

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION DIRECTORATE

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**Explore Africa's Future: Africa Blue Economy Week 2024 Set to Make a Splash**



The African Union Commission (AUC), in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and key stakeholders, is thrilled to announce the Africa Blue Economy Week (ABEW-24) and the Commemoration of the Africa Day of Seas and Oceans. Taking place from 23 to 25 July in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the event is set to boost inclusive and sustainable blue growth across Africa.

Africa's vast coastline and abundant marine resources offer exceptional opportunities for transformative economic and social development. However, this potential has been hindered by environmental degradation, overexploitation and infrastructure deficits. ABEW-24 seeks to tackle these challenges to unlock Africa's blue potential.

**Empowering Africa's Blue Renaissance**

This year's theme, "Empowering Africa's Blue Renaissance", highlights the need for collective effort and innovation to build a dynamic blue sector. ABEW-24 unites leaders from various sectors to foster dialogue, celebrate achievements and explore the blue economy's role in advancing development goals such as poverty alleviation and climate resilience.

H.E. Ambassador Josefa Leonel Correia Sacko, AU Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment ([ARBE](#)), highlights the event's unique opportunity to reflect on the vast potential of Africa's blue economy and to reaffirm the commitments to the sustainable use and conservation of our seas and oceans in line with Aspiration 1 (*A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development*) and Goal 6 (*Blue/Ocean economy for accelerated economic growth*) of [Agenda 2063](#).

As the UNDP Regional Director for Africa, Ahunna Eziakonwa, emphasizes, this event signifies a major opportunity for Africa: “The Africa Blue Economy Week 2024 is a pivotal moment for our continent to tap into the immense potential of our freshwater and marine resources. By unlocking even, a fraction of the global blue economy's \$1.5 trillion value, we can significantly boost GDP, create millions of jobs and enhance food security.”

The objectives of ABEW-24 are multifaceted. They focus on raising awareness about the blue economy by highlighting its significance, benefits, and challenges. The event aims to foster dialogue among government officials, industry leaders, development partners, researchers, civil society, and youth groups, promoting opportunities for collaboration. It will also provide a platform for policymakers to discuss and develop new frameworks and strategies for a sustainable blue economy in Africa.

Additionally, ABEW addresses trade and investment priorities within the blue economy, leveraging the opportunities presented by the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). A crucial aspect of the event is empowering youth by amplifying their voices, supporting youth-led initiatives, and encouraging blue entrepreneurship and innovation.

### **High-Level Plenary Sessions and Partner-Led Workshops**

ABEW-24 includes thematic tracks and sessions focused on crucial areas of the blue economy, including balancing economic growth with ocean health, positioning Africa as a major player in global maritime business, promoting responsible coastal tourism, and examining connections between blue finance, trade and policy. **A** dedicated session will focus on **empowering youth and women**, highlighting their roles in shaping the future of the blue economy.

The event includes high-level plenary sessions with keynote speeches from government officials and experts. Partners will lead workshops and discussions on topics such as

sustainable fisheries, marine conservation, renewable energy, maritime security, trade and transport.

## Celebrating the African Day of Seas and Oceans

The African Day of Seas and Oceans, celebrated annually on 25 July, is a feature of ABEW-24. This day underscores the tremendous value of Africa's aquatic resources and the need for sustainable management to support economic growth, food security and environmental health. The celebration aligns with the Decade of African Seas and Oceans (2015–2025), highlighting efforts to protect and utilize these resources.

The African Union highlights the importance of this collective effort. “This event will foster inclusive and sustainable blue growth and address the critical role of the blue economy in achieving our broader development goals. The event reminds us of the interconnectedness of our world and the shared responsibility we must protect our oceans,” said H.E. Amb. Josefa Leonel Correia Sacko, AU Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development and Blue Economy ([ARBE](#)).

Join us in Addis Ababa to shape the future of Africa's blue economy and contribute to a sustainable and prosperous continent!

### About the African Union Commission's Blue Economy Division

The AU Commission (AUC) institutionalized the Blue Economy Division in its governance arrangement following the 2019 institutional reform. Since then, African Leaders have decided to embed it as a key component of the mandate of the AUC. To this end, the institutional reform process of the AUC endowed its senior leadership with the blue economy portfolio. It established a Blue Economy Division in May 2021 with the primary goal of implementing the Africa Blue Economy Strategy and contributing to the agenda 2063. Learn more at <https://au.int/en/directorates/sustainable-environment>

### About the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

The UNDP operates in nearly 170 countries and territories, working to eradicate poverty and reduce inequalities and exclusion. UNDP assists countries in developing policies, leadership skills, partnering abilities, institutional capabilities, and building resilience to sustain development results. Learn more at [www.undp.org/africa](http://www.undp.org/africa)

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