the environment. One of the services under consideration within GMES and Africa is Marine and Coastal service.

### **Purpose of the Side Event**

The output of the world's ocean economy is estimated at around 1.3 trillion Euros and is forecast to more than double by 2030. This means that the Blue Economy could become an important driver of prosperity and job creation, not least in some developing and middle-income countries where the sector already represents an important share of the overall economy. Despite this huge untapped potential of the Blue Economy, the role of women and youth in this sector remains constrained.

Although stakeholder participation in the policy-making has improved over time, many challenges still remain. These require further and sustained efforts by all concerned. The purpose of the planned side-event is to achieve the following:

- Improve awareness among stakeholders with respect to Blue Economy;
- Set up a platform to coordinate and facilitate the synchronization between existing sectors, institutions and industries relevant to the Blue Economy by giving recognition;
- Identify challenges and opportunities in exploiting the potential of Africa's Blue Economy;
- Identifying technologically advanced contingency plan for environmental threats for enabling effective response to marine incidents;
- Identifying ways of engaging the youth to drive the Blue Economy agenda for Africa;
- Explore the best practices that promote women participation in Africa's Blue Economy, including affirmative action;
- Reflect on the potential for development of an African blue economy via the joint management of maritime boundaries, spaces and resources;
- Advocate for AU policy and legal instruments related to Maritime.

## **Policy Alignment**

This event is aligned to the Revised African Maritime Transport Charter, 2050 Africa Integrated maritime Strategy (2050 AIM Strategy), Lome Charter on Maritime Security, Safety and Development, and the Agenda 2063 on the Blue Economy. This further supports the United Nations' SDG 5, which emphasizes gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls.

## **Expected outputs**

The side event is expected:

- to come up with a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities for African Maritime Governance as well as concrete proposals that will be included in the African Union Blue Economy Strategy, with clear prioritization of women and youth participation.
- To promote notable key sectors that require improved private sector, with a focus on women, participation include fisheries, tourism, maritime transport, offshore renewable energy, aquaculture, seabed extractive activities, and marine biotechnology and bio prospecting;
- During the award ceremony, the launch one of the mechanisms provided under the 2050 AIM Strategy, namely the High College of Champions.

## **Participants**

Participants to the workshop will be drawn from the representatives of the African Union Member States, Regional Economic Communities, and Regional Monitoring Mechanisms, representatives of the AU Commission, Maritime Business Associations, International Maritime Organization, International Labor Organization and International Oceanographic Commission among others.

### Draft Agenda

Time	Event
0900-0930	Registration/Accreditation
0930-0945	Arrival of Dignitaries and Delegates
0945-0950	African Union Anthem National Anthem of the Republic of Kenya
1000-1003	Welcome Remarks by the Host
1005-1008	Remarks by Main Sponsor
1010-1013	Address by the African Union High Representative
1015-1018	...
1020-1040	Group Photograph + Tea Break
1045-1200	<p>Working Group Session-Introduction</p> <p><b>Theme1 stakeholders of the Blue Economy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Perspective from Policy makers</li> <li>- Perspective from private sector</li> <li>- Perspective from Women</li> </ul> <p><b>Theme 2 Challenges and Opportunities in the Blue economy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Peace and Security Perspective</li> <li>- Legal perspective (BBNJ,...)</li> <li>- New technology perspective</li> </ul>
1200-1400	Lunch Break
1400-1700	<p>Parallel Working Sessions 1 &amp; 2</p> <p><b>Session 1: Blue economy and Tourism</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Private sector Perspective</li> <li>- Coastal communities (women Perspective)</li> <li>- Environmental perspective</li> </ul> <p><b>Session 2: Blue Economy and CFTA (proposal from UNECA)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- African Ship-owners perspective</li> <li>- Fisheries sector Perspective</li> </ul>
1700-1900	Break
1930-2130	Diner Roundtable + African Blue Economy Awards
2130-	End of the Side Event