

Call for Papers
Background Paper for International Conference on
Developing Blue Economy in Indian Ocean:
Challenges and Opportunities

UGC Centre for Maritimes Studies, Pondicherry University
22-24 February 2017

Two thirds of the earth's surface is covered by water. Sea has been focus of humankind's concern. Sea based trade leads to mutual benefit, partnership, peace, stability and security. Sea connects different people, cultures, civilizations, governments and plays a constructive role in globalization (borderless and trade). It has been instrumental in connecting different parts of the world. Eighty five per cent of states of the world have a coast line and seventy five per cent of the world's population lives in the littoral, less than 200 nm from the sea. Eighty per cent of capital cities and major international trade centres and economic powers are located on the coast. Thirty six per cent of the world's oceans are encompassed within the exclusive economic zone (EEZ). Above all, ninety seven per cent of the world's trade (by volume) is traversed by sea. Over sixty per cent of ships fly flags different from the nationality of their owners. Maritime has become a dominant factor in global affairs. On the other hand, there are various threats emanate from the sea such as illegal trade, drug trafficking, terrorism, floods, tsunami, environmental degradation and rise of sea level. Since the threats through sea seem to be increasing, the littoral states need to enhance their cooperation on maritime/coastal security, which is otherwise having negative impact on their economy.

The cordial relations between humans and the oceans will decide the nature of sustainable development. Oceans and ocean related activities are considered as a fulcrum for economic growth, which can lead towards sustainable development. They provide food and minerals, produce oxygen, absorb greenhouse gases, alleviate climate change, influence weather patterns, temperatures, and serve as highways for human transport and sea-borne trade. This confluence of economy and sustainable development of the oceans leads to a concept called "Blue Economy."

The blue economy is a relatively new concept that has its origins in the green economy concept. Gunter Pauli's book (2010) entitled "***The Blue Economy: 10 Years, 100 Innovations, 100 Million Jobs***" brought importance of blue economy. The concept was endorsed at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development held in Rio de Janeiro in 2012. It shares the desired outcome: the improvement of human wellbeing and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities. The Goal of 14 of the UN's sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) envisages "Conserve and sustainability use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development." At its core, the oceans economy refers to the de-coupling of socio-economic development from environmental degradation. In this regard, efficiency and optimization of natural marine resources within ecological limits becomes paramount.

Developing Blue Economy in Indian Ocean:

The main components of blue economy are fisheries, sea-minerals including oil and gas, ports and shipping, marine tourism, marine biotechnology, deep-sea mining, and transport and logistics. The role of blue economy, which aims at optimum and sustainable use of oceanic resources for growth and development is critical for the coastal states. The high level of dependence of humans on marine assets keeps unprecedented pressure on marine ecosystems to service the ever-increasing demands of the growing global population. There is an increasing need for regulation based on an appropriate balance between the demand for oceans' natural resources and their sustainability.

The concept of an ocean's economy also embodies economic and trade activities that integrate the conservation and sustainable use and management of biodiversity, including maritime ecosystems and genetic resources. In addition, it includes activities that are not natural resource intensive, support sustainable patterns of consumption and generate lower or no green house gases emissions. It also seeks to contribute to mitigation and adaptation efforts to address climate change risks manifested in the rise of sea level and the acidification of seawater.

Indian Ocean is emerging as a new economic hub owes to its huge potential of oceanic resources. The development of blue economy holds immense promise for the region. Indian Ocean is the world's preeminent seaway for trade and commerce. It is also endowed with a wealth of natural resources, which are largely untapped. The development of blue economy in the Indian Ocean region is expected to yield a number of benefits for the littoral states. The region holds around 49.7 per cent of the world's proven oil reserves; around 49.7 per cent of the world's proven gas reserves and 19.8 per cent of the world's coal proven reserves. Availability of minerals, mainly polymetallic nodules and polymetallic massive sulphides, made the Indian Ocean region potential in terms of natural resources.

As far as sea lanes of communication are concerned, Indian Ocean accounts for the transportation of the highest tonnage of goods in the world, with almost 100,000 ships transiting annually. It transmits two-thirds of the worlds' oil shipments, one-third of bulk cargo traffic and half of the world's container shipments. The region is home to major sea transit routes that pass through several choke points in the region and some of them have been witness threat of closure by state and non state actors. Any disruption in the flow of maritime trade would affect the world's economy in general and littoral states of Indian Ocean in particular.

India has a long coastline of 7,500 km and an EEZ of 2.172 million km². Its economy is largely depend on foreign trade, most of which travel by sea. Coastal shipping has become recently an important means of moving goods across the country. Catching fish has become not only as a source of food but also as a source of income. Further, offshore gas and oil and mining are very important elements of national wealth and income. Coastal tourism contributes income and provides employment in coastal areas. Under UNCLOS-III, nearly two million square kilometres of area has come under India's jurisdiction. India was recognized as a pioneer investor in ocean mining. It had been given the status of a pioneer nation in 1987 to explore and exploit the resources in the seabed. It is estimated that India has 380 million tons of polymetallic nodules in the central Indian Ocean basin and India would obtain permission from the International

Seabed Authority to get exclusive rights to mine for precious metals on the seabed of the Indian Ocean.

Since India is becoming as one of the major economies, it needs to play a constructive role in world affairs. The constructive role of India is largely depending on its economic growth. The resources which Indian Ocean offered have the potential to maintain economic growth of India and other littoral states in Indian Ocean. With advancement in exploration technology, deep-sea mining, huge potential for exploration of hydrocarbons, petroleum, natural gas, rare earth metals, the demand for ports and shipping services, seaborne trade could contribute for India and other littoral's economic growth in the future. They have opportunity to fulfill their domestic need by using blue economy in the Indian Ocean. By developing blue economy, India and other littoral states not only enhance their sustainable economic development but also contribute to peace, stability and security in the region.

In view of the above, the UGC Centre for Maritime Studies, Pondicherry University, Pondicherry, plans to organize a three day International Conference on ***Developing Blue Economy in Indian Ocean: Challenges and Opportunities*** during 22-24 February 2017.

Themes: Following are some of the themes that would be focused during the Conference.

- Elements and significance of blue economy: fisheries; renewable energy; ports and shipping; explorations of minerals; marine biotechnology; trade, tourism, sea lanes of communications;
- Blue economy and countries' prosperity;
- Littoral states' approach towards blue economy;
- India's approach towards blue economy;
- Challenges for littoral states for developing blue economy in the region;
- Cooperation/collaboration for ocean planning/management and technology clusters between India and other littoral states
- Suggestions and policy recommendations for the littoral states

The Centre invites papers (5000-6000 words) for the above mentioned conference. The Conference Committee will scrutinize the abstracts/papers and accordingly invitation will be sent to those papers selected. The Centre will bear the expenses of accommodation and local hospitality.

Last date for submission of one page abstract (about 350 words) and title of the paper:

10 August 2016

Last date for submission of full Paper: **30 November 2016**

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