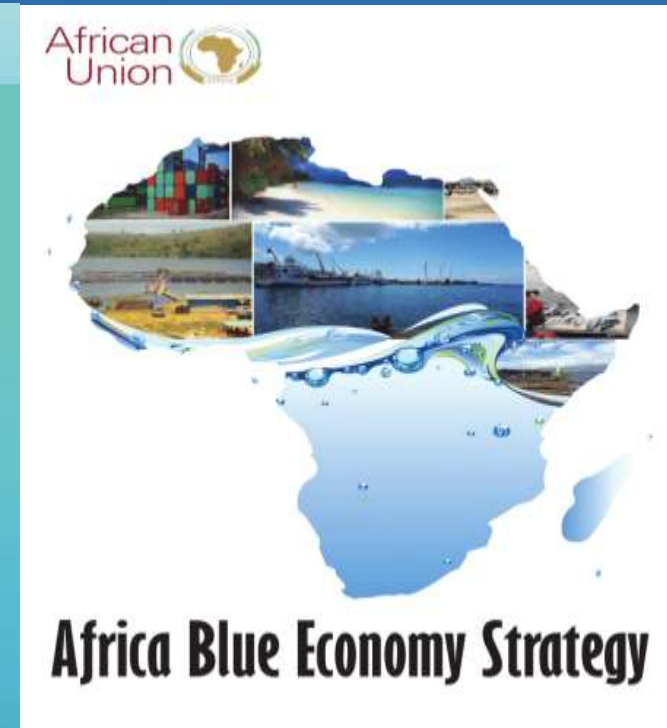
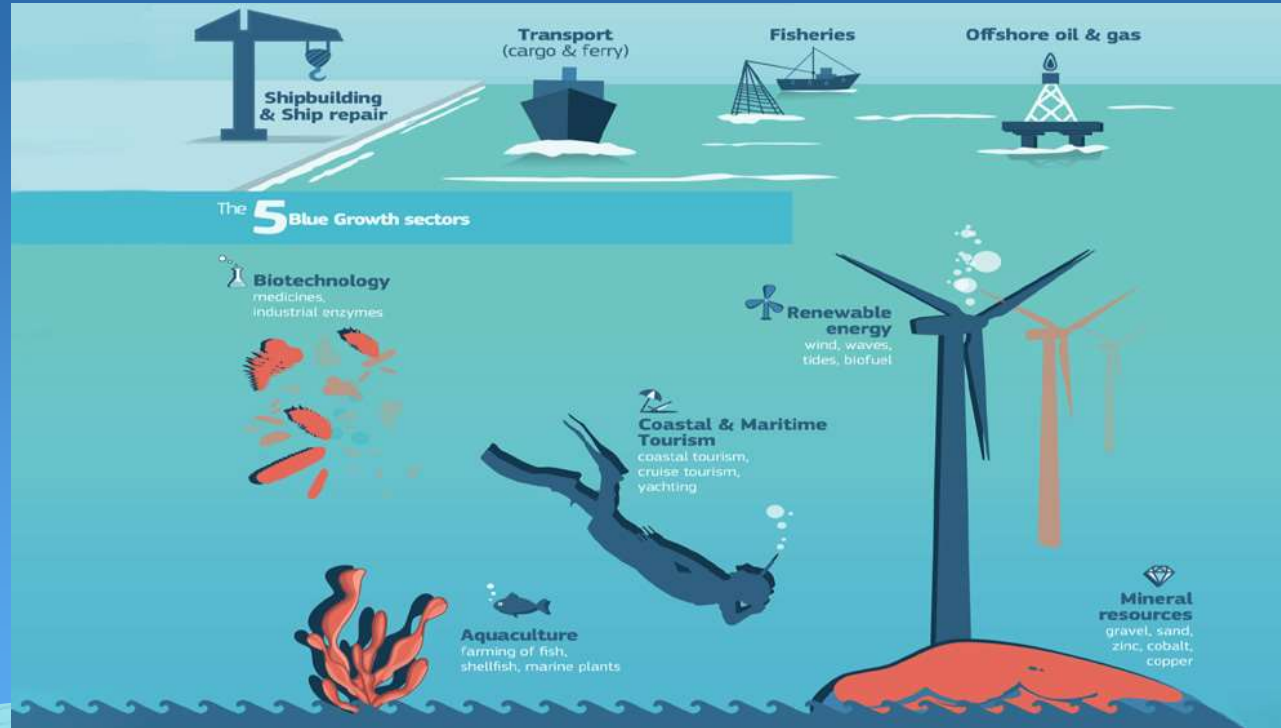




Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States Bordering the Atlantic Ocean (ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT)

The Blue Economy and its prospects in the ATLAFCO region



Naji LAAMRICH
 ATLAFCO Secretariat
 Tangier 14 April 2023

Harnessing today without compromising tomorrow ...



The concept of the Blue Economy

- ❑ It is a concept with an inherent conflict at its core between sustainable use, economic growth, and the need to align implementation in accordance with multiple, often competing, stakeholder groups and, more recently the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- ❑ The "blue economy" concept seeks to promote economic growth, social inclusion, and the preservation or improvement of livelihoods while at the same time **ensuring environmental sustainability of the oceans and coastal areas**
- ❑ **An important challenge of the blue economy is to understand and better manage the many aspects of oceanic sustainability, ranging from:**



- ❑ **The blue economy challenges us to realize that the sustainable management of ocean resources will require collaboration across borders and sectors through a variety of partnerships, and on a scale that has not been previously achieved**

The UN notes that the Blue Economy will aid in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals, especially 14, "Life Below Water"



Blue Economy...



uses smart shipping to lessen the impacts on the environment



is inclusive and improves the lives of all



harnesses renewable energy



is based on sustainable fisheries



creates jobs, reduces poverty and ends hunger

conserves marine life and oceans



protects coastal communities from the impacts of climate change



takes action against illegal fishing



tackles marine litter and oceans pollution

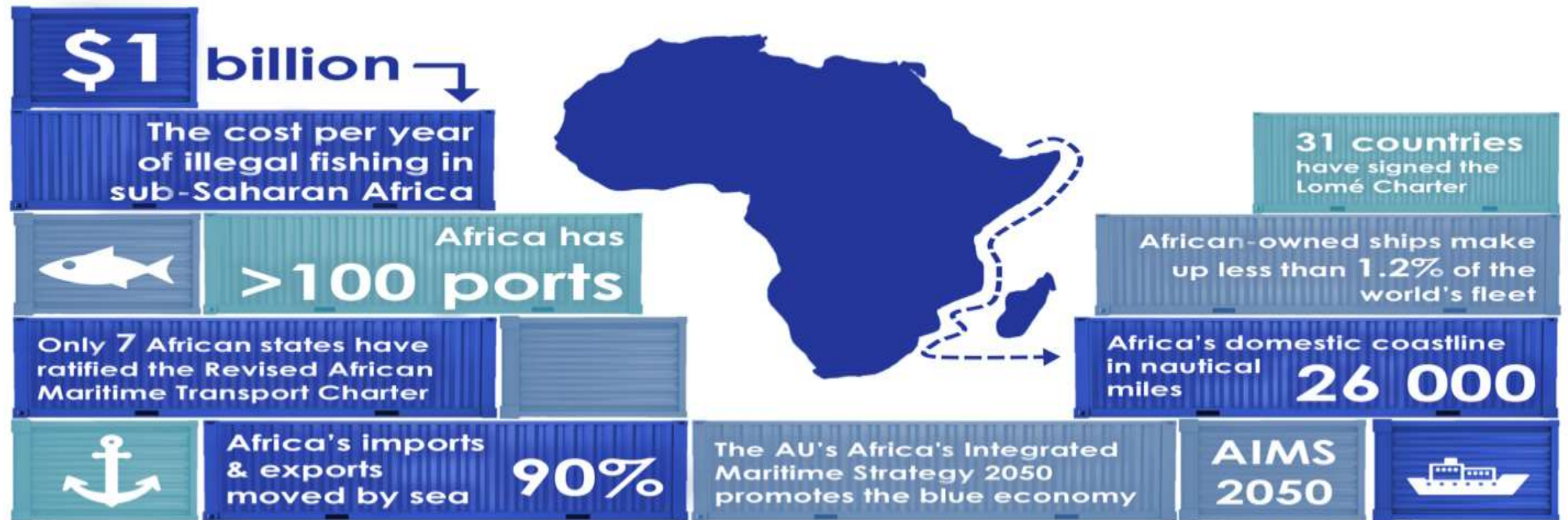


“ESTABLISHED” AND “EMERGING” INDUSTRIES UNDER BLUE ECONOMY

Established	Emerging
Capture Fisheries	Marine aquaculture
Seafood Processing	Deep-and-ultra-deep water oil and gas
Shipping	Offshore wind energy
Ports	Ocean renewable energy
Shipbuilding and Repair	Marine and seabed mining
Offshore oil and gas (shallow water)	Maritime safety and surveillance
Marine manufacturing and construction	Marine biotechnology
Maritime and coastal tourism	High-tech marine products and services
Marine business services	Other
