

AFRICAN UNION

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- What: SIDE EVENT: HIGH LEVEL MEETING ON AFRICA'S BLUE ECONOMY**
- Theme: UNLOCKING THE FULL POTENTIAL OF AFRICA'S BLUE ECONOMY – A CONTINENTAL STRATEGY FOR JOINT ACTION**
- When: Saturday, February 8, 2020**
- Time 19:00 – 21:30**
- Where: Sheraton Hotel**
- Who: Heads of State and Government**
- HE Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson African Union Commission**
- HE Erna Solberg, Prime Minister of Norway**
- HE Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada**
- HE Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary General**
- Members of the High Level Panel on Sustainable Ocean economy**
- Key partners on blue economy**
- The Private sector and Association in Maritime, Women, and Media.**

Background: The development of a sustainable blue economy is of strategic importance to implementation of Agenda 2063 flagship projects such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) that aims to accelerate intra-African trade and strengthen Africa's common voice and trading position in the global market place. More than 90% of Africa's import and export is transported by sea. Africa has 38 coastal and island states and a coastline of over 47,000 km, and hence presents an enormous opportunity for the continent to develop the sectors associated with the blue economy.

In order to harness the vast benefits that Africa's Blue Economy have, a continental strategy was developed to provide a framework to guide discussion and preparation towards the sustainable exploration of this resources.

The Blue Economy Strategy is to guide the development of an inclusive and sustainable blue economy that becomes a significant contributor to continental transformation and growth, through advancing knowledge on marine and aquatic biotechnology, environmental sustainability, the growth of an Africa-wide shipping industry, the development of sea, river and lake transport, the management of tourism and fishing activities on these aquatic spaces, and the exploitation and beneficiation of deep sea mineral and other resources.

Objective:

1. Official presentation of the Continental Blue Economy Strategy and the coordination mechanism for its implementation;
2. Solicit input from African leaders to the recommendations from the High Level Panel.
3. Trigger, amplify and accelerate action for a sustainable ocean economy by key stakeholders.
4. Provide a platform for policy-dialogue on, leadership, partnerships and cooperation at all levels in facilitating a coherent, coordinated and efficient implementation of the Continental Blue Economy Strategy

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