Marine R&D and education	
Dredging	

Africa's blue Economy

Africa's blue economy: prospects and pitfalls





Opportunities of Blue Economy in Africa

- ❑ Africa is one of the most blessed continents in the world in terms of its potential marine and terrestrial natural resources
- ❑ Most of these riches, particularly the marine resources which contribute to the Blue Economy, are yet to be responsibly utilized to foster the economic transformation of a rich yet poor continent in the world
- ❑ The marine resources which include freshwater bodies and oceans can offer significant economic opportunities such as fisheries, seabed mining, oil drilling, aquaculture, trade, and tourism which can drastically transform Africa's future.
- ❑ Despite many of the marine resources being utilized, some of the resources (such as marine fisheries) are over-utilized or improperly used through destructive fishing methods etc.





Challenges undermining the blue economy

In spite of all its promises, the potential to develop a blue economy is limited by a series of challenges

- ❑ **Overfishing:** Fish stocks are further exploited by IUU fishing, responsible for roughly 11 to 26 million tons of fish catches annually, or US\$10-22 billion in unlawful or undocumented revenue
- ❑ **Habitat degradation:** Due largely to coastal development, deforestation, mining, and unsustainable fishing practices as well as pollution, in the form of excess nutrients from untreated sewerage, agricultural run-off and marine debris such as plastics
- ❑ **Climate change related phenomena :** Long term climate change impact on ocean systems is fraught with uncertainty, but it is clear that changes in sea temperature, acidity, and major oceanic currents, among others, threaten marine life and habitats
- ❑ **Unfair trade:** much of the value from international seafood trade does not remain in developing countries of origin, let alone in fishing communities
- ❑ **Ad hoc development:** Unplanned and unregulated development in the narrow coastal interface and near shore areas have led to significant externalities between sectors, suboptimal siting of infrastructure, overlapping uses of land and marine areas, marginalization of poor communities, and loss or degradation of critical habitats



How to Invest, Develop, Engage and Protect Africa's Blue Economy?

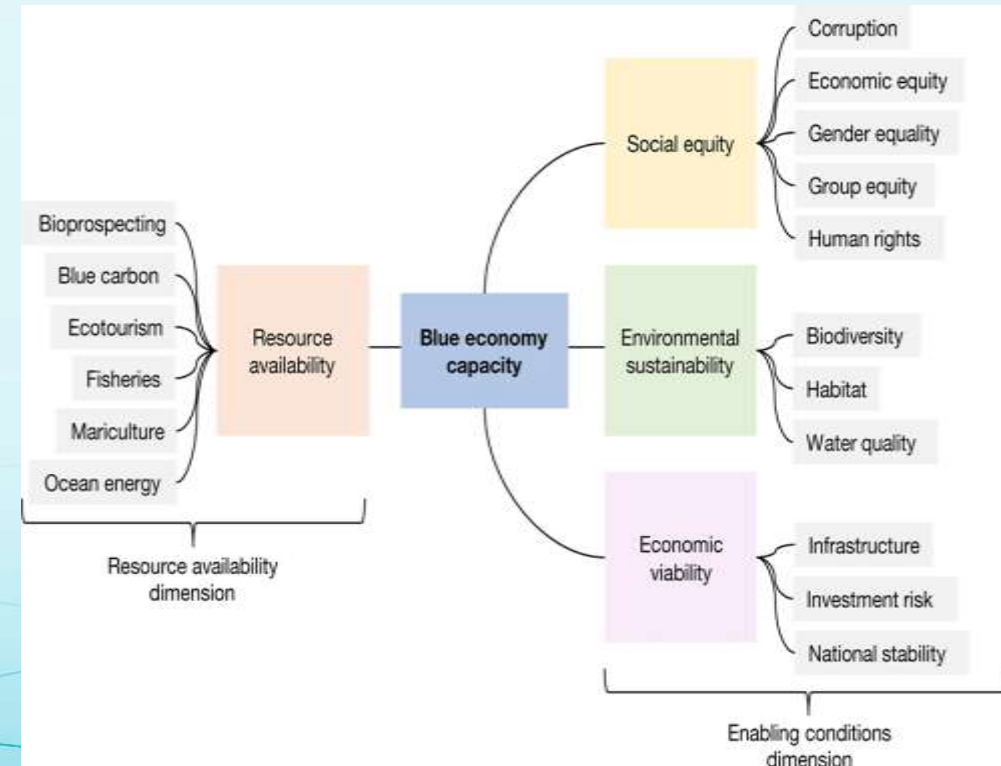
The desirable Blue Economy framework offers an “integrated, systemic, dynamic, inclusive, participatory and ecosystem-based approach in which sectorial barriers are minimized at the activity and governance level, and environmental, social and economic dimensions are intertwined and pursued for all Blue Economy activities” (see the report of the 21st Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on **Transformative Growth in Eastern Africa: Catalysts and Constraints**, published by ECA in 2017, available at:

<https://repository.uneca.org/bitstream/handle/10855/24053/b11875999.pdf?sequence=1>



Actions to be taken

- ❑ The need to overcome current economic trends that are rapidly degrading ocean resources
- ❑ The need to invest in the human capital required to harness the employment and development benefits of investing in **innovative blue economy sectors**
- ❑ The need to strengthening the concept and overcoming inadequate valuation of marine resources and ecosystem services provided by the oceans which makes it difficult to address cumulative impacts:
 - ❑ **inadequate human, institutional, and technical capacity**
 - ❑ **underdeveloped and often inadequate planning tools**
 - ❑ **lack of full implementation of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and relevant conventions and instruments**

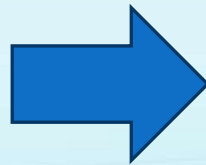




Conclusion

- ❑ Getting the opportunities of the blue economy will enable harnessing of its rich marine and aquatic resources to transform lives and livelihoods into a prosperous Africa that we all want
- ❑ This requires a paradigm shift and a new social contract for Africa to meet its long-term sustainable development challenges
- ❑ Through a better understanding of the enormous opportunities emerging from investing and reinvesting in Africa's aquatic and marine spaces, the balance can be tipped away from

Illegal harvesting
Degradation
Depletion



a sustainable Blue development paradigm
serving Africa today and tomorrow

If fully exploited and well managed, Africa's Blue Economy can constitute a major source of wealth and catapult the continent's fortunes



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